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New PR approach key in China

BEIJING: Brand owners in China change their PR and event marketing than once every three years, and hand out almost half of assignments on a project basis, a study has found.

Consultancy R3:GC [interviewed 223 leading PR and event marketers](#) and found that the average relationship between clients and agencies in China lasted 2.8 years.

This compares to an average 2.5 years concerning their advertising companies.

However, 48% of PR briefs are still distributed on a project-only standing, undermining performance.

"China's marketers are under pressure to deliver sales - and no-one is fonder of the PR and event agencies they work with," said Sabrina Lee, director of research at R3:GC in China.

"Marketers need to put in place more strategic, long term partnerships to maximize the benefits of collaboration and talent."

When choosing among shops, 79.8% of respondents named the digital agency as a primary consideration.

"With more than 450m netizens online, PR agencies are playing an important role in social media and iWOM in China - and marketers recognize the need to engage specialist third parties in this area," said Lee.

The quality of an agency's staff, suite of services, credibility with the media and experience in relevant fields were further essential characteristics monitored by clients.

OgilvyPR, part of the global network owned by WPP Group, secured the top position in its category for awareness and perception.

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Lee said: "OgilvyPR has benefitted not only from the 'halo' effect of the i brand, but also from strong, consistent thought leadership, and a lot of i marketing their capabilities to clients and prospects.

"They have set a high standard for other agencies to aspire to" she addi

Elsewhere, ten local operators featured in the top twenty PR providers, Focus, a firm running offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Such a status was also afforded to Genedigi, founded in 1997 and boas employees across three sites, and Trends, which has previously been t: Cola, Adidas and China Mobile.

Spearhead, Pico, and Highteam enjoyed similar pre-eminence regardin and Chinese companies in both sectors were argued to have benefitted media links.

"Local agencies have often had longer, more consistent management a stronger 'guanxi' with local media," said Lee.

"In the future, we're sure to see more alliances and acquisitions than ev global players look to consolidate their positions."

Data sourced from R3:GC; additional content by Warc staff, 11 Februar



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