Introduction

Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM)
- Increased interest from the business world
- Competitive advantage
- Wholly Foreign-owned Enterprises (WFOE)

Lacuna in EM research
- The applied use of EM in firms in developing countries
- How EM can vary depending on the environment and market characteristics

China as The New Frontier
- Still in the early days of development (1970s)
- Private business ownership recognised in 2002
- Despite flourishing entrepreneurship, China is still a hostile environment

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Aims & Objectives

This paper aims to provide foreign entrepreneurs with a better understanding of the Chinese business environment

- Highlight some of the cultural differences foreign entrepreneurs can expect to encounter in China
- Identify the common challenges faced by WFOE
- Provide recommendations for future entrepreneurs wanting to start a business in China

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Research Questions

- How do WFOE successfully use marketing to stay competitive in the Chinese market?
- What are the common themes of entrepreneurial marketing conducted by WFOE in China?
- What are the cultural implications affecting marketing in China?

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Methodology

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Exploratory Qualitative Research

- 20 semi-structured interviews
- Shanghai, Suzhou, Beijing

Limitations

- Interview length
- Narrow scope of sample
- Number of variables in the sample
- Language
- Bias

Ethics maintained through anonymity

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Research Findings

- Marketing to the individual
- Internal & external relationships
- Guanxi
- Relationship marketing
- KOP, Referrals, and WOM
- Educating consumers
- Strategic alliances

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Managerial Implications & Recommendations

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- Necessity to adapt operations and localise
- Planning entry & growth strategies
- Take a step by step approach after thorough market research
- Prepare to be flexible

Conclusion

- Granular approach to save firms from the 'China trap'
- Necessary to create and maintain relationships with stakeholders
- KOL, referrals, and WOM all common practices implemented by WPDE to increase awareness and customer acquisition
- Educate consumers to be attracted to value not just image