

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## What does China's beauty buying look like post-lockdown?

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Have months of lockdowns hurt China's beauty consumption? Evidently not, as a new study predicts the market will swell to \$15 billion in 2024. Image credit: Estée Lauder

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Mask mandates and months trapped indoors have not dented China's desire for skincare and cosmetics.

According to data firm Ji-gua.com, the country's beauty market is expected to reach \$13.2 billion (88.9 billion RMB) in 2022 before hitting \$15.5 billion (104 billion RMB) in 2024.

So far in 2022, average monthly beauty sales on ecommerce sites come out to roughly \$300 million (2 billion RMB), with Douyin accounting for 54 percent of beauty sales among social media platforms. Xiaohongshu follows behind at 29 percent, a drop from its 43 percent share in the first quarter of 2021.

**The Jing Take:** While the growth projection is promising, it hides the pain many beauty companies faced in the first quarter.

U.S. prestige beauty giant [Estée Lauder](#), for example, noted that reduced retail traffic and limited distribution capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions caused organic sales to fall mid-single-digits in the mainland.

Similarly, [Procter & Gamble](#) reported that Greater China sales were down mid-single-digits versus the prior year which was up 22 percent.

That said, some beauty sectors are faring better than others.

In the same quarter ending March 31, prestige beauty ecommerce sales in China reached \$2.7 billion, up 11 percent from the same period last year, according to [The NPD Group](#).

Even before the most recent Omicron wave, global players such as L'Oral, Shiseido and Coty were already focusing on their luxury divisions to [impressive success](#).

In fact, Coty China's prestige beauty was growing a whopping [six times faster](#) than the market in the quarter ended Dec. 31.

But where are consumers going to buy these beauty products?

When it comes to social commerce, **Douyin** is the clear winner.

With about 600 million daily active users, China's version of TikTok is more than a short video platform. Over the past two years, it has built out its ecommerce capabilities to include **flagship stores**, **an e-wallet** and a cross-border marketplace.

Luxury brand **Lancme** is a testament to both the importance of the platform and the strength of the high-end beauty segment: in just 10 days of opening a flagship store on Douyin, it saw sales in excess of \$1.5 million (10 million RMB).

As these figures show, COVID-19 may have changed what and how beauty consumers buy, but it has not curbed their desire to splurge. Not in the long run.

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