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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hong Kong and China's Marketers Advance Social Media Strategies in 2014 In Spite of Budget and Talent Deficits

Hong Kong — Feb 20, 2014 — Digital marketing is one of the most phenomenally impactful business trends of the 21st century. In 2013, 4.3 million active Facebook users in Hong Kong logged in every month, while China recorded more than 46 million daily active Sina Weibo users. Where the audience gathers, marketers will follow. Evolving beyond traditional email marketing and online advertisement placements, marketers in Hong Kong and China are increasingly shifting their focus to social media marketing.

These and more in-depth findings were released in the second annual Adobe [APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard](#). A six-month in-field programme comprising quantitative and qualitative surveys, the study benchmarked the levels of adoption, traction and success of digital marketing in Australia, Singapore, Korea, China, Hong Kong and India. 276 senior marketers from a range of industries took part.

Priorities Shift to Content Strategy, Social Optimisation

The Adobe APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard identified some dramatic shifts in marketers' priorities in 2013. Both HK and China marketers said they were strengthening their digital marketing content strategy (59% from Hong Kong and 77% from China), a big shift from 2012 (35% from HK and 19% from China). In both countries, they planned to prioritise social media optimisation (35% from Hong Kong and 47% from China) and had allocated 47% (Hong Kong) and 67% (China) of their digital marketing fund on social media community growth and engagement. However, while China's marketers are focusing more on mobile relationship marketing (60%), HK marketers preferred a more diversified portfolio and put more effort on increasing the performance search and online display advertising (47%), website (44%) and customer engagement (41%).

Investment Level Limited HK Digital Marketing Development

Compared with China (27%), only 6% of HK marketers stated that their organization's adoption of digital marketing is highly evolved and with senior management support. At the same time, 50% of HK marketers admitted that, due to limited resources, they applied measurement and analysis randomly. The difference is mainly due to the investment level in digital marketing between HK and China marketers. Investment levels did not move much between 2012 and 2013. APAC digital spend is still below global average, which is between 25% - 35% of total marketing spend, notes Liz Miller, Vice President of Marketing Programs and Operations for CMO Council. "Only 14% of marketers in Asia Pacific are spending on par with this global baseline," she said. "Although we saw budget increases at the top end in Australia, with nearly 11% of marketers now spending more than 70% of their total budget on digital, budgets are still quite low across APAC. How HK marketers managed their digital budget reflected their lower confidence in digital abilities. Only 12% of HK marketers allocated 25% or more of their marketing budget on digital marketing, which is far lower than China (23%) and APAC average (29%)."

Miller said that one of the greatest imperatives for marketers in 2014 will be to advance the business case for higher investment. "Next year 23% of APAC marketers expect to increase their budgets to align with the global average. But similar intentions were voiced in 2012 and the region's spend is still behind. Marketers need to be able to build a strong

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positive business case for the investment, demonstrating return on investment. Without the right analytic technologies in place, it's hard to do this," she said.

Challenges and Opportunities

Both Hong Kong and China marketers continue to face challenges in building teams with the right analytic skill-set, with 59% and 37% of HK and China marketers saying they lack budget to hire skilled senior staff, 50% and 57% saying their current employees don't have the right skills and expertise, and 26% and 33% saying it's difficult retaining staff who do have the right skills.

"Looking to agencies to fill the skills gap is not proving a successful strategy," said Mr Hisamichi Kinomoto, Vice President of Marketing, Adobe Japan and Asia Pacific. "At Adobe, we see companies using multiple agencies to manage different elements of the digital strategy: web campaigns, social media management, online advertising. This adds to the complexity and makes it harder to obtain an integrated view of results," he said.

Kinomoto said that the 2012 and 2013 dashboard results both showed remarkably low levels of satisfaction with digital agencies. "Only 12% of APAC marketers rate their agencies as excellent. The majority (69%) think they deliver mixed results, and 19% say results are poor. In our view, there is a clear opportunity for savvy APAC agencies to get ahead of the curve and invest in technologies and skills to provide deeper, richer performance metrics to clients who are unable to do it themselves."

Helpful Links and References

- [Adobe APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard Report 2013](#)
- [Adobe Digital Dialogue blog for APAC Marketers](#)
- Join the [Adobe Digital Dialogue LinkedIn group](#) for news and views from APAC Marketers
- Join the conversation around the APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard via [#APDash](#)
- For all the news on Adobe Digital Marketing, follow [@Adobemktgcloud](#)
- [Adobe Digital Marketing Blog](#)

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APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard Methodology

The 2013 Adobe APAC Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard was compiled through qualitative interviews conducted via phone with 23 marketers throughout the region. An online quantitative survey was distributed to the APAC members of the CMO Council. A total of 276 marketers from Australia, Korea, China, India, Hong Kong, Singapore and other countries responded and completed the online survey. All interviews and summaries included in the report have been reviewed and approved by each interviewee.

About the CMO Council

The Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council is dedicated to high-level knowledge exchange, thought leadership and personal relationship building among senior corporate marketing leaders and brand decision-makers across a wide range of global industries. The CMO Council's 7,000-plus members control more than US\$350 billion in aggregated annual marketing expenditures and run complex, distributed marketing and sales operations worldwide. In total, the CMO Council and its strategic interest communities include more than 20,000 global executives in more than 110 countries, covering multiple industries, segments and markets. Regional chapters and advisory boards are active in the Americas, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Middle East, India and Africa. The council's strategic interest groups include the Coalition to Leverage and Optimize Sales Effectiveness (CLOSE), LoyaltyLeaders.org, Marketing Supply Chain Institute, Customer Experience Board, Market Sense-Ability Center, Digital Marketing Performance Institute, GeoBranding Center and the Forum to Advance the Mobile Experience (FAME). More information about the CMO Council is available at www.cmocouncil.org.

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