



Suzhou Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism Celebrates Success Inspiring Travelers in North America and Europe to Learn About ‘The City of Arts & Culture’

*Two-year campaign educated consumers on
Suzhou’s signature style of handicrafts, performing arts, and more*

New York, New York (October 27, 2021) – The [Suzhou Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism](#) recently marked the completion of a two-year integrated marketing campaign that featured promotional efforts positioning the historic Chinese destination as “The City of Arts & Culture.” The multi-faceted, international program – which was executed by PHG Consulting, Suzhou’s North American marketing and representation partner since 2014 – is part of an ongoing promotional partnership designed to elevate the city’s profile as a must-visit destination for English-speaking travelers in North America and Europe.

Prior to the onset of COVID-19, activities including a photography-focused press trip and sponsorship of the 20th anniversary of the New York Chinese Scholar’s Garden, which was designed and constructed by a team of artisans from Suzhou. When international travel was halted due to the pandemic, efforts pivoted to focus on encouraging consumers to consider a trip when travel to China is once again possible. Once domestic travel in China re-started, PHG Consulting pivoted its plan and launched tactics that promoted Suzhou to English-speaking expats living in the country. These included a campaign with *Time Out Shanghai* that engaged expats in understanding why Suzhou is the perfect weekend destination, and a cultural showcase at Beijing’s 798 Arts District that brought the destination’s cultural heritage to hundreds of dignitaries, media, key opinion leaders, and consumers.

Meanwhile, international social media users learned about Suzhou’s signature cultural events and handicrafts digitally through interactive, themed social and digital media and video campaigns. The engaging content was shared with target audiences through Instagram and Facebook Stories, IGTV, YouTube, and Twitter, resulting in some of the destination’s highest social media engagement since 2014. From September 2019 through August 2021, more than 50,000 impressions and 28,000 social media users interacted with online campaign content, which resulted in more than 25,000 visits to the destination’s dedicated English-language website, TraveltoSuzhou.com. Distinctive cultural celebrations that PHG Consulting helped bring to life virtually across Suzhou’s social media channels included the city’s New Year’s Eve bell ringing festival at Hanshan Temple, Lunar New Year activities, and the Biluochun Tea harvest season.

Despite challenges presented by the pandemic and its travel-related restrictions, over the last two years, Suzhou’s social media channels have grown exponentially on North America’s most important and wide-reaching platforms including [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#). Monumental milestones include the growth of the @VisitSuzhou channels on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to 870,000 likes, 200,000 followers, and 30,000 followers, respectively, as well as more than 86,000 views of the destination’s YouTube videos to date

PHG Consulting also engaged with the North American travel trade community on Suzhou's behalf, holding more than 50 one-on-one meetings at trade shows including United States Tour Operator Association (USTOA) 2019, *The New York Times* Travel Show, Educational Travel Consortium, and Travel & Adventure Show. PHG Consulting and Suzhou also engaged in a cooperative marketing campaign with the international travel booking engine Tour Radar, which included development of a customized landing page to promote travel including Suzhou, along with a trip giveaway contest and promotional campaign that resulted in 209,436 social media impressions and 5,300 entries.

Over the course of PHG Consulting's seven-year partnership with Suzhou, the destination has penetrated North American media in a highly impactful way, and, for the first time, targeted European travelers this year. A dedicated Beijing-based team promotes the destination and its international marketing efforts through a focused media relations program including one-on-one meetings with top trade and consumer media, press release distribution, and events. In the past 24 months, more than 1,000 positive editorial articles have been published across North American and European outlets, generating more than 300 million media impressions, while in China, 86 positive articles about international and domestic marketing efforts generated more than 41 million impressions.

"I am proud that we have continued to bring the unique aspects of Suzhou and Jiangnan culture to foreign travelers on various platforms, despite the challenges over the past two years," said Rudong Wang, head of the international communication and cooperation department at the Suzhou Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism. "It has been a joy to share our messages with travelers through traditional media outlets and also engage directly via our social media platforms during a time when we are unable to welcome them in person – something we look forward to doing very soon."

About Suzhou

For more than 2,500 years, Suzhou has been known as a center of arts and culture. Intellectuals, artists, and high profile public figures have long been drawn to the city's romantic canals and stunning classical gardens, nine of which have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Performing arts including the Kunqu Opera and Pingtan storytelling originated in Suzhou, and the city is also important to the design and fashion worlds as a center for silk making and embroidery. In addition to its arts and culture, Suzhou is home to plentiful natural areas that allow for boundless outdoor activities. Visitors seeking Suzhou's modern side will find five-star hotels, the iconic Lake Jinji, limitless shopping, and China's largest overwater Ferris Wheel in the upscale and contemporary SIP District. Each year, millions of tourists travel to Suzhou to experience the destination's more than 400 attractions, ranging from pagodas and temples to historical districts and world-class museums.

Suzhou is located in the center of the Yangtze River Delta, approximately 60 miles west of Shanghai. Suzhou is easily accessible via direct air service from North America and Europe to Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG.) and is well connected with nearby cities including Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Nanjing by frequent high speed trains.

For more information on Suzhou, visit TravelToSuzhou.com, and follow the destination on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

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