



China

PR Country Landscape 2012

Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

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Acknowledgments

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Overview

It's an exciting time to be a public relations practitioner in mainland China. With the public relations industry growing overall at approximately 30 percent per year, coupled with the past decade of increasing economic growth, the opportunities for public relations practitioners are virtually boundless.

As the nation continues to develop its market economy, the public relations profession progresses, as well. China has based its public relations education and professional training on Western practices, including the relatively recent use of social media to target specific audiences. However, one significant piece of the Western public relations model that Chinese practitioners have not yet incorporated is the measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of their campaigns and other techniques and efforts.¹

According to a report released in 2004, by China International Public Relations Association, there have been about 2,000 PR agencies in China and the numbers continue to increase. As more international businesses seek to claim a piece of the growing Chinese market, multinational and local Chinese public relations agencies are increasingly called upon to help bridge the communications gap between Eastern and Western cultural and business practices. At the same time, the State employs international public relations firms more frequently than local firms, to assist Chinese businesses expand their presence in multiplicity of foreign markets and to create a more positive reputation of China in the outside world.

Current public relations status

Professional Associations

China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA) www.cipra.org.cn/English/

Association Profile

China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA) was established in April 1991 in Beijing as a national, corporate organization with a focus on international cooperation in the field of public relations. Its vision is "to let the world know China and to let China orient itself to the world."³ This focus has now expanded to include the improvement of public relations in China through education, standardization of practices, and training.

The Association's Goals

The organization has many missions or goals in place to improve and ensure the future of public relations in China. CIPRA's 2010 informational booklet lists these major goals:

- Strengthening management in the public relations industry.
- Engaging in developing and applying public relations theories, studies, practices, and strategies for the public relations industry in China.
 - Raising the social position of the public relations industry and practitioners.
 - Fostering the use of ethical public relations.

- Providing comprehensive services and training programs for its members.
- Promoting the cooperation among public relations organizations both at home and abroad.
- Developing the process of professionalism, standardization, and internationalization of the public relations industry in China.
- Developing public diplomacy and opening broad channels for international exchange and cooperation.
- Providing consulting services for local and foreign organizations, so as to serve the promotion of international public relations, for the construction of a harmonious society and for the further reform, opening up, and economic development of China.⁴

The Association's Structure and Organization

CIPRA has four standing committees: Academic Committee, Public Relations Agencies Committee, In-House Committee, and Local Organization Committee. These four committees represent public relations practitioners from CIPRA's major membership categories. Each committee is composed of academicians, presidents of public relations agencies, and leaders of municipal public relations associations.

The Secretariat, CIPRA's standing body, oversees many internal departments or sections: Membership Management, Foreign Exchange & Cooperation, Research & Development, Information & Consulting, Education & Training, Human Resources, and Administration.

The Association's Purposes and Activities

Education, standardization and training are all important aspects of the services CIPRA provides to the public relations industry in China. CIPRA published a textbook, *PR Practitioner*, and created an examination for the testing of occupational qualifications. This exam, although not required to practice public relations in China, tests the knowledge and capacity of practitioners. The first exam was administered in 2000 and in the first five years of the exam's use, approximately 100,000 practitioners took and passed the exam. By implementing this exam, CIPRA demonstrates its desire to ensure the field of public relations grows into a consistent, standardized profession in China. This exam, or "standard" as CIPRA refers to it, is administered four times a year.

CIPRA also organizes professional seminars and training for both local and multi-national public relations agencies and organizations; holds public relations training courses with major universities and hosts a public relations plan contest for China's university students. CIPRA also sponsors regular public relations events including the China International PR Congress and China Golden Awards for Excellence in Public Relations. Through these activities, CIPRA strives to build relationships with public relations associations across the world — Australia, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and United States, as well as many others. The organization conducts the China Public Relations Industry Annual Survey Report to gauge the growth and improvement of the public relations profession.

China is still a developing and rapidly growing market for public relations. Public relations practices are rapidly evolving. When asked about China's best public relations campaigns in recent years,

CIPRA Vice President Zhao stated, "There is no best, there is only better and we will have better PR in the future."⁵

CIPRA Leadership

CIPRA is headed by a president, an executive vice president and 13 vice presidents. Its staff is headed by a secretary-general and six deputy secretaries general.

Shanghai Public Relations Association (www.chspra.com/)

Association Profile

Established in November 1986, Shanghai Public Relations Association (SPRA) is China's first public relations professional organization, comprised of more than 200 foreign companies, private enterprises, government agencies, and individual members. SPRA focuses on education, on-the-job training (especially in employee and media relations because they are important to organizations in China) and how to measure the effectiveness of public relations.

The association was founded in 1986 by Professor Mao Jing Guan, who currently serves as the organization's chairman. He is credited with first introducing the definition of public relations in an article he wrote on "Developing Public Relations in the Social Society." Mao described Shanghai's growth and development as creating optimal conditions for the public relations industry to thrive, increasing the communication needs of the city and its domestic enterprises.⁶

The association provides a platform for exchanging information, improving communication, building relationships and strengthening cooperation among member companies and individual members. Through its activities, SPRA has advanced the theories and professional skills used in the Shanghai public relations industry.

According to Daphne Liew, author of "Addressing Asia's Ascent", In November 2010, SPRA celebrated its 20th anniversary with a Sino-Foreign Public Relations Forum in Shanghai's Grand Theatre. The forum was entitled "The Next 20 Years: Toward Greater Sino-Foreign Collaboration in Public Relations." Among the more than 20 foreign delegates attending the forum were representatives from various public relations associations in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Association's Purposes

- Coordination of public relations organizations, enterprises, and institutions (including foreign-funded enterprises and private enterprises and institutions) and other social institutions to promote the organization and the Shanghai community, and to provide the public with effective communication.
- Training of public relations personnel.
- To promote the public relations industry.⁷

The Association's Goals

- To bridge communication between business enterprises and government.

- To establish communication channels between different industries, especially between state-owned, foreign-funded, and private enterprises.
- To improve the training of public relations practitioners and to provide them with a platform for exchanging views and knowledge.
- To execute high-level, multi-channel forms of public relations activities to promote member enterprises and the links between government and media.⁸

The Association's Programs

- Conducting industry-oriented seminars.
- Recognizing with awards outstanding public relations performance and case studies.
- Sponsoring presentations by domestic and foreign celebrities and experts in marketing and public relations on "hot topics" in public relations.
- Providing professional training to meet the requirements and needs of members.
- Providing a forum for members to meet with government and industry leaders.
- Enhancing member and government relations and facilitating communication with government.
- Providing public relations planning and consulting to help members organize their various public relations activities.
- Providing professional development to members.⁹

Program Offerings

- Shanghai Excellent Public Relations Cases Histories — This biennial awards program has been held five times since 2001. Awards are based on the distinctiveness of creativity in the case histories, the extent of planning, the preciseness of implementation, and the degree of far-reaching outcomes.
- International Public Relations Forum — The Forum topics have ranged from "Public relations strategy in economic globalization era" to "The value of public relations in China's accession to WTO"; "Crisis management" and "Multi-culture and public relations." Each Forum has advanced China's public relations industry towards further specialization, standardization, and internationalization.
- Public Relations Salon — Held 54 times, the monthly SPRA Salon is a communications platform for senior members. Senior professionals share their experience and knowledge on "hot" issues that have, could or will affect the public relations industry.

SPRA and the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

SPRA joined the Global Alliance in December 2010. The association submitted a report on programs advancing the profession in its region in February 2011; that report focused on the newly adopted Code of Business Conduct emphasizing ethical practice. The Code, signed by representatives of nine international public relations firms doing business in China, articulates ethical business practices these firms have instituted with their suppliers. The Code prologue states:

"To promote the continued healthy and sustainable development of the public relations community in China, we the undersigned, as leading public relations industry players (hereafter referred to as "Companies"), collectively call on all the service providers in the industry to pledge to subscribe to

the following Code of Business Conduct (hereafter referred to as “Code of Conduct”) in the course of providing service to clients and any other activities. Companies and employees shall refuse to undertake work that requires us to compromise the principles of the Code of Conduct.”¹⁰

Major public relations firms

Many counseling firms practice in China, including:

Ad Hoc Concepts

www.adhocpr.com/index.htm

APCO Worldwide

www.apcoworldwide.com/chinese

<http://www.apcoworldwide.com/chinese>

Burson-Marsteller

www.burson-marsteller.com/default.aspx

D&S

www.dsfirm.com

Edelman

www.edelman.com/

Golin Harris

www.golinharris.com/#/

Guangming Public Relations, Beijing, China

www.pressreleasepoint.com/guangming-public-relations

H-Line Ogilvy

www.h-line.com/english/about/about.htm

Hill & Knowlton

www.hkstrategies.com/

Ketchum

www.ketchum.com/

Porter Novelli

<http://www.porternovelli.com>

Ruder & Finn

<http://www.ruderfinn.com/#/home>

Tafnit Communications Ltd.

<http://www.tafnit.com/>

Text 100

<http://www.text100.com/>

Weber Shandwick

<http://www.webershandwick.com/>

Education and professional training of public relations practitioners in China

Public relations education in China was established in 1994 as an experimental program at Sun Yat-Sen University. Since that time, education has grown and so have organizations that promote professional public relations development and training. Even in the technologically advanced and ever evolving 21st century, the public relations profession, at just two decades old, is still considered a small industry throughout China, although it continues to grow rapidly.

While there is great demand for appropriately prepared public relations practitioners, according to Ai Zhang, Public Relations professor at the University of Maryland, there are only 10 universities throughout China offering an undergraduate or graduate degree specifically in public relations. They include:

- Donghua University [<http://www.dhu.edu.cn/>]

- Zhongshan University [<http://www.sysu.edu.cn/>]
- Communication University of China [<http://www.cuc.edu.cn/>]
- Fudan University [<http://www.fudan.edu.cn/>]
- Zhongshan University (Sun Yat-Sen University) [<http://www.sysu.edu.cn/>]
- ShenZhen University [<http://www.szu.edu.cn/szu2007/indexE.asp>]
- University of International Relations [<http://www.uir-cie.com/>]
- Shanghai International Studies University [<http://language.shisu.edu.cn/>]
- Zhe Jiang University [<http://www.zju.edu.cn/english/>]
- Shanghai Normal University [<http://www.shnu.edu.cn/Default.aspx>]

Many other colleges and universities offer public relations courses.

Chinese public relations educators continue to experiment with their curricula, teaching a variety of specialized courses in communication as part of their public relations degree programs, including cross-cultural communication, media history of China, law and ethics, and global communications. In her 2010 dissertation, Zhang described the undergraduate public relations courses offered at one Chinese university, Hang Zhou Communication City College. Quoting a senior professor, Zhang wrote:

We have two curricular designs to meet students' needs. One is for those who want to further their education to graduate levels and the other is for those who want to enter the job market upon graduation. We train these two groups of students differently. For the first group, the curricula focus more on theory and research, and we offer students courses such as media management, mass media theory, public relations theory; in contrast, for the second group, the curricula emphasizes professional development a great deal more, and we offer students such courses as public relations campaigns, strategy and planning, information distribution, public relations practice, and so on. In alignment with these two designs, the school has also developed correspondingly different requirements for students to fulfill at different grades.

For freshmen, our goal is to help them develop a conceptual understanding of the major (public relations and international etiquette). We do not encourage them to jump directly into practice without having any conceptual understanding of the field. Their main tasks are to observe and listen. Through such sensory contact with the field, students gradually develop some intuitive understandings of public relations, which prepare them for further learning. For sophomores and juniors, we shift our focus to train their professional skills. We require them to take internships to acquire professional experience. At the same time, students are required to take the core public relations courses. In this way, the knowledge they learn in these core courses and the professional experience can go hand-in-hand to prepare them in a more holistic manner, and the professional experience can also help them better digest the abstract theoretical frameworks.

That approach is in contrast to the approach at Peking University. A senior professor there told Zhang:

We no longer accept any freshmen or sophomores to become public relations major students. It is not until the junior and senior years that they can declare their major in public relations. Then, we find some good candidates from 145 different disciplines and train them to become competent public relations major students. In this way, we can have the best students available. The rationale is that public relations is not a career suitable for everyone.

Even with all their efforts to tailor a public relations education to meet a student's and the public relations industry's needs, universities in China offering public relations programs cannot fully meet the growing industry's demand for appropriately prepared practitioners because the teaching materials available to them are mostly from Western texts and do not focus on the specific needs or trends in China. According to Zhang, when the texts are translated (most often from English) it is done verbatim without aligning the context to the meaning in China. Public relations in China is different from the practice in the United States or anywhere else and therefore requires a tailored teaching method and materials that focus on such topics as Chinese government relations, media relations, and corporate social responsibility.¹²

China's State Council recently acknowledged that the country "faces a heavy task in creating jobs for millions of college students who will graduate between 2011 to 2015." The Council encouraged the estimated 6.6 million 2011 Chinese college graduates to seek jobs in less developed regions or start their own businesses. Graduates were also advised to gain work experience through internships and to participate in occupational training to increase their career prospects.¹³

That news is discouraging for any college graduate, but particularly for individuals seeking to begin a career in public relations because companies and government agencies with public relations jobs are more likely to be in major cities where the competition is fierce. However, the advice to seek internships and professional training echoes what current public relations practitioners in China are saying to new professionals in the field.

Because the demand for public relations practitioners exceeds the number of graduates of college and university public relations programs, public relations practitioners come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including the arts, journalism, Chinese literature, economics, hotel management, and computer science. While all of these educational backgrounds have value to the practice of public relations, education in public relations and communication is valued even more.

Shirley King, a partner with the iN Communication Group in Shanghai, noted that computer science majors are desirable hires because of their technology savvy skills. Marrying those technology skills with public relations professional development and training from recognized and respected organizations including the Shanghai Public Relations Association (SPRA) and the China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA) are, she said, what China seeks in an up-and-coming public relations professional.¹⁴

Both SPRA and CIPRA emphasize the value of education and professional training in public relations practitioners. The leaders of SPRA say that education and training are among their associations' primary focuses.

SPRA provides training in collaboration with the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and accreditation to SPRA members. SPRA members interested in earning an Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) designation are mentored by ABCs throughout the world. The members seeking the accreditation from IABC will attend training sessions to develop their portfolios and prepare for an exam. Once portfolios are reviewed and accepted, individuals undergo a four-hour written exam and a half-hour oral exam. At the end of its first year, 10 candidates passed the accreditation exam and earned ABC designation. To date, SPRA has accredited three groups of IABC trained individuals. This is the only internationally -recognized accreditation opportunity available in China.

Public relations educators are encouraging their students to participate in professional activities, like programs offered through SPRA and CIPRA, to enhance their practical experience. The

associations also are making efforts to strengthen the connections between the profession and academia. Over the last few years SPRA has taken the initiative to nurture its relationship with Chinese universities that offer public relations education. It also has hired talented public relations interns and professionals from those universities. One SPRA leader noted that the young public relations specialists they hire today will likely be among the top practitioners in China over the next five years.

SPRA believes that students who go to work in public relations armed with professional knowledge and language skills will have the power in the next five years to move the strategic practice forward in China. Moreover, CIPRA provides comprehensive training programs for its members, advancing professionalization, standardization, and internationalization of the public relations industry in China.

Standardizing the public relations profession is one of the core missions of CIPRA, as noted earlier in this landscape. In 1999, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor, Wealth and Human Resources, CIPRA issued a standard for public relations practitioners, and in 2000 it administered the first accreditation exam for practitioners. The exam, while not required, analyzes a practitioner's capacity to work in the field of public relations. Each year, four exams are held throughout provinces in China. In 2000 when the first exam was given, 6,713 people took it and 4,957 successfully passed. Today CIPRA estimates that more than 100,000 people have passed the exam.¹⁵

CIPRA also is recognized for having taken the first step toward issuing guidelines for consultants working in agencies. The organization drafted and issued a catalog of standardized definitions of public relations terminology commonly used in China, and developed regulations regarding the use of E-PR (electronic public relations).¹⁶

CIPRA has developed a training module for public relations students that helps connect the industry and practice with educators at colleges and universities which, it says, helps educators shape students into the type of employees the industry seeks. CIPRA's training system includes four elements:

- Public relations internship centers (based in organizations)
- Public relations training centers (based in universities)
- A national public relations case competition for students
- A talent network of young public relations practitioners

One of the most established elements is the CIPRA student case competition. The program began in 2007 and has received positive feedback from students who participated and from practitioners throughout the public relations industry. Participation in the competition gives students a real world glimpse at public relations and allows them to work on issues that practitioners handle daily. Judges in the competition are often CEOs or managers at some of China's top national or international public relations agencies.¹⁷

Media Landscape

China's media are controlled, heavily influenced and to some extent owned by its central government. Over the past 20 years the media have evolved with the country; there has been

considerable restructuring and rapid growth of newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and emergent digital media.

Sources about Chinese Media

Chinese Newspapers

<http://media.mychinastart.com>

State Council Information Office

<http://www.scio.gov.cn/>

General Administration of Press and Publication

<http://www.gapp.gov.cn>

Ministry of Culture

<http://www.ccnt.gov.cn/English/index.html>

The State Administration of Radio Film and Television

<http://www.sarft.gov.cn/>

More than 2,000 newspapers and 8,000 magazines are circulated within China. The People's Daily is the official newspaper of the Communist Party, and in January 2012 its online division won approval to proceed with an initial stock offering (IPO) to raise up to \$85 million by selling stock on the Shanghai Stock Exchange. This is the first time a state-run media web site has filed to go public, and other state-run media properties, including Xinhua, China's official news agency. Xinhua News Agency, feeds the news appetite of those media from its headquarters in Beijing and through its 100-plus international divisions in the provinces of China and in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East.¹⁸

Another large media group is the national television broadcast network, China Central Television (CCTV). CCTV prides itself on being one of China's most important news broadcast companies, and boasts on its website, "Today, CCTV has become one of China's most influential media outlets." CCTV currently operates 24 free channels and 19 pay channels that provide content which includes news, documentaries, comedy, entertainment, finance, education, science, international matters, and children's programming. More than one billion households in China have access to CCTV on cable television. There are no privately owned or operated television stations in China.¹⁹

China's official radio network, the Central People's Broadcast Station, has nine channels. Additionally, each province or municipality has its own local radio stations that broadcast domestically. The government-operated China Radio International (CRI) is the only station that transmits abroad with broadcasts in 61 languages.²⁰

In this age of the Internet, China's media environment is expanding exponentially. China has more than 15 million Internet hosts and more than 500 million Internet users, and the numbers of both continue to grow. The transition from traditional print and broadcast media to more interactive online platforms is well underway. Popular websites include Xinhuanet.com, an online news service provided by Xinhua News Agency, and SinaWeibo, a Chinese news outlet with social networking and micro blogging options similar to U.S. counterparts Twitter and Facebook.²¹

The State oversees media content, and there are both government censorship and self-censorship by journalists themselves. There tends to be a fine and blurred line between what issues can be discussed in the media and matters that should not be addressed. Especially sensitive, however, is any media coverage of the military and the private lives of China's political leaders.

Several agencies share responsibility for censorship of media in China. The General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) is an administrative agency that oversees outlining and enforcing prior restraint regulations. Additionally, this agency reviews books on certain important topics. The State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) regulates all Internet, television, radio, and satellite broadcast content. The monitoring, licensing, and regulation of all telecommunications and software industries are managed by the Ministry for Information Industry. The Central Propaganda Department (CPD), a counterpart to GAPP and SARFT, is responsible for ensuring that the content published on the Internet is in accordance with the Communist Party's political agenda.²²

Media relations in China are based on personal affiliations and relationships between individual journalists and practitioners rather than on the more impromptu and impersonal media approaches so common in the West. "Guanxi," which translates in English to "relationship", is highly important. Professional contacts are often formed and nurtured during informal occasions when individuals have the opportunity to casually talk and become acquainted with one another.²³

Economy

Over the past 30 years, China's economy has shifted from a definitive communist system to a less-defined market capitalism. Significant changes in China's economy and global economic participation began after 1978 when waves of reform washed over the state. Through deregulation and reform, China enabled its private sector and foreign trade to bolster economic growth. Today, China is the second largest and fastest growing economy in the world. As a result of such significant growth, China's poverty rate particularly in rural area, has decreased from 53 percent in 1981 to 2.5 percent in 2005.²⁴

China's ingrained history of systematic national planning has influenced the gradual nature of economic reformation. The gradual yet steady increases in foreign investment and trade have made it possible for China to open its market to multinational corporations and join the World Trade Organization (WTO). Increased activity in foreign trade and private sector businesses has also given China the ability to funnel money into infrastructure and industry.²⁵

While China's exports are often regarded as the major force driving the economy, the private and public sector should not be underestimated. Industry and agriculture are the two most important sectors of the economy. China's domestic policy boasts an emphasis on productivity by raising income and consumption. The problem, however, is that income and consumption rise among industry workers at a much faster rate than those employed in agriculture. Therefore, a large gap

exists between the urban industry workers and the disadvantaged, rural farmers. As a result of such disparity between classes, many peasants in China's rural countryside have relocated to major cities in hopes of finding industry work.²⁶ Despite the difficult agricultural working conditions, China is the world's largest producer of rice and a significant source of wheat, corn, tobacco, peanuts and cotton. The country also boasts some of the richest mineral reserves in the world. However, these resources have yet to be maximized to their full potential.

Domestic industry is dominated by iron, steel, coal and machine building. Other prominent industries include textiles, petroleum, cement, chemical fertilizers, footwear, toys, food processing, automobiles, consumer electronics and telecommunications. Like many of China's products, coal is consumed domestically and also exported. China's main exports include machinery and equipment, textiles and clothing, footwear, toys, sporting goods, mineral fuels, and chemicals.

China still must cope with class disparity, high unemployment and the need for greater transparency in its stock market. However, China has increased GDP tenfold since 1978, and, with continued gradual growth, China at some point will close the gap between itself and the largest economy in the world, the United States.²⁷

Government

The Chinese government is referred to as the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. Structurally, the Central People's Government is made up of six different "branches," which include the National People's Congress (NPC), the Presidency, the State Council, the Central Military Commission (CMC), the Supreme People's Court (SPC), and the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP). There are also legislative, judicial and political branches, similar to the branches in the United States.

The NPC is the most powerful branch of government in the PRC. The Standing Committee is the defacto legislative committee of the NPC. The NPC and the Standing Committee are given power over the rights of legislation including decision, supervision, election and removal. The NPC has the authority to formulate and revise the Constitution of the PRC; elect members of the Standing Committee of the PRC, including the president and vice president; examine and approve the plan for national economic and social development; and exercise any other function or power as needed. The chairman of the NPC is Wu Bangguo.

The president of the PRC is the head of state, as well as the supreme representative of China, both internally and externally. The president of China is Hu Jintao, and the vice president is Xi Jinping. The president executes the decisions of the NPC and its Standing Committee. In foreign affairs, the president represents the PRC and enjoys the highest right of state representation.

The State Council of the PRC (also known as the Central People's Government) is the chief administrative authority of the PRC. The premier of the State Council is nominated by the president, and the other members of the State Council are nominated by the premier. The premier of the State Council of the PRC is Wen Jiabao.

The CMC of the PRC is the highest military administration, responsible for commanding the entire country's armed forces. The CMC is led by Chairman Hu Jintao and select members of the Standing Committee and NPC.

The SPC is the highest judicial authority in the country and exercises its right of trial independently. There are many functions of the SPC including first case hearings, supervision of trials and giving approval to death sentences. The president of the SPC is Wang Shengjun.

The SPP is the state's legal watchdog, responsible for prosecution and investigation. It consists of the SPP, the local people's procuratorates and the special people's procuratorates, including the military procuratorate.

Major Central Government Websites

Government Information Office The Republic Of China (Taiwan)

<http://www.gio.gov.tw/>

China Gov.com

<http://www.gov.cn/english/>

China On Line

<http://www.chinaonline.com/>

China.org.cn

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/government/21657.htm>

General Office, National Committee, Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

<http://www.cppcc.gov.cn/page.do?pa=402880451fef173b011fef567a8e0029>

Dalian

<http://www.dalian-gov.net>

Shenyang

<http://www.shenyang.gov.cn>

Qingdao

<http://qingdao.gov.cn>

Xiamen

<http://www.xm.cei.gov.cn>

Wuhan

<http://www.wuhan.gov.cn>

Chengdu

<http://www.cd.gov.cn>

Nanjing

<http://www.cd.gov.cn>

Shenzhen

<http://www.shenzhen.gov.cn>

Zhuhai

<http://www.zhuhai.gov.cn>

Ningbo

<http://www.ningbo.gov.cn>

Fuzhou

<http://www.fuzhou.gov.cn>

Xi'an

<http://www.xa.gov.cn>

Hangzhou

<http://www.hangzhou.gov.cn>

Harbin

<http://www.harbin.gov.cn>

Suzhou

<http://www.suzhou.gov.cn>

Kunming

<http://kmpg.gov.cn>

Hefei

<http://www.hefei.gov.cn>

Ji'nan

<http://www.jinan.gov.cn>

<http://www.jinan.gov.cn>

Shijiazhuang

<http://www.sjz.gov.cn>

Lanzhou

<http://www.lz.gansu.gov.cn>

Shantou

<http://www.gdst.gov.cn>

Haikou

<http://www.haikou.gov.cn>

Nanning

<http://www.nanning.gov.cn>

Nanchang

<http://www.nanchang.gov.cn>

Guiyang

<http://www.guiyang.gov.cn>

Xi'ning

<http://www.xining.gov.cn>

Urumqi

<http://www.urumqi.gov.cn>

The Communist Party of China (CPC) is the current party in power in the PRC. However, there are eight different democratic parties in China, which allow for multi-party cooperation and discussions over state affairs. Democratic parties include:

- The Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang (RCCK)
- The China Democratic League (CDL)
- The China Democratic National Construction Association (CDNCA)
- The China Association for Promoting Democracy (CAPD)
- The Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party (CPWDP)
- The China Zhi Gong Party (CZGP)
- The Jiu San Society (JSS)
- The Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League (TDSGL)²⁸

Country Background

Capital city: The capital city of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is Beijing, which has a total population of 19.6 million people. The time zone in Beijing (and all of mainland China) is 13 hours ahead of the Eastern Standard Time (EST) zone.

Other major cities by population: Shanghai's population is more than 22 million; Chongqing's is 10 million; Shenzhen's is 9 million; and Guangzhou's is 10 million.

Total area: China covers 9,596,961 square kilometers (5,963,275 square miles). It is the fourth largest nation in the world.

Population: As of 2011, China is the world's most populous nation with an estimated 1.34 billion citizens. Laws limiting households to one child have slowed China's growth rate. Over 70 percent of the population is between the ages of 15-64. The median age is 35.5 years old.

Urbanization: Fifty-one percent of China's population lives in rural areas; however, this is expected to shift because the rate of urbanization is 2.3 percent annually.

Sex ratio: The current male to female sex ratio is 1.06 males to one female. However, current births are trending 1.13 males to one female.

Ethnic groups: Nearly 92 percent of the population shares the Han ethnicity. Still, there are 56 other ethnic groups. Some of the larger groups include Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uighur, Tujia, Yi, Mongol, Tibetan, Buyi, Dong, Yao and Korean.

Religions: China is officially considered an atheist state, and a majority of residents claim no religious affiliation. Yet, more than 30 percent of Chinese claim religious affiliation, with Daoism

and Buddhism the most widely practiced religions. About four percent of the population is Christian, and one percent is Muslim.

Languages: There are seven major Chinese dialects and many more sub dialects. Mandarin (or Putonghua), the predominant dialect, is spoken by more than 70 percent of the population; it is taught in all schools and is the language of government. About two-thirds of the Han ethnic group are native speakers of Mandarin; the rest, concentrated in southwest and southeast China, speak one of the six other major Chinese dialects, such as Gan (Jiangxinese), Kejia (Hakka), Min (Hokkien and Taiwanese variants), Wu (Shanghainese variant), Xiang (Hunanese) and Yue (Cantonese and Taishanese variants). Non-Chinese languages spoken widely by ethnic minorities include Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur, Korean and other Turkic languages. English is taught in most of China's schools from elementary school through high school; therefore, many Chinese, especially younger residents, speak at least some English.

Literacy: The literacy rate is 92.2 percent, and most of the population ages 15 and older can read and write. The literacy rate is slightly higher among males (96 percent) than females (88.5 percent).

Education: The average Chinese citizen has completed 12 years of schooling, with a slightly higher education rate among women (12 years) than men (11 years).²⁹

Telecommunications:

China has the most Internet users in the world more than 500 million and growing quickly. China also has the most cell phone users with more than 930 million.

Access: China has more than 500 paved airports. Internally, it is connected via a rail system totaling more than 86,000 kilometers and a road network totaling more than 3,860 kilometers. China also claims the world's most navigable waterways, totaling more than 110,000 kilometers.

Ports and terminals: The main ports and terminals are located in Dalian, Guangzhou, Ningbo, Qingdao, Qinhuangdao, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Tianjin.

Major holidays: Major Chinese holidays include (dates are for 2012):

January 23-25	Mon-Weds	Chinese (Lunar) New Year
April 4	Wednesday	Tomb Sweeping Day
May 1-3	Tues-Thurs	May Day/International Workers' Day
June 23	Saturday	Dragon Boat Festival
September 30	Sunday	Mid-Autumn/Moon Festival
October 1-3	Mon-Weds	Chinese National Day

Among all of the 2012 public holidays, there are two "Golden Weeks" – Spring Festival Week in January and National Day Week in October. Those who work generally get seven consecutive days off (including weekends).

National anthem: “Yiyongjun Jinxingqu” (The March of the Volunteers) was adopted in 1949. The anthem, though banned during the Cultural Revolution, is more commonly known as “Zhongguo Guoge” (Chinese National Song) as it was originally the theme song to the 1935 Chinese movie, “Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm.”³⁰

Culture

China has one of the richest and most ancient cultures in the world, filled with beautiful art and architecture, creative folk tales, and unique native cuisine. One of the most diverse societies in the world, there are 56 ethnic groups in China. Much of Chinese culture is rooted in the traditional teachings of and belief in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Of these three belief systems, Confucianism has been the most influential in shaping the cultural behavior of the Chinese population, contributing to the mild manner and the harmonious and collective nature of the people. China has many traditional festivals celebrating the beauty and prosperity of the culture.

The Chinese celebrate several festivals throughout the year, honoring past and present traditions. The Spring Festival, which originated from the Shang dynasty, is the most important festival in Chinese culture. Celebrating the first day of the year, this holiday is known by most as the Chinese New Year. During Spring Festival, families throughout mainland China gather to enjoy sumptuous feasts, display firecrackers, and send well-wishes to family and friends, hoping for a healthy and prosperous year. Another important celebration of Chinese tradition is the Qingming Festival, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day or Cold Food Day. In this festival, which derived from the Zhou Dynasty, Chinese people offer sacrifices to their ancestors by sweeping off their tombs and eating cold food. Cold Food Day marks the arrival of late spring, an optimal time for planting and growing crops, according to Chinese traditions. One of the more joyous festivals is the Water-Splashing Festival, which falls around the Qingming Festival. During this festival, a majority of the Chinese population visit a Buddhist temple dressed in their best clothes and carrying water. They first show honor by washing the Buddha and then splash water on themselves for good luck. Increasing in veracity, the splashing of water denotes well-wishing and good luck to all participants. It is said those who are splashed the most will receive the best luck.

China is celebrated for its unique cuisine. Unlike the Chinese-American food known to Western countries, Chinese cuisine is as diverse as the many ethnic groups within the culture. In China, food is known for its central role in festivals and celebrations with a wide range of delicious tastes. Each festival is marked by the consumption of a specific traditional Chinese food, such as dumplings, rice, dim sum, noodles, and wontons, as well as various sweet cakes, fruits and nuts. Some of the traditional Chinese dishes are “pau po pu,” a sweet and sticky corn and banana leaf snack; “shou zhua fan,” which translates to “rice eaten with hands;” and the more well-known Peking duck, to name a few.³¹

China is also known for its beautiful and ancient art and architecture, including one of its most beautiful contributions, the calligraphy and art of written language. A compilation of distinct characters, China’s written language takes years of skill and technique to learn. Chinese sculpture may be best known for the many dragon, lion and phoenix sculptures that can be seen throughout the country. Along with the many exquisitely designed palaces in China, one of the most famous tourist attractions is the Great Wall of China, which spans over 5,000 miles from east to west, between Shanhaiguan and Lop Nur.

With modern day technologies and the integration of Western societal and cultural trends, Chinese culture manages to maintain its values and traditions by passing its unique and ancient societal

foundations from generation to generation. A cultural gem, this ancient civilization has a rich history of deep-rooted traditions, magnificent works of art, harmonious and peaceful inhabitants, and unique and delicious cuisine.³²

Cultural dimensions

Hofstede proposed five dimensions of culture: power-distance, collectivism-individualism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation.³³ And in 2001, Hofstede compared cultural values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across a number of countries, including China.

Hofstede noted these dimensions of culture in China.³⁴

- Power-distance: China's culture has a high power-distance, stemming largely from its imperial tradition. Communist rule, since 1949, has been very authoritarian. This high power-distance makes it difficult for public relations practitioners, as staff, to become part of the dominant coalitions that ultimately set organizational policy.³⁵
- Collectivism-individualism: Collectivism is a deep-seated value in China. The Mandarin language has no word corresponding to the English word "personality", and a person's family name precedes his/her given (first) name. Perhaps the most obvious sign of collectivism is the importance of *guangxi*, "one's network of connections and friendships that seem necessary to get most anything, such as a grain, a theater ticket, medicine or a job!"³⁶ *Guangxi* presents special challenges to public relations practitioners in China, including a need to spend much time developing relationships of trust before getting down to business, the norm of hiring and promoting friends and relatives, the view of "back-door" payments (which might be called bribes in other cultures) as respectful gifts and giving credit to a group as well as to an individual.³⁷
- Masculinity-Femininity: China has for centuries been male-dominated, patriarchal society, a value confirmed by Confucius. While Mao Tse-tung advocated equal status and roles for men and women, China remains a masculine culture that may be unfriendly to women, and thereby unfriendly to women public relations practitioners being taken as seriously as males.
- Long-term Orientation: This dimension of culture emphasizes the values of Confucianism, as noted by Hofstede and Bond.³⁸ It emphasizes patience, hard work and perseverance, and education is highly valued. Long-term emphasis and collectivism contribute to an idiosyncratic need for preserving face. While this can motivate the Chinese to work hard and be virtuous, it can also lead them to conceal problems and withdraw from relationships to avoid embarrassment. Public relations practitioners operating in China must take care to avoid creating a situation in which a Chinese native might encounter loss of face.³⁹

Footnotes

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General Office, National Committee, Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
<http://www.cppcc.gov.cn/page.do?pa=402880451fef173b011fef567a8e0029>

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Dalian
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Xiamen
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Wuhan

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Xi'an

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Hangzhou

<http://www.hangzhou.gov.cn>

Harbin

<http://www.harbin.gov.cn>

Suzhou

<http://www.suzhou.gov.cn>

Kunming

<http://kmpg.gov.cn>

Hefei

<http://www.hefei.gov.cn>

Ji'nan

<http://www.jinan.gov.cn>

Shijiazhuang

<http://www.sjz.gov.cn>

Lanzhou

<http://www.lz.gansu.gov.cn>

Shantou

<http://www.gdst.gov.cn>

Haikou

<http://www.haikou.gov.cn>

Nanning

<http://www.purchase.gov.cn>

Nanchang

<http://www.nanchang.gov.cn>

Guiyang

<http://www.guiyang.gov.cn>

Xi'ning

<http://www.xining.gov.cn>

Urumqi

<http://www.urumqi.gov.cn>

PR Associations

China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA)

<http://www.cipra.org.cn/English/>

Shanghai Public Relations Association (SPRA)

<http://www.chspra.com/>

PR Firms

Ad Hoc Concepts

<http://www.adhocpr.com/index.htm>

APCO Worldwide

www.apcoworldwide.com/chinese

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General Administration of Press and Publication

<http://www.gapp.gov.cn/>

Ministry of Culture

<http://www.ccnt.gov.cn/English/index.html>

The State Administration of Radio Film and Television

<http://www.sarft.gov.cn/>

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