

MULTICHANNEL

Galerié magazine sets sights on affluent Chinese returning to US

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Galerié cover

By JEN KING

With 2.2 million Chinese consumers traveling to the United States, 1.4 million of whom are on return trips, a new publication aims to secure the interest of this coveted consumer group.

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Luxury Daily

Debuting in November, luxury lifestyle magazine Galerié is working to capture the attention and shopping funds of wealthy Chinese tourists returning to the U.S. for business and leisure. Galerié uses a print and mobile approach to capturing these consumers as they renew their visa applications to enter the U.S., thus becoming top of mind in the early stages of trip planning.

"Returning Chinese consumers are more likely to be independent travelers," said Alec Glos, CEO of [i2i Group China](#), Beijing. "They tend to be more affluent, and luxury goods shopping and real estate investment is generally a key component of their U.S. travel.

"Unlike first-time Chinese visitors who tend to come with groups and guides, the independent repeat visitor is hard to reach," he said. "Last year, Chinese made 100 million international trips, 2.2 million were to the U.S. and 1.4 million were repeat visitors. So the

question becomes, how do you find that repeat visitor out of a country of over 1 billion and over 100 million international travelers? It means creating a connection is paramount.

"Shopping is key part of the Chinese visitor experience. It is something that is often an integral part of their trip, and something they begin to plan and consider as soon as they begin their trip planning process."

Welcome back shoppers

Galerié is published by i2i Group China, the publisher of Essentially America China, a travel publication promoting tourism in the U.S. Founded in 1994, the latter publication is distributed in local languages for inbound travelers to the U.S. from the United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico, Australia and as of 2013, China.

Essentially America China is published three times a year and its 80,000 copies are distributed via Citic bank, where Chinese travelers renew their U.S. visas. Since a visa is needed for Chinese consumers to travel to the U.S., Galerié—which will also be placed in the approximately 90 Citic bank locations throughout China—is the ideal placement as it organically becomes part of the planning phase of the consumer's travel experience.

Since Chinese consumers tend to shop outside of China for a bevy of reasons, advertising partners seen in Galerié will be top of mind as readers plot their shopping plans. The publication also offers a degree of trust for consumers and partnered brands due to its support by the U.S. government, which outsources visa services to Citic bank where the consumer will receive the copy.



Galerié watch spread

Beginning in November, Galerié will publish four times per year, resulting in 400,000 copies, during key travel periods specifically for Chinese consumers. These consumers are considered “lucrative” and “independent” as they are not traveling within a tourist group.

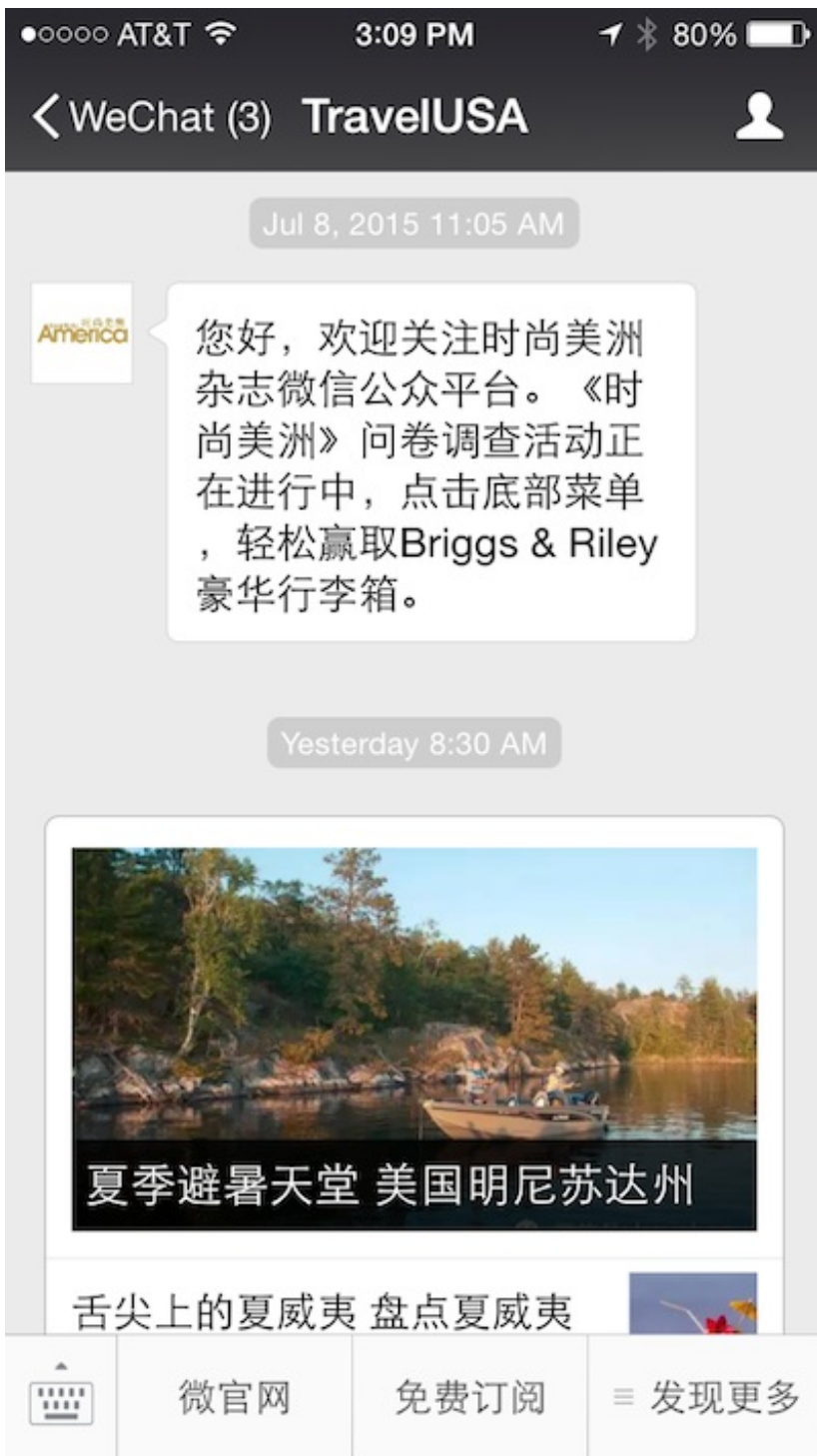
Galerié will reach approximately 640,000 repeat visitors, or 45 percent of the 2014 total. This model is similar to bridal magazines, which keep afloat due to the never-ending cycle of new brides, but in this case Galerié will capture the attention of repeat visitors.

"In Galérié's case, it is like casting a net into the stream. Once the fish swims by, you don't have another chance, in this case until the next visa renewal which with the changes into effect this year, means up to 10 years," said **Doug Gollan**, luxury consultant to Galérié. "With a projected readership of 640,000 repeat visitors, our platform reaches about 45 percent of the total repeat market. From a reach perspective, it is like buying time on the Super Bowl."

To continue readers' interaction with the Galérié publication, Essentially America will extend its Travel America WeChat platform to include the new title. This will allow readers of Galérié to access exclusive content, accessible by QR codes, on shopping and lifestyle activities.

For advertising partners, brands will be able to target communications specifically for returning Chinese consumers in the form of a "push" that may be able to drive interest and traffic to nearby retail boutiques in the U.S. Advertising partners can use the Chinese social communication application to display brand content and services with this group in mind, in addition to social accounts scaled globally.

Also, Galérié's omnichannel approach presents marketers with an ongoing engagement point as the brand can communicate with interested consumers after they return home and plan future trips to the U.S. With many Chinese consumers using WeChat as an email service, the connection forged will last much longer than the length of a vacation, thus presenting contact during relevant times in the marketing and sales funnel.



WeChat messages from Essentially America China and Galerié

"We are offering partners who commit to a full year program a custom WeChat platform specifically targeted to Chinese travelers visiting the U.S.," Mr. Gollan said. "While some brands already have WeChat platforms, these tend to be generic or domestically focused.

"The platforms we are offering enable partners to specifically promote locations, products and news tied into driving sales in their U.S. locations," he said.

In addition, Galerié will have support on other localized social platforms such as Weibo.

WeChatter

Brands and retailers have streamlined WeChat as a way to socialize consumer interactions in China and elsewhere in Asia.

For instance, Yoox, the official ecommerce partner of Kering, teamed up with WeChat to enhance its consumers' mobile shopping experience.

As part of the global partnership, Yoox created new official accounts for the United States and Italy on WeChat, as well as revamping its existing Chinese account. Tapping into WeChat's platform for social shopping will allow Yoox to make the mobile commerce experience more personal for consumers, giving access to live chat and messages from the retailer ([see story](#)).

More recently, U.S. apparel label Michael Kors made shopping more personalized for its consumers in Asia with a new CRM experience housed on WeChat.

Designed to merge the online and offline, the tool offers digital customer service touchpoints to be used both at home and in-store and offers benefits to members to spur bricks-and-mortar visits. Not only will this platform assist Michael Kors in delivering a customized experience to its consumers, but it will also enable the brand to learn more about its most engaged clients ([see story](#)).

For a print publication, introducing a WeChat component works to strengthen the relationship between Galerie and its Chinese readers.

"The print magazine is the entry point, with advertising and editorial. The Galerie QR code then provides an 'opt-in' to content that will be used for the duration of the trip and for subsequent trips, so we are enabling partners to build a long-term relationship," i2i Group China's Mr. Glos said.

"Many Chinese use WeChat as their email platform, so this enables the brand to keep these customers updated on new locations and promotions as long as the user stays active on the platform, including marketing while they are in the U.S.," he said.

"A recent 'push' promotion we did for South Coast Plaza with the current Essentially America platform generated 3,000 responses. Again, when you think about a country of over 1 billion, to be able to get 3,000 qualified prospects who you know either have just gotten their visa renewed or are already in market, is really amazing."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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