



2CHECKOUT



# The Guide to Chinese Social Media

*Secrets to attracting the largest pool of online buyers  
in the world*

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	3
<b>CONVERTING</b>	5
<b>THE PLATFORMS</b>	6
<b>Qzone</b>	7
<b>Tencent QQ</b>	9
<b>Sina Weibo</b>	12
<b>Tencent Weibo</b>	13
<b>Renren</b>	17
<b>Weixin (WeChat)</b>	19
<b>Youku &amp; Tudou</b>	21
<b>Jiebang</b>	23
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	25
<b>ABOUT</b>	26

# Introduction

Facebook is blocked, Twitter isn't permitted, and Google is a thing of the past. No, we're not talking about the social media apocalypse. In fact, we're focusing on a place where the Internet and in turn, social media and e-commerce, reign supreme. A place where 91 percent of the nation's netizens visit social media sites, compared to 67 percent in the US, according to data from an April 2012 study by McKinsey.

This is also a place where Internet penetration is 42 percent and the telecoms industry is the largest in the world, with mobile penetration at 82 percent.

*Have you figured it out yet? We'll fill you in: it's China.*

Most of the Asian country's major social players set up shop between 2005 –2009, and are now toppling worldwide charts with record-breaking numbers of active users. The largest network in China, Qzone, boasts more than 712 million registered users, of which 598 million are active. These numbers may not match the 1.1 billion active users that Facebook touted last summer, but they're nonetheless formidable.

That's not to say it's been a cakewalk for Qzone or the other platforms that have followed in its success. In a market dominated with political roadblocks and intense user scrutiny and skepticism, infiltrating China via social media has proven difficult for those who've attempted to break through – or in some cases – circumnavigate the walls of an internet environment with incredibly tight government regulation. But even where organizations have failed, the demand for useable and widespread social media platforms has prevailed.

That's not surprising given that 41 percent of the population is under 30 and 80 percent of Chinese users fall between the ages of 10 and 40, according to the US Census Bureau and the China Internet Network Information Centre, respectively.

With such large numbers of youths – naturally more inclined toward early adoption, social sharing and e-commerce – it was only a matter of time before social media found its foothold in the country.

So, how big of a foothold do these networks currently have?

According to McKinsey and the China Internet Network Information Centre, Chinese netizens spend 21 hours a week online and average around 46 minutes per day on social media sites.

83 percent communicate on instant messaging, 33 percent use online banking, and 24 percent participate in microblogging -- also called weibo. With all of that social activity, you're probably wondering about your own e-commerce implications and bottom lines, right?

Let's put it in perspective like this: the China Internet Network Information Centre says that over 43 percent of Chinese netizens participated in online shopping and that China has 75,000,000 more online shoppers per year than the USA. They completely dominate the UK with 6 times the number of online shoppers. That's not even to mention that Singles Day, the November 11 holiday that celebrates the romantically unengaged, is the single largest day in e-commerce in the entire world. Shopping platform Taobao raked in \$19.1 billion yuan, or \$3.07 billion US, in 2012 alone according to Global Times. Merchants looking to sell to a tech-savvy population with a penchant for online deals would be remiss to overlook this population, which is becoming more and more accessible every day.

Just like the telecoms industry, China also has the largest number of online shoppers in the world.

So in addition to Qzone, which platforms are taking China by storm and how can you get involved? How do you get your products and services in front of the millions of people that access China's social media channels, make purchases online, or influence their friends and family on both small and large e-commerce decisions?

*Keep reading to find out.*

# Converting Customers on Chinese Social Media

Converting real customers via Chinese social has been difficult for marketers for a number of reasons.

For one, barely 38 percent of China's netizens revealed their real names on social networking sites until recently. The government has cracked down on fake profiles in the past year, so now many citizens are being forced to sign up with their real details.

Second, many of China's social media outlets are incredibly fragmented. Each outlet has its own target audience, many of which are hyper-local and constantly evolving, so it's difficult to hold the attention of the masses when the masses are so quick to adopt something new before brands have a chance to interact.

That's not to say that netizens are unwilling to pay attention to marketing via social networks.

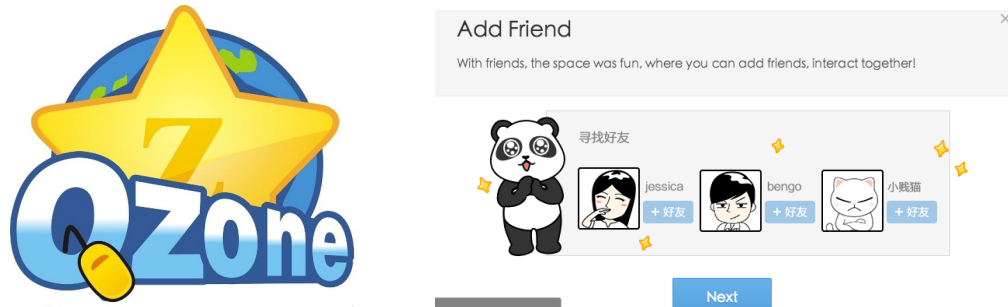
In fact, 66 percent of Chinese social media users follow brands. On average, they follow 8 brands and about 80 percent say that they care about commercial information on social networking. Obviously marketers aren't being pushed out of social game, though it's important to understand how netizens prefer to be communicated with.

In the following pages, we break down the top platforms and illustrate ways that a marketer can convert customers successfully.

# III. The Platforms

The following segment will diagram all of the major players in the social media space. Just because China doesn't have Facebook and the government blocks services like Twitter and Foursquare, that doesn't mean similar sites with parallel user benefits don't exist.

If we want to take a high-level overview at who and what is ruling China's social infrastructure, there's only one place to start. Hint: it's largely a company called Tencent, which accounts for 56 percent of social media users in China through their networks, so that's where we'll begin.



## **Qzone:** Facebook Meets Wordpress

Who Owns It: Tencent

Main Uses: Blogging, sending photos, listening to music

As we mentioned in the introduction, Qzone is the largest social network in China, with over 712 million registered users and 598 million active ones, according to BI Intelligence. That's three times more users than those on Twitter and double that of the popular international messaging service, What's App.

Created in 2005, the platform is popular with young teens and allows users to customize their profiles with engaging backgrounds and signatures, a la the US site and social media forerunner, MySpace. While a basic Qzone membership is free, many customization options and additional services require users to pay a fee through membership, assuming a freemium pay structure. Most users subscribe to the service at the Green Diamond and Yellow Diamond levels, which allow for background music and theme customizations.

At the Yellow level, members pay 10 yuan per month, but receive access to more features the longer they're subscribed. Allowing your account to slip from standing means you lose all of the features gained, so members are vigilant about ensuring that their membership stays active by paying on time. All money exchanged on Qzone is done through a virtual currency system, called Q coins.

In 2011, Qzone saw a huge jump in subscriptions when it announced it was opening its platform to developers. The platform's numbers skyrocketed with the release of QQ Farm, similar to Facebook's Farmville.

## How to Market on Qzone:

While Qzone may seem like the most obvious platform to begin a marketing campaign due to its size and similarities to Facebook, there's actually a bit more at play here. Gone are the days of simply running a well-designed ad and sitting back to watch the clicks and sales come rolling in.

For starters, it's important to keep in mind Qzone's audience and why they're using the service in the first place. Where weibo services are used for finding and sharing information (ideal for sales conversions), social networks like Qzone are for finding and interacting with friends. Further, Qzone's user base consists of young teens, which – if you can hook them – is great for awareness and lifetime brand evangelism, but not so much for in-the-now purchasing power.

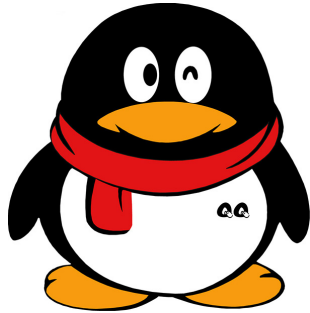
It's also relevant to note that at its core, Qzone is a blogging platform that leans more toward a personal diary than a public forum. Therefore, taking a personal approach when marketing through Qzone may be more effective than a targeted ad campaign. Instead of running a series of flashy ads, consider peppering the site with the occasional advertorial, with ad links directing back to your product or service. Make your advertorial relevant to the community and also useable and sharable.

There's also value in diverting from advertorial, as well. Because users write diaries on Qzone, showing a personal touch and humanizing the brand/introducing a face to your product or service could help you make strong headways here.

Also keep in mind that the name of the game on Qzone is personalization and customizable profiles, so creating a space that nurtures those types of interactions will be better received among users. You can do this through your photo albums by creating engaging images, customizing your signature, and upgrading to VIP accounts so you're further able to put high-level touches into your company profile. To date, companies including Nike, KFC, BMW, and Estee Lauder have all infiltrated Qzone with some level of proven success.

Something else that needs to be mentioned here is that Qzone allows users to black list other users on the site. Stay away from blanket messaging with links or ads, as marketing in this way is viewed as spam, just as it would be in the States.





## **Tencent QQ:** Similar to Gmail, AIM

Who Owns It: Tencent

Main Uses: Instant messaging, video chatting, file sharing, integration with other social platforms (gaming, microblogging, email)

If you thought that Qzone's numbers were impressive, prepare yourself to be wowed. According to the latest data on QQ, China's main instant messaging service, the network boasts almost 800 million active users. Second only to the search engine Baidu, qq.com is the most visited website a Chinese netizen navigates to when he or she opens his or her browser.

In 2009, QQ launched an international plug-in that allows users from all over the world to integrate QQ instant messaging services with their preferred social networks, including Facebook. To date, the service has acquired over one billion registered web and mobile users worldwide. Today, QQ's membership levels designate the service's integration with a number of other features, which also translate to Qzone:

Red: ability to create an avatar

Yellow: Qzone blogging service

Blue: QQ gaming

Purple: access to unique Tencent games

(QQNana, QQTang, QQSpeed, R2beat)

Greenish: QQ music

VIP: Chatting, beta testing, no ads

Black: Dungeon & Fighter game benefits

QQ users also use virtual money, the Q coin, to purchase QQ-related goods. Interestingly, the coin is now accepted in a number of online and retail stores for real merchandise due to its popularity on QQ. A sign of the social media times, perhaps?

Started in 1999, QQ is also Tencent's baby. Where Qzone is the biggest traffic distribution platform, QQ is the biggest traffic entrance. Many QQ users seamlessly join Qzone with one click through the QQ interface.

## How to Market on QQ:

QQ occupies an interesting position. As one of the first players in the space, the company has been through its fair share of growing pains. However, the company still continues to hold the top spot with 38.07 percent of the market share, as of the first quarter of 2013. They're also the leader in mobile IM active accounts with 42.54 percent of the market share, according to China Internet Watch.

While QQ has always held a stronghold on the industry, it wasn't always quite as popular with users -- even though its users stuck around due to a lack of other viable IM options. In the beginning, QQ was synonymous with annoying pop-up ads that flaunted everything from other Tencent products to online news. Since then, Tencent has polished its marketing integration and now partners with everyone from Coca-Cola to Intel to Nike, most largely on qq.com.

As its made more efforts to increase its credibility and ethical positioning, its also paid close attention to the needs of brands in the new digital era. As more and more brands moved online, Tencent released Tencent MIND, which helps companies integrate with its platforms based on 4 key components:

Measurability: effectiveness of branding

Interactive experience

Navigation: delivery of the branding

Differentiation: strategic messaging

How important is it to have a presence on QQ? To put it in the words of Tencent's GM for national ad planning Sophia Ong, "Everything starts from QQ. We have over 90 percent penetration of the online population [in China]."

To get started, you should focus first on advertising, still a cornerstone of QQ's revenue stream, though the days of the invasive pop-up are thankfully gone. Instead, brands can advertise across a series of QQ platforms, including qq.com, QQ music, QQ IM, Qzone, QQ Show, QQ Live Video.

Another option that's more interactive and encourages users to dive deeper into your brand is to focus on what users are purchasing with Q coins. By creating items of value that mirror your branding, you can encourage users to buy everything from ringtones to games with their virtual QQ money. Obviously, it depends largely on the direction and goals of your brand, but basic digital advertising still rules the roost on QQ, due in large part to its basic IM functionality.

However un-innovative, the company touches so many other platforms with larger implications for your brand that it's impossible to ignore QQ. Learning the ins-and-outs of how people interact with each other and how they use the service to branch off into the other corners of the social web will be paramount to understanding the Chinese netizen culture and securing your place among those succeeding in the space.



## **Sina Weibo:** The Twitter/Facebook Hybrid

Who Owns It: Sina

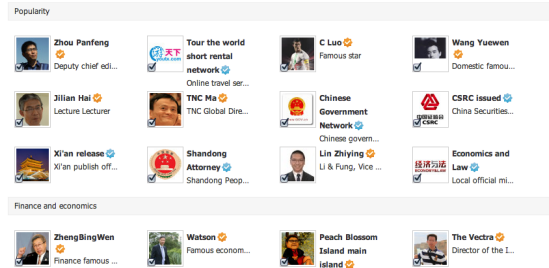
Main Uses: Microblogging, news sharing, celebrity gossip, and breaking news

With over 500 million users, Sina Weibo is the largest weibo service in China. Things get a little confusing here when we talk about weibo versus capital first letter Weibo, so here's what you need to know:

The word “weibo” means microblog, and is not in and of itself a brand name. When the Chinese media directly uses the word weibo, it usually references Sina Weibo, similar to the widespread use of Xerox when referring to a copy machine, even if the machine is not actually a Xerox.

Sina Weibo has been around since 2009 and mirrors the functionality of Twitter, including “@” symbols and 140-character limits. However, the service differs slightly from Twitter in that it allows users to create channels that pull together multiple social media tools into one place.

At the end of 2013, Sina Weibo will launch a finance platform designed to sell money funds and insurance, in addition to adding P2P services. Similar to Twitter, the company has long struggled to find a business model and has instituted changes as it transitions from a marketing platform to a service delivery platform. Sina hopes that the finance platform will bring in a necessary revenue stream as they continue to grow their services and expand to a global market.



**Tencent Weibo:** Twitter/Facebook hybrid  
 Who Owns It: Tencent  
 Main Uses: Microblogging, breaking news, celebrity gossip

In 2010 when the service launched, only QQ users could register for the Tencent Weibo. Now, users can register for an account with an unrelated email address. Though Sina still holds a small majority in the world of weibo users, Tencent is quickly gaining traction with over 469 million users. Functionality is near-identical to that of Sina Weibo, and user base is only expected to grow further, as Apple recently integrated support for Tencent Weibo into the new iOS 7. By comparison, Sina Weibo received support from Apple in iOS 6.

## How to Market on Sina Weibo & Tencent Weibo:

As the most popular microblogging site, Sina Weibo is perfectly positioned to be an excellent marketing source for those looking to make a sale. Just like Twitter, content spreads virally and quickly on the site, so a smart approach has the potential to rapidly convert large numbers of buyers -- and then build a meaningful relationship that keeps them coming back over the course of many months or years.

Wondering how widespread weibo (remember, that's all microblogging, not just Sina Weibo) is in China?

According to China Internet Watch and Nielsen, 89 percent of Chinese netizens use a weibo service and 97 percent of social media users in China are also weibo users.

That's all fine and good, but what are these users doing besides chatting on IM, sharing photos, and writing blog posts? They're researching and buying. A lot. And they want you to talk to them about what you're selling.

By the numbers, more than 50 percent of weibo users access e-commerce sites after seeing content on weibo, according to a September 2012 report by DCCI. Specific to Sina Weibo, 28 percent of users search the site for brand information, and 76 percent are open to advertising on Sina Weibo. That means by creating a campaign and targeting it at the correct people, you could see extraordinarily high numbers of click-thrus back to your content.

In addition, Sina Weibo understands its marketing power and makes it easy for brands to get involved by including:

- Easy integration with video, links, and images
- Connections between employees and companies
- Events and groups

Sina also expressed that its open to large-scale brand collaborations when it signed on for another strategic NBA partnership in August 2013 (the first was in 2010).

Through the partnership, the weibo service aims to attract a new clientele in three major areas: mobile broadcasting, community interaction, and live video. E-commerce and other value-add services are expected to be a large focus for this continued partnership. Even moreso, other large brands are quickly recognizing the importance of weibo in their businesses in China. To date, over 25 percent of Fortune 500 companies have a Sina Weibo presence.

So, what do you need to know before you launch a Sina Weibo campaign and how can you compete in the growing market? First and foremost, we should pause to address the elephant in the room that we've barely touched upon: mobile. We mentioned in the intro that China has the largest telecom network in the world, but here are some stats guaranteed to blow your mind:

72 percent of Sina Weibo users access the service via mobile  
Mobile weibo users account for 89 percent of all Chinese microblog users

From that information, we can assume that a high percentage of users access weibo for information when they're on the go -- maybe even when they're standing in front of your product, or when their friend mentions your service at dinner. But that doesn't mean all weibo searches end equally. By category, the Sina Weibo Users Report in October 2012, states that weibo's influence on online shoppers' purchasing decisions is as follows:

42 percent: books, audio and video  
37 percent: restaurants and entertainment  
35 percent: clothes, shoes and bags

## So what can you do to get your business in front of the right people?

Just like in the US, Chinese netizens are also more likely to check in with influencers (called key opinion leaders, or KOLs) on weibo services like Sina or Tencent. But there's more great news for you. It turns out that due to the skepticism that comes along with China's government structure, influencers are actually more...well, influential...in China than in the US.

How much more? An independent study on moisturizing products found that 66 percent of Chinese consumers relied on recommendations when purchasing as opposed to 38 percent of buyers in the US.

Jesse Goranson, SVP of Media & Telecom at Nielsen Greater China said in an interview with Ad Age in March 2013 that these KOLs come in four main types: celebrities, commercial accounts, grassroots users building a name for themselves, and industry experts in a particular field.

Luckily for you, Chinese KOLs are well-versed in working with brands and their interest and adaptability is only continuing to get bigger and better.

In some sense, you could think about the KOL boom in China like the mommy blogger boom in the US: influencers are eager to get involved with brands, so by positioning yourself as a savvy brand that's interested in gaining a KOL's respect and endorsement, you're already in a great place.

How do you do that? This is textbook marketing and something you should already be heeding in your current plans. Authenticity, a great starting product or service, and transparency (versus clouded or shallow promises) are all cornerstones for making a Sina Weibo partnership with or without a KOL successful.

If you're stuck on this step, go back to the drawing board and take a look through some case studies of successful campaigns around the world. While Chinese netizens are excited to have you come on board, they're also highly critical and able to spot an imposter (even one that means well!) from a mile away.

Ok, ready now? Good. So, you've gone through all the steps, secured a KOL who's as passionate about your brand as you are, and you're ready to roll out content in the form of guest blog posts, sponsored messages, and a hashtag contest, to name a few examples. What can you expect to get out of a successful Sina Weibo campaign?

In a nutshell, everything that you'd hope to get out of a successful Twitter campaign, including increased brand awareness, promotion of your business, reduced marketing costs, a PR management platform, and an easy and fast way to connect with potential and converted customers.

Of this list, weibo is probably one of the most accessible platforms to cut your marketing teeth on in China. The user base is comprised of an audience with strong purchasing power, they're chomping at the bit for someone to serve up exactly what they're looking to buy, and they're receptive to getting into bed with you for the long haul. When you do weibo right, it's a win-win for everyone.

Just remember that Sina Weibo isn't the only weibo service on the market! While many – if not all – of the same rules can translate to Tencent Weibo, WeChat offers up a different set of marketing functionality for sellers in the Chinese space, as it's primarily accessed on mobile versus the web.





## Renren: Chinese Facebook

Who Owns It: Oak Pacific Interactive

Main Uses: Status updates, photo sharing, instant messaging

Initially started in 2005 under a different name (Xiaonei), the company officially became Renren in 2009 before going public on the NY Stock Exchange in 2011. Similar to Facebook, the network targeted college students before opening up the platform to include the general public, in conjunction with the service's change in name. Renren also offers users the same functionality as Facebook, including status updates, photo uploads, and even a news feed to follow friends.

So why has Renren fallen fast behind Tencent's Qzone in recent years? Its story eerily mimics the abrupt MySpace fall-out in the States. Many Chinese users complained about the abundance of marketing and advertising on Renren, along with its poor user experience and lack of innovation. Additionally, where any QQ user can sign up for Qzone with just one click, securing a Renren account takes additional steps, which many younger users have proved unwilling to take.

Still, the market maintains almost 200 million users, 75 percent of whom access the service from mobile devices.

## How to Market on Renren:

If you're starting out for the first time in Chinese social media, we're inclined to tell you to steer clear of Renren...unless your main business is primarily young students. Even then, we'd caution you to focus your attention on the Renren mobile extension that the service launched in November 2013.

Billed as the "return of Renren", the mobile arm focuses on gaming and e-commerce, which differentiates it from Facebook in an effort to re-gain a portion of the market. Those looking to convert younger customers may consider developing an interactive game on the new mobile service, or opening an e-commerce store.

For others, investing anywhere beyond gaming and sales on Renren could turn into a poor investment of both time and money. Our recommendation? Your dollars – and customers – are better served elsewhere.



## **Weixin (WeChat):** Skype Meets

Foursquare

Who Owns It: Tencent

Main Uses: Location-based video chatting, group messaging

First released in 2011, over 300 million users are now registered for Wechat in China. Originally named Weixin, the company changed its name in 2012 to rebrand for an international audience.

Currently free to download and use, the company announced their launch outside of China in 2012. As of July 2013, the company has over 70 million users outside of China. The platform also now supports Facebook integration.

## How to Market on WeChat:

In August 2013, Wechat integrated with the online shopping website, Yixun.com. Though they granted access from both PC and mobile, the numbers show that over 60 percent of the transactions came from mobile devices, and that number is only expected to climb.

In essence, this shows us an important emerging trend for social media in China. In a nation already dominated by mobile usage, we'd consider it a wise move to integrate a mobile strategy into your initial plan when approaching marketing in China's social landscape.

People in China are surfing the web, connecting with friends, and purchasing more than ever before on their mobile devices. In fact, WeChat's vice general manager, Hou Xiaonan, said that 70 percent of total users accessed Wechat on mobile devices, up 5 times from last year. And who are those users? Around 74 percent of Wechat users in China are in their 20s, a prime demographic for both early adoption and purchasing power.

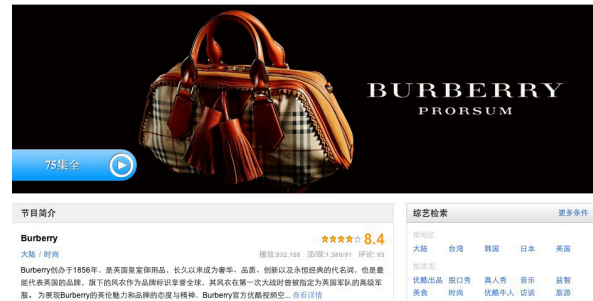
And those users are doing everything from buying coffee to banking to paying for their laundry from their handheld devices, which more times than not are Android devices. Currently, China is Android's biggest market. To illustrate this point even further, the value of China's mobile Internet market is growing at an annual rate of 102 percent!

Another boon for marketers came in October 2013 when Wechat announced it would open a number of APIs to verified public accounts. Users are able to secure a public account for 300 yuan annually. However, all of the kinks haven't quite been worked out of the open API. For example, Tencent's mobile strategy relies heavily on Wechat's payment API, but Tencent is still cautious about the functionality, so it's currently only opened to a few verified accounts. Those verified accounts must be certified with Tenpay, a long, arduous process.

Still, opening a public account and attracting as many followers as possible is a good way for you to reach out in this community. You should also master the use of Wechat's friend circles. While you won't find many new customers this way, you'll be able to maintain older customers who have purchased from you before.

To sum it up, what do all of these Wechat changes actually mean for you?

It looks like Wechat is committed to improving its experience for users, a good sign that more users will continue to join the service. By ensuring that your products or services are valuable, you'll attract user interest and can continue to watch Wechat's imminent developments on the marketing front. Where there are active users, there will be active ways to convert them to customers.



## Youku & Tudou: YouTube

Who Owns It: Youku

Main Uses: Video hosting

The second largest video site in the world (just after YouTube), Youku was founded in 2006 and went public in 2010. In 2012, it merged with Tudou, the second biggest online video company in China.

As far as functionality, users can upload videos of any length, but because such a small number of the population has owned video equipment until recently, only 15 percent of the content is user-generated. Instead, the majority of video uploaded to the site comes from partnerships with over 1,500 television stations, distributors, and film/ TV production companies in China.

Unlike YouTube, copyright laws are either non-existent or poorly enforced, allowing the service to broadcast copyrighted content without license.

Currently the service attracts around 475 million unique visitors each month.

## How to Market on Youku:

In recent years, luxury brands have set the precedent for marketing to the Chinese netizens on Youku. Since 2011, brands including Cartier, Gucci and Dior have all launched exclusive branded channels.

While a large-scale video program like one employed by Louis Vuitton may not be on your radar – or in your budget – there are still some easy ways to get into the Youku game. To start, focus on your customer: what are their pain points? What keeps them up at night? How can you help to alleviate their concerns?

To see how you may be able to break into the video scene, let's look at an illustrative example:

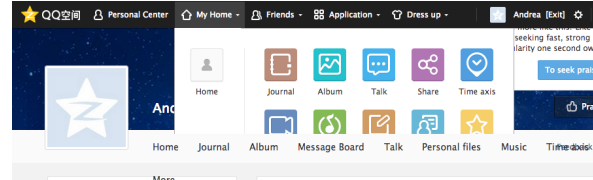
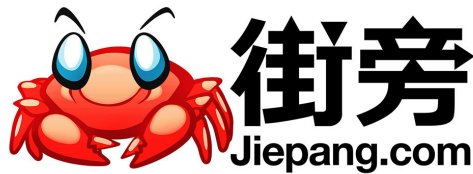
You run a small e-commerce website that sells makeup. You do well enough, but you're looking for ways to add value for potential and existing customers. How do you keep them coming back, even if they're not interested in buying right away?

The answer could be with a series of Youku makeup or styling tutorials.

You can do this in one of two ways: the first is to produce the videos internally and use other social media platforms as a way to drive traffic back to your content.

A second option is to partner with an influencer – remember they're called KOLs in China. A KOL could help to disseminate your message while promoting your brand. Plus, a video series creates a sticky solution for customers and potential clients that puts your brand front-and-center repeatedly.

To best maximize your exposure, don't forget to create a production schedule so you're consistently turning out new content every week, preferably on the same day. That way, your audience knows when to expect something new and can easily build a habit of checking in with you every week. Once they're in a position to buy down the road, you're already top of mind because you've become a utility that's part of their routine.



## **Jiebang:** Chinese Foursquare

Who Owns It: Jiebang

Main Uses: Location-based check-ins

Launched in 2010, Jiebang now has over five million users, the least of any on this list. However, we're including it because it has the potential to grow as more and more Chinese citizens acquire smartphones. The service also integrates with a number of social platforms, including Sina Weibo, Qzone, Renren, Tencent Weibo, Wechat, and even Twitter.

Similar to Instagram's design, Jiebang's homepage is shown in a chronological order that users can scroll through. At the bottom of the page lies a call to action to check-in using location-based service technology. Jiebang also incorporates badges into user profiles, just like Foursquare. "Players" earn these badges through check-in frequency, hashtags, using a branded photo filter, or participating in a campaign. The company has also instituted a series of changes that differentiate it from Foursquare including categories and friend tagging.

In 2011, the service made news for its partnership with Starbucks, in which users swipe their phones across a sticker in the store to check-in and pay instead of unlocking their phones and manually accessing the app.

## How to Market on Jiebang:

Where Qzone zeroes in on young teens, Jiebang's network has attracted trendsetting older users in major cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. And while the network is still small, it's far from insignificant. As we saw above, mobile usage has skyrocketed across China, and location-based services are the next logical step for many marketers looking to get in front of their customers.

While LBS is still finding its groove in China, 15 percent of China's location-based service users access services for e-commerce and 19 percent of these users access it for local deals. That's just one more reason to put mobile high on the list when you're planning out social strategies for 2014 and beyond.

CEO David Liu (a Cali native), said that over 400 brands have already worked with Jiebang on a number of brands and promotions. Changes to the platform this year integrate more life recording opportunities, which the company hopes will it them from Foursquare moving forward.

Liu also notes that Jiebang offers less clutter than weibo services, as brands, gossip, media, celebrities and every day people fight for attention on weibo. He says that the new functionality allows brands to specifically tie into a user's activity.

In the interview, Liu also says, "If I check in at a park, a brand might know that I'm at this park, but if I say that I'm at this park playing sports, then we can unabashedly push a Nike activity. There is tons of opportunity to expand on our principle that great advertising has to be great information."

While this network may be small, tapping into it early could be a great way to break into a Chinese platform that's on the up and up. Plus, getting trendsetters and early adopters on your side could lead to bigger gains and a larger audience that has the potential to convert to sales down the road.



# Conclusion

While the Chinese market definitely has a number of unique roadblocks and specific factors to take into consideration, the average Chinese netizen is eager and ready for further brand integration across all social media channels.

Additionally, some of China's unique viewpoints – like citizen skepticism of formal authority, for example – are a boon to smart marketers looking to harness the power of influencers through social media.

Taking care to be transparent, authentic and helpful will take you farther than good content or a killer campaign, but as we've illustrated in the above, there are a number of platforms perfectly primed to produce and maintain a very solid and rewarding Chinese customer base.

## Global payments made easy.

A worldwide leader in payment services, 2Checkout maximizes online sales conversions by giving global buyers localized payment options. Trusted by over 50,000 merchants, 2Checkout supports transactions in 196 countries through 8 payment methods, 26 currencies, and 15 languages, forming one of the leading processors of online transactions in the world. The service is simple to implement, including a pre-integrated payment gateway, a merchant account, PCI compliance, international fraud prevention, and plug-ins for 100 of the most popular carts.

**Connect with 2Checkout and learn more about how our services can enable you to implement these principles.**

[Connect >>](#)

*about the author*



## Andrea Duchon

Andrea is a writer and strategist who currently lives in New York City. For the last six years, she's worked as a social media strategist, brand consultant, and copywriter for brands including AT&T, Calvin Klein, and FADER Magazine. She currently writes on topics of culture, food, social media marketing, and travel.