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Apple, Nike among top brands in China

BEIJING: China Mobile, Apple and Nike are the brands which Chinese consumers consider to be the most engaging, according to new research.

R3, the consultancy, [asked over 1,500 people](#) in the country for their views of more than 100 brands, as part of an ongoing study into popular attitudes, building on similar analysis from Q1 2011.

China Mobile retained top spot on a total of 104 points. The telecoms provider posted 191 points for the qualities it personified, 87 points for being a favoured brand among participants, and 34 points for running memorable ads.

M-Zone, China Mobile's prepaid tariff aimed at younger customers, proved particularly popular. It has been promoted by pop star Jay Chou, and spawned a variety of CSR initiatives.

Apple, the electronics pioneer, generated 203 points for the values it encapsulated, as well as 56 points for brand preference, and 45 points for ad recall. This yielded an overall index score of 101 points.

"In terms of brand values, Apple has now moved ahead of China Mobile for the first time," said Sunny Chen, a consultant at R3. "Consumers have a rich knowledge of the brand and rate it highly in a number of areas."

Nike, the sportswear giant, was third on 89.8 points, overtaking Nokia, the handset maker, falling to fourth on 70.8 points. Coca-Cola, in fifth, logged 67.8 points, boosted by a 46% jump in ad recall figures, to 123 points, compared with Q1 2011.

"Coke invested heavily in digital this year, and the recall is paying off against Pepsi and the market at large," said Chen. Indeed, Pepsi received an aggregated 29.6 points, R3 revealed.

Li-Ning, a rival to Nike, was the top-ranked Chinese brand on 65.1 points, followed by Mengniu, the dairy group, on 62.6 points, and Lenovo, the technology specialist, with 58.3 points.

Turning specifically to the burgeoning social media sector, 25.2% of the panel named Sina Weibo as their favourite such platform, up from only 6.2% in the second quarter of 2010.

Kaixin001 observed a decline from 25% to 19.2% in this period, while Tencent Weibo saw a rise of 14 percentage points to 15.6%, and Renren secured a more modest 1.4-point gain, reaching 16.7%.

Chen reported brands like Nike operate as many as 11 accounts on Weibo, or microblog, services like those run by Tencent and Sina. "There's certainly no sign yet of Weibo slowing down in terms of involvement, interest and passion," she said.

Data sourced from R3; additional content by Warc staff, 20 September 2011

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