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Why brands need pop-ups more than ever in China

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Over the past decade, pop-ups have progressed from a nice-to-have to a must for any brand or retailer invested in mainland China. Image credit: Beast @

By [Jing Daily](#)

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Over the past decade, **pop-ups** have progressed from a nice-to-have to a must for any brand or retailer invested in mainland China.

This is particularly true in the fashion and beauty segments, where brands are eager to entice consumers back to physical retail locations and launch collaborations that can attract the attention of younger demographics.

The collaboration angle of pop-ups is key to understanding why these temporary retail events are so crucial in China.

In recent years, brand collaborations have become arguably more ubiquitous in mainland China than in other major consumer markets, with everyone from foreign multinationals to resurgent local brands jumping on the bandwagon.

Pop-ups when done correctly in China are a tried-and-tested way to generate buzz for new products and drive much-needed bricks-and-mortar footfall.

Some of the most successful pop-ups in China have clear markers of success that transcend immediate revenue generation. Typically, the goal is to offer market cred to the retail partner while promoting a specific element of the brand partner's offering typically a specific product, collection or collaboration.

One example of this is a December 2021 pop-up held by Shanghai-based multi-brand retailer Little B in partnership with Maison Margiela to promote Margiela's fragrance line. The event drew a wide range of local KOLs and fragrance enthusiasts, with a Weibo post by local KOL Ren Zimo racking up nearly 24,000 likes, 1,245 comments and 167 reposts.

For Little B, the benefits were obvious and more far-reaching than just attracting potential shoppers: an official association with a respected global brand is the ultimate advertisement.

Another marker of a well-designed pop-up in China is the ability of both partners to amplify their reach and connect with local consumers.

This spring, Michael Kors x Ellesse launched pop-ups in Wuhan and Shenzhen to promote their [24-piece collaborative collection](#), baking in activations to fuel activity and social media buzz. Shoppers whose shared photos of the event surpassed 20 likes received additional gifts at the pop-ups, while Michael Kors in return received a total social reach of 7.5 million on Weibo, Xiaohongshu and Douyin, according to influencer marketing platform Lefty.io.

Engagement on posts about the pop-up also outperformed the usual content posted by both Michael Kors and Ellesse, with the hashtag #MKxellesse# attaining 35,000 reads on the back of the Wuhan and Shenzhen pop-ups, easily surpassing the general hashtag #MichaelKors#, which reached 31,000 reads.

Pop-up collaborations between international and Chinese retailers are also increasingly widespread.

In 2020, H&M-owned Swedish brand & Other Stories collaborated with the popular Chinese lifestyle brand and retailer The Beast on a store-in-store & Other Stories pop-up at The Beast offering a limited-edition gift box. The pop-up proved a hit online, with an event-related hashtag racking up more than 11 million views on Weibo.

Download your copy of [Big in China: Brand Collaboration](#) today on [Jing Daily's Reports page](#).

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