

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Alibaba pressed to sell media assets

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Chinese government is tightening the leash on tech companies. Image credit: Alibaba Group

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

As Chinese government officials begin to crack down on big tech, regulators have increased pressure on ecommerce giant Alibaba Group Holdings Ltd. to divest its media assets.

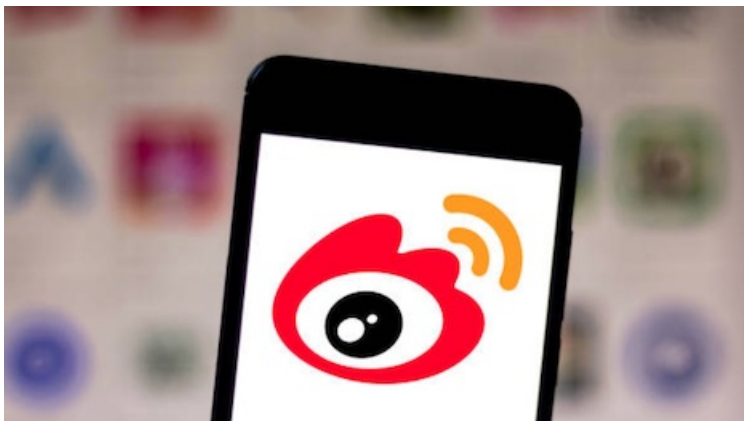
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Over the past year, the central government in Beijing has gradually tightened its leash on major tech players due to concerns over their expansive growth. In an address on Monday, Chinese President Xi Jinping called for an acceleration of strict rules and regulations on "platform" companies.

Cracking down

One area of particular concern for Chinese government regulators is how the country's biggest tech companies Alibaba and Tencent have become heavily vertically-integrated ecosystems encompassing everything from ecommerce and social media to film and television production and distribution.

In December 2020, Chinese regulators launched an investigation into Alibaba on the premise of alleged monopolistic practices ([see story](#)).



Alibaba has a market value of nearly \$3.5 billion in Weibo, a social media platform most similar to Twitter. Image credit: Getty

Throughout its two-decade lifespan, Alibaba has accumulated a significant pool of media assets across broadcast,

digital, social and advertising. Notably, the company has stakes in social media platform Weibo as well as Hong Kong newspaper *South China Morning Post*.

According to a Tuesday **report** from *The Wall Street Journal*, Alibaba's publicly listed holdings had a combined market value of more than \$8 billion on Monday morning, which includes roughly \$3.5 billion in Weibo and \$2.6 billion in video sharing platform Bilibili.

It has not yet been disclosed whether officials have requested that Alibaba completely sell off its media assets or just divest a portion of its holdings.

The *Financial Times* initially **reported** on Tuesday that the Alibaba internet browser has been removed from several Chinese app stores.

Luxury brands heavily rely on Alibaba, as well as its related social media platforms, to reach affluent Chinese consumers.

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