



Not Urgent But Important.

— The Missing Puzzle Piece to Airbnb's Quest to Conquer China —



First, let's talk statistics...

According to 2018 China Tourism Statistics, inbound tourism revenue accounts for USD 127.1 Billion while domestic tourism revenue accounts for USD 733.3 Billion — ratio 1 : 6.

Hence, like most of its competitors in China, Airbnb China chooses to focus on localization (provide instant bookings), establishing brand awareness, and building trust within the local community. And, it totally makes sense.

- Since there is no direct information about the guests' nationality on data from [insideairbnb.com](https://www.insideairbnb.com), we will use the number of Mandarin comments as proxy to measure the number of domestic guests.
- Yes, we are fully aware that guests from Hong Kong, Taiwan and etc. might leave Mandarin comments too.
- Still, we have the right reason to believe the majority of those comments belong to domestic guests.
- Hence, it's pretty obvious that Airbnb China did an excellent job focusing on building its brand name and trust domestically. #localization

Number of Mandarin Comments
(2018 VS 2019)

month	2018	2019	YoY
1	3210	8621	268.57%
2	2568	8396	326.95%
3	1182	11437	967.60%
4	4066	13733	337.75%
5	4656	15506	333.03%
6	4957	16261	328.04%
7	6097	18685	306.46%
8	7558	22186	293.54%
9	6353	17113	269.37%
10	7478	22192	296.76%
11	5802	12672	218.41%



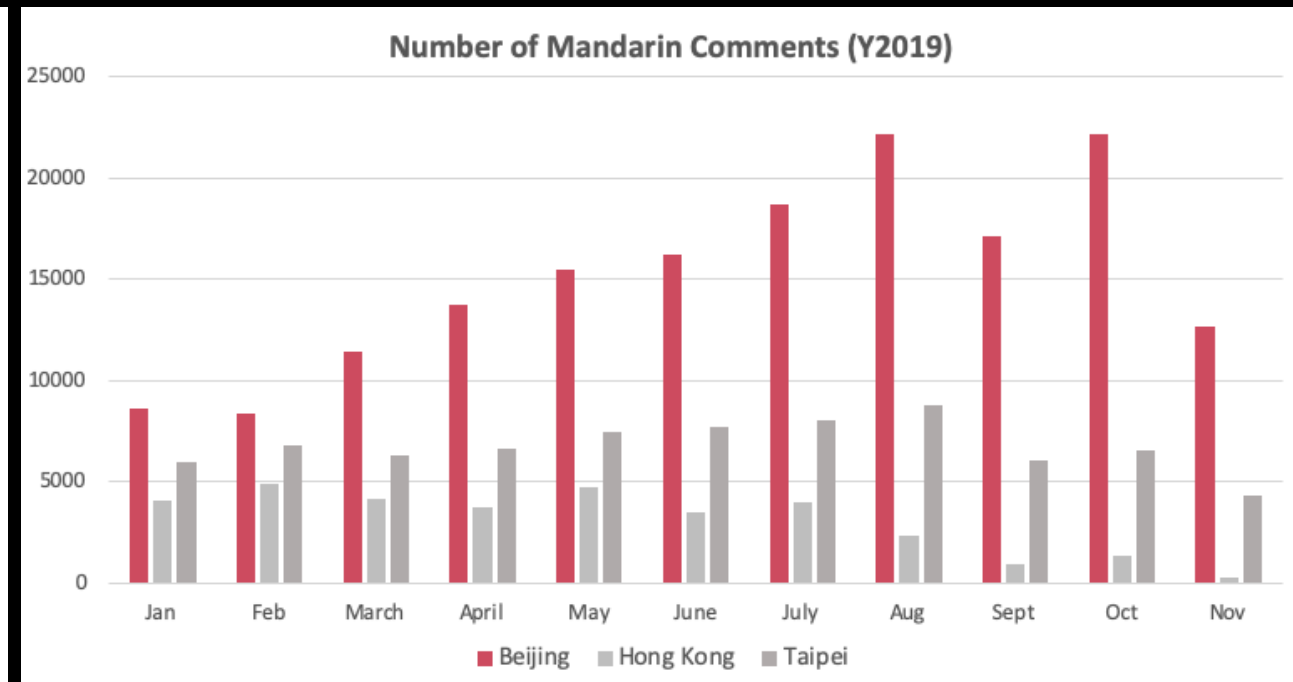
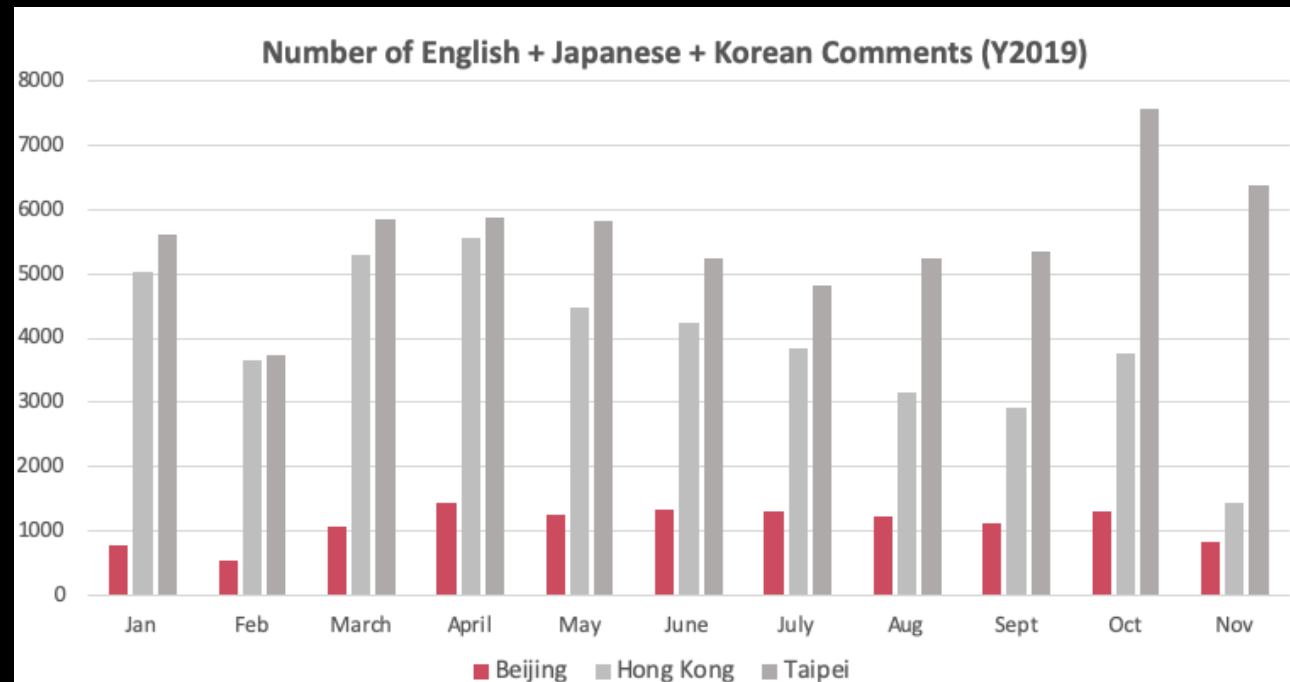
Yes, we understand that domestic tourism generates more revenue than inbound tourism.

However...

It doesn't imply Airbnb should overlook its own strength and completely ignore the inbound tourists. After all, inbound tourists did generate USD 127.1 Bil in 2018 (still a lot).

What differentiates Airbnb China from all the local competitors is the fact that Airbnb has well-established brand name and strong global presence. In other words, an inbound tourist is more likely to choose Airbnb China over Airbnb's competitors.

If we were to compare the number of English + Japanese + Korean comments with the number of Mandarin comments of Beijing with Hong Kong & Taipei, we will quickly realize that Airbnb China has failed to leverage its well-established global brand name into attracting inbound tourists.



Considering the huge contrast between the number of foreign language and mandarin comments (Beijing, Hong Kong & Taipei), I guess it's safe for us to conclude that Airbnb China was too fixate at its goal that we completely overlooked the inbound tourism market. Also, the huge drop in Hong Kong's comments is expected due to political reason.

If we were to dig deeper...

Obstacles: Temporary residence registration at local police station. (aka elephant in the room)



The_Vedas
Sydney, Australia

Level 6 Contributor

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Visa for China and AirBNB

1 year ago

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Hello, our family of four (2 kids aged 11 and 10) is looking to travel to [China](#) in January ([Harbin](#) and [Beijing](#)). I am looking for any advice/tips regarding applying for Chinese visas in Australia (for Australians). We will stay for 8 days and like to stay in AirBnB type accommodation as opposed to hotels. Will this pose a problem in getting a visa? Also, once we arrive, do immigration look closely at where and whom you are staying with e.g. a particular hotel?

Thanks



BePu
Amsterdam

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2. Re: Visa for China and AirBNB

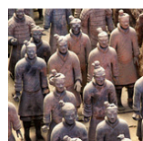
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For visa you need hotel bookings. But you may always cancel that after you get your passports back.

Be very careful with AirBnB. If people are not allowed to rent out the apartment, you cannot register at the police, which you have to do within 25 hrs.

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JohnP1950
California

Level 6 Contributor

4,138 posts
20 reviews
11 helpful votes

3. Re: Visa for China and AirBNB

1 year ago

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Do yourself a favor and just stay at hotels that will automatically register you with the police when you check in. Even if your AirBnB landlord does help you to register, this will take a little bit of time out of your vacation to do and you'll need to do it for each place you stay.

Since your AirBnB landlord likely won't help you to register, you'll end up violating the law by not registering within the 24 hour of arrival requirement, potentially finding when you leave [China](#) that each of you have to pay a fine when processing through Exit Immigration. You might be lucky as discussed in another recent thread and not get caught, but do you really want to chance that?

The time I was turned away from China

Jon Russell @jonrussell / 6:14 pm EST • November 26, 2017

Comment

I was permitted to stay for 24 hours under the shorter transit visa option, but my request to stay for three days — and not utilize the full 144-hour visa — would not be allowed.

The reason, as it was explained to me, was that in 2015 I had broken Chinese law when I failed to present myself to authorities in Beijing when I had visited and stayed at an Airbnb residence on two different trips. Unbeknownst to me at the time — and something that was not communicated by Airbnb — foreigners are required to register at a local police station, but in most cases the hotels where they stay handle this.

Therefore anyone using Airbnb, or staying with friends, must voluntarily visit the city's police station and register. As anyone who has ever spent time in China and doesn't speak the language will know, that's challenging. But it is the law.

**** Yes, language barrier could be another problem too cause I've read couple of comments about inbound tourists being turned down due to the fact that some hosts couldn't communicate in English and etc. However, it's reasonable to suspect that's not our main cause.**

For a company whose vision statement = “Belong Anywhere” and mission statement includes components like “Exceeding Expectations”, Airbnb China should include inbound tourism into one of its bigger pictures too.

Using the Eisenhower Matrix, I would argue that addressing the temporary residence registration issue might not be the most pressing matter at the moment but definitely is one of the more important matter in the long run.

Not Urgent, Important (Draw Parallel) : Spotify’s 2019 Wrapped Execution, Exercise

Urgent, Important

Localization

Safety + Trust

Local Brand Awareness

Host Expansion



Not Urgent, Important

*Temporary Residence
Registration Issue*

** Also, I'd like to point out that not addressing this issue could potentially hurt the brand's name cause it simply sends a message out there that Airbnb has become too big to care, which I sincerely hope that is not true.

The Eisenhower Matrix

Proposed Solutions

- **Setting up kiosks or temporary residence counter at every major airport like most car rental counters**

China Inbound Tourism Potential

- **According to 2018 China Tourism Statistics, among the China inbound tourists, Asians account for 76.3% & Europeans account for 12.5%. Tourists from America, Oceania and Africa account for 7.9%, 1.9% and 1.4% respectively.**
- **Hence, it's not entirely impossible to assume that with proper marketing campaigns targeting at the young Europeans & Americans, we can attract a lot more people to come visit & explore China. Due to currency exchange, China is not an expensive travel destination for Americans and Europeans.**
- **And, if Airbnb China were to figure a way to make it easy for its inbound guests to register their temporary residence and with proper marketing and branding (brand exploring China the “woke” & IT thing that every teenagers should do & etc.), it's pretty obvious that the hotel industry is the only strong competitor left to compete in this inbound tourism market.**

Thank You.