

MARKETING

## 9 mobile social marketing tips for luxury brands in China

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Louis Vuitton store in China. Image credit: VCG

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The leading Chinese digital marketing agency Social Touch recently hosted a marketing conference in Shanghai that gathered industry experts from institutions such as IBM and Forrester to discuss the future of mobile social marketing in China.

Here are nine insightful takeaways from the meeting:

### 1. Learn to make better use of the "Platisher"

A portmanteau combining the terms platform and publisher, "Platisher" refers to the type of online space that has the editorial authority to publish but sources content from consumers. In China, platforms such as WeChat's official accounts and Toutiao fall into this category.

**Social Touch** recognized that "Platisher" is an important part of mobile social marketing that is decisive to any marketing campaign.

However, the majority of brands today still overly rely on buying a large amount of advertising space on the platisher, which is an old-fashioned mindset that is obsolete in the fast-changing environment.

Social Touch advises brands to make full use of the platform's big data through conducting analytics to better understand their targeted consumers.

### 2. Do not miss out on short videos

Short videos, which are expressive yet fragmented, will be the next opportunity for online marketing in China.

The average time that Chinese online users spend on short videos each day was 68 minutes in 2016, according to data cited by Social Touch.

Brands are still experimenting with the use of short video to present their stories. That coupled with the uneven quality of short video service providers that currently exist in China creates a challenging environment for brands.

### 3. Establish a scientific marketing system for KOLs

Social Touch says that most brands today do not have had a systemic way of thinking and planning about how they want to use key opinion leaders (KOLs) in their marketing plan but only blindly follow trends.

In 2017, a number of the agency's clients raised the KOL budget to more than 10 percent of their total media budget.

One big risk during the brands' management process of KOLs, specifically identified by Social Touch, is that brands only treat them as products that they purchase from the market and not as a person or a valuable client with whom the brands should work closely.

But in doing so, they miss a valuable opportunity to discover how to make the KOLs' quality content fit perfectly with the brand's image and get the most commercial value out of the partnership.

#### 4. Enrich the diversity of online marketing

Online marketing is still underdeveloped.

According to Social Touch, only advertising has so far been fully distributed online. There are many other marketing tools, such as product testing and sampling, that are still pretty much only done offline.

Brands are advised to engage in online-to-offline (O2O) activities to reach the full potential of their campaigns.

#### 5. Improve the automation of the marketing process

Machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) should be applied to a brand's marketing process.

Social Touch believes that the replacement of human labor with these advanced technologies can facilitate the communication process between brands and consumers.

#### 6. Catch the most valuable generation the "post-95s"

The generation born after 1995 (aka, the "post-95s" as they are known in China) is likely to be the next most important consumer group on which brands should focus.

These people were born and grew up in a commercial environment and have been familiar with brands since they were little.

Unlike their previous generation, these post-95s generation have a better understanding of the value of a brand. This distinctive change in the consumer mindset is about to bring a wave of opportunity to marketers.

#### 7. Give Chinese consumers what they want: mobile payment

According to Social Touch's survey, Chinese consumers clearly prefer to use mobile payment Alipay, WeChat Pay, etc. when given the option online.

Convenience and efficiency are what Chinese consumers value about the mobile payment.

For example, Social Touch says that people who place orders online in evening are usually ordering from the comfort of their bed. Thus, mobile payment is preferable.

#### 8. Care about the depth, not the breadth, of marketing content

In the mobile age, the chance of impulsive consumption is higher than ever.

Therefore, following up on the previous tip that requires brands to make sure consumers can pay efficiently, Social Touch emphasizes the need to work on the depth, not the breadth, of marketing content, which is the key to improving the possibility of impulsive consumption on mobile.

#### 9. Do not underestimate the importance of online community building

The image of a brand is not static anymore in the current fast-moving digital society. It is more mobile, transformative and moving.

For that reason, Social Touch said it has become more significant for brands to build up its own online community that turns customers into followers.

The more successful for brands in doing this, the more likely that they will stand out in the fierce competition in the retailing sector.

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