

Chinese internet publishing options

The rules and regulations governing the publication of website content in mainland China are overseen by PR China. This paper is our understanding as of the date of publication.

These rules and regulations require your business to have access to an Internet content publishing (ICP) license before publishing on the Chinese Internet. Different levels of ICP licenses enable you to publish various types of content and engage in online trading.



Foundation Being seen in China articles

Discovery Being found in China article

Execution Start trading in China articles

Focus: publishing + platforms

Audience: overseas businesses

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Overview

Publishing internet content in mainland China, such as a website or app, is subject to national government rules and regulations enforced locally by the city/region.

These rules and regulations require your business to have access to an Internet content publishing (ICP) license before publishing on the Chinese Internet. Different levels of ICP licenses enable you to publish various types of content and engage in online trading.

However, there are ways to publish online in China without needing your business to have an ICP. These are Chinese platforms and services, such as Chinese email, social media, and search engines, where service providers must ensure their customers comply with Chinese publishing rules and regulations.

Under certain conditions, Access to China can assist international businesses in establishing their online presence in China by serving as an agent for their Chinese publications. There are many ways to publish your online content in China. We recommend considering all options before making a decision.

Options are in three groups

- International and Chinese e-Commerce platforms
- International and Chinese System as a Service (SaaS)
- Your internet presence.

Note: "International" in the context of this paper means "any platform or service running outside mainland China" and includes Hong Kong and Macau.

No ICP is needed for internet content published outside China, including Hong Kong and Macau. However, access to your internet content outside China may be blocked (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, etc.) or slowed down, making it unusable (e.g., Google).

Recommended actions:

- Test your internet content accessibility from mainland China. Review what can and cannot be seen, webtest.accesstochina.com
- Register your company brands in China. For more information, please see the article on intellectual property .

Management summary

International and Chinese e-Commerce and IT platforms

In mainland China, e-commerce and IT platforms are very popular. The service providers have obtained approval from the Chinese government to publish on the Chinese Internet. Therefore, you do not need an Internet Content Provider (ICP) license to use the providers' services.

The Chinese platform suppliers ensure that customers comply with Chinese publication and trading rules and regulations.

If you are selling from within mainland China, you will need a Chinese business to process payments, tax returns, and other related matters. Most SDPs offer an international service that allows you to sell to mainland China without needing a local Chinese company.



Quick checklist

Use this before choosing a publishing route.

- Are you publishing/hosting inside mainland China (ICP risk) or outside China?
- Are any key platforms/resources blocked (Google, YouTube, Facebook, etc.)?
- Have you tested the end-user experience from China (DNS + page load + missing content)?
- Are you using China-approved platforms where possible (e-mails, social media, SaaS providers)?
- If trading inside China, do you have a China business entity/agent for payments and tax?
- Have you registered your trademarks/brand names in China?

Note: "International" includes Hong Kong and Macau. Content can be accessible but still unusable due to slow loading or missing resources.

Need help?

If you would like help selecting a practical publishing route (platform-first vs website-first) and testing what can be seen from China, please get in contact.

support@accesstochina.com

Option

Summary

Recommendation

International search engines

Bing has 35.96% of the search market in China.
Google is blocked in China.
Google has 19.4% worldwide Mandarin

Good Option

traffic.

Article: **Chinese search engines**

Chinese search engines

Baidu 47.07%
360 search Haosou 8.08%
Sogou 3.69%
Shenma 1.68%

Article: **Chinese search engines**

Option for consideration for Baidu (SEO in Mandarin)

Overseas eMalls

Amazon, eBay, etc
Article: **e-Commerce from outside China**

Poor option

International Chinese retail e-Malls

Tmall Global
JDBuy international
Redbook
Pinduoduo Global Shopping
Douyin E-Commerce Global
DHgate

Article: **Chinese e-Commerce third-party vs website**

Option for you to consider. It can be costly.

Chinese local retail e-Malls

Taobao, Tmall, JD Buy, Pinduoduo, 1688.com, Redbook, Meituan, etc.

There are many local Chinese e-malls. You will need a Chinese company or person to sell these e-Malls.

Article: **Chinese e-Commerce third-party vs website**

It is a good place for research. You require a local Chinese agent to sell.

Chinese B2B platforms

Alibaba (B2B platform) is the largest and most widely used business platform in China and internationally.
This has been very successful for Chinese and overseas companies worldwide. It is the perfect place to research the world market. In listing, you will open your company to a potential 60% of the world market.

Article: **Chinese e-Commerce**

Option for consideration

International media channels

International media channels are blocked in China.

This is a problem when you use media channel content on your website. Although your website is not blocked, it displays missing content when accessed in China. You can check what can be seen in China:

Website Page Test

Review your website content

Chinese media channels

China has powerful media channels, including Tudou, Youku, and QIY. Over 100 media channels are in China, and they are tightly regulated. Overseas companies can upload their business media content to some of these services, provided they comply with Chinese regulations.
Article: [Information being updated](#)

Possible option

International social media

All international social media sites, including LinkedIn, are blocked in China. You can check what can be seen in China:
Website Page Test
Article: [Information being updated](#)

Review your website content

Chinese social media

Chinese social media is very successful, with millions of consumers and businesses. There are many social media platforms. The biggest is WeChat. Overseas consumers and businesses can use WeChat and be seen in China. TikTok, available to overseas consumers and businesses, is not accessible in China.
Article: [Information being updated](#)

Possible option

Chinese AI

China is quickly developing and rolling out the Internet of Things (millions of devices per month). Again, Chinese rules and regulations are still to be developed.
Article: [Information being updated](#)

Option to monitor

International and Chinese System as a Service (SaaS)

Software as a service (SaaS) is a type of software licensing model. It is delivered on a subscription basis, centrally hosted, and managed. It is sometimes referred to as "on-demand software" and was formerly called "software plus services" by Microsoft.

An overseas company can offer SaaS to a business or consumer in mainland China, provided the service runs outside China.

If you already have SaaS, please verify that your software components are accessible from China: <https://webtest.accesstochina.com> (including the help desk/support systems).

Option

Summary

Recommendation

International search engines

Your SaaS is running internationally outside China.
Check that your service can be seen and used in China: **Website Page Test**
Article: [Information being updated](#)

Possible option

Chinese enclosed network

Your SaaS is hosted locally in China and accessed by Chinese offices over a non-public port and firewall configuration,

Good option

allowing office-to-office connections only.

Article: [Information being updated](#)

Chinese white Label

White-label your SaaS to Chinese businesses

Good option

The Chinese company will be responsible for obtaining the ICP and ensuring the software remains under control.

Article: [Information being updated](#)

Chinese public

Local Chinese hosting, ICP certification, a Chinese business license, and locally hosted software will be required.

Option for consideration

Article: [Information being updated](#)

Split services between Chinese and international SaaS

Local Chinese hosting, ICP certification and a Chinese business will be required. Host the "Front" of your software in Hong Kong (with a direct connection) and host your backend software elsewhere.

Good option

This will significantly enhance IPR protection.

Article: [Information being updated](#)

Your business website in China

Publishing your internet content internationally or within China using a hosting service, server, or other similar means.

Option

Summary

Recommendation

Use your existing website

This is the "do nothing" option. You can leave your website on its existing domain and platform.

The first point to be checked

Problems with domain names and website response times in China often prevent your business, products, and services from being visible to potential customers.

Check that your website can be seen and used in China: **Website Page Test**

Article: **Business domain name has not been found in China**

Asia website hosting

A copy of your website (using a local Chinese-hosted domain is recommended) on our Asia hosting services with direct access to China's internet.

Work is often needed to update and maintain the website

Website content often needs to be updated to make your website visible in China.

Article: **Access to China Asian cloud services**

Dynamic cloud platform

A dynamic copy of your website (a reverse proxy) with direct access to China's

Good Option

internet.

I've dynamically made changes to your website as needed, ensuring the content remains visible.

Article: **Make your business website seen and found in China**

Trading without borders

Trading without borders is a concept started by Alibaba over eight years ago. Alibaba found a way to enable overseas businesses to trade online in China by dividing its website into separate sections for China, marketing, data, and Hong Kong for order processing.

Our dynamic cloud platform enables your business to streamline ordering processing more simply.

Article: **Products and services without borders**

[Good Option](#)

 [Test a web page from China](#)

 [Download "Chinese internet publishing options" paper \(PDF\)](#)

Access to China — Chinese internet publishing options.

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