

CHOOSE CHINA

2015



Who Are We?

We are a group of four: Sara, Vincy, Elim and Matt

We created this newsletter to reflect what we learned from both our professional office visits and cultural experience. In our newsletter, we'll give a city-by-city breakdown of what we experienced, followed by a summary of all that we learned in our various agency visits. Enjoy!



Why China?

We all have majors in public relations, marketing, and advertising. In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, distance is no longer a factor in what markets matter. However, so much of our worldview and curriculum is limited to the West. We chose China because we know there was so much to discover here. Academically, culturally, professionally and so much more.

We also love to travel and knew that this could potentially be our only visit to China. China isn't exactly the most common vacation spot. So to be given an academic reason to see one of the most amazing countries on Earth that has such a rich cultural history was the chance of a lifetime. We wanted to climb the Great Wall, see the Forbidden City, and walk through Tiananmen Square.

Finally, we chose China because the University of Georgia has some of the greatest study abroad programs in the world. UGA has amazing connections abroad and can provide such a well-rounded learning and living experience. The time we have been able to spend in some of the most beautiful hotels in the world, seeing sites we have only ever seen in history books, visiting agencies that are leaders in their field, all while learning with like-minded individuals is more than enough proof that the University of Georgia does study abroad right. We chose China and none of us will ever regret it.



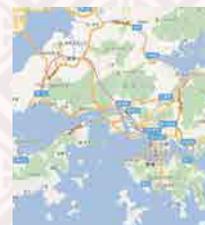
City Overview:

- Financial center
- “Paris in the East”
- 17 districts
- 3600 ppl (per sq.km)



City Overview:

- Capital city
- 16 districts, 6 rings
- 1311 ppl per (sq.km)



City Overview:

- Financial center
- 3 major islands
- 32 thousand ppl per (sq.km)

ShangHai 上海

AGENCIES' VISITS

APCO

At APCO Worldwide Shanghai, we met with Linda Du who is the Managing Director for the firm. This was our first taste of agency life in China. A big part of what Ms. Du addressed was how about the government and how a PR agency needed to work with it. Being students who all knew democracy very well; we had a lot of questions about the myths of communism, especially with the media.



We learned about the trendsetting government newspapers that set the tone of the government: like People's Daily, Guangming Daily, and Economic Daily. We also learned about the importance of a close relationship with the government. As our first stop, we also got some insights about the consumer culture in China. We learned that the Chinese favorite way to consume media is through their mobile phone. The importance of this fact couldn't be any more crucial because this changes the way that APCO needs to look at digital in this fast paced environment.



Conde Nast

We met with Judy Zhu, the editor of AD (安居) Magazine in China. It was our first time to visit a magazine company, and it was also the only magazines company that we would visit during our trip. As magazines are perceived as a more of a traditional form of media, we were very curious about how magazine industry changes during time, especially under the influence of digital media. Judy has worked in the company for more than 10 years and has a lot of experience especially in the editing and

writing area. We were very interested in how the magazine industry changed over time, especially under the influence of digital media.

Judy then talked to us about the shift of the leader role from publisher to reader under the influence of rising digitals communication and the developing industry. She also explained to us that, as an editor with digital communication in mind, she has a focus on high

quality content and the interaction of text and images.

After the office visit, we were invited to go to the photo studio where most of the celebrities' photos on the magazines were taken. The manager Monkey took us for a tour in the studio. The studio had large space for photos shooting and equipments. We felt very lucky to have an experience visiting the studio and took a "family photo" there.

BBDO

The work, the work, the work! BBDO's company mantra was exemplified perfectly by Jason and YiJing when we visited their Shanghai office. We had heard a lot about how international firms use agencies as a way to learn how to navigate the intricacies of Chinese government, but at BBDO we learned the social and historical context that leads to the habits and culture of Chinese people now. They focused on the importance of "finding the Chinese creative voice." It isn't enough to translate an American ad into Chinese and slap it on a billboard; the work must be distinctly Chinese. It was a fresh take that we all really enjoyed.

Perhaps the most exciting portion of BBDO's presentation was when they walked us through their Gillette "wet shaving" campaign. The most important part of their campaign seemed to be finding the "hook," the one thing that will connect and resonate most strongly with the target audience. The job is then to build one's work around that. Jason told us to focus on the three un's: unbranded, unplanned, and unconventional. We all walked out of the room with not only a distinct understanding of how to run an ad campaign but also how to run an ad campaign in China and effectively communicate with a Chinese audience.



LKK

We met with Mats Yan, the director of the Service Design Department, who talked to us about their focus on service design. Through service design, they aim to improve the interactive experience between the service provider and customers by planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communication and material components of a service. The agency integrates talents from different fields such as research and analytics, graphic design, industrial design, technology development.



Mats also shared a case they are currently working on: redesigning the service for the Traditional Handicrafts Museum in China. After knowing about

the problems that the museum had, we were separated into two teams. We did brainstorming together on how to solve some of the problems and made a presentation at the end.

Golin

We met Sarah Chin, who is the Vice President and General Manager of Golin Shanghai. She introduced us to the media marketplace in China, and how the Chinese media works. The government media, made up of a large staff that puts out daily coverage, reports mostly on policies and party news. But the Chinese media is less hard hitting and controversial, and report on a wide array of topics.

We also learned about the classification of Chinese cities. Each city is given a certain 'tier' based on many different aspects, like population, income, and GDP. Both of the cities in Mainland China we visited, Shanghai and Beijing, are considered Tier One cities. But even within that classification, each city has its own culture and media market. Shanghai is consumer heavy with an emphasis on finance and fashion, while Beijing is focused on policy and macro angles.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Adjusting to the Food Culture

Our first meal was a learning process for all members of our group except Vincy of course. The way of eating here is much different than in America. While we are all used to having our own servings, here meals are shared. All of the dishes are ordered and put onto a lazy susan that rotates and we all had to use chopsticks (or forks depending on how capable we were) to pick what we wanted. It creates a really fun, communal eating process. We also had a great moment at our first group meal when we were all discussing the lazy susan and Vincy confusedly asked “Who is Susan and why is she lazy?”

There were other parts of Chinese food culture we had to adjust to. Chopsticks were not anyone’s forte but some were definitely better than others. We also had to adjust to the fact that water with ice is not common in China. We had to learn to ask for it in Chinese.

ice water- 冰水 (bīng shuǐ)
fork- 叉子 (chā zi)

Hot water, without any tea in it, was served and none of us ever grew accustomed to that. We also learned that because we are American, everyone assumes we want to drink Coca-Cola and only Coca-Cola.

Most of us probably won’t be able to drink Coke for a few months after this trip. Despite the initial confusions however, we all did our best to sample new dishes (some even trying chicken feet) and attempt to use chopsticks. It helped that all of the food was delicious!



People Taking pictures of us

What surprised us most about mainland China had to be our new-found celebrity status. Most of us had heard from our friends who studied abroad that in mainland China, foreigners were still a shock to locals and Chinese tourists. While we heeded their advice, none of us were fully prepared for the way the people we encountered gawked at us, pointing and staring as if we were famous. People would thrust their kids in front of us asking us to take a photo.



Madeline and Elim were probably the most popular with the people of China due to their hair. Blonde hair and braids are very uncommon in China so they were the students who were most often asked for photos. Although “asked” might not be the best word to use as cameras were often thrust into our faces without question.

While initially we all loved the attention, it wore on us pretty quickly. As we moved to Beijing where there were even more Chinese tourists who weren’t used to seeing foreigners, they became more and more aggressive. When we first arrived in China, we understood that there were cultural and linguistic barriers in understanding but it was still off-putting when people would stare, point, whisper to their friends about us, and occasionally laugh. We went from feeling like celebrities on a red carpet to animals in a zoo. Elim bore the brunt of it but the group was great at warding off unwelcome “fans” and occasionally creating human shields around her to stop people from taking photos or touching her hair. As we left mainland China and entered Hong Kong, we were lucky to find that we were amongst a more diverse group of people and our 15 minutes of fame were over.

Zhou Zhuang 周庄

On one of our days in Shanghai, we visited a town about an hour and a half away called Zhou Zhuang (周庄). It's referred to as a "water town" due to its close proximity to the water. Houses are built right next to the canal that runs through the city, and many people use boats as their main source of transportation.

Although a bit more on the tourist side, Zhou Zhang certainly lives up to its nickname "The Venice of China". We were able to take a boat tour through it's canal. The quiet boat ride was a stark comparison to the chaos of tourists just on the other side of the houses. The town also had a nice mix of shops selling traditional Chinese items, like jade bracelets and scarves, and name brand chains like Starbucks. Whether you wanted a more traditional or modern experience, you can find both at the water town of Zhou Zhuang.



Beijing 北京

AGENCIES' VISITS

Burston-Marsteller

Burston-Marsteller Beijing was our only visit in the nation's capital and it was also the first visit where we were met with three Americans! It was definitely a change of pace but as we learned more about them and their backgrounds, it made a lot of sense that they ended up in China. It seems that studying abroad can easily lead to making the decision to work here long-term, something we all kept in the back of our minds throughout this trip.

A huge part of Burston-Marsteller's presentation hinged on WeChat, Weibo, and other Chinese created forms of communication. We incorrectly assumed that because there was no access to Facebook, Twitter, Google, etc. in mainland China that they just didn't communicate the way we do. What we learned from BM Beijing was that there are so many innovative methods of communication in mainland China that we were never

aware. WeChat is so popular and so incredibly multi-purpose in a way that American apps are not.

The final bit of information we got from BM Beijing was about adjusting to life on the other side of the world. Since we were hearing from three Americans we had access to perspectives that illuminated a lot for us. It was interesting to hear Brad talk about how he loved China so much and felt so integrated into the culture that he wished he were Chinese. We feel like such outsiders sometimes because of our inability to speak the language or blend in and that's after only a few weeks. Living here must be a true challenge but ultimately so rewarding. Being able to work and learn in one of the most dynamic economic and social climates in the world would make all linguistic and cultural barriers totally worth it.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Matching tourist groups

For us, Beijing was filled with visiting all the attractions that you need to see while you are in China. These included the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, The Ming Tombs, and the Summer Palace. Because these are some of China's most famous destinations, they were all filled with tourists. With so many tourists occupying a little area, it would be very easy to get lost. Luckily all of these groups had a common denominator, the wonder tour guides that kept everyone together.

In Shanghai our tour guide was Alice, and in Beijing we had a very energetic man named Jimmy. To

keep their groups together the tour guides had different strategies. Most carried long telegraphic poles with a unique flag on the end. However, the most interesting strategy to us was there were a lot of groups that matched. The extent of what they matched was different. We saw groups with matching hats, shirts, large stickers on their shirts, and some groups even when all the way with match uniforms.

We always joked that we would stop at one of the vendors and get some matching hats so our group could fit in with the others. However, getting lost was not an issue for us as we stood out like sore thumbs in Shanghai and Beijing.



Little Dumplings

A common thread amongst a few of the girls on this trip was their obsessive love of babies. Chinese babies happen to be enormous and extra adorable. Due to the aforementioned celebrity factor, parents were often completely fine with us stopping to play with their babies, affectionately nicknamed “little dumplings,” for a few moments. They would even ask us to take pictures with their child and we could pretend we were doing them a favor rather than conning them in order to play with their baby. We can’t count the number of times a quick sightseeing tour was delayed because Elim, Rachel, or Madeline had stopped to play with a little dumpling. The thing we might hate the most about going back to America is that it will no longer be

considered normal to openly fawn over random babies like we have become accustomed to.



Silk Market

Shopping, shopping and more shopping! The rapid development of the consumer’s market in China was well presented in everywhere in the city. One great example would be our favorite shopping place in Beijing — Silk Street, where we went two times during the four-day trip. We usually visited different places as a group, except here. There were seven floors in total in this mall, with all kinds of goods ranging from clothes to souvenirs, in both International and Chinese style, etc. With various types of goods and limited shopping time, we had to split into small groups or even went on our own to shop efficiently. So what’s charming about the Silk Street? We would say you’d need to explore it here and your experience will explain.



Great Wall

Before going on our trip, most of our group’s only exposure to the Great Wall was from the Disney classic Mulan. It was pretty funny impressing Jimmy with the knowledge of how the Great Wall used to work. When a threat was discovered, someone would light the torch of the nearest watchtower. Then the two closest watchtowers would light their signals, and so on, creating a sort of message system.

Nowadays, no soldiers patrol the wall, but it still stands as a proud representation of ancient China. For our journey, we ended up taking a makeshift ski lift to get to the top of the wall. We then had two options -the flat and easy path, or the steep and hard path. Naturally, we chose the harder path. We didn’t get too far before realizing our mistake. Since there’s hardly any shade on the Great Wall (it’s literally on top of mountains, so there’s nothing above it), we were all burning and sweating

within minutes of starting our trek.

Our only resting places were the watchtowers, where we could finally get some shade and catch a nice breeze. Although we didn’t make it all the way to the top of the next mountain, we still tried our best, and went as far as we could with the limited time we had. And, of course, the view was spectacular.

HongKong

香港

AGENCIES VISITS

APCO

At APCO's Hong Kong office, we met with Kennon Tam and Oliver Chase. During their presentation, Mr. Chase mentioned how you have to have a 360 degree perspective at APCO. Their employees don't fit in a specific mold. They all come from many different backgrounds bringing many different perspectives. This has been and will continue to be the case for advertising and PR. To communicate to a large audience of people with many different backgrounds, the people working on the communication side must also be from many different backgrounds. This allows a company to interpret and see things in ways people who

all come from the same industry may not. They also heavily promote their integrated services, like government relations, corporate advisory, financial communication, and strategic communication. This wide range of topics reflects the diversity APCO has.

APCO was even nice enough to treat us to lunch. Mr. Chase ordered some chicken feet for us to try. Not all of us were feeling so adventurous, but it was nice to have the opportunity to do so.



Edelman

Edelman's a fairly interesting company to begin with- the world's largest PR firm is still family owned. With the lack of pressure to make quarterly margins, Edelman is able to cultivate support for entrepreneurship. They have the freedom to test things out for the long run, and not be forced to cancel a project that may take a while to become successful.

In order to stay competitive, Edelman can no longer be just a PR firm. Our presenters, Ashley Hegland, Arun Mahtani, and Zamir Khan, mentioned the now familiar topic of how all communication fields are converging. They also talked about their expanding positions in the digital realm, including designers and videographers. Edelman, like other firms, has a strong focus on digital, for good reason. It's fast growing, and will continue to do so for the coming years.

Taylor Bennett Hayman, Inc.

Taylor Bennett Hayman was a little different type of agency than we were used to seeing. The specialty of this company is executive search with an emphasis in corporate communications. This means that companies come to them when they are looking for an experienced executive and they try to match candidates with prospective companies. The difficulty for this branch of the company is that they are very new in the Asia Pacific market. We met with an Associate, Charles McInnery.

Charles explained that this field is in need of experienced executives because Public Relations is a new field in China. More and more companies in this market are starting to realize the importance of corporate communications. This makes Taylor Bennett Hayman's job very exciting because of all the possibilities that exist in this region, and they have the power to shape the face of corporate communications in China one executive at a time.

Burston-Marsteller

We were lucky enough to visit Burston-Marsteller again in Hong Kong. It's always great to compare how things are done in mainland China versus Hong Kong. But for China in general, Lauren Kwan emphasized that they have experienced so much growth and development and it is necessary to understand the political climate before doing anything else. She also pointed out that because public relations is a relatively new field in Asia, there is a lack of understanding of how it works which leads to a unique set of difficulties for agencies to deal with. This was a common thread in many of the discussions we had with agencies.

Burston-Marsteller Hong Kong also focused a lot on their crisis communications which seems to be their forte as an organization. We love hearing about



dealing with crises because it is something we will have to deal with eventually in our careers and it's great to get a taste of it early on. We were walked through various case studies that helped us get a better grasp of what an agencies' job is in a crisis situation. It was interesting to learn how long a crisis can last, ranging from a few days to a few weeks. We were also lucky enough to hear from two young professionals, Sasha and Claudia, who went to college in America and ended up working in Hong Kong. As they were closer to our age group, they really understand where we were at and what information was most relevant to us. They gave us a lot of useful advice about finding our fit in agency life and not letting the stress of it all get to us. It was definitely information we needed to hear as we prepare for our future.



Golin

It was a pleasure to meet with Jonathan Hughes, the International president of Golin, and Zaheer Nooruddin, the head of digital innovation in Asia.

Mr. Hughes shared with us his "Top Ten Tips on How to Be Awesome in Asia." After hearing about the Chinese market for so long, this was a refreshingly different presentation that built on things we were already familiar with. Then, Zaheer introduced about the areas that digital communication that they covered in Golin, such as the production, target marketing and the analytics. He also mentioned the progressive transformation of digital communication in the Asia market -from 5 years ago when no one care about building a brand and social

media to today, when there are 950 million people in Asia Pacific access social through mobile phones. The Chinese and even Asian market is developing very rapidly. At the end, he gave out valuable tips for us as student about what area we should pay attention to according to the trend today.

Golin was nice enough to take us to a rooftop bar, Sugar, after their presentation. The view was spectacular.

SPRG

One of the largest PR firms in Asia, Strategic Public Relations Group Limited was created by Mr. Richard Tsang in 1995. It's one of the most decorated firms in Asia as well. Mr. Tsang has an interesting philosophy in order to prove to future clients

that his firm is the one they should choose.

We also learned about many differences between Mainland China and Hong Kong. Mainland China has more mature reporters who have no deadlines and run pretty flexible schedules. Hong Kong reporters are younger, more aggressive, run strict deadlines, and have tight schedules.



Light show

There are a lot of things visitors can experience when visiting Hong Kong, but we think seeing the light show at Victoria Harbor is a must.

Hong Kong consists of three major islands: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territory. Our hotel was in Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon. However, Hong Kong as a whole is very small. We could see the Hong Kong Island at the Victoria Harbor in Tsim Sha Tsui, and the skyscrapers across the sea were all under our eyes.

We thought the scene was beautiful enough, but surprisingly, there was a show that added onto this amazing

view. There were a lot of long light beams from the tops of the buildings across the harbor, shining towards to the sky on this side. The light beams moved together with the music from the little square where we stood. It felt like the two sides of the harbor were connected together even though they were separated by the sea in between. The scene was spectacular and the experience was amazing.

Even though it was raining, we stayed in the crowd and watched the whole show. - "We were amazed by the light show. Since it would be a waste of electricity to run all night, the light show only happens for 15 minutes once every night at 8 PM.

Driving on the left side

Hong Kong was owned by the British until 1997, when it was turned over to the Chinese government. Even so, there are many little details and remnants of the British presence still around. The English announcer in the subway is British, elevators are referred to as 'lifts', and all cars drive on the left side of the road. Walking also mirrors the way cars drive, so most people will walk on the left side as well. If you listen carefully, many natives of Hong Kong pronounce words with a slight British accent as well. All of these differences can be a bit disorienting to an American visitor. Just be observant, and follow someone who looks like he or she belongs.



Brunch experience

On our first day off in Hong Kong, Vincy our resident tour guide, decided to take us to a typical Hong Kong brunch. On our walk over to the restaurant, she explained that this was one of the few places left that still served in the classic style – by choosing your food off carts that were being pushed around. The restaurant was a lot nicer than we expected, and a few of us realized that we were underdressed. Nevertheless, we were seated and our first food experience in the city began.

The room was big and there were a bunch of women pushing around carts. The procedure for ordering food was to either order something off of the menu, or choose something when the ladies stopped by your table with the carts. When the carts would come

to our table, it was a bit overwhelming until we got the hang of it. Instead of one at a time, there would be three carts that stopped at your table at the same time. The ladies all pulled out their food and showed us what they thought was the best. The only problem with this was that it took a while to read what was on these carts.

However, when we got the hang of ordering we made the most of it. We discovered some of Hong Kong's signature dishes including shrimp dumplings, barbecue pork, and spring roll were just some of the foods that we ordered. This brunch was amazingly delicious, in the end this experience started as a bit of a culture shock. However, when we got adjusted we left with smiles on our faces and were so thankful that Vincy showed us this amazing place.

Our Group



Sara:

- Advertising and marketing double major from Peachtree City, Georgia
- Equipped with limited Chinese, able to eavesdrop very slightly on people's conversations
- She hurt her back bringing six Starbucks coffee mugs back to the States, but it was all worth it. She'll just have to go back to get a Shanghai one.



(Vincy) Pui Yi Fu:

- Advertising design major
- Love Chinese culture
- Hobby: explore & enjoy life/ Volunteering

Email:

pfu@c.ringling.edu



Elim:

- Senior, Public Relations major
- Enjoy wearing the umbrella hat in museums and playing with strangers' babies.



Matt:

- Marketing major
- Favorite activities in China were getting mean mugged by Chinese customs officials, never knowing if he had enough change for the subway, and playing a mean tambourine while doing karaoke.
- Got surprised that Chinese people absolutely love waffles,
- if he could do one thing again it would be tobogganing down the Great Wall.