In the last two years, Asia Pacific’s e-commerce market almost doubled. In figures highlighted by CFO Innovation\(^1\), the overall B2C e-commerce market has almost doubled from $300 to $525 billion in the last 2 years. By the end of this year, e-commerce revenues in Singapore are expected to hit $2.99 billion.

Six of the world’s top ten countries for social media use are in Asia\(^3\). We Are Social’s Digital in 2016\(^3\) compendium highlighted the rise of social media across the region, which is outpacing Western markets in both the number of accounts and the time spent online. More than 769m people in East Asia (Greater China, Japan and Korea) use social media, more than three times the number of people in South East Asia, the second placed region for usage with 239m, while in third place, North America has just 213m.

South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and Thailand all ranked in the top ten countries, with the number of active accounts on the top social network in each country compared to the population all significantly above the global average of 31%. South Korea ranks highest at 78%, with Hong Kong and Singapore both above 60%. The high numbers reflect the levels of connectivity of each market, which are among the wealthiest in Asia and also have very high smartphone penetration. Though South East Asia’s developing markets are playing catchup with connectivity, the numbers indicate huge future growth potential in coming years. Malaysia and Thailand in particular are already top ten players, despite have a lower internet penetration rate than other countries in Asia.

However, when it comes to the number of hours spent daily on social media, South East Asia is leading the charge with four developing countries in the top ten globally.

The Philippines is number one globally, with its social media addicts spending more than 3.5 hours every day on social media. Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia spend about three hours each on their favourite platforms, coming in at sixth, eighth and ninth respectively.

A recent iResearch study, “China’s Innovative Social Networking Marketing Report,”\(^4\) found the social media revenue of China’s social networking advertising was 13.82 billion Yuan (approximately US $2.07 billion) in 2015 and projects revenues to reach 40 billion Yuan (US $6 billion) by 2018. The data showed the number of Chinese users logging into social networks on their mobile devices has been steadily growing over the past year. There were more than 346 million monthly active users via mobile as of March 2016 and 458 million desktop users.
According to “The Asia Pacific Marketing Monitor 2016” study by TNS, marketing departments in Asia Pacific are shifting focus and budget to social media. Nearly half (46 percent) of marketers are using social media monitoring to inform overall planning, more than any other source. Marketers are almost equally as likely to use social media for brand communication (46 percent) as they are customer service (43 percent). It’s also being leveraged as a sales channel (38 percent) and to amplify other marketing activities (37 percent).
More than a third of surveyed marketers (38 percent) have paid for advertising on social media sites and 26 percent are leveraging social influencers through sponsorship deals.

As far as priorities, customer relationship management is number one for marketing departments in the Asia-Pacific region and it’s also a priority development area for 40 percent of marketing professionals. Other development areas identified by Asia-Pacific marketers include innovation and product development (36 percent), real-time marketing (36 percent) and social media analysis (34 percent). With a growing focus on the customer relationship management, on how to deliver the best overall customer experience, ahead of the traditional aim of increasing brand awareness, it follows that the data shows three of the 10 most important customer touchpoints are related to customer service and customer
experience: social media customer service, interactions with in-store staff and online customer service channels.

More marketers in Asia-Pacific surveyed in July 2016 named customer relationship management as an important area of development than any other area. The survey, conducted by TNS, revealed a number of important development areas, without any one area emerging as a consensus winner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Areas of Development According to Marketers in Asia-Pacific, July 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer relationship management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation and product development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real-time marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile brand marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better use of touchpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insights and data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: n=2,250
215917
www.eMarketer.com

More than a third of marketers in Asia-Pacific said an important development area was innovation and product development; about as many cited real-time marketing and social media analysis as important to develop. But with so many development areas hovering between 30% and 40% of respondents, one conclusion might be that there’s no single marketing trend practitioners across Asia-Pacific are most focused on at the moment. Focusing on the customer experience rather than fretting solely about sales shouldn’t be a novel idea, but more often than not, the numbers take precedence over how we reach them – customer experience continues to be seen as a cost of doing business in Asia, CMO Coun-
cil concludes after surveying 287 senior marketing executives in the latest study done in collaboration with SAP Hybris, on customer experience. In a recent survey commissioned by SAP to understand about consumers’ digital experience, it was reported that two-thirds of Asia Pacific and Japan consumers today are not delighted with the digital experience provided by brands in the region. With the digital transformation of businesses, more than 50% of organisations are predicted to redirect their investments to customer experience innovations by 2018.

Data is constantly being harnessed and analysed by companies in order to evolve and develop their strategies to maintain and foster stronger customer relationships. Creating algorithms that try to predict customer behaviour using only historical data isn’t enough today.

Data is translated into making customer experiences in more personalised and seamless ways. It is essential that organisations harness the abundant data available to understand their customers. To get a complete picture of each customer, brands must bring their business processes and customer information (including data from external sources) together on one core platform. The full picture and the ability to act on it in real-time are paramount to understanding the customer and taking the experience to the next level. This is contextual customer experience.

The pervasiveness of e-commerce has already changed what customers expect from the brick-and-mortar retail shopping experience. Trying to match the convenience, selection and clean navigation of an e-commerce site in a physical location is a tall order. Beyond offering individualised recommendations (that is one step further than personalisation), another focus is a holistic uninterrupted service delivery – a seamless transition that complements our day-to-day activities.

Companies today are aware of the rapidly increasing volume of interactions with customers across a growing range of channels, from email and the web to chat and social media. The challenge to engage with them and build long-term, profitable relationships is then to be able to respond quickly and consistently to customers, on their channel of choice. This lends support to a survey finding where 79% of marketers agree that the single view is pivotal to improving commercial performance.

Multiple agencies are scrambling for a bigger share of an increasingly fragmented marketing budget. Yet the marketers expect the agencies to work and collaborate together, when in actual fact they have been set up in fierce competition for a share of the budget. Agencies are rapidly trying to diversify their capability offering in an attempt to secure a greater share of that budget. In the meantime, the marketer is increasingly frustrated on a number of levels.
1. Constant frustration that agencies do not have enough budget to deliver everything they have planned.

2. Increasing number of agencies on their roster, increased time to manage and co-ordinate these agencies.

3. Agencies are looking for ways to cut their own costs to remain profitable, usually by getting increasingly more junior people working on the account.

Consolidation to either a full service agency, or a holding company solution or perhaps the ‘P&G’ lead agency model is simply outsourcing the problem to a third party who has much to gain with the increased control and share of the marketing budget. All of these roster solutions usually require the marketer accepting a compromise on quality across the specialist capabilities they require, plus it can create a bottleneck, which will slow down response rates – not ideal for services based industries like telecommunications, travel and hospitality or financial services.

Marketers are finding their agency rosters are too complicated then the starting point is not to simply restructure them in a way that outsources the problem, but to review and align their roster to their specific strategic needs. It is time for the marketer to look to achieving some marketing genius by “Taking the complex and making it simple”. There is need to articulate a results focused marketing strategy and to identify and appoint the resources deliver that strategy.

Solutions discussed at the “All That Matters” conference¹², is to consolidate the roster to a single lead agency or bundle up into a customised holding company solution – it is not news, is a reaction to a problem rather than a solution to the deeper issue facing modern marketing. The problem is not the number of agencies on the roster, but the response of marketers to an ever increasingly number of consumer touchpoints.

APAC advertisers can no longer ignore the issues of media agency transparency¹³. The relationship between the agency and their client has traditionally been one of a trusted advisor or partner, and yet increasingly the facts are that the relationship is a commercial one too where the agency has a responsibility to drive profits, seemingly at the expense of their clients best interests.
Marketers and advertiser starting to look at their current arrangements and make sure they have the right governance, accountability and transparency built into their agency agreements.

Retailers were previously suffering from the inability to connect with customers through a common touch point but consumers can now buy what they see and like on TV immediately through Stream technology. Beyond amalgamating online channels, the goal is to deliver a frictionless experience as they transit between offline and online. By unifying the customer views to create a single point of control for organisations, brands are now able to building a consistent brand experience across channels and devices; create customer satisfaction optimization and sales will naturally follow.

When it comes to social, 39% of those surveyed said they marketed to their social media followers; 38% of those surveyed said they paid for advertising on social media sites.
An eMarketer estimate from March 2016 places 2016 social network ad spending in Asia-Pacific at $11.43 billion, higher than every region other than North America, so it's significant that 38% of marketers in the area pay for ads on social media sites. Asia-Pacific also leads the world in social network ad spending growth, up nearly 50% from the previous year; next year there will be nearly 35% growth, still the highest in the world.

One of the areas where marketers may be falling short is online video. According to the study, online video is an important element to marketing; 95 percent of connected consumers in Asia Pacific are now watching free video content online with the majority watching videos weekly. However, only 18 percent of marketers are devoting budget to online video.

Brands are placing social media at the heart of their strategy as they strive toward 360-degree customer engagement.
Social Media Marketing in Asia Pacific

Top five metrics informing planning:
1. Social media monitoring
2. Market share data
3. Brand tracking
4. What the competition is doing
5. Information from media agencies

Top priority for marketing departments this year:
1. Customer relationship management
2. Increasing brand awareness
3. Transforming the marketing organisation in the digital world
4. Deriving value from data to inform decisions
5. Identifying and converting new sales opportunities

Social media and ecommerce:
- 47% using social media advertising
- 30% using social media buy buttons

What departments are marketers collaborating with?
- Communication service teams: 46%
- Business development teams: 39%
- Wider sales teams: 33%
- Digital teams: 30%
- Insights teams: 16%

How marketers are using social media:
- 46% Brand communications
- 43% Customer service
- 38% Sales channel
- 37% Amplifying other marketing activity
- 36% Providing insights to inform product development
- 27% Mining for customer intelligence

% using social networks: 92%

Top three platforms used daily:
1. WeChat Moments
2. Facebook
3. QQ Space
Increased internet penetration, high social media engagement and a mobile first consumer culture are building the foundations of e-commerce growth in South East Asia, but brands need to avoid a one-size-fits-all strategy if they are to succeed, brands stepping into the region’s highly fragmented online markets needed to appreciate the different languages, religions and shopping cultures that affect marketing strategy. In emerging markets, unique challenges present themselves – such as a cash culture, underdeveloped infrastructure and suspicion about online payment security.
The Internet has changed the launch process—now companies seed products with influencers, leak information to reporters, bloggers, and consumers, live-stream launch events globally, and reward brand advocates with exclusives. The new launch landscape levels the playing field for brands of all sizes and industries when reaching consumers—yet the ability for consumers to share their opinions freely on social media can provide huge hurdles for brand messaging.

Schneider Associates 2014 Most Memorable New Product Launch survey found that each generation uses a unique media mix. Seniors, Boomers and GenXers still like to curl up with a magazine. Millennials are turning to Facebook and Twitter, while GenZ, or the iGeneration, is skeptical of brands and places more value on peer-to-peer reviews—even from strangers. Consumers now look to six or more sources for information before buying a new product. This fractured media consumption trend makes it difficult for brands to build brand awareness, earn consumer mindshare, and drive sales.

Facebook is now the second-most used source for new product launch information behind TV commercials. Brands are using Snapchat to provide exclusive, limited-time opportunities to fans, closing the gap between virtual and in-store retail experiences. Meerkat, allows people to experience anything virtually through live video streaming on their smartphones.

Brands using social media marketing in Asia have yet to go mainstream, although it is one of the world’s fastest growing regions for personal social media usage. There are many reasons explaining Asia’s cautious adoption of social media marketing, helping prepare companies to adopt the medium is an equally important discussion that will drive the region’s marketing habits to change. Asian firms should consider the following aspects:

- **Differentiation.** As the most recently established marketing discipline, social media involves an entirely new set of influences and standards to traditional marketing techniques. Message and focus will need revision for the medium to ensure it is compelling and valuable to the audience.

  High-level buy-in and understanding of social media marketing is crucial to the future success of social media strategy.

- **Prepare a set of social media operating processes and guidelines -** with the Internet a source for instantaneous news and information, actively engage in social media conversations in and around social networks.
Like all other communications channels, social media marketing requires patience and time for genuine results and progress to be made. While specific activities and campaigns can raise the visibility and reputation of the company, long-term, sustainable returns require a patient approach.

Online communications is easily measured given the unprecedented access and levels of data on the Internet. This ease of measurement could lead to an obsession with quantitative figures. A qualitative approach represents a better basis for analysis that will present takeaway points with greater resonance and use for your ongoing communications or campaign. Social media marketing is about developing lasting relationships, not hitting numbers.

Content is the currency of social media marketing, so your firm must be ready to have something meaningful to say if it is to resonate and stand out amongst your competition online. Starting a Facebook page or Twitter account means nothing if you provide no value to your audience. Ensuring your company has valuable content is essential.

Asia is a hugely diverse region comprising differing cultures and languages. As HSBC frequently points out, what may work one way in one culture, may be the total opposite in another. Culture and language also explain why more citizens in Thailand use Facebook than the population of Japan, Korea, and China combined. Equally, while it is true many social networking sites have a strong presence across a number of markets, they have different uses or value in different countries.

Many companies confuse social media marketing’s potential to provide excellent value for money with being cheap. Though social networks themselves may be inexpensive or free to join, a dedicated, specialist team, implementation, planning, measurement, analysis, and other essential, dedicated functions are not.

Social networking penetration in the modern world means regardless of the nature of your business, employees, customers, partners, key media, and others are likely be found on one social network or more. This is even the case for B2B firms. With the Internet a key resource for news and information gathering, business conversations and opinion gathering is increasingly taking place online with social networks as a key platform for seeking opinion and providing it.
• Don’t plan ‘viral’ - No list of digital do’s-and-don’ts would be complete without reference to ‘going viral’, perhaps the most clichéd marketing term today. While many companies are right to plug in to social networking users to spread content and campaigns, they must accept that ‘viral’ is an effect not an objective. There are a huge amount of arbitrary and subjective factors that determine whether a message or content goes viral, being in the right place at the right time with the right message may not be enough without a little bit of luck.

Social success in Asia requires a different strategy to the one marketers might normally adopt in the US or Europe. One-third of Asia’s population is now online, with more than one-quarter using social media in the past 30 days. Almost half of the region’s population now owns a mobile phone.

1. Conversation - listening to your audience’s conversations in social media, and adopt a style that makes it easy for them to converse with you. There are hundreds of different social networks in Asia, all built around different needs, interests, and technological functions. They all have one thing in common, though, and that’s conversation. Managing a ‘regional’ conversation in Asia poses a number of challenges.
People around APAC speak more than 2,000 languages, and even if your audience understands English, they may not be comfortable – or happy – conversing in it. When it comes to social conversations, people prefer to speak the language that best allows them to express themselves. Even when they do speak the same language, there are invariably many different ways of speaking it – from the nuances of everyday slang to our constantly evolving ‘social’ vocabularies (think ‘LOL’). The key is to remember that successful communication isn’t determined by what you say; it’s determined by what other people understand.

2. **Culture**

Asia’s peoples are highly diverse, and this diversity can add significant complexity to the process of developing a unified regional approach. Firstly, people in Asia follow a wide variety of religions, each of which may impact how a brand needs to behave in social media. Marketers will need to keep track of myriad religious festivals and celebrations, while attitudes towards things such as alcohol, styles of dress, and even colours may vary dramatically from one culture to another. Similarly, many Asian cultures are guided by the concept of **面子** – ‘face’ as it is commonly known in English. Consequently, it may be more difficult to achieve high levels of audience interaction, which can impact organic reach and engagement.

3. **Content Neutrality**

Qzone and Facebook still command the greatest number of active users in Asia, but most of the region’s social media users are active across multiple platforms. Chat apps like WeChat (Weixin), Whatsapp, LINE and KakaoTalk have exploded in popularity in recent months, while platforms like Weibo, Twitter and Instagram continue to grow too. As a result, it’s important for brands to avoid putting all their eggs in one basket. Marketers need to create content that audiences will be able to transfer from one platform to the other, allowing people to continue the conversation on their own terms with their different networks. This approach will also help to avoid relying too heavily on platform-specific audiences. Social media users in Asia are quick to adopt new platforms, and marketers may find that the ‘likes’ or ‘followers’ they build in one platform quickly become irrelevant as audiences move on to the newest network or app.
China’s Tencent is responsible for 3 of the world’s top 5 most active social platforms – clear evidence that Asia’s social media users have adopted multiple channels.

4. Country Needs
Social media is only ever a means to an end, and that it’s also only one tool in your marketing toolkit. It’s unlikely that your brand will be dealing with the same set of challenges and opportunities in each market, so you’ll need to adopt your approach to the brand’s local needs. Much of this relates to the audience context in each market – for example, how much they know about the brand, or the specific place it holds and role it plays in the local landscape. Do you need to educate people, or just reinforce what they already know? Can you already harness ‘cultural equity’ like community in-jokes or evocative imagery? You’ll also need to adapt your content and conversational approach to your brand’s specific needs for things like new launches or environmental factors (e.g. product shortages). Don’t forget that local legislation may also have a significant on your activities. Many countries in Asia have strict laws governing aspects such as product claims, competitions, or even whether certain products (e.g. alcohol) can be overtly marketed.
5. **Cellphones**

Social media in Asia is almost always a mobile-first experience. 85% of Facebook’s users in the region access the service via mobile devices, whilst almost all 396 million users of WeChat - China’s hottest social platform – are mobile-only. This mobility presents some great opportunities for marketers, whether it’s connecting with people when they’re actually using a brand, when they’re at the point of sale, or when they’re out socialising with friends. However, Asia’s mobile context differs considerably to the one in the West, and the region’s mobile-first environment isn’t without its challenges. Firstly, data connections remain slow across much of Asia, with barely one-quarter of the region’s 1.8 billion mobile users able to access 3G networks. Meanwhile, more than 80% of the region’s 4 billion active mobile connections are pre-paid (versus 27% in the US and 42% in the UK), meaning that the cost of mobile data – and therefore of mobile internet access – is still an important issue. As a result, marketers need to build carefully balanced content plans. High-definition video may deliver the ‘optimum experience’, but video streams or downloads will be too slow and too expensive for the average mobile user in countries like India or the Philippines, so be sure to incorporate simpler, static content too. Slow connection speeds mean brands need to deliver immediate value too; if the audience has any doubts about the relevance or utility of a brand’s post, they will scroll straight past it before the content even has a chance to load.
6. **Communities**  
If you do need to take a regional approach to social media in Asia, try to avoid categorising your audience by country. Instead, look for the interests, motivations and attitudes that the people you want to engage have in common, and use these commonalities to define your audience. People are drawn to other whom they feel affinity for, and when it comes to the borderless internet, this affinity is far more dependent on passion than it is on place.

Marketers need to use new technologies to add new kinds of value; not just to interrupt people in new ways with new kinds of advertising.

Social brands aren’t just brands with a social media presence; they’re brands that put social thinking at the heart of all their marketing.

Here are some tips brand and marketing managers can use to leverage converged media to their advantage:

1. Use social media as a supporting character, not the star performer.
2. Use social media to leverage and support an in-person launch event.
3. Use social media to build or capitalize on a consumer’s emotional connection to a brand.
4. Use social media to support a launch by knowing your target demographic and their social media preferences.
5. Use social media to host contests that foster loyalty and reward brand advocates.
6. Use a blogger outreach strategy to help launch your product.
7. Use a hashtag to create, ignite, and track the conversation on social media.
8. Use visual social media to give people an inside look at a B2B company.
9. Use social media to let consumers create the new product.
10. To maximize effectiveness of a social media campaign, always stay ahead of “the next big thing.”

People are spending more than 25% of our online time on social media and 80% of marketers are already promoting their content in social media. Using social media effectively is becoming a daunting task. For example, if you shared a link via Facebook, you have the opportunity to create a post that will truly stand out.
amongst the rest; all you need is an attention-grabbing headline, a clean, relevant image that piques interest (which might be different from the featured image used in your content), and a short, compelling description.

Effective ways to promote your content using social media include:

- Embrace the visual. Three of the “newest” social networks, Pinterest, Instagram, and Snapchat, are based entirely on images. Create not only a branded “featured image” to share with your post, but also create separate images for each of the main points in your content so they can be shared when you repeatedly post them to social media.

- Headlines matter

- Create better titles that help your posts to be more promotable in social media or...

- Create a new title specifically for sharing your content in social media. Don’t just settle for one title. You should be posting your content multiple times, so you should be creating multiple titles, and even doing A/B testing to see which headlines are more effective to promote your content on which social networks.

- Customize for the platform. When sharing content, utilize the customizable posting features on each social media platform—this includes the headline, image, and a description of the content you are sharing.

- Share at the right time. Many content marketers overlook this simple concept. For maximum engagement, the content you’re sharing needs to reach as many people as possible, so you have to go where the crowd is—and when they are online and active. Keep in mind that different social media platforms may not have the same peak times.

- Don’t be afraid to post multiple times. Numerous data studies suggest you will be more effective by promoting the same content multiple times on social media. With multiple images and multiple headlines for your content, you can engage with your followers without them even knowing a link is to the same content you posted earlier. Consider posting multiple times to social media as a way to ensure your audience has a chance to see your content.
• Ask questions. Drive social media users to communicate with you—and increase the chances they engage with your content—by asking for questions and feedback. Because social media was made for people and not for businesses, you should always be striving to create a human connection with social media users.

• Share on the right platform. Since different sites serve different purposes and audiences, it’s crucial to familiarize yourself with the major social media platforms your target audience uses. Avoid redundancy and simply “dumping” content across all channels. Concentrate on the platforms where you have the highest chance to engage with your audience. Use this list of content promotion tools to see which platform best fits your needs.

• Pay to play. Paid Social is mainstream, meaning you can pay to promote your content into the news feeds of social media users, where you are guaranteed visibility from a relevant audience.

• Maximize your brand advocates. There are many tools that make it easy to manage and measure social media sharing by brand advocates.

• Leverage communities. An employee advocacy program is one way of leveraging communities and utilizing the strength in numbers approach to promote your content to more social media users. There are already literally more than two million communities within LinkedIn alone, not to mention additional communities in the form of Twitter chats, Google Plus communities, shared Pinterest boards, and even Facebook Groups.

• Experiment with content creator communities. A number of communities such as Triberr, Social Buzz Club, and Viral Content Buzz that exist outside of social media for the sole purpose of bringing together content creators and enhancing your social media promotion.

These tips are supported by the results of the study that shows that brand loyalty of the customers is positively affected when the brand

1. offers advantageous campaigns
2. offers relevant content
3. offers popular contents
4. appears on various platforms and offers applications on social media;
It is essential to take the specific aspects of each culture into account. Social media strategies presented by Datawords at China Connect are not the only means to this end. Effective approaches and methods employed by major brands on social media networks to attract – or even seduce – Japanese, Chinese and Korean clientele, and win their ongoing loyalty.

1. All Presence. The first approach, known as “All Presence”, consists of increasing the points of contact and opportunities for exchange through an increase in the frequency of messages across a maximum number of platforms. For example, McDonald’s increases promotions or dedicated operations on WeChat and Weibo in order to draw consumers to visit their restaurants more often.

2. Proximity. The second approach is to reinforce the interpersonal dynamic with a strategy that harnesses proximity to engage consumers by asking questions and eliciting reactions. For example, a distributor of cultural products in Japan attained answers to a lengthy questionnaire in this very fashion, managing to enlist a full 10% of its followers on the social media platform Line (the most popular network in Japan).

3. Benefits. The third strategy consists of a brand offering advantages to its community in the form of benefits and gifts as rewards to accompany their purchases. A supermarket in Hong Kong rewarded their consumers in this way by offering online access to highly popular TV series as a reward for online purchases.

4. Bonding. Another technique is to create an emotional bond through the use of content that portrays the deeper value of a brand through a more emotional angle. This is particularly true in Japan, where various major brands have created “emoji” – strikingly original and endearing emoticons – which are collected and shared online.

5. Endorsement. Brands can also turn towards relying on trendsetters and ambassadors to promote their products to consumers. A Korean snack brand gained attention in this way by using pop singers and local actresses. The representatives described the difficulty of getting their hands on the coveted snacks, which resulted in successive sell-outs of the product and reinforcing an aura of desire around the brand.

6. The Second Date. To forge both fruitful and long-lasting relationships with consumers, knowing how to build brand loyalty becomes an essential asset. Promotions, discounts and exclusive offers play an import-
Social media communication in Asia often takes on a more playful and visual dimension. The use and habits linked with smartphones have developed quicker in Asia than in the West. Social media communication requires that brands invest into the local adaptation of their campaigns and the creation of dedicated campaigns. The stakes are even higher considering that Asia is well ahead in the realm of social media, and thus the best practices of these markets will soon be assessed for use in other countries.

**China:**

**WeChat** is more than a simple tool of instant messaging. It’s grown into a complete social media ecosystem which features various tools (including a payment solution) and a countless array of third-party applications. WeChat provides an excellent platform for direct individual interaction between a brand and the members of its community, accelerating marketing personalization and customer service. Its range today includes around 700 million active users, 222 million of whom are in continental China. However, WeChat isn’t the only platform in use in China, and brands must take into account the impact of other social networks. First off, **Sina Weibo** has 549 million active users and is an indispensable resource which plays an important role working in lock step with brands in terms of approach. Internet users stay tuned to Weibo for news and updates, and to get a better understanding of the world of the brand. At times, it’s also wise to choose secondary social media platforms for more targeted marketing approaches. In China, this method allows brands to reach tens of millions of consumers and can generate outstanding results.

In China and in other countries, trendsetters are an indispensable tool on social networks and must be chosen with the utmost care. Advertising programming is quite efficient in China, and the volume of data available on users exceeds that of most other markets. Digital development in China tends to be horizontal and can expand into other fields. Responses on WeChat (with active moderation) are expected within 10 minutes (as opposed to 2 hours), a result of the sharp rise in automated technology.
Japan and Korea

Unlike China, Japan and Korea feature the strong online presence of Facebook and Twitter, with millions of users and a substantial penetration rate. But in each of these countries, far and away the most vital social network is a local mobile network: Line in Japan, and Kakao Talk in Korea. Line and Kakao Talk allow brands to interact with their client base in the closest possible way, working to establish a direct dialog that has a positive impact on brand perception. These networks also help foster a high rate of transformation (purchases from the brand online or visits to a physical store).

Mobile Trends among Travellers in JAPAC

According to a study by AdNear titled ‘JAPAC Traveller Report 2014’, homemakers travelling through Changi Airport are the most connected mobile users. The report is exploring trends in the JAPAC region and found that homemakers are five times more switched on to their mobile devices as against professionals. Travelers in the 25-36 age group showed the highest engagement at 69%.
Lenovo’s Global Christmas Selfie Campaign. Lenovo, the Chinese multinational computer technology company has a holiday themed social media campaign that is capitalising on the popularity of selfies. Under the hashtag #Holiday360, members of the public are invited to submit a selfie video that shows how they are celebrating the festivities in their hometown. Videos can be submitted to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, and Lenovo will curate them to create “the world’s first global 360° selfie”.

Christmas Campaign for Chocolate Lovers. As part of its festive Christmas marketing campaign, Ferrero Rocher China has launched a multichannel initiative that allows visitors to personalize, share and send a virtual Christmas greeting along with a box of chocolates. Customised greetings can be sent by email on the chocolate brand’s website or via its social media sites such as Wechat and Weibo. Participants who send a virtual gift will be in line for a festive prize, a box of premium Ferrero Rocher chocolates.

BMW’s Imaginative Social Campaign is inspired by Snapchat. To try and reach younger consumers, car giant BMW has embarked on a Snapchat-inspired social media campaign and website dubbed Snowchat. The imaginative project takes its lead from the hugely popular photo messaging Snapchat app where users set a time limit for how long recipients can view their Snaps.

Getting Creative in the Bath. Lush’s latest marketing campaign was inspired by its social media followers. The cosmetics company has published a video backed by an orchestral score that shows the swirling colours created when their bath products hit and dissolve in the water. Lush said that part of the motivation came after seeing posts from their fans who had shared their bath art images under the hashtag #LushTime.

Nikon Turns to Social to Show off its New Camera. What better way to demonstrate the features of your company’s new camera than with an entertaining social media video? To show prospective consumers just what its Nikon D750 DSLR FX camera can do, Nikon brought in JWT Singapore to create the ‘Breaking Free’ online campaign. The 5-minute video, which features on Nikon’s YouTube channel lets viewers watch a group of Korean breakdancers from nine different perspectives taken by the new camera.

Big Prizes in Yamaha’s Photo Contest. Social media contests are all the rage, and Yamaha Music is tapping into their popularity with a photo contest to promote its audio devices. Consumers who upload a picture of a room inspired by their ‘Home of Sound’ range will be in with a chance of winning a Yamaha LSX-70 Relit. The products will be given to 12 winners selected from those who upload images to
Pinterest, Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag #homeOfSound. One winner will be announced each day of the campaign.

**Starbucks**

Though Starbucks is one of the most popular global chains and is visited by millions of people across the world every day, the company can still get a bad rap sometimes for being the “enemy” of small coffee shops. In 2012, the company made a push to start one-on-one customer engagement across their social media accounts. This included responding to criticism and welcoming positive feedback. They also started an additional account, @MyStarBucksIdeas where customers can submit their ideas for making the entire Starbucks experience better. That account alone has more than 45,000 followers, while the Starbucks Facebook page has more than 35 million likes.

**T-Mobile**

Since branding themselves as the “uncarrier” of mobile companies, T-Mobile has been making a splash in the social world. T-Mobile has done an exceptional job of forging real relationships with their customers via social media. In addition to announcing their groundbreaking “uncarrier” promotions, the company uses Facebook and Twitter to find qualified job applicants. What better place to locate your next employees than in a community of followers who are already fans of your company?

**AirAsia**

When it comes to customer service, airlines need to be at the top of their game. In October 2013, the company celebrated 2 million likes by offering free seats to their Facebook followers. The company was one of the first airlines to embrace social media marketing and has enjoyed the dividends. AirAsia also frequently posts contests to encourage engagement, including their #LoveIsInTheAir contest in February, which asked visitors to submit photos of them and a loved one who a chance to win free seats.

Gift maker Mud Pie has come up with a good way to promote its brand across social media and at the same time provide expert content for its followers. Five bloggers are collaborating with the company via its online ambassador program. Through their posts, they will share information about industry trends and other relevant news as well as encourage their followers to consider Mud Pie’s product offerings.

Luxury marketing is increasingly about experiencing the brand as a way of building awareness and loyalty, and with Southeast Asian consumers among the heaviest users of social media, a digital experience is becoming a requirement for upmarket brands in the region. In the past, luxury brands were reluctant to embrace social media for fear of losing their air of exclusivity, but the nature of the platforms has forced their hand.
Some luxury brands, including Giorgio Armani, Jimmy Choo and Burberry, have invited consumers – and millennials are most likely to do this – to upload images of themselves wearing their favourite brand. But, in the social equivalent of an arms race, social networks for HNWIs (High Net Worth Individuals) are now appearing – ELEQT, Quintessially, Best of all Worlds – where membership is invitation only.

In Manila’s financial district last year, a Land Rover billboard drew plenty of stares. At first glance, it appeared to be a typical car billboard, with a large profile of a Range Rover Evoque framed against a twilight cityscape. Suddenly, the car was driven away by someone taking it for a test drive.

Land Rover’s billboard, one of several the company placed throughout the Philippines as part of a promotional campaign, invited passers-by to actively take part in the advertisement and “test drive this billboard”. A video promoting the stunt says the billboards increased test drives “ten times over”. By letting bystanders participate in the advertisement itself, the Land Rover billboard was utilising experiential marketing. While traditional advertising on the radio, television or in print engages consumers through sight and/or sound, experiential marketing aims to leave an impression on customers through an immersive experience.

A study by online luxury retailer Reboonz has also observed more people across Asia buying pre-owned luxury goods, with sales up 30% in the past year and bags and shoes among the most popular items.

As an industry that already employs some of the world’s most creative minds, the luxury sector has embraced this challenge of moving advertising to the next level, particularly as it provides a unique opportunity to build brand awareness and loyalty. A 2015 report by consulting firm Bain & Company stated that the global luxury market was worth more than $1.1 trillion in 2015, and a 2014 survey by research firm Wealth-X reported that more than 90% of luxury executives value experiential marketing as “crucial to their brand’s ability to connect with ultra-wealthy clients”.

Southeast Asian consumers increasingly have money to spend on luxury goods.

Experiential marketing ranges from tried-and-tested ‘guerrilla’ marketing, such as handing out free samples of a product, to more attention-grabbing methods, such as when Grey Goose opened branded bakeries in several cities and made bread using the same ingredients that go into its vodka.

According to Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Vertu: Marketing Lessons From Some of the World’s Most Exclusive Brands, a report by researchers at the University of Limerick, Ireland, the key to immersive luxury marketing is “to engage customers in a memorable experience around the product/service, developing a relationship with customers, creating an affinity with them”.

Social Media Marketing in Asia Pacific
Louis Vuitton has established its own ‘island’ in Singapore, where visitors can immerse themselves in the iconic fashion brand. Originally intended as an art gallery or exhibition space as part of the Marina Bay Sands complex, the building was claimed and dubbed Louis Vuitton Island Maison by Bernard Arnault, CEO of LVMH, the world’s largest luxury goods conglomerate, which counts Dom Pérignon, Bulgari, Christian Dior and Louis Vuitton among its brands.

Not far from Louis Vuitton Island Maison, tucked inside Singapore’s ION Orchard shopping mall, sits Swiss luxury watchmaker Patek Philippe’s largest boutique in Southeast Asia. At 265 square metres and containing a VIP room with a ‘secret’ entrance, the store seems designed to encourage well-heeled customers to lose track of time while perusing classic watches and admiring the birdseye maple and Indian rosewood décor.

User-submitted campaigns such as Burberry’s offer the consumer a chance to directly involve themselves in their favourite brand’s marketing. And in social media-obsessed Southeast Asia, which boasts Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines in the top ten countries for daily hours spent on social media, according to digital analytics firm We Are Social, there is untapped potential for this style of crowd-sourced marketing.

While it is now the norm for luxury brands to have Facebook pages or Twitter feeds carrying fashion tips, questions from their customers and other such interactions, in the past, luxury brands had a reputation for being hands-off with the masses. While many luxury brands were relatively slow to catch on to the potential benefits of social media, some of them are already streaking straight past to the next big technological thing: virtual reality.

Mercedes-Benz has already developed its own app for Google Cardboard, an inexpensive virtual reality device that holds a smartphone and fits over a user’s eyes much like a pair of goggles. With Mercedes’ simulated 360-degree display, users can ride on top of a Sauber C9 or sit in the driver’s seat of an AMG GT.

From Hermès hosting social media ‘dinner parties’ to LVMH organising a charity concert with Kanye West, experiential marketing is becoming more creative by the day. And with luxury consumers demanding ever more innovation from their favourite brands, the line between genuine real-life experiences and marketing department-created happenings looks set to become increasingly blurred.
Apart from being present online and targeting right audience, real estate companies are also developing mobile apps to facilitate the transactions. Digital marketing is gaining hold with developers who have realized that homebuyers are finding it convenient to explore various options virtually before physically checking out the short-listed properties. Builders are increasingly forming alliances with Facebook and Google to help connect with homebuyers through personalized messages to right audience and they seem to be getting better visibility and results. “Currently, digital marketing contributes to around 25% of the leads generated through all sources and helps generate around 8% to 10% of revenue. In the next 3 years, digital marketing’s contribution would be close to 25% to 30% of the revenue.

Social media including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube are also being used extensively across product categories to improve the reach and to increase the consumer touch points. “Facebook provides marketing services to help grow real estate business and deliver the right message at the right time, to the right people — this is personalization at scale. Tata Housing Development Company, one of the early adopters of digital marketing since 2009, was also amongst the first developers to create a mobile app for its projects The Promont in Bangalore and Arabella in Gurgaon.
Google and the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) have announced the launch of Digitize, a new programme focused on training local talent to be programmatic buying and technology experts for the digital marketing industry. The programme will provide 24 Singaporean fresh graduates and young working professionals with intensive training in programmatic, and give them the opportunity to work in top media agencies and advertisers.

The year-long programme will include:

- 5-week training by Google in Singapore and Sydney
- 3-week international work placement in Sydney; and
- 10-month placement in Singapore with top media agencies and advertisers including Dentsu Aegis Network, Omnicom Media Group, Publicis, Hotels.com and Amobee

MediaMath has announced the introduction of AudiencePLUS (APAC), the region's first mobile audience segment collection for digital marketers, on its TerminalOne platform. Developed by consumer intelligence platform on mobile, Mobilewalla, APAC is intended to help marketers better identify and target individuals through more than 120 audience segments with more than 600 million unique, targetable devices, in twelve countries throughout the region. The offering will also leverage Mobilewalla’s 70 petabytes of accumulated mobile consumer data to compute consumer profiles and segments. As a result, marketers will be able to plug APAC segments into their marketing campaigns, and further establish a digital connection directly to the mobile devices of their target consumers, thereby extending possible business outcomes.

Facebook has introduced Dynamic Ads for Retail. By connecting their local store inventory to the social media platform, advertisers can create a campaign that can dynamically showcase products available at the closest store.

KMK Online is one of Indonesia’s leading digital publishers, with news portal Liputan6 and online video platform Vidio, entertainment portal Bintang and sports portal Bola. Vidio has 400 million annual streams, and supplies premium local video content to the Indonesian market has partnered with video inventory management platform, SpotX, to monetise video advertising across its news and video sharing properties. SpotX will provide the programmatic infrastructure, facilitate modern buying techniques, and provide demand facilitation services to help set up deals among the 60-plus trading desks and DSPs it maintains relationships with.
MSL Group has launched an influence-to-impact performance platform to better deliver the true potential of influence in marketing and reputation at scale. Called Conversation2Commerce, the offering is touted to put the agency’s expertise in earned media and influence at the core and surrounds it with best-in-class expertise and technologies from Publicis Communications and Publicis Media. The new global solution headed by MSL Group’s chief influence strategist, Erin Lanuti, provides scalable services in influence identification, content and idea creation, targeting, amplification and measurement. It features industry-leading performance marketing data, technology and analytics making it more measurable, transparent and accountable for driving incremental impact and ROI for brands.

With consumer, media and stakeholder influence now playing a critical role in decision-making, PR has earned a role at the centre of marketing and strategic communications. By bringing together MSL Group’s earned expertise with Publicis shopper, media and creative brands, we have been able to develop innovative solutions for enhancing the consumer experience and driving brand lift and commerce with a level of control, measurability and targeting never before applied to earned media.

Manchester City has announce a new regional partnership with mobile fan engagement technology company Ballr, which sees the Live Fantasy Sport App become an official partner of Manchester City in China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Singapore. Ballr Football, which launches in October 2016, is a free gaming platform that allows fans to connect, compete and communicate during real-time sporting events.
http://datawords.com/6-social-media-approaches-asia-presented-datawords-china-connect
http://maysocial.com/6-imaginative-engaging-and-creative-social-media-campaigns/
https://www.facebook.com/AirAsia
https://sea-globe.com/luxury-marketing/
http://www.campaignasia.com/article/tech-talk-google-facebook-mediamath-msl-group-and-more/629865