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# PR technologies in the promotion of a Chinese company in the Internet space

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#### **Abstract**

The relevance of this research topic is due to the fact that modern PR is a virtual technology of control over the communicative sphere and media management. Any commercial organization operates within a complex environment. Therefore, the understanding that those companies that actively use the Internet in their activities receive a number of undeniable competitive advantages is becoming more and more tangible. Doing business in modern conditions without the use of information technology is not possible, as the Internet provides ample opportunities for promotion. It is important for the company to ensure awareness of potential customer, to ensure that a certain percentage of the target group has heard about the existence of the organization, its products and services, as well as their usefulness. Knowledge about the company, the product is acquired by the client as a result of purposeful informing about the specifics of the company and its capabilities, about the ability of the product to satisfy the need. There are many channels for presenting an organization and goods or services, but at the moment, due to high competition, every commercial company is trying to make itself known in such a strong modern information space as the Internet. The results of recent studies have shown that the use of PR on the Internet can bring real savings and profits. This is due to the great benefits and conveniences that both consumers and firms receive.

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### **Keywords**

PR-technologies, promotion, Internet, virtual technologies, information technologies.

#### Introduction

PPR is one of the elements of the complex of integrated marketing communications. Its main goal is to ensure mutual understanding and mutual cooperation of people participating in information exchange; management of communications between the organization and the public [Breckenridge, 2020].

PR activities involve a comprehensive and targeted work with the target audience before and after the initial contact with the company, as well as maintaining and stimulating the consumer's desire for further cooperation. The use of PR tools allows the company to manage its reputation (among potential and real customers, partners and investors), prevent crises or help in their elimination, achieve strategic goals, solve marketing problems, and optimize relationships within the company itself.

Based on the target audience, the PR methodology on the Internet can be divided into mass relations (mass communication), group relations (relationships with groups) and media relations (relations with the media), each of which has its own tasks [Brogan, 2019].

For mass communication: branding via the Internet, promotion of a product or website. Website promotion has become a popular service when it is necessary to attract the attention of the target audience and create an active community of regular visitors (community), which is the closest business environment of the company [Hunt, 2021].

Media relations, interaction with the media through the use of the Network (sending out press releases, creating a section on the website "for the press", writing custom articles, etc.). Relations with the media, as well as offline, continue to be one of the frequently used elements of PR activities [Brody, 2021].

Group relations are relations via the Internet with the closest environment of the company (with the target market segment), i.e. all those who need to receive information about the company. A company can segment its business environment into certain groups and carry out activities with each of them [Cizmec, Ercan, 2020].

From the point of view of PR, a site is a set of information blocks and tools for interacting with the target audience, which can be represented by real and potential customers and partners and the media. The information on the site and the technical design of the site are highly dependent on the target audience, and what the site should convey to it, what opportunities to provide.

Having a corporate website for an organization is a must today. "If you are not represented on the Internet, you simply do not exist"— this phrase can describe the importance of a website for an organization [Atshaya, Rungta, 2020]. On the Web, when an organization is mentioned in articles or news, links are made to the corporate website. Today, the question no longer arises: do you need a site or not, but the topic is how to make the site as effective as possible in terms of successful communication and maintaining a favorable image. Therefore, the creation and support (regular updating of information) of the site is one of the important components of PR activities on the Internet. It is very important to establish feedback support: firstly, the ability for the client to quickly contact by e-mail or using instant messengers and, secondly, the company's prompt response to the message [Bouari, 2020].

As a PR tool, the site is a convenient channel for informing target audiences and studying it. It allows you to collect statistics on visitors, draw a portrait of your audience, which makes it possible to compose an adequate and targeted message, as well as overcome communication barriers. For example, a company can provide access to certain information only to registered users, for which site visitors need to fill out a questionnaire and subscribe to updates [Abud, 2020].

PR activities on the Internet include [Zarrella, 2020]:

- impact on the audience through the publication of materials and news in the Internet media, online browsers, websites of news agencies and the media, specialized and thematic servers;
  - contact with media representatives via the Internet;
  - work with the audience in online conferences, discussion lists, mailing lists;
  - holding events, promotions, contests in the network.

A PR campaign is an event aimed at raising the image of an organization and maintaining its reputation. Unlike an advertising campaign, a PR campaign creates a positive environment for the client to make a purchase decision. The main goal of a PR campaign is to improve the image and position the PR object on the market. The technological cycle of a PR campaign consists of: analysis and setting goals, development and implementation of the plan, analysis of performance evaluation [Wright, 2021].

A PR campaign is a set of PR tools and advertising materials that are used by a single concept and general plan to influence the opinions and attitudes of people in order to popularize the image and maintain reputation.

The concept of the target audience is one of the most important in PR.

PR activities are aimed at carefully selected groups of people who are part of a large general public. It is important not only to clearly define your target audience, but also to accurately define its ideals, interests and, accordingly, precisely its communication channels. Thus, the definition of the target audience actually includes three interrelated tasks [Rose, 2021]:

- segmentation of the mass audience;
- identification of values and ideals of each segment;
- definition of communication channels peculiar to each segment.

Very important in the concept of a PR campaign for public relations is the choice of the main strategy of the event, which in principle are unique. In a sense, any event in life is unique [Hunt, 2021].

Also, an important element of the PR campaign plan is the early determination of the criteria for the effectiveness of the PR campaign. Performance criteria or intended outcomes need to be specified in the plan so that the success of the campaign can be adequately assessed at the end of the campaign.

#### **Methods**

In the study, the authors used some methods such as analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, historical and logical, abstraction and concretization.

#### **Results**

On November 12, 1998, Ma Huateng and his university classmate Zhang Zhidong officially registered to establish Shenzhen Tencent Computer System Co., Ltd. The company's business was to expand the wireless network paging system and build an online paging system for the paging station. This software development project for enterprises or departments was the best choice for all small and medium companies providing network services [Tencent Holdings official website, www].

Today, Tencent develops and provides rich and easy-to-use instant messaging and social networking platforms, making communication, sharing and communication more convenient, colorful and personalized in innovative ways, and enriching people's lives.

Tencent helps build an enterprise ecosystem focused on solving the world's most pressing problems. Tencent combines innovation, investment and entrepreneurship to create new ways to

increase food production, prevent disease, mitigate overpopulation, address climate change, improve healthcare and many other key global challenges.

For January, 2022 the number of employees of Tencent Holdings reached 85,858 people.

Tencent Holdings Co., Ltd.'s chief operating decision makers are primarily the company's executive directors. They review internal reporting to evaluate performance, allocate resources and identify operating segments based on these reports.

Chief operating decision makers evaluate the performance of operating segments primarily on the basis of segment revenue and each operating segment's gross margin. Selling and marketing and general and administrative expenses are the total costs incurred for these operating segments as a whole and are therefore not included in the segment performance measure used by the chief operating decision makers as a basis for allocating resources and segment performance evaluation.

The table provides comparative data for 2021 and 2020.

Indicators	2021	2020
	(in million yuan)	(in million yuan)
Revenue	138 259	114 883
Cost of revenue	(75 514)	(61 673)
Gross profit	62 745	53 210
Interest income	1 630	1 749
Other income, net	20 763	8 607
Sales and marketing expenses	(10 013)	(7 756)
General and administrative expenses	(22 638)	(16 499)
Operating profit	52 487	39 311
Finance costs, net	(1 942)	(2 005)
Share of losses of associates and joint ventures	(3 857)	(295)
Profit before tax	46 688	37 011
income tax expense	(3 666)	(4 557)
Profit for the period	43 022	32 454

Table 1 - Tencent Financial Performance for 2020-2021 [ibid.]

We see that the company is quite successful in the market, its revenue and profit have grown compared to 2020. Business services revenues grew rapidly year-over-year thanks to the digitalization of government services and traditional industries, and the consolidation of business services revenues.

Organizational structure of Tencent Holdings Co., Ltd. covers all management of the company (Figure 1).



Figure 1 - Management structure of Tencent Holdings Co., Ltd. [ibid.]

CDG (Corporate Development Group) as a platform for the company's new business incubator and exploration of new business directions, CDG is responsible for promoting development and innovation

in important areas such as financial technology and advertising, as well as marketing services, including payment and financial applications. As a professional support platform, CDG also provides support to the company and various business groups in strategic planning, investments and mergers, investor relations and corporate global communications, marketing and public relations, and more.

CSIG (Cloud & Smart Industries Group) – Responsible for advancing the company's cloud and industry internet strategy, CSIG explores the interaction between users and industries to create innovative solutions for smart industries through technological advances such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence and network security. By driving the digitalization of retail, healthcare, education, transportation and other industries, CSIG helps companies serve users more intelligently by creating a new ecosystem of smart industries that connects users and businesses.

IEG (Interactive Entertainment Group) – Responsible for research and development, operation and development of the company's interactive entertainment business, including games and e-sports. Through online gaming, live streaming and offline esports, IEG is helping the company to lead the global interactive entertainment market by delivering the best interactive entertainment content for users.

PCG (Platform & Content Group) – responsible for the company's Internet platform and the comprehensive development of the content and culture ecosystem. PCG integrates social platforms such as QQ and QZone with traffic platforms such as the App Store and Tencent browsers, as well as content platforms including news, video, sports, live streaming, anime and movies to create a better ecosystem growth environment Tencent content. PCG promotes cross-platform and multimodal IP development with the common goal of creating more diverse premium digital content for more users.

TEG (Technology Engineering Group) – Responsible for supporting the company and its business groups regarding technology and operational platforms, as well as the construction and operation of research and development control centers and data centers, TEG provides users with a full range of customer services. As the largest network, device and data center operator in Asia, TEG also chairs Tencent's Technology Committee to strengthen infrastructure research and development through internal and distributed open source collaboration, building new platforms, and supporting business innovation.

WXG (Weixin Group) – Responsible for building and operating the Weixin ecosystem and leveraging Weixin's open platforms such as official accounts, mini-programs, Weixin Pay, WeCom, and search function, WXG provides solutions and connectivity for intelligent upgrades across all industries. WXG is also responsible for the development and operation of QQ Mail, WeRead and other products.

Today, Weixin's active user base and engagement have increased even more, highlighting the company's service and commerce dynamism.

The volume of transactions generated by the mini-programs more than doubled year-over-year as Tencent helped businesses thrive by making it easier to manage their own channels and user relationships, and allowing them to achieve higher profits than marketplaces.

Brands and merchants can: 1) Attract customers for their mini-programs offline with QR code and Weixin Pay; 2) create and distribute content through their official Weixin accounts and groups, attracting users and encouraging repeat visits to their mini-programs; 3) convert visits into sales with powerful shopping features in mini-programs; and 4) strengthen user connections with video and live streaming accounts as additional touchpoints.

As for QQ, young users are increasingly consuming entertainment content such as anime and comics. To cater to young users' need for immersive social and entertainment activities, Tencent has

enriched QQ's augmented reality camera effects for video content production and video chat. Tencent has also automated the in-app video editing process with smart templates and media.

VAS paid subscriptions rose 13% year on year to 229 million. Video subscriptions increased 9% year-on-year to 125 million, receiving a variety of content from sports, animated series, drama series and movies. Music subscriptions increased by 41% compared to 2020 to 66 million thanks to effective TME marketing and increased consumer readiness

Tencent has strengthened the intellectual property of key games in China and abroad.

In the stability life cycle stage, Tencent Holdings has already peaked its sales and sales have begun to slow down a bit, but revenue growth remains stable. The company has received wide recognition in the international market, so the business constantly receives income and profit. New competitors constantly appear, their solutions are ambitious, and the market is distributed among different companies and Tencent Holdings each time takes a smaller share in this market. In order for the company to be able to stay at this stage and avoid a recession, it is necessary to introduce constant innovations. So far, the company is doing well. Thus, the latest ideas help the company to compete in the market.

Tencent Holdings' wealth management objectives are to ensure the company's ability to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future and support the company's sustainable growth to deliver returns to shareholders and benefit other stakeholders and maintain an optimal capital structure to enhance shareholder value in the long term. Equity refers to equity and external debt (including loans and notes payable). To maintain or adjust the capital structure, a company may adjust the amount of dividends paid to shareholders, return capital to shareholders, issue new shares, buy back shares of the company, or raise/pay off debt.

#### Recommendations and conclusions

In order for Tencent Holdings to continue to be competitive in the online services market, it needs to apply a PR strategy to streamline its business processes, as well as focus on available resources and make the best use of them in order to boost business sales. services online and gain an edge over your competitors.

The analysis showed that Tencent Holdings is a competitive company, but it can do even better by conquering new markets.

The situation in the business services market changes frequently, and Tencent Holdings must regularly review its marketing strategy, making changes in line with the company's market position.

In order to remain a leader in the business services market, Tencent Holdings' marketers must develop marketing plans and create new PR solutions.

The introduction of digital promotion tools in the company will help the management decide how to properly provide business services, as well as assess the prospects and possible income from their activities, taking into account reliable information about the market, the volume of online services sold and the target audience.

It is worth calculating and reducing advertising budgets, and at the same time increasing the marketing activity of the company. In addition to moving away from expensive advertising, it makes sense to optimize sales channels and rethink branding policies.

Loyalty must be earned. And this can be achieved not only by high quality services, but also by using non-standard methods of promotion.

Based on the identified shortcomings in the strategy, we will offer PR promotion tools for Tencent Holdings.

#### 1) Social media activity

Social media strategies are at the core of all marketing programs. Tencent Holdings should use social media more actively. The company should think of the social media channel as an extension of the company website to help tell the story more fully. So, when used correctly, combined with a solid digital marketing strategy, social media can give Tencent Holdings the ability to directly communicate and engage with its community. There are about 2.62 billion users on social media worldwide. This is a huge number of people that a company can potentially contact to offer its business services.

Social media is now becoming a powerful tool for building the Tencent Holdings brand and gaining audience loyalty.

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy as the most important thing for Tencent Holdings to consider is defining its messages. Take every opportunity to promote your social media accounts by including links and markers in printed materials.

The number of subscribers can be attracted by working with stars, opinion leaders, bloggers and through joint events with partners. These are people who are somehow interesting to a wide audience, they may not be show business stars, but they have authority in the eyes of subscribers. They share their experience and people trust them. It is this category of accounts that provides the main sales, and cooperation with the stars works more for the image of Tencent Holdings.

2) SEO-promotion, a set of measures to increase the visibility of the site in the search for user queries by increasing the position of the site according to the ranking results of search engines.

Search promotion is a better way of online promotion than regular advertising. The target audience is offered not announcements, usually subconsciously ignored, but solutions to its problems and tasks. The user sees the company not in the advertising section, but in the top 3 search results, and therefore is motivated to go to the site and use the services. Tencent Holdings gets a quality audience that is genuinely interested in the company's offering. For Tencent Holdings, the site is the most stable promotion tool and brings in the most customers. This is not just a fashion trend, but a necessity that is associated with success in promoting and developing a business, the company's reputation. The site helps to make oneself known and take a leading position in the business space, adjust marketing communications in such a way as to attract as much attention as possible to the audience.

On the Tencent Holdings website, it is worth blogging, telling company news, its achievements in the field of business services, anniversary events, media coverage, posting photos and videos. All this information is a great way to be closer to customers and not only inform them about events related to the company, but also increase its loyalty.

3) Modern website promotion of Tencent Holdings is impossible without proper contextual advertising. Contextual advertising on the Internet is becoming an effective element: the popularity of pages, the perception by search engines is growing. Contextual advertising is essentially paid text advertising that is shown when certain queries are entered into the search.

Such a tool becomes the best option for a company website whose success depends on targeted visitors. If the top positions in the search results are not available for a number of reasons, contextual advertising becomes the right solution to the problem. The company pays for each user click on the ad. Pay-per-click advertising has gained popularity due to its transparency for both the advertiser and the owner of the advertising space.

Among the advantages of contextual advertising for a company are:

- loyal attitude of the user towards it, tk. it suits his interests;
- contextual advertising is relevant at the moment for the user, he does not perceive it as spam,
   because by clicking on the link the user already knows what is being offered to him and is
   potentially ready to become a client of the company;
- for Tencent Holdings, a significant advantage is the low cost and payment for real clicks, and not for ad impressions;
- coverage of a huge audience: advertising is shown not only in search engines, but also in social networks;
- the ability to target users (for example, Tencent Holdings can set up ad impressions only for residents of China);
- the ability to measure the effectiveness of an advertising campaign. With the help of special tools, the advertiser can track the number of site visitors who came through the contextual advertising link, whether these visitors have completed the target action (registration on the site, etc.).
   Tencent Holdings can analyze this data and make adjustments to the advertising campaign to improve its effectiveness.

Thus, using contextual advertising systems, Tencent Holdings can attract an audience already interested in business services to the site.

4) Email marketing is one of the most effective internet marketing tools for businesses. It allows you to build direct communication between the brand (or business, company) and potential or existing customers. The result of such communication can be expressed both in increasing customer loyalty to the company, and in increasing new and repeat sales, that is, in other words, in retaining and returning customers.

Here, the company should make more active use of new technical opportunities for mailings, for example, personalization of the letter, in order to make customers feel that they are not being contacted by another bot, but by a real live person. Personalization is a very important part of email marketing and it pays off.

- 5) Participation in branding events with partners of your level will add weight to the Tencent Holdings brand. Companies should be very selective in choosing partners and events so as not to scatter their resources.
- 6) Integration with partners is a truly effective promotion tool, because many of the company's customers really pay attention to reviews and recommendations on other services. Integration with partners will significantly expand the audience, brand awareness, create value chain benefits and change the company's business processes.
- 7) Internet PR has become more significant in advertising policy due to the fact that it allows you to actively attract users. At the same time, clients are formed into several groups, which are divided according to gender, age, range of interests, profession, and the like. And experienced professionals know how to work with this audience to generate demand growth.

In order to create a positive brand image for Tencent Holdings, the company needs to constantly work with the media on the Internet, popular online resources, bloggers, publishing interesting and expert content that best affects the audience.

Internet PR has become in demand for a number of reasons. Firstly, this is a great feedback, the ability to get data and statistics of an advertising campaign, allows you to evaluate its effectiveness and make changes during the process. Secondly, in social networks we are talking not only about advertising business services, but also about creating a whole thematic group. Thirdly, there is a chance

to launch a real "viral" material that users themselves want to share, distributing it over the network as soon as possible. Plus, the company is cheaper and more effective than conventional advertising due to other tools and greater accuracy.

With the advent of great opportunities for promotion on the Internet, specialists have more and more technologies and methods of influencing the public. Working with the Internet, PR specialists must take into account specific laws and principles, knowledge of which will allow them to manage the company with maximum efficiency. A properly planned and implemented PR campaign on the Web can bring benefits comparable in productivity to a large-scale advertising campaign.

At the same time, as a rule, conducting PR campaigns on the Internet requires much less money. The Internet provides experienced PR-specialists with unique means of scaling a project, accounting for campaign statistics and performance, and provides the opportunity to organize feedback with the user.

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# PR-технологии в продвижении китайской компании в интернетпространстве

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#### Аннотация

Актуальность данной темы исследования обусловлена тем, что современный PR представляет собой виртуальную технологию управления коммуникативной сферой и медиаменеджментом. Любая коммерческая организация работает в сложной среде. Поэтому все более ощутимым становится, что те компании, которые активно используют Интернет в своей деятельности, получают ряд неоспоримых конкурентных преимуществ. Ведение бизнеса в современных условиях без использования информационных технологий невозможно, так как Интернет предоставляет широкие возможности для продвижения. Для компании важно обеспечить осведомленность потенциального клиента, добиться того, чтобы определенный процент целевой группы слышал о существовании организации, ее продуктах и услугах, а также об их полезности. Знания о компании, продукте приобретаются клиентом в результате целенаправленного информирования о специфике компании и ее возможностях, о способности продукта удовлетворить потребность. Каналов представления организации и товаров или услуг много, но на данный момент, в связи с высокой конкуренцией, каждая коммерческая компания старается заявить о себе в таком сильном современном информационном пространстве как Интернет. Результаты последних исследований показали, что использование РК в Интернете может принести реальную экономию и прибыль. Это связано с большими преимуществами и удобствами, которые получают как потребители, так и фирмы.

#### Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

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#### Ключевые слова

PR-технологии, продвижение, Интернет, виртуальные технологии, информационные технологии.

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