

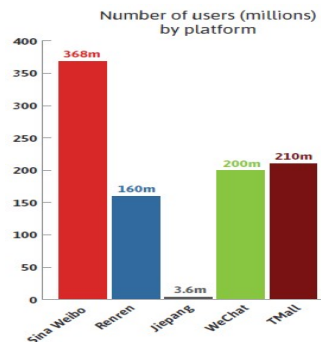
By Yvonne Zhang

From an audience perspective, digital allows the brand communication model to convert from being a **monologue** to a **dialogue**. The level of involvement required by the audience to engage with a brand, in many cases a simple click of the mouse, shrinks the gulf between interaction and offline brand perception. Well-conceived digital strategies and campaigns will push brands ever forward in the consciousness of their audience and lead to lasting adoption, advocacy and, over time, increase expectation from industries as a whole.



China’s social media landscape is three times more complicated than the other countries’ landscape. Each network is looking to monetise faster and further than its competitors, so they are always looking to ‘upgrade’ and ‘evolve’, making it hard for brands to match their pace and make effective judgements on where to focus their resources.

In China, the top social platforms are **sina weibo, renren, jiepang, wechat as well as Tmall**. The right chart shows the registered users for that website, which is a very huge market, and the following cases will show how they successfully “seize” the audiences and “conquer” the market.



Key One: Sina Weibo and Ikea – “What is the most romantic thing you have done.”



Sina Weibo is the largest micro blogging site in China, with a focus on sharing news, views and opinions on celebrities, key opinion leaders and current affairs.

- **368 million** users, posting more than 100 million times a day
- **60%** of users access it on their mobile phones
- Users tend to be white collar workers; aged between **20 to 45**

Ikea uses a combination of Weibo functions to engage its audience, including a feature video, regular poll discussions and rewrites of user images of Ikea products. Its approach is focused on building awareness and encouraging brand ambassadors rather than direct sales – one of its polls was titled ‘What is the most romantic thing you’ve done?’.

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Shanghai

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encouraging conversation and engagement with the ‘human’ aspect of the brand. For specific campaigns, Ikea also had a message board on its page, enabling swift resolution of customer complaints and issues.

Key Two: Renren and Dell – Individual Campus Ambassador

Renren is China’s leading social networking site. Its history as a student social network has helped it to develop a presence across the whole of China.



- 160 million users
- 60% of users access it on their mobile phones.
- Users tend to be college students and young professionals
- **BMW**, China Mobile Communications, **Estée Lauder** and **Mercedes-Benz** are among the big brands to advertise on the platform

To leverage the business benefits of having 730,000+ fans, Dell set up a flagship store on its Renren brand page, complete with offer coupons, product information and the opportunity to chat ‘live’ with sales associates.

To support its sales drive, Dell also set up individual ‘campus ambassador’ pages where users could find personal profiles of company agents, interact with them and ask direct questions. It has also run a number of additional initiatives, including a ‘**Money Jar**’ campaign, which encouraged fans to use Renren to earn points and buy Dell products.

Key Three: Jiebang and Starbucks- Virtual Christmas Tree Campaign



Jiebang is the oldest and most influential location-based app in China. Designed as a local, social mobile app that helps friends share and discover places, it’s a clone of Foursquare.

- 3.6 million users
- Differs from local LBS apps in that it also offers services in Hong Kong and Taiwan
- Its most active users are based in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Hong Kong

Jiebang partnered with Starbucks to run a promotion using a combination of outdoor advertising, NFC technology, location-based service and social media. Users who checked in at Starbucks stores in Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces received a virtual Starbucks badge. When the number of badges issued hit 30,000, the virtual Christmas tree on Starbucks’ event webpage lit up, and badge holders were awarded a free upgrade to a larger drink. Jiebang used digital signs to advertise the campaign over 30 commercial buildings around Starbucks outlets in Shanghai, complete with NFC tags containing information about the stores and where to find them

Key Four: Wechat and Nike – Sports brand subscription platform

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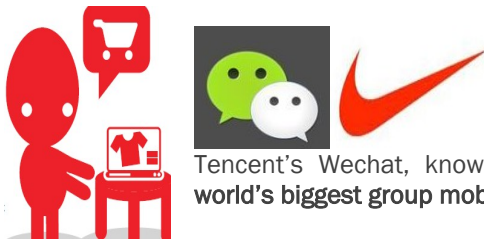
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Tencent's Wechat, known in China as Weixin, is the **world's biggest group mobile** messaging app.

- **200 million** users
- Most are white collar workers in their **20s**
- They are located in first and second tier cities and are **well-educated**
- It took WeChat only **6 months** to secure **100 million users** in China

Nike teamed up with WeChat to develop a '**sports brand subscription platform**' with a sports-on-the go concept, where users can opt to follow the brand and receive daily news and Nike-related updates. Nike chose WeChat because of its increasing influence as a service and because mobile is emerging as a key method for reaching consumers in China. The campaign is designed to enhance Nike's one-on-one customer relationships, taking advantage of its young, active and relatively affluent demographic. It's supported by online and outdoor marketing involving QR codes in prominent public places, allowing users to join WeChat and subscribe to the Nike account when they scan the code

Key Five: TMall and the NBA



TMall is the biggest player in China's **massive e-Commerce** industry. Created by Taobao, China's number one online sales platform (similar to eBay), as a B2C sales platform solely dedicated to official brand stores, it allows vendors to sell their goods to the entire Greater China region.

- TMall currently has over **70,000 brands** in more than **50,000 stores**
- It has a **41.5%** share of the B2C market, which is very significant given that the top five players in that market hold **66%** combined
- Sales are currently in the RMB one trillion each year, and are expected to grow even further

Basketball is highly popular in China, and to take advantage of this enthusiasm, the NBA has become an official TMall vendor - the first Western professional sports league to open a flagship outlet on the platform. Its store has been specifically designed to offer the most complete range of NBA merchandise available anywhere in China. Fans can buy products including NBA jerseys, shoes by Adidas, Spalding basketballs and collectibles, all at Western prices, based on the premise that customers are getting the genuine article - TMall has strict rules prohibiting the sale of counterfeit goods. The NBA's stated aim is to make it convenient for Chinese customers to buy original licensed NBA products, and to move into the growing online market for sports merchandise - according to TMall, the transaction volume of sports products increased by **300%** in the space of a single year

Source:

<http://www.intellictics.com/blog/2013/05/05/what-is-digital-engagement/>
<https://www.redant.com>

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