



Five Practical Steps to Raise your International Profile from China



China — as a market for purchasing scholarly publications and a resource for research publication output — continues to grow. Whether you are a publisher selling your content into the China market, or recruiting editorial board members and attracting good papers from China, or if you are a scholarly society going ‘international’ to develop members and partners in China, these five practical steps will help as you develop your outreach into the China market.

1. Understand the market environment and players

The China market has very different market structure, policies and mechanics, and channels of knowledge-acquisition. Newcomers to this market can be easily confused by the appearance, and hence ignore the differences deep inside.

2. Build your brand in China

The first task for publishers entering the China market is to establish their brand in a way that can attract and retain Chinese customers, in the Chinese language.

3. Develop local networks and community

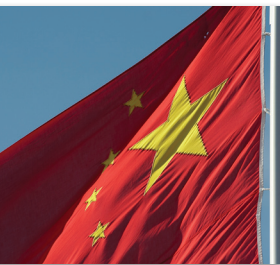
Building relationships with the local community in your subject areas helps you develop your business in China.

4. Tailor your services to suit the unique needs of your Chinese audience

Sales and marketing strategy and activities in China need to be carefully designed to meet the needs of the market and achieve similar effects that you have experienced in your other markets.

5. Get help from a trusted Chinese market specialist

Only those who have expertise in publishing and the China market can help you convey the real meaning, find the best approach, talk to the right people, and hence achieve the best result.



1. Understand the market environment and players

The China market, with its unique culture and developing economic and academic priorities, has very different market structure, policies and mechanics, and channels of knowledge-acquisition.

With the continuous fast development of the economy and technology in the past 30 years, it appears very similar in many ways, especially in big cities, to the mature market in developed countries. Newcomers to this market can be easily confused by the appearance, and hence ignore the differences deep inside.

Firstly, it is key to understand laws, government policies and regulations in related areas. There are restrictions in setting up publishing houses. To publish books and journals in China, you need to find a proper local partner and get approval from GAPPBFT (General Administration for Press, Publication, Broadcast, Film and Television), previously known as GAPP (General Administration for Press and Publication), which was combined with the Administrations for Broadcast, Film and Television in the government reform in March 2013. It is also important to keep up with the policy changes and their influence on the trend. For example, China's Central Government has adopted various measures and provided funding for launching and publishing English-language STM journals. This has created, and will continue to create, more opportunities for co-publishing and publishing services.

Secondly, there are big gaps in the level of development between eastern and western, urban and rural areas, and organizations. The purchasing power and habit can be tremendously different. Leading universities and research institutes have sufficient funds to buy expensive databases and content. Usually their students and staff also have better English skills and higher demand to get published in international journals. As a result, identifying who and where your customers are, and what they need is key to success in developing the market.

Thirdly, find accurate information and keep up with the change. There are limited resources with sufficient information on market size, key players, and statistics, etc., in English. You may find this kind of information on the websites of government bodies, organizations and cooperatives, but usually in Chinese only, and sometimes out of date. It is important to collect information both in English and Chinese, make sure it is from trusted resources and up to date.

For publishers who wish to understand their market penetration and potential to expand market share, it is worth considering carrying out market research to understand: market position; analyze market potential; map out priority targets; get feedback from targeted groups on a specific topic; and then make decisions.

2. Build your brand in China

You may find that few people know your name in China, even though you are the market leader in your country and other areas, so your first task is to establish your brand in a way that can attract and retain Chinese customers. Even for those big names which are already well known in China, it is wise to review your brand image to make sure that it is consistent with your global branding and yet fits Chinese language and culture.

To design branding strategy and campaigns for the China market, you need to bear in mind that it has different channels of knowledge-acquisition, information distribution and social media communications. Advertisements on the specialized research platforms for a more targeted audience help to promote your brand and content. With *Twitter* and *Facebook*



access blocked in China, publishers must consider the local social media channels for mass marketing. **Weibo**, the Chinese version of *Twitter* with the same functions and capabilities, is the most popular social network channel in China, and is used by over 500 million Chinese. It is the most preferred channel for mass marketing, as well as for interacting directly

and instantly with researchers and potential users. YouTube is also blocked in China, so Chinese visitors cannot see your demos by clicking the links on your website. You need to find an equivalent in China to host your videos.

Language can also be a barrier for your branding. English skills of Chinese researchers and students in top level universities, hospitals and institutes in big cities have improved in the last few decades. However, in most circumstances people still communicate in their native language — Chinese. Even for those who speak excellent English, some key points might be missed due to unfamiliar terms and expressions, not to mention it is much easier and faster for them to read in Chinese, their native language. As a result, it will help your key information to be circulated more widely and accurately with an approved Chinese version. Our experience has shown that Chinese websites drive more traffic to the publishers' online content and help local SEO and Chinese search results. Email campaign and marketing materials in Chinese receive more feedback. Call campaigns and local help desk services should be always in Chinese.

3. Develop local networks and community

Networking with the local community helps open doors to new business and opportunities. This is even more important in developing China market, where 'guanxi' ('relationships') has a major influence on everything. Where and how to establish contacts with Chinese peers, professional and other people who can assist you achieve your targets? The first choice is attending international and national conferences in China.

The China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) is the largest national non-governmental organization of scientific and technological workers in China. Through its member societies - 181 in number - and local branches all over the country, this organization maintains close ties with millions of Chinese scientists, engineers and other people working in the fields of science and technology. It is responsible for the supervision of 1050 STM journals sponsored by its member societies. CAST and its affiliated societies organize and sponsor many scientific meetings and forums in various disciplines every year. Identify those that your target groups will be there and attend. You can promote your brand and products, collect data and feedback from the researchers directly, build rapport with the relevant specialists through the interactions, recruit members, and identify suitable guest editors and editorial board members.

Beijing International Book Fair (BIBF), Academic Journal Exhibition (AJE), and conferences organized by China Academic Library & Information System (CALIS) and some other library societies are good events to meet with librarians and potential publishing partners to promote your publications.



Related to the language barrier mentioned in point 2, it is important to find out in advance whether English is the official language or interpretation service is available, and/or average English level of the attendees, to decide if you need the support of a local contact for representation and/or translation.

By attending key events and networking, you can identify and recruit suitable candidates as your guest editors, reviewers, and editorial board members, and/or find partners on co-publishing, organizing conferences, and many other projects.

4. Tailor your services to suit the unique needs of your Chinese audience

As described in point 1, the China market is unique and complex in many ways. It means that some features of your products may not meet the needs of Chinese customers, some member benefits are not attractive or even useless to them, or they need extra support. Sales and marketing strategy and activities in China need to be carefully designed

by China specialists to achieve similar effects that you have experienced in your other markets.



For example, according to a survey we did on behalf of an American society among their Chinese members, the most attractive benefit is access of materials and information, to keep up with the new and changing trends. The benefits

most people feel useless include salary reference (unless they want to find a job in the USA), and continuing education (certificates are not acknowledged in China). Areas to improve include: reducing membership fees, holding webinars in suitable time zones for Chinese audiences (current ones all at midnight or very early morning Beijing time), or have a recorded version online (better in Chinese), developing local chapters, and building local network. Some of the improvements can be achieved through the efforts of the society and its members, while for those ‘useless’ ones, it may help to work with relevant professional societies and organizations in China as partners to make them useful in China.

Another localized service worth considering is author and editorial support. Your editors may be flooded with papers from Chinese authors (especially if your journal has an impact factor) and annoyed by the disregard of publishing criteria, instructions to authors, and poor English. Besides translating the guidelines into Chinese and hosting on your Chinese website, our experience shows that Chinese authors find author workshops on how to select a journal, how to submit a paper, understanding of process, and improving writing skills very useful. By doing this, you provide a valued service to the Chinese academic community that your publication serves, get to promote journal profile and brand awareness of organization, and help to increase the efficiency of your editorial process. If you have a China office, the next step can be a help desk managed by Chinese-speaking staff to provide real-time customer service support to the publisher’s growing community of authors, editors and reviewers.

5. Get help from a trusted Chinese publishing market specialist

Whether you are newcomer making your first footprint in China, or a publisher that is already in the market and wish to understand their market penetration and potential to expand market share, it is important to have a trusted Chinese publishing market specialist – internal or external – to help you decide correct strategy and develop efficient approaches.

As you search for a new staff or a consultant, look for an expert who really understands both the international and Chinese publishing industry, who is bilingual and bicultural, and highly connected and respected in the scholarly publishing community in China. This brings with it multiple benefits and saves your time and costs on trial and error. They can act as a reference, be your interpreter and navigate you through the bureaucracy, legal system and local business networks. They can advise and collaborate with large publishers and societies. Even for small publishers and societies who may only look for one-off support — for example, organizing marketing campaigns in advance, and representation at a conference or exhibition in China, the vendor who has experiences and practices in China can convey their real meaning, find the best approach, talk to the right people, and hence achieve the best result.



The Charlesworth Group is a high-quality, global publishing services company – and the China Experts

We help publishers to get their content to their readers more efficiently, effectively and ultimately more profitably. We're a high quality, independent and powerful publishing services company, and have been helping publishers evolve for over 80 years. Through tailor-made workflows addressing individual requirements we can handle as much or as little of the publishing process as you need from **typesetting** right up to full **project management**. We invest in up-to-the-minute technologies such as **AutoProof**, our unique automated paginated system which can deliver proofs to your desktop within five minutes, and so we remain at the cutting edge of publishing services. We can format your content to be available on all the latest **eReader devices** as well as the more traditional print.

Our client base largely comprises academic and professional publishing companies and self-publishing societies from the UK and Europe. We work globally, with **offices based in the UK, US and China**. As such we are well positioned to advise and support clients in their **global publishing strategy**. We are a **leading agency in China**, already representing high profile clients taking publications into the Asian market and making their content accessible internationally. We also provide **translation services** for multiple languages, **Language Polishing** for non-native English researchers submitting to western publications and a variety of **support services for authors**.

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