# Spring China Social Media Report

Chinese social media entry guideline and case analysis of how Spring Professional penetrates the social media market in China

# Table of Contents

# Report Guideline

The Spring Professional Social Media Report is divided into five sections. The report guideline will help readers understand the content structure and report usage.

## Report Introduction

This section presents the overview, purpose and usage of the report.

## China Social Media Entry Guideline

The second section provides the general guideline of action for businesses that are interested in entering the social media market in China. Businesses can easily understand the process, which consists of seven steps, each provided with a detailed description.

## China Social Media Operation Strategies & Tactics

This section aims to provide businesses with specific strategies to take as they enter the China social media market. The strategies will range from channel selection, social media keywords, content and banners, update frequency to performance measurement.

## China Social Media Operation Measurement & Analysis

This section presents Spring Professional as a case study of how to measure and conduct social media performance analysis in China. Top influential contents are also selected to showcase the right contents for the business. Website conversion rate analysis is also presented to demonstrate its relation to social media.

## China Social Media Report Key Findings

Key findings from the Measurement & Analysis section are emphasized separately in this section for businesses to reference for their own purposes .

# Report Statement

Social media market in China is listed as the most active social media markets in the world. According to *2016 Digital Yearbook* conducted by WeAreSocial, the number of active social media users has been increasing rapidly in China in recent years. This year the social media penetration in China has reached 47% [1] (653 million users) which is 16% [2] higher than the global average social media usage.

However, how social media works in the local market is a completely different story compared to social media channels in Western countries. Global mainstream social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Vimeo are mostly blocked by the government firewall due to government policies and censorship.

Also, it is found that websites embedded with blocked social media channels bear a high risk of being blocked by the firewall, thus causing problems for company websites too. Furthermore, the local Internet speed to load content from websites with such blocked social media channels appears to be relatively slower.

Thus, although with eager eyes laid on the Chinese market, overseas businesses are still unclear of how to promote themselves digitally in China. Yet, a more critical problem for businesses is how to select and penetrate the local digital market after gaining access to it.

The Spring Professional Social Media Report is hence designed to help overseas employers and marketing managers kick off their social media penetration process in China by understanding the local social media market, how to conduct competition analysis, selection of channels and performance measurement.

In this report, the internal analysis of Spring Professional's social media marketing strategies & tactics as well as the performance measurement in our entry period in China are taken as the case study. This report will be regarded as a social media entry guideline for overseas businesses who are looking to enter the China social media market.

### Reference

[1] Data from 2016 Digital Yearbook, a regional and global social media overview report conducted by WeAreSocial
[2] Data from 2016 Digital Yearbook

# Report Case Study

Spring Professional social media penetration and performance in the China market is taken as the major case study in this report. As a leading mid to senior level recruitment business across Asia, Spring officially entered the China market in April 2014.

In late 2015 Spring Professional had its marketing function set up in mainland China. With the rapid development of the business, the regional marketing team decided that Spring's branding should be presented to the China market in a localized manner.

Taking the existing social media operation in the region as reference, localized social media marketing strategies and tactics were planned and executed. WeChat and Sina Weibo, leading Chinese social media channels, were both successfully integrated into the regional social media system. Social media contents and measurement performance from November 2015 to February 2016 were then taken to conduct a social media performance analysis.

The case study of Spring's social media market entry in China is presented for two purposes, a) to help businesses understand how social media entry strategies and tactics are made,  and b) to provide a guideline for businesses to measure their social media performance in China.

# China Social Media Entry Guideline

## Social Media Channels
### Timeline & Introduction

- Social media marketing in the West first started with Facebook. Ever since Facebook became publicly accessible, Facebook has had more than 100,000 company pages registered to promote their businesses in terms of sales, branding and CRM.
- QQ, developed and launched by Tencent in 1999, is regarded as the start of social media marketing in China. An increasing number of channels were introduced to the market since 2005.
- Social media user group varies depending on channel functions as well as age and the identity of users.

**QQ (1999 Feb)**
The most widely used instant messaging software with 829 million active users (data of 2015)

**Baidu Tieba (2003 Dec)**
The largest online communication community bounded with the major internet search engine developed by Baidu

**Youku (2003 Mar)**
China's top online video and streaming platform with 500 million + monthly active users (data of 2015)

**LinkedIn (2003 May)**
Professional network that connects employers, recruiters and professionals for business or career. Since the entry in China in 2014, LinkedIn has developed 17 million elite users in China. (data of 2015)

**Douban (2005 Mar)**
Popular social networking service website where users create and share information about popular films, books, music and events

**Renren (2005 Dec)**
Social networking service targeted at students at high school & colleges with 31 million active monthly users (data of 2011)

**Kaixin 001 (2008 Apr)**
Social networking platform targeting at the white-collar group with on-line social games

**Sina Weibo (2009 Aug)**
The most popular micro-blogging website (combines features of Twitter & Facebook) with 100 million active daily users (data of 2015)

**Tencent Weibo (2010 Apr)**
Tencent's micro-blogging website is an open network where users can post tweets within 140 characters and interact with others

**WeChat (2011 Jan)**
The dominant mobile-end text & voice messaging communication service with 700 million active users (data of 2016)

**Zhihu (2011 Jan)**
Online community that offers Q&A service where questions are created, answered, edited and organized by users. The platform is currently active with 17 million users

## Social Media Channels
### Identification & Selection

- Identify social media channels including social network, messenger, blog and BBS that are available in China.
- Conduct research to identify effective channels where the audience are potential clients/customers in your business field.



## Social Media Operation
### Effective Planning

| | |
|---|---|
| **Target Audience** | Define the type of audience who are crucial for your business |
| **Keywords** | Be aware of keywords that your target audience might search for via social media channels |
| **Contents** | Identify what type of content is interesting and effective to attract potential audiences |
| **Banners** | Design banners in a consistent style for all types of contents on all social media channels |
| **Update Frequency** | Plan and decide the frequency of content update on different social media channels |
| **Measurement** | Create a Key Performance Index for different social media channels and decide how frequently your business should measure the performance |
| **Analysis** | Conduct social media performance analysis every quarter to update and amend the social media operation |

## Competitor Activities
### Identification & Analysis

- Conduct research to identify competitors in the local market who are active on different social media channels

- Record the content and activities of competitors on different social media channels

- Record key performance index of competitors on different social media channels

- Conduct social media market position analysis based on different dimensions to identify the current market position of your business



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## Social Media Operation
### Amendment & Execution

- Based on the research of competitor activities, amend and update the social media operation plan for your business.

- Take note of content or activities that do not appear in your original plan. Re-assess the necessity of amending any contents or activities

- Identify a team of local marketing specialists to create social media content and execute the social media operation plan accordingly

## Social Media Measurement
### Key Performance Index (KPI)

- Social media KPI measurement consists of five major criteria
- Note that key criteria to measure will vary depends on different channels/businesses

| Followers | Exposure | Reposts | Comments | Likes |
|-----------|----------|---------|----------|-------|
| xx | xx | xx | xx | xx |

- Performance of each social media channel should be measured on a weekly basis
- Performance analysis should be conducted on monthly/quarterly basis

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Followers | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| Exposure | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| Reposts | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| Comments | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| Likes | xx | xx | xx | xx |

- To conduct performance analysis, the following supporting data should be tracked and sorted

  - Follower increase & decrease

  - Content reading/exposure

  - Content interaction (repost, like, favourite, clicking, comment etc.)

  - Top five influential contents of each month

  - Monthly website Page View (PV), External Link (EL) and Social Media External Link (SMEL)

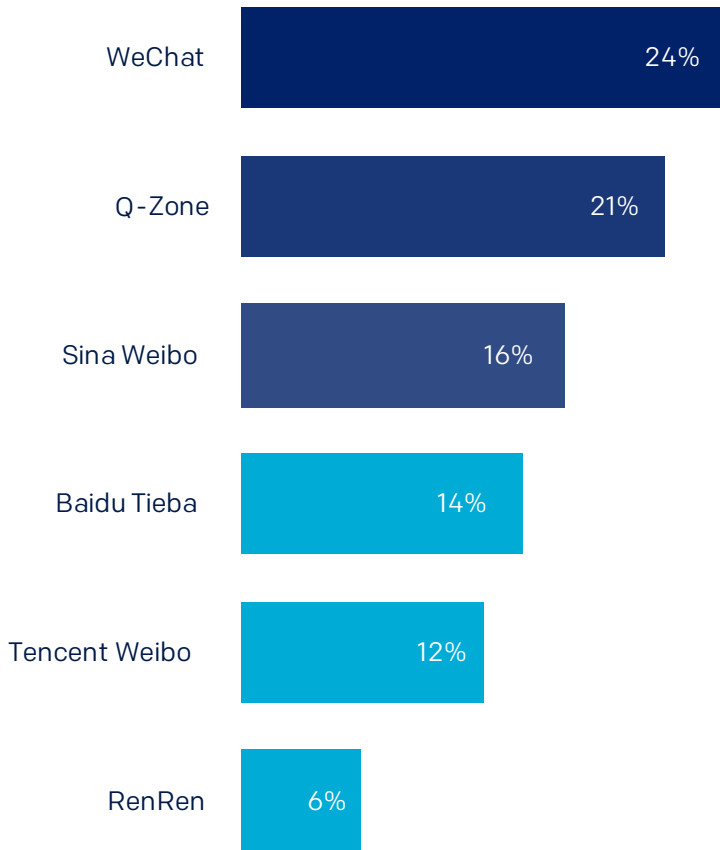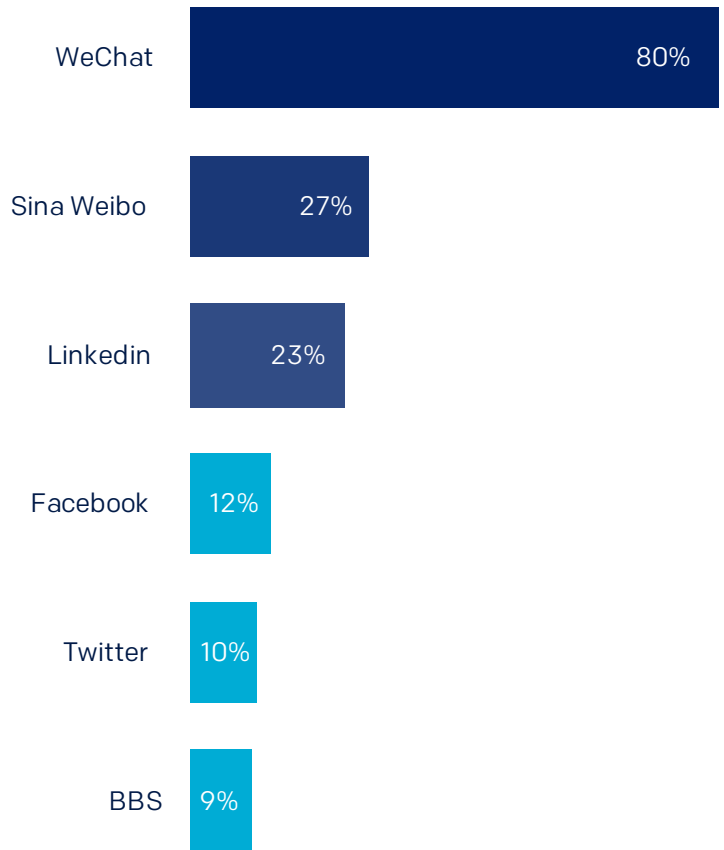  - Available data/information of competitors' social media performance and activities

## Social Media Channels

Our social media channel research was conducted not only from a marketing perspective, but also from the specific perspective of recruitment and hiring. The top three social media channels are highlighted for Spring to consider the possibility of integrating them into the regional social media operations.

Spring Professional China is currently active on WeChat, Sina Weibo (Weibo), LinkedIn, Youku and three influential local HR BBS.

### 2016 Digital Yearbook by WeAreSocial

| Channel | % |
|---|---|
| WeChat | 24% |
| Q-Zone | 21% |
| Sina Weibo | 16% |
| Baidu Tieba | 14% |
| Tencent Weibo | 12% |
| RenRen | 6% |

### Social Ads Whitebook by LinkedIn China

| Channel | % |
|---|---|
| WeChat | 80% |
| Sina Weibo | 27% |
| Linkedin | 23% |
| Facebook | 12% |
| Twitter | 10% |
| BBS | 9% |

## Contents & Banners

### Update Frequency

|  | WeChat | Weibo |
|---|---|---|
| **Weekdays** | Mon, Wed & Fri | Every weekday |
| **Time** | After 6:00pm | 10:00am, 12:30 pm & 5:30pm |
| **Posts/day** | 1 - 2 | 2 - 3 |

### Content Types

- Jobs
- Career Tips
- Market News
- Spring News
- Salary Survey

| Type | % |
|---|---|
| Jobs | 40% |
| Career Tips | 25% |
| Market News | 20% |
| Spring News | 10% |
| Salary Survey | 5% |
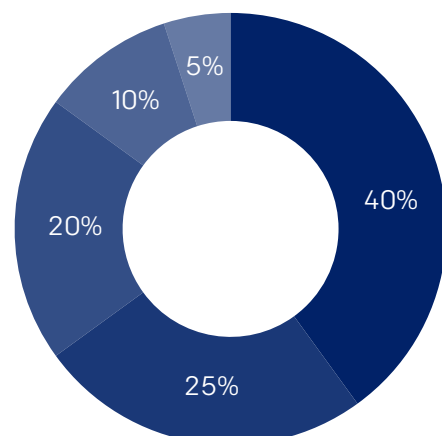
# Social Media Keywords

## Tags & Keywords for Search Engine

- Define social media keywords that will increase visibility on major search engines
- Social media keywords are selected based on businesses. ie, Spring Professional is a leading mid to senior level recruitment consultancy in sectors of Engineering, Corporate Functions, Property & Construction, IT, and Supply Chain & Logistics.
- Other keywords can be selected depending on the needs of different businesses
- Keywords for social media channels in China should be in Chinese

### Engineering

Automotive
Auto Parts
Auto OEM
Manufacturing
New Energy
Oil & Gas
Steel & Iron
Chemicals
Infrastructure
Aerospace
Electronics
Semiconductors
Medicine
Medical Device
Pharmaceutical
Life Science
Healthcare

### Corporate Functions

Human Resource
Organisation Development
Training
Compensation & Benefit
Payroll
Finance
Accounting
Auditing
Legal
Sales
Business Development
Marketing
Marcom
Customer Service

### Property & Construction

Business Property
Interior Design
Construction
Shopping Mall
Renting
International Hotel
Amusement Park
Architecture
Facility Management
Project Management
Investment Attraction

### IT

Internet
Internet +
Gaming
Mobile
Information Tech
E-commerce
O2O
Technology
IT Sales
IT Service
IT Operations
IT Finance
Applications
System Development

### Supply Chain

Supply Chain
Purchasing
Procurement
Sourcing
Licensing
Merchandising
Logistics
Transportation
Freight
Forwarding
Trade & Compliance
Demand Planning
& Forecasting
Supplier Quality
Warehousing
Retail & Distribution
Costing

### Others

Recruitment
Executive Search
Consulting
Headhunting
Job Seeking
Job Changing
Job Hopping
Career Development
Human Resource
Senior Management
Salary Survey
Career Tips
Market News
Spring News
Hot Jobs
Spring China

# Contents & Banners

## Screenshots of WeChat & Weibo



WeChat on PC-end



Sina Weibo on PC-end

# Contents & Banners

## Banners on Social Media

## Performance Measurement

### Key Performance Index of Weibo

**Followers**
The number of users who follow your weibo account

**Exposure**
The number of users who read your weibo posts & images

**Reposts**
Users who read and repost your weibo contents to their private pages

**Comments**
Users who write down comments under your weibo posts

**Likes**
Users who like your weibo posts and click like button

**Conversion**
Percentage of users who click shortlinks that lead them to other websites

## Performance Measurement

### Key Performance Index of Weibo

**Followers**
The number of users who follow the WeChat account

**Exposure**
The number of users who read the WeChat contents

**Reposts**
Users who read and share your WeChat contents to private Moment

**Comments**
Users who write comments under your WeChat content

**Likes**
Users who like your WeChat content and save it as favorite

**Conversion**
Percentage of users who click "read more" that lead them to other websites

## Performance Measurement

### KPI Time Measurement

- A weekly/bi-weekly/monthly KPI excel form to track changes of all indexes

- Monthly/quarterly KPI performance summary and analysis

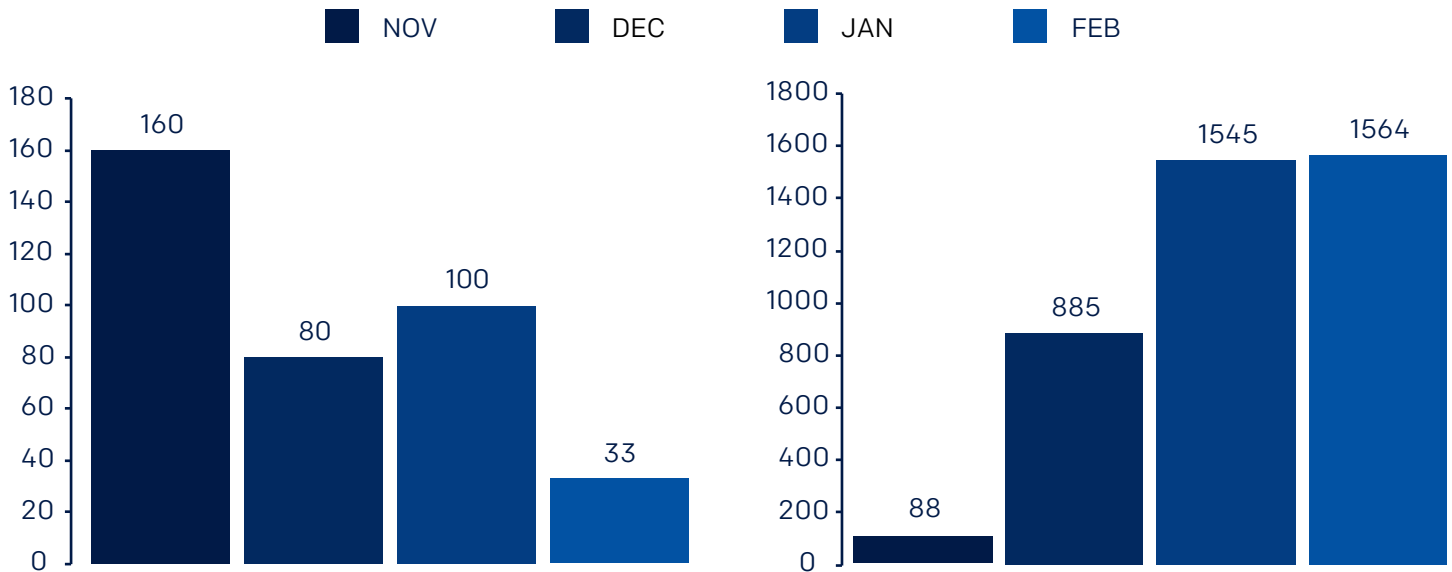- Performance of a specific post should be tracked at least 3 days after the post is published

# Social Media Operation Measurement & Analysis

## User Analysis

Spring Professional China

### WeChat

### Weibo

- NOV
- DEC
- JAN
- FEB

**WeChat chart values:**
- NOV: 160
- DEC: 80
- JAN: 100
- FEB: 33

**Weibo chart values:**
- NOV: 88
- DEC: 885
- JAN: 1545
- FEB: 1564

## Influential Content Analysis

Spring Professional China
Top Five Influential Weibo Contents

| Date | Content Type | Exposure | Repost | Link |
|------|-------------|----------|--------|------|
| 2015/12/8 | Career Tips | 24000 | 8 | |
| 2015/11/26 | Career Tips | 16000 | 8 | |
| 2015/11/23 | Job Ads (ENG) | 9081 | 2 | |
| 2016/2/16 | Job Ads (CF) | 6746 | 2 | |
| 2015/12/24 | Job Ads (CF) | 4756 | 1 | |

## Influential Content Analysis

### Spring Professional China
### Top Five Influential WeChat Contents

| Date | Content Type | Exposure | Repost | Link |
|------|--------------|----------|--------|------|
| 2016/1/25 | Salary Survey | 547 | 26 | |
| 2015/12/8 | Job Ads (CF) | 498 | 26 | |
| 2016/1/13 | Job Ads (ENG) | 442 | 19 | |
| 2015/11/9 | Job Ads (CF) | 405 | 48 | |
| 2016/1/20 | Job Ads (CF) | 371 | 30 | |

## Website Conversion Analysis

### Spring Professional China
### Page View Source Analysis

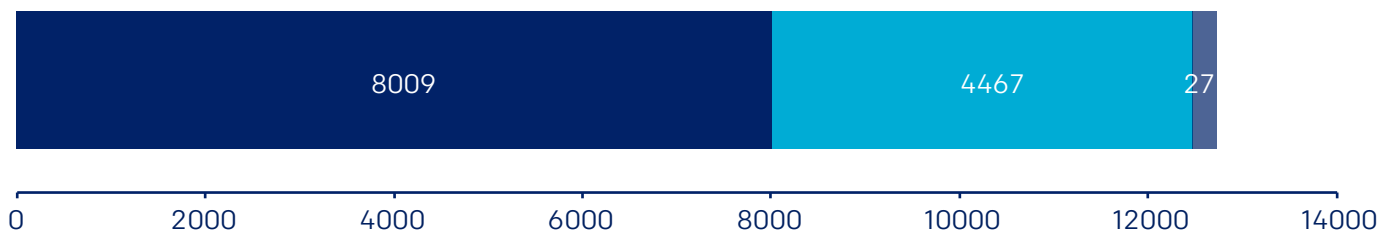- Social media channels found in the external link analysis
    - LinkedIn
    - WeChat
    - Sina Weibo
    - Facebook
    - Instagram
- Percentage of social media channels out of the total page view = Website conversion rate
- Calculate the website conversion rate of accessible social media channels in China
    - LinkedIn: 24.87%
    - WeChat: 1.75%
    - Sina Weibo: 0.70%

Legend: ■ Direct Access  ■ External Link  ■ Search Engine

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8009 | 4467 | 27 |

0    2000    4000    6000    8000    10000    12000    14000

**SWOT Analysis**
Social Media Operation

## Strength

- Consistent in content and banner creation
- Consistent interaction with third party hiring KOLs
- Instant response to messages and comments
- Good understanding of consultants' needs
- Well crafted job ad format and information

## Weakness

- Lack of interesting and current content and topics
- Lack of original content created from self-conducted surveys
- No online social media campaigns to boost content exposure
- Weak linkage to Spring's China website

## Opportunity

- Active on the most important social media platform in China - WeChat
- Most active on Weibo among all competitors
- High quality of job ads and banners
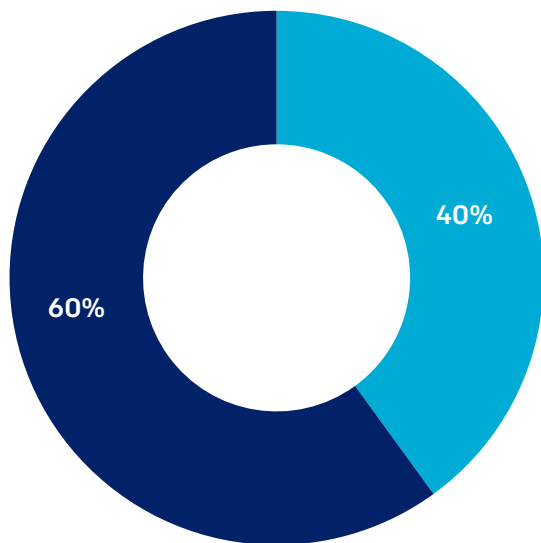- Planned & organized a talent survey and social media campaign

## Threat

- Slow speed directing to the mobile-end of Spring's China website
- Competitors run campaigns and event from online to offline
- Online publication and promotion on social media
- Consistent update of salary and talent analysis surveys
- Technical development on WeChat for candidates to apply for jobs

# China Social Media Report Key Findings

**Influential Content**
Sina Weibo

40%

60%

**Influential Content**
WeChat

20%

80%

**Job Ads** account for 60% of the most influential contents on Sina Weibo
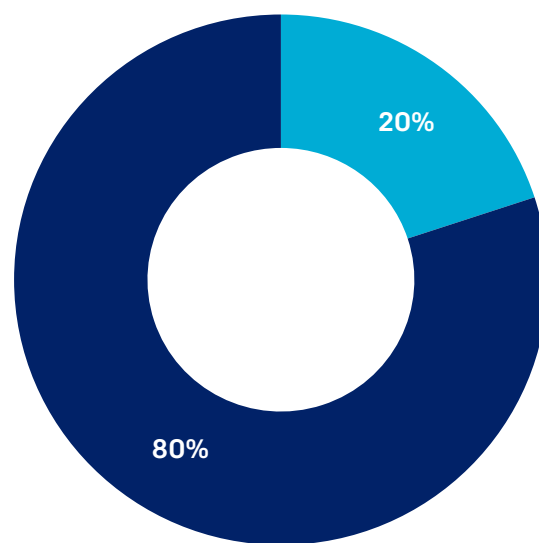
- A well-sorted job ad is proved to be the most valuable information for recruitment business
- An average of six pieces of job ads are collected on a weekly basis, of which 40% are contributed by the corporate functions team of Spring Professional
- Interaction with third party hiring KOLs, ie. "The Big Four" and "Finance Jobs" proved to be highly effective in increasing job ad exposure on Sina Weibo.

**Career Tips** account for 40% of the most influential content on Sina Weibo

- Related and concise keywords and tags (#xx#) proved to be crucial for post exposure
- Repost from business-related KOLs is another important factor to increase content exposure

**Job Ads** account for 80% of the most influential contents on WeChat

- Job ads with brief description, salary information, banners and 3 to 5 pieces of key requirements have more exposure than job ads in plain texts
- An average of six pieces of job ads are collected on weekly basis, of which 60% are contributed by the corporate functions team of Spring Professional
- Two job ad updates per week is the maximum frequency followers can take. More updates leads to decreasing exposure
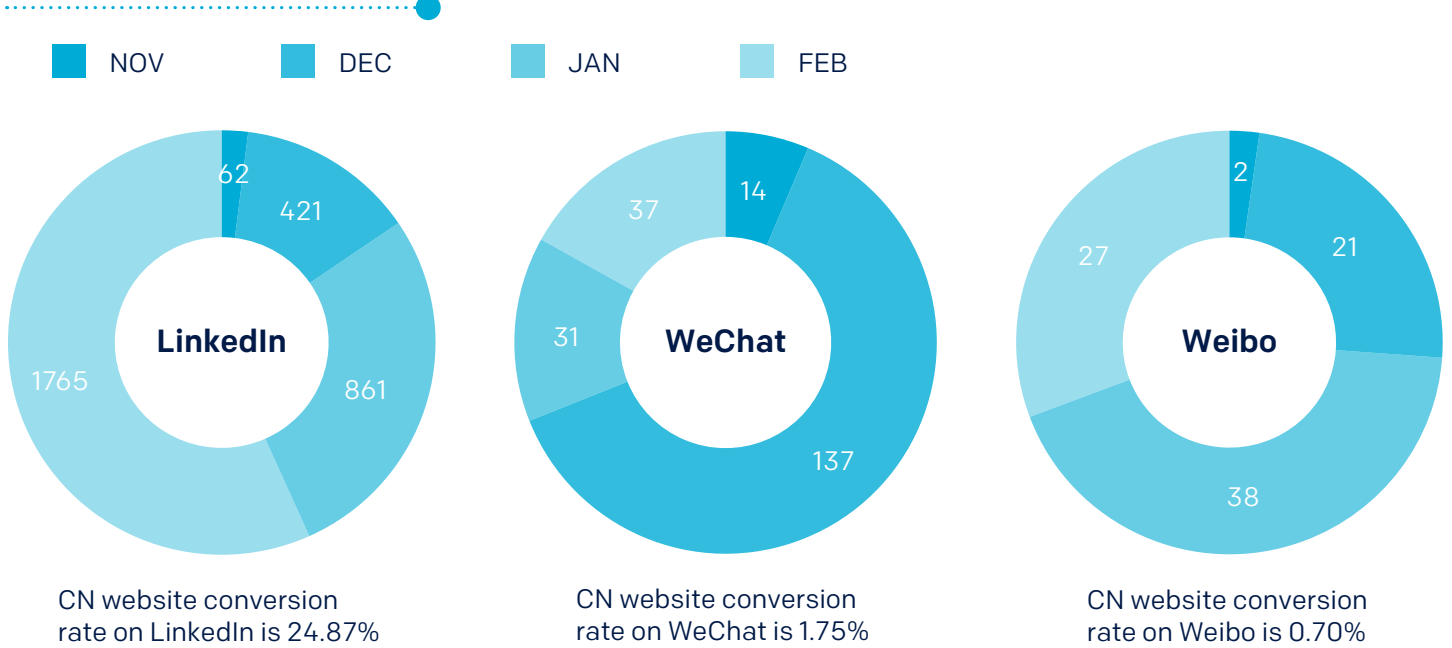- Employees are highly active in reposting and sharing the content on WeChat Moment and groups

**Career Tips** account for 20% of the most influential content on WeChat

- Translated contents from Spring Seeker (Spring Professional's blog) does not apply to local audience on WeChat
- Contents related to interview, career development and salary survey gained more exposure from audience

## Website Conversion
### Linkedin, WeChat & Weibo

NOV    DEC    JAN    FEB

**LinkedIn**
62
421
1765
861

CN website conversion rate on LinkedIn is 24.87%

**WeChat**
14
37
31
137

CN website conversion rate on WeChat is 1.75%

**Weibo**
2
21
27
38

CN website conversion rate on Weibo is 0.70%

Website Conversion Rate of each social media channel is calculated based on the external link analysis of Spring's China website cn.springasia.com. By analyzing the external clicking, marketing teams can better identify and understand which channels are effective, and which channels need more traffic. Data might vary due to different business natures.

### LinkedIn

LinkedIn, the largest online social network, remains the most active channel for mid to senior level candidates who are looking for job opportunities in China. Contents with links to Spring Professional's China website brought in high number of visits.

### WeChat

It is also found that for recruitment businesses, WeChat is a useful platform for Spring to engage with local candidates and clients. From the perspective of CRM, WeChat can be further developed by third party technical service suppliers to design in-app job applications that connects to Spring's talent system or website.

### Sina Weibo

Sina Weibo, unsurprisingly, holds the lowest website conversion rate. As ''twitter in the east'', Weibo has attracted millions of users who share short posts within 140 Chinese characters. According to the latest report from Sina, 63% of Weibo users are below the age of 25, whereas the target audience for Spring is above 30.

# Spring Professional China

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## WeChat

Official Account
springprofessional

## Weibo

Official Page
跃科SpringProfessional

To find out more about Spring Professional in China, or to ask questions in terms of
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