

Wrong Gallery: A New Paradigm for Art Space

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ABSTRACT

This case gives a depiction of how the founder of Wrong Gallery, Ron, when facing the competition and operational mode of the traditional art gallery industry in Taiwan, capitalizes on the latest trend of emergent social media, and leads his team to break through the shackles or consumers' stereotypical impression. Ron has set up a brand-new age of art space with the brand thinking and innovative approaches, becoming a practical case in regard of the new-pattern art space. In an era where the total value of output from cultural and creative industries worldwide is rapidly increasing, this case's rich materials give readers a better understanding of the operation of an art gallery amongst the cultural and creative industries. This case allows readers to understand how an innovative enterprise's founder starts by analyzing industry situations, incorporates his/her personal strengths, and further determines the strategy application and implementation for the company's market position and business operation model.

KEYWORDS

Art Gallery, Cultural and Creative, Designer Toy Strategic Management, Wrong Gallery

INTRODUCTION

In this current era of creativity explosion, a variety of creative products are marketed or displayed in virtual and physical stores, and even on sidewalks. These creative products are similar to the embodiment of fragrances that enhance the overall texture of spaces. As a form of creative products, artworks are mainly sold at galleries, and for most people, the impression of art galleries are places of luxurious consumption for the rich, as some artworks and paintings in galleries can command extremely high prices. While the general publics are able to appreciate the beauty of artworks, they may lack the funds to purchase such beautiful art, or they simply regard galleries as a place for the cultivation of art appreciation ability. In recent years, Taiwan government has aggressively promoted cultural and creative industries, and provided public spaces for artists to freely display or sell their creations. Cultural and creative markets and squares have been established in many locations, and many host cultural and creative exhibition halls. The prosperous development of such "cultural and creative industry" triggered Rong-Cheng Chang to found the Wrong Gallery (WG) in 2013, which has a business model different from that of the traditional model. This case study describes how Rong-cheng Chang, the founder of WG, started changing consumers' perceptions of pop art to re-creating the concept of street art, how he faced the competition and business model of the traditional gallery industry in Taiwan, how he used emerging social media trends to lead his operational team to break through consumer stereotyping regarding galleries, and applied brand thinking and innovative approaches to create a new era of art space, to make his gallery become an example of a new pattern for art spaces.

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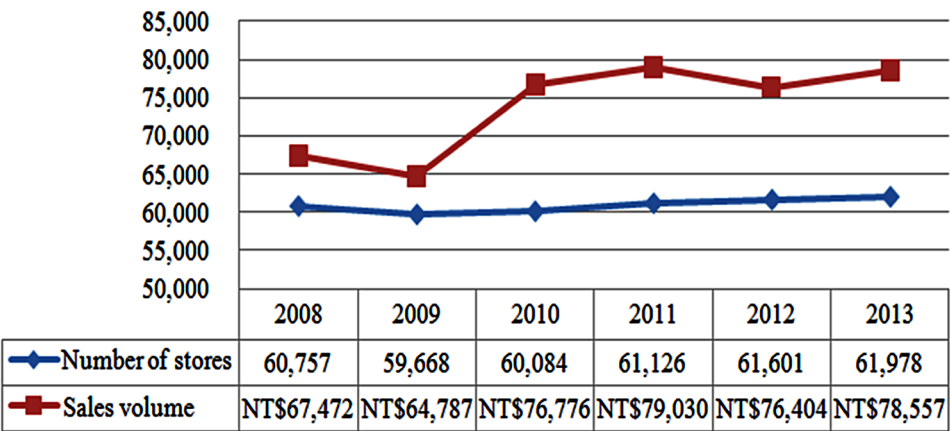
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CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND THE GALLERY INDUSTRY IN TAIWAN

Recently, in the cultural and creative industries, policymakers have been interested in promoting reliable empirical measures of activity, leading to economic growth and increased social benefits (Pratt, 2009). With the strategic support and promotion of the government, the number of stores engaging in cultural and creative industry in Taiwan increased from 59,668 in 2009 to 61,978 in 2013, and the sales volume increased year by year (see Figure 1). In 2013, the project of “Value Output – Construction and Innovation of Cultural and Creative Industry Value Chain”, as led by the Ministry of Culture, strengthened intermediary and brokerage systems according to the needs of the cultural and creative industry, thus, improving the innovation and connection among the upstream, midstream, and downstream of the cultural and creative industry chain. At this period, the government also established 5 cultural and creative industrial parks, including Huashan, Hualien, Taichung, Chiayi, and Tainan, to provide platforms for performances, exhibitions, transactions, and cross-border cooperation of cultural and creative products. Moreover, the government aggressively welcomed core creations and independent workers to reside in cultural and creative settlements, and subsidized private groups to provide art space for the use of the cultural and creative industry in Taiwan (Department of Education, Science and Culture, 2015). The cultural and creative industry in Taiwan has been prosperously developed, and gallery brokerage has played a critical role as a medium for transactions in the cultural and creative industry chain.

In Taiwan, galleries belong to a fragmented industry, and there are diversified genres with their own niches. However, on the international stage, the international competitiveness of the gallery industry in Taiwan is not high, as gallery brokerage houses in Europe or Asia, such as Singapore, China, and Hong Kong, are relatively more developed and handle artworks from various places around the world. In terms of supportive industry, the craftsmanship of pottery and painting in Taiwan is excellent, and NGOs aggressively devote themselves to art education in order to lower the threshold for those who intend to engage in the art industry (Shih and Liu, 2015). Frequent exhibitions, as hosted by the Taipei World Trade Exhibition Center, Nangang Exhibition Center, etc., increase the opportunities for artwork tradeshow; while the progress of internet technology provides space for the development of virtual platforms. In terms of supply and demand, most art collectors in Taiwan prefer to purchase artworks from Europe, the U.S. or China. Due to a lack of marketing, it is very difficult for artworks of local artists in Taiwan to attract the attention of international collectors.

Figure 1. Overview of the number of stores and sales volume of the cultural and creative industry in Taiwan from 2008-2013. Note 1: Source: Chang et al. (2014), Ministry of Culture Website. Note 2: Units of sales volume: NT\$ Ten thousand dollars.



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