

Brand Journeys to Singles' Day 2020: #1—Uncle Bud's Leverages Celebrity Influence for China Debut



Launching our *Brand Journeys to Singles' Day 2020* series, we profile industrial hemp brand Uncle Bud's and discuss the importance of key opinion leaders (KOLs) in the brand's Tmall Global journey.

- Hemp and CBD brand Uncle Bud's sells more than 70 products across more than 15,000 retailers in the US. The brand is now entering the Chinese market via Alibaba's Tmall Global platform.
- Supported by the Tmall Global marketing team, Uncle Bud's has designed a marketing approach for Singles' Day based on KOLs and celebrity endorsements.
- The brand has a robust market outlook for China. Its multi-channel promotion strategy comprises hiring local Chinese PR services as well as accelerated activity of the popular Chinese social media platforms Little Red Book, WeChat and Weibo.

[Singles' Day](#) (also known as 11.11) is held annually on November 11 and is the largest global online shopping festival. In the lead-up to this year's event, our Brand Journeys to Singles' Day 2020 series profiles 11 brands that are participating in Singles' Day, and we explore each brand's journey on Alibaba's cross-border e-commerce platform, Tmall Global.

In this report, we spotlight Uncle Bud's, an industrial hemp brand.

Uncle Bud's: Brand Background

Uncle Bud's industrial hemp brand was officially launched in September 2018. In less than two years, the brand has grown to include over 70 hemp and CBD products, sold in more than 15,000 stores in the US. The full range includes hemp and CBD products for skin care, personal care and even pet care—all retailing at under \$30.



Headquarters

Beverly Hills, California, US

Funding Stage

Self-funded

Management Team

- Bruno Schiavi—Chairman and Cofounder
- Garrett Greller—Cofounder

The brand was created to provide pain relief solutions, following Cofounder Garrett Greller's experience with chronic pain from arthritis. Inspired by his success with hemp, Greller and the Uncle Bud's team have been successful in sharing their remedies with US consumers.

Brand Spotlight

Uncle Bud's is using this year's Singles' Day as a route to entering the China market, having joined the event through Alibaba's [Go Global 11.11 Pitch Fest](#) on September 15, 2020. Through insights from the Tmall Global team, Greller learned about the importance of using local [KOLs](#) to reach Chinese consumers. Along with leveraging endorsements from American celebrities, this has become a central pillar of the brand's Tmall marketing strategy.

As Chinese influencers have emerged as key drivers behind 11.11 sales, Uncle Bud's has established a KOL marketing campaign for the upcoming shopping festival. NBA legend and entrepreneur Earvin "Magic" Johnson, an Uncle Bud's brand ambassador, will kick off a live launch of the brand's new online store on November 6. In addition to two livestreamed launch events hosted by Johnson, Uncle Bud's has organized a series of radio and online interviews with the basketball star.

The brand has also partnered with actor and activist Jane Fonda, recording artist Toni Braxton and NHL defenseman Seth Jones.



American basketball player Earvin "Magic" Johnson with a display of Uncle Bud's products

Source: Uncle Bud's

China Market Outlook

Uncle Bud's has a robust marketing strategy for the China market, including a partnership with a Chinese PR firm that is renowned for having previously launched many high-profile brands in China and on Tmall. The marketing strategy comprises accelerated activity on Chinese social media platforms [Little Red Book](#), [WeChat](#) and [Weibo](#)—leveraging KOLs, key opinion consumers (KOCs) and Chinese celebrities.

Uncle Bud's has organized multiple press interviews with highly respected Chinese publications, as well as paid social media and paid online marketing activities that will promote the brand through its launch and beyond.

The brand has quadrupled its global retail footprint since its inception and has further marketing plans for China—an expanded partnership with Tmall Global is anticipated for 2021 and beyond.

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