



# CONTENT RADAR 2021-2022 Q1 REPORT R3 China

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# R3 Content Radar - Covered Areas 涵盖内容



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## Ever-aggressive “Clash of Contents” in 2021-2022

It is not doubt, that Chinese consumers’ attention under ever-changing digital ecosystem are further scattering in 2021 and beginning of 2022, leaving brands with tremendous hardship to engage and attract desired target group with efficiency. The hardship entailed not only the new emerging channels and concept, but also the allocation of attention, as well as way and depth of engagement from one social touchpoint to another social touchpoint, from one media format to another media format.

This unstoppable tendency will drive further fierce competitions among brands and marketers via ever-aggressive war to gain consumer attentions and achieve business wins under such an disruptive era.



# Key Observations 2021-2022 Q1

## 1. Engaging Through Force of Sentiments

Dynamic combo of Local Chinese culture & western culture, immense size of the market and layered depth of the consumers provides excellence marketing battlefield to grasp consumer sentiments and advocate brands and products through them.

*“Not only can water float a boat, but it can sink it also.”*  
—Chinese Idiom

While leveraging and sentiments and occasions, it is essential for marketers to increase content agility on social trends and cultural taboos to avoid potential crash on consumers WOM.

虎年 大吉

马上 快乐

### Highlight 1

CNY Campaigns are Tapping into Deeper Level of Sentiments

### Highlight 2

Increase Content Agility to Local Social/Cultural Trends

### Highlight 3

Expanding CSR Marketing Domain



# Key Observations 2021-2022 Q1

## 2.Future Reached via Two Way Road

While emerged with massive new concepts like NFT, Virtual Idol, Metaverse...., a stronger eager to learn the future of marketing arise from every corner of the marketing field.

Surprisingly, while some marketers are diving into the new concepts to explore first-to-the-market opportunities, some others are further re-inventing and enhancing what is regarded is “conventional” way of gaining consumers attention. Creating "third space" in experiential marketing would be a perfect example of doing so.

HAUS SHANGHAI  
0 10 10 10 1  
7 9 8 8 N 2

### Highlight 4

Growing Marketing Opportunities Under The Umbrella of Metaverse

### Highlight 5

The Third Places - A Contested Space of Experiential Marketing



# Key Observations 2021-2022 Q1

## 3.Fire Content Power via Entertainment

Further explosion of entertainment content in China drove increasingly fierce competition in marketing through entertainment programs, in terms of both selection of top tier entertainment programs and stand out among all competitors in the show & out of the show.

As entertainment marketing is no longer a pay-and-expose, it is fairly crucial for marketers to design and execute a complete journey from inside program exposure all the way to outside program leverage and amplifications.



# Key Observations 2021-2022 Q1

## 4. Dynamic Duos to Achieve Quick Win

In past 3 years, almost every business category has embraced rounds of “collaboration blast” initiated by both or multiple brands, either within category, or cross category.

Yet the fatigue from overcrowded collaboration content were not able diminish brands’ passion to surprise the market by waves of either unexpected collaborations or strong tactical collaborations that drives direct business results.

**Highlight 8**  
**Channel Collaboration to Enhance O2O Integration**

**Highlight 9**  
**Social Buzz Maximized through Co-Branding and Crossover Marketing in Luxury Industry**



# Highlight 1: CNY Campaigns are Tapping into Deeper Level of Sentiments

## Campaign Riding on CNY Traditions

Campaigns carried out based on CNY themes and traditional customs in connection with brand messages to drive new year sales.



## Campaign based on Unique Scenario of CNY

Brands noticed some problems that can occur during the CNY holiday. These campaigns presented problem solving solutions through use of their products.

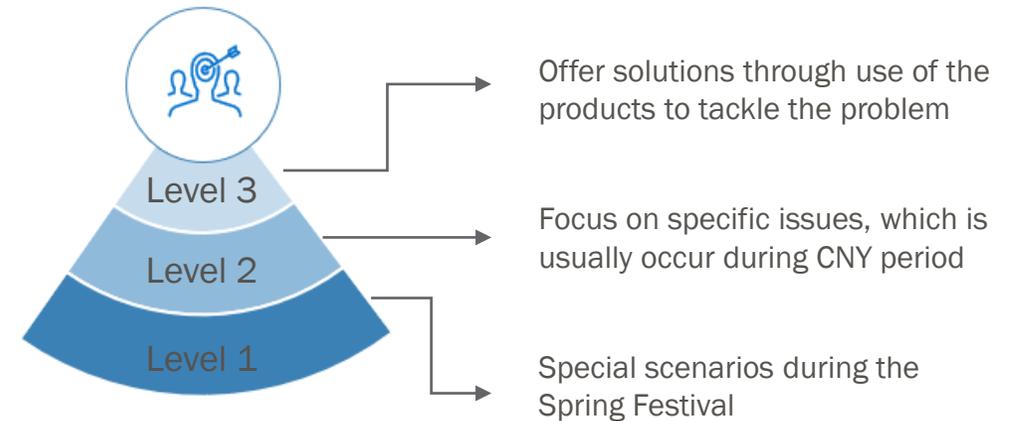


## Viral Marketing via leverage of CNY elements

Combing the CNY elements and brand characteristics together, brands aim to create unforgettable CNY moments that generate social buzz and spread on social platforms for extended audiences.



## Deepen the Emotional Bonding Between Brands and Customers



# Campaign Riding on CNY Traditions Cater to CNY Sentiment to Drive Sales and Attention

**饿了么** Big Spring Festival Shopping (大年货节) offers festival special edition food package for sharing at gathering occasions



CNY is a period of time family members get together to review and share the experience of the past year. Based on such tradition, Ele.me collaborated with multiple food & beverage brands to launch a special edition of festival food package containing several number of products in one big package, such as snacks and fast food to meet the needs of sharing at such occasion.

**和平精英** A special edition CNY City Map of Dragon and Lion (龙狮城) was launched prior CNY to bring good omens to gamers through the game.

Game for Peace launched a new map in the game, a special CNY themed design. In this map, players can get the equipment of lion dressing (same as the lion dancing), and go to a blessing tree to pray for good fortune and luck in the Year of the Tiger.

A famous Feng Shui Master was part of the campaign promotion to release a Weibo post carrying a role of the fictitious operator of the Dragon and Lion City in the game to guide gamers good fortune and turn one's luck.



Weibo post of Fengshui Master, Mai Lingling



Campaign posters



Lion dress, specially designed equipment in the game

# Viral Video Leverage the CNY Elements Communication Made Effective to Gen-z Speaking in Their Language



The unexpected attracted viral spreading among Gen-z audience effectively

BMW attracted massive attention during CNY from via the CNY campaign video. Instead of the usual way of automotive advertisement portraying successes and premium lifestyles associated with the brand, BMW used the popular video format among Gen-z, Gui Chu (auto-tune remix-themed content) in the video to communicate with young audiences in celebration of the CNY festival. Such unexpected advertisement from BMW caused a stir online and spread quickly among the youngsters on social platforms.



Gen-z audience posting favorable comments of the Gui Chu (auto-tune remix-themed) content on social platforms.



**\_兔菟子**

02月01日 15:31 来自 nova7你在焦点在

宝马的虎年广告...? 哪里来的鬼才策划 被鬼畜到了 致命的节奏感



**Cho曹**

01月31日 11:39 来自 iPhone客户端

太鬼畜了!! 冲着这个换车还要换宝马 哈哈哈哈哈

@宝马中国

BMW虎力全开, 马上如虎添翼, 马上虎虎生风, 马上虎年大吉, 马上快乐! #宝马太虎了#

链接 宝马中国的微博视频号



01月27日 09:00 来自 微博视频号

416415 6655 91448

## Use of Memes

The lyrics of advertisement is playing with memes that have strong association with the brand and CNY:

The characters of 马 (horse, the traditional transportation vehicle in China that is equivalent to cars in modern day, implying BMW) and 虎 (tiger, as in the Chinese zodiac animal of 2022, year of the Tiger) are repeatedly used in the video in auto-tone and remix.

In this Gen-z way of talking to them allowed the brand to build more brand affinity and bring audience closer. It also made a difference of BMW from those competitors who still communicate with youngsters in the old school way.



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# Campaign Ideas Based on Unique Scenario of CNY

## Address pain points and strengthen emotional bonding

New Year's Eve dinner is the highlight of the holiday. It is seen as the most important ritual bonded with strong emotions brought together by family reunion and expectations of bright outlook of the year. The sumptuous dinner is an indispensable tradition of the Spring Festival. However dish-washing after such big meal seems so daunting. Finish and Robam well demonstrated how their products can help solve such pain point by recreating the scenarios and solutions made possible by using their products.



The mini-film depicted a family of three who live in Guangdong. The father was a chef who worked hard as young to afford the family living. He was forced to retire because of a back illness. The son has very conflicted feelings towards his father. On one hand, he complained about father's absence during in his childhood. On the other hand, he cared for father suffering from the back illness caused by years of cooking. Finally, he chose a improper way to express his love by locking the kitchen and forbidding his father from cooking.

At the end, the father and the son find a middle-ground: the son renovated the kitchen and installed smart kitchen appliances. With the ease to use of the smart appliances, cooking was made much easier for the father saving him from suffering further back pain. It efficiently saves time and energy to finish the dinner on New Year's Eve.



Campaign Mini-film



老板创造者系列

蒸烤冠兰 集蒸更好吃

老板创造者系列

免洗烘干洗碗机 洗碗更轻松

Product KV posters used for amplification after release of mini-film

### Highlight of the Robam Campaign

There is no obvious product placement in the mini-film and the role of smart kitchen appliance as handy supporter is naturally implemented in the story. The product selling-points were demonstrated in a subtle way while the watching experience of the video is not compromised.



### 春节联欢碗会 Spring Gala of Bowls

A tiring chore of dish washing after the family reunion dinner on the New Year's Eve can be quite overwhelming. Compared to enjoying the recreation activities like snatching lucky money and watching Spring Festival Gala, dish washing seems more like a punishment.

Finish's campaign video showcased how their product helped with washing piled up dishes in that particular scenario on New Year's eve.

Rainbow Choir is featured in the video singing and acting out the scene and demonstrated how stress-free it is to use Finish product.

The product benefits of removing heavy oil and stains with ease is clearly elaborated to trigger the emotional response of consumers who face such problems. The message of "Finish with ease" highlight the product benefits and product name in an easy to remember way.



KV poster



TVC generated 50m+ impressions

## Highlight 2: Increase Content Agility to Local Social/Cultural Trends

The term “China-chic” 国潮 has expanded the concept of “Made in China” and characterizes the rise of China’s native fashion trends. Over the past decade, China-chic has gained 528% increase of attention in domestic market. This trend has led many marketers jumping on the bandwagon to pursue the appeal to not only young audience but also Chinese customers in general who are heavily influenced by the growing cultural confidence. However, several recent controversies ads were backlashed online accusing brands of disrespecting Chinese people by showing models with “slanted eyes”. The issues were overwhelmingly debated online among netizens causing some major damages to the brands.

### TIMELINE



The accuse was caused by a photograph of Dior’s art exhibition in Shanghai, a photography work by Chinese photographer, Chen Man (陈漫). In the photo, an Asian woman in traditional dress holding a Dior bag appears to be spooky in particular with the slanted-eye makeup. Netizens criticized the photography being conforming to the western beauty standards. “The model looked like she came from hell” a netizen commented. Dior quickly deleted the photo and issued a statement saying that the brand as always do respect the feelings of the Chinese people. Chenman later also apologized for her “immaturity and ignorance” at the time of the shoot.



Three Squirrels (三只松鼠)’s poster from a campaign of 2019 received critics for models’ long and thin eye look. Some people think the eye makeup is demonizing Chinese people. “The models on this page are Chinese, and the makeup is based on her facial characteristics, without any attempt to dehumanize her.” Three Squirrels apologized for the discomfort caused by the incident and removed the ad materials immediately. They promised to prevent such incident from happening again in the future.



The controversy of Three Squirrels is not yet ceased while Mercedes-Benz released a new ad to promote a latest car model, which led it into an online backlash.

The ads featured an actress with painted slant eye makeup. Netizens think the makeup, focused on narrow eyes and upturned eye end, is a stereotype of East Asians. Netizens were intolerant of the slanted-eye look because they link it to the West’s perceived superiority. Eventually, Mercedes solved the problem with replacement ads.

### R3 OBSERVATION

Brands should take cues from today’s patriotic social media landscape and stay humble about Chinese consumers’ expectations of how they are represented on the global stage to avoid PR disasters. On the other side, brands should always stay precautious with controversial issues that could bring on negative criticism.



# Expanding CSR Marketing Domain to Shift Brand Image From “Product Oriented” to “Brand Oriented”



Kang Wang: “Pick Up Plastic”, Reducing the Dandruff of Earth

As an anti-dandruff product, Kang Wang well leveraged the CSR topic on environmental protection to show corporate responsibility and demonstrate product efficacy in one campaign.

During its plogging campaign of “Picking and Running” (捡跑活动), it compares white trash to dandruff of earth, and proposition to encourage volunteers to “wash off the dandruff for earth” (为地球去屑). This campaign showed how brand can well integrate product values and social responsibility to convey an upgraded and self-consistent brand message to consumers.



Online KV Posters for amplification



Plogging activities were held in 6 cities (e.g. Beijing, Chongqing etc.) across China.



## Highlight of Campaign

- Integrated marketing communication: to realize unified and full-link consumer journey across platforms, Kang Wang co-launched activities with pharmacies offline, then sparked online discussion via KOL/KOC & PR release.
- It was able to reshape the brand image of Kangwang in the mind of consumer to be CSR advocate and responsible enterprise.

## Results:

- Extensive brand exposure
- Deepen the binding with pharmacy partners to cultivate consumption behavior of consumers
- Built a responsible and CSR advocate brand image

# Expanding CSR Marketing Domain

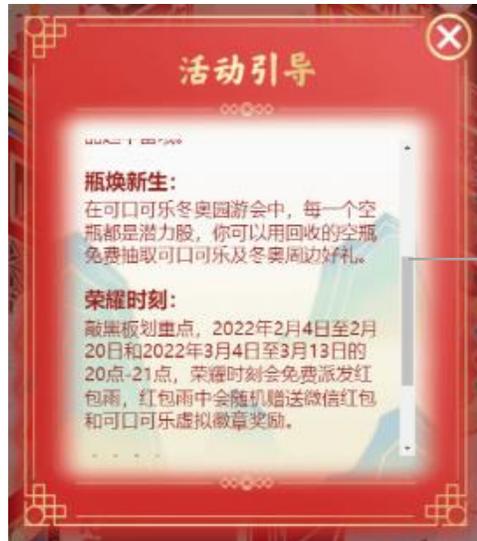
## IMC Campaign to Achieve Multiple Brand Purpose - Coca Cola Winter Olympics Campaign (1)

### Emphasis Social Responsibility via CSR Advertisement

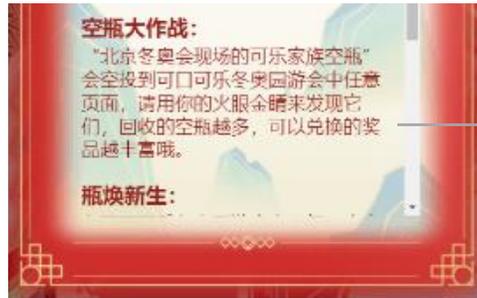


As the Winter Olympic Games approaching, Coca-Cola released an eco-friendly campaign to call for actions taken to protect environment. In the ad, recycling water bottles are mimicked as sports of Winter Olympics. An empty bottle is likened to a curling stone, the bottle slides smoothly into the trash bin by rubbing the ground, and then falls into the correct trash (recyclable garbage). While promoting the Winter Olympics and environmental protection, the ads also add fun to encourage audiences for participation.

### Emphasis Social Amplification via Gamification Eco Campaign: Online & Offline



The guidance in the game



Coca-Cola released a Winter Olympics-related game on its WeChat mini program. In the game, players can collect empty bottles scattered randomly on the page in exchange for free gifts.



Collect empty bottles in the game and get badges as gift

Coca-Cola also launched an offline event called "Meeting friends with Badges" (以章会友) in Beijing. The event called on players who participated in the mini-game to voluntarily join in and exchange badges. After collecting all the badges, players can get a display stand (limited design) as a reward.



# Expanding CSR Marketing Domain

## IMC Campaign to Achieve Multiple Brand Purpose - Coca Cola Winter Olympics Campaign (2)

### Emphasis Brand Communication and Innovation via Recycling Packages and Processing to Gift for Consumers



- Coca-Cola reprocessed recycled bottles into table mats:
- Each table mat contains the material of 3 recycled bottles
  - Materials of mats unused from previous campaigns were then recycled again.
  - Table mats are made in the hope that everyone can enjoy their meal

Sending table mats as presents prior to CNY, Coca-Cola expressed the best wishes through such special gift for Spring Festival with wished to recipients to get best of luck in the new year.

Recycled material made into table mats were sent out before CNY, consumers left positive feedback on social media



Coca-Cola processed the bottles into working suit (recycled material, PET). The suits were given as gifts to cleaners to clean up rubbish for the Winter Olympic Game. The working suit includes coat, trousers, thermal linker, neck, winter gloves and a hood. Coca-Cola not only embodies the brand value of warmth and quality, but also promotes the public awareness of recycling and environmental protection in an innovative way.



Table mats designed for people eat along, hoping one can also enjoy the meal and so does life

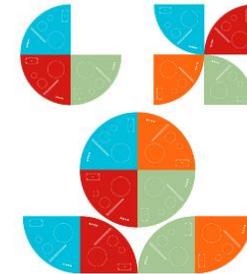
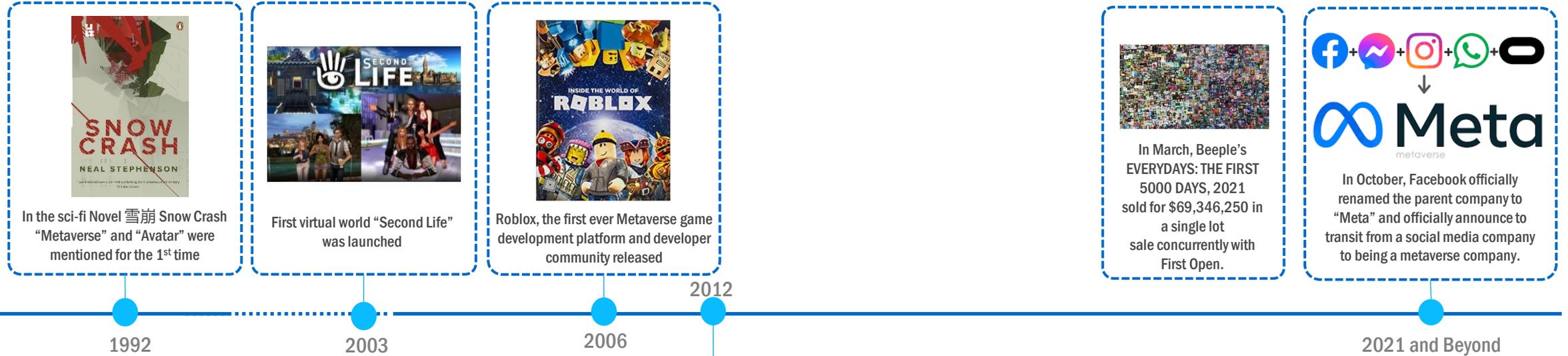


Table mats designed for family dinner, expressing best wishes for reunion

# Highlight 4: Growing Marketing Opportunities Under The Umbrella of Metaverse

## Metaverse Key Milestones

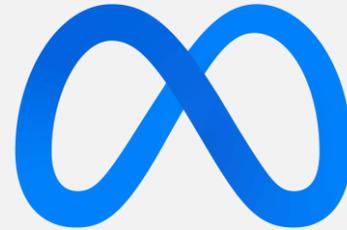


Over the past decade, digital human has evolved from a simple figure of ACG content to IP virtual character idols of entertainment, then to meta-human, who have a appearance of real person with a "real" identity and human character. The strong market demand and advancing technology has enabled the quick revolution of virtual humans.



## Evolution of Digital Human

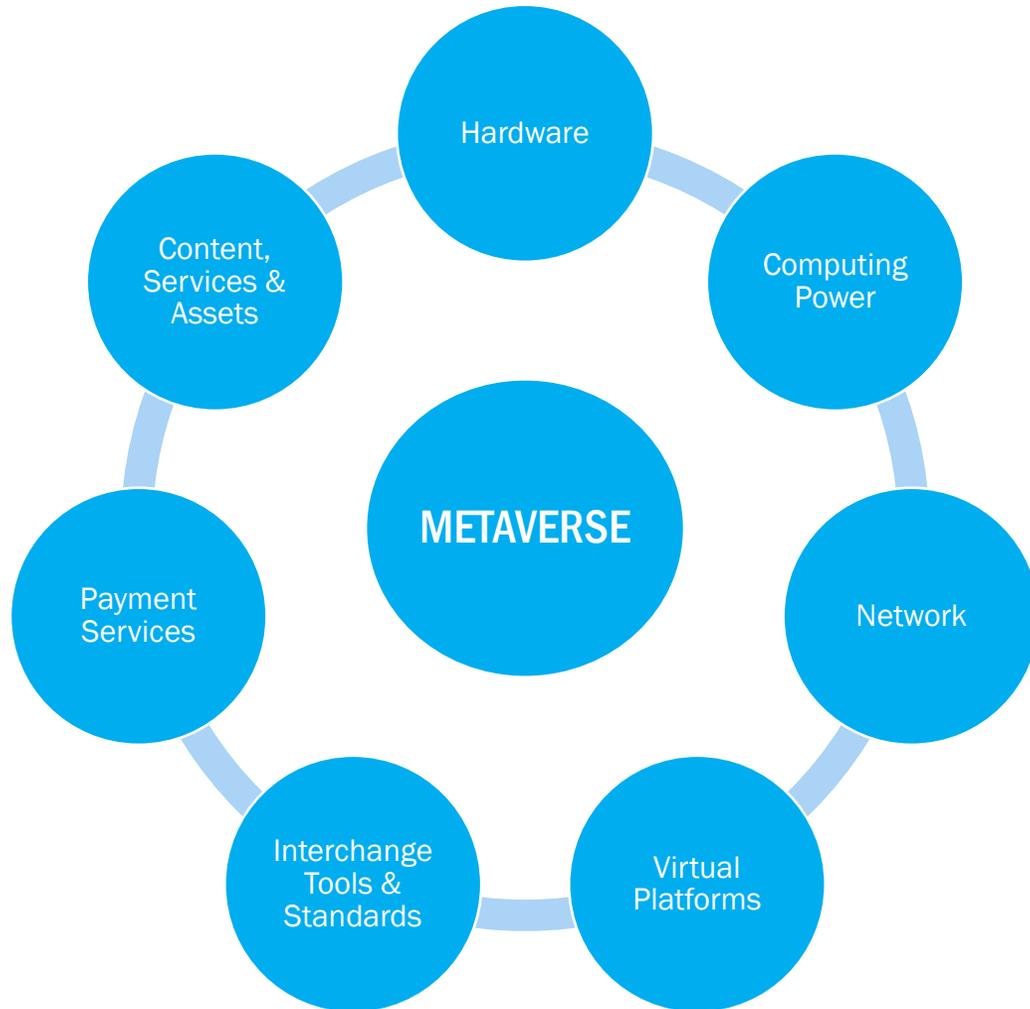
# Metaverse Explained



“The Metaverse is a massively scaled and interoperable network of real-time rendered 3D virtual worlds which can be experienced synchronously and persistently by an **effectively unlimited number of users**, and with **continuity of data, such as identity, history, entitlements, objects, communications, and payments.**”

~Matthew Ball, Venture Capitalist & Technologist

# The Building Blocks of Metaverse



The rise of the metaverse will have repercussions to the marketing and advertising industry, similar to how e-commerce has disrupted retail.

Namely, more work in virtual spaces means a higher demand for agencies and game developers who can build 3D digital assets, as well as digital engineers and coders who can take a brand's aesthetic and meld it to fit its new digital reality.

Beyond securing the talent and creating the work itself, brands need to figure out how to be authentic in this new setting. *“Just because you are an iconic brand in the physical world, doesn't mean it transfers over into the metaverse,”* says Akash Nigam, CEO and founder of avatar agency Genies. *“Someone needs to reinvent your brand with the metaverse in mind. These brands will ultimately start from scratch, reinvent their digital goods in a more fantastical way, and exceed boundaries for what is feasible in the physical world.”*

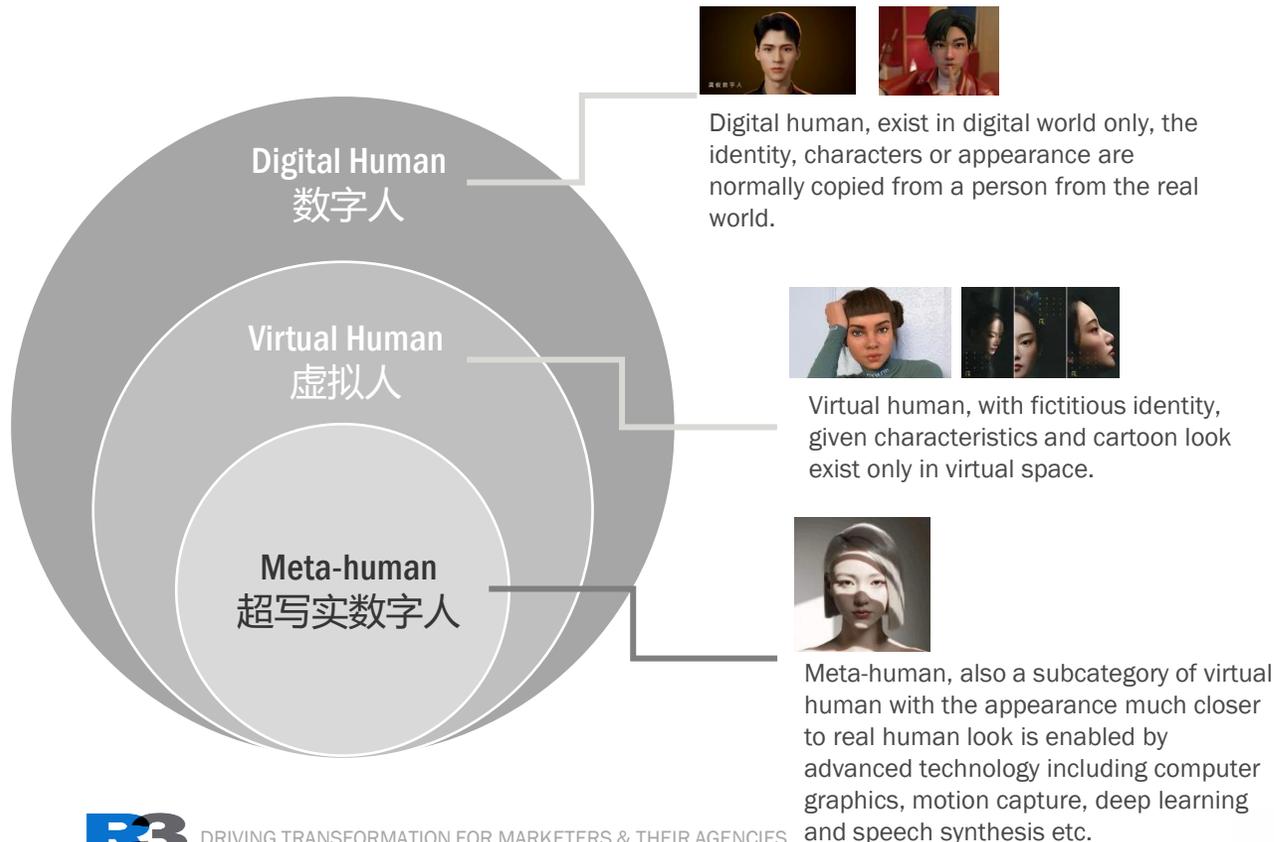
While the idea of Metaverse might feel like a novelty right now, many brands have started exploring the potentials by leveraging two of the most popular concepts gained massive attentions along with Metaverse – [NFT](#) and [Virtual Human](#).

# The Rise of Virtual Human Idol/Influencer Marketing

Looking back on 2021, many of the “traffic stars” celebrities had fall for unethical scandals causing some major damages of brand images. Chinese government continues to rack down on high-profile individuals due to the belief that toxic celebrity culture is positioning the minds of country’s youth.

While brands remain vigilant with celebrity endorsements, there is a growing interest in the potential of virtual idols and influencers as vehicles for marketing of brands. Virtual human can carry the role to humanize brands while with risks mitigated to the lowest possible.

## Common Definition Explained:



## Pros and Cons of Real-life Celebrity vs Virtual Human idols/influencers:

	Real-life Celebrity	Virtual Human idols/influencers
<b>Pros</b>	<p>High social volume and creative-driven.</p> <p>Mature and solid industry chain offers wide rang of options to brands</p> <p>Highly interactive with audiences and applicable to a range of brand categories</p>	<p>easy to control and manage via technology</p> <p>Relatively low cost of collaboration</p> <p>Level of customization is high as long as copyright issues are eliminated.</p>
<b>Cons</b>	<p>Difficult to have full control</p> <p>High cost of collaboration</p> <p>Risk of breaking the public image</p>	<p>Technological and aesthetics barriers</p> <p>A rising industry still at exploratory stage with absence of industry best practices</p> <p>Interaction with consumer at high frequency and anytime</p>

# Opportunities for Brands in Virtual Human Marketing

## R3 OBSERVATION

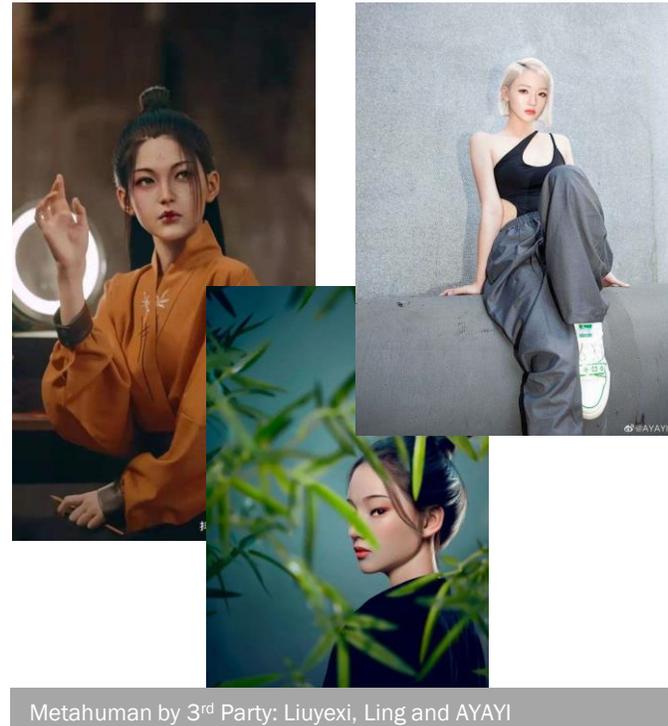
As the virtual idol industry undergoes continuous development, the commercial value of digital celebrities will continuously grow. The commercialization of meta-human is taking shape and yet to be defined in the future in the domestic market.

At this exploratory stage, most virtual idols are still shown simply in photography, and videos are mostly conceptual. Marketers and 3<sup>rd</sup> party operators lack of long-term operation experience and knowledge.

### Virtual human launched by brands



### Metahuman created and managed by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties



### Other Virtual human appeared in entertainment industries



Opportunities for brands to leverage virtual human as a marketing tool

# Opportunities in Virtual Human Marketing Communication with Gen-z via Virtual Idols

安慕希<sup>™</sup>  
希腊酸奶

Ambrosial is ambitious in stepping in the blue ocean of Metauniverse and has been making several strategic moves. Sep 2021, shortly after designating AYAYI, the Meta-human as the digital art and fashion curator of Ambrosial, the brand launched a brand new yogurt product called AMX, claiming to be the world's 1<sup>st</sup> ever digital yogurt. With its technological and futuristic look and feel, this line of products apparently aiming to appeal to young consumers, and is seen as Ambrosial's another major step towards a youthful and fashionable brand image transformation.



## R3 OBSERVATION

In order to stay close to the preferences of young consumers and demonstrate the determination of the brand, the brand invested in innovation to drive brand upgrades, completing the transformation from a "industry brand" to a "social brand". Different from gimmick-style collaboration, Ambrosial's deployment of Metaverse is a completed picture with solid planning, and the cooperation with AYAYI is only a small part of the plan.

AYAYI co-promoted the digital yogurt on her social media accounts like Red, Weibo as the co-designer of AMX. The brand even released several working photographs appreciating AYAYI's effort in co-creating the product with the brand team, which brought more realistic sense to the whole story.



AMX Promotion Posted by Ayayi on Weibo & Red

Ayani Working with AMX Brand Team

More than that, 安慕希 further states that AMX would be the first real NFT yogurt on the blockchain in the future. By taking this rather strategic move, 安慕希 hopes this bold and pioneer attempt could narrow the distance with Gen Z.

# Opportunities in Virtual Human Marketing

## Watch-outs

Some degree of backlash against the virtual idols is already on the way. The Chinese traditional/ "Guochao" style fashion virtual idol Ling had received negative comments about advertisements for cosmetic products. In collaboration with Gucci to promote lipstick product on Red, the post was criticized for virtual humans being unable to represent the authentic texture/color and being inappropriate for a "Guochao" figure to promote international brand.

Gucci x Ling Test Promotion on Lipstick, Gucci delated the posts right after being criticized

### R3 OBSERVATION

Marketers should remain cautious with risks involved using virtual idols, whether they are compatible to the brand image or right fit to deliver brand values. Brands may consider focusing on appealing to audiences who appreciate the imaginative, romantic possibilities of virtual worlds rather than merely trying to mimic the real world.



June 1<sup>st</sup> 2021, Florasis announced its virtual idol Huaxizi, named after the brand. It is designed to be a personification of the brand and encapsulating brand's strong focus on traditional Chinese heritage and beauty.

Before that, the brand has been debatably questioned for over-marketing. Florasis leveraged multiple celebrities in building brand awareness at early stage. The risk of celebrity ethical issues and scandals in recent years are increasing. Losing emotional connections with fans after end of contract with celebrity is also worrying.

Having a brand-owned virtual IP figure is seen as a breakthrough in brand personification to better communicate with consumers. However would it be a short term hype or a long term tool that ultimately become a brand equity that could add values and drive sales, all depend on how brands operate and invest on a long run.

## The Hype of NFT NFT Digital Collectables

Cryptocurrencies and blockchain are currently blocked in China. However NFT offerings rebranded as “digital collectibles” find a way to stay active in public eye. The current system permits the initial acquisition of an NFT. Platforms do not allow buyers to resell or trade their purchases by government regulations aimed at minimizing speculation.

### NFT Collectables by 2022 Asian Games Hangzhou

The image shows a Weibo post from the official account of the Hangzhou 2022 Asian Games. The post, dated 2 minutes ago from an iPhone client, announces the launch of the digital torch NFT collection. It states that the digital torch will be available for purchase on September 16 at 12:00 via the Alipay 'Smart Asian Games' mini-program. The collection is limited to 20,000 pieces and priced at 39 RMB each. The post is powered by Ant Chain. Below the text is a small image of the digital torch NFT. To the right is a larger promotional poster for the 'Digital Torch Launch' event. The poster features the Hangzhou 2022 Asian Games logo, the title '数字火炬发布' (Digital Torch Launch), the price '¥39元/个' (39 RMB per piece), and the limited edition quantity '全球限售20000个' (Global limited edition of 20,000 pieces). It also displays the date and time '2021.9.16 12:00' and the name of the torch '薪火' (Xin Huo / Eternal Flame). A quote at the bottom reads: '数字火炬是实体火炬的一种数字载体，由蚂蚁链提供技术支持，让每个人都有机会成为亚运精神的传递者。' (The digital torch is a digital carrier of the physical torch, supported by Ant Chain technology, allowing everyone to have a chance to become a passer of the spirit of the Asian Games.)

The 2022 Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou announced the sale of its first NFT collection – a digital torch. The limited edition of the 20,000 NFTs is priced at 39 RMB each sold via an in-app feature in Alipay, powered by Ant Chain, the blockchain arm of Alibaba affiliate Ant Group.

### NFT Collectables Released by Ant Chain

The image displays a large digital torch NFT collectible on a black pedestal. The torch is golden and features a blue dragon-like figure. Below the torch, the text reads '紫禁琉璃荣光-与时俱进' (Purple Forbidden City Glaze Glory - Keeping Pace with the Times) and '限量 8000份' (Limited Edition 8000 pieces). To the right is a grid of four smaller NFT collectibles, each with a unique design inspired by the Forbidden City and Chinese culture. The designs include a blue dragon, a red and white floral motif, a white crane, and a traditional Chinese building. Each collectible has a title and a limited edition quantity: '紫禁琉璃荣光-与时俱进' (8000 pieces), '紫禁琉璃荣光-雪落紫禁' (8000 pieces), '紫禁琉璃荣光-瑞瑞彩霞' (8000 pieces), and '紫禁琉璃荣光-紫禁之门' (8000 pieces).

Ant Chain released “The forbidden city- colored glaze glory” series of NFT collectables. The design of this series of NFTs is inspired by the culture of the Forbidden City, attached with cultural symbolic visuals and elements, it appeals to Chinese consumers’ including four individual designs sold in single edition limited to 8,000 copies.

# The Hype of NFT

## NFT Themed Marketing Campaign

奈雪の茶

Chinese homegrown milk tea and bakery brand, Nayuki, has launched a series of activities to celebrate its 6th anniversary, including the launch of Nayuki's official brand ambassador "NAYUKI", a virtual idol that can personify the brand to be an amiable figure. This virtual KOL Nayuki has its own identity and characteristic, communicating with young people the charm of the tea with Chinese fad.

With this new virtual persona, the brand released a limited sets of "NAYUKI" NFTs blind box for sales, 300 sets in total and priced at 59 RMB each, available in digital artform only. Bounded by nature of NFT artworks in China, the digital collection is unique and exclusive but currently does not have investment values as being untransferable and untradable.



However, this campaign seems to be more sales-driven than real business transformation to Metaverse. By mainly promoting the membership card charged at 100 yuan for value of 150 yuan, Nayuki successfully gained 200 million GMV in just 72 hours. Besides the release of the NFTs, the brand did not make it clear for how it plan to develop in metaverse. It seems to be just an attempt in leveraging the trendy topic of Metauniverse to test brand power and deepen customer loyalty.

### R3 OBSERVATION

Most of those invested in the concepts of metaverse and NFT are international companies or domestic brands who have strong capital foundation.

The core factor that can drive consumers to buy NFT collectables still lies in "scarcity". Being the first to preempt the release of digital collectables and the first to release blind boxes of products in tea industry, Nayuki is able to occupy the first position in the mind of users and build a pioneering image of a tea brand.

## Highlight 5: “The Third Places 第三空间” A Contested Space of Experiential Marketing

As ever fierce as it is to gain consumers’ attention, we are seeing more brands, young or mature, local or global brands are investing more in the “third places” 第三空间 in particularly offline stores, to enhance the overall consumer experience online and offline.

Instead of simply focusing on sales and merchandising, the growing trend is repurposing offline shops as centers for **customer engagement and entertainment**.

Some retail shops extended services at the store to bring new experience and possibilities to consumers with added values; other offline stores are starting to look like “exhibition center/galleries” dedicated to novelty seeking experience; some may play a critical role for brands with DTC (direct-to-consumer) strategies, as the shops enable brands to engage with customer and capture data through interactions and purchases. Additionally, some thematic stores are designed to deliver brand unique value and aesthetic proposition through certain concepts or culture integrated with offline space.



“  
The “third places” 第三空间, naming places like bars, coffee shops, library, parks, general stores etc. that are other than living space (1<sup>st</sup> places) and workplaces (2<sup>nd</sup> places), are essential to community and public life. They are central to **local democracy** and **community vitality**.  
- Urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg <The Great Good Place> (1991)

”

# Redefine Conventional Commercial Space to Drive Organic UGC and PR

RALPH  
LAUREN

Ralph's Coffee opened right below Ralph Lauren retail store in Beijing. With the consistent branded look and feel, the store interior, food and coffee packaging, merchandises and even the distinguish brand IP, Polo bear, all packed in one location to offer consumers an inviting immersive brand experience. This luxury experiential attracted many KOLs and consumers to visit the store and generated organic UGC across social platforms.

## R3 OBSERVATION

Brands continue to redefine the idea of conventional commercial spaces to reignite the flame of retailers and consumer to physical stores. By adding coffee shop to retail store, Ralph Lauren has extended consumers' consumption scenario and provide an exclusivity that is difficult to imitate to consumers. Not only it provides additional reasons to visit the store, it demonstrates the **brand attitude and the lifestyle** it associates with, and in turn, creating **emotional connections** with target audiences. Consumers with such appreciate of the lifestyle brand promotes are likely to visit the store and share the experience in their social circles.

Gentle Monster's futuristic retail concept store provides **emotional provocation** to visitors to deliver an **unprecedented cultural experience**. With such innovative, artistry and pioneering mindset, it **differentiated itself** from any other sunglasses realm.

## GENTLE MONSTER



The 2<sup>nd</sup> HAUS worldwide, **HAUS Shanghai**, Gentle Monster's revamped flagship space was revealed. This multi-brand store shows boundary-breaking approach to the retail experience. The store blended retail, exhibition and experimentation spaces all in one combining Gentle Monster's eyewear design, desserts café Nudake and beauty brand Tamburins in a provocative cultural approach. The store had attracted large organic media exposure and UGC content online, across different social platforms.

# Mature Brand Retail Space Breakthrough to Drive Sales Growth and Convey Brand Value



In collaboration with the strategic partner Topsports, Nike opened the [Nike Rise Retail Concept store](#) in Beijing early Jan. Beijing is the capital of sports hence the store covers a wide range of sport fields including ball games, outdoor, skiing, hip-hop, skateboarding etc.

Nike Rise provides hyper-localised experience via the [redefined physical store](#), designed as a digital advanced sports hub, along with the [new Nike App features](#), which members can use to sign up for sport activities, workshops and events organized by local Nike athletes or sport influencers. Customers can personalize the products they purchase at the in-store “Nike By You” bar and “Nike Fit” technology helps them to find the best fitting.

## R3 OBSERVATION

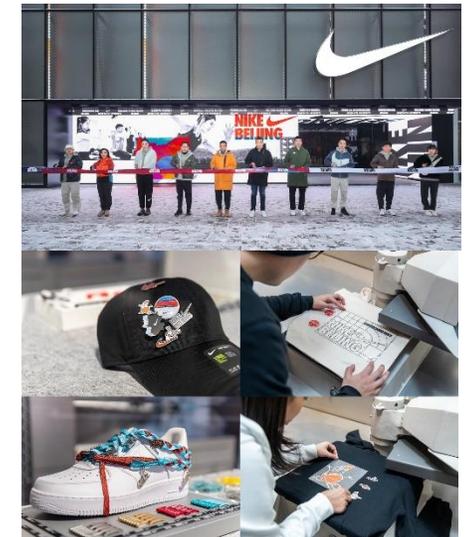
This marks the full implementation of [four-level of retail structure of Nike](#) in China market including HOUSE OF INNOVATION, NIKE RISE, NIKE LIVE and NIKE UNITE. The lineup of Nike store concepts are designed to [uniquely serve individual communities](#) in aiming to encourage members to visit stores more often and increase [direct-to-consumer business and boost sales](#), and ultimately to convey brand culture and enhance brand value.

Such retail concept store can provide a [seamless online and offline holistic](#) shopping experience and engagement to ensure consumers’ satisfaction and loyalty.

[Partnership with Topshop](#) can also empower Nike with unique resources to expand penetration, CRM construction and maintenance of local culture and consumption habits.

## NIKE’S Four Types of Concept Stores

NIKE LIVE	Provide experience of seamless connection and real-time interaction between mobile app and reality in the store
HOUSE OF INNOVATION	Available only at international super first tier mega cities, Shanghai and NYC. It offers consumers a peek behind the curtain of Nike’s biggest innovation moments with personalized and digitally-connected shopping journeys.
NIKE RISE	Aim to service local communities and cater for urban culture and offer sport classes, workshops and events to Nike members.
NIKE UNITE	Environmentally friendly store that are small in size and focus on community. Hire community residents as employees, support schools and non-profit organizations in the community.



Nike APP new features to enable online and offline integrated services provided at the Nike Rise store

Product customization at the store after purchase

# New Breed Brand Maximize Brand Influence and Build Momentum from Online to Offline

Banana in 蕉内



Banana in 1st store on Huaihai Road

Surrounded by brands including Gentle Monster, X11 store, Bosie and DOCUMENTS, **Banana in's thematic** 1<sup>st</sup> store in SH located on one of the most busiest areas of CBD districts in Shanghai. It benefits from massive foot traffic and attentions from young generations who are drawn to these new breed brands on Huaihai Road. Simple, creative and humanized interior design and visual merchandise heightened the brand attitude “redesign the basics” and provide the opportunity to consumers to see the physical products before purchasing.

- Both stores located at the center of business districts gaining organic foot traffic, **young and local brands Banana in and 三顿半** born and thrived via EC and online platforms are seeking offline channels to not only expand sales channel, but to provide a space for customers to social, to experience and to understand the brand and products better.
- Through the offline space, they aim to further develop brand equity and create more brand values to consumers for long-term business goals.



“into\_the force” 三顿半 conceptual store was designed to have a simple industrial look and feel to look like an unfinished space base. The visual display of the store and product packaging are all made by recyclable materials to reflect the brand's devotion in being environmental friendly. The space is also designed to be photogenic and social friendly, made easy for customers to move the tables and seats around easily for social and networking, and taking photos.

## R3 OBSERVATION

**Thematic and conceptual stores** are designed to deliver brand **unique value and aesthetic proposition** through certain **concepts or culture** integrated with offline space. Not only it provides a **brand new consumption experience** to consumer to remember, but also further develop brand equity for **long term business goals**.

# Highlight 6: Integrated Content Marketing Empowered by Entertainment

Popular content marketing format in combination with entertainment

## Sitcom + Campaign = Lighthearted Communication with Audiences



The sitcom scene is based on the story of Aladdin's magic lamp, where two friends trying to define a “like-minded” and “heart-to-heart” friendship to complement the AI system selling point of the sponsored car.



During the sitcom, the brand advantage of the intelligent car connection system were repeatedly conveyed to consumers in a humorous and natural way.



## Talk Show + Campaign = Easygoing Brand Image



During an online campaign, the brand adopted a rather trendy form of advertising – talk show, and invited several well-known comedians to perform as brand ambassadors.



Dad joke somehow came back into fashion. Harbin Beer, homophonic, “happy beer”, were used as a communication tactic. It is highly accepted by young consumers.



## Live Action Role Play Game + Campaign = Unique Experience



Xianyu held an offline drama killing event, invited APP users to participate – discover surprises, find treasure (捡漏), and make friends. By combing two of the most trendy topics among Gen Z – “lay flat” and “live action role play game”, Xianyu hopes to bring the distance closer with Gen Z.



Xianyu seizes an excellent opportunity to communicate with Gen Z users, strengthens its brand mentality of “上闲鱼来摸鱼”, encourage people to try different lifestyle and expect the unexpected on Xianyu.



# Commercial in Comedy Style to Capture Consumer Interest

Comedy format provides a rich context for video content to tell brand story. The lighthearted way showcase product selling points (e.g. product benefits, promotions, discount etc.) is more receptive to audiences.



The scene was set to show a group of primitive men being impressed and amazed by the smart home system. Product benefits were showcased in a lighthearted way. The funny and comedy-like content arouses viewers interest to keep watching even though it is clearly an commercial ad.



JD.com invited Wang Zi, (a mime-comedy performer), to promote different interest-free products in a silent way. This new form of performance creates freshness in marketing, and the pantomime form also coincides with the campaign slogan “passion and love is silent, purchase of good things doesn’t generate interest” (热爱无声，好物无息).

JD.com further leveraged KOLs and commercial website to amplify reach of audience.

# Highlight 7: Complete the full circle of Entertainment Marketing

## Maximized Amplification & Conversion Throughout Consumer Journey



Awareness



Interest



Search



Action



Share

Regular Tactics

- Awareness:**
  - Product placement
  - Celebrity endorsement
  - Embedded customized mini-show
- Interest:**
  - Social content seeding
  - Merchandise under the IP of shows
  - Show related online games
- Search:**
  - Offline experiential store
  - Search engine ads
  - Banner ads
  - Purchase incentives e.g. membership or fan gift pack
- Action:**
  - Purchase on E-commerce platform
  - Purchase at offline stores
- Share:**
  - Product post and review on social media platforms and in friends circle
  - Commenting and review in interest groups and communities
  - Repurchase and CRM retention

Case Study 良品铺子 X 披荆斩棘的哥哥

Product placement via celebrity brand ambassadors in the show



In the show interval play with product placement



Offline in-store promotion



Ambassador in EC livestream driving sales growth



Online Tmall store promotion



Carefully selected brand ambassadors attracted the right fans to convert to customers. Product selling points are well embedded in the show and interval plays. Products are made available online and offline multichannel for maximized reach to potential audiences.

**Maximize the endorsement of brand ambassador in the show and outside the show.**  
**Multi-channel conversation made possible.**

#张智霖李佳琦粤语每个字都不准#  
 #张智霖教李佳琦粤语直播#  
 social hot topics further the amplification for brand

# Embedded Mini-show in Main Program for Better Brand Content Customization

Main Program v.s. Embedded Mini-show

Main Programs	Brand Sponsorship	Embedded Mini-show	Brand sponsorship
1			
2			
3			
4			

## R3 OBSERVATION

Customized content can better match with brand tone & manners. Embedded mini-show in the main program can **avoid promotion cluster** from other brands. With such brand content embedment, brand can better deliver **brand values** and build **emotional connections**.

脱口秀大会: 和府捞面 x 脱口秀小会

Embedded mini-show in the program & themed store open offline



In-store interior design and atmosphere as extension of the show



Customized menu in offline store and merchandise to giveaway to emphasize brand value “笑着面对”



Talk show stage in-store available for customers to experience

# Highlight 8: Channel Collaboration to Enhance O2O Integration

## Cultivate Consumer Consumption Habit via Collaborated Channel to Drive Sales



Pepsi x Ele.me



### New Product Launch Ads

- Product ads to focus on product key selling points
- Clear consumption scenario indicated to consumers



Pepsi: Osmanthus-flavor cola designed for Mid-Autumn Festival

### Participate in Campaigns initiated by channel

- Via channel initiated campaign, massive attention attracted through collective brand participation and influence to drive sales growth.
- May be unfavorable for brand/product recall for as multiple brand competing for the same audience groups.



Ele.me: Discount and coupons of food and beverage for Fafa Festival (发发节)

### Brands Collaboration via Online Channel

- Bond with reputable restaurants to giveaway free cola via ele.me to build consumption habit
- Cultivate the consumption behavior for better product recall of Pepsi with collaborated restaurant brands on ele.me.



Pepsi & Ele.me: Order Qing Hua Jiao Fish via Ele.me to get 30% discount and a Pepsi cola for free

# Highlight 9: Social Buzz Maximized through Co-Branding and Crossover Marketing in Luxury Industry

## Gucci & Balenciaga Unprecedented Partnership to Reach Broader Audience

This campaign “The Hacker Project” is a collective effort by two of the rapidly growing disruptive brands from Kering Group, Gucci and Balenciaga. The duo released Gucci’s 100th-anniversary “Aria” collection, classic bags with the combined two iconic luxury logo on the merchandises. Gucci and Balenciaga motifs merge to create new interpretations of signature pieces to explore ideas of authenticity and appropriation.

Considered as rival brands, this collaboration sparked much excitement online and the hashtag #GucciAria hitting nearly 3 billion views on Weibo. This unprecedented partnership may maximize the reach of two brands to broader audience and retain their younger cult buyers.



“The Hacker Project” KV Poster



Gucci and Balenciaga Retail Space Decoration

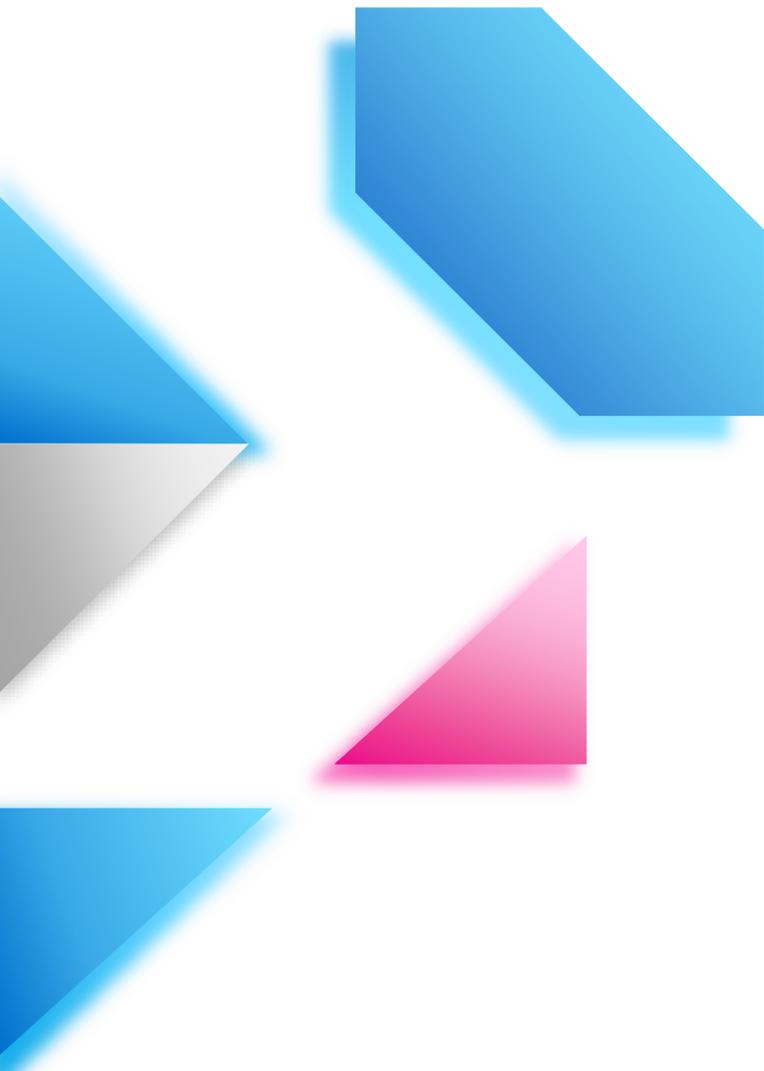
## Prada Crossover Marketing Local Market Takeover in Shanghai

Prada launched a crossover campaign in a wet market in Shanghai, where PRADA transformed the fruit and vegetable market in the neighborhood of CBD district by Prada’s iconic codes and prints from the new collection of Fall/Winter 2021. People can shop at the market at the normal price with purchase of food wrapped with special packaging in Prada print. Prada seems to be making the brand more accessible (“接地气”) through this campaign by choosing this everyday space. This campaign attracted many consumers and KOLs flocked to the market and shared photos of them holding Prada packaged vegetables or flowers, causing netizens’ dispute in different views.



Online dispute over Prada wet market takeover controversial campaign:

Positive Comments	Negative Comments
The creative initiative bring two contrast subject, luxury brand and everyday space together, were impressive to consumers.	The pop-up was a standalone activity and lack of post campaign activities or brand asset building actions. After all the market only served as a temporary photography spot.
The approach made the brand accessible to customers and bring consumers closer with emotional connection	Prada has no relation to the wet market itself and the campaign was simply change of the market deco and use of Prada packaging.
Maximized brand exposure online and reach to border audience	The pop-up affected the normal life of the neighborhood due to foot traffic from experience seeking consumers. Some people throw away food purchased at the market right after taking photos all made negative social impact.



# Thank You!