

China is the world's most populous country, with nearly one and a half billion people living there. It is also an economic powerhouse and as a result of these two factors, is also a huge music market both domestically and internationally with celebrities such as Wu Yifan who has 45 million followers on Weibo, being cast in several major Hollywood films and even sparking a huge backlash from American music fans when in 2018 his album out-charted Ariana Grande's latest release. Many accused the singer of using bots, but with no evidence found, this event goes to show the power of the Chinese music market, and how it is impacting the global music landscape.

In 2016 the newly formed Girl Group 'Twice' managed and created by the Korean music company JYP entertainment, released a video with all the members sitting on bunkbeds and talking about themselves as a way for fans to get to know them. One of the main marketing points for the group in this video was that the members were from a range of different countries and each of them had the flag of the country they were from taped to their bunk. At a first glance, it is nearly impossible to see anything wrong with this video, but the youngest member Chou Tzuyu, who was only 16 at the time, had a Taiwanese flag on her bunkbed, as she was born and raised in Taiwan. Unfortunately, in China this was not taken as innocently as it did to the general international audience.

Chinese officials said that because Tzuyu had been shown with a Taiwanese flag and not a Chinese flag, it would be taken as a sign of her supporting Taiwanese independence. This quickly escalated into the Chinese government banning all JYP Entertainment artists (including actors, models and dancers) from being allowed to work in China.

The Solution was one that many international onlookers thought harsh and unkind towards the teenager. JYP uploaded a video to their YouTube channel with a clearly distressed Tzuyu reading an apology to the Chinese Government and asserting that she stands by China's 'One China Policy'.

Whilst there are many moral and ethical debates to be had over promoting artists and working in China, this won't stop the international music industry from wanting to exploit the huge potential of the Chinese market. In the last months, Warner music has launched Anne-Marie in China.

What I intend to do with my proposal, is to help companies both large and small, to launch their artists in China and to help them avoid falling into any of the potential mistakes that would be inconsequential in the outside world but could seriously hurt their career in China. Such as the situation with Tzuyu.

The target demographic for my project, is the anyone in the music industry who will want to launch and promote music in China. We will provide services ranging from basic Chinese language classes (covering both Mandarin and Cantonese, depending on the region/s of China that the artists will be being promoted in) in order for the artists to be able to sing fluently or be able to answer simple interview questions, to advice for companies on how to best manage their artists in China,

and avoid incidents that could have much larger ramifications than they would in the west.

China has a lot of television shows where celebrities appear and their fans can get to know them better, these range from 'Happy Camp' where the guests play games and compete in challenges against each other in front of a live audience, to 'Yummy Yummy' where the guests share their personal recipes and show the food they usually keep in their fridges. Both shows have had international guests appear on the shows, with translators. As an organisation, we would provide advice and training on the cultural differences that the artists/guests should know before appearing on these shows to be able to appeal to the Chinese audience more.

Another aspect that we would cover, would be the visa application process. It is particularly difficult to get a Chinese visa approved and often takes multiple applications, due to the fact that China requires visa applications to be very detailed on what people will be doing while in China, which is often difficult to know in such detail in advance, which causes the visa application to take multiple tries.

We would be employing people with expertise in all these areas. Much of the language classes would also encompass culture and behaviour for the people visiting. We would also partner with a visa agency in order to streamline the process of getting into China. We would also put our clients in contact with translators that they could work with whilst in China.

We will work predominantly online, as it will be based out of London but not everyone will be able to make it in to an office. We will be able to run our classes through online platforms such as Skype and Zoom so as to be as flexible as possible for the clients. We will also rent an office space for multiple reasons, but the main ones being that we can hold meetings there, between ourselves and with potential clients in a professional setting.

The majority of this project will be a small team working together to create a network that will become a crucial to many people from both large and small companies that are looking to expand into China and want to have a successful campaign and launch.

In conclusion, my business proposal is a cultural sensitivity consultancy specifically to help people from all over the world to make the most out of the Chinese market and expand their fanbase around the world.

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