

# 520 Campaigns

Luxury's Best WeChat Campaigns of 2021

# Introduction

# Chinese Valentine's Day(s)

When is Valentine's Day in China? There's no one correct answer, but more like three. People in China celebrate the Western February 14th Valentine's Day, but there are a few more on the calendar: 520 (along with 521) and Qixi 七夕节. (And there is a saying that, when you're in love, the 14th of every month is Valentine's Day!)

Qixi is a traditional holiday with a romantic backstory, dating to the Han dynasty-era poem, "The Cowherd and the Weaver Girl," which ends with separated lovers meeting once a year in the sky on a magical bridge of birds (which is why you'll often see pastoral and stary imagery). Since Qixi's date is according to the Lunar calendar, it changes from year to year. For 2021 it falls on August 14th.



# Chinese Valentine's Day(s)

May 20th, however, has a modern origin. The Chinese pronunciation of 520, wu er ling 五二零, sounds similar to how you say I love you, wo ai ni 我爱你. Because of the similar pronunciations, 520 became internet slang for "I love you." Sending 520 to someone online is akin to confessing your love for them, leading to May 20th becoming a holiday to confess to your "crush." It tends to focus on giving gifts to women.

521 on May 21st has been added to the holiday as a sort of response, "I am willing," as the two phrases are loose homophones (*wueryi* and *woyuanyi*). This day tends to be seen as a day to give gifts to men.

In this whitepaper, we'll dive into what best practices and innovative techniques we can learn from some of the top luxury 520 campaigns of 2021 from brands like Gucci and Pandora – insights that might prove useful for the upcoming Qixi holiday!

# WeChat Campaigns Analysis and Insights

## 520 Campaigns

# Overview

2021's 520 campaigns have seen a heavy reliance on KOLs, lots of limited-edition collections, and somewhat of a shift away from "confessing" love towards a celebration of love in many different forms. While some of the campaigns promoted more traditional gift-giving, others sought to inspire buying for oneself as a personal expression of the celebration of love.

Brands used hashtags, Mini Program games, ever-popular comments-based giveaways, 3D and AR/VR features, e-commerce Mini Program integration, and collaborations to engage their audiences and increase conversions. WeChat's capacity for interaction, like touch-responsive post features and mini-game integration, means that brands must design campaigns to be something people want to participate in, outshining the hundreds of brands vying for attention. With WeChat being the ubiquitous social platform of choice, creating a meaningful experience pays off big-time as users share them with their friends, giving brands more organic reach and a fan base with a higher loyalty.





## 520 Campaigns

# Valentino

Valentino's 520 campaign is most targeted at gift-givers, using 520 as a reason to confess love for their crush. Brand ambassador Guan Xiaotong 关晓彤 modeled their featured bag, which has five classic Valentino studs on both sides and along the strap, adding up to 20 studs, making it the perfect gift to show love to your crush. Known as the "Nation's Daughter" in China, Guan is regarded as one of the "Four Dan Actresses of the post-90s/post-95s". The topics related to her have been trending on Weibo many times. Valentino clearly did their research on how she could bring brand awareness and commercial value.

For their second 520 WeChat post, Valentino showed eleven celebrities modeling the 520 bag. It included brand ambassadors Tiffany Yang 唐嫣 and Qin Lan 秦岚 (who have over 93 million Weibo followers combined) and up-and-comers like Liu Lingzi 刘令姿 who became popular through the reality show Youth with You in 2020.



品牌大使关晓彤浪漫演绎  
520限定特辑



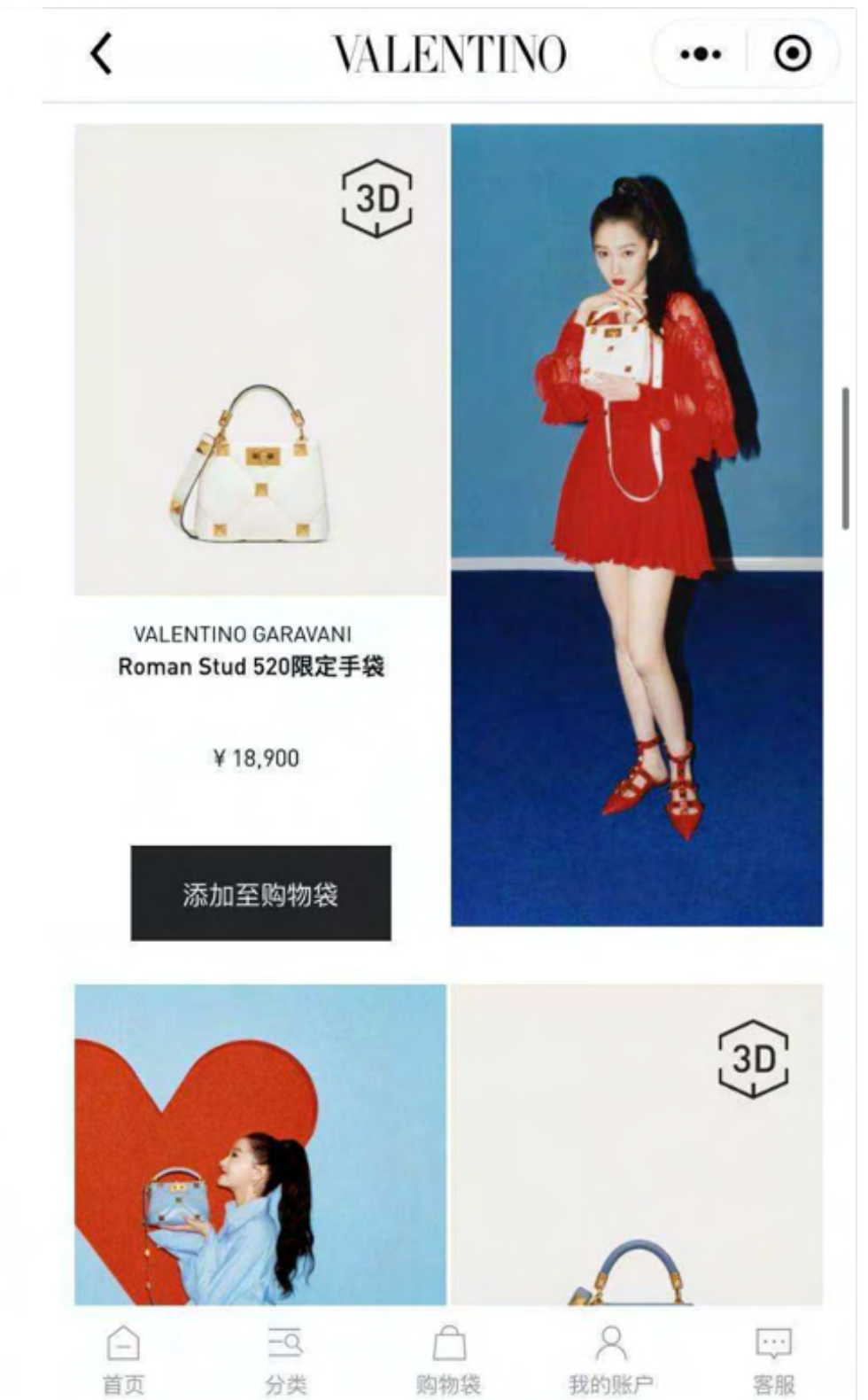
## 520 Campaigns

# Valentino

Featuring a wide array of KOLs, from lesser-known bloggers to A-list celebs, is becoming more popular with luxury brands (Yves Saint Laurent did something similar in March and got an enthusiastic response). As RED, the lifestyle app heavy on user-generated content, continues to gain in popularity, brands may be experimenting with ways to replicate its feel within WeChat. Showing how different KOLs or KOCs wear your brand does so to some extent.

The handbag comes in a special gift box with a 3D pop-up heart-shaped card. While browsing the bags in Valentino's WeChat store, shoppers were able to view them in 3D. This feature is becoming more and more common and perhaps expected within luxury WeChat stores.

**Response:** Valentino's e-commerce Mini Program features the hashtag #520爱就告白# (#lovethenconfess#), which got 160 million views on Weibo following the April 28th post.



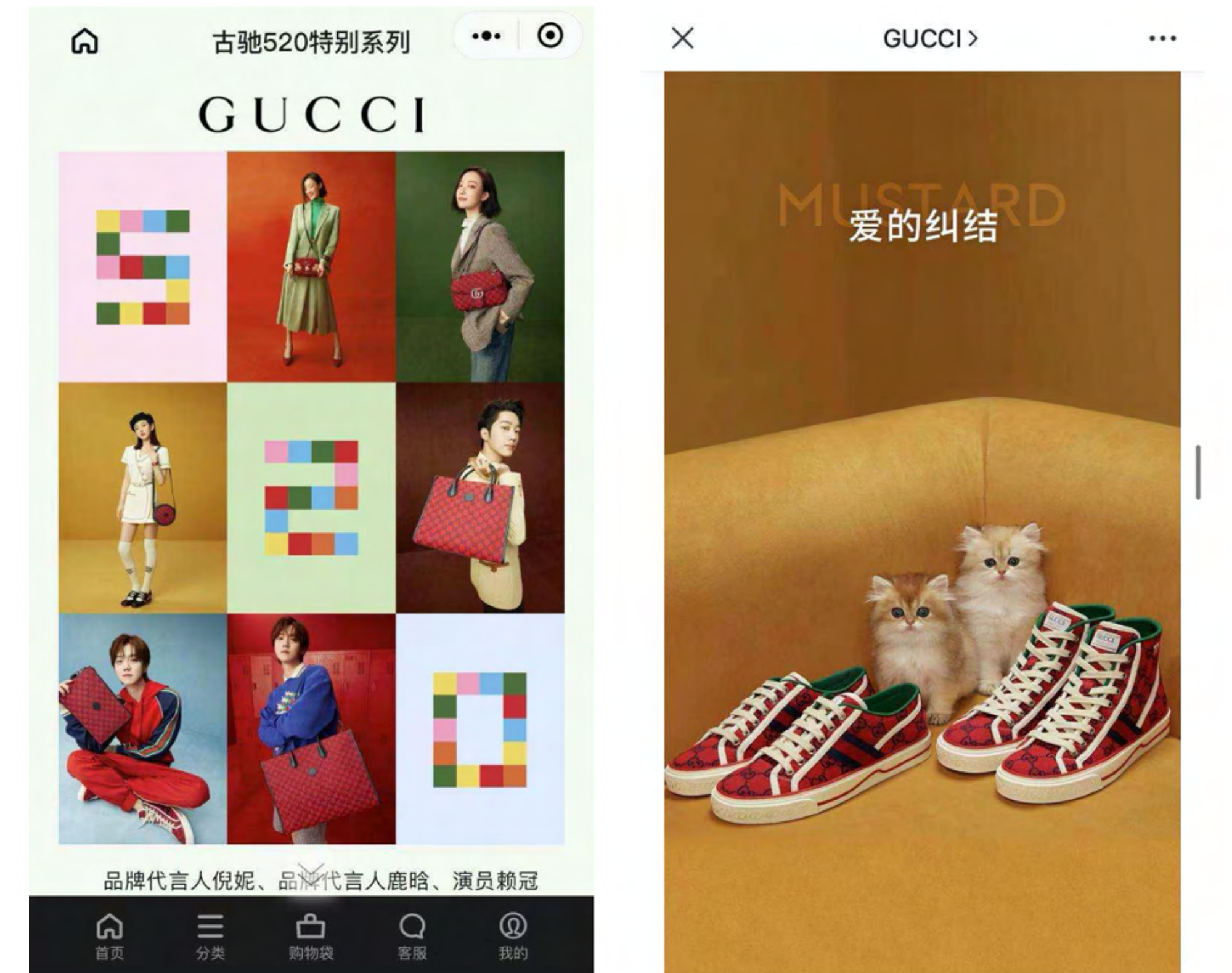


## 520 Campaigns

# Gucci

“Love is like a coloring book, having different hues from the moment of encounter.” Gucci sought to celebrate the versatility of love, inviting four KOLs to express 520 in their own way. This creative shift from "confessing" to your crush to personal expression opened the door to a broader audience. Also, Gucci's bold colors representing love in all different forms allowed consumers to relate to the collection on different levels.

The four KOLs included brand ambassadors Ni Niv倪妮 and Lu Han 鹿晗, and actors Lai Guanlin赖冠霖 and Song Zu'er 宋祖儿, each in a different outfit paired with a 520 limited-edition bag. The four celebrities are featured in campaign videos: Ni Ni is reading Chapter 5 Scene 20 of a script when a person by the name of 520 calls her. Lai Guanlin is sitting on seat 520 at the cinema alone, Lu Han places his Gucci lip balm and cologne into his Gucci bag before removing it from locker 520, and Song Zu'er is recording her kitten who is playing with a catnip with the phrase “Happy 520 days.”





## 520 Campaigns

# Gucci

The multi-faceted nature of the campaign combined with the exclusive release collection (which included not only bags, but clothing, sneakers, hats, ties, jewelry, and watches) appeals especially to younger Gen Z consumers who want to express themselves in unique ways.

Going beyond 3D viewing, Gucci allows shoppers to do a virtual try-on of some of their 520 rings. Shoppers can capture and share the images with friends, making the collection all the more shareable.

**Response:** Much of the response focused on Lu Han, with commenters on WeChat and Weibo saying how well he matches the brand aesthetic. Mr.Bags reviewed Gucci's bags in his 520 Weibo post, and several commenters felt that the red in this 520 collection was too close to the stereotypical Chinese Spring Festival red, feeling old-fashioned. However, Weibo users expressed approval of the collection online and commented that the classic red was well-suited to 520. The hashtag #Gucci 520# hit 110 million views on Weibo and two WeChat articles gained over 100,000 views. Many netizens commented that they enjoyed finding the small details related to 520 in the videos.





# Moncler

For the love-filled 520 festival, Moncler collaborated with the multimedia artist James Goldcrown, internationally known for his signature “Bleeding Hearts/Lovewall” graffiti murals. Goldcrown has already collaborated with multiple brands on limited edition items, including Armani Exchange, Estée Lauder, Rimowa, and Vogue. To “spread the love” to China, he did an installation for the Shanghai Super Classic in May 2019 and worked with Li-Ning on a product collection entitled “love is,” featuring t-shirts and shoes with his signature love graffiti.

Brand ambassador Song Xi drew attention especially on Weibo: Moncler's first two 520 posts without the actor drew fewer than 100 total likes, shares, and comments; their third post picturing Xi, however, drew over 76k likes, shares, and comments. This contrast illustrates how important KOLs continue to be for luxury brands.

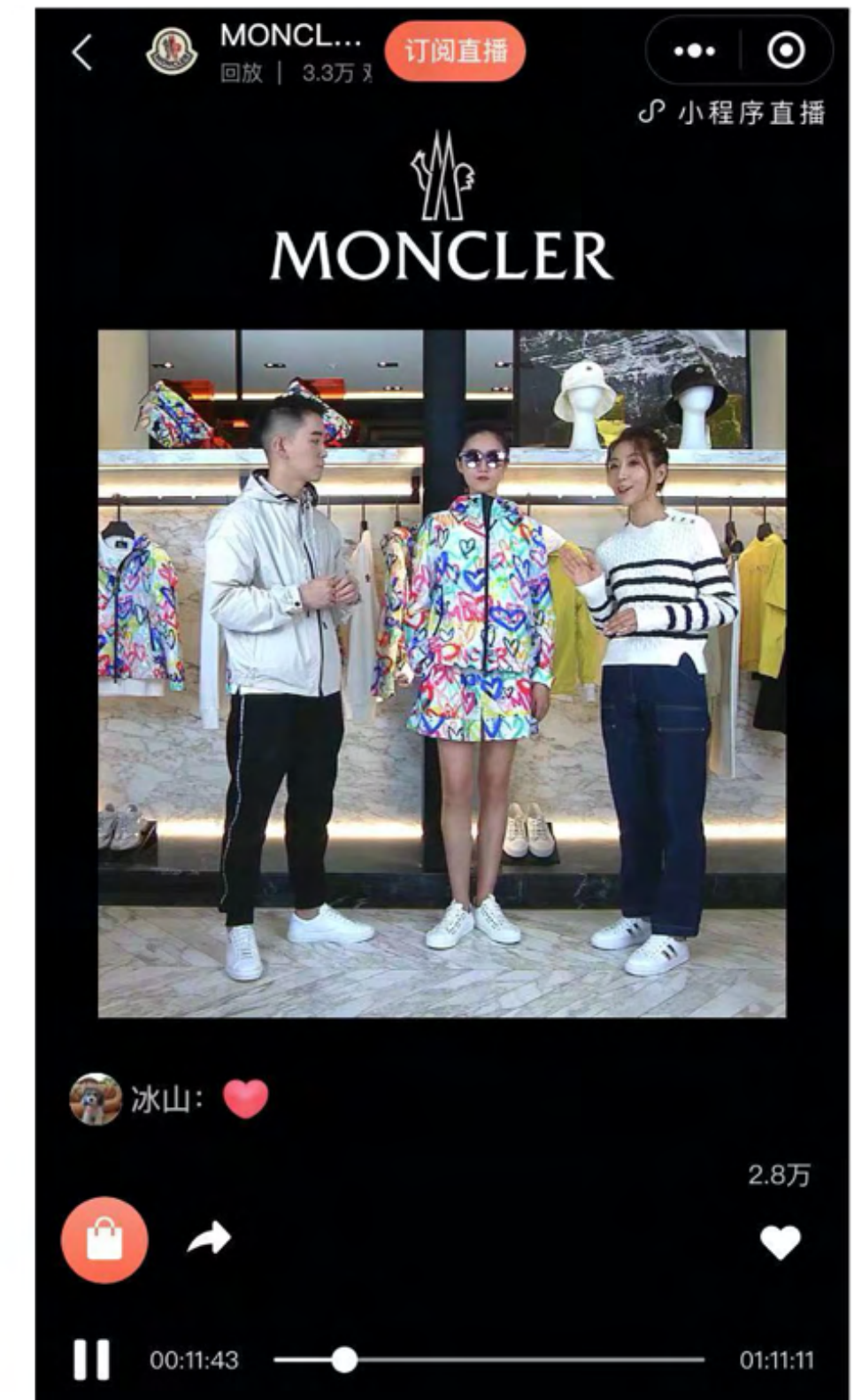


## 520 Campaigns

# Moncler

Moncler's 520 WeChat post begins with three interactive multiple-choice questions about your crush (like whether you've pinned their chat to the top of your WeChat home screen). After the reader clicks their answers, the sentence "Before I knew it, my feelings for you had become 'love +1'" appears. This interactive and responsive post especially speaks to the younger, technologically savvy generation.

Moncler's 520 products focused less on gift-giving and more on celebrating love. Capitalizing on the comprehensiveness of WeChat's ecosystem, the brand held a livestream, linked to from their 520 post, where viewers could seamlessly like, save, and purchase 520 items.



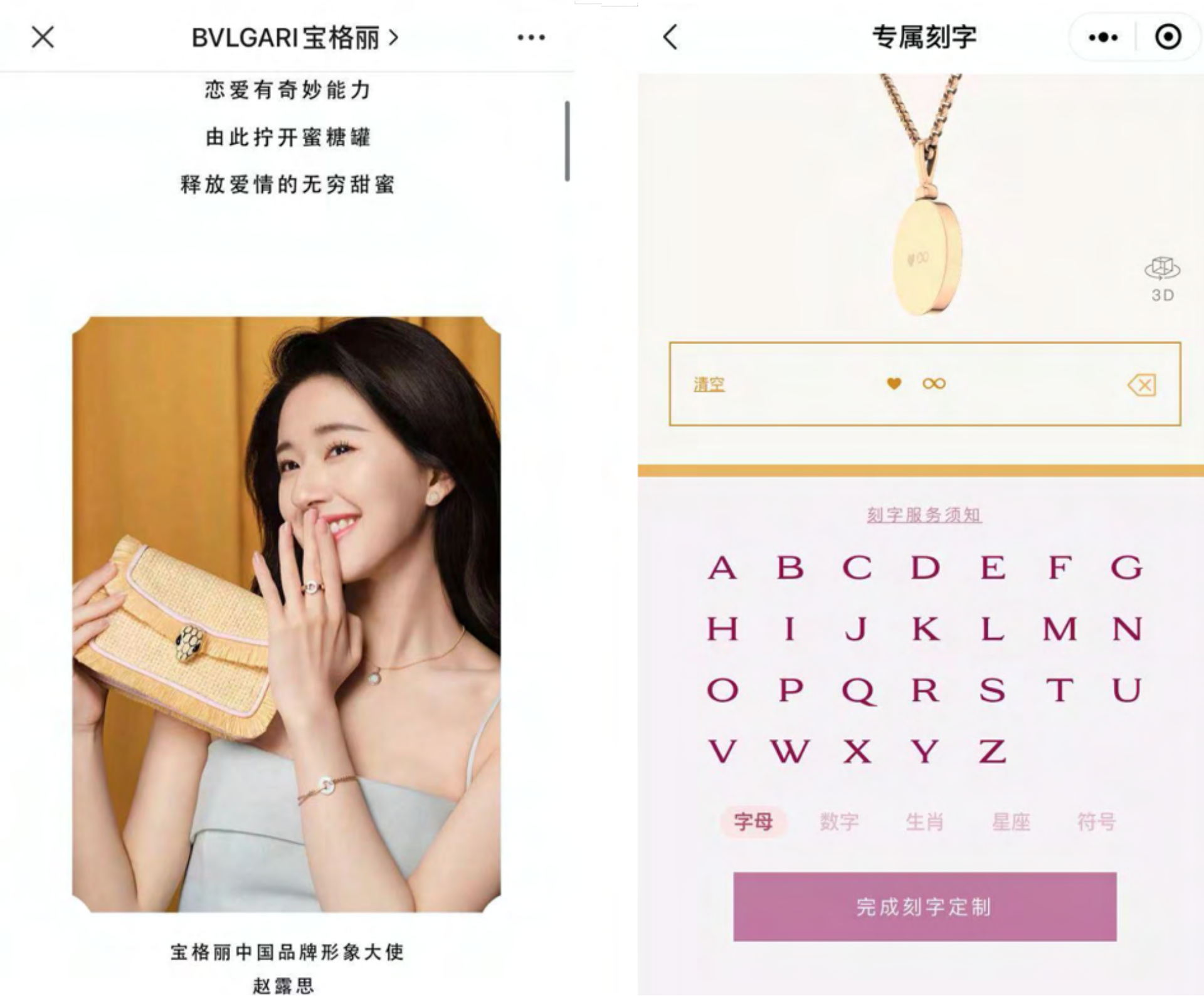


520 Campaigns

Bvlgari

Appealing to the happiness of gifting yourself, Bvlgari declared that “Love is a planet of happiness, set your roots here and let happiness surround yourself.” This theme fits in well with the growth of China's she-economy, which sees upwardly mobile, professional women buying luxury items for themselves.

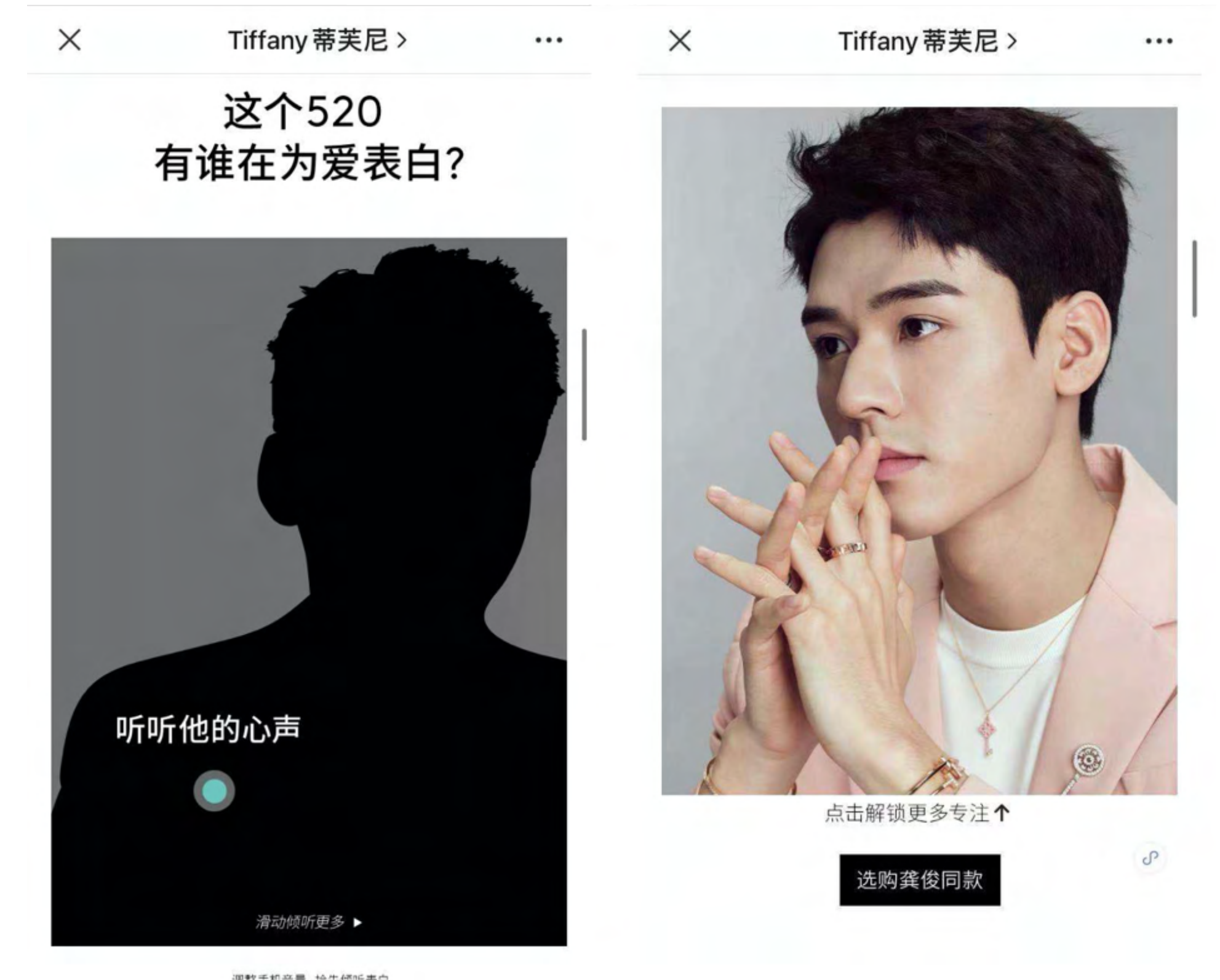
Bvlgari’s campaign especially rewarded online shopping, with exclusive services, promotions, and items available only to purchases made in the e-commerce Mini Program. Necklace engraving was only available for items bought on WeChat, and their Serpenti Diamond Blast bag was an online exclusive. Additionally, a 520 gift box was offered for only the first 300 online orders, and 520 DIY stickers were given to the first 1,000 online orders over 20,000 RMB; all shoppers who made an online purchase received a 520 customized gift box and card.



# Tiffany & Co.

This year for 520, Tiffany & Co. declared that “Love unlocks limitless possibilities” to introduce their online-exclusive keychain charm, which sold out worldwide with a limited quantity of 450.

The campaign began on April 30th, uniquely focused on voice, asking, “This 520, who is confessing love?” Readers could click on four shadowy images, each playing only a voice recording. The mystery celebrities weren’t revealed until the following week, keeping readers into pop culture looking forward to the next post. This interactive and suspenseful post earned nearly ten percent engagement (with such a large readership, the brand’s posts usually receive around two percent); the following week's reveal post got similar attention.



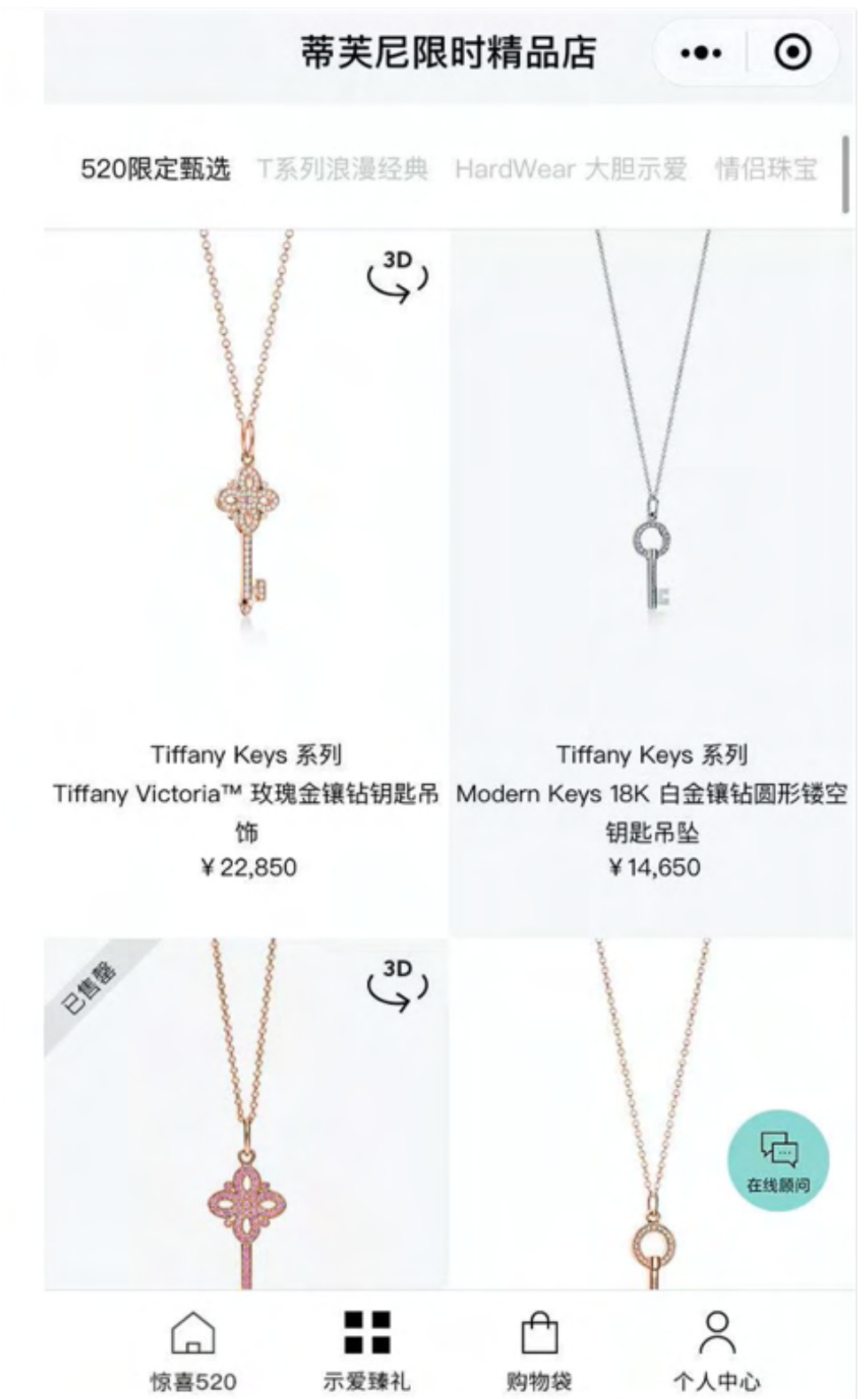


# Tiffany & Co.

Tiffany & Co. did an excellent job of structuring their campaign for interaction with the audio elements that got readers guessing, making it highly shareable at the same time. Campaigns that readers can participate in are perfect for WeChat, where readers can seamlessly share with friends, increasing the organic value of the campaign.

The four celebrities included actors Gong Jun 龚俊 (known as “the husband” because the pronunciation sounds similar to his name), Song Yanfei 宋妍霏, and Ou Hao 欧豪, and “king of lipstick” livestreamer Austin Li 李佳琦 (who featured in Louis Vuitton’s 520 campaign for 2020).

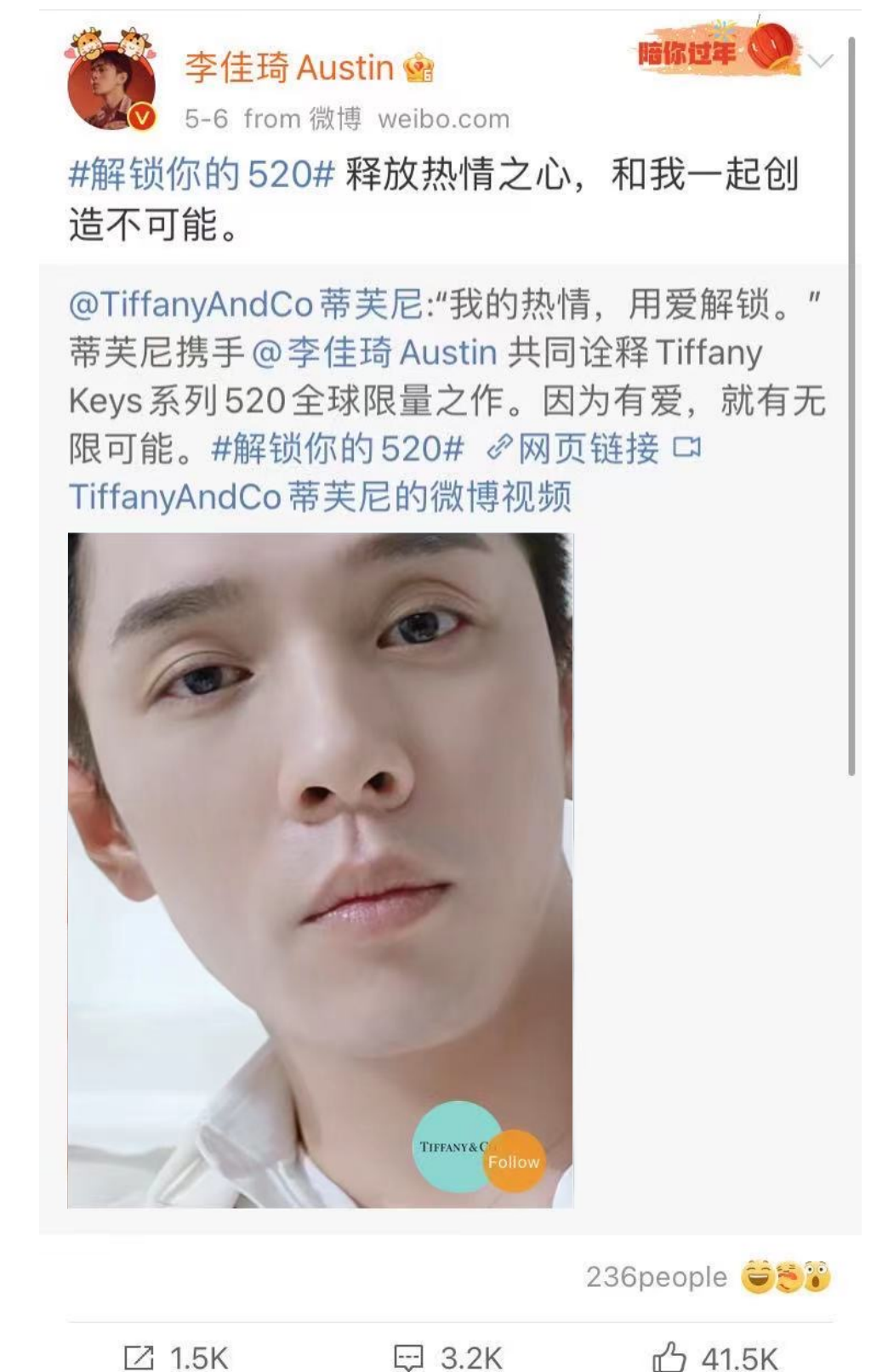
Like Gucci’s 520 capsule, Tiffany & Co.’s limited-quantity charm appealed to shoppers’ desire for uniqueness. The key theme likely also piqued the interest of devotees of the brand as it was a continuation of 2019's and 2020's 520 collections (2019 also used “confession” voice recordings from different celebrities.)



# Tiffany & Co.

Tiffany's WeChat store has a dedicated 520 section with an array of key-themed jewelry. As in Valentino's store, shoppers can view several items in 3D.

**Response:** The celebrities' four Weibo re-posts of Tiffany & Co.'s campaign, each with a short video of themselves wearing the key-themed collection, collectively received nearly 400k shares, over 160k comments, and 1 million likes. Tiffany & Co.'s strategy was to go for the big names (Gong Jun is ranked #5 on Weibo's "Superstar" list, and Song Yanfei is #40 among Weibo's "Rising Stars").



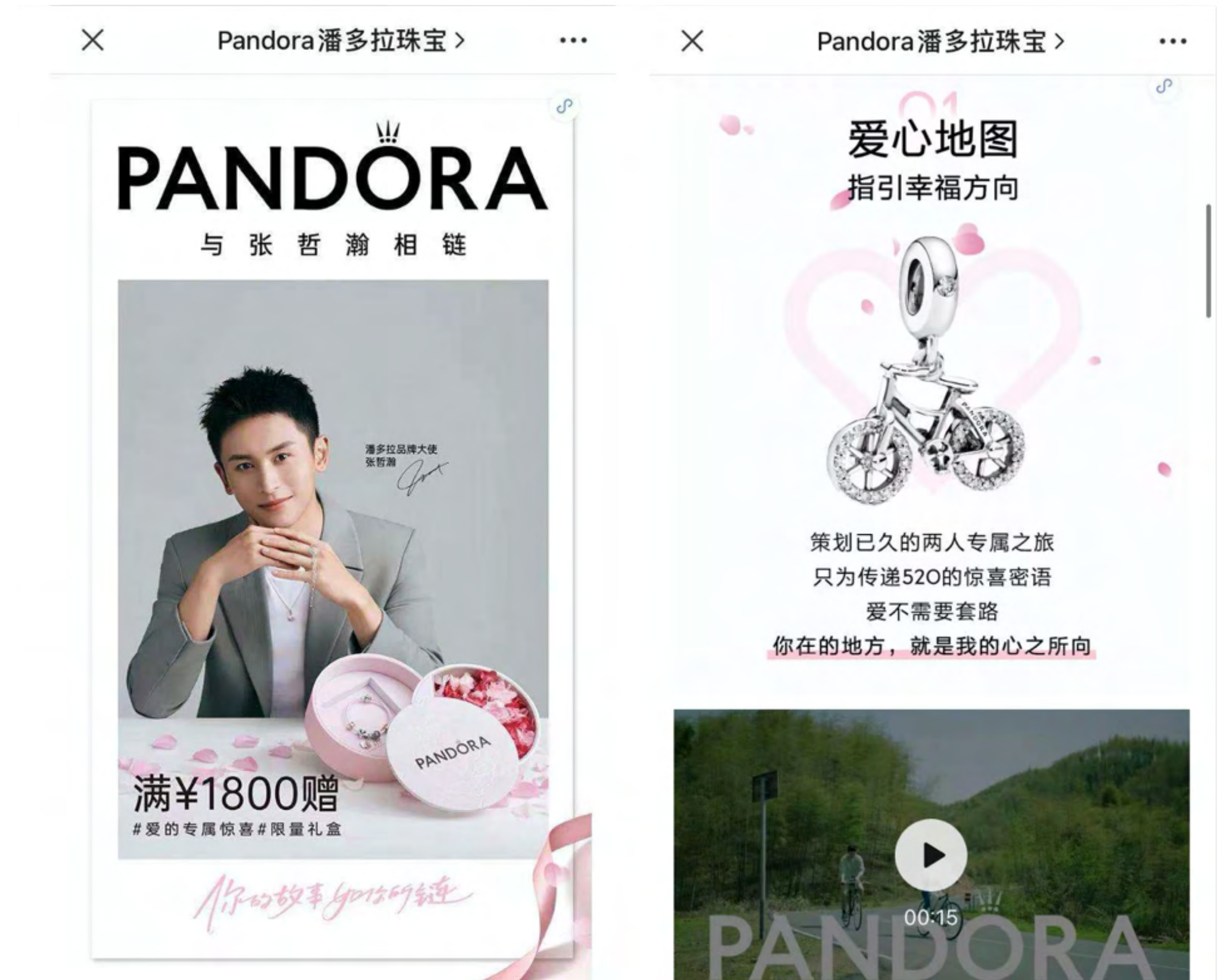


# Pandora

Pandora targets gift-givers with their 520 campaign by inviting them to think of special memories between them and their loved ones. The focus is not on a romantic crush but includes all special relationships.

“Your story, linked the way you want,” encourages users to focus on memories with their loved ones. Pandora promoted unique 520 items, including a two-piece charm that reads, "Moments spent with you are my favorite."

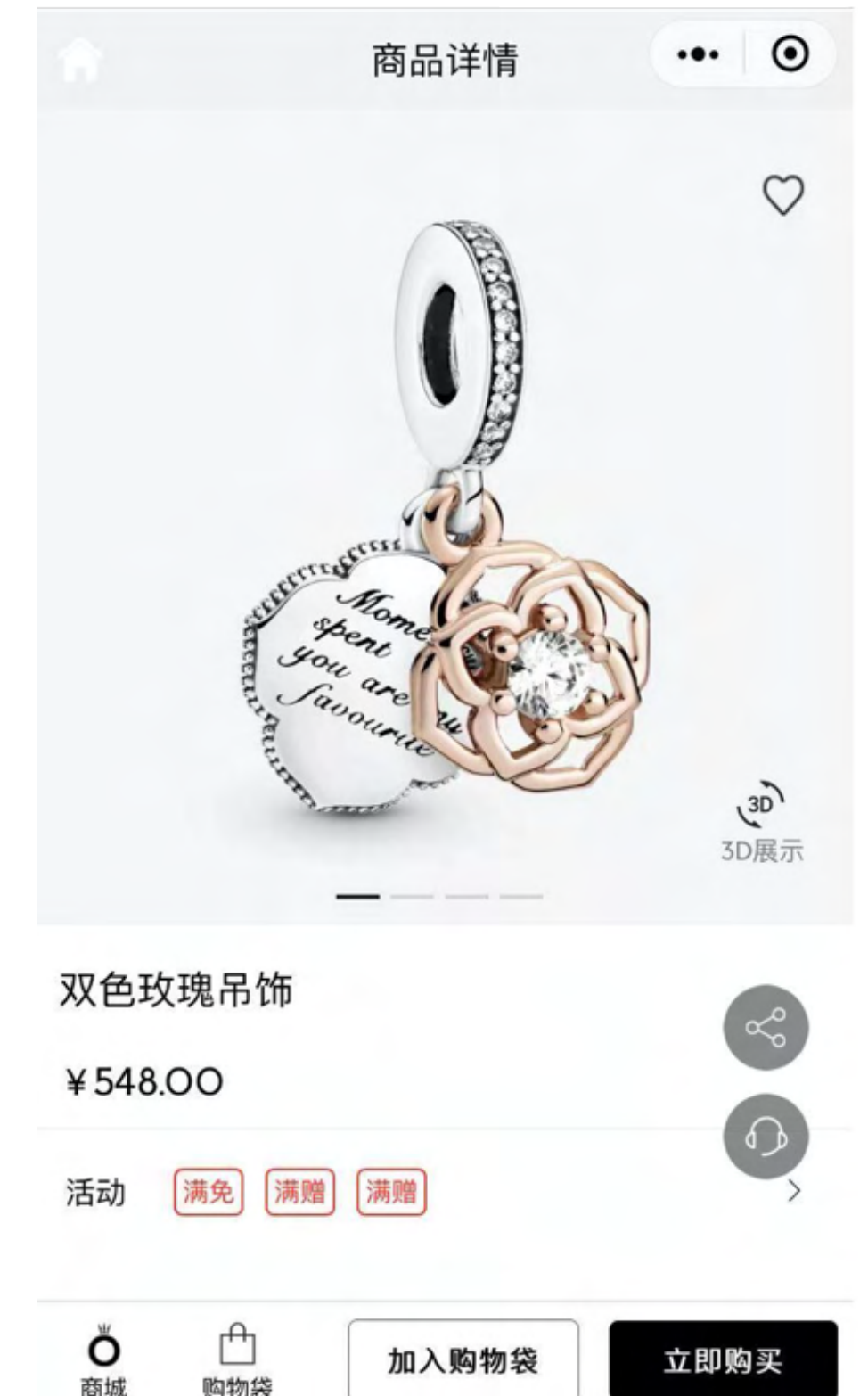
Exclusivity and KOLs were also components of the campaign. Zhang Zhehan 张哲瀚 hosted a livestream that gifted his poster to the first one hundred shoppers who bought the featured product. Before the livestream, users could sign up to receive a reminder via Pandora's Mini Program.



# Pandora

(Zhang's popularity is on the rise as he was the lead role in the hit Chinese TV series 山河令 "Word of Honor" that just finished airing about a month ago. The show has a rating of 8.6 out of 10 on the Chinese rating site, Douban. The first episode of the series has over 8 million views on Youku, with a like/dislike ratio of 98%. The celebrity Gong Jun who worked with Tiffany's 520 campaign was also in this show. Because of the show's popularity, Gong Jun and Zhang Zhe Han have become the most popular TV couple in 2021.)

Doubling down on memories and KOL charm to increase reader engagement, Pandora held a comments-based giveaway. They asked readers to answer the question "What is your most impressive 520 surprise?" in the comments, with winners receiving a 520 gift from Zhang.





# Pandora

**Response:** Zhang Zhehan drew a lot of attention to Pandora. The hashtag #link with Zhang Zhe Han# has 530m views and 976k users discussing this topic. On May 11th, Pandora wished Zhang Zhehan a happy birthday with a display on Shanghai’s twin towers, winning gratitude from his fans.

While somewhat smaller in scale, the comments-based giveaway also generated meaningful interaction, with tons of readers sharing their own 520 experiences in Pandora’s WeChat Official Account post. The top comment spoke about how 520 could be meaningful between best friends – right on message for female-focused Pandora. This type of user-generated content is valuable for creating a feeling of authenticity and of having a “two-way conversation,” allowing readers to form an emotional connection with the brand.



## 520 Campaigns

# Delvaux

Delvaux framed their campaign around the question, “How will you spend your 520? With your lover? Friends? Or just by yourself?”

A bubble-gum pink lucky-draw type Mini Program game asked players further questions: “What is your current relationship status?”, “What qualities attract you?”, and “What do you do when you’re with someone you like?” According to their answers, they are presented with a recommended 520 product.

This game is a fantastic combination of personalization and gamification to make the campaign fun and shareable. It's also a great way to gain new followers: if the Mini Program game card is shared with a WeChat user who doesn't follow Delvaux's Official Account, the receiver is first directed to scan a QR code to follow the account before playing the game.





## 520 Campaigns

# Delvaux

For both new and existing followers, the game provides Delvaux with a chance for valuable data binding. At the end of the game, players can fill out a form (asking for their birthday, region, etc.) to enter to win a "Delvaux Dream Flower Box." This information allows Delvaux to send better targeted future content and personalize user journeys (for example, by alerting users in a certain region to a nearby pop-up store, or offering special birthday treats).

One way this game could be improved would be to allow non-account followers to play. Only those who followed Delvaux's Official Account could access the game, so if someone sent it to their friend who didn't follow the account yet, it wouldn't be easily accessible to the receiver. The brand could have perhaps gotten further reach by removing this requirement.



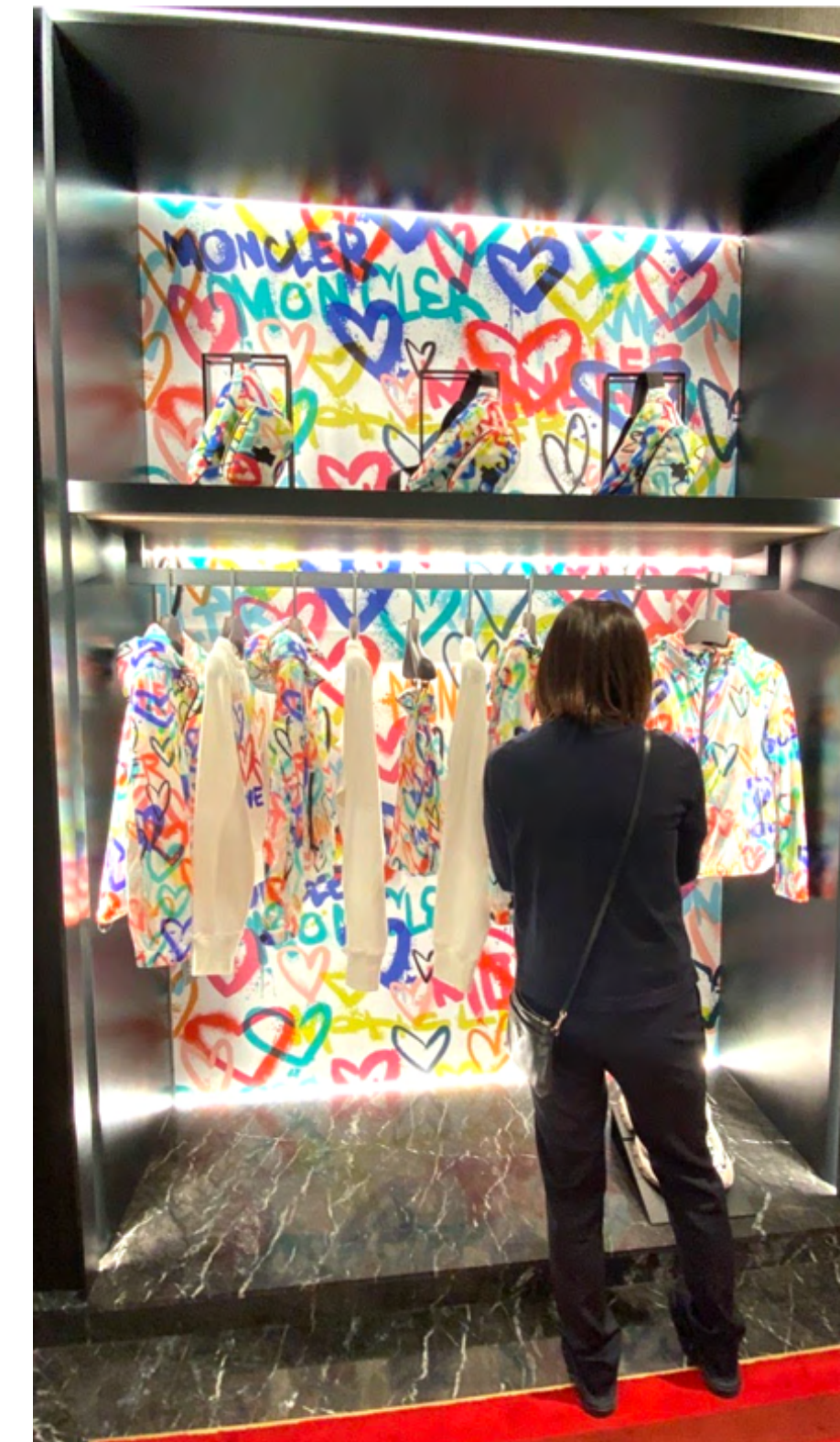
# Offline Campaigns



# Overview

We took to the upscale Taikoo Hui 太古汇 shopping mall in Guangzhou, one of China's top-tier cities, to explore luxury's offline 520 campaigns. We surveyed Gucci, Longchamp, Alexander McQueen, Dior, Bvlgari, Moncler, Chopard, Chow Sang Sang, and Fred's offline displays. Tiffany & Co. had a fabulous online campaign, but their 520 collection was not in-store.

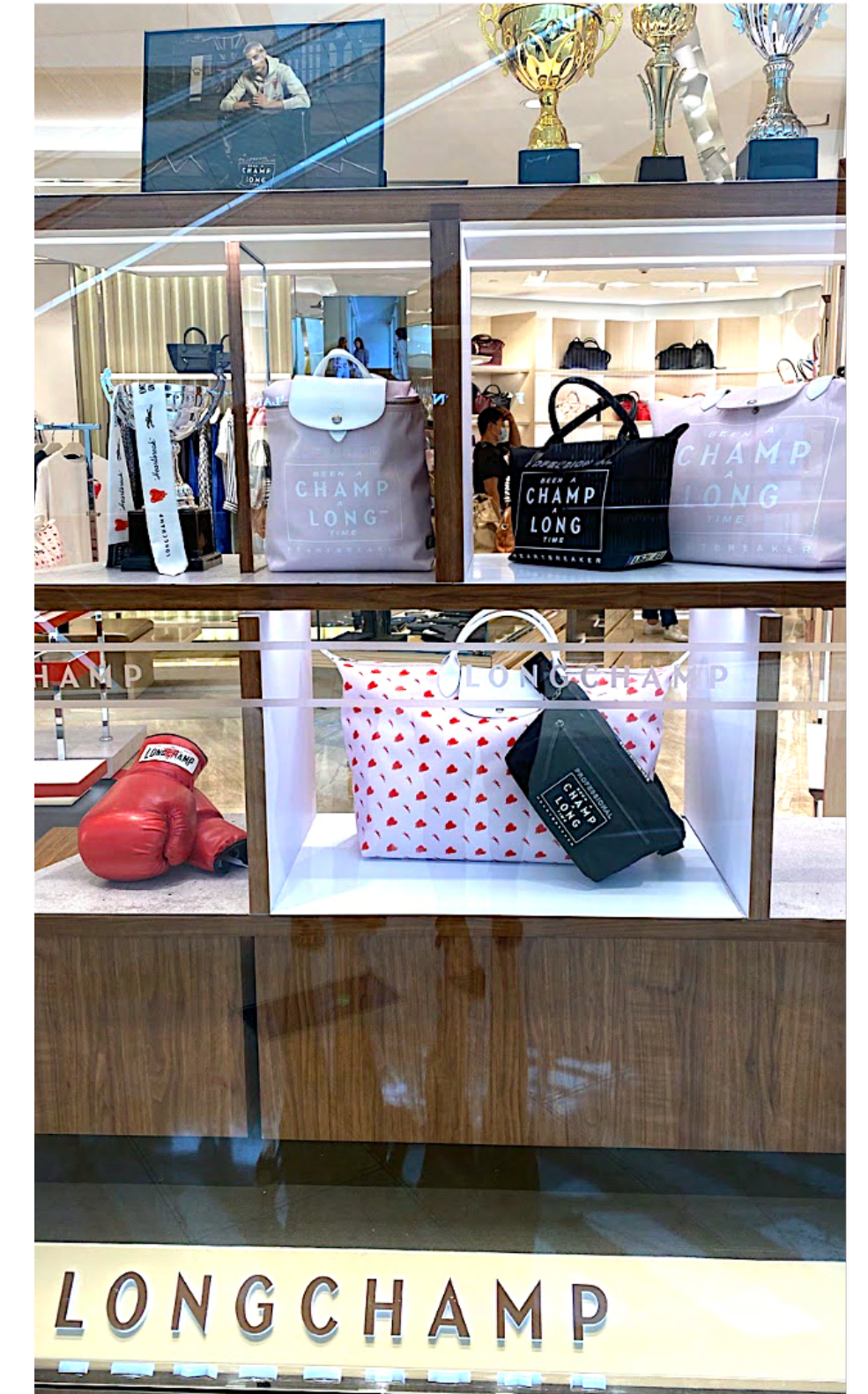
Overall, brands' offline 520 displays were low-key, with only Longchamp, Gucci, and Moncler heavily promoting their holiday collections. In our discussions with sales associates, we found that pushing 520 products and promotions did not seem to be a high priority. Several stores with smaller 520 displays were essentially recommending current products for 520 gifting, not launching special-edition collections.





# Longchamp

Longchamp had the most conspicuous 520 display of our surveyed stores, with several product displays front and center. Longchamp's ongoing collaboration with streetwear brand EU, especially the notable use of EU's bleeding heart theme, extended nicely into their 520 collection. Longchamp took the holiday as an opportunity to add a powder pink, recycled-material bag to the collaboration's series, with the ongoing theme "Been a champ a long time" printed across the front, in addition to three other pink 520 bags.





# Gucci & Moncler

Gucci also featured their 520 collection front-and-center, with the wide array of red bags, shoes, and accessories arranged atop the block-color pattern from their online campaign. Gucci's store was the best example of a coherent online-to-offline visual connection, with a strong theme from their WeChat campaign that would be instantly recognizable to anyone visiting the store.

Although Moncler's 520 collection was toward the back of the store, it still stood out with colorful graffiti hearts in contrast to their signature black-and-white. Moncler's sales associates were the most involved in promoting and explaining the collection. They informed us that the items were limited-edition, with only one of each size in-store.

# Other Brands

We had to do a bit of hunting before we found the 520 promotions in other stores. Dior offered a heart emoji for personalized embroidery on their 520 handbag collection. Alexander McQueen's collection was in a central, low-key display, featuring t-shirts, bags, and shoes. At Fred, we found heart-themed jewelry that hadn't been featured in their WeChat post (interestingly, their WeChat "Color Your Love" 520 promotion was not present in-store).

Lanvin, Chopard, Tiffany & Co., and Chow Sang Sang promoted some of their products for 520 gift-giving but didn't promote special collections in-store. For example, when we asked a sales associate in Chopard where we could find their 520 line, we had to show him the WeChat post because he wasn't yet aware of it, nor was it promoted in-store.





# Recommendations

Recommendations

**520 Campaigns**

# WeChat Campaigns

While several of the campaigns' posts involved readers through touch-to-reveal features, only one (Delvaux) took the next step to gamification. In e-commerce Mini Programs, we saw several brands offer 3D product viewing and one AR/VR try-on. We recommend that brands expand their use of these features. The more interactive – and therefore sharable – a campaign is, the more return brands will see with their campaigns.



# Offline Campaigns

We recommend that brands' offline store associates make greater use of WeChat to connect with customers. Out of the ten luxury stores we visited, only associates at Pomellato and Lanvin asked us to add them as WeChat contacts. We also found that some in-store sales associates were not aware of their brand's 520 online campaigns and products. These in-store interactions are an opportunity to provide an excellent starting point for creating long-term connections with existing and potential customers, as well as increasing engagement with online campaigns. With the convenience of WeChat e-commerce stores, a significant proportion of customers choose to browse offline, but then make final purchases online. Because of this multi-touchpoint process, we recommend that brands take greater advantage of their face-to-face interactions with shoppers.

Additionally, we suggest that in-store QR codes direct users to more targeted experiences (rather than only directing them to follow the Official Account). Of the in-store QR codes we scanned, none of them led to a personalized customer journey. Brands can take this offline opportunity to tag and segment users for location and as being highly engaged (willing to go to offline stores) and use that information to send customized content. While luxury brands are certainly integrating their online and offline worlds more and more, especially through special pop-up events, it seems there is still room for improvement on this front.



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