# **Travel Retail in China**

In-depth review of players in China's travel retail market October 2021





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# Industry overview

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## China's travel retail market benefited from COVID-19

After absorbing Chinese tourism consumption that previously belonged to other countries, the market is expected to reach ¥150 billion by 2025



Source: ASKCI.com, China Securites Co., Ltd.

mostly

further

### China's duty-free stores are concentrated in Hainan and the Pearl River Delta

China's duty-free stores are concentrated in popular tourism destinations like Shanghai, Guangdong, Hainan and the surrounding areas



- China duty-free Group (CDF)
- Sunrise duty-free Group (subsidiary of CDF)
- Hainan duty-free Group
- Shenzhen duty-free Group
- ▲ Zhuhai duty-free Group
- China National Service Corporation for Chinese

### The CDF Group dominates China's travel retail market

The CDF Group owns 240+ duty-free shops in China and works with 1,000+ brands



#### Market share of main players in Chinese travel retail market



## New opportunities in China under COVID-19

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## The new duty-free policy under COVID-19 boosted Hainan duty-free sales

The new policy removes limitations to purchase duty-free goods domestically

### **Policy Highlights:**

- The annual duty-free shopping allowance increased to ¥100,000 per person for travellers in Hainan
- The categories of duty-free goods available for consumption increased from **38 to 45**
- Cancellation of the ¥8,000 duty-free limit for each item
- Purchase limits on cosmetic products have been raised from 12 items to 30 items, indicating travellers can purchase more dutyfree cosmetics in Hainan than before

## Sales of duty-free goods in Hainan (in ¥billion)



Source: Wind, National Development and Reform Commission, Guosheng Securities



### **COVID-19 impacted the global travel retail industry dramatically**

The sales of the four biggest duty-free groups worldwide had all decreased at least 38% YoY





## The CDF Group launched a membership service "CDF 会员购"

"CDF 会员购" as a new E-commerce platform under COVID-19 to increase purchase

- "CDF 会员购" is an e-commerce platform that CDF Group launched in June 2020.
- The app itself is like Taobao, allowing customers to shop online and the orders will be delivered to the customer's house.
- Although customers cannot enjoy duty-free price on it, with CDF Group's strong purchasing and bargaining power, CDF 会员 购 offers a lower price than other non-dutyfree channels like Taobao.





## The CDF Group allows tourists to order online

Travellers to Hainan can enjoy duty-free prices without physically visiting retail stores





### The CDF Group had a 9.5% sales volume growth and 35% net profit growth in 2020

The sales increase is due to new online channels and effectiveness of the new duty-free policy





# The CDF Group is gaining relative market share worldwide in a shrinking international market

As a result, CDF will be in a good position to acquire competitors worldwide

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(By turnover, €billion) 2019 **Dufry Group** 8.1 1 st Lotte Duty Free 7.7 2nd The Shilla Duty Free 7 3rd 4<sup>th</sup> China Duty Free Group 6.1 From 2019 to 2020, CDF 2020 ranked moved from 4<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> globally among duty-free China Duty Free Group 6.6 1 st groups by turnover. 2nd Lotte Duty Free 4.8 **Dufry Group** 2.4 3rd 4<sup>th</sup> **DFS Group** 2.2 Source: Moodie Davitt 13 DAXUE CONSULTING

Top 4 Travel Retailer rankings 2019 & 2020

## Hainan duty-free sales vs Korean duty-free sales

Korea is losing market share because of the travel restrictions under COVID-19



According to KPMG China, in 2019, over **94%** of the Korean travel retail customers were foreigners, who contributed over **\$20 billion USD** of revenue.

- The global lockdown in 2020 increased the difficulty of travelling and shopping in Korea, resulting in an approximately 38% decrease in Korea duty-free sales from 2019 to 2020
- In July 2021, Korea reported more than 500 daily new COVID cases, meaning that Korea's duty-free market has an uphill recovery.

Source: Moodie Davitt



### **COVID-19 changed Chinese luxury consumers' buying patterns**

Sales through online and offline domestic channels increased while those through overseas channels decreased

Comparison of Chinese customers' luxury purchasing channels (2019 & 2020)



### Luxury goods sold through domestic retail stores increased by 27%

Due to the restrictions on international travel and the release of China's new offshore tax-free policy

## The proportion of luxury goods sold through domestic retail channels



# The number of luxury goods sold through overseas channels has dramatically decreased with Covid-19

Due to travel restrictions affecting both the Chinese tourists and Daigous

## The proportion of luxury goods in China sold through Daigous & foreign retailers



Source: Tencent Marketing Insights



# Luxury products sold through e-commerce doubled and brands' websites quadrupled

Brands are heavily promoting their online channels driving the cross-border e-commerce market

## The proportion of luxury goods sold through e-commerce platforms & brands' official websites



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# 3 The role of brick-and-mortar channels for travel retail

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# Brick-and-mortar stores creating memorable experiences to become tourist destinations

LE TEMPLER ON THE BUND and other check-in photo spots as attractions for travellers



IGFD turned retail stores to check-in photo spots

- In 2019, fashion brand IGFD opened its first self-owned department store, LE TEMPLER ON THE BUND, in Shanghai
- IGFD turned the retail stores to 'insta-worthy' photo points that are almost tourist attractions within themselves



### Check-in Photo spots (网红打卡地)

- Brands can ride the hype for Instagrammable spots -which can be as simple as an interesting wall by leveraging the "check-in" trend on social media
- Global travel restrictions provide an opportunity for brands to recreate reminders of famous destinations for consumers
- Draw a link between nostalgia and the brand



## Possible partnerships with tourist destinations to reach a larger audience

UNIQLO, Dior, and Cartier choose to captivate consumers through cooperating with museums



### Moma x UNIQLO

- An ongoing partnership since 2013
- In 2014, UNIQLO launched the "SPRZ NY" collection featuring artwork from the Museum's collection on brand products



#### Dior x Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art

- Dior has launched the "Miss Dior Love 'n Roses Exhibition" in collaboration with the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art
- Cartier also presented an exhibition, "The Making of Art" at the Sichuan museum



- Partnerships could reflect a significant milestone for the brand/museum to maximize its impact
- Possibility to explore partnerships with relatively more niche, private-owned museums



### **Offline channels offer premium experience to customers**

Offline channels as part of the new retail and a place to experience personalization service



### New Retail

- Winona, a renowned skincare brand in China, has integrated offline and online features
- Winona consultants, in-store, build ties with customers and then direct them to make purchases on brand's WeChat platform
- Brick-and-mortar channels provide a means for brands to stand out in a market increasingly saturated with online options



The Luxury Experience

- Chinese consumers shifting to value experiences, and not just product ownership
- Consumers are more likely to make a purchase if personalization services are offered. Such service includes in-store complimentary treats (eg: champagne)



# Pop-up shops as a tool for fostering offline traffic and rendering luxury brands more accessible

Luxury brands create immersive pop-up shops making consumers feel they've entered another world





Recently, Hermès opened the world's first popup gym, **Hermèsfit**, in Chengdu. Inside this sports-themed pop-up, key features include sandbag areas, boxing ring areas, climbing walls, lockers etc. The color of the pop-up is Hermes' signature orange, giving the fitness equipment a luxurious look. Louis Vuitton Qixi Festival Pop-up Shop



Louis Vuitton opened a 17-day pop-up store
during Qixi Festival, traditional Chinese
Valentine's Day. With pink as the theme, it
creates an atmosphere of love, and sells LV
Crafty series products in the store. The graffiti
pattern depicts the mood of love under the art
movement of the 20th century.

Prada Silver Express themed Pop-up Shop



Prada presented a conceived "train station" in
the iapm Shanghai. The dreamy train represents
Prada's constantly moving image, inspired by the
brand and its most fundamental concepts, such
as tourism elements and a rich sense of
modernity.



### Pop-up shops are attractions to Gen Z and Millennials

Using "limited time" and "co-branded" as selling points to catering Millennials and Gen Z

### Type of luxury bought by different age groups in last two years (N=3,000)



- Gen Z are the most willing to try minority, co-branded and new designs
- For middle-aged and above, classic designs are their favorites

### Pop-up shops interact with consumers to lay the foundation for future purchases

Releasing information online to let users interact with the brand



Create excellent user experience through online-offline integration by allowing users interact with elements in the pop-up store through their smartphones to create an immersive experience Brands release information online to attract users to join the activities in the pop-up stores, allowing users to combine the brand image with the featured offline popup stores, creating unique experience





## Pop-up shops connect with and acquire new customer segments

By changing user perception about the brand through creating new marketing touchpoints

### High-end retail stores



- Luxury flagship stores are generally considered high-end and exclusive
- Therefore, they may not be able to reach a wider range of customers with purchasing power, such as Gen Z and Millennials

### Down-to-earth pop-up shops



- Luxury pop-up shops create new marketing touchpoints by offering fresh experience to its consumers
- Allowing users to associate luxury with "Down to Earth" perception, rather than "Luxury" or "High-end"



## SK-II Launches First "Social Retail" Pop Up Store in Hainan

Aim to attract Hainan travelers and create an immersive experience for consumers

#### **Objectives**

- To connect consumers to the brand, rather than only focusing on sales
- The pop-up shops attracts more first-time SK-II consumers by creating an interesting and immersive experience



#### Mini Magic Scan

In three minutes, the scanner helps consumers understand their unique skin characteristics, like skin age, and can provide a personalized analysis and recommend suitable products.



#### VS Animation by SK-II Studio

can watch the Users animated short film "VS" the WeChat mini on program and play to defeat "Kaijus" together with Olympic athletes through augmented reality.



### Hermès uses online features to attract customers to offline stores

The Hermès online limited time experience store shares deeper information about the brand



The Hermès online limited time experience store only provided a restricted number of products. The store is more like a demo, showing the value of Hermès to its customers. Consumers are encouraged to go to offline stores to purchase popular or iconic products since they are not offered in the online store.





# Daigous, a travel retail disrupter

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### China's daigou market has developed rapidly in recent years

### The market reached ¥260 billion in 2018

came into effect, requiring e-2014-2018 the Daigous market scale in China commerce practitioners to become (in ¥billion) compliant and pay taxes. 260 235 205 176 155 At the same time, with the emergence of various crossborder e-commerce and brand websites, the market share of Daigous started to shrink. 2015 2016 2017 2018 2014

Source: cction.com



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After 2018, the E-commerce Law

### Daigous are now facing restrictions from the government

The Government has put measurements to restrain the growth of Daigous.



Chinese Daigous' industrial chain

## Getting more regulated by the government

China's crackdown on Daigous is part of its moves to strengthen E-commerce regulations and better control the rapidly expanding sector.

With the opening of the tax-free policy in Hainan province, Daigous are rampant. As it is a taxevasion act, on July 6th, 2020, the government published laws to contain the Daigous' behavior.

### The demand for Daigous is unlikely to decrease post-pandemic

Scarce products such as iconic Hermès bags and minority designs still require Daigous



According to Bain Company and Tmall, 23% of Gen Z claimed they prefer minority design luxury and 19% of them show an interest towards co-branded designs. For example, brands such as Supreme or ASSC are usually sold in premium by Daigous to the Gen Z and Millennials.





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There are certain categories of products that is not offered in the newly established Hainan duty-free zone, such as Chanel bags. For these products, customers still need to rely on traditional channels and Daigous.

In China, there is a great demand for iconic products, such as Hermès bags. The market still needs Daigous to bring these products back to China from overseas to meet demand.



## Brands and Daigous' "love-hate" relationship

Daigous are both a source of pain and revenue for brands, the question is how to leverage them.



### How brands are leveraging Daigous





- The slump in luxury sales in the European market due to COVID-19 put pressure on European store assistants to reach sales targets through selling to the Chinese market indirectly.
- During COVID-19, in the Spanish shopping village of Las Rozas, brands including Prada and Burberry allowed Chinese daigous to live stream in the store.



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### Working with 'middlemen'



- From before COVID-19 in Australia, sales and logistics companies such as China Road work with Daigous shoppers to sell Australian and New Zealand products to Chinese consumers.
- Popular products include baby formula and vitamins.
- Working with middlemen causes brands to export the element of trust.

### Why some brands may work with Daigous

Brand can acquire Daigous' customer pool and prevent Daigous from further hurting brand image



strong purchasing power, but these customers are sometimes
more loyal to Daigous rather than brands, because they cannot
feel the culture and temperature of the brand from the Daigous
during the purchasing activities. They are more willing to
believe Daigous as "someone they trust" rather than "stonecold" international corporations such as luxury brands.



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## The main downsides of Daigous' activity

Luxury brands risk losing control on pricing, image and distribution



If on the one side, fraudulent and unethical practices may damage brand reputation, on the other side, poor, or in most cases, even lacking after-sales service and the absence of brand storytelling hamper the establishment of sound customer relationships. Moreover, the opaque nature of their operations deprives brands of the precious CMR data they need to build up stronger ties with consumers.

#### Daigous operate outside luxury brands' pricing strategies: they sell items up to 30% cheaper than official prices and usually the higher the discount, the more likely that shoppers are going to receive counterfeit goods.

According to Alimama, the **history of the brand** is the most valued element by Chinese online luxury consumers

## >28million RMB

of Gucci, Prada, Loewe, Celine and Balenciaga handbags sold on Taobao in just one month by Daigou merchants

Daigous put European luxury sales assistants in competition with their Chinese counterpart. Indeed, the drop in luxury sales due to travel restrictions led European branches to devise new methods to fulfill their targets.


# 5 How brands can leverage cross-border e-commerce

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# Steady growth in cross-border e-commerce platforms

Catalyzed by the pandemic, cross-border e-commerce policies are favorable, and the market scale is expanding rapidly



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# Alibaba's platforms dominate China's cross-border e-commerce market

Tmall Global and Kaola contribute 64.7% of the market share

2020 Q4 China cross border e-commerce platform market composition





## **Daigous vs Cross-border e-commerce**

Cross border e-commerce outperforms Daigous in-terms of service quality, timeliness and legality



#### **Better Service Quality**

Daigous usually cannot ensure stable supply of products, their post-sale service is poor, and there is the risk of purchasing counterfeits. Instead, cross-border ecommerce usually does not have such problems. Moreover, it also has further features such as order visualization to improve user experience.

#### **Better Timeliness**

Cross-border e-commerce has a sounder logistic system and is supplied directly from the brand. In fact, Daigous must go to a physical store and then take a plane, carrying a small amount of goods to China, thus usually customers can receive new products more quickly from cross-border e-commerce.





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#### **More Legitimate**

Daigous are often seen as an illegal activity in China. Selling goods with duty reduction without customs approval or paying no import duties constitutes a smuggling operation. Compared to Daigous, cross-border e-commerce is legal and compliant in most cases.



# The top cross-border e-commerce platforms in China

Alibaba Group is dominating the market after acquiring Kaola in 2019

|                    | Tmall Global  | Kaola   |  |  |
|--------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Brand              | 天猫国际<br>THALL GLOBAL  | ••• 考拉海购  |  |  |
| Business Model     | An e-commerce platform that brands can sign up for  | A platform run by Alibaba itself  |  |  |
| Product Categories | Top-tier brands   | Lower-tier brands   |  |  |
| Advantage          | <ul> <li>More product variety</li> <li>Strong technical support</li> <li>Mature operating system</li> </ul> | <ul> <li>Authentic guarantee</li> <li>Membership system</li> <li>Brand communities</li> </ul> |  |  |



# <sup>6</sup> How luxury brands can continue to thrive

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# How luxury brands can continue to thrive

In the context of COVID-19 and Hainan duty-free sales



Marketing to the masses who are becoming increasingly well-to-do

- Brands can explore having more "standard" luxury products to market to the masses who hope to own their own piece of luxury item
- The Louis Vuitton 'Neverfull' is regarded as an example of a luxury product that is relatively common among the masses



#### Maintaining a sense of exclusivity

- Alongside with mass marketing, brands should also cultivate more exclusive lines of products while offering customization
- Emphasizing upon Haute Couture could be a way for brands to preserve their exclusivity





 Brands can also engage Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) with a strong presence on social media, in order to further cultivate 'brand envy' and a sense of aspiration among consumers to own luxury products



# How luxury brands can continue to thrive

In the context of COVID-19 and Hainan duty-free sales

#### "Always-on" marketing coupled with seasonal campaigns



Chinese consumers are generally used to regular quality content, while seasonal campaigns can help spur sales

• "Always-on" marketing can include brands livestreaming from Hainan duty-free stores with the goal of tempting consumers to pay a visit to stores in person, and hence generate constant publicity and hype



- Burberry's 'Close your Eyes and Think of Christmas' campaign featured an inception-like look at Christmas traditions, which added a sense of mystery to the Brand's image
- Moschino released a Chinese New Year themed WeChat mini game, which enabled Users to collect shopping coupons and use them in Moschino stores in China







# Engaging travel retail consumers in every step of the customer journey

Clé de Peau Beaute used livestream, exclusive product and pop-up shop to connect with consumers



Source: Moodie Davitt



# Using exclusive product and livestream to drive consumers to Hainan

Clé de Peau Beaute used exclusive products and livestream to drive consumers to their Hainan pop-up shop





#### The CDF-exclusive set

This exclusive product can only be bought in Sanya duty-free shops, increasing the desire of tourists and Daigous to visit the retail store in Hainan.





#### The livestream

The livestream included a virtual tour of the pop-up shop, introduction of the exclusive and popular products, product demonstration and exclusive gift-with-purchase promotion. The intention is to promote the pop-up shop and the brand in Hainan.



# Using pop-up shops to create an immersive experience

Clé de Peau Beaute strongly connects consumers to the brand through interaction



#### The discovery zone

The discovery zone allows consumers to interact with the product by scanning the QR code to look at the skincare benefits of every product.





The Smart Radiance Mirror allows consumers to virtually try on the makeup products.



#### **The Aurora Room**

The room simulates aurora borealis and allows consumers to take photos and share them on social media (Check-in Photo spot).

Source: Moodie Davitt



# Lancaster opened its first repair clinic retail concept in Sanya

The brand offers a seamless and unique experience to travellers in a duty-free shopping center



Lancaster opened a pop-up store from June 16<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Sanya at the Hainan Tourism duty-free Shopping Complex.

#### The pop-up store offers:

- A skin repair clinic
- A skincare bar to test products
- Skin consultations
- A luminotherapy experience
- Brand discovery (innovation, legacy of Princess Grace of Monaco, etc.)



Lancaster specifically promoted its 365 Skin Repair Youth Renewal transversal serum.

Source: ©The Moodie Davitt Report



# Lancaster markets the pop-up store with global audience

Lancaster targeted media and influencers to give the pop-up store visibility

#### Media

- Opened its pop-up shop on a high note by inviting ٠ Chen Xiao to attract media.
- Organised a ceremony to invite the press to be present on both social media and the press.



inaugurated with the brand ambassador Chen Xiao

#### Influencers

- Lancaster's pop-up store is influencer-friendly. It provides perfect lighting for vlogs and lives on social media.
- Created a unique experience that can easily be shared on social media.



Lancaster provided livestreaming installations to respond to consumer demand for shareable

Source: DFNI Frontier



# **Choosing Hainan to promote skin regeneration products**

A pop-up store that targets luxury Chinese travellers

#### Targeting travellers



Luxury

Eye Flash Treatment to help rejuvenate post-flight eye-bags



20min Flash Repair Treatment using regenerative skin with exclusive protocols developed for travellers

#### **Targeting luxury**



Lancaster offers samples of exclusive products with luxurious wrapping.

Customers receive hand massages as a welcome gift in the popup store

Source: ©The Moodie Davitt Report



## What to expect

#### Contextualising travel retail in China within China's 14th 5-Year Plan (2021-2025)

# Greater investment in human capital, alongside widening north-south divide

- According to research institute CEPII, China's 14<sup>th</sup> 5-Year Plan will attempt to ensure greater investment in human capital in all regions. Yet, with the concurrent investment in innovation and technology, China's north-south divide is also widening.
- This means brick-and-mortar stores or brands hoping to leverage upon the pop-up store concept should be aware of the characteristics of each Chinese city - whether they feel that their brands or stores would do better in well-established Chinese cities, or they are well-placed to leverage upon the first-mover advantage.

# Achieving "a fully developed market socialist market economy"

- China's ultimate goal is to "restore the Middle Empire at the centre of Asia" according to CEPII
- Such **nationalism** is likely to also be pronounced in the Travel Retail market in China, **highlighting that the Guochao trend is only likely to get stronger**.





# ABOUT



# WHO WE ARE





# **Our local coverage at your service**

#### National coverage of local expertise



#### Offices

#### **OPERATION & COVERAGE**

#### Covered Tier-1 cities

- ▲ Covered Tier-2 cities
- + Covered Tier-3 (and below) cities



#### **COMPANY EXPANSION**

#### 30+ team members

|                               | 2 people |                         | 8 people |      |      | 16 people |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|----------|------|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|
|                               | 2012     | 2013                    | 2014     | 2015 | 2016 | 2017      | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Foundation in Beijing Opening |          | Opening of Shanghai off | ice      |      |      |           |      |      |      |      |

# Daxue's approach: methodology-based consulting

An agile and data-driven approach towards solving complex research questions





IN-HOUSE ORGANIZED We do not outsource



TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGIES Interviews, cold calls, focus groups, surveys, and etc.



**SOFTWARES AND TOOLS** *3rd-party software and in-house built scrapping tools* 



ACCESS COUNTRY-WIDE Able to run research across all layers of population



MASSIVE Data-driven and cross-checking from many angles as the base for



咨询



**RESEARCH-DRIVEN** *Consulting backed up by massive research* 



AGILE

Market discovery -> market validation -> market entry



COLLABORATIVE

We encourage frequent meetings and workshops with our clients



#### TRANSPARENT

Full insights into our work with frequent intermediate updates



INDUSTRY PARTNER NETWORK

Built-up over 350+ projects and 100+ podcasts



CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Mix of foreign-educated Chinese and China-educated foreigners

### **Our services**



# **Our methodologies**



#### AND MANY MORE...

# Using modern tools & software to stay ahead

A selection of tools leveraged by us for our clients



# An experienced organization with the Chinese market

Regularly featured and quoted in publications all over the world







TV interviews on prime time television in Singapore



Workshop on the China's food imports



Daxue on Thoughtful China



Lecturing at Peking University MBA.



Frequent speakers on China-business topics

## An international team at both strategy and execution levels



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# 400+ clients for the past 9 years

#### Examples of references



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