

“MARKETING STRATEGIES OF CHINESE COMPANIES IN THE GLOBAL MARKET”

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Abstract: This article examines the marketing strategies of Chinese companies in the global market and analyzes the key factors contributing to their international competitiveness. In recent decades, Chinese enterprises have become increasingly active in global economic activity thanks to rapid economic growth, technological advancement, and strong government support. This study focuses on China's "Going Global" strategy, which encourages domestic companies to expand their operations overseas, increase foreign investment, and strengthen international economic cooperation. The article discusses the key goals of this strategy, including accessing new international markets, accessing advanced technologies, strengthening global brands, and securing access to natural resources. Furthermore, the study analyzes the key mechanisms used to implement the "Going Global" strategy, such as foreign direct investment, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and export-oriented expansion. The paper also provides examples of major Chinese multinational companies, including Huawei, Lenovo, Alibaba, Haier, Xiaomi, and ByteDance, that have successfully entered global markets and strengthened their international positions through innovative marketing and globalization strategies. Furthermore, the article examines the transformation of marketing strategies in the digital era. With the rapid development of the digital economy, technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence, and digital platforms have significantly transformed the marketing landscape. The study highlights several important digital marketing approaches employed by Chinese companies, including data-driven marketing, digital branding, online distribution channels, community marketing, and integrated digital marketing strategies.

Key words: Chinese companies, global market, marketing strategies, digital marketing, Going Global strategy, international marketing, foreign direct investment, globalization, digital economy, brand development, international expansion.

Introduction.

In recent decades, Chinese companies have become important players in the global market. Rapid economic growth, technological development, and government support have enabled Chinese enterprises to expand their business activities internationally. As globalization intensifies competition, Chinese firms are increasingly relying on effective marketing strategies

to enter and succeed in foreign markets. These strategies include digital marketing, localization, strategic partnerships, and innovation-based marketing. China's digital economy has developed rapidly in recent years and has become an important factor in marketing transformation. For example, the scale of China's digital economy is estimated to reach 48.9 trillion yuan in 2022, accounting for more than 30% of the country's GDP. This transformation has had a significant impact on the way companies communicate with consumers and promote their products globally. Therefore, understanding the marketing strategies used by Chinese companies in the global market is important for analyzing their international competitiveness and expansion. Many scholars have studied the internationalization and marketing strategies of Chinese companies. Research shows that globalization has encouraged Chinese firms to enter international markets through foreign direct investment, export activities, and strategic partnerships. Chinese enterprises began to expand globally after economic reforms and the "open door policy" that integrated China into the global economy and significantly increased international trade activities. Recent studies show that Chinese companies are increasingly focusing on the European Union and other developed markets due to their high purchasing power and advanced economic systems. These markets present both opportunities and challenges for Chinese firms seeking to gain a foothold on the global stage. In addition, with the development of digital technologies, marketing strategies have become more data-driven and personalized approaches. Digital platforms, social media, and artificial intelligence now play an important role in shaping modern marketing strategies.

China's Position in the Global Economy and Investment Expansion

China plays a dominant role in the global economy. According to the World Bank and IMF, China accounts for approximately 18–19% of global GDP and is the second largest economy in the world. Furthermore, China is the world's largest exporter, contributing around 14–15% of total global exports.¹ In addition, the country produces more than 30% of global manufacturing output, highlighting its critical position in global industrial production.

| Year | Outward FDI (USD billion) | Notes |
|------|---------------------------|---|
| 2000 | 27–28 | Initial stage of "Going Global" strategy |
| 2005 | ~57 | Rapid expansion begins |
| 2010 | ~114 | Strong growth due to globalization |
| 2015 | ~146 | Stable growth period |
| 2016 | ~196 | Peak level of outward investment |
| 2018 | ~143 | Decline due to capital controls |
| 2020 | ~153 | Resilience during COVID-19 |
| 2021 | ~179 | Recovery and expansion |
| 2022 | ~146 | Slight decrease due to global uncertainty |
| 2023 | ~147 | Stabilization phase |

¹ World Bank. World Development Indicators:
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=CN> – Date of access:
 25.03.2026.

| | | |
|------|----------|-------------------------------|
| 2024 | ~150-155 | Moderate recovery (estimated) |
| 2025 | ~155-165 | Gradual growth expected |
| 2026 | ~165-175 | Continued expansion trend |

Table 1- China's Outward FDI Dynamics

Source: Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM). Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment

<http://fec.mofcom.gov.cn/article/tjsj/tjgb/>

China's outward foreign direct investment (FDI) has grown significantly since the launch of the "Going Global" strategy. According to UNCTAD, China's FDI outflows increased from approximately \$28 billion in 2000 to over \$147 billion in 2023. China is now among the top three global investors, accounting for around 10-12% of global FDI flows. The main investment destinations include Asia, Europe, and Africa, while key sectors include energy, manufacturing, technology, and infrastructure.

| Region | Share (%) | Description |
|---------------|-----------|---|
| Asia (ASEAN) | 35-40% | The largest share of China's outward FDI is directed to neighboring Asian countries, especially ASEAN, due to geographic proximity, trade integration, and production networks. |
| Europe | 15-20% | Investments focus on acquiring advanced technologies, well-known brands, and access to high-income markets. |
| Africa | 10-15% | Primarily resource-seeking investments (oil, minerals) and infrastructure development projects. |
| Latin America | ~10% | Concentrated in energy, mining, and agricultural sectors, particularly in countries like Brazil. |
| North America | 5-10% | Limited by regulatory restrictions, but still important for technology and innovation investments. |

Table 2-Regional Distribution of China's Outward FDI

Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. World Investment Report 2023 <https://unctad.org/publication/world-investment-report-2023>

China's outward foreign direct investment is unevenly distributed across regions, reflecting both economic priorities and strategic interests. The largest share of investment is directed toward Asia, particularly ASEAN countries, which benefit from geographical proximity and strong trade ties. Europe represents another important destination, where Chinese firms seek advanced technologies and established brands. In Africa and Latin America, investments are largely resource-oriented and focused on infrastructure development. Meanwhile, investment in North America remains relatively limited due to regulatory barriers, although it continues to play a role in technology acquisition. Overall, this regional distribution highlights China's strategic approach to global expansion, combining market-seeking, resource-seeking, and efficiency-seeking investments.

What is the "Going Global" strategy?

The “Going Global” or “Going Out” strategy is an economic policy developed by the Chinese government, the main goal of which is to encourage Chinese companies to enter international markets and expand foreign investment. This strategy was formed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and especially actively developed after China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001. The main idea of the strategy is to turn Chinese companies into competitive enterprises not only in the domestic market, but also on a global scale.²

China's "Going Global" strategy is an important economic policy aimed at expanding the international economic activities of the country's companies and increasing their competitiveness in the global market. Within the framework of this strategy, the Chinese government encourages national companies to enter foreign markets, invest abroad, and develop international economic cooperation. The main goal of the strategy is to ensure that Chinese companies operate globally and strengthen the international integration of the country's economy

One of the important goals of the strategy is to capture new international markets. Chinese companies seek to increase their sales volume by exporting their products and services to other countries. At the same time, they expand their activities by opening branches in foreign countries, implementing investment projects, and cooperating with local companies. In addition, the strategy is aimed at mastering technology and innovation. Many Chinese companies acquire or cooperate with foreign enterprises in order to learn advanced technologies from developed countries and introduce them into their own production systems. This serves the modernization and innovative development of Chinese industry. Another important goal of the strategy is to ensure access to natural resources. As China's economy grows rapidly, the demand for energy and raw materials is increasing. Therefore, Chinese companies are implementing investment projects in countries rich in oil, gas, metals and other resources. Also, through the “Going Global” strategy, Chinese companies are striving to build international brands and increase global competitiveness. Companies such as Huawei, Lenovo, Xiaomi and BYD have managed to strengthen their brands in global markets by using international marketing strategies. This process is further strengthening the role of Chinese companies in the international economic system.

Methods of Implementing China's “Going Global” Strategy.

China's “Going Global” strategy is implemented through several economic and institutional mechanisms that help Chinese companies expand into international markets. The main purpose of this strategy is to support Chinese enterprises in operating abroad, entering new markets, and becoming important participants in the global economic system. To achieve this goal, the Chinese government has introduced different political, financial, and organizational support measures that encourage companies to develop their activities overseas.

1. Foreign Direct Investment one of the key ways of implementing the “Going Global” strategy is through foreign direct investment. Chinese companies invest in other countries by establishing factories, subsidiaries, or production facilities. This approach allows them to access new markets, expand production capacity, and integrate into global value chains. The Chinese government actively encourages such investments by creating supportive policies and financial mechanisms that make overseas expansion easier for domestic firms.

² OECD. China Going Global Investment Strategy <https://www.oecd.org/investment/china-going-global.htm>

2. Mergers and Acquisitions- another important method is the use of mergers and acquisitions. Chinese companies often acquire or merge with foreign firms in order to enter international markets more quickly. Through these deals, they can gain access to advanced technologies, managerial expertise, and well-known global brands. In recent years, Chinese banks, industrial corporations, and technology companies have purchased stakes in many international businesses, helping them strengthen their global presence.

3. Joint Ventures Establishing joint ventures with foreign partners is also a common strategy. By cooperating with local companies, Chinese firms can better understand local regulations, market conditions, and consumer preferences. Joint ventures help reduce risks and allow companies to adapt more effectively to foreign business environments while building long-term international partnerships.

4. Expansion through Export and International Trade at the early stage of internationalization, many Chinese companies entered global markets mainly through exports. Exporting products abroad allowed them to find new customers and increase their sales volumes. Over time, however, companies began to complement exports with more complex strategies such as overseas investment, acquisitions, and strategic partnerships.

5. Expansion through Global Economic Initiatives China's international economic initiatives, especially large infrastructure and trade projects, also play an important role in supporting the "Going Global" strategy. These initiatives help Chinese companies access new markets, improve logistics networks, and strengthen international trade connections. As a result, Chinese enterprises are able to expand their global operations and deepen economic cooperation with many countries.

Companies Implementing the "Going Global" Strategy.

Many big Chinese enterprises have successfully moved into overseas markets as part of China's "Going Global" plan, and they now operate globally. These companies increase their global market positions through foreign investment, technological collaboration, mergers and acquisitions, and global marketing tactics.

1. Huawei.

Huawei is one of China's leading telecommunications and information technology businesses, and it is widely regarded as a successful implementation of the "Going Global" plan. The corporation operates globally, creating telecommunications infrastructure and developing innovative technologies like as 5G networks in a number of nations. Huawei provides services in over 100 countries and has created research and development centers throughout the world. This foreign presence has enabled the organization to establish a robust global innovation network.

2. Lenovo.

Lenovo is another notable example of a Chinese company that transformed into a global corporation by executing the "Going Global" approach. Lenovo entered the foreign market in 2005 when it acquired IBM's personal computer division. This strategic move aided Lenovo's transformation into a global brand, eventually propelling it to the top ranks of computer manufacturers worldwide.³

3. Alibaba.

³ Leading Chinese companies on to the international stage <https://www.imd.org/research-knowledge/leadership/articles/leading-chinese-companies-on-to-the-international-stage/>

Alibaba Group has grown globally, mostly through e-commerce, cloud computing, and digital services. The company runs worldwide trading platforms and logistics networks that facilitate cross-border commerce in a number of nations. By creating worldwide digital commerce networks, Alibaba has begun to play an increasingly vital role in international trade.

4. Haier.

Haier is a significant Chinese home appliance manufacturer that has been actively seeking global expansion. To access other markets, the business created manufacturing facilities overseas and bought a number of multinational appliance companies. As a result of these initiatives, Haier has established itself as a leading brand in the worldwide home appliance business.

5. Xiaomi & ByteDance.

New-generation Chinese technology companies are also actively pursuing a "Going Global" strategy. Xiaomi, for example, offers smartphones and other electronic devices in a wide range of nations. ByteDance, on the other hand, has achieved amazing global success with its digital media platform TikTok, which has become one of the most popular social media applications globally.⁴

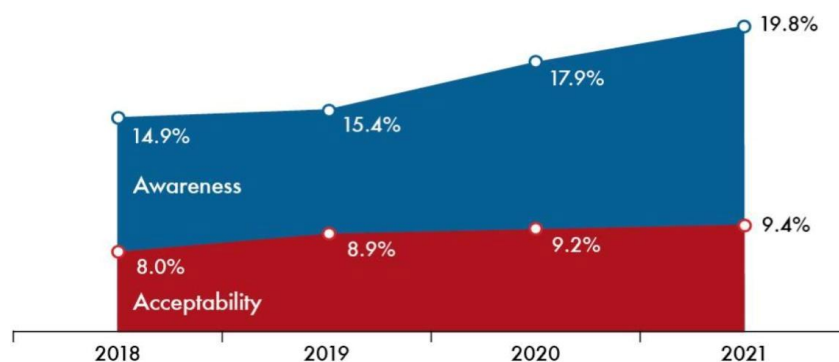


Figure 3- BRAND RECOGNITION: Chinese brands are experiencing higher levels of awareness and acceptability by consumers in developed markets

Source: Going Global <https://english.ckgsb.edu.cn/knowledge/article/going-global/>

Marketing strategies of Chinese companies in the digital era.

China's digital economy reached 48.9 trillion yuan in 2022, accounting for more than 30% of the country's GDP. This shows that the digital economy has become one of the main driving forces of China's economic development. In the future, digital technologies are expected to increasingly penetrate all areas of society, including production processes and everyday life.

Marketing is a set of activities aimed at creating, communicating, delivering, and managing relationships with consumers. With the arrival of the digital era, marketing concepts and methods have undergone significant changes. Today, not only enterprises but also consumers play an important role in the marketing process. Therefore, in order to succeed in the digital economy era, companies need to adapt their marketing strategies to the new

⁴ Going Global <https://english.ckgsb.edu.cn/knowledge/article/going-global/>

environment. Based on the Chinese market, this study analyzes how Chinese companies choose marketing strategies in the digital era and how they transform from traditional marketing to digital marketing.

One of the main principles of traditional marketing is understanding and satisfying consumer needs. For this reason, companies need to carefully study the real demands of consumers and offer products and services that meet these needs. In addition, firms determine their target markets, segment consumers into different groups, and select the appropriate audience for their products or services. In terms of products and services, building strong brands, increasing consumer awareness, and ensuring customer satisfaction are also important. These factors ultimately help create greater value for consumers. To achieve these goals, marketers must establish effective communication channels with consumers. These include advertising, distribution channels, direct sales, and customer service. During the development of marketing theory, the “4Ps” marketing mix, which focuses on the market perspective, and the “4Cs” consumer-oriented concept have gradually emerged.⁵ At the same time, market competition and the external environment also influence the marketing process. Since market conditions and competition constantly change, companies must continuously adjust their marketing strategies in order to gain a competitive advantage in the market.

Significant Transformations Caused by Digitalization.

In the digital era, the basic principles of traditional marketing strategies remain relevant and continue to be applied. However, digital transformation has significantly influenced not only people’s daily lifestyles but also the way information is accessed and how companies organize their marketing activities. As a result, the overall marketing environment has changed considerably. With the rapid spread of digital technologies, market information has become more open and accessible. Consumers now have a wider range of options when choosing products or services. Thanks to the development of smart devices and the Internet, people can obtain information from many different sources. The growth of the Internet has reduced the information gap between consumers and marketers. It has also removed geographical limitations in marketing activities and created opportunities for companies to reach niche markets and satisfy the diverse needs of consumers. Consequently, marketing activities have become more complex and competition among companies has intensified.

At the same time, consumers’ lifestyles are increasingly becoming digital and online-based. This shift has fundamentally changed the way people communicate, search for information, and make purchases. Statistics show that by the end of 2020, the Internet penetration rate among Chinese users reached about 73%. On average, people spent around 28.5 hours per week online. Moreover, approximately 80.3% of users relied on search engines, while 81.6% were involved in online shopping. Today, consumers perform many activities on the Internet, including communication, entertainment, information searching, and travel planning. As a result, the Internet occupies a significant portion of people’s daily time. Because of these changes, companies must develop marketing strategies that are closely connected to consumers’ digital lifestyles. Businesses need to build stronger online connections with

⁵ Zhou M. Exploration on Marketing Strategy Selection in the Digital Age // Chinese Market. – 2022. – No. 11. – P. 136–138.

customers, turning these interactions into marketing opportunities and effectively delivering the value of their products through digital channels.

Furthermore, new technologies have created innovative tools and platforms for marketing. The development of 5G networks, artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, as well as AR and VR technologies has led to the emergence of new products and marketing scenarios. For instance, VR technology allows consumers to experience products and services in a virtual environment, making the experience more interactive and engaging. Artificial intelligence can provide smart customer service and personalized recommendations, while big data helps companies better understand consumer behavior and improve marketing accuracy.⁶

In the digital age, rapid technological development and changes in consumer behavior have significantly transformed the marketing environment. Therefore, companies must adapt their marketing strategies to these changes in order to maximize marketing effectiveness and achieve competitive advantages in the market.

1. Deep Understanding and Exploration of Consumer Needs.

One effective approach to understanding consumer needs is the use of conflict marketing strategies. This concept suggests that marketing often revolves around identifying or creating contradictions in consumer needs. High-level marketing strategies intentionally create contradictions, while others identify or respond to existing ones. By highlighting these contradictions, companies can generate discussions and attract attention online, which increases brand visibility.

A good example is the beverage brand Vital Energy Forest, which successfully capitalized on consumers' concerns about sugar consumption. By promoting its products with the concept of "zero sugar, zero fat, and zero calories," the company addressed the contradiction between consumers' desire for sweet beverages and their health concerns. This strategy strengthened the brand's unique positioning and significantly boosted product sales.

2. Data-Driven Marketing Based on Digital Technology

In the digital economy, data has become one of the most valuable resources for marketing activities. Modern marketing strategies increasingly rely on digital technologies and data analytics to guide decision-making. Through the analysis of online behavior, marketers can segment consumers according to their preferences, habits, and demographic characteristics. This allows companies to precisely position products and target the most relevant consumer groups. In addition, feedback data such as customer reviews and complaints can be used to improve existing products or develop new ones.

Data models—such as recommendation systems, shopping basket analysis, and decision trees—also enable companies to predict consumer purchasing behavior. These tools help businesses implement strategies like cross-selling, loyalty programs, and personalized recommendations to increase customer value. Furthermore, early warning systems can identify customers who may stop using a product, allowing companies to implement retention

⁶Zhao W. Transformation and Innovation of Enterprise Marketing Model Based on Digital Era // Economist. – 2022. – No. 6. – P. 282–283.

strategies and extend the consumer lifecycle. From an organizational perspective, digital data can also be used to monitor distribution channels and supply chains, helping companies optimize management decisions and improve operational efficiency.

3. Product Self-Marketing in the Digital Environment.

Digital products increasingly rely on self-growth mechanisms to promote themselves. Compared with traditional marketing approaches, this strategy focuses on creating products that naturally attract users through their functionality and value. When a product provides real benefits and convenience to users, consumers themselves become promoters by sharing their experiences with others. This approach reduces marketing costs while increasing product influence and user engagement.

4. Online Distribution Channels

With the rapid development of the Internet, many digital platforms have become important marketing channels. Platforms such as JD.com, WeChat, Weibo, and Douyin play a crucial role in connecting companies with consumers. As online traffic patterns change, companies must continuously adjust their marketing channels to remain competitive. The goal is to make purchasing easier for consumers during fragmented time periods and to increase opportunities for online product display and sales. At the same time, businesses should integrate online and offline channels to provide consumers with a more convenient and seamless shopping experience.⁷

5. Digital Branding and Communication.

Brand marketing has become an essential component of marketing transformation in the digital era. Traditional promotional activities such as advertising campaigns or limited-time offers usually focus on short-term sales. However, digital marketing emphasizes long-term brand building and communication. Companies increasingly use digital platforms to develop strong brand identities and connect emotionally with consumers. Internet influencers and brand IP collaborations play an important role in modern brand communication. For instance, China Mobile revived its "Dynamic Zone" brand by cooperating with popular celebrities, using their online influence to attract younger audiences and create a vibrant and energetic brand image.

6. Community Marketing in the Digital Era.

Community marketing has become an effective way for companies to establish close relationships with consumers. Online platforms such as WeChat public accounts, Weibo communities, forums, and Baidu Tieba provide spaces where consumers with similar interests can gather and interact.

By actively participating in these communities, companies can communicate directly with target audiences, understand their needs, and build long-term relationships. As a result, community-based marketing can significantly improve brand loyalty and consumer engagement.

7. Cultural Marketing Strategies.

In the digital economy, marketing innovation is closely connected with the use of information technology and cultural communication. Compared with traditional marketing

⁷ Zhu B. On the International Marketing Strategy of Enterprises in the Digital Age // Marketing Industry. – 2021. – No 26. – P. 46–47.

models such as the 4Ps, the digital economy emphasizes resource sharing, efficient information circulation, and the ability to meet diverse consumer needs.

Cultural marketing plays an increasingly important role in this environment. It is often said that “third-class companies sell products, second-class companies sell services, and first-class companies sell culture.” Therefore, companies should focus on building a strong brand culture and reputation among consumers. For example, businesses can strengthen consumer trust by creating compelling brand stories, defining clear corporate visions, and developing recognizable brand symbols. In international markets—especially within initiatives such as the Belt and Road—digital technologies can help companies present their culture, product quality, and brand values to global consumers.

8. Integrated Digital Marketing Strategy.

Driven by the development of the “Internet+” economy, digital markets are becoming increasingly borderless. Companies now have greater opportunities to expand into international markets through cross-border e-commerce.

Integrated marketing communication requires companies to build comprehensive databases of consumer demand. Without such databases, many firms struggle to implement effective integrated marketing strategies. When companies maintain long-term data-driven interactions with consumers, they can build stronger relationships and improve marketing efficiency. For example, Haier Group created a digital database called “My Exclusive Customization” on its online shopping platform. This system allows consumers to personalize products according to their individual needs, enabling the company to communicate directly with customers and strengthen brand loyalty.

9. International Marketing in the Digital Age.

Compared with domestic markets, global markets are more complex and competitive. Therefore, companies must conduct thorough market research and develop strategies that align with the economic conditions and consumer preferences of different countries. Digital technologies provide powerful tools for exploring international markets. By analyzing economic indicators, consumer behavior, and market trends, companies can better understand global demand and design effective marketing strategies. In addition, digital platforms allow companies to collect feedback from international consumers and involve them in product development. Crowdsourcing, for example, enables businesses to gather ideas and suggestions from global users through online networks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Chinese companies have become increasingly active participants in the global market in recent years. Rapid economic development, technological progress, and government support have created favorable conditions for companies to expand their activities beyond the domestic market. As a result, many Chinese enterprises are now successfully operating in different regions of the world and competing with international companies. One of the key factors that has supported this process is China’s “Going Global” strategy. This strategy encourages companies to invest abroad, explore new markets, and strengthen international economic cooperation. Through foreign direct investment, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and export activities, Chinese companies have been able to expand their business operations and increase their global presence. Well-known companies such as Huawei, Lenovo, Alibaba, Haier, Xiaomi, and ByteDance clearly demonstrate how Chinese enterprises can transform into global brands through effective international strategies. Another important

factor influencing the success of Chinese companies is the rapid development of the digital economy. Digital technologies have significantly changed the way companies communicate with consumers and promote their products. Today, businesses actively use digital platforms, social media, and online distribution channels to reach a wider audience. Data-driven marketing and personalized communication with customers allow companies to better understand consumer needs and improve marketing effectiveness. In addition, modern marketing strategies are becoming more innovative and flexible. Community marketing, digital branding, and integrated marketing strategies help companies build stronger relationships with consumers and increase brand recognition. These approaches allow businesses to remain competitive in the rapidly changing global market environment. Overall, the combination of globalization strategies and digital marketing tools has helped Chinese companies strengthen their positions in international markets. As digital technologies continue to develop and global economic connections become stronger, Chinese enterprises are expected to further expand their activities worldwide and play an even more important role in the global economy.

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