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How to market to Chinese "Yummy Mommies" has been one of the growing concerns of many sellers of fast-moving consumer goods and maternal and child care products. At present, as a demographic, Chinese "yummy mommies" are mostly mothers in their 20's and early 30's who grew up in the Internet age. What are the characteristics of their media use and purchasing habits and how should brand vendors approach this demographic? This article will answer these questions based on research recently conducted on young Chinese mothers by Ipsos in cooperation with Mi magazine.

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# The Way to Reach "Yummy Mommies"

By Guoliang Cai, Research Director of Ipsos ASI in China

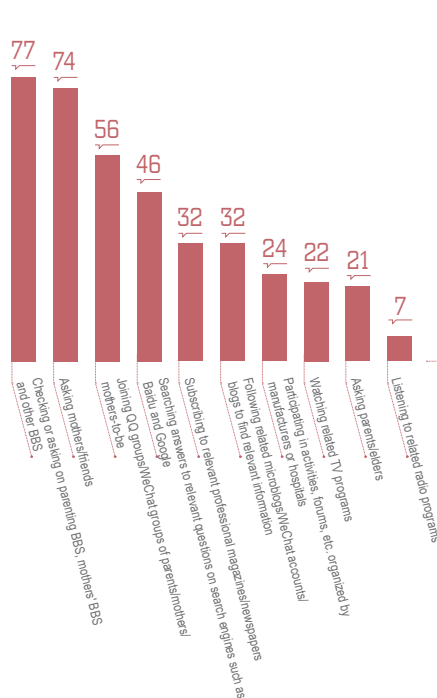
## What information channels and factors Chinese do "yummy mommies" consider when selecting and buying products for their kids?

According to the Ipsos research, BBS for parenting and mothers is the main channel (77%) for young mothers to get information, followed by asking mothers/friends around them (74%). In addition, QQ groups/WeChat groups (56%) and search engines (46%) are also important sources of information.

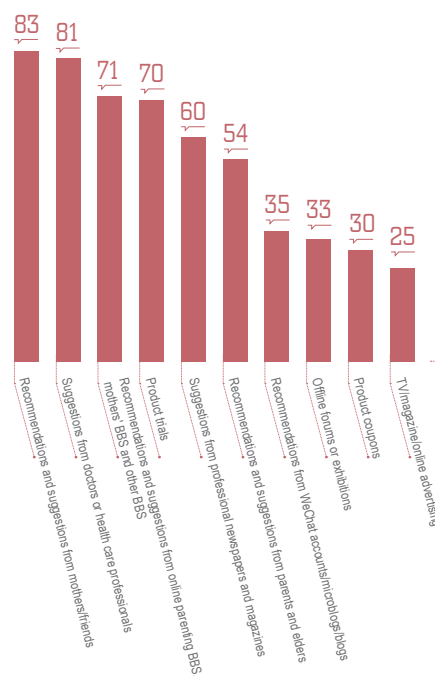
For product selection, recommendations from friends and acquaintances (83%) and recommendations from doctors/health care professionals (81%) are the main factors taken into consideration, followed by online community BBS (71%) and product trials (70%). The research also found that recommendations from others, vertical parenting websites, and maternal and child care apps are three major channels of access to maternal and child care information, and also the sources of information that the "yummy mommies" consider to be the most credible.

On the whole, word of mouth plays a crucial role in "yummy mommies" consumption habits. Both online and offline word of mouth are the most popular channels for "yummy mommies" to get information, and they are the major considerations when selecting and buying products.

**Channels of Access to Information When Buying Products for Kids**



**Factors Considered When Selecting Products for Kids** (very important/somewhat important)



## Both online and offline word of mouth

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### Why is word of mouth so valued ?

Due to maternal responsibility, "yummy mommies" give top priority to product safety and quality of maternal and child care products. As a result, they look for product information that they believe to be most reliable. Mothers tend to have feelings of distrust of any marketing content of a brand, even if it is endorsed by a celebrity or an expert. Suggestions and recommendations from friends/colleagues are therefore one of the most important channels for them to obtain product information and make purchasing decisions.

Meanwhile, in today's social media environment, factors affecting purchase decisions are no longer limited to advertising information. "Yummy mommies" can learn about others' experiences on maternal and child care products online very easily. These experiences are becoming an important factor that affect their purchasing decisions, and are providing a good basis for the fast and extensive word-of-mouth advertising of products. In this regard, online word-of-mouth advertising is becoming increasingly important. However, because of the natural instincts that young women have to share and communicate, combined with their habits of using online communities, vertical maternal and child care BBS/community websites are necessarily another source of product information. Here, they can not only listen to and follow their friends and favorite brands and get the latest information about discount offers, but also share their own ideas and experiences. Meanwhile, the comments of other mothers can be influential in the purchasing process. They are willing to spend time and



effort to study and discuss products and information concerning child care, so as to make informed purchasing decisions.

As word-of-mouth, especially the online variety, becomes a main source of information and factor affecting the consumption decisions of "yummy mommies", the effects of traditional advertising campaigns are weakening, and real product experiences are becoming increasingly important. However, this does not mean that traditional marketing should be

abandoned. Many brands are still increasing their advertising budgets, and the proportion of traditional marketing seems to still be on the rise, but companies are gradually finding that massive exposure is not the main way of opening markets to products and marketing does not necessarily need the support of big budgets. Brands will instead focus more on promoting word-of-mouth advertising for their products.



## Attaching importance to relationship building

Regardless if they are third-party or self-built community platforms, brands shall not regard these as naked promotion channels. Forcefully pushing of brands and product information will not only stifle the spread of word-of-mouth advertising, but also create negative impressions of the brands. For self-built communities, the community manager of a brand has to develop real and meaningful relationships with consumers through personalized interactions with community members. He/she should seriously and actively answer the questions raised by community members, listen to their answers and reply accordingly. The conversations should be natural and relaxed, just like those between friends and the moderator should learn how to convey really exciting things to community members as such. Ultimately, if the relationships with community members are successfully built, the members will continue to participate because they enjoy such interactions and want to buy products of this brand.

For third-party community platforms, brands should focus on building relationships with community members by developing their long-term IDs (opinion leaders), thereby promoting the spread of word-of-mouth advertising by guiding the conversations and promoting interaction. Vertical BBS communities are ecosystems where "yummy mommy" users contact and influence each. When effective interactions happen between the opinion leader of a brand and "yummy mommy" users, a ripple effect can be produced. However, it is worth noting that explicitly pushing brands and product information by opinion leaders will also push "yummy mommy" users with experience in BBS communities away. Incorporating objective product experiences into the brand information is more effective in gaining the trust of community members.



## Delivering value

For "yummy mommy" or other users, brands must show the users that they can deliver something of value to them and can live up to their promises. In delivering such a promise, they must first ask themselves: "If I were a user, what message would make me want to open it, read the text, click on the link, and get involved?"

To define the value of participation of "yummy mommy" users is easy, but they must be inspired. To make a successful value proposition, it is necessary to understand why "yummy mommies" want to have these interactions learn more. Aggressive marketing with eloquent promises may not be required, as this tends to push them away. "Yummy mommies" are, by nature, emotional thinkers, but must be rational in studying and comparing products while. The content should provide insights and suggestions into the life of being a mother (such as product experiences or parenting experience), and the form and tone should be funny and interesting. If a favorable impression can be made, they will become loyal customers.



## Simplifying communications

Consumers often need guidance and like plans with guaranteed consistency. Therefore, a strong and consistent communication plan is essential for piquing the interest of "yummy mommy" users. An appropriate rhythm should be established for a brand, so that "yummy mommies" can expect when there will be something new.

At the same time, communication with them should be as brief as possible. Chinese "yummy mommies" are a busy group as many of them are working mothers. They can take the time to carefully compare and study various products, but will not waste too much time on long-winded introductions. Therefore, a brand needs to attract their attention with concise information. Also, more and more "yummy mommies" participate in community discussions through mobile devices, so there will be more opportunities for a brand to communicate with users on a regular basis with small chunks of information. Even when users are mobile, the response rate will also be improved. From this perspective, short and funny videos are also a very effective communication tool in addition to graphics and text information.

For more detailed information, please contact:  
[ipsos\\_china@ipsos.com](mailto:ipsos_china@ipsos.com)

So, how can brands effectively use word-of-mouth marketing to reach "yummy mommies"? The following aspects are worthy of attention:



Attaching importance to relationship building



Delivering value



Simplifying communications

