

WWW. A Closer Look at Chinese Consumer.Com

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According to a survey conducted by the China Internet Network Information Center in 2005(2005), there were 103 million internet users in mainland China. Furthermore, China is expected to have 57 million broadband subscribers by the end of 2007 (Electronic News, 2005). It is argued that Internet consumption patterns in China are closely related to the construction and reconstruction of individual and collective identities. They have a strong cultural and social orientation (Li, 2006). Trust is perceived as an important determinant for online business in China. In China, the favorite on-line games are those associated with Chinese legends of knights (Hong Kong Trade Development Council, 2002). In one of the popular chat rooms in China, QQ.com, members can buy clothes, jewelry, and accessories to decorate their virtual images. Users can use “Q-money” to purchase fashionable products to dress up their virtual selves. An imagined or hyper-real (Baudrillard, 1988) community is in sight. In China ebay, there is a particular section for lover’s fashions, and the designs are very telling of the relationship of the wearers. “Lang Man Yi Shang” is one of the most popular brands in Hangzhou, China. Literally translated, the brand means “Romance All Over.” In the company’s website, different “romantic activities” are conducted for various marketing orientations. Strung through these fragmented pieces is a new picture of consumers in the digital age. This group of consumers makes up one-fifth of the world’s population. This paper attempts to get a closer look at them.