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Commercial Development Plan of Company L

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MSc in Business Administration

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Department of Marketing, Operations and General Management

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In the midst of years of busy work, I have always had the idea of continuing to learn. The epidemic made me think a lot about my career and life planning, and the idea of continuing my studies was born. So I bravely embarked on a journey to Portugal, where I met many excellent professors and students, and I would like to thank my supervising professor Nuno Reis Teixiera, who guided my thesis and gave me a lot of advice, and I am very grateful to him for his careful and responsible revision of my thesis, without which I don't think I could have finished this thesis. Prof. Nuno has been one of the best and most responsible people in my life, and I hope that we will continue to have a good student-teacher relationship in the future. Secondly, I would like to thank my family, who have been very supportive of me coming to Portugal to study, and who have always given me encouragement and comfort, so that I can continue my studies in a foreign country without any worries.

I would like to conclude with an ancient Chinese poem, which is the screams of monkeys on either bank, had scarcely ceased echoing in my ear. When my skiff had left behind it, ten thousand ranges of hills.

Resumo

A empresa L é uma empresa de viagens em Xangai que vende produtos de turismo de cruzeiro. Com o desenvolvimento do mercado de turismo de cruzeiro e do marketing digital, a empresa L está a ter um desempenho de vendas insatisfatório e, mais importante ainda, a situação de marketing está a afetar o desenvolvimento presente e futuro da empresa. O principal objetivo da dissertação consiste em melhorar a atual situação de marketing insatisfatória através do marketing digital para melhorar o desempenho das vendas e reforçar a imagem de marca da empresa.Ao mesmo tempo, intensificar os esforços para adquirir utilizadores e manter a sua fidelidade, a fim de reduzir a rotatividade de clientes. A dissertação combina a análise do ambiente interno e a análise do ambiente externo para lançar as bases da proposta subsequente.

Além disso, utiliza-se o método de análise da literatura, o método de inquérito no terreno, o método de inquérito por questionário, o método de entrevista aprofundada e o método de análise de dados para fundamentar a tese. Ao mesmo tempo, este estudo foca em estratégias comerciais, analisa o ambiente de negócios, propõe soluções de marketing utilizando o modelo dos 4 Ps e dá grande ênfase à aquisição e retenção de clientes ao longo de todo o processo.

Palavras-Chave: Modelo de marketing 4P, Marketing de produtos turísticos de cruzeiros, Plano comercial

JEL Classification: M31, M37

Abstract

Company L is a travel company in Shanghai that sells cruise tourism products, with the development of the cruise tourism market as well as digital marketing, Company L is experiencing unsatisfactory sales performance, and more importantly, the marketing situation is affecting the company's present as well as future development. The main purpose of the dissertation lies in improving the current unsatisfactory business situation through the means of commercial development plan to improve the sales performance and enhance the company's market position while, at the same time, intensify efforts to acquire users and maintain user loyalty to reduce customer churn. The thesis combines internal environment analysis and external environment analysis to lay the foundation for the subsequent proposal. As well as the use of literature analysis method, field survey method, questionnaire survey method, in-depth interview method and data analysis method to provide support for the thesis. At the same time, this study focuses on commercial strategies, analyzes the business environment, proposes marketing solutions using the 4P marketing model, and places a strong emphasis on customer acquisition and retention throughout the process.

Keywords: 4P marketing model, Cruise tourism product marketing, Commercial Plan

JEL Classification: M31,M37

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1. Introduction

In China, tourism is the first of the country's five “happiness industries” (In 2016 China's current Premier Li Keqiang pointed out that tourism, culture, sports, health and pension are the five major happiness industries.), and it has a role to play in promoting social and economic development as well as people's lives. For example, it stimulates consumption, encourages consumption upgrading, and improves the happiness index of residents' life. Therefore, the tourism industry has excellent economic and social benefits and is a key target for the State.

In recent years, with the strengthening of China's economic power and the continuous improvement of residents' incomes, living standards and cultural standards, the demand for tourism consumption by Chinese residents has been growing rapidly and gradually enriched and diversified. The traditional way of traveling is increasingly difficult to meet the needs of tourists. In this context, cruise tourism, which integrates hotel and entertainment modes, has gradually gained more and more favor among Chinese tourists.

In 2006, as the center of gravity of the cruise market continued to move to the Asia-Pacific region, cruise ships officially landed in the Chinese market. According to the International Cruise Association, from 2006 to 2019, the average annual growth rate of cruise tourists in China's home ports was as high as 52%, and China has become the second largest cruise market in the world. Meanwhile, the Chinese government has introduced a series of incentive policies over the past decade or so, providing strong support for the benign development of China's cruise tourism industry. For example, the Opinions on Promoting the Development of China's Cruise Industry issued in 2008 and the Opinions on Promoting the Development of China's Cruise Economy issued in 2018, which have strongly promoted the development of China's cruise tourism industry. Therefore, before the epidemic, China's cruise tourism market development maintained good momentum and became an important part of the global cruise market.

However, with the onset of the epidemic, China's cruise tourism industry was hit as hard as the global cruise tourism industry. According to CLIA data, the overall market for the cruise tourism industry in each country in 2023 recovered to similar levels in 2019. China's number of cruise tourists in 2023 was only 0.16 million, a decrease of 1.7 million from 2019, and its share of the overall market share was 0.49%. This is mainly due to the reopening of cruise tourism in China in September 2024, which has resulted in a surge in cruise passenger traffic, but not enough for the market to regain its position as a major source market.

China's cruise market is witnessing a rapid recovery since the end of the epidemic. According to the “Cruise Green Book: China Cruise Industry Development Report (2023)”, the market is showing strong growth momentum with the full recovery of international cruise

transportation, and the number of cruise tourists is expected to reach 39.5 million in 2027. Meanwhile, according to Shanghai Customs data, in the first quarter of 2024, the number of inbound and outbound international cruise ships was 69, and the number of cruise passengers was 210,000, representing a sequential increase of 3.3 times and 15.1 times respectively. However, as an emerging market for cruise tourism, China's cruise tourism market is very immature, with old-fashioned cruise products, unreasonable pricing and even malicious low-cost competition among dealers, false publicity by travel companies on social media platforms, traditional travel agencies knocking travelers off their feet, and too much reliance on channel players, among others.

Company L is a Shanghai-based travel company founded in 2002, which currently operates cruise products, including more than 150 boutique sea circumnavigation programs covering the whole world. However, during the development process of more than 20 years, Company L also faces the above marketing strategy problems, which leads to the company facing great pressure in the competitive market. Therefore, this paper tries to analyze China's cruise tourism industry by using PEST and Porter's Five Forces analysis methods, etc., and to find out and solve the problems in the marketing strategy of Company L by using 4P marketing theory and questionnaire research method, in-depth interview method, etc., to improve the marketing strategy, attract more customers, enhance the market share and competitiveness of Company L, and actively carry out the marketing level of Company L when achieving a stable improvement in In realizing the stable improvement of the marketing level of Company L, it actively carries out the beneficial exploration of the marketing strategy of the cruise industry, provides reference for other tourism companies, and realizes the healthy development of the cruise tourism industry.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Marketing theory

According to McCarthy (1960) ,the 4Ps marketing mix includes product, price, place, and promotion.According to Chandy and Tellis (1998) ,product innovation and quality management are key factors in achieving competitive advantage and sustained growth.According to Zeithaml (1988) ,different pricing strategies can achieve different market goals, such as market share growth, profit maximization, or brand image building.According to Anderson and Coughlan (1987) ,enterprises need to determine the optimal channel strategy based on the characteristics of the target market and consumer purchasing behavior.

Zhong et al. (2020) argued that the key issue to consider in the development of the cruise tourism market is to establish a distribution channel system.According to Chen (2019) ,The Chinese cruise market has problems such as product cognitive bias and immature customer source market. To address these issues, we can establish a promotion system based on tourist data, content, channels, and public relations, build a marketing team, strengthen brand management, and channel construction. According to Es soegoto (2019) ,using new media for marketing activities can stimulate consumers' strong interest in products, thereby achieving a good overall social media marketing communication effect.

According to Chin (2020) ,By integrating modern marketing theories such as traditional 4Ps, 4Rs, 4Cs, and 4Vs with tourism marketing theories, this study compares the product, price, channel, promotion, customer, consumption power, behavior analysis, and corporate behavior in traditional marketing theories,In the application of modern tourism marketing theory, it is believed that the development of different tourism products needs to be combined with the economic development level of the region where the tourism product is located, the consumption ability of regional tourism customers, and the degree of inclination of regional tourism industry policies, in order to apply different tourism theories and complete the strategic selection of suitable tourism product marketing.

2.2. Tourist Marketing

According to Perkins (2021) , attention should be paid to the complementary role of modern network marketing to tourism marketing theory, with the continuous development of mobile Internet technology, in the trend of increasing integration of tourism products to precision marketing, the network marketing of tourism products is becoming a favorable complement to traditional tourism marketing, and based on the mobile Internet technology of tourism data analysis, so as to achieve the precise marketing of tourism projects, is an important basis for

tourism enterprises to make decisions on tourism land investment, scenic spot development and tourism product development and other related management activities.

According to Jin (2022) , in 2020-2022, under the crisis of the new crown epidemic, China's tourism industry suffered a “cold winter”, with the decline in the consumption capacity of tourism customers, the network digital marketing of tourism projects has become a new mode of integration and development. Tourism interactive platform, live broadcasting of tourism scenic spots and the innovation of new tourism marketing methods of VR cloud tourism provide brand-new ideas for the marketing adjustment of tourism enterprises under the post epidemic environment, thus summarizing that under the new development opportunities, tourism enterprises need to develop network tourism projects in depth and realize the integrated marketing of tourism projects and products, and to realize the integrated marketing of tourism projects with the help of digital network technology, which is the most important factor in the development of tourism industry. In this way, it summarizes that under the new development opportunities, tourism enterprises need to develop network tourism projects in depth, realize the integrated marketing of tourism projects and products “online + offline”, and realize marketing promotion and publicity with the help of digital network technology, thus attracting more tourism customers.

According to Wu (2022) , the development of the modern tourism industry is based on the improvement of the quality of people's material life and the increase of the disposable income of the family tourism, so as to improve the social insights and self-regulation for the purpose of choosing tourism products.

2.3. Research on Cruise Tourism Marketing

2.3.1. Cruise Industry

The rise of cruise ships can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s, and since the 1970s, the international cruise industry has entered a period of rapid growth. As the birthplace of cruise travel, Western countries, unlike China, have a more mature cruise industry. Since the beginning of this century, with the start of China's cruise industry, it has gradually increased Chinese consumers' awareness of the cruise industry.For the definition of the cruise industry, According to Espinet et al. (2020) , the cruise industry is a branch of the tourism and hospitality industry that is characterized by the transferability of the port of call experience due to the routes and ports.According to Silva and Souza (2022) , the cruise industry has a large supply chain system and a large number of crew members, and is highly internationalized, capital-intensive, and highly planned.In recent years, with the continuous development of China's cruise market, Chinese researchers and scholars have gradually increased their exploration

of the cruise industry. According to Sun and Hou (2017) , the cruise industry, as a resource-dependent industry. On the one hand,it brings a large number of socio-economic opportunities.And on the other hand,it produces a number of negative effects, which are often overestimated after offsetting their economic benefits.

2.3.2. Cruise Tourism

Through reviewing the literature, since entering this century, cruise tourism has gradually become popular and more and more consumers, and has gradually completed the transition stage from high-end tourists to mass consumers, in the process of which a lot of new and diversified cruise products have been derived. As a new type of tourism, different research scholars have their own views on cruise tourism.Natalya et al. (2020) argued that cruise tourism is a special kind of travel vehicle in socio-economic activities, involving the realization of people's physical, psychological and other needs, as well as a whole industry that provides the formation, promotion and implementation of cruise tourism products.Paoli et al. (2020) argued that the development of cruise tourism should be integrated into the local environment and use it as a basis to find a way forward in the long term.Zhang et al. (2010) argued that cruise tourism is a high-end way of traveling on a large luxury cruise ship that sails on the sea and carries out a series of leisurely recreational activities on board.Wei (2004) argued that the ship as the main body to divide the cruise tourism form into three modes: ocean-going cruise, near-shore type cruise and river and lake type sightseeing cruise.Yan (2018) argued that cruise tourism is a multi-functional, combined and highly malleable marine leisure tourism product.

2.3.3. Cruise Market

The study of the cruise market shows that the center of gravity of the global cruise market has been shifting to the Asia-Pacific region in recent years.In 2019, China's total passenger traffic in the cruise market has accounted for the majority of the total passenger traffic in Asia, jumping to the second in the world and the first in Asia, which shows that China has become an emerging and fastest-growing country in the global cruise market.However,the Chinese cruise market has suffered tremendously as much as the international cruise market due to the COVID-19 Epidemic. It is vital to study the Chinese cruise market to understand the researcher's division of the overall global cruise market.

According to Hobson (1993) , based on the survey data of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the cruise tourism market is divided into four segments by using the social class structure analysis method: the mass market (from the middle and lower income class,

with an average daily spending of about 125 to 200 dollars); the middle market (from the middle and upper income class, with an average daily spending of about 200 to 350 dollars); the luxury market (mostly from the upper class, with a daily spending of more than 350 dollars); and the special market (grouped by travelers with the same special interests on small ships, with a number of people generally between 50 and 150). (average daily spending of about US$125 to US$200); the mid-market (from the upper-middle income bracket, with average daily spending of about US$200 to US$350); the luxury market (mostly from the upper echelons of society, with daily spending of more than US$350); and the specialty market (groups of travelers with the same special interests who travel on small cruise ships, usually numbering between 50 and 150 persons). This segmentation is widely used by research organizations.

Regarding the operating model of the Chinese cruise market, according to Wang et al. (2018) , cruise operations in China differ significantly from current practices in the two major cruise markets, the United States and the Mediterranean. The value-added chain-coordinated pricing strategy of profit redistribution benefits both cruise passengers and service providers. In two subsidized scenarios, one for passengers and the other for travel agents, the cooperative pricing strategy outperformed other strategies and succeeded in increasing market share and total revenue.

Regarding the development of China's cruise market in recent years,according to Ye and Wang (2019) ,the momentum of China's high-speed growth in the cruise market is gradually declining, showing a steady upward trend.Against this background, efforts must be made to overcome the difficulties of insufficient fulfillment of the market function, too few and restricted sales channels, and the consumer interest protection mechanism has not yet been sound and incomplete, in order to promote and maintain the field's benign development in this area, fully releasing the potential and vitality of the market and creating a market atmosphere of healthy competition.

According to The Shanghai International Cruise Economy Research Center (2020)，China's cruise tourism market is in a slump due to the epidemic. The domestic cruise tourism market may see explosive growth after the end of the epidemic because of the surge in demand in a short period of time and the limited supply of cruise products, which may lead to an oversupply.

2.3.4. Cruise Consumer Research

The studies of different cruise consumers by different research scholars have certain reference and learning significance for the study of Chinese cruise consumers. According to Petrick (2005) , a study of cruise passenger price sensitivity found that the more price-sensitive travelers were more likely to spend more, and the more price-sensitive passengers were more

likely to positively evaluate their tours.According to Marcello et al.(2017) , the physical environment of cruise tourism, such as transportation convenience, food and beverage, entertainment facilities, etc., has a direct impact on the consumer's travel senses and cruise experience.

According to Gunnar and Irena (2017) ,studies have shown that websites, search engine optimization and word-of-mouth communication have a positive impact on deepening market segmentation in the cruise industry and are an effective way to reach potential consumers.

According to Milad et al. (2018) ,through the study, it was found that the service and travel experience of cruise travel affects consumers' willingness to repeat purchases.

According to Shahijan et al. (2018) ,examining how service convenience and traveler experience significantly affect cruise passenger satisfaction and revisit intentions, empirical evaluations suggest that service convenience is a higher-order model consisting of decision-making convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and post-benefit convenience.

According to Frida et al. (2019) ,data was collected by means of a survey and analyzed using choice-based coalition (CBC) analysis to analyze tourists' decision-making factors for choosing a cruise ship, and it was found that cruise tourists are influenced by factors such as online ratings, the environmental friendliness of the cruise ship, the length of the cruise vacation, the distance to the cruise port, the cruise itinerary, and the price of the cruise vacation when choosing a cruise ship

According to Chang et al. (2021) ,the product attributes of cruise travel were categorized into onboard activities, lounge space, cabin comfort, Michelin restaurants, and refund mechanisms, and a questionnaire survey was conducted with cruise passengers in Taiwan, which showed that: (1) cruise passengers valued the quality of onboard services the most, followed by onboard amenities when they traveled; (2) cruise passengers' preferences for swimming pool space and more activities onboard were both negatively significant, suggesting that they disliked the idea of adding these amenities and experiences on board; (3) cruise passengers are willing to pay extra to upgrade an inside cabin to an ocean view room and to experience a Michelin restaurant; (4) cruise guests pay more attention to their own health due to the impact of the COVID-19 Epidemic. However, the new crown epidemic did not reduce their willingness to travel by cruise ship.

For China cruise consumer research,according to Jiao et al. (2021) ,in the study of cruise tourists, the biggest motives of Chinese cruise tourists are family leisure, relaxation and nature and culture exploration, which provides a solution reference for expanding the source of Chinese cruise market.

According to Tang et al. (2019) ,the study identified barriers to high-income Chinese adults participating in cruises from domestic home ports. The results of the study showed that

“structural” constraints (lack of knowledge, time and money) had the greatest impact on the intention not to participate in a cruise, while “non-selective” constraints (disinterest due to previous cruise experience and intention to take a cruise from a foreign home port) had the least impact.

2.3.5. Research on the Marketing of Cruise Products by Tourism Companies

According to Logunova et al. (2019) ,the cruise product as a complex of services is presented in three main forms: services provided on board, services consumed by tourists on shore, and services related to the provision of assistance to passengers in the process of organizing transport trips.

According to Lincoln (2018) ,Its qualitative study found that cruise lines and destinations can develop new products and improve marketing communication interactions based on consumers' perceptions of travel.

Matusse et al. (2023) argued that the marketing strategy adjustment of tourism enterprises needs to be built on the basis of project strategy optimization, and it needs to be led by the regional government, especially after the easing of the epidemic, the tourism market has stepped into the development of the regular tourism industry policy adjustment at a high speed to help tourism enterprises to eliminate the impact of the epidemic on the operation of the enterprise, and for the tourism resources are too dispersed region, the integration of the image of the tourism image led by the government is a key factor to improve the competitive advantage of the regional tourism products. For regions where tourism resources are too dispersed, the integration and promotion of tourism image led by the government is a key factor to improve the competitive advantage of regional tourism products, which means that the higher the policy support of the regional government for the tourism industry, and the higher the degree of autonomy and flexibility in optimizing tourism marketing strategies, the more robust the development of the tourism industry in the region will be.

According to Cui (2018) ,cruise tourism enterprises must master the theory of customized marketing, comprehensively considered the interests of the target consumer groups and their real needs, and put forward the views of historical and humanities, traditional festivals and activities, or cultural and artistic features into the cruise travel product themes, to ensure the uniqueness and irreplaceability of the cruise product, so as to improve the attractiveness of tourism products.

According to Lu (2020) ,consumers' perception of and satisfaction with the cruise product can be achieved through the five integrated senses of touch, sight, sound, smell, and taste, which correspond one by one to accommodations, musical and cabaret performances, dining, and shopping on board the cruise ship.

According to Hu (2019) ,problems in product, market positioning and publicity in the marketing strategy of China's cruise tourism industry need to be reconstructed in a way that differentiates, entertains and normalizes the holiday season

Ye and Sun (2010) argued that cruise tourism products are mainly composed of two aspects: the cruise line and the cruise ship itself. For the cruise ship itself, we should firstly highlight the difference between the cruise ship and other travel modes, emphasize the comfort and high quality service in the cruise tourism and the special characteristics of the sea leisure mode. Secondly, the cruise products should be improved according to the characteristics of Shanghai consumers, which is mainly realized by understanding and familiarizing with the living habits of Shanghai people. As for the product strategy of the cruise line, it should maintain the existing products and develop new products according to the different needs of tourists.

SánchezRivero and RodríguezRangel (2021) argued that by analyzing the strengths and similarities of the Spanish domestic tourist destinations, the competitive criteria of the competitiveness factors should also have tourist resources and available products

According to Natasha (2020) ,through a survey of 12 tourism enterprises in three cities in the UK, we propose the concept of “digital tourism” based on the TOE framework theory, and consider the great role of digital VR in the development of tourism product channels and product promotion, and believe that with the continuous improvement of the consumption demand of tourism customers, the virtual experience of tourism products that can be immersed in the world without leaving home will become an important promotion method for the development of modern tourism projects, i.e., the innovation of tourism strategy will greatly promote the effectiveness of the overall adjustment of the marketing strategy of tourism enterprises. The concept of “Digital Tourism” suggests that digital VR can play a great role in tourism product channel development and product promotion. It is believed that with the increasing consumer demand of tourism customers, immersive tourism experience without going out of the home will become an important promotion method for modern tourism project development, which means that the innovation of tourism strategy will greatly contribute to the effectiveness of the overall adjustment of the marketing strategy of tourism enterprises.

2.4. Customer acquisition and retention

In the cruise industry, customer acquisition and retention present unique challenges due to the sector’s complex service nature and highly competitive environment. Cruise companies face increasing difficulties in acquiring new customers because of rising marketing costs, the need for differentiated brand positioning, and growing consumer concerns about sustainability and safety, especially in the post-pandemic context. At the same time, retaining existing customers has become more demanding as travelers’ expectations for personalization, digital

engagement, and high-quality experiences continue to evolve. Customer loyalty in the cruise sector is easily influenced by external factors such as price fluctuations, travel restrictions, and emerging alternatives in leisure tourism.

Cui and Zhou (2021) argue that user satisfaction exerts a significant positive influence on customer loyalty. Furthermore, all five dimensions encompassed by perceived value—functional value, emotional value, cognitive value, and loss aversion value—play a positive role in driving user satisfaction.According to Almunawar (2024),CRM is key to enhancing customer satisfaction, loyalty, and overall business performance.Kamil et al. (2024) argued that in today's fiercely competitive market, effective CRM is an essential choice for businesses to establish a foothold.

According to Alexandru (2022),by offering personalized products or services, businesses can closely align with customer needs and achieve the goal of converting ordinary customers into key accounts. This perspective underscores the unique value of personalized service in customer relationship management, opening up new avenues for companies to enhance customer value.Yoo et al. (2024) argued that the continuous advancement of machine learning and deep learning algorithms in recent years, coupled with the emergence of generative artificial intelligence, has made AI the "new normal" in organizational operations. This trend has extended into the CRM domain, giving rise to AI-enabled CRM systems—or AI-CRM. This new development direction charts a course for upgrading and optimizing CRM systems, promising to propel enterprise customer relationship management to new heights.According to Su (2020),customer relationship management integrates modern information technology, business philosophy, and customer-centric management principles to establish, maintain, and retain customer relationships through systematic approaches.

Wang and Li (2024) argue that in the practical research of customer relationship management, the specific components of CRM include collecting and analyzing user information, segmenting users, implementing diversified services, enhancing interaction to develop relationships, and establishing institutional safeguards to improve service quality.According to Hou (2024),customer Relationship Management Optimization Strategy Respect all customers and establish stable relationships with them. Implement customer segmentation management to enhance service levels. Enrich brand experiences to improve service quality. Establish a VIP system to provide professional services. Strengthen communication to build emotional connections. Develop an information management system to deliver personalized services.

Wu et al. (2021) argued that growth remains the eternal benchmark for business development. When acquiring customers, consider customer acquisition costs; during

activation, pay attention to “key actions”; for retention, track user data; when monetizing, monitor user ARPU; and during organic growth, leverage private domain traffic.Liao and Ruan (2021) argue that user growth requires leveraging big data analytics to identify customer preferences for different products, enabling tailored marketing plans for users with varying preferences.

In addition to these international studies, several Chinese scholars have also made valuable contributions to the literature on customer acquisition and retention. According to the Research Report on the Development Trends and Competitive Strategies of the CRM System Industry (China Industry Information Network, 2023), the Chinese CRM market is undergoing rapid digital transformation. The report highlights that refined customer segmentation, digital engagement, and data-driven service innovation have become critical strategies for improving customer acquisition efficiency and long-term retention performance.

Similarly, the article A Review of Domestic and International Research on Customer Relationship Management (Marketing Studies, 2022) provides a systematic overview of the theoretical evolution and practical applications of CRM. The authors emphasize that CRM development in China is increasingly oriented toward the integration of information technology, big data analytics, and customer-centric business models, all of which enhance customer loyalty and value co-creation.

Furthermore, Wu, Zheng, and Qi (2020) explored customer retention strategies in service supply chains while considering customer heterogeneity. Their research demonstrates that differentiated retention strategies based on varying customer characteristics can effectively improve satisfaction and strengthen long-term customer loyalty. These insights are particularly relevant to cruise companies that operate in complex service environments and rely heavily on long-term customer relationships for sustainable growth.

3. Methodology

Literature analysis method: review and refer to the existing theoretical results of cruise tourism marketing, including academic papers, journals, historical literature, professional books and research reports and other paper materials. And organize the relevant research results, identify and summarize the theories, methods, tools, conclusions, etc. in the relevant literature, objectively and comprehensively understand the cruise tourism marketing, the current situation and prospects of China's cruise tourism market, etc., and form their own views based on the analysis of their predecessors.

Field investigation method: In-depth field visits to the front line of the investigation, the L company to conduct field inspections, the actual project from the front line of the company data to obtain relevant information, etc., and field research on the industry competitors, industry consumers and other related situations, the market information for further integration, which is conducive to the efficient summary of the marketing plan for the L company to put forward or improve, as well as efficiently adapt to the actual situation.

Questionnaire method: this plan combines quantitative research method. With the development of marketing concepts and the development of cruise tourism marketing practices, the questionnaire survey method is an effective method to investigate the basic information and purchase intention of users, and explore product marketing issues around the cruise tourism market. By collecting and organizing the sample data obtained from the questionnaire, data analysis is carried out to provide data support for the proposal or improvement of Company L's marketing plan.

Data Analysis Method: Processing, interpreting and analyzing the collected data through a systematic approach, extracting useful information data, drawing conclusions and providing data support for L Company's marketing development, and making subsequent recommendations with reference to the analysis results.

In-depth interview method: This plan combines the stereotypical research method with the 4Ps as the main model, and conducts in-depth interviews with the general manager, deputy general manager and marketing manager of Company L. It obtains the first-line data of Company L and records and summarizes the contents of the interviews in a timely manner, and combines with the company's marketing status quo, to learn about the market consumer groups, the future development of the company, and so on.

4. Commercial Development Plan

4.1. Executive Summary

This commercial development plan uses market research and in-depth interviews, etc. as the basis to analyze the overall marketing situation of Company L. Company L is a tourism company located in Shanghai that has been developing for many years, and mainly engages in cruise tourism products, and has a certain amount of customer resources in the cruise tourism industry; however, the head cruise company of the industry occupies most of the market share, and the competition among similar tourism companies is fierce, and Company L is struggling to perform in this competitive situation. After China announced the opening of cruise tourism in September 23, with the gradual diversification of consumer demand and the gradual normalization of digital marketing, etc., how to improve the market competitiveness and sales of L Company has become an urgent problem.

This commercial development plan begins with an external environment analysis PEST analysis, which analyzes the key external factors of the cruise tourism market, including political, economic, social, and technological factors, which play a key role in the development of the cruise tourism business of Company L. Company L can formulate a marketing strategy that meets the market demand based on these external environmental factors. Meanwhile, in-depth industry analysis helps companies understand the cruise tourism industry dynamics and market development trends, which helps to clarify the current industry situation and future growth potential. Through competitor analysis, Company L can understand and study its major competitors, which possess advantages that Company L can refer to and learn from, and formulate different marketing strategies. As well as Porter's Five Forces analysis to understand Company L's supplier and buyer bargaining power, threats from potential entrants, threats from substitutes, and threats from competitors. This helped Company L to understand the impact of different forces in the industry and to have a more comprehensive understanding of the competitive landscape of the industry as a whole, which formed a great help in the subsequent marketing strategies.

The internal environment analysis combined with the SWOT analysis clarifies Company L's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and on this basis goes on to analyze what Company L can strengthen or improve in the future, which points out the direction for marketing practice. Through the 4P marketing mix, Company L is systematically analyzed and proposed in four typical modules: product, price, channel and promotion. In this context, the proposal requires Company L to innovate its products, improve price flexibility, integrate multiple channels and form a promotional mix. It is intended to build Company L into a cruise

tourism company that has product highlights, price flexibility, online and offline multi-channel deployment, digital marketing advantages, and reasonable promotional activities.

In addition, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the proposal, the implementation path and effect evaluation indexes of this plan are further proposed. This will help Company L to increase sales volume, capture more market share, enhance brand reputation, increase customer loyalty and realize long-term development of the company in the competitive market landscape.

This business development plan prioritizes marketing while simultaneously focusing on expanding into emerging markets, acquiring and retaining customers, and enhancing user loyalty. By integrating product, pricing, distribution channels, and promotional strategies with digital marketing tactics, we will elevate our commercial capabilities. This process will progressively open up emerging markets, such as the cruise tourism sector targeting young consumers through social media channels. While acquiring users through emerging markets and innovative marketing approaches, we will enhance customer satisfaction to achieve high retention rates. Thus, this business development plan strives to realize "upgraded marketing to drive new market expansion, accelerating the conversion of new users into loyal customers."

4.2. External Situational Analysis

4.2.1. PESTE Analysis

4.2.1.1. Political Factors

In recent years, in order to accelerate the cultivation of a good cruise tourism industry and promote the rapid and healthy development of China's cruise industry, China has increased its support and issued many relevant policies one after another, as detailed in the table. For example, in September 2018, ten central departments jointly issued Several Opinions on Promoting the Development of China's Cruise Economy, whose main tasks are to actively cultivate the cruise market, expand and improve the service capacity of ports, further optimize the environment and functions of ports, strengthen the safe development of cruise ships, and strive to promote the green development of cruise ships. The launch of the policy provides direction for the development of China's cruise industry and plays a role in promoting the development of the cruise economy.

Table 4.1 Political Factors

Time	Name of policy	Thrust
December 2016	Circular on the Implementation of Major	Encourage the development of island tourism, sports tourism, cruise tourism, study tourism, hot

	Projects for Tourism and Leisure	spring tourism, ice and snow tourism, health tourism and other emerging tourism products.
December 2017	Opinions on Financial Incentives for the Development of International Cruise Tourism Industry	Between December 31, 2022, financial incentives will be provided to domestic and foreign cruise companies, cruise port (terminal) operators and shipping agencies that provide cruise services in Weihai City.
January 2018	Opinions on Further Promoting the Support of Cruise Tourism Development	Subsidies will be given to relevant enterprises engaged in the operation of cruise tourism, including cruise companies and chartered ship enterprises, for a period of three years (effective from January 1, 2018 onwards).
August 2019	Opinions on Further Stimulating the Consumption Potential of Culture and Tourism	Support the development of cruise yacht tourism, intangible cultural heritage theme tourism and other forms of business.
November 2022	Circular on Consolidating the Upward Trend and Strengthening Efforts to Revitalize the Industrial Economy	Accelerate the mass development of cruise ships and yachts, and promote the green and intelligent upgrading of inland waterway vessels.
August 2023	Implementation Opinions on Accelerating the Development of Cruise Yacht Equipment and Industry	By 2025, the cruise yacht equipment industry system is initially completed, the domestic large cruise ships completed and delivered, medium-sized cruise ships to speed up the promotion of small cruise ships to achieve batch construction, yacht product series of diversified large-scale production, tourism cabin upgrading and upgrading characteristics of the development.
September 2023	Several Measures on Unleashing the Potential of Tourism Consumption and Promoting the High-Quality Development of the Tourism Industry	Improve cruise and yacht tourism policies, and strengthen the construction of cruise and yacht terminals, coastal vacation camps, sports boat terminals and other tourism support services. Optimize cruise routes and cruise tourism product design, and promote the full resumption of international cruise transportation.

January 2022	Tourism Development Plan for the 14th Five-Year Plan	Promoting cruise tourism infrastructure construction in an orderly manner, advancing the development of cruise tourism in Shanghai, Tianjin, Shenzhen, Qingdao, Dalian, Xiamen and Fuzhou, and promoting the construction of an international cruise home port in Sanya.

Source:Chinese government website

The epidemic had a significant impact on the global cruise industry, and China's cruise market was not spared from suffering a heavy blow, resulting in the complete suspension of the Chinese market on January 29, 2020, making it the earliest cruise market in the world to stop sailing, and causing huge economic losses to various cruise companies, travel companies and travel agencies mainly engaged in cruise tourism products, and duty-free stores in cruise ports. As of September 18, 2023, China's Ministry of Transportation and Communications (“MOTC”) issued the Circular on Doing a Good Job in Fully Resuming International Cruise Transportation, and China was thus able to fully resume international cruise transportation.

To support the development of the cruise industry, on May 15, 2024, China's National Immigration Administration (NIA) issued an announcement on the full implementation of the policy of visa-free entry for foreign tour groups on cruise ships. The announcement states that foreign tour groups coming to China by cruise ships and organized by travel agencies in China can enter the country visa-free through 13 cruise ports along China's coastline: Tianjin, Dalian, Liaoning, Shanghai, Lianyungang, Jiangsu, Wenzhou and Zhoushan, Zhejiang, Xiamen, Fujian, Qingdao, Shandong, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, Guangdong, Beihai, Guangxi, and Haikou and Sanya, Hainan. This provides more and more convenient choices for travelers and also promotes the development of China's cruise market.

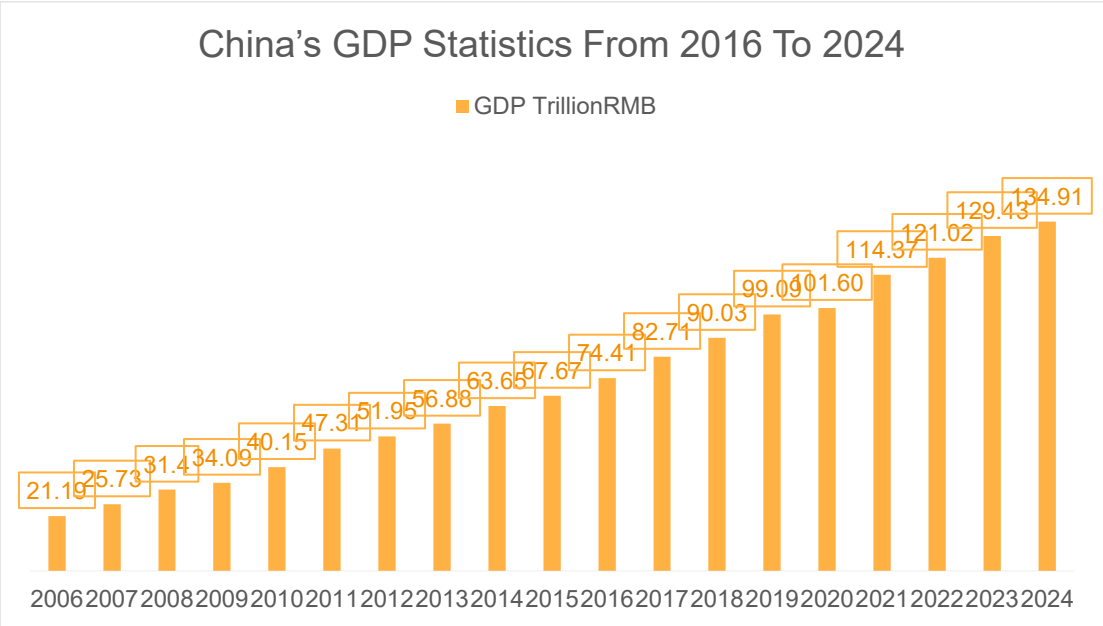
The Action Plan for Upgrading Shanghai's Shipping Service Industry to Contribute to the Construction of an International Shipping Center, released by Shanghai in June 2023, proposes to optimize the layout of the cruise economy industry chain. Explore destination-free sea tours and Chinese-funded flag-of-convenience cruises along the coast. Develop a rich and distinctive cruise tourism product system. Create an international cruise tourism consumption center and promote the establishment of a cruise cross-border commodity trading service platform.

Therefore, political factors play a guiding role in the development of the cruise industry, and travel companies should fully study and understand the current status of their local policies in their operational development.

4.2.1.2. Economic Factors

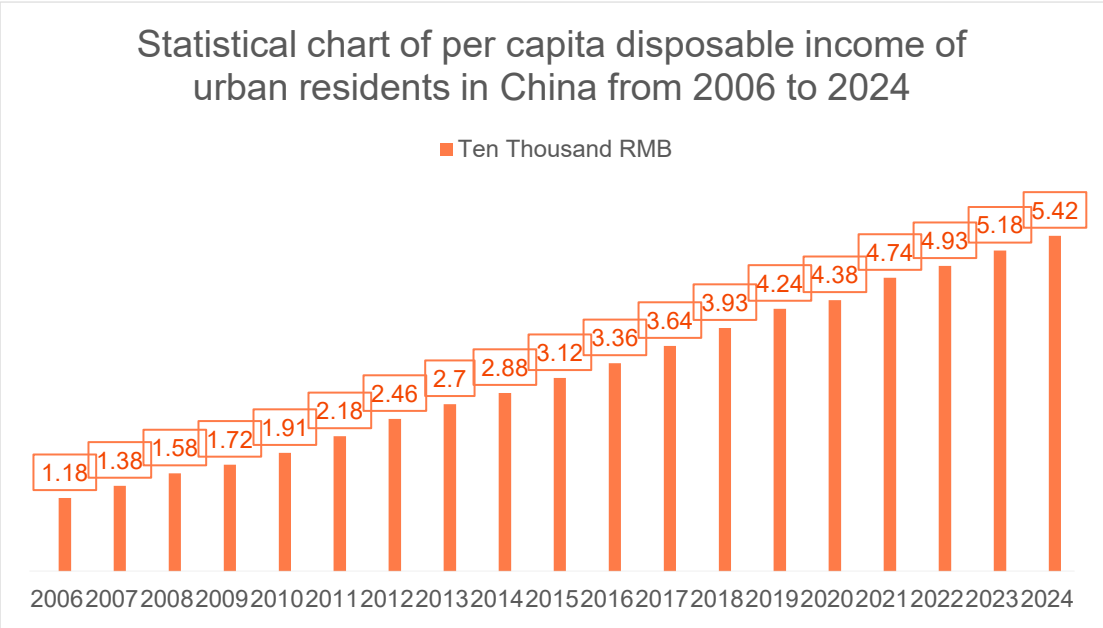
China's cruise economy began in 2006 with the maiden voyage of the Elangana in Shanghai, which started the homeport operation in China. In recent years, China's cruise economy has continued to develop, and according to the Cruise Economy Prosperity Index for China and Asia released by the Shanghai International Cruise Economy Research Center, China's Cruise Economy Prosperity Index in 2024 will be 102.13, a solid increase on the basis of 2023. According to the relevant report of the International Cruise Association, the stable development of the macro-economy and the continuous expansion of the size of the middle-income group are the important reasons for the rapid development of China's cruise market.The core reason for the explosive growth period of China's cruise industry from 2006 to 2017 cannot be separated from China's rapid economic development, and the significant rise in the GDP and the increasing disposable income per capita of the residents have made it possible for more people to afford the option of cruise tourism. See chart

Figure 4.1 China's GDP Statistics From 2016-2024



Source : China National Bureau of Statistics (CNBS)

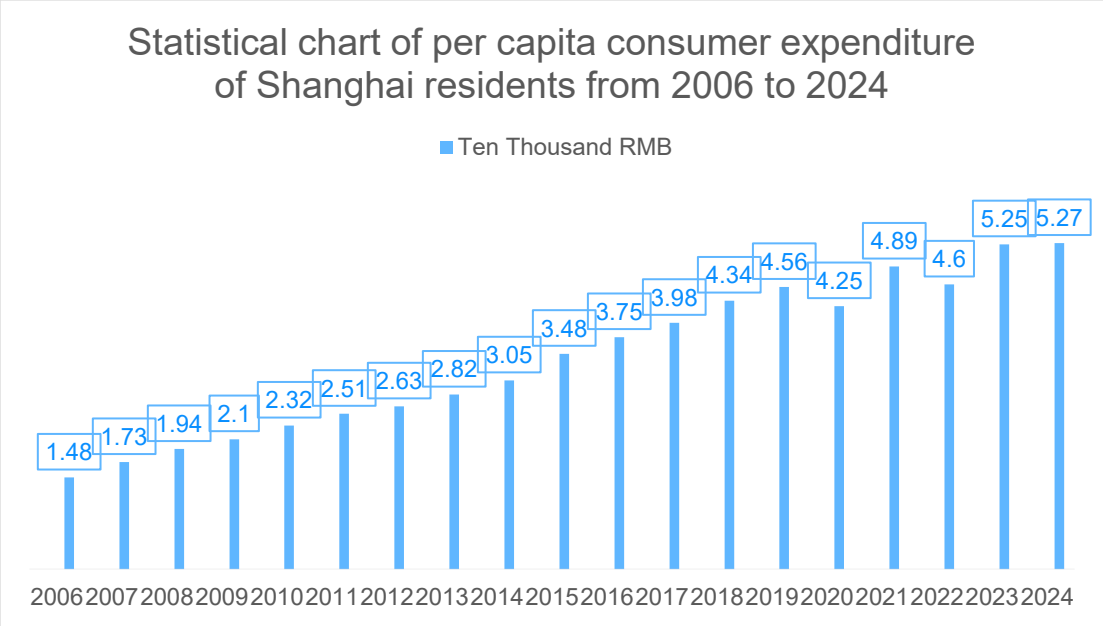
Figure 4.2 Statistical Chart of per Capital Disposable Income



Source:China National Bureau of Statistics (CNBS)

Shanghai, as an important hub for China's cruise market, has achieved remarkable development in the cruise industry over the past decade, with a cumulative total of more than 3,000 cruise ships and about 15.3 million tourists as of the end of 2019, and the overall size of the cruise economy reaching 26 billion yuan. According to the information disclosed by the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism, in 2024, the port of Shanghai received 247 international cruise ships berthing and 1,375,900 cruise passengers, further promoting Shanghai as one of the important cruise economic centers in the world. This has nothing to do with Shanghai's economic development trend, strong economic development and growth rate resulting in increased consumption of residents, which further leads to strong tourism consumption, such as per capita consumption expenditure of Shanghai residents since 2006 have exceeded 10,000 yuan,

Figure 4.3 Statistical Chart of per Capital Consumer Expenditure



Source:China National Bureau of Statistics (CNBS)

It can be seen that economic factors have an increasingly important position in the development of the cruise market, and the economic situation of residents has become one of the prerequisites for choosing a cruise tourism trip. Tourism companies should consider the economic environment of the country or the local economy and pay attention to the economic situation in the process of marketing strategy customization or enhancement.

4.2.1.3. Society Factors

(1) Population factors

According to CLIA data, the largest percentage of global cruise travelers in 2023 will be over the age of 60, at 34%. This indicates that the middle-aged and elderly population remains the mainstay of cruise tourism. According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, China's aging population is further deepening, with 22% of the country's total population aged 60 and above in 2024. Travel companies need to keep up with the new trend of China's population policy and design their marketing programs well when using the demographic environment as a benchmark for research.

At the same time, the cruise tourism market is gradually developing towards youthfulness, and CLIA public data shows that 22% of global cruise tourists in 2023 will be aged 28-43. Some cruise companies are also enriching their cruise products to meet the needs of young tourists. For example, products such as music festival-themed cruises and singles trips for young people have been launched.

(2) Cultural factors

The cruise industry originated from the aristocratic leisure culture, and its development cannot be separated from the strong economic strength, excellent navigation technology and advanced service management level, but its core is the cultural value of cruise tourism products. The cultural experience it brings is the intrinsic driving force for the development of cruise economy.

At the same time, the operation and development of tourism companies can not be separated from the impact of the social environment, of which the cultural environment is relatively important. On the one hand, culture will bring profound significance to marketing activities, and on the other hand, it will also have far-reaching influence on the society. For travel companies covering cruise products, cultural factors as their product signals can meet customer needs to a certain extent. For example, different cruise ships have their own cultural characteristics, the Royal Caribbean Cruise is known for high-tech, Costa Cruises take the Italian style route, Princess Cruises has a special “Princess Courtesy” culture.

According to the information disclosed by the Shanghai International Cruise Economy Research Center, Chinese domestic tourists attach great importance to cultural and spiritual experiences, and the popularity of the innovative model of cultural and tourism integration is strong. For example, the first large-scale cruise ship built and operated independently by China, “AIDA Magic City”, which will officially set sail in January 2024, is characterized by the fusion culture of cruise ships. Whether it is the painting of the ship's hull or the onboard entertainment shows, all of them present cultural characteristics to the passengers. During the Dragon Boat Festival, AIDA Mordor launched a parent-child cultural activity, “AIDA Shanhaijing - Fantasy Journey”, an interactive stage show for parents and children.

Therefore, tourism companies covering cruise tourism products can carry out relevant research according to the socio-cultural environment of the target market and design more targeted marketing strategies for specific customer groups before carrying out marketing work.

4.2.1.4. Technology Factors

With the gradual and in-depth development of artificial intelligence, big data and other science and technology, digital marketing is gradually being widely used in the cruise tourism industry. On the one hand, this makes customers more efficient when booking a cruise. Many cruise lines or travel companies, such as Carnival Cruise. They will rely on advanced virtual reality technology to enable customers to experience cruise facilities, cabin environments, and sailing scenery in advance, so that customers can quickly access information about their target cruise travel products from the comfort of their homes. They will also provide instant Q&A services to customers through AI technology, with smart replies and automated Q&A throughout the day,

answering frequently asked questions and assisting customers in booking, which greatly increases customers' willingness to book. On the other hand, this makes acquiring customer traffic more precise and efficient. Through social media marketing programs, cruise lines and travel companies use Instagram, TikTok and other platforms to publish content on cruise travel, combined with the formation of online communities, to attract potential customers and call on them to share their cruise travel experiences to increase customer loyalty.

In addition, many online travel companies and international cruise lines offer networked e-commerce operations, developing mobile applications that integrate booking, embarkation procedures, itinerary management, and onboard consumption to provide business services that include a full range of categories. For example, Royal Caribbean International's mobile application allows customers to check in, book onboard packages, find routes, make schedules, and chat with groups online, which improves convenience and greatly enhances the cruise experience for tourists.

The integration of technology has contributed to the faster development of the cruise tourism industry, and travel companies or cruise lines can conduct effective marketing in terms of technology to enhance customer goodwill towards the brand and at the same time improve the brand image and strengthen customer loyalty to the brand.

4.2.2. Industry Analysis

The upstream of the cruise tourism industry chain mainly involves the construction of cruise ship design, manufacturing and assembly. The middle reaches of the industry chain are mainly cruise ship operation and management companies, which are responsible for cruise tourism and management, including route planning, marketing and customer service. The representative enterprises of cruise companies are Carnival Group, Royal Caribbean Group and so on. These companies occupy most of the market share of the global cruise industry, forming a strong market monopoly. The downstream of the industry chain is mainly tourists.

In recent years, as the idea of cruise tourism has gradually taken root in people's hearts, China's cruise tourism industry has experienced remarkable growth and changes in recent years, and China's cruise tour industry has shown strong development momentum and become an important force in the global cruise market. Meanwhile, with the recovery of the global economy and the improvement of people's living standards, China's cruise tourism industry will usher in a broader development prospect. First of all, China's cruise market is witnessing a rapid recovery. According to the “Cruise Green Book: China Cruise Industry Development Report (2023)”, with the full recovery of international cruise transportation, the market shows strong growth momentum, and the number of cruise tourists is expected to reach 39.5 million in 2027. According to CLIA data, China's cruise tourism industry began to recover

one by one, and China's cruise tourism reopened in September 2023, with the number of cruise tourists reaching 0.16 million within a short period of time, and a surge in cruise passenger traffic.

The growth driver scenario of the cruise tourism industry is mainly characterized by the expansion of China's middle class, increasing disposable income of the population, and more people being able to afford cruise travel, enabling China to be the fastest growing region for cruise tourism.

However, the cruise tourism industry is susceptible to challenges from sudden global events as well as environmental issues, such as the COVID-19 outbreak, which hit the cruise industry hard, with cruise ships shutting down and tourists canceling their bookings, leading to a significant drop in industry revenues. The environmental impacts of cruises, such as emissions and waste disposal, are also under increasing scrutiny and regulation. The cruise tourism industry is strictly regulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other bodies, especially in terms of safety and environmental protection. Meanwhile, policies and regulations on cruise tourism vary in different countries and regions, affecting the operation and route planning of cruise lines.

Technological development in the cruise tourism industry has also become a new trend, as cruise lines are adopting more digital technologies, such as mobile apps, smart rooms and virtual reality experiences, to enhance the traveler experience. Meanwhile, in response to environmental challenges, cruise lines are investing in more environmentally friendly technologies, such as liquefied natural gas (LNG)-powered ships and wastewater treatment systems. The cruise tourism industry is expected to return to growth in the coming years as the outbreak gradually gets under control, with China continuing to drive the industry and showing new growth potential.

4.2.3. Competitor Analysis

With the rapid growth in demand for cruise tourism, the cruise tourism market in China has become highly competitive.2023 Following the announcement of the resumption of international cruise transportation in China, internationally renowned cruise lines have returned to the Chinese market, leading to renewed competition in this sector. Competitors in the cruise tourism market mainly include international cruise lines, Chinese domestic cruise lines and Chinese domestic cruise distributors.Among them, in addition to choosing travel agencies, tourism companies and other distributors to help sell cruise products, international cruise lines also have a strong direct sales capability; China's domestic cruise lines, as an emerging force in the cruise market, have a strong momentum of development, and many of them do not choose to cooperate with travel agencies but directly through digital marketing and other sales

of cruise products; China's domestic cruise distributors Many of them do not choose to cooperate with travel agencies but sell cruise products directly through digital marketing, etc.; Chinese domestic cruise distributors are generally travel agencies or travel companies, and many of them have good customer resources and brand strength, which gives them an obvious competitive advantage.

International cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean Cruises, Carnival Corporation, MSC Mediterranean Cruises and other large international cruise lines. They have rich and personalized cruise tourism products, a long history of brand development and strong brand influence, equipped with a variety of routes, good reputation and other advantages. By virtue of their globalized operation experience and their own advantages, these international cruise companies often occupy a dominant position in the cruise tourism market, have a larger market share, and have strong competitiveness in the market competition.

Table4. 2 International cruise lines

Cruise Lines International	Year of Establishment	Head Office	Key Advantages
Royal Caribbean International	1968	USA	One of the world's largest cruise lines, with a number of large cruise ships, such as the Oasis of the Seas series; excellent cruise facilities, a wealth of on-board activities, and unique global itineraries. Its marketing strategy is to attract a wide range of customers and increase sales based on brand awareness. The company not only targets high-end customers, but also attracts family-oriented customers by offering a wide range of family entertainment facilities and attracting Chinese travelers by providing Chinese language services and Chinese food and beverage. As well as focusing on digital marketing, it provides convenient services through its website and mobile apps, and utilizes Instagram, etc. to post promotions and user-generated content (UGC). Its share of the global cruise market will be around 20%-25% by 2023.Partnering with major e-commerce platforms

			and top KOLs, while also collaborating on advertising with China's official CCTV News channel, is one of its key business strategies. Simultaneously, it places emphasis on serving high-end clientele.
Carnival Corporation& plc	1972	USA	One of the world's largest cruise operators with several cruise brands, including Carnival Cruises and Princess Cruises; its marketing strategy aims to differentiate brand positioning, digital marketing with emphasis on customer experience. For example, Carnival Cruises caters to families and young customers, while Princess Cruises caters to high-end customers. As well as the cooperation with Disney brand, providing themed entertainment and food and beverage, attracting specific customer groups and so on. It also focuses on customer loyalty, such as the VIFP Club and “Captain's Circle,” which offer benefits to different customers. Its share of the global cruise market will be around 40%-45% by 2023.With a strong emphasis on onboard service as a core business strategy, the company has significantly upgraded its cruise tourism offerings in recent years. Innovative activities have garnered increasing popularity among users, and the company places great importance on user research and feedback, linking activity updates directly to customer satisfaction.
MSC Cruises	1989	Switzerland	MSC is the world's largest privately owned cruise line, with European-style service and unique Mediterranean itineraries. MSC adheres to innovative marketing strategies, such as launching online marketing and live broadcasting business to introduce cruise products and popularize cruise knowledge for consumers online. In terms of products, MSC has launched

			the newly upgraded “ship-in-ship” Mediterranean Yacht Club, which brings customers an innovative maritime vacation experience. By 2023, its share of the global cruise market will be about 7%-10%, with a trend of continuous growth.With pricing as a key focus of its business strategy, the company has launched a significant number of competitively priced cruise tourism products in recent years. It has leveraged promotional offers from partner e-commerce platforms to attract customers.

Source:Author(2025)

With the rapid development of cruise tourism, China's domestic cruise companies are also growing gradually, such as AIDA Cruises Ltd, Shanghai Blue Dream International Cruise Co, Ltd etc. They differ from distributors like tour companies in that they have cruise ships that can be operated, and in addition to that, they have great market adaptability in their local markets, a deep pool of tourists, a stable direct sales distribution capability, and so on.These competitive advantages enable these cruise companies to stand firmly in the cruise tourism market.For example, in the first half of 2024, the share of AIDA Cruises' fleet in the Chinese market exceeded 60%. It is committed to creating an innovative marketing model of “cruise + culture”, with a large number of Chinese cultural elements in its tourism products, and launching different Chinese cultural themed activities, as well as paying close attention to the needs of young customer groups and launching a marketing model of “cruise + performance”, combining comedy shows, art festivals and other methods favored by young people. The company also pays great attention to the needs of young customers by launching the “cruise + performing arts” marketing model, which combines comedy programs and art festivals favored by young people.

Shanghai Blue Dream is a cruise company with national characteristics and favored by Chinese people, which focuses on differentiated marketing. Unlike AIDA Cruise Line, which focuses on short and medium routes, Blue Dream launches cruise tourism products on ultra-long routes, and chooses to avoid popular destinations and develop cruise tourism products for small and beautiful destinations. At the same time, Blue Dream focuses on the market positioning of “National Lohas Cruise” and promotes the “slow-paced” cruise tourism model, so as to provide consumers with more choices of experience.

Domestic cruise distributors in China mainly refer to travel agencies and tour companies. They get more favorable prices by cooperating with domestic and foreign cruise companies, attracting customer traffic with price advantages and promoting the sales of cruise products. In recent years, more and more distributors have been using live broadcasting and social media marketing to increase product exposure and build the company's brand advantage. To a certain extent, this has intensified the degree of competition in the cruise tourism market.For example, Huacheng CITS is a leading outbound travel service provider in China, which adopts omni-channel marketing, including 2024 organizing offline product promotion meetings, and at the same time, creating online product marketing, inviting a number of travel KOLs to experience the products through channels such as WeChat, Weibo, and TikTok, and completing the conversion of customers accordingly. As well as cooperation with a number of cruise companies, such as Hurtigruten Cruises, to launch the Nordic route cruise tourism products, combined with film and television promotional means to achieve sales results.

Competition among market competitors is mainly reflected in cruise routes, cruise tourism products, pricing strategies, marketing strategies and so on. In order to gain more customers, the company needs to continuously launch new routes and tourism products, such as family reunion cruises and “Chinese New Year” cruises, to meet the needs of different groups of tourists. Meanwhile, in terms of pricing strategy, the Company has introduced favorable prices and cruise packages to attract price-sensitive tourists. In terms of marketing strategy, the Company needs to continuously update its marketing tools, abandon ineffective traditional marketing strategies and enhance its marketing programs in order to gain more customers and achieve higher sales volume.

Intense market competition will, to a certain extent, promote the cruise tourism industry to continuously improve its innovation ability and market adaptability, and seek different development strategies to stimulate the growth of its own brand.

4.2.4. Porter’s Five Forces Analysis

4.2.4.1. Existing Competitors

Since Chinese tour companies are generally distributors of cruise lines, the existing competitors are categorized in this section as tour companies and travel agencies. China's tourism market has a long history of development, and there are different types of tour companies and travel agencies in the market, both large and small. The large tour companies have a long history of brand development, good brand image, and differentiated competitive strategies, which have led them to capture a large market share in a highly competitive market. For example, they have established partnerships with more cruise lines and have the strength and privilege of organizing more cruise activities, as well as mastering more digital marketing

capabilities, such as selling travel products live on Taobao. Meanwhile, large travel companies, due to relatively substantial overall benefits and stable cash flow, adopt marketing strategies such as price reduction promotions and low-priced activities to attract customers during the off-season of cruise tourism or economic downturn. Other travel companies, on the other hand, are often faced with the situation of losing money if they reduce their prices due to the company's economic problems and, in many cases, will not easily opt for price cut promotions. This further intensifies the competition in the cruise tourism market.

As a result, the intensity of competition among existing competitors in the cruise tourism industry is high, and large tourism companies or travel agencies in the market have strong competitive advantages, mainly focusing on price advantages, marketing strategy advantages, and product advantages. In their own development, Chinese travel companies can refer to the parts of the marketing strategies of large travel companies that are suitable for them.

4.2.4.2. Potential Competitors

The cruise tourism industry has very high barriers to entry, which means that huge capital investment is required. Travel companies and cruise lines enter into distribution partnerships, which require no less than the size of the travel company, its customer base, customer loyalty, operational capacity, and marketing ability. Not to mention the operation of a cruise line, which requires the purchase or construction or chartering of a cruise ship, as well as regular maintenance and upkeep, and relevant licenses. For new entrants in cruise tourism, whether they are travel companies or cruise lines, it means a large amount of capital investment upfront, as well as a certain level of customer relationship, brand operation capability, etc., which is a very big challenge for potential competitors.

At the same time, the cruise industry is subject to strict international maritime regulations and environmental standards, which means that new entrants need to invest more resources to meet the requirements. For example, travel companies need stronger economies of scale in order to partner with compliant cruise lines and launch cruise tourism products to fulfill sales mandates.

Therefore, the threat posed by potential competitors is low, and travel companies can focus more on existing competitors and expanding their strengths in subsequent or transformative developments.

4.2.4.3. The Replacements

Currently, there are numerous alternatives to cruise tourism, which take many different forms. On the one hand, in times of economic recession, when people's willingness to spend is gradually becoming lower, or during epidemics, consumers will choose cheaper alternatives, such as short land trips and self-drive tours. Such alternatives have the advantage of being more attractive than cruise travel in terms of price and flexibility. On the other hand, with the current development of virtual reality technology and augmented reality technology, many consumers may choose virtual travel as an alternative for reasons such as curiosity and goodwill towards virtual technology.

At the same time, as the development history of cruise travel in China is not very long, many consumers have not generated the consumer awareness of cruise travel. Instead, land vacations and air travel have become very common in the lives of Chinese consumers, and promotional activities of airlines and the promotion of regular travel activities by travel companies have pushed consumers to make corresponding travel choices.

Therefore, the threat of alternatives to cruise tourism is very large, there are very many forms of tourism in China, in the economic environment is not good or consumer preferences change, cruise tourism is often in a disadvantageous position, the main cruise tourism products of the tourism company in its own marketing development, should follow the pace of the market, according to the economic environment and the current situation of the market instantly adjust the marketing strategy, and if necessary, consider the psychology of consumers.

4.2.4.4. Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Tourism companies' suppliers are cruise lines, and cruise lines' suppliers are shipbuilders, fuel suppliers, food and beverage suppliers, and technology providers, which have high bargaining power, especially when resources are scarce or demand is high. For example, there are a limited number of cruise shipbuilders globally and a high concentration of shipbuilders, resulting in strong bargaining power for suppliers in terms of price and delivery time. For example, Italy's Finacantieri and Germany's Meyer Werft. At the same time, due to the high dependence of cruise ships on fuels, cruise tourism is to a large extent controlled by the cost of fuels, such as Heavy Fuel Oil, Marine Diesel Oil, Liquefied Natural Gas, etc. The price fluctuations of fuels can significantly affect the operating costs. Fuel price fluctuations can significantly affect operating costs.

In China, there are a large number of tour companies and travel agencies, and fewer cruise companies in China or even in the world. Therefore, cruise companies have strong bargaining power when choosing tour companies to start business cooperation, and tour companies will have less initiative in their dealings and cooperation with them.

Therefore, the bargaining power of suppliers is very strong, but for travel companies, if their own brand competitiveness is strong, they have very strong marketing ability, good customer relations and have huge customer resources, taking into account the economic interests of both parties, the cruise company will consider the travel company's proposal as appropriate.

4.2.4.5. Bargain Power of Home Buyers

Nowadays, the development of technology has led to more and more information transparency in cruise travel, and the Internet and online travel agencies make it easy for customers to compare prices, products and services, which makes the bargaining power of customers higher. At the same time, many of the customer groups that choose to cruise are groups of customers, such as families, corporate employees, members of organizations and so on, large groups through bulk booking will also be or discounts and other benefits. In addition, with the rise of payment platforms, social media, shopping sites, many booking platforms will have a platform to pay the price of platform payment, platform payment discounts, etc., these concessions also make the bargaining power of consumers become higher.

The price sensitivity of cruise travel is higher, especially when the economic environment is poor or the degree of market competition is high, consumers will choose to wait for promotions or specialize in cheaper routes.

As a result, consumers' bargaining power is higher, and travel companies need to give more consideration to consumer needs when developing or enhancing their marketing strategies to improve consumer satisfaction.

4.3. Internal Situational Analysis

4.3.1. Characterization of the company

Founded in 2002, L is a medium-sized travel company approved by the National Tourism Administration and located in Shanghai. During its 23 years of development, L has been actively expanding its brand influence and accumulating good reputation, and was awarded “Top 30 Shanghai Travel Agency Brands” in 2013 and “Top 100 Most Popular Travel Companies in China” in 2019. In 2015, due to the growth of its business, L established a branch office in Guangzhou City.L Company, as a cooperative distributor of a number of cruise companies, mainly sells the cruise tourism products of the cruise companies on behalf of the cruise companies and engages in the business of soliciting tourists to go on overseas cruise tours, arranging international cruise gatherings, and hosting cruise tours for conducting

business study activities.Since 2019, L has opened new cruise tourism products such as customized cruise trips, cultural cruise trips, etc. in order to expand sales and keep pace with the times.

Over the years, L Company has been developing and expanding, and as of 2025, L Company has more than 30 mature tour guides and tour leaders with high quality, high foreign language proficiency, and more than 5 years of working experience, who are responsible for the explanation of cruise trips, serving customers on board, and coordinating cruise activities, etc., and a sales team of 20 (10 full-time and 10 part-time), who are responsible for on-line and off-line We also have a team of 20 (10 full-time and 10 part-time) sales staff, who are responsible for online and offline customer development, customer relationship maintenance, and travel Q&A; as well as a team of part-time telecommuting part-time customer service staff, who provide 24-hour customer Q&A, after-sales service, and complaint handling.

As of 2025, L Company has established cooperative relationships with 15 cruise companies around the world, has more than 100 boutique sea travel programs covering the world, receives an average of more than 150,000 tourists annually, and serves more than 2.5 million customers annually. At present, L Company's cruise tourism products are mainly categorized into high-end, mid-end and low-end types, and some popular products are shown in the figure:

Table 4.3 Route Plan and Price

Cruises	Days	Distance Traveled	Types	Approximate price RMB (subject to price fluctuations due to seasonal and other factors)
Ocean Spectrum	5days	Shanghai-Okinawa-Shanghai	Low-end type	3000
Ocean Spectrum	6days	Shanghai-Fukuoka-Jeju-Shanghai	Low-end type	3500
Zanzibar of the Seas (submarine)	10days	Tianjin - Seoul - Jeju - Kumamoto - Kagoshima - Kochi - Tokyo	Mid-end type	5500
Anthem of the Seas	7days	Shanghai-Singapore-Marina-Phuket-Singapore-Shanghai	Mid-end type	7800（Includes round-trip airfare from Shanghai to Singapore）

MSC World Europa	12days	Shanghai - Milan - Genoa - Palermo - Valleborg - Barcelona - Marseille - Milan - Shanghai	High-end typ	28000（Includes round-trip airfare from Shanghai to Milan）
Emerald Princess	20days	Beijing-London-Southampton-Cork-Kakoltok-Reykjavik-Southampton - London - Beijing	High-end typ	32000（Includes round-trip airfare from Beijing to London）

Source: L Company Product Brochure

Due to the three-year business stagnation caused by the epidemic, since the beginning of 2023, L Company has turned on digital marketing. During the two years, Company L created an official account on the Xiaohongshu platform, regularly released cruise tourism promotional videos, cruise tourism science articles, cruise tourism product introductions, etc., and cooperated with KOLs. As of 2025, Company L released 18 works on the Xiaohongshu platform, including 5 video works, and formed a 35-member user group, with the account being followed by 1,070 followers.

4.3.2. Mission, vision and values

As a travel company that has been developed for more than 20 years, L Company has always insisted on establishing a unique brand image and focusing on customer satisfaction. Against this backdrop, L's mission is to create value from the customer's point of view, provide unforgettable travel experiences with quality services and innovative products, and in doing so, connect the world's cultures and natural landscapes vision is to become China's leading cruise travel service provider, with the hope of promoting the development of the cruise tourism industry through excellent and sustainable cruise travel solutions, and facilitating the cultural exchanges of the cruise tourism. L's values are customer first, always putting customer needs and satisfaction first and providing quality service to customers; pursuing innovation, insisting on product and service innovation to enhance customer travel experience; insisting on honesty and integrity, fulfilling social responsibility, and ensuring the fairness and impartiality of business activities.

L's mission, vision and values have been respected and practiced by every employee during the development process, and have become the belief of the company and every employee's growth.

4.3.3. Consumer analysis

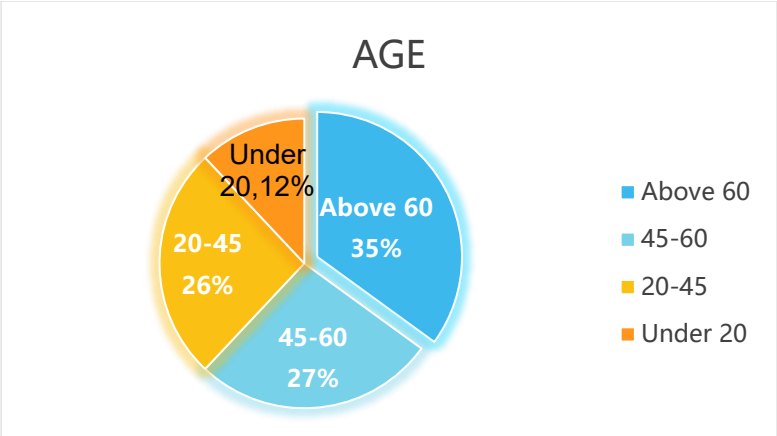
Consumer analysis is an important foundation for formulating commercial development plans or strategies, product design and maintaining customer relationships, which can deepen the understanding of target consumers, help the company better meet customer needs, provide products favored by consumers, and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, and so on. Therefore, in order to better carry out consumer analysis, this part uses questionnaires and in-depth interviews, the specific content is as follows:

4.3.3.1. Questionnaire

By designing questionnaires for consumer market research and organizing data to draw corresponding summaries, the marketing situation of Company L can be more effectively understood and analyzed. Therefore, the customer groups who have ordered the cruise tourism products of Company L, the potential customer groups organized internally by Company L, the online group of travel enthusiasts, and the offline citizens of Shanghai are taken as the main survey groups for the study. The questionnaire design was divided into two parts: the first part was the basic information of the customers, including the age level of the customers, their work income and annual disposable income, and the number of times they traveled per year; the second part was the purchase motives and needs, including the purpose of the purchase, the acceptable price, the most concerned points of the cruise tourism, and the most unacceptable points of the cruise tourism.A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed between the months of October and November in the year of 2024 (See Appendix) and 198 questionnaires were returned, of which 13 were judged to be invalid, thus resulting in 185 valid questionnaires. Conclusion of the questionnaire data are as follows:

According to the survey data, as shown in the figure, among the 185 questionnaires in this survey, there are 64 people aged 60 and above, accounting for 35%, which is the largest proportion. Combined with the figure, it can be learned that the proportion of middle-aged and elderly people over 45 years old reaches 62%, and the proportion of young and middle-aged people between 20 and 45 years old is 26%, with 48 people.

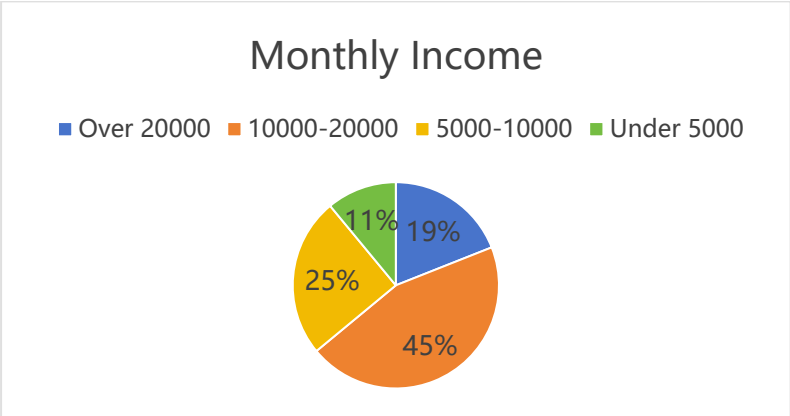
Figure 4.4 Age



Source: Questionnaire Data

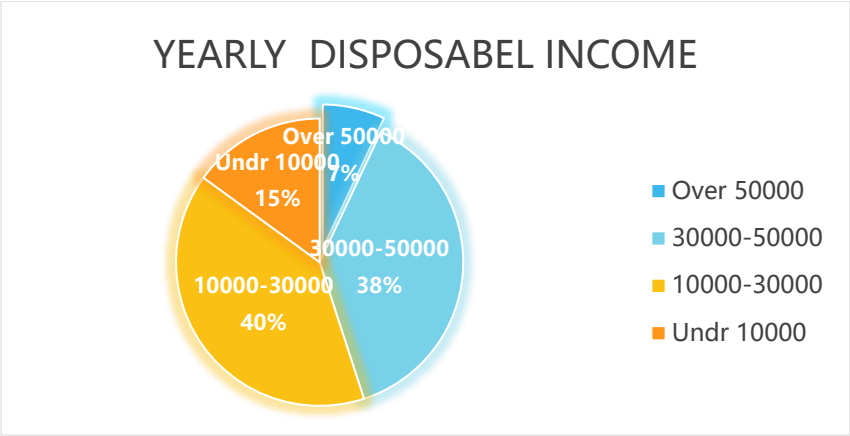
Since traveling requires a certain amount of financial expenses, the monthly salary income and annual disposable income of the respondents were counted. According to the survey data, as shown in the figure, the largest number of respondents, 84 or 45%, had a monthly income of 10,000 to 20,000 RMB. The number of respondents with a monthly income of less than RMB 5,000 is the lowest, with only 20 respondents, accounting for 11%. The number of respondents with an annual disposable income of RMB 50,000 and above was the lowest, with 14 respondents, or 7%, and the majority of respondents had an annual disposable income of RMB 10,000-50,000, with a total of 144 respondents, or 78% of the total.

Figure 4.5 Monthly Income



Source: Questionnaire Data

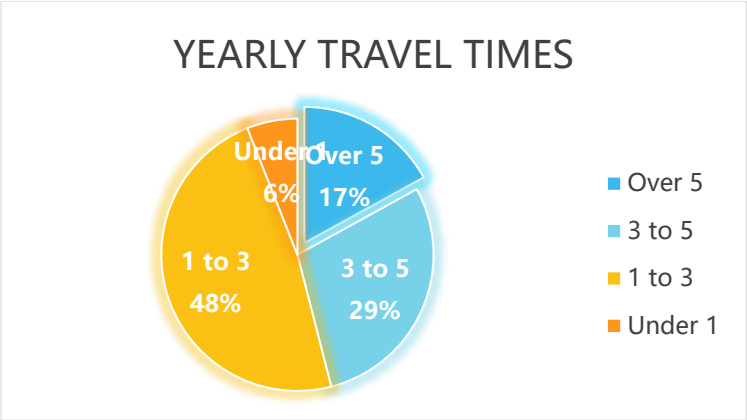
Figure 4.6 Yearly Disposable Income



Source: Questionnaire Data

In terms of the number of times the respondents traveled per year, as shown in the graph, the highest number of people traveled 1 to 3 times per year with 89 people or 48%. The second is traveling 3 to 5 times a year, with 53 people, accounting for 29%. This shows that the respondents have a certain degree of awareness of tourism, and to a certain extent, it can be reasonably presumed that Chinese consumers have the awareness or behavior of consuming tourism products.

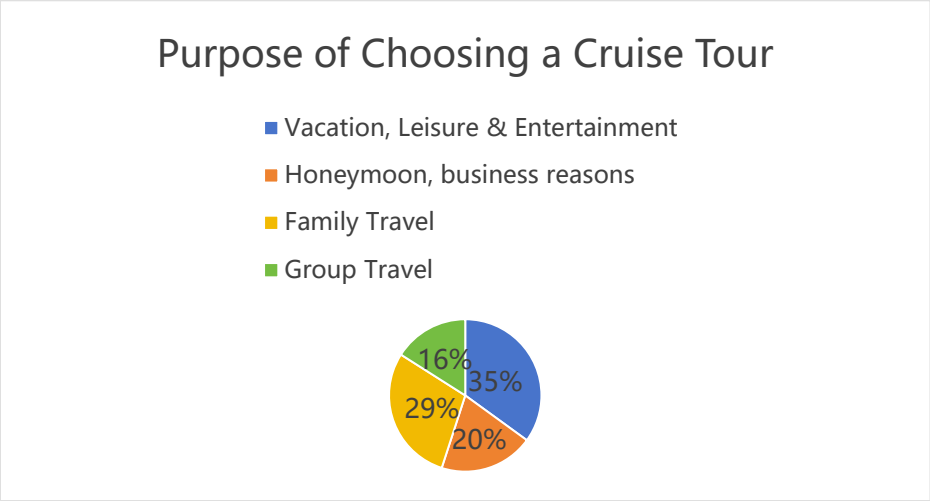
Figure 4.7 Yearly Travel Times



Source: Questionnaire Data

If the respondents chose to travel by cruise ship, the purpose of most of them focused on “vacation, leisure and entertainment”, with 65 people, accounting for 35% of the total number of respondents. The second is “family travel”, accounting for 29%, the number of 53 people. This shows that Chinese tourists choose cruise travel more for vacation, experience cruise vacation mode. At the same time, Chinese people are more family-oriented, and often bring their children and the elderly together to experience cruise tourism with entertainment, hotels and sightseeing during holidays.

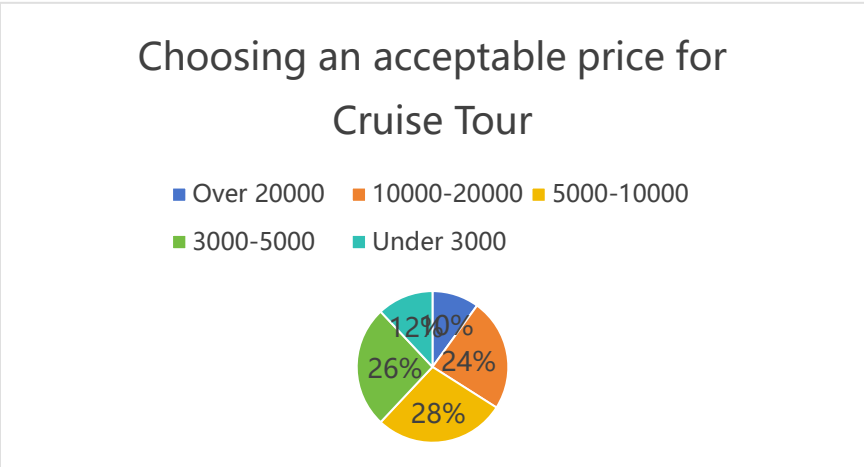
Figure 4.8 Purpose of Choosing a Cruise Tours



Source: Questionnaire Data

If the respondents choose cruise travel, the price range they can accept is RMB 5,000-10,000, RMB 3,000-5,000 and RMB 10,000-20,000. The number of people choosing the three price ranges is relatively close to each other, with 52, 48 and 44 people respectively, accounting for 28%, 26% and 24% respectively. This indicates that Chinese tourists tend to be in the middle of the range of prices they can accept for cruise tourism products, and will not give too low a budget for cruise tourism. Considering future expenses, personal subsequent career development and other reasons, most of them will not set too high a budget on cruise travel either. And such tourists are more price-sensitive, choosing the middle price and pursuing high cost-effectiveness.

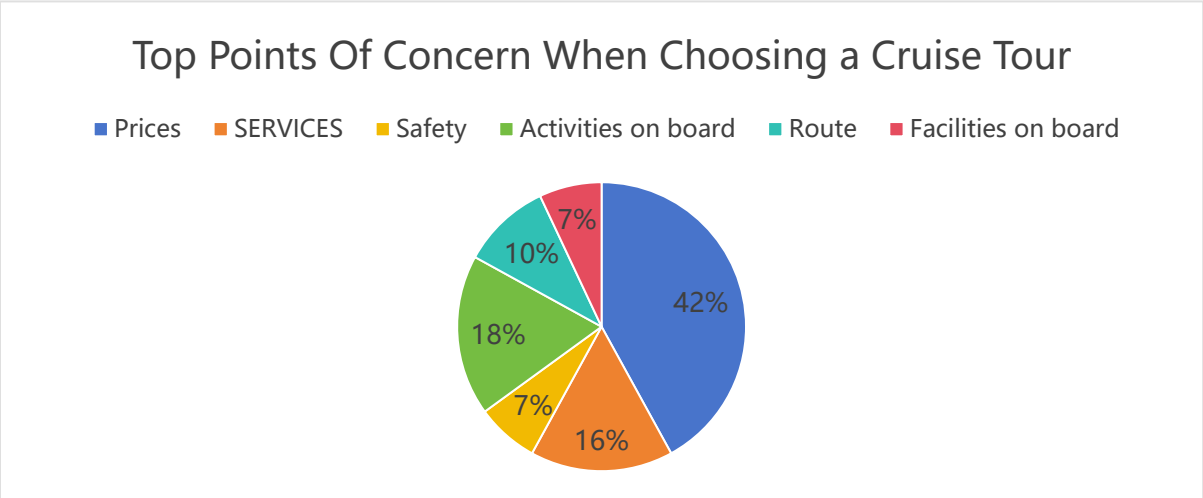
Figure 4.9 Acceptable Price



Source: Questionnaire Data

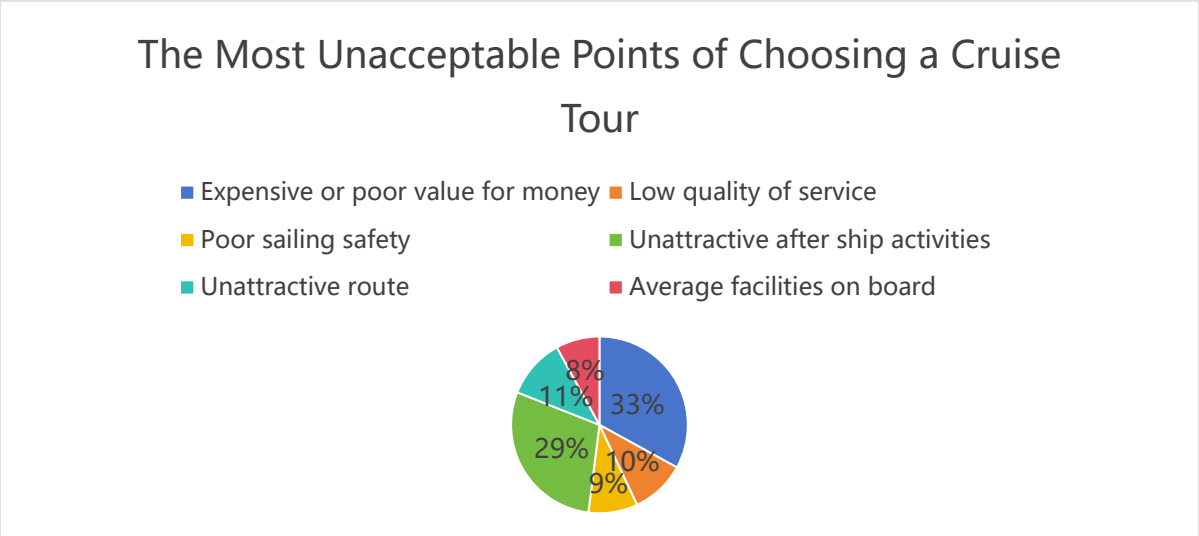
Respondents were most concerned about price when choosing a cruise with 77, or 42 percent. This was followed by on-board activities, with 33 people, or 18%. When choosing cruise travel, respondents were most unable to accept that the price was expensive or not cost-effective, with 62 people, accounting for 33%; followed by unattractive onboard activities, with 54 people, accounting for 29%. This shows that consumers are more concerned about the price, the price of cruise tourism products tends to become their most concerned point, the activities held on the cruise ship is also more important, because consumers choose to cruise tourism after most of their time will be spent on the cruise ship, the experience of cruise tourism in the activities can be reflected, if the activities do not meet the needs of consumers, the experience of their cruise tourism will be worse.

Figure 4.10 Point of Concern



Source: Questionnaire Data

Figure 4.11 Unacceptable Points



Source: Questionnaire Data

Through the consumer analysis, combined with the questionnaire data, we can learn what factors consumers pay more attention to when choosing cruise tourism, and from the side can also speculate the needs of consumers, which can play a certain reference role or reference significance for the subsequent tourism companies in improving commercial development plans or marketing strategies.

4.3.3.2. **In-depth interview**

According to the in-depth interviews conducted by Company L, it can be roughly summarized that the main consumer groups in China's current cruise tourism market are concentrated in the middle-aged and elderly groups, which have a certain degree of economic strength and are more willing to pay for the comfort of travel. At the same time, these groups generally have more vacations, and can have the conditions for cruise travel. At the same time, according to the "Global Cruise Industry Report 2023", from 2018 to 2022, the "silver-haired group" over the age of 60 is the largest consumer group of cruise ships, accounting for 33% of all tourists. This is also consistent with the results of in-depth interviews. At the same time, L Company and China's current cruise tourism market consumer groups are basically consistent, mainly for the middle-aged and elderly groups.

At the same time, consumers' needs and concerns for cruise tourism are changing, with needs becoming more and more diversified and concerns no longer singularly directed to a single factor. With the development of Chinese society and the improvement of people's material and spiritual level, consumers have differentiated needs for cruise tourism, such as cruise activities with different themes, niche routes, high-end cruise tourism and so on. They are also not only concerned about the price, but also consider the overall cost-effective and other factors.

Therefore, grasping the consumer information provides the basis for the subsequent improvement of L Company's marketing strategy, and L Company needs to make multi-faceted adjustments according to the current situation of consumers in the future development.

4.3.4 **L Company's Digital Transformation and Commercial Activities**

By November 2025, L Company will accelerate its digital transformation and technology empowerment as a key business strategy and development initiative, committed to driving comprehensive business growth. Concurrently, it is progressively enhancing innovation in its cruise products and services, gradually increasing the proportion of premium travel offerings

while strengthening data privacy protection for high-end clients throughout the process. Currently, L Company is implementing digital systems to strengthen data-driven operations. Examples include an online app passenger flow forecasting system that uses big data to predict peak and off-peak season traffic, effectively managing foundational tasks for online apps and digital stores. Concurrently, it is comprehensively enhancing digital control frameworks, such as upgrading online digital tour guides. Another key initiative involves broadening sales channels for cruise tourism products, fostering collaboration between platforms and the company to boost user growth while ensuring retention. L is actively building a social media matrix on platforms like Xiaohongshu and TikTok, and has established partnerships with Meituan, Ctrip, and offline travel agencies. Through this multi-layered channel deployment, the company aims to create an operational model resilient to seasonal fluctuations.

In addition to digital transformation and channel expansion, L Company is actively advancing the construction of its brand ecosystem and the extension of its customer value chain. The company plans to integrate upstream and downstream resources in cruise tourism—such as destination excursions, hotel accommodations, specialty dining, and on-shore entertainment—to create a one-stop cruise vacation experience platform. This “cruise + destination” model not only enriches the diversity and depth of customer experiences but also expands new sources of ancillary revenue. At the same time, L Company is developing a comprehensive membership system featuring point accumulation, tiered privileges, and personalized services to enhance loyalty and repurchase rates among premium clients. Furthermore, the company intends to pursue cross-industry collaborations with international high-end brands in sectors such as fashion, art, and gastronomy, offering cruise travelers journeys that combine cultural refinement with premium lifestyle value.

From a market expansion perspective, L Company is proactively implementing an internationalization strategy and a differentiated competitive layout. On one hand, it is focusing on developing emerging cruise markets in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, introducing customized routes and localized services that align with regional cultural characteristics to attract middle-class and younger travelers. On the other hand, L Company is leveraging big data and AI technologies to optimize its marketing strategies, enabling more precise customer profiling and demand matching that increase marketing efficiency while reducing acquisition costs. Meanwhile, the company emphasizes sustainability and corporate social responsibility through its “Green Cruise Initiative,” aimed at promoting energy conservation, waste reduction, and environmental awareness. These multifaceted commercial activities collectively strengthen L Company’s long-term competitiveness and position it as a modern, responsible leader within the global cruise industry.

4.4. SWOT Analysis

Through the SWOT analysis, L Company can systematically sort out and analyze the competitive situation in the cruise tourism market and its own current situation. Its advantages, disadvantages, opportunities and threats can help the company better evaluate itself. Under the SWOT analysis and marketing formulation, it can help the company better cope with market challenges and achieve its own development.

Table 4.4 SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis	
Strengths	Global coverage of cruise resources: After more than 20 years of cruise tourism product development, L has a wide range of cruise destination coverage and post-ship tourism service capabilities, able to provide consumers with cruise tourism options worldwide. Strong supply chain and partnership: L company is more than 10 cruise travel group cooperation agent, is more than 30 travel company distributors. After many years of development, we have established long-term cooperation relationships with cruise lines, hotels, shore-after-arrival businesses, attractions, etc., which can provide competitive prices and quality services. Customer service and support: Company L recruits and trains more than 10 part-time customer service workers who work remotely, and they can provide customer service remotely all day, while other companies provide customer service eight hours a day. Help customers solve problems during their travels throughout the day and increase customer satisfaction. 4. Strong human resources team: L company has more than 30 tour guides and leaders with more than 5 years of service. Most cruise teams have more than 10 years of experience, can handle almost all cruise travel issues, and are familiar with the geographical history of most countries around the world, so they can help customers have a good cruise experience.
Weaknesses	Dependence on cruise companies: L Company is overly dependent on suppliers such as international or Chinese cruise companies, and has also been relatively dependent on L Company's own agents and middlemen since the pandemic. Overall, this is because

	L Company's customer resources are not strong enough and its ability to attract customers is weak. 2.Greatly affected by seasonal fluctuations: Cruise tourism has obvious seasonal fluctuations, with significant differences in passenger flow during peak and off-peak seasons. This leads to unstable revenue for L Company, with more revenue during peak seasons and no revenue during off-peak seasons. 3.Weak digital marketing capabilities: L Company's weak digital marketing capabilities are mainly reflected in insufficient understanding of digital marketing, inadequate digital marketing strategies, and a lack of systematic digital commercial development planning. Among them, the development and maintenance of digital platforms such as websites and mobile applications require continuous technical investment, which may increase operating costs. 4.Insufficient differentiation of cruise tourism products: L Company's current number of cruise tourism products is sufficient, but they are not differentiated enough to meet the needs of different customers. Moreover, the products are not scarce, and there is a high degree of similarity with the products of many companies in the market.
Opportunities	Growth in demand for emerging markets: In recent years, the demand for new types of tourism, such as cruise tourism, from the middle class and young consumers has grown rapidly, which provides L Company with new market opportunities. Personalized and customized tourism: With the improvement of the living standards and spiritual and cultural levels of Chinese residents, the demand for personalized and customized tourism experiences has increased, and L Company can meet this trend by providing customized itineraries and theme tourism. 3. Digital transformation: In the digital age, technological innovation, such as virtual reality tourism experience, AI customer service, and intelligent recommendation systems,it can enhance customer experience and operational efficiency, which is a significant opportunity for L Company.

	4.Cross-border cooperation: With the application of cross-border cooperation becoming more and more widespread, cooperating with well-known IPs, such as Disney, has become a new opportunity. Cruise tourism products and well-known IPs can jointly innovate product forms, launch joint promotional activities, and expand market share.
Threats	Economic uncertainty: fluctuations in the global economy, such as inflation, exchange rate changes, and economic recession, may affect consumers' travel spending, leading to a decrease in demand. Increased competition: the cruise tourism industry is highly competitive, with new online cruise tourism platforms and travel agencies emerging constantly, which may lead to price wars and profit compression. Health and safety risks: unexpected events such as pandemics, natural disasters, and terrorism may have a significant impact on the cruise tourism industry, leading to order cancellations and customer losses. 4.Policy and regulatory changes: government policies such as visa restrictions, tourist taxes, and environmental regulations may increase the operating costs of cruise tourism companies or limit business development. 5. Technical risks: cybersecurity issues such as data breaches and hacking may affect customer trust and company reputation.

Source:Author(2025)

Through SWOT analysis, L Company can formulate corresponding plans to better utilize its advantages, work hard to overcome its disadvantages, actively seize opportunities, and bravely deal with threats.

4.5. Objectives of this plan

Because the cruise tourism industry is greatly affected by the economic environment, policy strength, seasonal climate, and sudden events, combined with L Company's budget and other issues, the goal of this part is set as a short-term goal by the end of 2026.

(1) Annual target total sales growth of 10%: According to the company's historical sales performance, the company's resources and the content of in-depth interviews, the annual target total sales according to the product line decomposition, high-end cruise tourism products target annual sales growth of 2%, medium and high-end cruise tourism products target annual sales growth of 3-4%, low-end cruise tourism products target annual sales growth of 4-5%. The Company plans to invest RMB1 million to mainly apply the Company's cruise tourism product line on-line and off-line omni-channel laying etc, such as participating in travel exhibitions 7-10 times by the end of 2026; strengthening cooperation with travel intermediaries and cooperating with approximately 5-7 intermediaries by the end of 2026; opening WeChat and TikTOK 2 social media platform accounts for operation and sales, including but not limited to placing online advertisements and launching live broadcasts, etc.; opening L Company's official website and L Company's own mobile application for website operation and mobile application maintenance; increasing the number of KOLs cooperating with Xiaohongshu to 20, including 5 Top-tier KOLs with more than one million followers, 8 Mid-tier KOLs with hundreds of thousands of followers, and 7 Micro KOLs, etc.; and increasing the number of cooperation with Meituan, Trip .com Group, and Qunar 3 online travel platforms to expand the sales surface and increase sales.

(2) Reduce customer churn by 15%. Considering the extended cycles for cruise ship upgrades, renovations, and maintenance, to effectively reduce customer churn, by the end of 2026, over 40% of L Company's partner cruise ships will incorporate multiple personalized services and onboard activities. Additionally, customer incentive mechanisms—including loyalty points systems, tiered membership programs, and exclusive discounts—will be implemented across L Company's TikTok, Xiaohongshu, and WeChat online stores to boost repeat purchases and enhance customer retention.

(3) Tapping into new markets among younger demographics: Considering the emerging market trends among young consumers—such as their pursuit of quality living and embracing the present moment—Company L must cultivate new markets tailored to this demographic. These consumers possess spending power, prioritize value for money, and are heavily influenced by social media. By the end of 2026, Company L must enhance its cruise product offerings and organize at least 10 exclusive group tours per quarter specifically for young people, priced within the budget of today's young consumers. Simultaneously, L Company must increase content marketing on TikTok and Xiaohongshu to attract more young audiences. It should launch live-streaming events featuring late-night discounts, timed promotions, and deposit-to-full-payment conversion schemes—all incentives favored by young consumers.

(4) Increase the amount of fans on each platform by 40% : Considering the unstable attention of fans on platforms and the problem that it becomes difficult to attract fans at a later

stage, the ratio is set to 40%. By the end of 2026, through KOL cooperation, release of promotional activities, platform live broadcasting and other activities, the target number of followers of L Company's Xiaohongshu account will increase to 1500, and the target number of followers of Tik Tok account will increase to 1000.In November 2025, the number of followers of L Company's Xiaohongshu was 1235, and the number of followers of Tik Tok was 1134.

(5) Updating and adjusting 30% of the products: Since Company L is a distributor for several partner cruise lines, Company L does not own the cruise tools itself, but only undertakes the cruise tourism products. Therefore, Company L cannot change its products, but it can update and adjust its products. By the end of 2026, 30% of the products are expected to be updated and upgraded:

First quarter: Including New Year and Chinese New Year, which are in the peak period of high demand for cruise travel, 5% of the cruise products are updated.

Second Quarter: Spring is the peak season for tourism in many regions and the climate is suitable for cruise travel, which is the peak season for cruise travel, and the middle-aged and elderly groups will enhance their travel needs, and 10% of the cruise travel products are updated.

Third Quarter: 10% of the cruise travel products are updated according to customer demand as this is the summer season, when the climate is hot and the sea is relatively cool as well as during the summer vacations of elementary school, high schools and universities in China, which raises the demand for family trips or cruises for young student groups.

Fourth Quarter: Includes China's National Day holiday, but the weather is relatively cold belonging to the off-season of cruise tourism, 5% of the products are updated.

4.6. Commercial Strategy: Marketing, Sales and Business

4.6.1. Segmentation

Cruise tourism companies need to segment, position and set goals for the market when developing or enhancing their commercial development plans, these steps can help the company to understand the cruise tourism market and consumer demand more clearly, so that it can develop or propose marketing strategies or plans that are more suitable for the company's development as well as more adaptable to market changes, which can further be able to promote the company's sales, promote the company's development, and enhance its competitiveness.

4.6.1.1. Age

Consumers of different ages have different needs for cruise tourism, and Company L needs to segment consumers in the market by age in order to differentiate its marketing.

(1) 20-45 years old: The number of young consumers in this age stage is mostly young, they do not have much savings, but they pay attention to life and experience, have a strong sense of consumption, and are easily influenced by social media, advertisements, colleagues and friends, as well as the mainstream trends in society. For example, pursuing things advertised in advertisements, pursuing things that are popular in the society, and so on. At the same time, due to economic problems, they will consider the price and cost-effectiveness.

(2) 45-60years old, over 60 years old: These two ages belong to the middle-aged and old-aged customers, they have certain economic conditions, most of them belong to the retired or semi-retired group, and have the time for cruise travel. They are more concerned about comfort and relaxation. They may even pay attention to high-end products or services out of consideration for their health.

4.6.1.2. Income level

Economic income, as the basis and premise of cruise tourism, is one of the very important segmentation criteria. Generally speaking, high-income groups may be more inclined to choose high-end cruise tourism products, high-quality cruise services, private customized tourism products, etc.; middle- and low-income groups are more concerned about the price and cost-effective, and are inclined to choose low-priced or heavily discounted cruise tourism products.

4.6.1.3. Family Structure

Family structure is also an important segmentation criterion. In 2016, China fully implemented the policy of allowing couples to have two children, and in 2021, China announced the implementation of the policy of allowing couples to have three children, and the increase of multi-child families in China is also a point that cruise travel companies need to consider. Families with children considering cruise travel will pay attention to family-friendly cruise products, children's themed cruise products, and children's activities on board; at the same time, couples and singles pay more attention to entertainment and recreation, social experiences, etc.

4.6.1.4. Consumer Spending Habits

With the arrival of the digital age, the vast majority of payments, reservations, inquiries, etc. are completed online, but in this case, consumer spending habits are different, such as some consumers like to book in advance to buy in advance, some consumers like to pay attention to the first until the last minute to buy, some consumers like to repeatedly compare prices in pursuit of economic incentives and so on. For those consumers who like to provide the purchase of early bird discounts, for the last-minute purchase of consumers to set a limited time offer, for the pursuit of economic incentives for consumers to implement the lowest price tips and so on.

4.6.1.5. Consumer Lifestyle

Different consumers have different lifestyles, and their lifestyles play a key role in the choice of cruise ships. For example, consumers pursuing luxury life are more inclined to choose high-end cruise products, and consumers practicing environmental protection lifestyle are more inclined to the sustainable development of cruise tourism products.

4.6.2. Targeting

The role and significance of Targeting becomes especially important through the evaluation of each market segment, selecting appropriate segments and focusing on their development, and formulating corresponding commercial development plans or strategies. After in-depth interviews, Company L can select multiple market segments and focus on differentiated target markets, providing different products and services for different target markets to meet consumer needs and build up a good reputation for the brand. For example, develop high-end cruise products, family-friendly cruise products and low-end cruise products at the same time.

At the same time, select one or a few market segments for focused development and concentrate resources on providing targeted products and services. After in-depth interviews and the company's past sales, it is known that the middle-aged and elderly customer groups account for a relatively large proportion of the consumer groups in the cruise tourism products of Company L. It can be regarded as a key target market, focusing on the middle-aged and elderly customers of middle-end and high-end cruise products, and implementing corresponding marketing strategies, such as cooperating with travel agencies for groups of the middle-aged and elderly, accepting offline booking of cruise tourism products by the elderly, and increasing the number of promotional channels that the elderly are used by the publicity channels, such as one-on-one product inquiries at parks, and so on, For example, one-on-one product inquiries at parks.

4.6.3. Positioning

Through market positioning, Company L is able to capitalize on its unique values and strengths to attract target consumers.

(1) Differentiated Positioning

High-end positioning: targeting high-income groups, providing the ultimate luxury experience, such as luxury suites, private butler service, and high-end catering.

Family-friendly positioning: targeting families with children, providing abundant children's entertainment facilities, family suites, parent-child activities, etc.

Innovative positioning: for consumers who like innovative experiences, provide unique routes, such as polar regions and remote islands, with professional adventure equipment and tour guides.

(2) Value Positioning

Cost-effective positioning: targeting the middle-income group, providing cost-effective cruise products and attracting consumers through package deals and early bird discounts.

Unique Experience Positioning: Aiming at consumers pursuing unique experience, provide theme cruises, cultural experience activities, etc. to highlight the unique value of cruise travel.

4.6.4. Customer retention strategies

To enhance service quality and customer experience, Company L must regularly collect customer feedback, update the functional design of its online apps and physical stores, refresh cruise product offerings, and ensure timely after-sales support responses. Leveraging artificial intelligence and data analytics can improve complaint resolution efficiency and customer service response rates, thereby boosting current satisfaction levels.

Establish a loyalty program that uses data analytics to customize recommendations and implement personalized marketing. This enhances customers' sense of being valued, reduces churn caused by lack of targeted communication, and increases customer stickiness. Increase customer switching costs by offering long-term discounts, exclusive services, VIP perks, and other value-added benefits. This raises the cost of abandoning existing relationships, thereby reducing churn rates.

Strengthen customer relationship maintenance by regularly gifting holiday presents to loyal and high-spending customers. This enhances brand affinity while deepening emotional connections, ultimately boosting customer loyalty.

To further enhance customer experience, Company L should build a comprehensive customer data management system that integrates information across online and offline channels. By establishing a unified customer data platform (CDP) or CRM system, the

company can analyze behavioral patterns, identify key customer segments, and conduct lifecycle management. These insights enable precise marketing communication and the continuous optimization of service strategies, ensuring that every interaction is both relevant and personalized.

Company L should also develop a seamless omnichannel service experience. Consistency across digital applications, websites, physical stores, and customer service channels is crucial for maintaining a coherent brand image and improving convenience. By integrating online and offline touchpoints, customers can enjoy flexible booking, inquiry, and support options, which strengthens trust and reinforces overall satisfaction throughout the service journey.

Moreover, Company L can foster deeper customer engagement through community-building and co-creation initiatives. Establishing a brand community, organizing member-exclusive events, and encouraging customers to share travel stories or feedback can transform them from passive consumers into active brand participants. This sense of participation cultivates emotional bonds, enhances brand advocacy, and contributes to long-term customer loyalty.

4.6.5. Sales strategies

In the era of digitalization and information technology, L Company should place greater emphasis on content marketing as a core component of its integrated sales strategy. High-quality, value-driven content not only attracts a broader and higher-quality customer base but also reinforces brand awareness and strengthens user engagement. The company should leverage diverse social media platforms—such as Xiaohongshu, TikTok, and WeChat—to publish dynamic and interactive content in multiple formats, including images, text, and videos. These platforms can be used to promote cruise travel products, exclusive events, and seasonal offers, thereby deepening online exposure and fostering stronger emotional connections with potential customers.

At the same time, L Company should continuously enrich its product portfolio by introducing innovative cruise packages and personalized service options tailored to different customer segments. The adoption of flexible pricing strategies, such as early-bird discounts and dynamic pricing systems based on demand forecasting, can further stimulate booking motivation while optimizing revenue management. Additionally, channel development should focus on expanding online distribution points and strengthening omnichannel integration, ensuring a seamless customer experience across digital platforms and offline sales channels. To support these efforts, the company must intensify its marketing campaigns through target-

focused promotions, influencer collaborations, and cross-platform advertising, in order to amplify brand visibility and convert audience engagement into tangible sales growth.

Given the structural characteristics of the cruise industry, intermediaries such as online travel agencies (OTAs), traditional travel agencies, and corporate client agents play a crucial role in the distribution ecosystem. These intermediaries act as important connectors between cruise companies and end consumers, particularly in markets where brand awareness and direct sales channels are still developing. Establishing long-term, trust-based partnerships with these intermediaries allows L Company to efficiently expand market reach, optimize resource allocation, and accelerate customer acquisition. By cooperating closely with travel agencies and online platforms, the company can ensure wider product visibility and access to broader traveler segments, both domestically and internationally.

To actively engage intermediaries, L Company should focus on building a collaborative channel strategy that aligns incentives and mutual benefits. This includes designing a transparent and competitive commission system, co-developing marketing campaigns, and offering continuous training to enhance intermediaries' cruise product expertise. Furthermore, L Company should establish a partner relationship management (PRM) framework supported by digital tools to streamline communication, enable joint data sharing, and monitor performance outcomes. Through these initiatives, intermediaries will have stronger motivation to prioritize L Company's products, resulting in better promotion efforts and sustained sales momentum. At the same time, consistent co-branding activities—such as cross-platform promotions, holiday campaign collaborations, and destination showcases—can foster stronger cooperation and long-term engagement.

In understanding intermediary preferences, L Company must recognize the factors that influence intermediary behaviour and sales prioritization. Typically, intermediaries prefer working with brands that offer stable profitability, clear sales policies, reliable operational support, and flexible marketing tools. They value agility in booking systems, prompt communication, and access to updated promotional materials that facilitate convenient and effective selling. To align with these expectations, L Company should provide digital resources such as a centralized booking and management platform, dynamic pricing visibility, and real-time product updates. Additionally, establishing tailored incentive programs—such as quarterly sales bonuses, performance recognition, and exclusive partnership tiers—can further strengthen loyalty and encourage intermediaries to proactively promote L Company's cruise offerings. Such an integrated channel engagement strategy not only drives immediate sales

growth but also nurtures sustainable partnerships, positioning L Company as a competitive and trusted brand within the global cruise market.

4.7. Marketing-Mix

4.7.1. Product

The products of cruise tourism companies are not only the cruise itself, but also the entire travel experience. At the heart of the product strategy is to provide consumers with a unique, high-quality travel experience. L has been operating for more than 20 years and has accumulated numerous cruise and route resources. As a cooperative agent of many cruise companies, L can better provide diversified cruise products according to routes and destinations.

L Company can provide a variety of cruise types, such as different from the luxury type of super luxury cruise, family friendly cruise, adventure theme cruise, to meet the needs of different segments of the market. According to in-depth interviews, there are many single people in China today. L can offer single cruises based on the single customer group, provide unique dating and friendship boat activities, create a boat dating platform, promote the development of tourist relationships through many days of spending time on board, and use this as a product highlight to attract single tourists; At the same time, given the current pet economy, Company L can offer pet-friendly cruises that allow visitors to bring their own pet dogs, Cats cruise together, set up appropriate pet entertainment areas and pet meals on the cruise, arrange for onboard pet doctors, and equip with essential pet medical supplies, create product highlights with unique pet-friendly cruise tourism products and rare pet travel experiences, and expand customer coverage.

Company L can provide niche route types, such as polar routes, remote island routes, etc. At present, most of the tourism companies in the market set up cruise products according to the popular routes and tourist cities, Volkswagen destinations and port cities, etc. L company is no exception, but can break through this point, add a small number of routes, For example, a route with the destination of Antarctica can attract customer curiosity and increase the attention of customers who are eager to differentiate and niche, on the one hand, it can create scarce product image features, which can be unique, and enhance the company's competitive advantage in the cruise tourism market.

L company can provide a wealth of cruise activities and entertainment projects, According to the survey questionnaire and the in-depth interview, consumers are relatively concerned about cruise activities. At present, the existing cruise product activities of Company L are more conventional. According to this in-depth interviews, consumers' satisfaction with cruise activities is general, and Company L needs to make corresponding adjustments. For example,

market segmentation should be done, different activities should be carried out according to different customer groups, and cultural activities preferred by middle-aged and elderly people such as elderly dance activities, Chinese opera performances or traditional cross-talk are provided for middle-aged people. Target youth groups by providing pop music performances, theme events with an exploration or romantic element, night parties, etc.; For family groups, provide parent-child experience activities, etc. At the same time, L can create cruise classes, offering dance classes, cookery classes, fitness classes, etc. on board the ship, increasing the connection between tourists and the cruise ship, creating product uniqueness while increasing passengers' participation and satisfaction.

In terms of on-board facilities and services, L company can provide a wealth of on-board facilities, and at present L company can basically do this, and can add facilities theme on this basis. For example, to create different themed restaurants, bars, spas, gyms, swimming pools, like the Shanghai Beach-themed restaurant, visitors to dine need to wear traditional women's kimonos and men's robes, ensuring that passengers have a variety of entertainment and leisure options and a unique cruise experience on board. At the same time, we offer a variety of themed dining options, such as international cuisine with the theme of the global village, specialty dishes with the theme to recall hometown, and healthy dining with the theme for health care, to meet the tastes and dietary needs of different consumers. In terms of personal services, L companies can provide personal services, such as one-to-one personal butler, exclusive customized itineraries, exclusive private events, etc., to meet the needs of high-end spenders.

4.7.2. Price

Price strategy is an important means for cruise tourism companies to attract consumers and improve their competitiveness. A sound pricing strategy can balance a company's profit goals with consumers' willingness to pay. Through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, we learned that many consumers are concerned about product prices, and similar travel companies in the market are seeking to reduce prices. Developing a flexible price system is therefore especially important. Taking into account multiple factors such as the high intensity of competition in the current market, the future development of Company L, and Company L's current increased need for customer volume, the overall strategy is to undercut the price of the comparable market (1%-5%). The following specific strategies follow this:

L company can adopt the seasonal pricing strategy, cruise tourism is divided into high season and low season, L companies can adjust prices according to the high and low seasons of tourism, when demand is high, the prices can be appropriately raised to increase revenue, and when the low season provides discounts to adjust consumer time to attract more

consumers. L could adopt a layered pricing strategy, for example, by offering different price levels of options based on the class of cabin (e.g., in-flight cabin, sea-view cabin, balcony cabin, suite, etc.) and the content of service to suit consumers of different budgets. In addition, different from similar travel companies that consistently reduce prices, different discount pricing strategies can be used for different customer groups (such as higher-income groups, middle-income groups and low-income groups), so as to have a more flexible competitive advantage in price. At the same time, peer-to-peer prices can also be set, for example, if a family of three chooses a cruise, the first person's ticket price is no discount, the second person's price is reduced by 10%, and the third person's fare is reduced to 20%. L could focus more on value for money on the basis of price. According to surveys and in-depth interviews, sometimes consumers are concerned about value for money for cruises, in other words, the same price but content services are included that consumers think are worth so much. L companies can offer package deals, such as family packages, honeymoon packages, etc., providing additional value or services outside of the package, such as free breakfast, free spa, free laundry services, etc. At the same time, the tip culture of cruise ships has caused many Chinese tourists to be unable to adapt, and there is no concept of tip in Chinese service culture. Therefore, L company can set up a discount ticket including tipping or gratuity, so that after boarding the ship, there is no need for consumers to pay tips, and increase customers' goodwill to the brand. L company can provide early bird discount, such as the first half of the boat booking to enjoy the early bird price, the early bird price lower than the normal price to encourage consumers to book in advance, to ensure a stable booking. As well as implementing a loyalty program, through membership programs and points awards, old customers are encouraged to repeat spending and enhance customer loyalty. And L company can cooperate with the major online travel platform, according to the characteristics of the platform and user groups, to develop a targeted price strategy. For example, for Meituan or Ctrip's low-income customers, L company can launch cruise tourism products with appropriate incentives, and for the high-end customers of the Little Red Book, L company can launch high-end tourism products with higher prices.

4.7.3. Place

Channel strategy involves how products are delivered to consumers. Cruise travel companies need to reach out to potential customers through multiple channels and provide convenient ways to book and purchase. Based on the in-depth interviews, it is clear that Company L currently focuses on the direct sales channel and B2C, through sales staff telemarketing, email marketing and consumers to communicate and release cruise travel promotions, the latest route information and so on. As well as the use of social media as a direct sales channel,

release product information on social media platforms and communicate directly with consumers to provide services and benefits. In terms of distribution channels, according to the interviews, it can be seen that the number of cooperating travel intermediaries, platform providers, etc. is small, considering the economic pressure of the company to pay for agency fees, which highlights the drawbacks of the relatively single and weak marketing channels of Company L, resulting in too small a market coverage and difficulty in realizing the scale of the cruise tourism market.Therefore a B2B approach can be added appropriately.

Therefore, Company L can broaden its online cruise tourism distribution channels and improve its sales chain. On the one hand, in an era of rapid digitalization, where networking, self-media, and online consumption have become the mainstream features of the times, online media promotion is indispensable for Company L to efficiently complete the construction of its marketing channels and obtain more customer resources, and Company L has only set up a corporate account on the social media platform Xiaohongshu and regularly publishes relevant content. For example, WeChat is one of the most frequently used mobile apps in China, integrating community communication, online payment, public video number, and small program online sales, which is very suitable for Company L to promote its products through online channels. Company L can create company public number and video number, publish pictures or video content related to the company's cruise tourism products, and set up forwarding rewards or sharing rewards for the viewers to expand the reach of consumers; it can create company mini-programs, publish the company's cruise tourism products to create platform differentiation, and the price of mini-program products is lower than the company's booking price by slight price advantage, which not only meets the needs of the middle-income consumer groups in pursuit of price concessions but also enhances the sales of the products. On the other hand, the company has strengthened its cooperation with travel platforms as appropriate. China's travel platforms, such as Fliggy, Trip.com.Group and Meituan, have extensive customer networks and sales channels, as well as the ability to provide consumers with professional consulting and booking services, so Company L can appropriately increase its cooperation with them to expand its market coverage. For example, Company L can open its own company store on the Meituan platform and release cruise tourism products, and attract new customers by virtue of Meituan's large platform advantages and customer resources.

Meanwhile, Company L can utilize offline platforms to establish offline channels. Currently, there are very many travel exhibitions in China, such as China International Tourism Fair and Shanghai International Tourism Fair, etc. Travel exhibitions are one of the most important platforms for travel companies to conduct public promotion and publicity to enhance the attention of potential consumers and raise public awareness by displaying travel products and so on. What's more, travel exhibitions have many agent resources and customer resources. Therefore, L Company can participate in the domestic tourism exhibition as a participant,

through the exhibition, to display the characteristics and advantages of the past or future tourism products in the form of booth advertisement and publicity materials, personally receive customers at the exhibition, provide face-to-face consultation and booking services, and enhance the sense of trust of consumers.

For the B2C channel, Company L has the option to upgrade.Company L can also add online channels to enhance booking convenience. With the development of science and technology, people no longer need to search for information with hard work, they can complete the information query, product or service booking without leaving their homes, etc. Company L can create the company's official website, online travel platforms and mobile applications to provide convenient online inquiry and booking services. Consumers don't need to do extra work to check route, price and cabin information and make bookings at any time. Increased convenience means shorter time for customers to think and hesitate, promoting the purchase of products while enhancing brand favorability.

4.7.4. Promotion

Promotion strategy is an important means for cruise tourism companies to attract consumers and increase brand awareness and sales volume. Through a variety of marketing activities, L company can effectively transfer product value, stimulate the desire of consumers to buy.

In today's online economy, travel companies have a lot of promotional models. L company needs to achieve innovation in the promotion model, and with WeChat's widespread use for many years, L company can use it as a network promotion method. WeChat does not have a limit on distance, after users sign up for WeChat, they can form a connection with the same registered "friends" around them, users subscribe to the information they need, merchants promote their own products by providing the information the users need, thereby achieving peer-to-peer promotion. L company WeChat promotion, including tourism WeChat platform basic content construction, tourism WeChat Mini Program development, tourism promotion function expansion; In addition, we can develop personalized functions such as attractions, catering, and tourist services for different modules of cruise tourism, utilizing the huge advantages and potential of WeChat promotion in tourism promotion, and realize the strengthening of promotion. For example, Company L has set up an official WeChat public number, which publishes 1-2 cruise tourism promotional articles every day, including but not limited to: cruise product promotional articles, cruise tourism itinerary update articles, etc., and encourages the viewers to share the articles at the end of the articles in the form of issuing coupons, etc. Company L has set up a WeChat video number, which publishes cruise tourism videos with promotional offers as the promotional point 2-3 times a week, and interacts with the viewers in the comment section. Company L has set up a WeChat mini program, which

includes various functions such as checking routes, booking tickets, online payment, after-sales service, etc., and supports tourists to use it and share it with other WeChat friends in the form of mini program payment reductions and so on.

At the same time, L can use public relations promotion strategies to build a positive image of itself and cultivate tourist preferences for travel through third party support, inviting public relations experts to plan public relations campaigns to make the destination's tourist image a sensation in the relevant region. Public relations methods can take the form of inviting journalists, cruise columnists, etc. to visit, inviting socialites, celebrities, KOLs to take vacations, etc., so as to allow social celebrities to experience first-hand, conduct word of mouth publicity, and stimulate consumers to buy. For example, Company L could invite Dragon TV hosts to conduct interviews on cruise activities for Shanghai-bound cruises, attracting Dragon TV's audience of local Shanghai consumers and middle-aged and elderly people. L could also invite Chinese celebrities such as Jackson Wang to be L's travel ambassadors and attend L's travel events to attract young Chinese consumers.

In the current digital era, the development of the tourism industry has ushered in new opportunities. Network technology has been widely used in the tourism industry, and its advantages such as interconnection, real-time, richness and convenience have prompted the traditional tourism industry to rapidly integrate into the wave of network tourism, and made network promotion a major trend in the development of tourism marketing today. Consumers can easily achieve complementarity of travel information materials through the Internet, especially through group ordering, which allows tourists to minimize travel expenses, and provides both technical and cost support for consumer travel decisions. Companies can use influencer marketing to work with multiple KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) to promote their cruise products through their imaginations and attract fans to follow and book.

L companies need to set up strong promotional activities, regularly launch cruise product promotional activities such as limited-time discounts, special discount routes, free upgrades, etc., and post them on various cooperative platforms to stimulate consumers' purchasing desire. Also, through word of mouth marketing, passengers are encouraged to share their cruise experiences on social media like Xiaohongshu,TikTok,Weibo etc. and travel review websites like Qunar.com,lvmama,etc. with coupons, cash awards, gift awards, etc., to form a good word of mouth effect and enhance consumer goodwill.

Finally, when making 4P marketing strategy, L cruise company needs to consider the market environment, consumer demand and competition situation, and adjust the strategy flexibly. Examples: Product innovation: continually innovate products based on consumer trends (e.g. health, environmental, personalized experiences) to provide unique travel experiences. Price flexibility: Flexible adjustment of price strategies according to market demand and competition to ensure profitability while attracting consumers. Multichannel

integration: Provide a seamless customer experience through the integration of online and offline channels, ensuring that consumers can conveniently access information and make reservations. Promotion combination: Through a combination of various promotional means, maximize market influence and increase brand awareness and sales volume.

4.8. Implementation

4.8.1. Schedule

A 1-year plan was developed to ensure product updates or adjustments, flexible and advantageous pricing, online and offline market penetration, and promotional campaign enhancements. The table below is divided into 4 modules by quarter, outlining the key tasks for each quarter to ensure timely implementation of recommendations.

Table 4.5 One Year Plan

Quarter	Main Tasks	Main Tasks
First quarter (Month 1-Month 3)	Update products; complete Tik Tok platform account operations; complete public relations promotions; build online channels; implement promotions, etc.	Update family-friendly cruise products, relaxation and health-themed middle- and high-end cruise products for the middle-aged and elderly groups; Simultaneously, comprehensively update cruise offerings tailored for younger consumers, including social and leisure-oriented experiences;create a Tik Tok account, publish two pieces of work per week, complete a weekly live broadcasting activities, and cooperate with Tik Tok KOLs; invite two Ctrip travel bloggers and columnists to have a cruise experience; open the official website of the company as well as the WeChat account; formulate off-season promotions, display promotions, and other activities, and launch a new cruise product by means of direct sales and distribution. direct sales, distribution, etc.
Second quarter (Month 4-Month 6)	Updating products; implementing exhibition marketing; maintaining the	Update the high-end cruise products for the middle-aged and elderly groups; participate in the offline travel exhibitions in Shanghai and Guangzhou in May; cooperate with 3 travel

	company's WeChat platform; cooperating with travel platform providers; building and maintaining online channels; realizing Xiaohongshu business cooperation; implementing pricing strategies, etc.	platforms (Meituan, Ctrip, and Qunar); open the company's own mobile application, and do a good job of technical support; daily operation of the Xiaohongshu account, and cooperate with 6 KOLs of Xiaohongshu for product promotion; adjust the price of cruise travel products and increase the price of the high-end cruise products for the middle-aged and elderly groups etc.
Third quarter (Month 7-Month 9)	Updating products; realizing the Little Red Book business partnership; and implementing a pricing strategy;	Updating cruise products for young groups as well as family-friendly cruise products; daily operation of Xiaohongshu account and product promotion cooperation with 7 KOLs of Xiaohongshu; adjusting cruise travel product prices and increasing the prices of family-friendly cruise products, etc.
Fourth quarter (Month 10-Month 12)	Updating products; realizing the Little Red Book business partnership; implementing trade show marketing; and implementing pre-year promotions;	Update the National Day Golden Week and Christmas-themed cruise products,focus on expanding cruise offerings targeting young consumers; operate the Xiaohongshu account on a daily basis and cooperate with 7 KOLs in Xiaohongshu for product promotion; participate in 2 travel fairs in Tianjin and Beijing in December offline; formulate the strongest promotional campaigns, which will be released on multiple platforms by virtue of Tik Tok, Xiaohongshu, WeChat, etc., and combined with advertisements and direct marketing means by email, etc.

Source:Author(2025)

4.8.2. Budget

Company L's 1-year budget plan consists of product renewal, channel building, marketing, brand operations and customer retention. The first five items are the main implementation budget components.

The budget is expressed in RMB and EUR, assuming an exchange rate of 1 EUR = 7.6 RMB, and adjusted according to market fluctuations.

Table 4.6 Budget List

Budget Types	Estimated Cost (RMB)	Estimated Cost (EUR)
Product Updates	400,000	52,632
Channel Building	200,000	26,315
Marketing	150,000	19,737
Brand Operation	85,000	11,184
Customer Maintenance	65,000	8,553
Customer Retention	40,000	5,263
Tapping into the youth market	60,000	7,894
Total Cost	1,000,000	131,578

Source:Author(2025)

4.8.3. Control and Assessment

To ensure proper implementation of the proposed actions, the following key performance indicators and assessment methods will be used to track progress and evaluate success:

Table 4.7 Key Performance

	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Target Measurement
Product Updates	Number of product updates and product sales	30% of products to be renewed and restructured Target annual sales growth of 2% for high-end cruise travel products, 3-4% for mid- to high-end cruise travel products, and 4-5% for low-end cruise travel products.
Channel Building	Number of total channels	Completing 30 channel collaborations
Marketing	Number of cooperative KOLs	Collaborate with 20 Xiaohongshu KOLs

Brand Operation	Number of brand fans	40% increase in fan base across platforms
Customer Maintenance	2026 Customer Service Rating Score for the previous year	10% increase in satisfaction (assessed in 2026)
Customer Retention	The number of cruise ships equipped with personalized services; The completeness of the customer incentive system, and the evaluation	Reduce customer churn rate by 15%
Tapping into the youth market	Number of exclusive cruise tours for young consumers；Number of livestream events targeting young consumers	Number of purchases by young customers

Source:Author(2025)

5. Conclusions

In recent years, with the strengthening of China's economic strength and the continuous improvement of residents' incomes and living standards, residents' demand for tourism consumption has been growing rapidly and gradually enriched. Cruise tourism consumer demand has been growing year by year and has made China the fastest growing country in cruise tourism. The three-year epidemic led to the temporary suspension of China's cruise tourism industry, but with the reopening of cruise tourism, accelerated the market competition in the cruise tourism industry.Company L, as a bargaining development for many years of the cruise tourism company, in the fierce market competition environment, found its own existence of the lack of awareness of the digital marketing, weak marketing capabilities, product sales are difficult to maintain a good level and other issues. These problems seriously constrain the subsequent survival and development of Company L. Therefore, this program seeks to help Company L solve the problems in the marketing process.

The target setting of this program seeks to increase Company L's annual target total sales by 10%, increase the number of fans on various platforms by 40%, and update and adjust 30% of its products. It is expected to combine marketing methods, tools, plans and programs with L Company's own strengths in enhancing L Company's brand reputation while increasing its customer loyalty, improving market competitiveness, and expanding market share, etc. This plan mainly adopts research methods such as literature research, field research, questionnaire survey, data analysis and in-depth interviews, etc., in order to understand the market competition environment faced by the enterprise and the industry in which the enterprise is located, the current situation of enterprise marketing, the subsequent development of the enterprise, etc., by means of in-depth research; by means of questionnaires, to understand the relevant information about the consumers, and to combine the 4P model with the marketing program to provide data. reference.

With the 4P marketing model as the core, we put forward the program of product, price, channel and promotion, combined with the analysis of the external environment, taking into account the political, economic, social and technological factors, as well as industry analysis, competitor analysis, Porter's Five Forces analysis, etc., to clarify the basic competitive situation of the industry in which we are located. And combined with practical consideration of the actual situation of Company L, analyzing the internal environment of the company, through consumer analysis, SWOT analysis, etc., provides a reference and basis for the proposal of Company L's marketing plan. Therefore, this plan proposes: Product innovation: continuously innovate products according to consumer trends (e.g., health, environmental protection, personalized experience) to provide a unique travel experience. Price Flexibility: Adjust pricing strategies

flexibly according to market demand and competition to ensure that profitability is maintained while attracting consumers. Multi-Channel Integration: Provide a seamless customer experience through the integration of online and offline channels to ensure consumers can easily access information and make reservations. Promotional Mix: Maximize market impact through a combination of promotional tools to increase brand awareness and sales.

A 1-year plan was developed to ensure product updates or adjustments, flexible and advantageous pricing, online and offline market penetration, and promotional campaign enhancements. The total budget of RMB 1 million was mainly applied to product renewal, channel building, marketing, and brand operation. The number of product updates as well as product sales, total number of channels, number of cooperative KOLs, brand fans, and 2026 customer evaluation score of the previous year's service were evaluated as key performance indicators.

However, there are deficiencies and limitations in this study, on the one hand, in the design of the questionnaire, the design of questionnaire items may be professionally insufficient, and the design of the answer options may be unable to comprehensively cover the real wishes of consumers; in the process of questionnaire collection, a part of respondents willing to fill in the questionnaire are the customers of L Company, and a part of the potential customers that have been accumulating over the years in L Company, and the number of these two parts is large, so their For the final results there may be a certain degree of subjectivity; in the questionnaire data analysis, due to time and resource limitations eventually collected only more than 180 valid questionnaires, the quality as well as the number of samples may not be sufficient, and the data analysis method is also very limited, which may lead to bias in the results of the questionnaire survey; on the other hand, China's cruise tourism market is more chaotic, resulting in the analysis of the competitors may be biased to a certain extent.

In the subsequent further research, it is expected to be based on the cruise tourism product consumer demand and consumer preference and consumer psychology. This is an in-depth study of consumer psychology and behavior, which will be integrated into the marketing research of cruise tourism products. It is also necessary to pay attention to the latest market changes and tourism consumption trends, and study the most adaptable marketing strategies for the future to ensure the effectiveness of marketing. The focus of future research will be to continue to study the changing law of consumer demand on the basis of the existing findings.

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Appendices

Appendix A – The Survey Questionnaire

Company L Market Questionnaire (excerpt)

Dear Sir or Madam:

Sincerely thank you for your recognition and support of this project. In order to understand your needs more effectively, we sincerely invite you to fill in this questionnaire, which takes about 2-3minutes. The information you provided will be strictly confidential and your advice is particularly important to us. Thank you for your support.

1.Your age is _____?

A.60 and above

B.45-60 years old

C.20-45 years old

D.Below 20 years old

2. Your monthly income from work is _____(RMB)?

A.20000 and above

B.10000-20000

C.5000-10000

D.less than 5000

3. Your annual disposable income is _____(RMB)?

A.50000 and above

B.30000-50000

C.10000-30000

D.below 10000

4. How many times do you travel each year _____?

A.5 times and above

B.3 times to 5 times

C.1 time to 3 times

D.less than 1 time

5. If you choose to travel by cruise ship, what is your purpose _____?

A.Vacation, entertainment and leisure, try a different experience

B.Honeymoon, business arrangement

C.Family trip

D. Group travel

6. If you choose to travel by cruise ship, what is the price you can accept _____(RMB)?

A.20000 and above

B.10000-20000

C.5000-10000

D.3000-5000

E.below 3000

7. If you choose to travel by cruise ship, what attracts you most _____?

A.Price

B.service

C.Safety

D.Activities

E.Route

F.Facilities on board

8.If you choose to travel by cruise ship, what is the most unacceptable to you _____?

A.Expensive price, or uneconomical price

B.Lower quality of service

C.Less safety on board

D. Fewer on-board activities or unattractive on-board activities

E.Unattractive routes

F. Average facilities on board

Appendix B – In-depth Interview Excerpts

(1) Interviewee: Deputy General Manager of Company L

Interview time: December 15,, 15:00-16:00

Recording method: audio recording, text recording

Question 1: What are the main customer segments of the current L and the cruise travel market?
Answer: In fact, the company and the cruise travel market have the same customer base.The customers of the company's cruise tourism products are mainly concentrated in the middle-aged and elderly groups, that is, people over 45 years old, especially the retired people, which have a certain degree of economic strength and have time to travel. This is very much in line with the reality of the elderly, they will be old friends, ex-colleagues, ex-students of the relationship to get together, traveling together to participate in various activities and so on. But after the epidemic, the company gradually more young customer groups, such as millennials, this crowd has entered the community to work and accumulate some savings, there is the economic basis for cruise travel, while the young group is greatly influenced by the social media, they see the cruise tourism publicity information on social media, will gradually produce cruise travel aspirations.
Question 2:What are the current trends and changes in consumer behavior in the cruise tourism market?
Answer: In the past, cruise tourism represented high-end, luxury, aristocratic travel or lifestyle, and ordinary consumers did not dare to imagine that they would travel around the world on a cruise ship. Now cruise tourism is very populist and ordinary people can realize the idea of spending part of their money to buy a ticket to travel on a cruise ship. Influenced by the improvement of spiritual and cultural level, consumers have some personalized needs for cruise travel, such as the pursuit of customized cruise packages; influenced by the epidemic, consumers' safety awareness is gradually improving, when choosing to take a cruise they will consider the health facilities on the cruise, such as the gym; there is also the influence of consumers in the technological advances, there will be some requirements for the onboard technological experience, such as onboard WIFI, etc. These are all trends.

(2) Interviewee: General Manager of Company L

Interview time: February 1, 13:00-14:00

Recording method: audio recording, text recording

Question 1:What are your expectations for the future development of Company L?
Answer: It's just the end of the New Year and it's currently the first quarter of 2025, so I hope that the company's sales will be up 20% by the end of the 4th quarter of this year. This will require increased marketing efforts. the plan for 2026 can be referenced to this year, so focus on short-term goals first.
Question 2:How much does the company expect to spend on marketing in 2025?
Answer: About 1-1.5 million RMB, mainly applied to social media advertisement placement, KOL cooperation costs, pre-investment costs for adding new channels, etc.
Question 3:What is the main market positioning of Company L?
Answer: The company mainly focuses on differentiated positioning, such as luxury positioning, for high-income customer groups, we launch high-end products, high-end services, such as private butler services; now many families will choose cruise travel, for family-friendly positioning, we can provide family suites, set up parent-child activities and so on.
Question 4:What is the main target setting of L Company?
Answer: The company is to choose multiple market segments and provide diversified products to meet different consumer needs. For example, to develop the luxury cruise, family friendly cruise and cultural theme cruise market at the same time, etc.

(3) Interviewee: Marketing Manager of Company L

Interview time: February 1, 2025 14:00-15:00

Recording method: audio recording, text recording

Appointment time: February 2, 2025

Question 1: What are the next marketing priorities for Company L?
Answer: The company's current marketing has many deficiencies, such as insufficient differentiation of the company's main products, low promotional efforts, fewer promotional activities, and insufficiently broad channels, etc. The next step in the company's marketing focus is to work hard to differentiate the company's main products. The next marketing focus of the company is to try to make up for the shortcomings, and strive to improve marketing efforts in a short period of time to shape the brand image. Therefore, we will focus on updating products, expanding marketing channels, keeping up with the times, cooperating with some KOLs and increasing cooperation channels, and so on. At this stage, we are more concerned about sales performance.
Question 2: What do consumers pay more attention to when choosing cruise travel?

Answer: Price has always been a point of concern for consumers, because there is a lot of competition in the cruise tourism market nowadays, and the price has been repeatedly lowered by many merchants. But this also leads to a lot of problems, consumers find that the low price of the product will bring the corresponding disadvantages, such as cruise service is very general and so on. So now many consumers began to pay attention to the cost-effectiveness of the cruise, the price is not the lowest but comprehensively, can get the most value for money experience. This is becoming more and more a point of concern for them.
Question 3: What are the marketing strategies of Company L's competitors?
Answer: The company's competitors in the market are divided into two parts, one of which is to adopt a low price strategy to attract customers and impress them with prices lower than the market price, but this can only last for a period of time, and can't be done in the long run. Because of the low price strategy is the need for cost, long-term will affect the development of the company, at the same time customers will not always choose the low price, low price means low price at the same time other aspects of the drawbacks, will affect the consumer experience; the other part of the use of digital marketing strategy, through the KOL cooperation, e-commerce platforms, live broadcasts, mobile applications APP, social media publicity, etc., to attract a portion of the customer traffic, superimposed on a good service to enhance customer satisfaction.