

**Advertising Research in the Post-WTO Decade in China:
Meeting the Internationalization Challenge**

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Abstract

This paper reviews advertising studies on China published in 13 advertising, marketing and business journals during the country's post-WTO decade (2002-2011). Since its WTO entry, China's advertising industry (including regulatory environment and advertising practices) has fundamentally changed, turning it into the world's fastest growing advertising market and the nation with the largest pool of netizens. We adopt the glocalization framework to selectively highlight five themes in our review: (1) diversified/shifting cultural values; (2) language and brand names; (3) acceptable/offensive advertising; (4) media growth and control; and (5) agency management. Our discussion follows Taylor's (2005) suggested agenda for international advertising research and focuses on the implications for academic researchers and advertising professionals that these papers collectively provide. In the transitional market in China, insights from past studies are relevant for its future development in advertising both locally and globally.

Key words: China advertising, international advertising, glocalization, World Trade Organization

China is increasingly becoming recognized as the largest untapped consumer and advertiser market in the world. In 2009, the country's open door policy reached its 30th anniversary. Three decades of robust GDP growth of over 8% annually has powered the country into the world's fastest growing market and second largest economy. This allows multinational firms to expand in China and then leverage their size advantage to compete for their relative positions globally. Recognizing China as the potential "king-maker" economy (Child and Tse 2001), firms such as Nike, Toshiba, Volkswagen and General Motors entered China in the early nineties. Many more firms followed suit after China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in November 2001.

To prepare the country to face changes brought on by the WTO, China actively prepares its local advertising industry and the general public for the internationalization challenge. It opened its first advertising college in 2000, when Beijing Union University joined forces with Noble, the ad agency under *People's Daily*, to train local talents (Liu 2004). Further, China pushed for media conglomeration, merging less competitive media to consolidate and build "national teams" to compete with multinational counterparts (Hu 2003). It also held the first internet advertising competition in 2000 to encourage and reward achievements in new media formats and to signal its bold venture into the internet era (Liu 2004). Between July and September 2000, the country extended intensive efforts to educate the public on deceptive advertising to prepare consumers who might be caught off-guard by multinational agency's aggressive ad campaigns. After all, China's advertising laws and regulations were recognized to be highly restrictive with a dated mentality to "protect" consumer interests (Chang, Wan and Qu 2003). These changes were critical to the industry and society as China entered the WTO and faced related global influences.

Indeed, China's WTO entry has sparked fundamental, wide-spread, and substantial changes in the advertising industry, cutting across its once heavily regulated institutional environment, advertising practices and agency strategies. By 2003, the growth challenges in advertising brought on by entry into

the WTO were considered “much tougher than the preceding 25 years” (Liu 2004, p. 3). Under agreement with the WTO, China would lift all restrictions on foreign investment in the advertising sector. Foreign agencies could increase their joint-venture shares from minority to majority (including wholly-owned) ownership (Hu 2003). As well, China would loosen restrictions on advertising contents which until then, it could freely censor any foreign advertising that sought airtime (Li and Shootshtari 2007). By continuously lowering regulatory barriers, China’s entry into the WTO signals the country’s ready acceptance of internationalization as a significant and permanent part of the advertising industry. Indeed by 2010, all major multinational agencies are represented in China. They create about 10% of the “above-the-line” advertising though they represent only 0.4% of all agencies in this market. Powered by multinational corporate accounts such as P&G, L’Oreal and Unilever that comprised the top advertisers in China, many multinational agencies became top ranked agencies, including Leo Burnett, Saatchi and Saatchi Great Wall, and Beijing Dentsu Advertising, the top three agencies in China by billings (China Hand 2011).

Rapid growth of the China market coevolves with growth of its advertising industry. The country’s advertising billings of US\$83.6 billion in 2010 is the third largest in the world and is estimated to continue its double-digit annual growth (Ad Age China 2010). In terms of talents and human capital, China’s advertising industry has some 243,000 companies employing 1.48 million people. The highly fragmented state of the advertising industry is typical of growth industries that have considerable room to consolidate and mature.

Research on Advertising in China

On the research front, intellectual interests on the uniqueness and dynamics of China advertising during the post-WTO era are eminent.¹ There is a six-fold increase in the average number of articles on China advertising published each year in *Journal of Advertising* (JA) and *Journal of Advertising*

¹ For a history of advertising in China, please refer to Liu (2004), Stross (1990), or Wang (1997).

Research (JAR) during this period (2002-2011) compared to an earlier period (1979-2001) (details to follow). This finding concurs with a review of 23 communication journals, where China was mentioned in the article title 108 times between 2000-2009 versus 60 times between 1990-1999 (So 2010).

The advertising studies on post-WTO China covered a number of perspectives: culture and advertising effects; media growth and control; and agency management issues during this period. To better understand their contributions, our paper examines and summarizes their insights using five themes based on the glocalization framework: (1) diversified/shifting cultural values; (2) language and brand names; (3) acceptable/offensive advertising; (4) media growth and control; and (5) agency management. In our discussion, we follow Taylor's (2005) agenda on international advertising research. We acknowledge that the size of the literature is relatively small. Collectively they provide a number of research and professional insights relevant to the highly significant China market that may in turn provide implications for other emerging markets.

Meeting Internationalization Challenge: A Glocalization Framework

Global standardization (globalization) versus localization is a long-standing debate in international advertising. This debate reflects the continuous evolution of paradigms shaped by shifts in global forces and market structures as well as new insights on how firms manage their cross-national activities. It was originally suggested that each market has unique tastes requiring foreign firms to tailor their marketing efforts, thus supporting the *localization* approach (Keegan 1969).

Advancements in global media, world travel and other forms of global connectedness (Levitt 1983) offered unprecedented opportunities and benefits for firms to standardize their efforts globally, giving rise to a *globalization* approach. *Globalization* emphasizes gains in cost, scale economy, and control made possible by the emergence of global logistics, outsourcing, and the global proliferation of mass media and its contents (Jain 1989). This allows firms to develop products and advertising with global embedded appeals. These core characteristics of the globalization approach suggest that its applicability

rests on (1) the existence of global values across countries; (2) the substantial size of globalized consumer segments; and (3) a firm's ability to use standardized offers to appeal to needs of globalized segments. Given these stringent requirements, a full globalized approach is difficult to implement.

Accordingly, *glocalization* is proposed as a balanced paradigm that recognizes the criticality of meeting local market needs. Even if a firm uses global standardized products and advertising, consumers often modify and transform the meanings embedded in the product/advertising using their own historical, sociocultural or symbolic perspectives to fit the global appeals into local cultural and lifestyle patterns (Hannerz 1996; Miller 1996). A number of firms have mastered a dual capability, i.e., being globally competitive and locally responsive (Ger and Belk 1996; Ghoshal and Bartlett 1990; Maynard and Tian 2004) and adapt global product/advertising appeals to local manifestations of desired consumer experiences. Our paper follows this framework to discuss China advertising issues.

Glocalization and the Impacts of Culture on Advertising

Culture is a fundamental tenet in advertising. It is purported that national culture, i.e., the values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns of a national group (Leung et al. 2005) affects the effectiveness of advertising. Seminal studies proposed a number of cultural dimensions and adopted dichotomies such as individualism/collectivism (Triandis 1989) and modernity/traditionalism (Pollay 1983) to delineate national culture. Ads that match the cultural norms of a focal country are purported to be more effective. The results are mixed, however (Hung, Li and Belk 2007; Zhou and Belk 2004).

Rather, there is a realization under the glocalization framework that cultural dichotomies such as traditionalism and modernity are not mutually exclusive (Smith and Bond 1998). Using a longitudinal study involving 65 societies, Inglehart and Baker (2000) showed that the cultural heritage of a society, be it Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, or Confucian leaves an imprint on values that endures despite modernization. Indeed, Chinese consumers, though modernizing, hold on to their cultural heritage strongly (Zhou and Belk 1994). To further complicate the dichotomized approach, globalizing

forces may provoke a reinvigoration of traditional culture to retain a country's integrity and cultural characteristics (Barmé 1995). National culture may converge (i.e., takes on new meanings) or diverge (i.e., drops existing meanings) as consumers and other stakeholders such as firms and governments redefine the cultural values that are meaningful to the nation and its people (Askegaard and Kjeldgaard 2006; Leung et al. 2005). These create a complex and dynamic cultural frame that affects consumers when they scrutinize advertising.

To advertisers, an understanding of the interplay between local and foreign cultural values is essential in creating an affinity with Chinese consumers to achieve the desired communication effects. This challenge is intensified as the glocalization process would likely differ across segments, given the consumers' differential readiness and ability to adapt and internationalize (Hung, Gu and Yim 2007). Thus, one may ask: Given China's time-honored tradition and culture, regional and generational differences, the visual-based language and unique ideographic script, to what extent would culture affect advertising effectiveness? More specifically, how can advertisers communicate accurately, effectively, and without offending Chinese consumers? To answer these questions, our review would investigate, among other themes, three issues that could help delineate culture's impact on advertising: (a) diversified/shifting cultural values, (b) language and brand names, and (c) acceptable/offensive advertising.

Glocalization and Media Growth and Control

The impact of globalization forces on national identity and state sovereignty is a long-running theme in international communication and media studies (Waisbord and Morris 2001). On the one hand, media globalization provides better and faster access to information and entertainment to people around the world, thus reducing spatial distances and information asymmetry; on the other hand, it erodes people's cultural and national identities (Featherstone, Lash and Robertson 1995). The latter is especially salient in developing nations (e.g., South Africa, India, Brazil), where local media are

typically smaller and less competitive. To reduce these negative effects, local governments (e.g., Canada) may introduce regulatory control such as reducing imported programs, implementing language policy, and sponsoring domestically produced contents to defend against globalization's cultural infringement (McDowell 2011; Waisbord and Morris 2001).

Aside from these regulatory control measures, industry integration is another salient outcome of media globalization. In developed markets, industry integration often takes the form of mergers and acquisitions (e.g., by Murdoch) that allow firms to consolidate and gain scale economy. In China, the central government plays the role of the "invisible hand" through state-orchestrated conglomeration of the media industry as a defensive mechanism against globalization forces. For example, the China Cable Network Company was established in 2001 to absorb one third of local cable operators across the country. The China Broadcasting, Film, and Television Company, also established in 2001, was a merger of a number of state-owned broadcasting companies (China Online 2001). China Central Television (CCTV), a former state monopoly, underwent rapid expansion and now dominates the national airwaves with 19 channels (China Hand 2011). These clusters of media strongholds prepare local firms to compete against foreign firms at the same time they facilitate the government's administrative and media content control (Wang 2008). The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), for example, has a reputation for rigorous censorship. While it allows the transmission of 30 foreign satellite-TV channels in China, including CNN International, HBO and ESPN, it limits their availability to designated establishments (e.g., 3-star plus hotels) (Hu 2003).

While considerable regulatory changes have taken place in conventional media, the internet grows and gains ground in China. Without the burden of past telecom infrastructure (i.e., ground line), China is leap-frogging many countries in new media developments. The country's internet population grew by 6.1% year-on-year to 485 million by June 2011 (China Hand 2011) to become the host country with the largest internet community. Similar to the global trend in favor of online adspend, China's online

adspend surged by 79.3% year-on-year to RMB 27.9 billion (US\$ 4.4 billion) in 2010 (China Hand 2011). Interestingly, recent research on media strategy in China focuses on new media and their effects (Riegner 2008; Song and Fiore 2008), a topic faced by advertisers around the world. China's experiences in new media revealed in these studies would likely be on par with global norms and contribute to knowledge on the trends and effects of networked communication channels.

Glocalization and Agency Management

Aside from gains in scale economy and costs advantages, a globalized approach with standardized procedures provides a firm with more corporate control (Walters 1986). A glocalized approach, on the other hand, is accompanied by a decentralized firm structure that empowers the foreign operations with more autonomy. This complicates a firm's governance system and reduces its ability to exercise control (Cavusgil, Zou and Naidu 1993; Walters 1986). However, the relaxed corporate structure and processes could be advantageous if they allow the firm to get closer to consumers and integrate their needs.

Interestingly, in spite of the opportunities offered by the Chinese government that allow multinational agencies to form wholly-owned enterprises, few adopted this option. Most agencies renewed their joint-venture agreement with local firms (China Hand 2011) thereby opting to continue a glocalized approach in the country. This may be because China presents an environment with increased competition as local agencies are learning fast and small-and-medium-size (foreign) agencies can also enter the China market, given the lower entry barriers (China Hand 2011). Amidst these changes, multinational agencies need more than ever the ability to understand the local market, including consumers and other market players. For example, would cultural factors recognized to be of concern to individual consumers affect organizational buying? Are there unique characteristics in the agency-client relationship in China that multinational agencies should become aware of? These pressing issues have intrigued scholars in advertising and international business, who contributed their research efforts (Dou et al. 2010; Prendergast, West and Shi 2006).

Review Papers on Advertising

Yale and Gilly (1988) noted in their 10-year review of advertising research that a backward glance could help scholars understand the prevailing trends and reflect on developmental issues in the discipline. Our study objectives are similar to other retrospectives (Muncy 1991; Taylor 2005; Yale and Gilly 1988) but adapted to a single-country context to provide useful anchors. Our observations suggest that the decade immediately following China's entry to the WTO (i.e., 2002-2011) provides a unique context to examine the aforementioned issues in a transitional advertising market undergoing intense internationalization. On the one hand, consumers are exposed to advertising appeals and cultural values they are less familiar with. On the other hand, media and agency professionals faced with a competitive environment need to adapt closely to the changing consumers' needs to survive and prosper.

We reviewed related papers published between 2002 and 2011 in 13 journals. They include advertising journals: *Journal of Advertising* (JA), *Journal of Advertising Research* (JAR), *International Journal of Advertising* (IJA), and *Journal of Interactive Advertising* (JIA) as well as marketing and business journals that contain articles of relevance: *Journal of Marketing Research* (JMR), *Journal of Marketing* (JM), *Journal of Consumer Research* (JCR), *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (JCP), *Journal of International Business Studies* (JIBS), *Psychology and Marketing* (P&M), *Journal of International Marketing* (JIM), *Journal of Business Ethics* (JBE), and *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing* (JPPM). Our choice of journals is based first on their rankings (Theoharakis and Hirst 2002; Social Sciences Citation Index 2008). We then snowballed the journal list to include suggestions made by experts in this area of research.

In our review, we pay attention to the aforementioned themes reflective of the glocalization of advertising in China: (1) diversified/shifting cultural values; (2) language and brand names; (3) acceptable/offensive advertising; (4) media growth and control; and (5) agency management. These themes were adapted from past review papers (Muncy 1991; Yale and Gilly 1988) and studies on China

advertising (Li and Shootshtari 2007). We investigated the extent these issues were examined in the literature and then identified key findings under each theme to delineate the academic and managerial contributions the papers collectively offer.

Methodology

Papers on China Advertising

We have noted the importance of the decade 2002-2011 in the development of China advertising; yet, to examine whether it provides a relevant timeframe to examine research in this area, we compared the number of papers relevant to China advertising published in top advertising journals during this period to its equivalence in an earlier period. The inclusion of *JA* and *JAR* at this stage of the research was based on journal rankings (Social Sciences Citation Index 2008; Theoharakis and Hirst 2002) and their low rate of acceptance, a characteristic of prominent journals. There were 30 papers that included China or Chinese in its title and/or abstracts published in the past decade (10 years: 2002-2011) but only 12 papers published in the same journals since the opening of the China market in 1979 but prior to 2002 (23 years: 1979-2001). This represents a six-fold increase on the average number of papers published each year (3 versus 0.5 papers) over the recent decade, indicating the growing prominence of research on China advertising during this period. The few papers published earlier (0.5 per year) may not allow us to draw an accurate picture of scholarly work in those years. We would therefore focus on the 2002-2011 timeframe in this review.

Next, we consulted experts in this area to identify other prominent journals that publish papers on advertising in China. The process helped identify 11 additional journals in advertising, marketing, and business. We then searched for relevant papers in the 13 selected journals (*JA*, *JAR*, 11 additional journals) published within our timeframe using keyword search in archives such as *Proquest* and *Business Source Complete*. Words such as “China” and “Chinese” were searched in article titles and abstracts. For marketing and business journals, we also identified manually from this body of work

papers relevant to advertising. We considered papers related to Hong Kong and Taiwan but excluded papers that are highly region-specific (e.g., internet regulations in Taiwan). We included 65 papers after a careful examination. Table 1 summarizes the papers by journal and publication year. We also summarized the key findings in each paper in the Appendix. Among the 13 journals, *JA* published the highest number of papers (16 papers or 25% of the pool), followed by *JAR* (14 papers or 22% of the pool).

Content Analysis

An initial reading of the selected papers shows that they naturally converge onto three themes that concur with those found in earlier reviews on advertising studies (Muncy 1991, Yale and Gilly 1988): (1) culture and advertising effects, (2) media growth and control, and (3) agency management. A closer look shows that two thirds of the papers fell under “culture and advertising effects” (n=42), making it by far the most researched topic. This research focus is to be expected because China provides an ideal context to investigate how consumers negotiate among conflicting values in a globalizing world. As it will be shown in the following, Chinese people embrace both traditional and modern values (Zhang 2009) and these values coexist in Chinese advertising (Zhang and Shavitt 2003; Zhou and Belk 2004).

To provide more sensitive and meaningful findings, we examined the natural convergence of the 42 “culture and advertising effects” papers and subdivided them into three separate themes to provide research and practical insights: (1) diversified/shifting cultural values, (2) language and brand names, and (3) acceptable/offensive advertising. Similar themes were outlined in Li and Shootshtari (2007) regarding the difficulties for multinational firms advertising in China. These together with the two remaining themes identified earlier (media, agency) comprise a five-category coding scheme.

Two coders were briefed and trained on this coding scheme using a sample of non-selected papers. They then categorized the selected papers independently. Cohen's Kappa Coefficient, popular in advertising studies (Hung and Li 2007; James and Vanden Bergh 1990), was computed to determine the

chance-corrected agreement between the two coders (Cohen 1960). Results showed that the coding scheme had good reliability (Cohen's $K = 0.907$, $p < .001$). Discrepancies in coding were resolved through discussion among the coders and the lead author. The selected papers were categorized as follows: (1) diversified/shifting cultural values ($n=16$); (2) language and brand names ($n=7$); (3) acceptable/offensive advertising ($n=19$); (4) media growth and control ($n=18$); and (5) agency management ($n=5$).

In the following, we provide specific examples from the papers to illustrate what we have learned. To facilitate the discussion of the results, we divided again three of the five themes (i.e., “diversified/shifting cultural values”, “acceptable/offensive advertising”, and “media growth and control”) into two to three sub-categories each to highlight particular insights underlying these themes. Again, two coders were briefed and trained on the sub-categories before they content analyzed the papers independently. Research results showed acceptable reliability for each sub-division: “diversified/shifting cultural values” (Cohen's $K = 0.721$, $p < .01$), “acceptable/offensive advertising” (Cohen's $K = 0.905$, $p < .001$), and “media growth and control” (Cohen's $K = 0.731$, $p < .001$). Discrepancies were resolved through discussion. “Language and brand names” and “agency management” did not receive sub-division.

Research Findings

Diversified/Shifting Cultural Values

As Chinese people increasingly interact with global values, norms, and practices, researchers are keen to examine how advertising in China may change as a result. The 16 papers on “diversified/shifting cultural values” address this research question with two primary approaches. First, content and semiotic analyses were used to examine print ads (Hung, Li and Belk 2007; Lin 2008; Zhang and Shavitt 2003; Zhao and Belk 2008), television ads (Zhou, Zhou and Xue 2005), poster ads (Zhao and Belk 2008a), and event invitation (Zhu 2009). Second, experiments and interviews were used to examine consumers' preferences that would likely change as a result of their increased exposure to

global cultural values.

Beyond Individualism/Collectivism. While one may expect ads in China to carry and reflect collectivistic cultural values, the papers in this collection illustrate a diversity of values. In addition to individualism/collectivism, researchers investigated established value dimensions such as high/low cultural context (Zhou, Zhou and Xue 2005), masculinity/femininity (Chang 2006) and youth and modernity appeals (Hung, Li and Belk 2007; Lin 2008; Zhang and Shavitt 2003). Others examined indigenous cultural values such as *mianzi* (face; Zhou and Belk 2004), Confucian ethics, and *guanxi* (relationship; Zhu 2009). These cultural characteristics were viewed either as additional dimensions of Chinese advertising or as dimensions of consumer orientation that could moderate advertising effectiveness.

Also of interest is the coexistence of globalized and localized values. A mix of such values can be found in early poster ads of the 1930's (Zhao and Belk 2008a) as well as in print ads in *People's Daily*, where key political symbols (e.g., red star) and propaganda were reconfigured to promote consumption (e.g., buying Toshiba promotes friendship between China and Japan) (Zhao and Belk 2008b). Similar findings are found in case analyses, where successful ads adapted global appeals (e.g., enjoy the rich flavor of Colombian coffee) into the local sociopolitical context (e.g., produced by the coffee growers' hard work) (Zhao and Wang 2011) to ease China's social and political transition to consumerism.

Market Fragmentation to Bicultural Orientation. The coexistence of diverse cultural values in advertising suggests two possibilities in the consumer market: market fragmentation and a bicultural orientation among consumers. There is supporting evidence of both possibilities in the selected papers. For example, whereas older consumers found collectivistic appeals to be more persuasive (Teng and Laroche 2006), Generation X consumers found individualistic and collectivistic appeals to be equally persuasive (Zhang 2010). These studies suggest an age division, with modernization exerting a stronger impact on young consumers.

Meanwhile, research on model ethnicity shows a duality in preference among Chinese consumers. In line with research indicating a correlation between perceived globalness and perceived quality (Steenkamp and Batra 2003), Western models that have a natural predisposition towards global associations enhance the perceived quality of a brand (Barnes et al. 2009; Chang 2008). This may help explain why Western models and mannequins are widely used in Chinese advertising and retail outlets. Meanwhile, in contrast to the quality perceptions associated with Western models, Chinese models produce more self-referencing (Hung, Li and Belk 2007; Martin, Lee and Yang 2004). Consumers rated products advertised with Chinese models higher on brand friendliness, brand trust, self-brand connections, and brand liking (Chang 2008).

The studies on model ethnicity and its respective associations suggest an interesting discourse between globalization and localization. Rather than being at the opposite ends of a continuum, some consumers embrace both individualism and collectivism. In a study examining multiple ad copies, the ad that resonates most with the readers featured a woman who carried both Western and Chinese characteristics (i.e., independence, self-sufficiency, stylish, feminine softness) (Hung, Li and Belk 2007). Indeed, a bicultural disposition (high in both orientations) is evident among Generation X consumers in China, with individualistic (or collectivistic) ads activating an independent (or interdependent) self-construal (Zhang 2009). These studies are also indicative of consumer dialectic responses. On the one hand, Chinese consumers are driven by the desire for global cosmopolitanism and status goods; on the other hand, they are motivated by a nationalistic desire to invoke traditional values they identify with in their consumption patterns (Hung, Li and Belk 2007; Zhou and Belk 2004). In sum, whereas consumers respond favorably to advertising with global cultural characteristics, preference for traditional values and ideology remains strong.

Summary. Given the relative novelty of China advertising research, early papers discussed Chinese culture and ad contents in comparison to their western counterparts (e.g., individualistic vs.

collectivistic appeals). Yet, the progression of papers over the past decade emerges from a comparative to an indigenous approach as the China market grows in importance and there is a wider recognition of its cultural uniqueness (Zhao and Belk 2008). As market fragmentation intensifies in China, cultural traits presumed to be pan-China are gradually recognized as segment- or individual-based traits. Collectively, the papers show that while collectivistic value and tradition remain ingrained in Chinese advertising, westernization and modernization appeals are evident. It is thus imperative for advertising researchers and professionals to go beyond normative beliefs to understand Chinese consumers as a whole and as specific age and gender segments, the characteristics of which are growing in prominence. The emergence of a bicultural segment that embraces seemingly opposing cultural values suggests that China advertising may follow a path of its own. Investigation into the very core of the Chinese “self” would be both challenging and rewarding.

Language and Brand Names

The seven papers in this category examined language, a specific glocalization issue multinational firms have to face when they enter the Chinese market. Content analysis and experiments are the primary methods. The papers revealed that the choice of language and cultural superstition are key concerns worthy of advertisers’ attention when formulating promotional language and brand names.

The vast majority of Fortune-500 companies localize their brand names when they enter China, with transliteration being the most popular strategy (Francis, Lam and Walls 2002). Some firms such as Coca-Cola have gone beyond the phonetic aspects of the brand name to make semantic adjustments so that the transliterated name is meaningful in Chinese (e.g., Coca-Cola translated to “Ke Kou Ke Le” meaning tasty and happy). Barnes et al. (2004), however, suggest that firms should be concerned with their transliterated names as consumers prefer easy-to-pronounce brand names though they pay less attention to the meanings. Language also plays a role in ad processing as the Chinese (visual) and English (auditory) languages are associated with different schemas (Tavassoli and Lee 2003) and

generate different perceptions (Toffoli and Laroche 2002). In particular, English names enhance the brands' perceived globalness (Chang 2008). This may help explain why even local brands take on names that appear to be transliteration (e.g., Metersbonwe, BYD) that carry little meaning in Chinese.

Marketers should not undermine the language barrier presented in the context of marketing communication. Warden, Lai and Wu (2002) found that when a webpage is written in Chinese, the consumers' product evaluations are enhanced, especially in highly differentiated markets. This is interesting as we have noted some positive connotations with English. However, reading a webpage in a foreign language obviously requires much more cognitive resources and language proficiency than reading a foreign-sounding brand name. This finding underscores the importance for firms to address local culture in its simplest form: information in the native language enhances product evaluation.

Besides the choice of language, cultural superstition also remains a popular concern in creating brand names and in marketing communications. Cultural superstition includes brand names that have the lucky number of strokes in its Chinese name (Li and Lii 2008) and price endings with the number 8 associated with prosperity and good luck (Simmons and Schindler 2003). Whereas observing "luck" may be indicative of an adherence to tradition, these practices may also be a response to the highly uncertain market environment in the country.

Summary. The findings show that using a foreign-sounding brand name can be a double-edged sword. Although English enhances quality perceptions, relying on English as the medium of communication is inefficient. Advertisers must be aware of the limits of using foreign languages since the predominant language in China remains Chinese. As China continues to develop, people would have more exposure to foreign languages. Future research could keep track of changes in consumer reaction to English brand names and promotional materials. Besides, Generation X consumers are more affected by the modernization process (Hung, Gu and Yim 2007). Future research could examine cross-segment differences in language preference and cultural superstition.

Acceptable/Offensive Advertising

This body of works consists mostly of surveys, supplemented by content analyses, experiments, and sales data analyses to examine the acceptability of advertising in China. We would first review papers that examine the acceptance of advertising in general, followed by papers that examine offensive advertising. We would then discuss humor and celebrity endorsement, two appeals that are highly popular among advertisers and their acceptability among Chinese consumers.

Ad Acceptability. In contrast to American consumers, Chinese consumers, in particular those with higher levels of education, hold positive attitudes and beliefs towards advertising (Zhou, Zhang and Vertinsky 2002). This may be because ads in China are perceived to be informative (Zhou, Zhang and Vertinsky 2002) and there is generally a positive association between advertising intensity and corporate giving (Zhang et al. 2010). Chinese consumers extend high commitment towards brands that carry social responsibilities, a relation *not* significant in the UK (Eisingerich and Rubera 2010).

The positive attitude towards advertising in China is supported by advertising's effects on sales, especially for durable products (Zhou, Zhou and Ouyang 2003) as well as its ability to enhance brand premium. Advertising has been shown to help increase penetration and build brand loyalty among brands suffering from double jeopardy (i.e., brands with lower market penetration garner fewer repeat purchases and attract fewer buyers who buy less) (Yang, Bi and Zhou 2005). Some domestic brands have succeeded in raising both their price and sales using advertising (Ewing et al. 2002).

Offensive Advertising. While advertising is well-accepted by Chinese consumers, specific ads that violate the shared norms that consumers have developed through social learning are offensive and are rejected. An ad can be offensive due to the product advertised (e.g., addictive products; Fam and Waller 2003) or its execution. What is deemed offensive also depends on the values the consumer holds. For example, advertising for sex-related products (e.g., condom) is more offensive to consumers with "traditional" and "security" values than those with "adventure" values (Fam, Waller and Yang

2009). Sex and fear appeals are offensive to some consumers, namely those high in self-esteem or high in susceptibility to interpersonal influence. These segments of consumers tend to be more discerning about their image presentation (Prendergast, Cheung and West 2008).

Humor and Celebrity Endorsement. Humor is a popular advertising appeal and its effectiveness is supported by evidence of enhanced recall, evaluation, and purchase intention under appropriate match-up conditions (Scott, Klein, and Bryant 1990). Owing to the sensitive nature of humor and its difficulty in adapting to different cultures, one would expect humor to be used less often in China due to the “shame” it may potentially bring a company (Alden and Martin 1995); yet, the use of humor in China is on par with France (Laroche et al. 2011). The use of humor in China is also supported by another study that shows that consumers high on uncertainty-avoidance or collectivistic value prefer humorous ads with incongruity resolution that are “safer” (Lee and Lim 2008). Thus, humorous ads can be effective in China when used appropriately.

Similar to humor, celebrity endorsement is a highly popular and effective advertising appeal (Mittelstaedt, Riesz and Burns 2000); yet, unlike humor that is purported to be individualistic, celebrity endorsement is a good match with the collectivistic and hierarchical Chinese culture. This proposition for a cultural match is supported by a study that delineates the consumer-celebrity relationship as a significant antecedent to value-transfer and brand purchase intent (Hung, Chan and Tse 2011). Consumer-celebrity relationship also provides young people with a form of social comparison similar to interpersonal communication with peers and other role models (Chan and Prendergast 2008).

Summary. Chinese consumers hold a favorable attitude towards advertising in general. This may be partly because consumers find it informative and associate it with corporate giving. Advertising in turn generates sales and improves market penetration and brand loyalty. Whereas some products and ad execution are considered offensive, the effect appears to be restricted to selected segments. Sex-related products and appeal, for example, have higher acceptance among consumers who are adventurous.

Humor ads can improve their effectiveness in China by including incongruity resolution. Celebrity endorsement, on the other hand, has a good fit with local culture and is an effective form of advertising execution in China.

Media Growth and Control

Another focal point in the collection of papers concerns media strategy. The 18 papers cover issues faced by conventional media but place a greater emphasis on the growing impact of the internet as a new media platform. The influence of social media among Chinese consumers is also highlighted.

Conventional Media. Among conventional media, TV is the most influential medium for China's rural population, outperforming other media as the main source of product information (Chen, He, Zhao and Griffith 2008). TV remains a top media platform given the number of Chinese living in rural areas with limited access to the Internet. Meanwhile, in China as in other developed markets, magazine has the highest targetability among conventional media (Hung, Gu and Tse 2005). Nevertheless, content providers in conventional media are responding to the consumption patterns of Generation X consumers, who prefer entertainment (TV dramas and pop music) over information-based programs (news and business reports), especially in less developed regions (Dou, Wang and Zhou 2006).

New Media. Yet, research has shifted its focus onto new media platforms. In dissecting the drivers behind the growth in internet usage, a large scale survey by Wei, Frankwick, Gao, and Zao (2011) found that the consumers' socioeconomic status, usage of informational channels and interpersonal communication have positive effects on internet adoption in China. With the influx of Chinese consumers onto the internet, the e-business landscape (B2C and B2B) in China has grown substantially with the emergence of e-commerce giants such as Alibaba, Dangdang and Taobao. As more and more firms in China adopt internet into their operations and foreign providers increasingly set their sights on China, the e-business industry may take on a leading role in China (Liang 2010).

To serve China's internet population, the online advertising industry has boomed over the past

decade, reaching 20% of total advertising industry expenditures in 2011, and it is expected to hit RMB 40 billion by 2012 (Huang and Tsang 2010). Within the internet ad industry, search engine, portal, alliance network, online video, online community, and vertical website advertising have all grown steadily within the past five years as a result of significant brand building efforts by local and multinational firms (Huang and Tsang 2010). As a result, researchers are beginning to investigate the nuances of internet advertising in China. For example, Li, Pan and Huang (2010) found that, among other characteristics in search engine advertising, the longer the keyword, the lesser its clickthrough volume. Their study provides insightful suggestions for advertisers hoping to select appropriate keywords, given the nuances and idiosyncrasies of the Chinese language, to increase brand traffic.

Online Consumer Behavior and Social Media. Firstly, it may be important to understand the similarities that exist among successful applications of new media formats in different countries. Top websites in China mirrors those in developed countries, for instance, Baidu looks like Google and Taobao functions similarly to eBay (Riegner 2008). A case study of successful mobile ad campaigns in China and Australia indicate that they all encompass high levels of interactivity to encourage conversational exchange among users (Spurgeon 2005). Meanwhile, China's digital elites are younger (Riegner 2008) so that the majority of internet ads in China are using individualistic rather than collectivistic appeals to align with the preferences of their targets.

In particular though, Chinese consumers are receptive to new media ads in various forms. The exposure to just one additional banner ad improved their brand recall, brand attitude and purchase intent (Gong and Maddox 2003). They are also receptive to online promotions and online new product information (Riegner 2008). Their receptiveness to SMS (short messaging service) advertising can be traced to its perceived usefulness (in terms of information, entertainment and sociality), ease of use, and trust (Zhang and Mao 2008). Indeed, messages communicated via new media seem to be positively associated with the favored image of new media in China.

In China, the internet is also an empowerment tool. Chinese web users engage in online social behavior to a greater degree than US web users, popularizing social networking, video, and photo-sharing websites (Riegner 2008). Chinese consumers are also pursuing freedom and liberation from real life constraints using social networking sites. At the same time, they hold on to traditional collectivistic values in seeking social identity and links with others through these sites (Chen and Haley 2010) and online forum (Prendergast, Ko and Yuen 2010).

Regarding electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), Chinese netizens rely a great deal on popular opinion and are more likely than US consumers to request direct product recommendation (Fong and Burton 2006). Often, they purchase new products only after consulting blogs, chats, and review websites. Indeed, eWOM re-addresses the informational bias against consumers by keeping them informed of product news through a network of social connectedness (Hung and Li 2007), platform credibility and interpersonal trust (Hung, Li and Tse 2011). Social connectedness is further highlighted in Zeng, Huang and Dou's study (2009) that revealed that social identification, group norm, and group intention influence the perceived relevance and values in advertising on community websites.

Summary. Given the size of China's broadband population and consumers' receptivity to new media, the internet is an important media platform with substantial potential for growth and development. Thus not surprisingly, the majority of the papers examined new rather than conventional media. They note that Chinese consumers value interactivity, freedom and empowerment that the internet and social media provide. They also show that whereas the majority of internet ads in China use individualistic appeals, collectivistic values remain strong. Together, these studies point to the vital role that online communities play in Chinese consumers' choice of brands, purchase intentions and susceptibility to advertising for which both advertisers and brand owners need to pay attention to.

As internet penetration continues, and most notably the impact of social media in consumers' lives, we posit that further research is needed to delineate the strategies for brand builders to effectively target

and engage consumers on this new media platform. For example, the way advertisers tailor internet ads and other web promotional efforts to reach consumers (e.g., virtual communities, banner ads) remain crucial. More importantly, the duality of growing individualistic attitudes amongst traditional collectivistic values (e.g. seeking social connectedness) of young Chinese consumers from a social/psychological as well as marketing perspective yet to be properly addressed. Understanding consumer cohorts like these will yield insights for researchers and is pivotal for the success of advertisers in China.

Agency Management

The last topic highlights the practical issues regarding firms and agencies in China, paying particular attention to agency relations, budgeting methods, and campaign creativity. They reveal that agency management in China is evolving and has yet reached a level of sophistication on par with developed markets.

Given the asymmetries in local and professional knowledge, (local) client- (multinational) agency relations constitute a problem area in agency management. For example, though most agencies agreed on the necessity to promote integrated marketing communications, most Chinese clients are unfamiliar with this tool (Kitchen and Li 2005). Yet, Chinese clients typically command more power in the campaign process (Agrawal and Wu 2004). Such disparity in knowledge leads to goal incongruence and dissatisfactory agent-client relationships (Dou, Li, Zhou and Su 2010). Issues with agent-client relationship may also be indicative of multinational agencies' less-than-active approach in entering China, as client-following was their major motivation (Cheung, Mirza and Leung 2008). Their less active approach were further hampered by unreliable external agents, lack of competent local personnel, and China's culturally and politically sensitive environment (Cheung, Mirza and Leung 2008). While learning and adaptation on both client's and agency's parts can mitigate the negative impacts, disparity of advertising knowledge between multinational agencies and local clients remains a problem area that

needs to be addressed.

Regarding advertising budgets, multinational agencies may use more sophisticated budgeting methods, while most local agencies rely on less sophisticated judgmental approaches as their main budgeting methods (Prendergast, West and Shi 2006). In spite of these issues that may signal tension between agencies and clients, the use of creativity in advertising is increasingly significant. Li, Dou, Wang and Zhou (2008) found a positive correlation between agency creativity and campaign outcomes though they also found a negative effect from excessive creativity. The study also revealed that agency creativity is more effective in markets characterized as highly competitive or less dynamic. Thus, creativity is an area of expertise in which agencies can benefit client firms, but knowledge of how and when to use creativity is perhaps more important.

Summary. Although these papers discuss different agency management issues, they collectively point to the need for more advertising education in China to increase the level of expertise among agency professionals and their ability to inform clients of such expertise so that they may appreciate non-price competition and the specialized roles ad agencies performed. It was timely for China to have opened an advertising school to improve professional training and boost the confidence and expertise of the professionals (Chao 2005). Moreover, multinational agencies have to continually learn to deal with the local clientele to facilitate knowledge exchange and ensure the transparency in ad campaigns (Dou, Li, Zhou and Su 2010), thereby improving the perception and effectiveness of advertising in China.

The above findings show signs that the agency industry is progressing well. Some firms are using sophisticated budgeting methods after successful campaigns that demonstrated the values of agency creativity with positive effects on profitability. In the past, multinational agencies complained that local clients are highly price-conscious and fail to appreciate their relative sophistication (Wang 2008). These developments point to positive signs for agencies with appropriate skills to go beyond price

competition and develop a healthy growth in China given their competitive advantages.

Discussion and Implications

China's emergence into the global economy during the post-WTO decade has provided sweeping challenges and opportunities to the advertising industry. With lower regulatory barriers, multinational agencies are in the position to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the expanding China market, driven largely by direct foreign investment from multinational corporations, who are the key clients of major agencies. However, future development in China advertising is not without challenges. To address this issue, we reviewed 65 papers published in 13 journals over the past decade to identify the research and managerial insights that these papers collectively offer. A summary of the implications can be found in Table 2.

The papers reviewed are rich in diversity and the findings are encouraging. Chinese consumers are receptive to advertising. They are open to a great variety of global appeals, including modernity appeal, celebrity endorsement, western models, foreign brand names (with easy-to-pronounce transliteration), humor (with incongruity resolution), fear and sex appeals (targeted at consumers with adventure values) in addition to local appeals. Their positive predisposition towards advertising also leads to sales and price premium (for smaller and domestic brands). Further, Chinese consumers' high receptiveness to advertising on new media, online promotion, and e-commerce places them in line with global industry trends.

Implications on Culture and Globalization

Findings from the review also bring out a number of implications that point to non-obvious characteristics of the Chinese consumer and advertising in this country that can be summarized in three areas. First, on the macro level, China's changing societal values and consumption habits is a topic that warrants serious and continuous attention. Many individuals in this dynamic environment, especially young consumers, readily embrace modernity and individualism targeted at them through advertising.

This process helps redefine the Chinese people into segments of differential values, especially along the generation and gender lines. Some of the studies reviewed are already looking into segment- and individual-level effects. Additional research in this area could enrich our understanding of the kaleidoscope of cultural values and sub-cultures in China, rather than the presumed collectivist block, and their respective responsiveness towards different types of advertising.

Second, our review shows that bipolar values such as traditionalism/modernity perceived to be at extreme ends of the value spectrum are not mutually exclusive to the Chinese consumer. Traditions and modernity, or alternatively globalization and localization often coexist in the same ad copy and reside in the same individual. Zhang (2009) showed that Generation X consumers have a bipolar disposition. Their respective self-construal can be activated by ads that use either an individualistic or collectivistic appeal. Beyond Generation X, these characteristics of the Chinese consumer show their two attraction responses. Global appeals (indicated by foreign language and western models) elicit cosmopolitanism and quality perceptions that are appropriated by Chinese consumers into their cultural and consumption schemas. When combined with local appeals that elicit self-referencing, brand friendliness, and brand liking, a brand could fit well with the consumers' evolving needs. It is not surprising that consumers prefer a model that captures both global and local images (Hung, Li and Belk 2007).

While many Chinese consumers are taking on global cultural values, it remains unclear how they combine these values with Chinese traditional, collectivistic values to create a new "self." This opens up the potential for future research to examine new cultural dimensions and personality traits that characterize consumers for more effective targeted advertising. As well, further research may examine the interaction effects, when global and Chinese values combined into one's self-concept, including one's "ideal self" and "social self", to understand Chinese consumers' changing self-concepts.

Third, whereas Chinese consumers accept a broad range of global appeals, respect for Chinese culture draws the baseline for ad acceptability. Nike's "Chamber of Fear" ad discussed in Zhao and

Wang (2011) featured American NBA player LeBron James defeating a Chinese martial arts master, a pair of dragons, and legendary Chinese goddesses. While the ad was purported to be a simulated videogame, images of the defeated were all respected symbols of the Chinese culture. The ad provoked a public outcry, was later banned, and Nike had to apologize publicly for its insensitivity (China Daily 2004). While no advertisers would intentionally insult the consumer, one needs to be vigilant and aware of the cultural symbolism and local sensitivity in the host country. Using the appropriate (local) language may provide a first step towards communication effectiveness.

Implications on Conventional and New Media

Although research efforts in recent years have shifted to the impact of new media platforms, conventional media such as TV, newspapers, and magazines remain the stronghold for reaching Chinese consumers beyond Generation X living in urban areas. Unfortunately, few examined this area over the past decade, especially regional differences in media use. The situation is pressing in China as there are few past studies to draw on for advertisers and agency executives to understand conventional media platforms in this country. Conventional media platforms are also evolving fast with the emergence of IPTV (internet protocol television), 3DTV (three-dimensional television), and Tablet PC's into the mainstream market to meet the challenges posed by new media. We strongly endorse research that examines the way conventional media, including their new developments, are used in the changing China market with potential network convergence (IPTV, mobile, internet) in the future.

Implications on Agency Management

Beyond considerations for culture, media and the consumer, the development of advertising institutions lags behind the development and needs of the market, suggesting that improvement in agency management is a key area to sustain growth. As the advertising industry is still in the growth stage and many Chinese firms have yet to recognize the benefits of advertising or still believe they know better than agency professionals, global experiences can be highly beneficial to the industry.

Already, some major agencies are uniting the local experience of Chinese companies with the business expertise of international firms, creating an improvement in agency practices such as sophisticated advertising budgeting methods, creativity concerns and a profitability focus.

An area that needs continual improvement is agency-client relationships. According to the research, the relationship remains unbalanced in favor of the clients, who have inordinate amount of market power and say. The lack of competent local skilled personnel, reliable external agencies, as well as China's sensitive cultural-political environment further render the market environment in China complex and unpredictable. To handle this and arising contingencies, ad agencies need to develop into an adaptive system to match the complexity of the environment (Holland 1975). There are two ways to adapt to this complex environment: complexity reduction and complexity absorption, the latter of which is consistent with Chinese culture. It entails the use of alliances to create options and hedge risks (Boisot and Child 1999). Thus, agencies operating in China need to develop a *guanxi* (or relationship) network (Gu, Hung and Tse 2008) of client firms, ad professionals, and government representatives to understand their agenda and co-evolve strategic and policy alternatives in this complex environment.

Conclusion and Limitations

The studies we reviewed were conducted in a Chinese cultural context. If one accepts that advertising theory and phenomena are culturally-bound, the emergence of a highly different cultural context, such as that of China, presents an interesting challenge. It forces us to reconsider some normative constructs, postulates and theories in advertising since most of them are asymmetric to US and European countries. Using this perspective, what is different is indeed interesting. Through the development of the advertising industry in China, many of us have the opportunity to embrace emerging markets, their characteristics and insights.

We would like to acknowledge three limitations in this review. First, our choice of time frame (ten years) may not be sufficient to reveal the structural and dynamic changes in a fast growing market such

as China. Future work is needed to complement and contrast what we have uncovered. Second, we reviewed 65 papers; yet, this collection of papers may not be sufficient to offer a generalizable knowledge base on China advertising. The selected papers paid more attention to Generation X consumers than other age groups. Relatively less attention was given to the socio-political environment or industry competitiveness. With the growing interest in this global market, future studies may help unfold further insights on theory development and advertising practices. Last but not least, we reviewed only journals written in the English language. With the continuous development of advertising and communication studies in China, the number of papers written in Chinese would increase, making this expanding knowledge platform highly resourceful for future work and study.

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* Paper included in the review

Table 1
Selected Papers from 13 Journals, 2002-2011

| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Journal Total |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| JA | | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 |
| JAR | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | | | 4 | 14 |
| IJA | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 12 |
| JIA | | 0 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 4 | | 7 |
| JMR | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| JM | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| JCR | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| JIBS | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| JIM | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 4 |
| JBE | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 5 |
| P&M | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| JCP | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| JPPM | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Year Total | 5 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 65 |

Table 2
Research Topics, Insights and Implications

| Topics | Insights & Implications | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Research | Managerial |
| Diversified/Shifting Cultural Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize Chinese culture in transition; - Be aware of oversimplification of dichotomies (individual/collective); - Sensitive to emergence of a bicultural segment in Generation X; - Recognize market fragmentation along cultural values & age cohorts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapt to dynamic & transitions in consumption culture; - Need to match cultural values with fragmented segments; - Sensitive to bicultural consumer groups. |
| Language & Brand Names | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand how language affects ad effectiveness; - Investigate language labeling effects on brands with different schemas; - Understand links between cultural superstition and ad execution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate webpage & other ad materials to facilitate processing; - Need attention to transliterated brand names – easy to pronounce; - English (western) brand name has positive associations; - Be aware that language may embed cultural superstition. |
| Acceptable/Offensive Advertising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural value causing offensive reactions; - What is the boundary of acceptance – accept yet stand out from clutter; - Acceptance by segments and in competitive situation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore use of humor (& how) and celebrity endorser; - Recognize salience of corporate giving and its potential effect to firm image; - Operate within acceptance boundaries in ad execution. |
| Media Growth & Control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to understand transformation of conventional media (IPTV); - Effects of new media in various formats, on future generation cohorts; - Ways to create effective internet ad and web promotion; - How eWOM and social media operate in collectivist culture (eWOM). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to reach consumers through multi-media channels; - Recognize e-business opportunities (e.g., e-service platform); - How to effectively use eWOM |
| Agency Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the effect of information asymmetry in agency-client relationship; - Assess cross-over effects for foreign/local client relationship; - Need to understand relationship with other players (e.g., government) through guanxi network. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of foreign/local agency-client relationship cross-overs; - Recognize the need in client education and relationship management; - Need to adapt and integrate into local culture and politics. |

Appendix
Summary of 65 papers on China Advertising

| Paper Title | Journal, Year & Author(s) | Major Findings |
|---|---|---|
| | Research Method | |
| 1. Diversified/Shifting Cultural Values (n=16) | | |
| <i>Cultural Values in Advertisements to the Chinese X-Generation: Promoting Modernity and Individualism</i> | JA - 2003 J. Zhang S. Shavitt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both modernity and individualism predominate in current Chinese ads. - Advertising helps shape new values among the X-Generation, as well as reflect existing values in the mainstream Chinese market. - Product characteristics (personal use vs. shared products) are found to affect the degree of individualism and collectivism manifested in ads |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>The Influence of Ad Model Ethnicity and Self-Referencing on Attitudes</i> | JA - 2004 B. Martin C. Lee F. Yang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asians exhibit greater self-referencing of models than do whites. - Self-referencing mediates ethnicity effects on attitudes. - High-self-referencing Asians have more favorable attitude toward the ad and purchase intentions than low-self-referencing Asians. - Asian models advertising atypical products generate more self-referencing and more favorable attitudes toward the model. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>Chinese Consumer Readings of Global and Local Advertising Appeals</i> | JA – 2004 N. Zhou R. Belk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two dialectic reactions by Chinese consumers: (1) Desire for global cosmopolitanism and status goods for the sake of <i>mianzi</i> (prestige face). (2) Motivated by a more nationalistic desire to invoke Chinese values that are seen as local in origin. - These opposing reactions to advertising have implications for understanding how international advertising affects local cultures. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>Visual Differences in U.S. and Chinese Television Commercials</i> | JA - 2005 S. Zhou P. Zhou F. Xue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compared the visuals of U.S. and Chinese television commercials within the framework of high-context versus low-context cultures and individualistic versus collectivistic societies - Results showed that traditional storytelling techniques such as story line and comparison and identification are better vehicles for cultural manifestations than cinematographic variables such as subjective camera, direct address, and pacing |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>Cultural Masculinity/Femininity Influences on Advertising Appeals</i> | JAR – 2006 C. Chang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examined whether masculinity/femininity can influence responses to ads employing image and utilitarian appeals. - Results showed that US participants (a predominantly masculine culture) liked the utilitarian appeal ad better and rated it more believable than the image appeal ad. - In contrast, participants from Taiwan (a predominantly androgynous culture) responded equally well to both ad appeals. |
| | Experiment & Interviews | |
| <i>Interactive Effects of Appeals, Arguments, and Competition Across N. American and Chinese Cultures</i> | JIM – 2006 L. Teng M. Laroche | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An experiment with North Americans and Chinese participants on the effects of cultural congruent (vs. incongruent) appeals and argument strength in a competitive context. - An ad with culturally congruent appeal creates more favorable responses than a competing ad containing incongruent appeals. - The effect is qualified by argument strength—cultural congruency has negligible effect if the focal ad contains weak argument. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>Advertising Consumer Culture in 1930s Shanghai: Globalization and Localization in Yuefenpai</i> | JA - 2008 X. Zhao R. Belk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examined poster ads (<i>yuefenpai</i>) a popular advertising medium in Shanghai in the 1930s. Discussed China's early encounters with globalism, localism, and advertising, and how they relate to China's current experience with globalization. |
| | Content Analysis | |

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| <i>The Effectiveness of Using a Global Look in an Asian Market</i> | JAR - 2008 C. Chang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This research explored the use of two global-look strategies: the use of Western models and English brand names. - The use of Western models and English brand names enhanced the perceived globalness of the brand and encouraged participants to infer that the product originated from a developed Western country and higher perceived quality of the product. - On the other hand, participants showed an "in-group bias" in ratings of products with Chinese brand names: higher on brand friendliness, brand trust, self-brand connections, and brand liking. |
| | Content Analysis & Experiment | |
| <i>Confucian Ethics Exhibited in the Discourse of Chinese Business and Marketing Communication</i> | JBE – 2009 Y. Zhu | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This research analyzed the discourse of Chinese Expo invitations and illustrated how Confucian ethics (guanxi, interdependence, harmony and <i>mianzi</i>/face) are applied in marketing communication in advertising for the Chinese Expo. |
| | Discourse Analysis | |
| <i>Glocal Understandings: Female Readers' Perceptions of the New Woman in Chinese Advertising</i> | JIBS – 2007 K. Hung S. Li R. Belk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A content analysis of 427 print advertisements from magazines supported a typology of four women images in Chinese advertising: cultured nurturer, strong woman, flower vase, and urban sophisticate. - Interviews with 14 women informants showed that women consumers use a number of interpretive strategies and self-referencing responses to these images. As a result, while Chinese women accept Western women characteristics such as independence and self-sufficiency, they also infuse the ideal women images with Chinese cultural values. |
| | Content Analysis & Interviews | |
| <i>Sexual Issues: The Analysis of Female Role Portrayal Preferences in Taiwanese Print Ads</i> | JBE – 2008 C. Lin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study content-analyzed 735 magazine advertisement sampled from three magazines types (foreign women's magazines-Chinese edition, domestic women's magazine, and domestic management magazines) during the period of 01/2004 to 07/2004 in Taiwan. - Results showed that classical beauty and girl-next-door images were most frequent images in domestic magazines whereas trendy woman image was most frequent in foreign women's magazines. |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>Politicizing Consumer Culture: Advertising's Appropriation of Political Ideology in China's Social Transition</i> | JCR – 2008 X. Zhao R. Belk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A semiotic analysis of advertisements in the People's Daily, focusing on the ideological aspect of advertising. - Results showed that advertising reconfigures both key political symbolism and communist propaganda to promote consumption within China's social and political transition. The dominant ideology is reconfigured to reinforce and naturalize China's social conformation to global consumerism. |
| | Semiotic Analysis | |
| <i>Exploring Cosmetic Advertising in Southern China</i> | IJA – 2009 B. Barnes N. Siu Q. Yu S. Chan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey comparing Hong Kong and Shenzhen women on their preference of copy strategy. - Hong Kong women have higher preference for global appeal. They place less importance on the Chinese translation of brand name, prefer Western models and Western music in ads. - Hong Kong women prefer the models to have an ideal-look whereas Shenzhen women prefer the models to look sophisticated. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>The Effects of Advertising Appeals in Activating Self-Construals</i> | JA – 2009 J. Zhang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examined the effect of advertising appeals in activating self-construals among Chinese Generation X consumers. - Study 1 showed that bicultural disposition was evident in this generation. Viewing individualistic (vs. collectivistic) ads shift participants' self-construals toward independence (vs. interdependence). - Study 2: self-shifting effect emerged only among bicultural Gen Xers |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>The Persuasiveness of Individualistic and Collectivistic</i> | JA - 2010 J. Zhang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study examined the persuasiveness of individualist & collectivist ad appeals of Generation-X consumers & older consumers in China. |

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| <i>Advertising Appeals Among Chinese Generation-X Consumers</i> | Field Experiment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For shared products, young adult consumers found individualistic and collectivistic ad appeals equally persuasive, whereas older consumers found collectivistic appeals more persuasive. - For personal-use products, both younger and older consumers found individualistic appeals more persuasive than collectivistic appeals. |
| <i>Regulating Political Symbols China's Advertising Law And Politicized Advertising</i> | JAR - 2011 X. Zhao J. Wang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A semiotic analysis on four advertising cases, specifically examined how some advertising violated the ideological components of China's advertising law and how other marketing efforts were able to successfully use ideological terms to promote products. |
| | Semiotic Analysis | |
| 2. Language and Brand Names (n=7) | | |
| <i>Cultural and Language Effects on Chinese Bilinguals' and Canadians' Response to Advertising</i> | IJA – 2002 R. Toffoli M. Laroche | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants evaluated either an informational print ad in Chinese or the same ad in English. Participants perceive the print ad in English to be less forceful and more honest. Shows more favorable attitudes towards the ad and the brand when the ad is in English. - An Anglo-Canadian sample rated the English print ad. Hong Kong Chinese perceive the Chinese ad to be more forceful and less honest as compared with Anglo-Canadians perceiving the English ad. These results may be attributed to Chinese as a more implicit form of communication. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>How Worldwide Is Marketing Communication on the World Wide Web?</i> | JAR - 2002 C. Warden M. Lai W. Wu | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study investigates the impact of different language interfaces and language familiarity on attitudes about the products found. - Familiarity of language improved product evaluation when product differentiation is high but reduced evaluations when diff. is low. - The effect of English is found to be nearly indistinguishable from an unknown language for both high- and low-differentiated products. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>Executive Insights: The Impact of Linguistic Differences on Int'l Brand Name Standardization: A Comparison of English & Chinese Brand Names of Fortune-500 Companies</i> | JIM - 2002 J. N. P. Francis J. P. Y. Lam J. Walls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The authors conduct a study of Chinese and English brand names of consumer goods companies listed in the Fortune-500 from China and Hong Kong. - They find that the most commonly used brand name standardization/adaption strategies involve transliterating brand names to fit the local market. The localizing naming strategy also involves adding cultural symbols, product benefits, and positive connotations. |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>Cultural Superstitions and the Pricing Endings Used in Chinese Advertising</i> | JIM – 2003 L. Simmons R. Schindler | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey of 499 advertised prices shown in print advertisement found in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. - Results showed that 39.9% of the advertised price endings (i.e., the right most digits of a price) in the number 8, which is associated with prosperity and good luck. The frequency of price endings in the number 8 is four times more than endings in the number 4, which is associated with death. These findings indicate a prevalent superstition in Chinese culture. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>The Differential Interaction of Auditory and Visual Advertising Elements with Chinese and English</i> | JMR – 2003 N. Tavassoli Y. Lee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This research examined the influence of unrelated auditory and visual elements on processing of English/Chinese ad copy; since English is alphabetic whereas Chinese is logographic. - 2 experiments showed that auditory elements interfere more with the learning of and cognitive responding to English ad copy than with Chinese ad copy, and vice versa for visual elements. - A 3rd experiment showed that auditory elements are better retrieval cues for English than for Chinese ad copy, & vice versa for visual elements. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>Investigating the Impact of International Cosmetics Advertising in China</i> | IJA- 2004 B. Barnes P. Kitchen G. Spickett | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey of 100 Chinese women on preferences for cosmetic ads. - Respondents tend to think that it is important for foreign cosmetic brands to have easy-to-pronounce brand names. However, they pay less attention |

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| | -Jones Q. Yu | to the meaning of the translated brand names. |
| | Survey | - Expert/specialists and celebrities are important reference groups in cosmetic purchases. Television and magazines are important media sources that respondents use to obtain cosmetic information. |
| <i>Luck of the Draw: Creating Chinese Brand Names</i> | JAR - 2008 W. Li P. Lii | - This study examined the relationship between branding practices and supernatural beliefs in China. |
| | Content Analysis | - More than 50% of the cases we studied, the creation of brand names was based, in part, on a "lucky" number of total strokes drawn in creation of the characters that spelled out the brand name. - Brand names comprising a lucky total-stroke number were more common in high-uncertain than low-uncertain market environments. |
| 3. Acceptable/Offensive Advertising (n=19) | | |
| <i>On the Renaissance of Chinese Brands</i> | IJA – 2002 M. Ewing J. Napoli L. Pitt A. Watts | - An analysis of the recent data (market share, sales value, sales volume, price) of four fast moving consumer goods in China. |
| | Sales Data Analysis | - Domestic brands increase in sales value and volume despite rising prices, while multinational brands are losing sales value and volume despite price decreases. Domestic brands are also achieving success in traditional points of distribution where MNBs typically do well. - These results suggest that domestic brands are gaining brand equity whereas multinational brands (MNBs) are losing it. |
| <i>Advertising Trends in Urban China</i> | JAR – 2002 D. Zhou W. Zhang I. Vertinsky | - The Chinese advertising market expanded in the past decade at an average annual rate of above 40%. |
| | Survey | - Urban Chinese have similar or more positive attitudes toward advertising than their U.S. counterparts and these positive attitudes demonstrate resilience over time. - In contrast to the United States, those with higher levels of education tend to have more positive attitudes and beliefs. |
| <i>Product Placement in Movies: A Comparison of Chinese and American Consumers' Attitudes</i> | IJA – 2003 S. McKechnie J. Zhou | - This study surveyed 107 Chinese on their attitude towards product placement in movies. The results were compared against previous findings with a U.S. sample. |
| | Survey | - Results show that Chinese consumers are less accepting of product placement than U.S. consumers. Both U.S. and Chinese consumers are less favorable toward placement of ethically-charged products. - Unlike the findings from U.S. consumers, gender and frequency of movie watching have little impact on Chinese consumers' attitude toward product placement. |
| <i>Long-Term Effects of Television Advertising on Sales of Consumer Durables and Nondurables</i> | JA - 2003 N. Zhou D. Zhou M. Ouyang | - This study offers a first glimpse of the long-term effect of television advertising on sales in China through the use of a marketing-persistence model. |
| | Sales Data Analysis | - Significant marketing persistence was found in sales of consumer durables, whereas there were mixed results in sales of nondurables. |
| <i>Advertising Controversial Products in Asia Pacific. What Makes Them Offensive?</i> | JBE – 2003 K. Fam D. Waller | - A survey conducted with 1014 students across four regions (China, Malaysia, Taiwan, New Zealand) to determine what type of products are seen as offensive and why. |
| | Survey | - Four types of products: Gender/sex related products, social/ political groups, healthy and care products, and addictive products. - Chinese consumers tended to find advertising for social/political group and addictive products to be offensive, and were more likely to cite "indecent language" and 'anti-social behaviors' as the reasons. |

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| <i>Chinese Children's Attitudes Towards Television Advertising: Truthfulness and Liking</i> | IJA – 2004 K. Chan J. McNeal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study surveyed 1758 children (ages 6 to 14) in Beijing, Nanjing, and Chengdu. Children in Beijing trusted and liked TV commercials more than children in Nanjing and Chengdu. - In all three cities, perceived truthfulness of advertisement varies by school year. Proportions of children with extreme ratings decrease consistently with school years. - Similarly, proportions of children holding extreme feelings towards TV commercials decreases with school years. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Harmonious Regional Advertising Regulation?</i> | JA - 2005 Z. Gao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A theoretical framework for comparing government regulations is developed and used to analyze the similarities and differences between advertising regulations in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. - It concludes that harmonization of regional advertising regulation in Greater China is an attainable goal |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>The Automatic Country-of-Origin Effects on Brand Judgments</i> | JA – 2005 S. Liu K. Johnson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An experiment showed that that the accuracy of participants' categorization decisions was influenced by their intentional use of the attribute rule and the country stereotypes that were activated automatically by country-of-origin (COO) cues presented. - These findings suggest that country stereotypes can be spontaneously activated by the mere presence of COO information in the environment, and they may influence product judgments even when consumers do not intend to base their judgments on COO. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>The Double Jeopardy Phenomenon and the Mediating Effect of Brand Penetration between Advertising and Brand Loyalty</i> | JAR - 2005 Z. Yang Z. Bi N. Zhou | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study of the Double Jeopardy (DJ) phenomenon and the mediating effect of brand penetration between advertising and brand loyalty in four major cities in China. - Smaller brands are punished twice for being small, following the well-known DJ pattern, which says that brands with larger market penetration tend to enjoy higher repeated purchases and smaller brands attract fewer buyers who also buy less. - Brand penetration plays a mediating role in the relationship between advertising and brand loyalty. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Social Comparison, Imitation of Celebrity Models and Materialism Among Chinese Youth</i> | IJA – 2008 K. Chan G. Prendergast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 631 Hong Kong Chinese youth shows that both social comparison and imitation of celebrity predicts materialism. - Results also show that interpersonal communication (communication with parents, teachers, and friends, and susceptibility to peer influence) is positively related to social comparison. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>What's Funny and What's Not: The Moderating Role of Cultural Orientation in Ad Humor</i> | JA - 2008 Y. Lee E. Lim | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness of ad humor is jointly determined by the humor process (i.e., incongruity resolution and arousal safety) employed in the ad and the cultural orientation (i.e., uncertainty avoidance and individualism-collectivism) of the ad viewer. - Attitudinal effects elicited by the cognitive/ affective uncertainty elements in ad humor are more pronounced among consumers who have higher uncertainty avoidance, as well as among those with more collectivistic orientations. |
| | Experiment | |
| <i>How Far Is Too Far? The Antecedents of Offensive Advertising in Modern China</i> | JAR – 2008 G. Prendergast W. Cheung D. West | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey in Hong Kong and Shanghai classified offensive advertising into 3 categories: ads dealing with offensive sexual matter, ads for offensive nonsexual matter, and ads displaying an offensive manner. - Of these categories, manner was perceived as the most offensive. - Self-esteem and susceptibility to interpersonal influence were significant in predicting the level of offensiveness for all three types. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Controlling Deceptive Advertising in China: An Overview</i> | JPPM – 2008 Z. Gao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This research examined how China controls deceptive advertising in five aspects: initiation, interpretation, deception, verification, and |

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| | Case Analysis | remediation. Chinese advertising regulation is governed by several statutes and administrative regulations. The differences between the Chinese and the U.S. system, as well as the contradictions embedded within the Chinese system, pose challenges to foreign firms in China. |
| <i>Addressing the Advertising of Controversial Products in China: An Empirical Approach</i> | JBE – 2009 K. Fam D. Waller Z. Yang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 630 consumers in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou on their personal values and the extent to which they find advertising of alcohol and condom offensive. - Consumers with “Traditional” and “Security” values are more likely to find condom ads offensive whereas consumers with “Adventure” values are less likely to find condom ads offensive. Values did not influence perception of offensiveness of alcohol ads. Results also suggested ways to reduce offensiveness of advertising messages. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Drivers of Brand Commitment: A Cross-National Investigation</i> | JIM – 2010 A. B. Eisingerich G. Rubera | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 167 consumers in UK and 230 consumers in China examined the effects of four brand management strategies. - Results showed that brand innovativeness and brand self-relevance have a greater effect on brand commitment in UK (individualist, short-term oriented, low power distance), while brand customer orientation and social responsibility have a greater impact on brand commitment in China (collectivist, long-term oriented, and high power distance). - All 4 strategies equally contribute to brand commitment in China. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Assessing Celebrity Endorsement Effects in China A Consumer-Celebrity Relational Approach</i> | JAR - 2011 K. Hung K. W. Chan C. H. Tse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey of 1,030 Chinese consumers showed that consumer celebrity worship is a significant antecedent to endorser effects: celebrity-worship leads to value-transfer which affects brand purchase intent. - The model is robust across both sports and entertainment celebrities and the endorsement effect is moderated by over-endorsement. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>What’s So Funny? The Use of Humor in Magazine Advertising in the United States, China, and France</i> | JAR - 2011 M. Laroche M. Nepomuceno L. Huang M. Richard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article compares the use of humor in US, China, and France. - Results showed that humor was used significantly more often in the United States than in France and China. China used more humor than France for “luxury” products, but humor is used less than 50 percent of the time for non-personal and non-luxury products. |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>Corporate Philanthropic Giving, Advertising Intensity, and Industry Competition Level</i> | JBE – 2010 R. Zhang J. Zhu H. Yue C. Zhu | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An analysis on Chinese firms’ philanthropic response (as in press release) to the 2008 Sichuan earthquake showed that a firm’s advertising intensity is positively associated with probability and amount of corporate giving. Besides, this positive association is stronger in competitive industries. These results suggest that corporate philanthropic giving is strategic rather than altruistic. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Country of Origin Effects in Developed and Emerging Markets: Exploring the Contrasting Roles of Materialism and Value Consciousness</i> | JIBS – 2011 P. Sharma | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey on 1752 employees of a large MNC from its offices in four countries (China, India, UK, & USA) on their actual car choice, and evaluation/purchase intention for a fictitious car brand. - Results showed that consumers in emerging markets have more favorable responses for products imported from developed markets. In contrast, developed market consumers have less favorable responses for products imported from emerging markets. Moderated by consumer ethnocentrism, materialism, and value consciousness. |
| | Survey | |
| 4. Media Growth and Control (n=18) | | |
| <i>Measuring Web Advertising Effectiveness in China</i> | JAR - 2003 W. Gong L. Maddox | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results suggested that just one additional banner exposure can improve Chinese users’ brand recall, change attitude toward the brand, and increase purchase consideration. - General attitude toward Web advertising was found to exert influence on consumers’ attitudes toward the banner ads & toward the brand. |
| | Survey | |

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| <i>Improving Media Decisions in China: A Targetability and Cost-Benefit Analysis</i> | JA - 2005 K. Hung F. Gu D. Tse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Among the three most popular mass media in China (magazines, television, newspapers), magazines have the highest targetability. - Among special interest magazines, fashion magazines are significantly more costly to advertise in, while they reach the same income segments as travel and business magazines. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Losers and Lovers: Mobile Phone Services Advertising and the New Media Consumer/Producer</i> | JIA – 2005 C. Spurgeon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This paper presented two case studies of successful mobile services advertising campaigns: Virgin mobile Australia’s “Warran” campaign for SMS services and CSL Hong Kong’s “Lovers’ campaign for mobile data. - The 2 campaigns featured high levels of interactivity and encouraged consumers to participate in “conversations” using their cell phones. - Mobile phone is regarded as a new mass conversational medium in which users are both consumers and producers. |
| | Case Study | |
| <i>Generational and Regional Differences in Media Consumption Patterns of Chinese Generation X Consumers</i> | JA - 2006 W. Dou G. Wang N. Zhou | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Generation X cohort consumers, compared with their preceding generational cohorts, tended to pay more attention to entertainment-based media programs such as television drama series and radio pop music, and shun information-based topics such as news or business reports. - While cohort effects on preferences for media program types exist, the effects are less pronounced in more developed regions in China. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Electronic Word-of-Mouth: A Comparison of Stated and Revealed Behavior on Electronic Discussion Boards</i> | JIA – 2006 J. Fong S. Burton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study compared eWOM behaviors of U.S. and Chinese participants of six discussion boards that have a focus on "Digital Photography": U.S. based—eBay, Yahoo, Google; China based EachNet, Sina, and Netease. - Chinese participants are more likely to request for direct product recommendation. U.S. sites had more than twice the number of postings giving a digital camera recommendation. - Follow up survey showed that many U.S. respondents had given info on the online discussion board. The two groups were equally likely to seek product recommendation and placed similar importance on info collected |
| | Content Analysis & Survey | |
| <i>The Influence of eWOM on Virtual Consumer Communities: Social Capital, Consumer Learning, and Behavioral Outcomes</i> | JAR - 2007 K. Hung S. Li | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyzed computer-mediated data and conducted face-to-face interviews with beauty product enthusiasts in China to understand eWOM in a consumption-interest virtual community. - Findings reveal four categories of responses: (1) sources of social capital, (2) brand choice facilitation, (3) persuasion knowledge development, and (4) consumer reflexivity. |
| | Interviews | |
| <i>Sources of Product Information for Chinese Rural Consumers</i> | IJA – 2008 Q. Chen Y. He X. Zhao D. Griffith | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 1115 respondents from 11 Chinese provinces examined consumers’ usage and trust of various information sources. - Consistent across product categories, TV commercials are respondents’ top choice of information source and among the top three most trusted information sources. In additions, family members, salespersons, and friends are also among top choices and most trusted sources. However, selection and trust of these sources varies across product categories. - Source credibility is a reliable prediction of information source use. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Wired China: The Power of the World's Largest Internet Population.</i> | JAR - 2008 C. Riegner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This report summarizes key features for global marketers to consider by comparing the similarities and differences between the Chinese and American online populations. - The impact of user generated content among those under 35 in both countries is a major focus. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Understanding the Acceptance of Mobile SMS Advertising among Young Chinese Consumers</i> | P&M – 2008 J. Zhang E. Mao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 262 Chinese consumers of an online survey panel showed that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, and subjective norms significantly predict responses to SMS ads. - Results showed 3 antecedents of perceived usefulness of an SMS ad: info. usefulness, entertainment usefulness, sociality usefulness. |
| | Survey | |

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| <i>Internet Advertising Strategy of Multinationals in China</i> | JIA – 2009 H. Li A. Li S. Zhao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of a total of 47,131 Internet ads, comparing the creative, placement, and budget strategies of Eastern and Western MNCs. - Creative strategy: (1) Western MNCs use more direct-response ads; (2) Both Eastern and Western MNCs dominantly use individualist appeals; (3) Eastern MNCs use more emotional appeals whereas Western MNCs use more rational appeals. - Placement strategy: Eastern MNCs use more heavy traffic websites whereas Western MNCs use both moderately and heavy traffic websites; - Budget strategy: Cost per ads and cost per unique ads tend to be lower for Western MNCs. |
| | Content Analysis | |
| <i>Social Factors in User Perceptions and Responses to Advertising in Online Social Networking Communities</i> | JIA – 2009 F. Zeng L. Huang W. Dou | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study surveyed 327 Chinese consumers who have been enrolled as a member in their most visited community site (QQ-Zone, Tianya Club, or Mop Space) for at least three months and spend at least four hours a week on the site. - Results showed that identification with the community, the community's group norm, and group intention influenced perceived ad relevance and perceived ad values, which in turn influenced responses toward community ads. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Interpersonal Trust and Platform Credibility in a Chinese Multi brand Online Community— Effects on Brand Variety Seeking and Time Spent</i> | JA - 2011 K. Hung S. Y. Li D. K. Tse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An online survey of 899 Chinese consumers examined the effects of interpersonal trust and platform credibility on consumer search and consumption behaviors. - Results showed that (1) web features, and user instrumental and relational need fulfillment are antecedents of interpersonal trust and platform credibility; (2) interpersonal trust is an important driver of platform credibility; and (3) both constructs drive a user's online community usage and brand variety seeking behavior. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Consumer Adoption Intentions Toward the Internet in China: The Effects of Impersonal and Interpersonal Communication Channels</i> | JAR - 2011 Y. Wei G. L. Frankwick T. Gao N. Zhou | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey of 3,754 consumers in China showed that demographic characteristics (age, education, personal income, household income); impersonal communication channels/mass media use (newspapers/magazines, television news); and personal communication channels (word of mouth, personal selling) influence consumer Internet adoption intentions. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Online Word of Mouth and Consumer Purchase Intentions</i> | JIA – 2010 G. Prendergast D. Ko S. Y. V. Yuen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A mall intercept survey of 150 consumers in Hong Kong showed that both similarity between a user's interests and a forum's topic and user attitudes towards the forum strongly predict purchase intentions. The effects were partially mediated by forum's persuasiveness. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>The Lived Meanings of Chinese Social Network Sites (SNS) Among Urban White-Collar Professionals: A Story of Happy Network</i> | JIA – 2010 H. Chen E. Haley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews 12 Chinese, urban white-collar professionals on their lived meanings of using a newly launched Social Network Site (SNS). - Results revealed that participants' understanding and interpretations of SNS are shaped by and reflective of their social role and cultural characteristics of Chinese society. - Participants actively & constantly seek freedom of control, time, communication, socialization, & entertainment. Returning to Chinese culture is an overarching theme that organizes their experiences of SNS. |
| | Interviews | |
| <i>Development and Current Issues Related to Internet Marketing Communications in China</i> | JIA – 2010 M. Huang A. S. L. Tsang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article examines the current status and development of Chinese online marketing communications. Specifically, it showed current figures on audience characteristic, media types, and subject placement and discussed current issues for internet communications in China. |
| | Industry Analysis | |

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| <i>Selection of Best Keywords: A Poisson Regression Model</i> | JIA – 2010 J. Li R. Pan H. Wang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article proposed a statistical model that links keyword characteristics to the effectiveness of paid search advertising. - Through empirical tests with a real data set obtained from the Web site of a service company in China, this research reveals that ranking and length of a keyword influence its clickthrough volume and thus, influence effectiveness of using the keyword in a paid search advertising campaign. |
| | Statistical Modeling | |
| <i>The Present Situation of and Prospects for E-Business in China</i> | JIA – 2010 C. Liang | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article analyzed the current situation of e-business in China and identified several key trends. For example, rapid growth in e-business has spillover effects on driving development of logistic distribution in financial and information industries. Future trends were also discussed. |
| | Industry Analysis | |
| 5. Agency Management (n=5) | | |
| <i>Perceptions of Integrated Marketing Communications: A Chinese Ad and PR agency Perspective</i> | IJA – 2005 P. Kitchen T. Li | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey with 60 ad agencies and 23 PR agencies in Beijing showed that most Chinese agencies saw the importance of IMC. - Barriers to promote IMC in China include clients' unfamiliarity with IMC, the lack of cross-disciplinary communication skills within agencies, and clients' tight marketing budgets. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Advertising Budgeting Methods and Processes in China</i> | JA - 2006 G. Prendergast D. West Y. Shi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal interviews with over 200 advertisers in China, including state-owned enterprises, international joint ventures (IJVs), and private firms. - The most common budgeting method used was "judgmental" and the most common decision-making process was "bottom-up, top-down." - IJVs and firms that adjust their budgeting methods for different profitability levels used more sophisticated budgeting methods. |
| | Interviews | |
| <i>The Effect of Agency Creativity on Campaign Outcomes</i> | JA - 2008 H. Li W. Dou G. Wang N. Zhou | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study examined the effect of agency creativity on campaign outcomes as moderated by different levels of market dynamism and competitive intensity. - Results showed impact of agency creativity on campaign outcomes is positive but the impact of excessive creativity is negative, and agency creativity is more powerful in high rather than low competitive intensity and in low rather than high market dynamism. |
| | Interviews | |
| <i>Client Following Revisited: A Study of Transnational Advertising Agencies in China</i> | IJA – 2008 F. Cheung H. Mirza W. Leung | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey of 32 foreign agencies, covering the world's top agencies and regional top agencies (N. America, Europe, Asia). - Client following is the dominant motive for foreign advertising agencies to enter China. "Presence of client" was regarded as the most important advantage in China, followed by "market size and growth potential." - "Competent personnel" is regarded as the most significant ownership advantage required to make FDI in China. "Ensuring adequate quality control" was most important to internationalization. |
| | Survey | |
| <i>Exploring Relationship Satisfaction between Global Professional Service Firms and Local Clients in Emerging Markets</i> | JIBS – 2010 W. Dou H. Li N. Zhou C. Su | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This study examined key concerns in cross-border professional agency relationships using agency theory perspective. - Local and professional knowledge asymmetry was proposed to influence adaptation and goal congruency, which in turns, influence relationship satisfaction. - The model was tested with dyadic data obtained from personal interviews of 177 domestic Chinese firms and their multinational ad agencies. |
| | Survey | |