

MARKETING

Want your brand collaboration to stand out in China? Get nostalgic

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One standout trend in China is leveraging familiar IPs from cartoons or national food brands to stir a sense of nostalgia in millennials and Gen-Zers. Image credit: Loewe x Spirited Away

By **Sadie Barger**

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The following is an excerpt from Jing Daily's market report *Big in China: Brand Collaboration*.

Packed with detailed breakdowns of the top revenue-generating collaboration trends for brands, retailers and more, the report is a must-read for anyone looking to attract China's most influential luxury consumers. Get your copy today on Jing Daily's [Reports page](#).

When evaluating collaborations in China, one standout trend is the leveraging of familiar IPs from cartoons or national food brands that stir a sense of nostalgia.

For example, in 2022 Chinese rapper Jackson Wang's streetwear brand Team Wang collaborated with one of China's household names, Taiwanese food manufacturer Want Want, [on a gift box](#) to celebrate the Year of the Tiger. On Weibo, the hashtag "Buy Want Want to Bring Luck to Spring Festival," which promoted the collaboration gift box, racked up an impressive 100 million cumulative views.

As Mr. Wang said in a statement, "When I was a kid, there would always be Want Want [rice crackers] in the house during Lunar New Year, and I loved that feeling of being able to share them with family and friends."

Given that Team Wang is a clothing brand, tapping Want Want not only created the opportunity of extending into a new product category, but also allowed Team Wang to relate to a wider audience as it is not only fashion or music fans who consume Want Want crackers at home.

In 2021, Mintel found that 77 percent of Chinese consumers enjoy products that stir memories of the past, including childhood snacks. Nostalgia is a straightforward way to stir endorphins, while comforting consumers, particularly during difficult times such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whether a direct result of challenging periods or not, China has seen a consistent flow of nostalgic food and cartoon collaborations in 2022.

In May 2022, the newly launched, Gen Z-focused beauty brand Pink Bear , part of the portfolio of Perfect Diary owner Yatsen Holding Limited, launched a playful collection featuring the IP of the Japanese cartoon Chibi Maruko-chan 〇.

First introduced as a popular cartoon in China from the 1990s through the end of its run in 2018, this Chibi Maruko-chan cosmetics line specifically targeted the nostalgia of Chinese millennials and Gen-Zers.

According to Chinese consumer research from China-based marketing agency Catalyst Agents, today most nostalgia marketing is aimed at millennials and Gen-Zers.

China's millennials are familiar with cartoons such as Doraemon and Ghibli Studio, so it was therefore unsurprising that LVMH-owned Spanish brand Loewe's [Spirited Away collection](#) performed particularly well in mainland China in both 2021 and 2022.

Global shopping platform Lyst reported that after the second collection was announced in January 2022, searches for Loewe jumped 23 percent within 24 hours, proving positive nostalgia-fueled consumer sentiment.

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

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