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HOT POT CHINA

10 Chinese Beauty Consumer Myths in 2023

A Hot Pot China and
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Preface

Why chinese beauty consumers?

It was the great English playwright William Shakespeare who wrote in Love's Labour's Lost that 'Beauty is bought by judgement of the eye'. In other words, beauty, and the standards of what constitutes beauty, are very much in the eye of the beholder.

When we reflect on something as subjective as beauty in modern life, we often find ourselves filling our gaps of understanding, particularly if we're talking about a region different from our own, with stereotypes and assumptions that lead to myths. China is perhaps the greatest example of a country where beauty standards are nuanced, confusing and evolving, and so it is unsurprising that it is somewhere already greatly misunderstood: there are many myths about attitudes, motivations and how to successfully market brands in the country.

This report was created in order to highlight and dispel some of these myths, and to offer a more nuanced, and in some cases dissenting, voice. We are confident that the report will serve decision-makers in the skincare and cosmetics industry with a tilt to Chinese consumers, and will in turn lead to better, deeper connections with this audience for future marketing strategies.

This talk of deeper connection and a more nuanced appreciation for the Chinese mindset towards beauty is not in vain – according to the latest statistics from research house Euromonitor, in 2021 the total spend value of the beauty industry in China was about Rmb573bn (£69.7bn), and this is likely to grow as tough pandemic restrictions in China start to gradually ease up. By introducing, and then dispelling, myths that span both the skincare and colour cosmetics sectors, we hope that brands and partners reading this report will take more nuanced steps to realise some of this value in a growing market.

In this report, China strategy and marketing specialist Hot Pot China, in partnership with strategic foresight consultancy The Future Laboratory, will take you on a journey through some of the myths that are dominating the beauty sector at present. Through qualitative and quantitative consumer research, Hot Pot China has gained unparalleled and meaningful insight into the attitudes and behaviours of Chinese beauty consumers.

We hope you find our study insightful and we are on hand should you have any questions about applying the findings to your business as you look to win with the opportunity in China, or with Chinese buyers overseas.

Research aims and methodology

In February 2023, Hot Pot China's in-house insights team launched research into the beauty consumer in China, with the aim of pushing back against a heavily mythologised and misunderstood market and category. At Hot Pot China we have unique access to a 5,000-person panel based across China, called our Cultural Intel Community (CIC). For the research, which is both quantitative and qualitative/focus-group based, we surveyed both men and women across the skincare and cosmetics sectors across Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities in China.

The two core stages combined qualitative and quantitative consumer research:

Stage 1 – Quantitative : A 500 sample survey (4:1 female to male) of those aged 18–30 in Chinese Tier 1 to Tier 3 cities, skincare and/or cosmetics buyers in the past 12 months, with a monthly personal income above Rmb5,000 (£606).

Stage 2 – Qualitative : Five smaller online focus groups with above audience types. Total panel was 30, breaking down as 24 female and six male.

Rather than focusing exclusively on high-net-worth individuals, a wide range of skincare and cosmetics buyers participated from a range of tiered cities in China, in order to provide full visibility on the range of consumer types and behaviour.

Who did we speak to?

In order to get a better understanding of as broad a spectrum of the China landscape as possible, we surveyed 18–30-year-old consumers, both male (although weighted towards female respondents) and female, living in Tier 1 to Tier 3 Chinese cities, who had purchased skincare and cosmetics products in the past month. In order to keep the report within a realistic premium context, we restricted personal income to above Rmb5,000 (£606) per month. Half of our respondents were in the younger age group, while the other half were in the older group.

It is important to acknowledge the unique economic, social and political context surrounding this report, and more specifically China's beauty buyers across skincare and cosmetics. Current conditions, specifically Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and an uncertain outlook for the global economy, have in some way affected or accentuated the trends discussed in this report, as well as the future direction of the beauty consumer in China, so it is best to keep this in mind.

Photography by Victoria Ling for The Future Laboratory

Photography by Cottonbro Studio

Part one

Attitudes

The following are myths and misconceptions that can be grouped together as attitudes.

Myth 1: Chinese youth are rebelling against mainstream beauty standards

Reality

There is an emerging trend of younger generations in China defining beauty in unorthodox ways, but among young women there are still very high levels of acceptance of core mainstream ideals.

The mainstream Chinese ideals of beauty, including the holy trinity for women of possessing pale, luminescent skin, large eyes and a high-bridged nose, can be partly explained by both a deep-rooted belief that tanned skin is linked to a labour-intensive, non-cosmopolitan lifestyle, and by the influence of a European aesthetic, dialled up by pop culture and technology e.g. beauty filters on smartphones. Many beauty brands lean into these ideals; for example, Liu Yifei's campaign for Shiseido's White Lucent Luminizing Serum, a best-seller in China, can be seen below.

When answering questions about these ideals and their relevance today, our focus group research found that these beauty ideals were still very much in place, and were proving extremely resistant to that much change. For all the evidence of Gen Z in China taking a rebellious, counter-cultural approach to new trends in fashion and beauty, the core ideas of what it is to be beautiful are still not 'in the eye of the beholder' as much as the myth suggests. In addition to the facial beauty ideals, there were an increasing number of young Chinese respondents in our focus groups, particularly younger women, who were equally if not more concerned with a slim body shape as they were with whiteness, large eyes and nose structure.

Top: Photography by VroniV; above: Photography by PeopleImages

这一两年比较推行白幼瘦，中国女孩都比较推行这种白幼瘦什么的，对我多多少少影响到了，女孩子一定要

‘White, slim, and young have been the mainstream ideas of beauty since two years ago. And it did have an impact on me that I want to look white with good flawless skin, and looking cute. I feel like it’s the best’

Linxin F, 20, Chengdu

This finding was also supported by our quantitative research, which showed that there is a high level of reported acceptance of the core beauty standards in China, but that equally the feeling of pressure about these ideals is not as high as might be expected. This is often wrongly misconstrued by newcomers to marketing in China as a desire to look Western. In truth, these attitudes around whiteness have roots that go back centuries and stem from class status in Imperial times.

Among 25–30-year-old women, 60% of respondents accepted orthodox social standards of beauty, but in turn did not feel pressure. About 30% of respondents accepted standards but did feel pressure. Whether or not pressure is felt, it is startling to note that acceptance of beauty standards among this group stands at about 90%.

While it should be stated that it was an emerging trend that was most notable from our qualitative research, there were mentions of a more natural complexion and athletic, inspired by a growth in self-reported gym attendance and athletic participation. This counter-cultural ideal was particularly true within the subculture of outdoor sports, watersports and athletics.

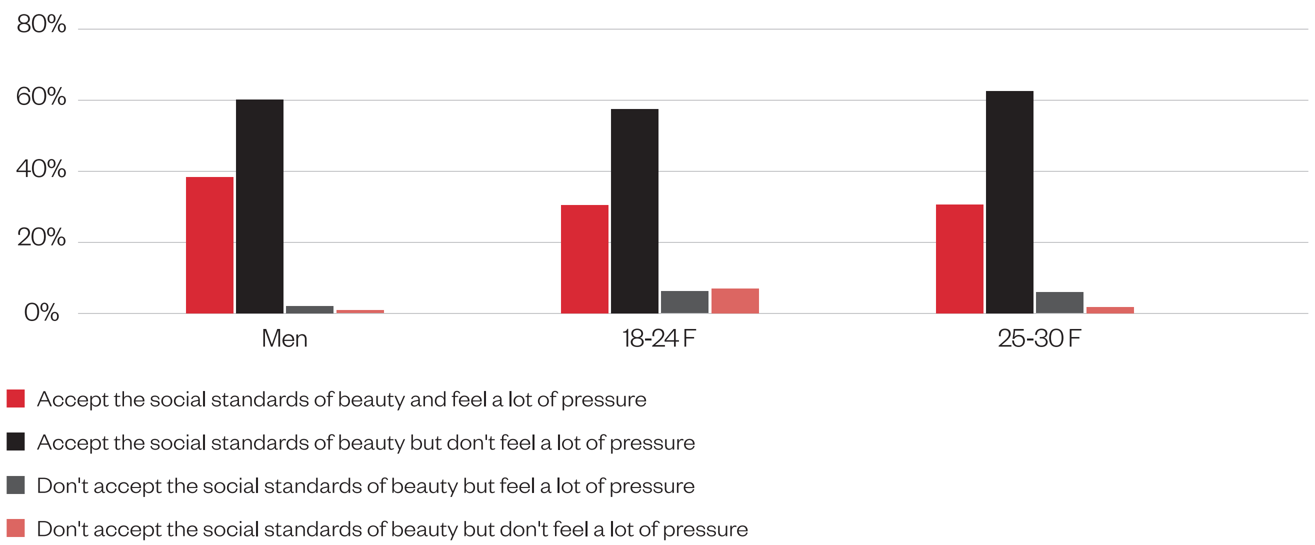
60%

Of respondents accepted orthodox social standards of beauty, but in turn did not feel pressure.

The Future Laboratory **Thought-starter**

In China, consumers are still content with aspirations and ideals, while around the world, a very different approach to beauty is emerging, one that is more democratic and inclusive. As a result, China may be uncomfortable territory for many Western brands that have spent resources on tackling harmful stereotypes within beauty. It is important to acknowledge that this work should not be undone or hidden for the Chinese audience, but instead, integrated and subtle in your brand communications.

Attitudes towards beauty standards in China



‘If you are fit, you have muscles, and you have a well-proportioned body shape, you will look beautiful and natural with a light brown wheat-like skin tone’

Xianrui W, 21, Nanchang, Female

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

There is a misconception that fixed beauty ideals, such as bright, white skin, large eyes and a high nose have been abandoned among the post-1990s generation in China. The reality cuts through the myth – while there has been an emergence of a more athletic aesthetic, including slightly darker tones and muscular builds, it is nascent and not mainstream.

The resistance to change, and the acceptance of the status quo of these standards, should definitely be noted by brand leaders in the West, especially when it comes to core messaging and positioning themes for these brands. Nowadays in China, it should be noted that there is greater nuance for skin tone desires. There are no longer words for pale skin or bright skin, but a growing lexicon detailed around more specific tones. There is a phrase related to ‘cool tone white skin 冷白皮’, for example, which means having white skin and leaning towards the cooler colour tone simultaneously.

Photography by Cottonbro Studio

Myth 2: Among Chinese women, ageing concerns only start at 40+

Reality

Our data shows that concerns about preventing and eradicating the effects of ageing start much younger in China, with product preferences reflecting this.

Beauty brands, particularly skincare brands looking to market their age-prevention claims in Western markets, tend to do so by positioning products, endorsements and messaging around eradication rather than prevention, and target an older demographic of ladies in doing so. An example of this would be Reese Witherspoon's central role in the campaign for Elizabeth Arden's core anti-age range, Prevage.

Our research found that younger Chinese women, much like their Western counterparts, consistently hold attitudes that are related to existing physical issues like big pores, oily and dry skin or acne skin conditions. Product portfolios and messaging of the major global players in China reflect this; for example, L'Oréal's Revitalift is positioned as an overnight cream that tackles existing skin issues like those mentioned above.

But, in China, our data also shows that there is a difference in the age when the first signs of ageing become a significant, and particular concern. Roughly 50% of women between the ages of 25 and 30, a significant figure given the population volume, start using skincare products to deal with the first signs of ageing, and still 40% of women are reporting modifying their skincare routine to deal with the existing effects of ageing.

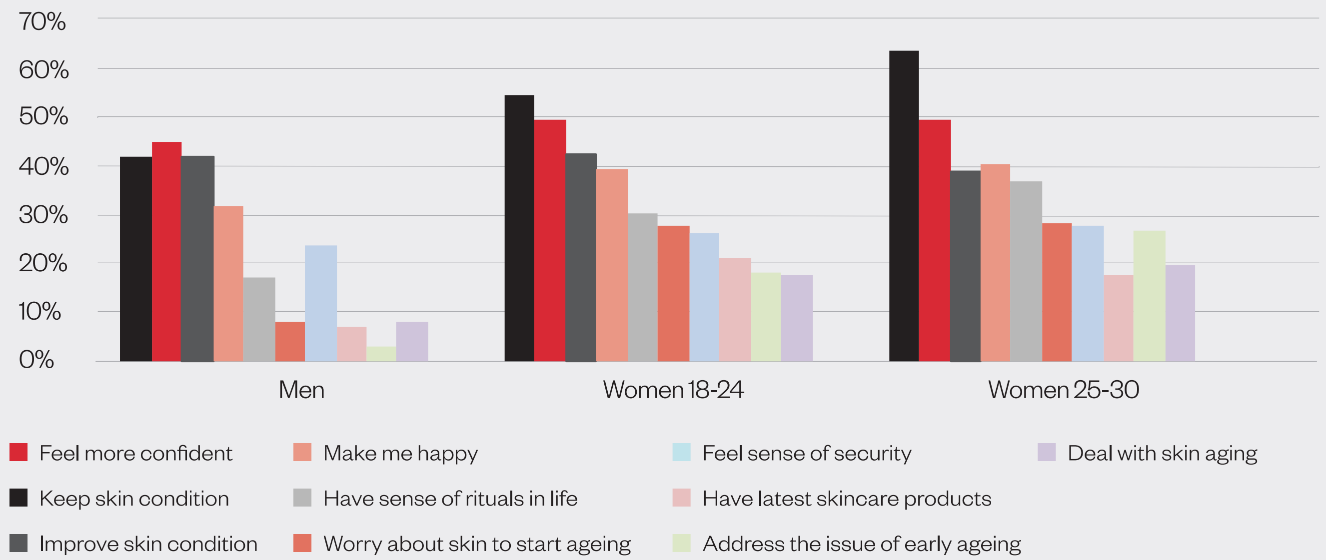
The product portfolios of the Chinese women we surveyed show a noticeable shift towards products that support the above concerns with ageing effects as they enter their mid-20s. Eyecare, serums and night creams are all indicative of a comparatively early concern with ageing in China.

Photography by Cottonbro Studio

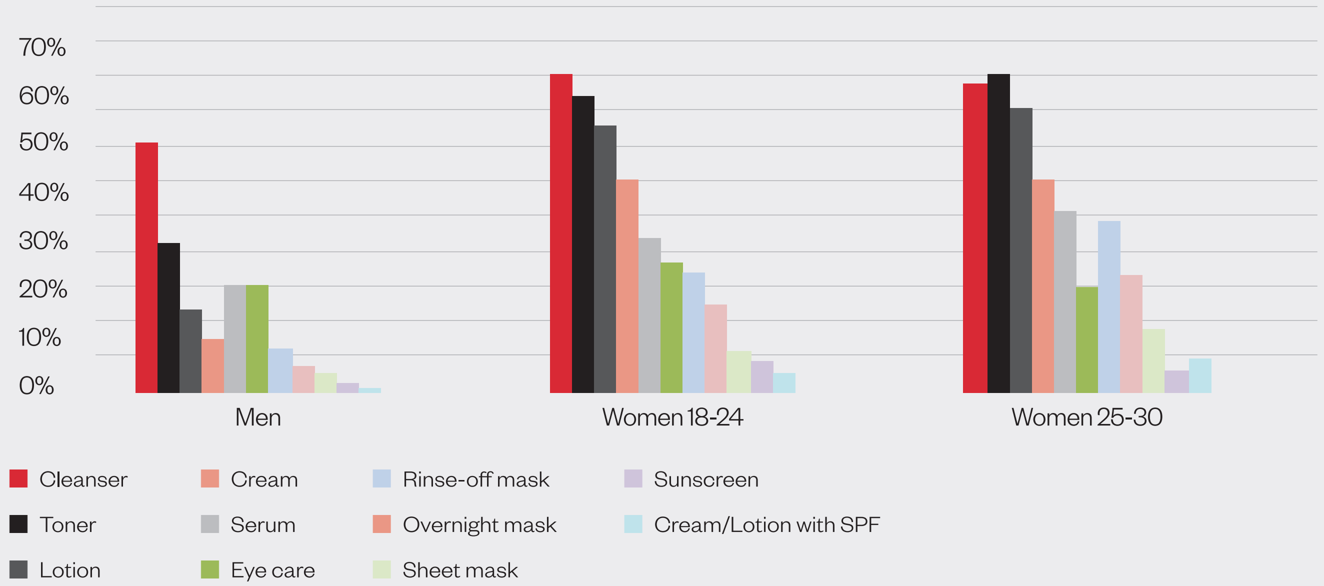
THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

In a 2018 study of the cosmetics and personal care market, global brands like Elizabeth Arden and L'Oréal on Xiaohongshu, or RED, as well as domestic players like KANS and Wei Beauty were correctly identified as already tilting themselves towards anti-ageing preferences in younger consumers, but it appears that skincare brands are still not fully realising the potential of this focus.

Why use skincare products now?



Skincare products in use now



Myth 3: Appearing attractive for love interests is all-consuming

Reality

Feelings of self-confidence, and having a younger and healthier look, rank higher than being desired by a potential love interest.

There is a misconception in the West that, owing to a comparatively low age of first marriage in China (on average 26 in China versus 32 in the UK, for example), there is a strong attitudinal tilt towards cosmetics product usage as a means of finding a marriage partner.

While this is, of course, a fairly reductive view, it is an important topic that required some research. Our data found that usage of cosmetics was more likely to be for reasons linked to personal or self-confidence such as looking prettier, younger or more energetic, than to attract a partner. While this does not discount the implied reasoning behind wanting to look pretty, the research is interesting, and is a theme that was supported in our focus group panels. Our findings in focus groups were that young, university-aged women are eager to express individuality through make-up and liberation from high school. And most importantly of all, they want to look pretty and feel confident about themselves.

The Future Laboratory **Thought-starter**

Among the many reasons for cosmetics use, 'looking healthier and energetic' ranked third in Hot Pot China's survey. This shift towards aesthetic health – described by The Future Laboratory as 'adapting lifestyles and behaviours to bolster appearance' – is also evident globally, as consumers demand beauty formulas and tools that have direct health benefits. Consider how the healthifcation of beauty might play out in your domain, from lymphatic skincare to multifunctional facial health devices.

Above: Photography by Shiny Diamond
Right: Pexels.com

'After entering university, all my flatmates were talking about make-up. And also I felt liberated after entering university. I could put on make-up as much as I want to look beautiful'

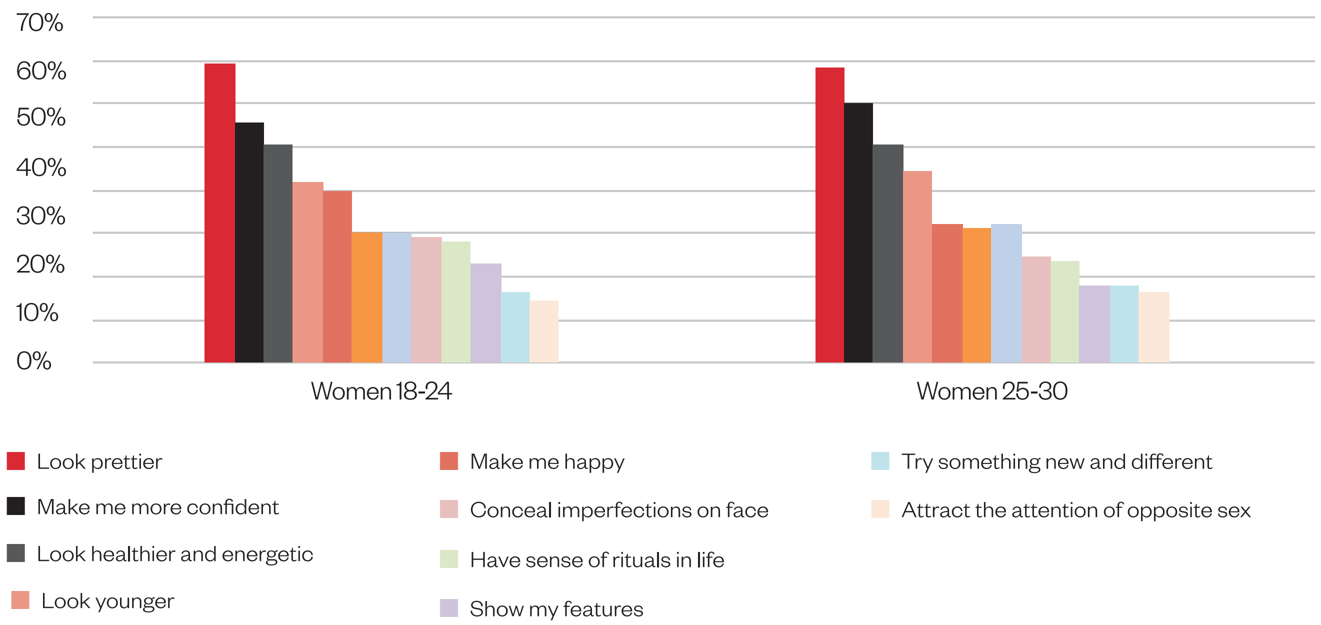
Xiaoyan G, 28, Shanghai, Female

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

Cosmetics brands that want to understand the best ways to cultivate a positioning as well as creative ways to use this trend of self-defined beauty would do well to take note of Mac's interactive experience centre in Shanghai, launched before the pandemic and designed with Chinese customers' preference for multi-staged cosmetics routines in mind. Whether purposeful or not, messaging steers away from dating or romance and focuses instead on product effects and the impact on personal appearance.

Photography by Alfi Nuryaman

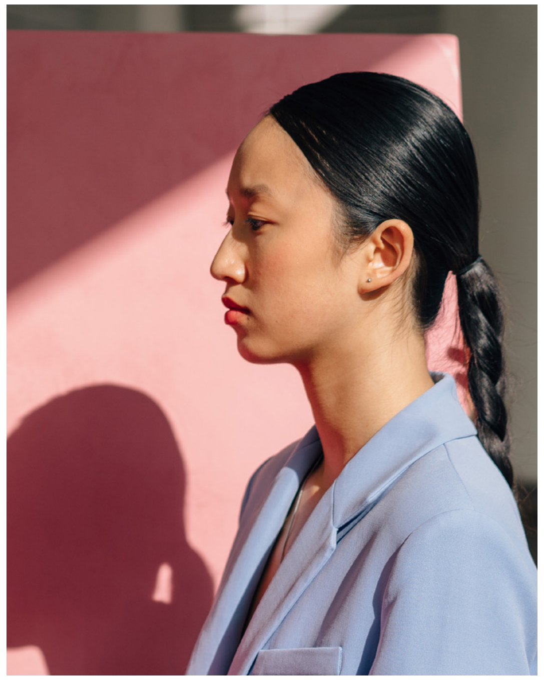
Reasons to start using cosmetics



Myth 4: Specific product ingredient understanding in China is as low as in the West

Reality

Deep knowledge bases and levels of understanding in China about specific ingredients are uniquely high.



Photography by Cottonbro Studio

For Western beauty brands, China represents a significant volume and value opportunity, but only for those who understand the consumer better than their competitors – to simply translocate domestic assumptions into China has historically failed for beauty brands. One area in which there has been some misconception is in relation to the depth of knowledge around specific ingredients and compositions of these ingredients. Whereas in the West there is (probably correctly) some common wisdom that exact ingredients are discussed and disseminated only by early adopters and a minority of highly frequent and passionate users, in China our data shows that the prevailing attitude is that it is important to be extremely well informed about beauty products. Buyers want an expansive amount of information on product content such as nicotinamide, hyaluronic acid, Bosein and glycerine, and this is actively sought out in about a quarter of cases. Interestingly, this holds true across male and female buyers.

Our research also indicated that, with regard to female beauty buyers in China, a majority of buyers (over 80%) make their purchase decisions based on specific ingredient content.

We know from our focus group work that behaviour supports these statistics – Xiaohongshu, or RED, conventionally nicknamed Little Red Book, is the main platform in China where knowledge and tips on the most granular of beauty product ingredients is shared for all buyers to see.

The Future Laboratory **Thought-starter**

China is setting a precedent for the future of Accredited Beauty – a term coined by The Future Laboratory. We are in the age of the expert and brands can no longer breeze through the saturated beauty market. They must build on the pillars of expertise, exploration, evidence and certification to truly satisfy a more educated consumer that is demanding product quality and efficacy.

‘When choosing a new product…I know what Bosein, retinal, and vitamin C can do to my skin. I think most Chinese girls know what ingredients are good for whitening and anti-ageing’

Xue Y, 29, Beijing, Female

Photography by Jonathan Jobs

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

While clearly the Chinese beauty buyer across skincare and cosmetics can be said to be far more deeply knowledgeable, it is important that brands do not simply discard the need to build an emotional connection with buyers and purely pursue rational ingredient communications. There is, of course, a need for a balance of these two elements. But, when product ingredients and claims are the subject of conversation, it is important to understand that the base knowledge in China is far higher than it is likely to be in your home market.

Part two

Motivations

Understanding the difference in strongly held attitudes, especially if they are different or more pronounced, is a foundational principle in consumer understanding, and ultimately the secret to winning with China.

Attitudes are only one aspect though. To truly paint a complete picture of the young Chinese beauty consumer, we also need to understand the misconceptions around specific buying motivations and behaviours within the sectors.

Myth 5: Purpose claims are equally important for buyers in China and the West

Reality

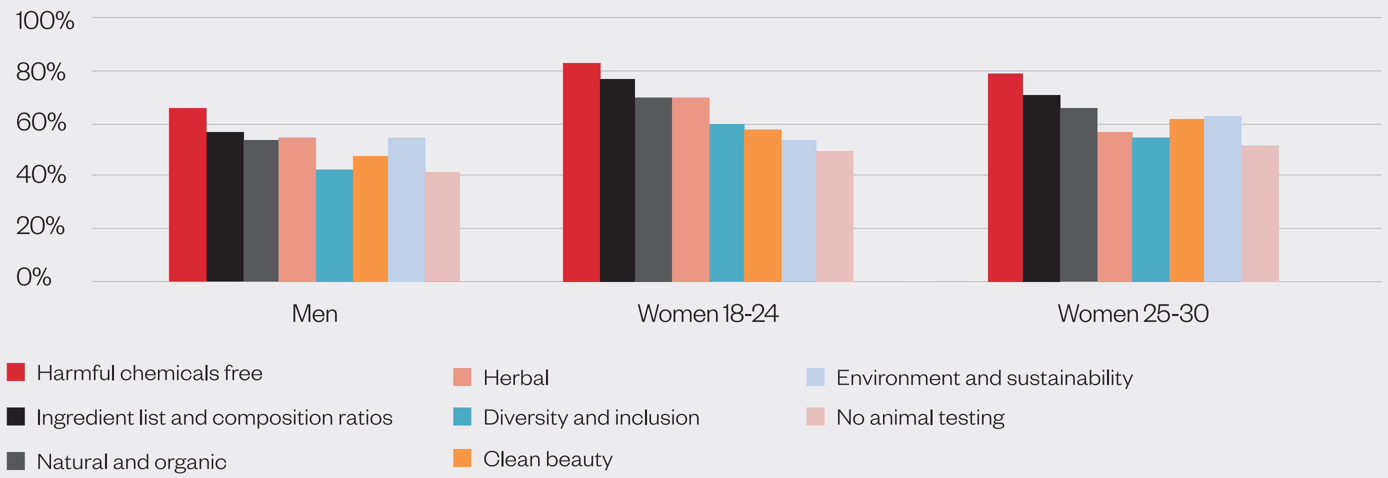
Although supporting factors in determining beauty buying habits, sustainability and related diversity and inclusion (D&I) are not the dominant influences when compared to other product-specific and personal benefits.

A key theme that runs throughout this research is the inability to apply the hierarchy of motivations that a Western audience holds to those of the beauty market in China. A 2020 study commissioned by the New York-based Zeno Group entitled The Strength of Purpose found that respondents from a range of key markets, including those based in China, were four times as likely to buy from a brand if that brand had strong purpose messaging around the environment and people of the global majority, for example.

The Future Laboratory **Thought-starter**

Many global mainstream brands still buy into notions of purpose and sustainability and proactive mission statements, but the communication and advertising of these factors is not a priority for consumers. Instead, brands should focus on how these elements are built into the internal infrastructure and foundations of their business, and save marketing communications for maintaining consumer relevance.

Influencers in beauty products purchase



THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

Although this report does not discount the importance of a strong purpose, for Chinese buyers our data challenges its rank as all-consuming, and places these motivations as lower than ingredient ratios and harmful chemical content. For the Chinese consumer, particularly women buyers, the factors that relate to the personal product effects far outweigh a brand's D&I, animal testing and environmental messaging. In the case of younger women buyers, this is even lower down on the agenda of importance. Brands with globally mandated positioning and messaging on purpose should proceed with caution, and take heed of these buying motivations as they relate to both skincare and cosmetics ranges.

Photography by Cottonbro Studio

Myth 6: Skin whitening dominates as the issue for Chinese consumers

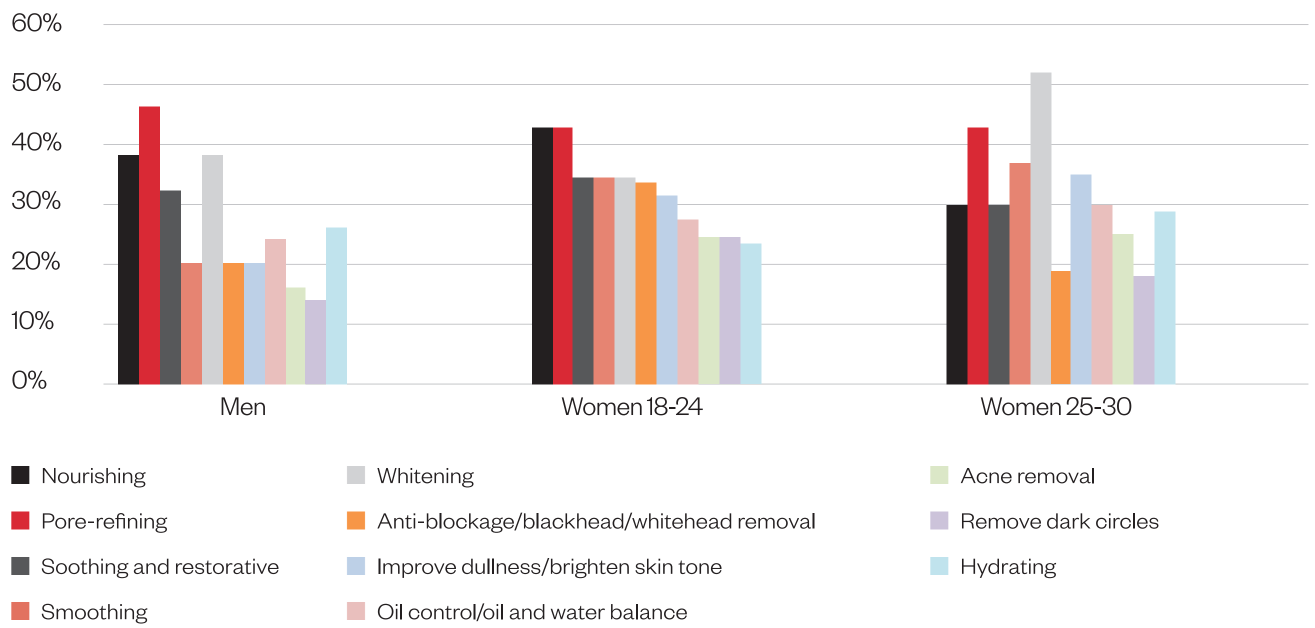
Reality

A range of preventative and issue-based factors rank as far more important than skin whitening among a younger Chinese audience.

As we have already mentioned in the Attitudes section, there is a persistent set of standards in China, in particular a whiter, cooler skin tone, that are proving resistant to change among the younger generations. Despite this acceptance of these core beauty standards, when it comes to buying criteria, there are other elements that rank higher. In terms of general wellbeing motivations, skin nourishment and hydration rank the highest for younger Chinese women, whereas for men, oil control and water balance (30%) are the most important.

With regard to specific skin issues that could be interpreted as non-preventative, pore refinement scores highly (25%) across all the surveyed demographics. Acne removal unsurprisingly takes on a higher importance among a younger group of women, and diminishes in importance as the condition typically tends to be alleviated.

Most needed benefits of skincare products



Photography by Sunny Ng

Myth 7 : Male cosmetics is the next opportunity for brands looking at China

Reality

Spending and upgrade opportunities for men are sub-categories specific within cosmetics, and the opportunity for brands should still be considered as emerging.

Westerners who have been to China in the past few years might have noticed billboards featuring male models promoting cosmetics. Owing to the relative stigma associated with male make-up and cosmetics in the West, it would be fair to conclude that in China the opportunity for men's cosmetics has exploded. While usage is definitely increasing – for context, Statista data from 2021 estimated that only about 12% of men in China use colour cosmetics frequently – this should definitely not be overstated, as over 75% of men therefore are unlikely to use these products.

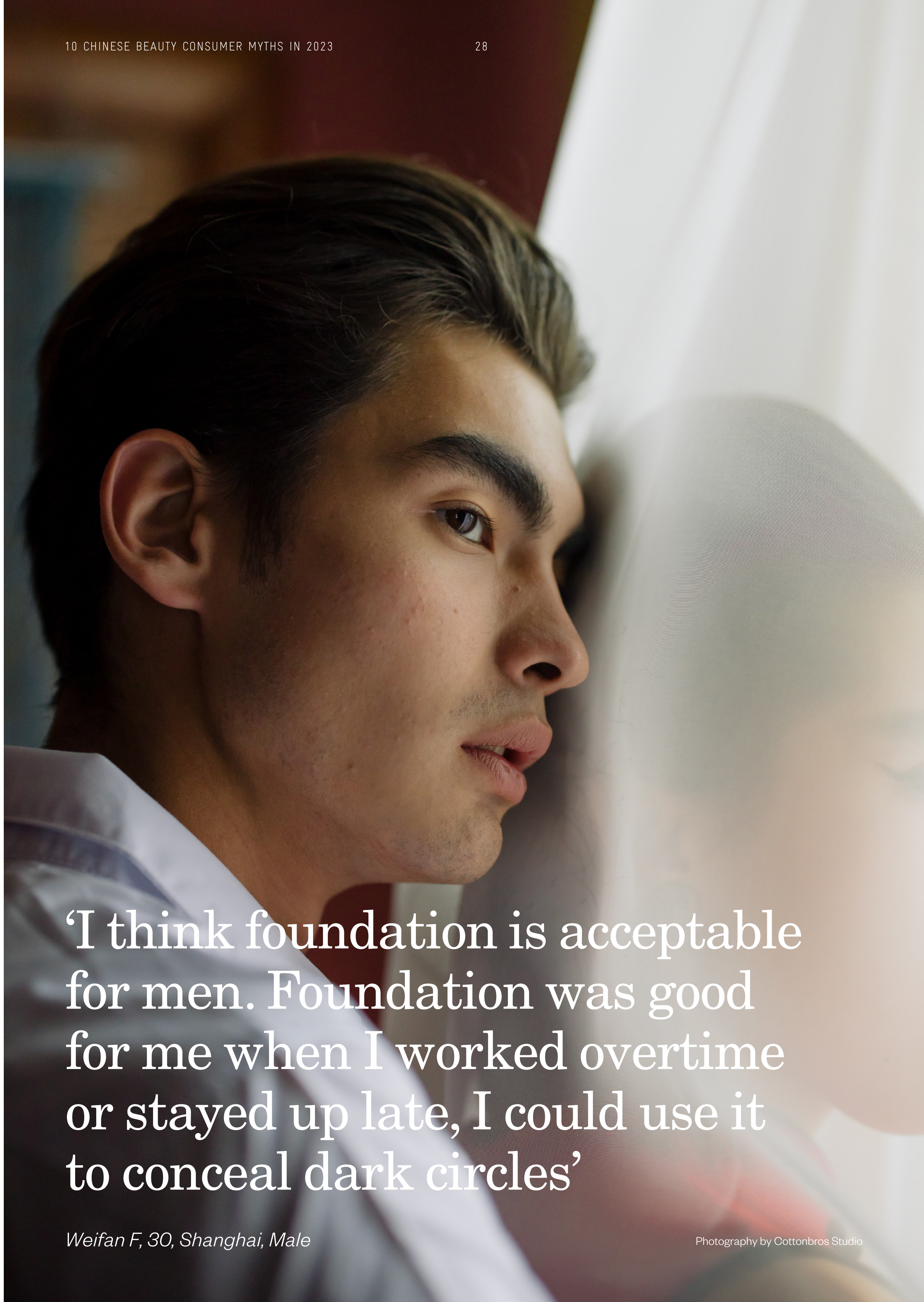
Within the usage group, though, the product opportunity is surprising, as it lies within lipsticks and foundation rather than mascara. We found that these were product preferences in our focus groups too. Among male cosmetics users, over 30% were primed to upgrade their foundation, while 40% were primed to upgrade their lipstick. This compared to only 5% of men who reported spending more on their mascaras. This shows that, although the opportunity for men's cosmetics in China is emerging, it would be wise for brands looking to use this trend to be product- and sub-category-specific when looking for entry points.

The Future Laboratory **Thought-starter**

When considering this emerging category, brands have an opportunity to increase adoption by targeting men in sub-categories that they most use. Positioning personal care as a component of maintaining an active urban lifestyle or using cosmetics for increased professionalism are both ways in which these products and routines could appeal to male audiences.

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

The men's cosmetics opportunity in China is a significant and emerging one, especially for premium brands looking to win in niche categories such as men's lipstick and foundation. But the majority of men in China are not primed for cosmetics purchases, so this market is better understood as supplementary alongside a core female focus, unless the brands' product portfolio is specifically male only. As an emerging trend, however, men's cosmetics in China is certainly one to keep an eye on.



'I think foundation is acceptable for men. Foundation was good for me when I worked overtime or stayed up late, I could use it to conceal dark circles'

Weifan F, 30, Shanghai, Male

Photography by Cottonbros Studio

Part three

Marketing

Ultimately, the above sections exploring just a few (of the many) young Chinese generations' attitudes to beauty, as well as their buying motivations, are only useful to marketing and commercial decision-makers if they are executed in the right channels.

The next section covers myths related to marketing channels, and can serve as advice for beauty brands looking to win in the right context with the Chinese skincare and cosmetics market.

Myth 8: KOL live selling ranks as one of the most influential shopper marketing channels in beauty

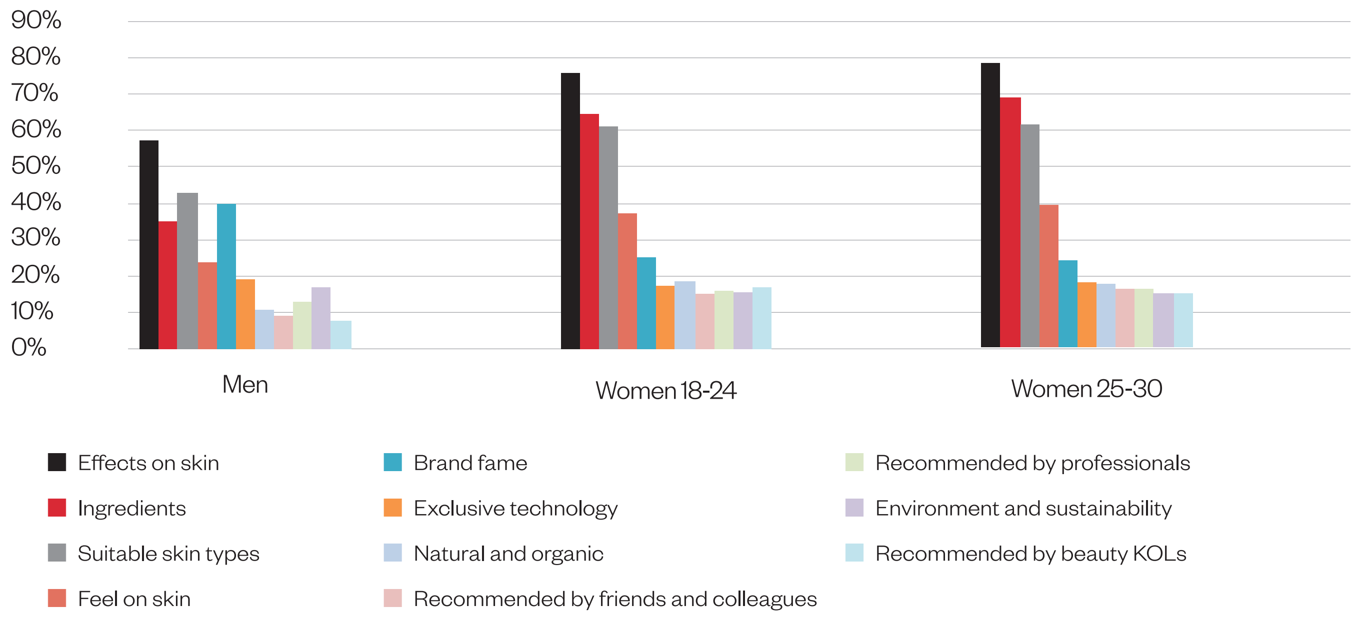
Reality

Key Opinion Leader (KOL), powerful Chinese influencers), recommendation ranks further down than other channels.

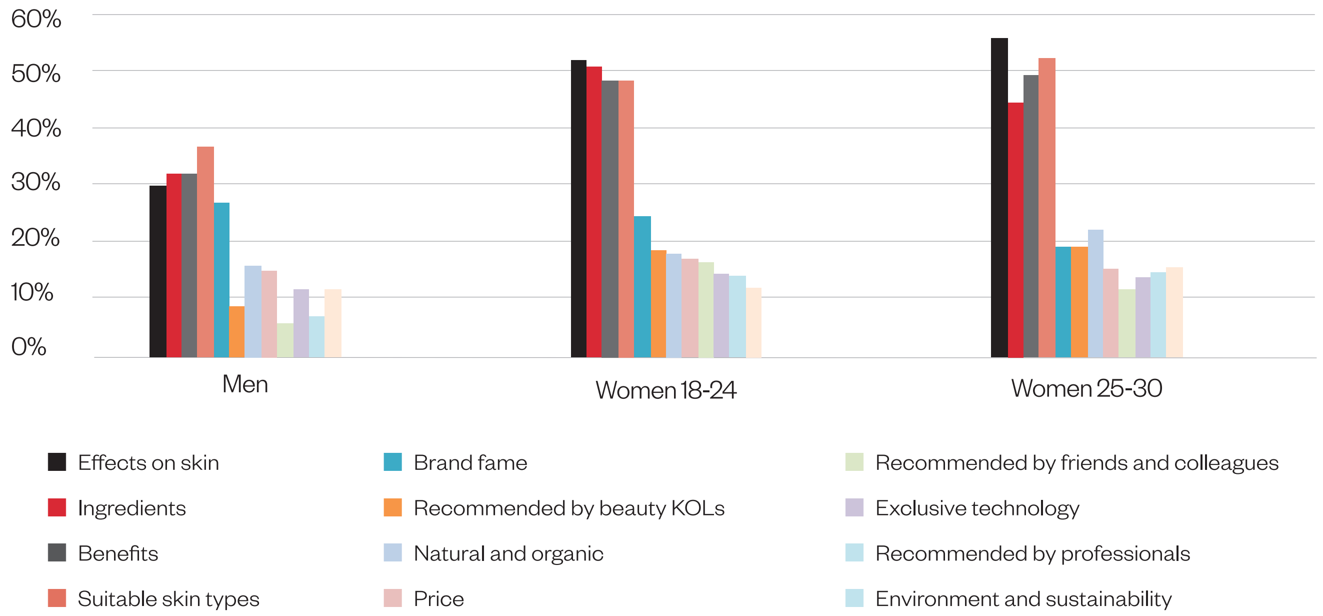
It is conventionally believed that KOL and Key Opinion Consumer-driven (KOC) live commerce is transforming the way that Chinese beauty consumers are trialling and ultimately converting into skincare and cosmetics brand customers. The numbers at the macro-level back this up. According to Statista data, the market size of live selling revenues for consumer brands grew from Rmb120bn (£14.5bn) in 2018 to Rmb2.2 trillion (£267bn) in 2021.

Despite the obvious growth and retained importance of the channel, our data found that for skincare and cosmetics consumers, on the question of whether they are being utilised as main shopping channels, it seems that this is lower than the macrotrends suggest. A brand's physical store, its Tmall, JD presence and its owned website all outstrip live commerce as shopping channels within which to have a marketing presence. For 18–24-year-old women buying cosmetics, live commerce accounts for just over 20% of their main shopping channels, while this level drops to under 20% for 25–30-year-old women. This is in stark contrast to Tmall, JD and physical stores, which all sit well above the 30% mark – it stands at 60% in Tmall's case. The same percentage distributions are seen in the skincare sector too, showing that live selling via KOLs, while growing fast in China, should still be seen as a supporting rather than a leading channel for beauty brands.

Main purchase factors in skincare products



Main purchase factors in cosmetics products



Photography by Mart Production

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

As the Attitudes and Motivations sections show, the cosmetics and skincare consumers in China are comparatively sophisticated in their levels of personal knowledge and access to specific ingredient information.

We believe that it is this finding that accounts for the surprisingly low reported use of live selling as a main shopping channel. While many cosmetics brands such as Lancôme are reporting extremely high returns on Douyin with the help of KOL-driven live selling, our data suggests that it is brand fame and ingredient benefits that are driving this as opposed to the KOL recommendations themselves. To support this, note how strikingly low down Chinese consumers place external KOL recommendations versus aspects that the brands themselves can control via their own messaging and branding. Beauty brands across skincare and cosmetics should take note – our conclusion is not to totally discount the role that KOLs play, but to take a more balanced view when assessing KOLs as a live-selling tool versus pure gifting and brand ambassador opportunities.

Photography by Amy Shamblen

Myth 9: Deep cosmetics knowledge in the market naturally means strong make-up application skills

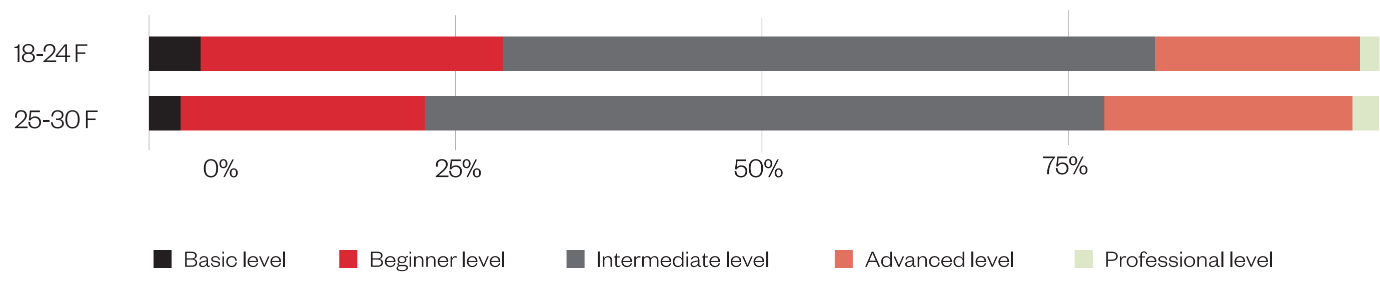
Reality

A sizeable number of Chinese cosmetics buyers lack confidence in actually applying make-up in the best way.

Confidence is an interesting thing, as it can be understood as confidence in theory but not in practice. This is what appears to be occurring in the Chinese cosmetics market, particularly in make-up. While our Attitudes section concludes that knowledge bases about specific ingredients and intended uses among young Chinese beauty consumers (both cosmetics and skincare) are unusually high, our data shows that, in spite of this, many reported skill levels that are only basic and intermediate.

The chart below for make-up application exemplifies this point. While young Chinese buyers have the ability to know what they want and for what specific need, there is still a lack of ability when it comes to the best-looking solutions.

Skill level of make-up



THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

Beauty brands across both skincare and cosmetics should take note of the myth and reality, as the applications in positioning, messaging and tactical channel marketing are far-reaching. Brands looking to win with the Chinese beauty consumer need to consider how best to help deliver application confidence to an already relatively knowledgeable customer base. For market-entering cosmetics brands this could mean in-store tutorials which go into far greater depth than foundational application and dial up ingredient profiles within the tutorials, more like advanced training. This could mean greater levels of application sampling in physical outlets, or it could be the means by which specifically curated KOLs or KOCs are utilised.

The nuance in a distinction between high confidence in theory but lacking in practice should also be noted within claims too; for example, ease of application and the ability to link to an online tutorial or FAQ location if warranted.

Photography by Dragon Images

THE HOT POT TAKEAWAY:

Beauty brands looking to enter the China market will invariably be introduced to distributors, also known as TPs, who will most probably initiate market entry by advising cross-border Tmall platforms. While this is absolutely the best-fitting route to get brands off the ground while chasing scale, ultimately for beauty brands if it is available, the domestic platform is a larger addressable opportunity, where most importantly our data suggests there are a larger number of Chinese beauty consumers.

Myth 10: Tmall cross-border platform offers the greatest commercial opportunity for Western brands

Reality

Cross-border is a good start for brands, but the bigger opportunity lies in the domestic Tmall platform.

As discussed earlier in the report, Tmall's importance as the top shopping channel for cosmetics and skincare is not in doubt, hovering around the 60% mark for younger Chinese buyers across both categories. Tmall's domestic platform, however, differs from its cross-border offering, and its features enable Chinese buyers to purchase foreign brands not available in China. Cross-border e-commerce ranks far lower than the main Tmall domestic platform, however, and cross-border e-commerce is cited as the main shopping channel for only about 10% of buyers. This highlights a key challenge for foreign brands, as often TPs (distributors) position cross-border e-commerce as the silver bullet.

The data supports the reality on the ground – that Tmall's domestic revenues often outstrip its cross-border counterpart. Note below from a study into a selection of skincare brands' Tmall revenues in China – it is evident that the higher volumes come from the platform with the greatest addressable market.

Brand	Store Type	RMB	GBP
Antipodes	Cross-border	¥5,074,000	£ 617,275
First Aid Beauty	Domestic	¥131,215,000	£15,962,895
Dermalogica	Cross-Border	¥67,838,000	£8,252,798
Jurlique	Domestic	¥42,712,000	£5,196,107
	Cross-border	¥6,745,800	£820,657
Caudalie	Domestic	¥103,654,000	£12,609,976
	Cross-border	¥7,483,300	£910,377
Florihana	Domestic	¥13,064,400	£1,589,343
Pixi	Cross-border	¥3,669,000	£446,350

Epilogue

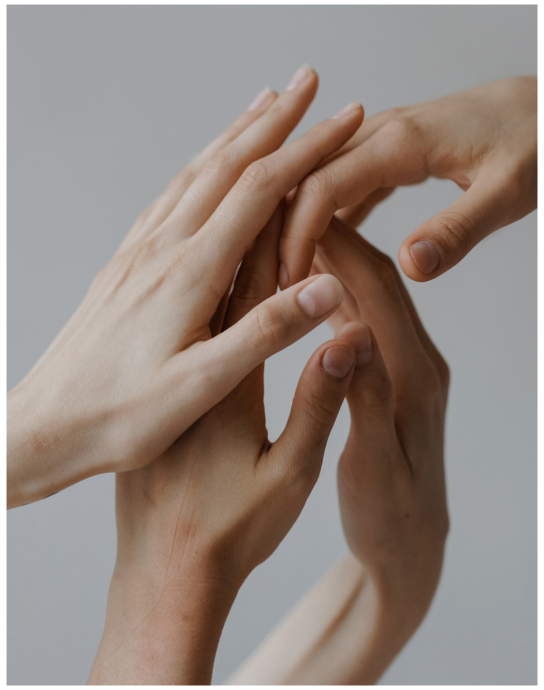
Closing Remarks

By Jonathan Travers-Smith, Founder and CEO, Hot Pot China

In my closing remarks in last year's Chinese Male Luxury Consumer report, which we also co-published with The Future Laboratory, I noted that the only constant with China has been change. That was not strictly true. The other constant, particularly as it applies to the fast-paced and innovative beauty industry, is misconception. This constant is especially true as it relates to the younger Chinese brand buyer.

These misconceptions and stereotypes have created myths about the attitudes, motivations and channels to market and position with Chinese consumers. They lead to a costly misunderstanding of the Chinese beauty buyer, and can be prohibitive for marketing and commercial decision-makers based outside of China. Suppose, for example, that you followed the conventional wisdom that a live-commerce heavy campaign for your anti-ageing skincare range should be targeted at an older, poorly informed audience segment with little attention paid to the specific ingredients, and a greater focus on brand diversity and sustainability credentials. While this would probably play fine with a marketing department decision-maker based in London or New York, the impact could be much more effective with your most important decision-maker – the Chinese customer.

The qualitative and quantitative research that feeds into the myth-busting themes of this report are designed to be provocative. As a truly bicultural agency team of native Chinese and Western Mandarin-speakers based in London and Shanghai, we believe wholeheartedly that a deep understanding of the Chinese consumer, even when it goes against the grain, should be the foundation of all marketing work in China or in targeting overseas Chinese. Above all, though, the insights in this report are designed to be applicable in your marketing and commercial strategies. Now let's get to work together.



Top: Photography by Cottonbro Studio; above: Photography by Ron Lach

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HOT POT CHINA

Hot Pot China delivers China success through culturally impactful marketing. We work with forward-thinking brands across luxury, fashion, beauty, F&B and fitness to build and deliver successful strategies in the world's fastest-moving consumer market.

If this report has helped you to see under the surface of your target male audiences in China, get in touch with Hot Pot China to discuss a deeper dive and help shape your bespoke strategy for long-term success in the market.

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