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**The digital age for marketing impact on China music industry and Chinese  
consumer motivations**

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# **The Digital Age for Marketing Impact on China Music Industry and Chinese Consumer Motivations**

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**Abstract:** This study examines the effect that the digital age takes on the music industry and the consumers' motivation. The qualitative multiple-case study methodology uses to research the objectives. The findings show These social media provide the new function platforms to musicians and users. From the user experiences of social media, consumer motivation includes extending social relationships and identity, users' participation in two-way interaction between person and organizations, and a sense of enjoyment. The digital age increases the shareability, communicative and innovation of Chinese music industry.

**Keywords:** *digital age; music industry; customer motivation; social media*

**Data Availability:** *The data are publicly available from the sources identified in the paper.*

## I . INTRODUCTION

In this study, we focus on the impact of digital age take to the music industry and the consumers' motivation. Previous researches mainly focus on how digital age influences the spreading of music in China (Menglan, 2014), how online reviews changes (Chen, Y., Fay, S., & Wang, Q, 2011), and in the United States and China, the cultural differences of using social media (Men, L. R., & Tsai, W. , 2012).

It has long been the sales of music CDs and tapes have been down recently and most of the concerts are unprofitable. The revenue of copyright also is limited, because the lots of pirated music and the clouded charge system (Salo, J., Lankinen, M., & Mäntymäki, M., 2013). However, the digital music market that combination of emerging data technologies and music are presented fast development.

In China, at the same time as the internet tools spread music, what is this digital revolution takes to whole music industry should pay more attention. So far, the current situation of digital music in China has become the focus in fields of contemporary entertainment, media and culture. At the same time, music industry and information industry, network industry are also emerging the new industry model (Junyu, 2014). Therefore, the main research question aims to answer following question: What impacts does the digital age make to the development of music industry? And how does it make the consumers' motivation?

With the development of the digital era, the significant reform of the structure of the Chinese music industry took place. In the traditional music industry, these data technologies mainly refer to social media and digital audio and video media directly related to music industry. Along with the in-depth application of digital technology in music industry, digital music is gradually known with public (Xuan, 2014). Online music form from the digital age was set to be the new generation label (Bhattacharjee, S., Gopal, R. D., Lertwachara, K., & Marsden, J. R., 2009). The revolution of various network technologies has brought great changes to China's traditional music industry, which has not only brought great impact to the music industry but also hidden unlimited development opportunities (Junyu, 2014). Under these effects, the form of music products, marketing forms, and music consumption methods have changed (Boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B., 2008). Thus, the significance of this study is to analyze the situation caused by the combination of digital technology and music industry.

Compared with western countries, Chinese social media users have more demand of social relationship, such as social identity (Wang Guibin, Stephen Mcdonwell, 2013). Chinese users are more active on social media and have more social media products. By contrast, western users commonly use Facebook and YouTube (Salo, J., Lankinen, M., & Mäntymäki, M., 2013). Therefore, China's social media usage is more complex and consumer motivation is more diverse. The finding of this study is more significant for current situation of Chinese music industry.

Our research hypothesizes the usage of social media is the most important aspect of this digital revolution of Chinese music industry and extending social relationships and identity, users' participation in two-way interaction between persons and organizations, and a sense of enjoyment are the main Chinese consumer motivation. And this study uses qualitative multiple-case study and semi-structured interview as methodology. The researcher finds the purpose of users using social media and consumer motivation consistent with hypothesis.

This study has made contributions to two aspects in terms to existing literature. Firstly, for the theoretical contribution of this research, it examines the impact of digital age take to music industry among the usage of social media tools in China sales

marketing way, and the music consumption method. What is more, it also reports the consumer motivation. Furthermore, from the point of view of the practical value, the digital age takes a great impact to music industry with a lot of opportunities, at the same time, it also lurks the element of limitations. The paper can present the development limitation and prove more valuable in the future for digital music industry.

Part II shows literature reviews and background information. Part III includes the methodology used in this study, collection result, validity and reliability and discussion. Finally, the conclusion follows in part IV. Part V mainly presents references.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Type of Chinese Social Media Tool**

When referred to the digital age, many phenomena of social media are rising in China and has become the most popular Chinese internet field of business. After 2007, the social media which web 2.0 as the core and require the users to use real identity is accelerating, both user scale and influence. With social media jumped into popularity, the new cultural transmission characteristics formed with information exchange and transmission which goes beyond traditional internet. Therefore, social media can achieve new business model operations in China. Chinese social media tools such as Weibo, QQ, and WeChat enable to be dominant.

Tan Tian and Zhang Zijun (2017) referred that under the Chinese digital age, the four different social media categories in China have formed into social networking, forum boards, content communities, and blogs. As social media tools enter the internet transmission age, complex social networking has been formed and changed the communication way of Chinese society. This paper presents the social media tools as the feature and reflection of the digital age.

### **Chinese Consumer Motives for Using Social Media**

Social media is the platform of a large number of users to voluntarily contribute, extract, and create news information, then spread information through their common contact people. Dholakia et al. (2004) referred people psychological and individual needs motivate the using of social media, and they also mentioned the definition of “social identity” from social identity theory. It conferred people’s collective representation as a part of group when this psychological state adapted to virtual community (Dholakia, U. M., Bagozzi, R. P., Klein, L., & Pearo, A, 2004).

The hope of social media gives people that build social relationships at a low cost. Wang Guibin et al. (2013) found that the meaning is more important in China because the complexity and high cost of traditional Chinese social relationships. However, social media achieve the low cost of personal social relationship building and provide many conveniences. Granovetter M. (1983) points out that people regularly depend on this relationship when they are contriving social identity. Network social relationships can easily extend web of friends. Former President Obama is one example. Mr. Obama uses Tweet to make the strong relation network, it offers the opportunity to many followers to connection with President. This crowd gathered psychology offers a great advantage to Mr. Obama to get throne.

Furthermore, people use Social media as a tool that they are not only participating in creating and sharing opinion but also making interaction. Gan Chunmei et al. (2016) found that using social media for entertainment, enjoyment, information and seeking friends are the major motives of Chinese consumers.

According to the literature review about using social media, the current study suggests the Chinese consumer motives followed: (1) extending social relationship and identity; (2) users' participation in two-way interaction; and (3) a sense of enjoyment.

### **Chinese Community Typology**

Some of the Chinese scholars define community as the people crowd and activity area that has some interact relationship and common cultural maintenance, having certain social activity base on the geographic location (Bagozzi, R. P., Dholakia, U. M. , 2002). The development of digital age makes the limitation of geographic location has almost disappeared, people who are indifferent city, country can be easily gathered. Therefore, the concept of "Virtual Community" is developed. At the same time, community means not only specific area of real life. Any people have communication on affective level and interaction on behavior that can call community.

Virtual Community is a person or organization joined up that the common value or same interest, through digital media to interact and share the zone. In China, internet virtual community has various categories (Armstrong, A., Hagel, J. III. , 1995). According to the reason why community is built can divide into four categories: community of transaction, community of interest, community of fantasy, community of relationship. The community of transaction focus on providing the transaction floor to both seller and buyer who want to do the transaction. As the gathering place of information in China, community of transaction increase information transparency and change the disadvantage of Chinese consumers. Then it can decrease the research cost of consumers and motivates consumers' behavior. With further explore of Chinese digital business, community of transactions got developing quickly in China. The building of community of interest based on interest, people who are dispersed but have same interest can get gather. It is the most common internet community in China by far. Community of fantasy provides virtual zone to people to play the role what they want, then satisfy their fantasy motivation. Typical representatives of this community in China include online games (Steam, Blizzard et al.), some domestic chat site (WeChat, QQ). The community to a certain extent to satisfy people's need for escapism. As an efficient communication tool, community of relationships can help users find like-mind friends and build wide personal relationship. People can get a sense of belonging and identity.

Furthermore, content communities are the subtype of community of interest that focus on users posting users' content, such as music (NetEase cloud music, QQ music, Xiami Music), videos (iQiyi, Youku, Bilibili, Tencent Video), text (Weibo, Zhihu, Douban). This social media of this kind provides a platform to users to update information or follow other users. This service generally uses for artists share information with followers.

## **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL RESULT**

### **Research methodology**

An exploratory, multiple-case study (Yin, 1989) is applied in this study, which is designed to understand the impacts that the digital age takes on the music industry and the current consumers' motivation.

In the empirical part of this research include the primary data and secondary data. The primary data were collected with music artist interviews, telephone interviews, WeChat interview. Secondary data were employed with the related literature, website. The multiple cases of evidence always show the difference and similarity, then increase the reliability of research and make it more robust (Yin, 1989). This study focuses on research a phenomenon under the background that the researcher cannot control, thus it uses multiple-case study methodology (Yin, 1989).

### **Case selection**

This multiple-case study selects samples accord to the subject matter expert (SMEs) meeting criteria for participants (Yin, 1989). The selection criteria include 1) adult age over 20; 2) professional working experience in the field of music. This purposeful sampling methodology through the predetermined criteria to select the samples can make an in-depth study in the efficient information (Patton, 2015).

The empirical data consist of four interviews conducted with the music artists where the interviewees are familiar with music industry marketing. The professional music artists have several years' experience of working in the music industry. All respondents hold reliable points of the current situation of music. The interview was conducted in 2019.

### **Methodology design**

The data collection methodology uses four semi-structured interviews on Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The interview questions were intended to explore the opinion of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) about the marketing impact of what the digital age takes to music industry and consumer motivation. All interviews were recorded by the tape of iPhone or screenshot, and this digital recording is with the permission of interviewees.

After the completion of interviews, these interview recordings were converted to text and some interviews need to translate from Chinese into English. These transcripts were studied and reviewed multiple times. The four interviewees met the selection criteria: 1) being adult age over 20; 2) professional working experience in the field of music. Data were collected from four participants by the tape of iPhone and screenshot.

This part provides the result of each participant along with the key findings and themes from the interview on the opinion of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on the marketing impact what the digital age takes to the music industry and consumer motivation.

This study attempted to research the following questions:

**RQ1:** What are the insights of professional musicians on social media factors of the digital age that make an impact on the music industry in China?

**RQ2:** What are the insights of professional musicians on how do social media make Chinese consumers' motivation?

These issues will be researched through seven questions in the semi-structured interview. The seven questions are followed:

**Question 1:** What is your common music social media as an artist? And what criteria for selecting music social media to upload your music?

**Question 2:** What music social media have you ever used? The three representative types include social networks, content communities, and other virtual communities.

**Question 3:** How do you try on these social media?

**Question 4:** What your perception among the elements driving artist marketing by using these social media or virtual communities?

**Question 5:** As a music consumer, what social media have you ever used and what's your feeling?

**Question 6:** What do you think the purpose of why consumers use these social media?

**Question 7:** What do you think the consumer motivation during using social media?

## **Participants**

The multiple-case study of this study includes four subject matter experts. These subject matter experts come from NetEase cloud musician, music producer, DJ et al. industry relevant to music.

**Case1:** DJ Hakeen is the owner of Wenzhou Noise Space DJ studio, who is good at using electro house, trap, hardtrap, trance, psytrance, bass et al. music style work as a live DJ. He has experience in music industry as a DJ for some decades ago. In the decade's years of his music career, he has worked as music director in SOHO bar, but also as electronic music and RAVE culture promoter.

**Case2:** Black\$oul is a local rapper and producer in Wenzhou and participates in the creation with Jewish Poet Crew in 2017. Jewish Poet Crew presents the new emerging music power of Wenzhou. In 2011, Black\$oul released his first EP. He had accumulated a lot of experience in digital music industry.

**Case3:** DenguE is a NetEase musician. He played the tonic guitar solo in Fishhead Killer Band between 2011 to 2016. In 2016, he began to create folk music. And he began to involve in hardcore rap music in 2017. In his eight years' music career, he involved many music styles, and as an internet musician, he is experienced in the using of network in music industry.

**Case4:** BGhost is a rapper of BENGBIGANG Crew. His crew has little known in China. He engages music in 2015 and found out his potential of music in one year and the rap style of himself. He has held the Desperadoes MC Battle between 2017 to 2018. As a musician, his many representative works have uploaded in some major music platforms.

## **Result of study**

The integration of information presents in Table 2. The result of the current study present that customers use social media for extending social relationships and identity, users' participation in two-way interaction between persons and organizations, and a sense of enjoyment. Furthermore, getting information and content is an important motivate in Chinese music industry. The artist interviewees respondent that high-quality content is the extremely impact factor of social media in Chinese music industry. At the time of the study in China, most participants used NetEase Cloud to listen to music and discovering new content. Yet compared with the traditional music industry,

consumer prefers to buy online digital music more than physical album. Weibo generally used as the information source of fan page that the content includes photo, video, and interaction with others directly. Currently, these activities have to a certain extent move to NetEase Cloud. More and more artists and followers gathered in NetEase Cloud. Table 1 summarized music social media used in the artist field and Table 3 present a summary of the ways how do customers use social media.

**Table 1**  
**Music Social Media Used in Artist Field**

Type	Social Media Tools	Purpose
Social networks	WeChat, QQ	Sharing music, artist-fan communication, advertising, conversation
Content communities,	NetEase Cloud, Weibo, QQ Music, Apple Music, Xiami Music, Beatport	Uploading content, discovering new music, conversation, marketing new albums, announcing new concerts, advertising, evaluating artist, artist-fan communication
Other virtual communities	Baidu TieBar, YY, Douban	Uploading content, artist-fan communication, linking with social networking, conversation, advertising

## Discussion

This study set out to research the following research question: What are the social media factors of the digital age make an impact on music industry in China? How social media does make Chinese consumers' motivation? This objective was addressed in Table 1 and Table 3 where three motivate Chinese customers to affect them to use different social media tools and evaluate the purpose.

Compared to other research, the result of this research provides an understanding of the tendency of music industry under the development of digital age. The multiple-case study gets the qualitative data to support the theoretical contribution.

## Limitation

A significant limitation of this research is that there is the inevitable bias exists in the semi-structured interviews when the artist shares the opinion on the subject (Patton, 2015). Therefore, the interviewees and researchers can take potential bias into research. It might be a significant limitation of multiple-case study methodology. Additionally, this research reduces the generalizability (Patton, 2015). The interviewees are the professional field artist that cannot be generalized to normal customers.

**Table 2**  
**Integration of Information**

	<b>Case 1:</b> DJ Hakeen	<b>Case 2:</b> Black\$oul	<b>Case 3:</b> DenguE	<b>Case 4:</b> BGhost
<b>Q1:</b> What is your common music social media as an artist? And what criteria for selecting music social media to upload your music?	For me, because I am a DJ by profession, Beatport is a suitable platform for DJ. The NetEase cloud is also occasionally used because more people use the NetEase cloud and more people hear about it. The main reason why I choose Beatport is that this platform is used by many DJs and provides more resources for the DJ industry.	Now it's usually using NetEase cloud. It feels like there are more users and it's faster to upload music and pass the checking examination. Now it's good to give some benefits to musicians. When I first got in touch with this industry, I was usually Tudou, Douban musician, and like YYFC. Because Chinese platforms were not very developed at the time, this kind of spontaneous platform was more suitable for free musicians like us. Now that more and more standardized music social media appears, we also have many options to upload works.	NetEase and Weibo. The reason why I choose NetEase, it started as the criteria of registration to be a NetEase musician is the lowest. If you have original music content and you can upload. It's not like QQ music needs a tedious checking process. Yep, the other media have the checking trouble. But NetEase is convenient, the music content can basically upload if you do not involve highly sensitive types. Then, about Weibo, it can use to upload many videos. In addition to audio track content, if you make music as your career, you also need provide some visual content for your fans. You can through Weibo to upload them. NetEase also can upload	NetEase cloud music. Actually, I uploaded in Xiami at the beginning, but my music could not pass the upload checking of Xiami, so I started to use NetEase cloud.

			videos, but for video content communities, Weibo is the biggest and the best one.	
<b>Q2:</b> What music social media have you ever used? The three representative types include social networks, content communities, and other virtual communities.	Mainly use Beatport, NetEase cloud, QQ music. Beatport should be the site where DJs from all over the world meet. NetEase cloud and QQ music in the current network era also have a lot of good music. Because there are a lot of people to share their music collection, but it's a bit like looking for a needle in a haystack. I am a live DJ, so I use social media WeChat, Weibo is mainly used to announce my life or upload my live video.	About social networks, YY or Baidu TieBar were mainly used for social networking. At that time, these social media were not mature enough. Now, WeChat, Weibo and other relatively complete social media will also be used. MV and music, mainly NetEase Cloud. About NetEase, general communication with fans can also be private messages and comments, so in terms of virtual communities, NetEase Cloud can also be completed.	You're talking about these three functional communities; I have separate platforms for these communities. But if saying which one has done best, I think it is NetEase. For social networks, Weibo, Instagram, WeChat. But WeChat is not relatively public. Uploading content mainly uses Weibo and NetEase, sometimes may use YouTube. For virtual communities, which some still NetEase. Because I'm still a niche singer, the Listeners also leave messages via the NetEase. Virtual communities are also basically finished via NetEase, NetEase can all three functions is done. You can upload your content and your communication community. Then, you can do a social chat.	These three functional communities for me, I usually use the NetEase cloud. Because NetEase cloud is more convenient for musicians, and most famous musicians also use NetEase cloud. In other words, uploading music and video will go to use WeChat, because people use WeChat in life is the highest frequency, so I share my content in WeChat, you can also easily see or hear. Promotion and publicity are on Weibo. Compared with WeChat, Weibo is a more open community, so the promotion effect of works will be better.
<b>Q3:</b> How do you try on	DJ is divided into live DJs and producers. I've been a	In addition to uploading works, I mainly use these	In the social network aspect, because I have my music work,	I think music social media provides a more means of

<p>these social media?</p>	<p>live DJ for a long time, so I use social media to promote more because the lives of mine need to be promoted through WeChat and Weibo. Now occasionally, NetEase cloud is also used, because NetEase cloud now has a cloud village community where users can publish status. In cooperation with NetEase cloud, users can also purchase live tickets directly on NetEase cloud. Therefore, we will also publish performance information and ticket purchase links in NetEase cloud to facilitate our live publicity and ticket sales.</p>	<p>social media to promote my new songs or new concerts, etc. In addition, social media is also a platform for us to get to know other musicians. The NetEase Cloud's private messaging feature allows us to contact musicians who we're interested in, collaborate on our music, and more. I like to upload my mv and music to the NetEase. I used to use Xiami. However, Xiami's users are not as many as NetEase, so most of them are now advertising in NetEase Cloud.</p>	<p>so publicity is definitely needed. I'll share it on social networks to let more people know what I'm doing. Actually, Social networks don't help much with my music, it's more about sharing what's in your life. But about the works, just say, let more people know my works. For uploading contents, I'd like to post in NetEase, the listeners can easily find my music in NetEase. For virtual communities, it's kind of like an after-sale platform. People who like listening to my songs can communicate with me.</p>	<p>music production, and we use these unique advantages to upload music, images, and videos for users to enjoy. Meanwhile, for musicians, I think the main function is to upload content. In addition, exploring new musical styles, communicating with other musicians and interacting with fans are all functions provided by social media.</p>
<p><b>Q4:</b> What your perception among the elements driving artist marketing by using these social media</p>	<p>These social media have provided the music industry with a platform to spread across a wide range of areas and with flexibility. What's more, the Internet in the digital age is very inclusive and fast. Audiences can quickly find music-</p>	<p>In my opinion, the development of social media has provided a new media environment for the development of the music industry, which has simplified the process of music production and distribution. The speed of</p>	<p>I think one of the nice things about Weibo and WeChat is that everyone has their own friends on both platforms, and they are also musicians. My friends have shared my music work, there is a spreading effect. However, about NetEase, I think this platform</p>	<p>In my opinion, the Internet of music consumption has made people generally accept the way. Digital music can not only be easily stored, copied and played, but also facilitate the transmission of music. I think it's the digital age that</p>

<p>or virtual communities ?</p>	<p>related content, which is more efficient and comprehensive. In my opinion, it also improves the interactivity of the music industry market. No matter between musicians or between musicians and listeners, they can directly communicate with each other on various aspects of music content through these media.</p>	<p>music production has been accelerated, and the intermediate links of music industry operations have been continuously reduced. In such channels, the cost of music promotion is gradually reduced, which improves the level of music consumption and helps to realize the economic value of music. We also got more opportunities to develop our music career. In addition, through such a digital environment, the music industry has gained more opportunities to interact with consumers and better meet their personalized needs.</p>	<p>is convenient for helping publicity. Additionally, one of the cool things about NetEase is the musician index. After I upload my content, it counts how much I listen to each day, and who is listening to my music. Then it can analyze my listeners, and defines my style of music, tag and categorize. Musician index is a high-tech tool, it recommends my music to people who like my type of music via NetEase daily recommendations, and accurately promote my works.</p>	<p>has had the greatest impact on the music market. In terms of consumer, social media has enhanced the communicativeness of the music industry, allowing users to communicate and enjoy music in unlimited time and space. In this way, the loss of consumers is reduced, and new markets are constantly opened.</p>
<p><b>Q5:</b> As a music consumer, what social media have you ever used and what's your feeling?</p>	<p>I use more NetEase cloud, QQ music, WeChat. NetEase cloud music is a music social media whose core architecture is "playlist". I think the biggest product feature of NetEase cloud music is the music community. Whether it is the</p>	<p>As a consumer, I prefer to listen to music on the NetEase cloud. The quality of the songs is generally higher, and it sounds better. The daily recommendation function of NetEase cloud is also one of my favorite things. It will recommend you</p>	<p>As a consumer, I always switch between apple music and the NetEase Cloud, because of the issue of music copyright. The copyright of Chinese music is very strange. Because Tencent music is exclusive, they buy out a lot of copyright. However, we can find from</p>	<p>I prefer NetEase cloud and Xiami. NetEase cloud music is better. NetEase cloud music attracted me most is the playlist, and can send music independent musicians, you can hear a lot of free musician in singing songs, it is nice.</p>

	<p>comment area or the function of sharing music dynamics, these forms of interaction are a concrete way for people who come here to discover that there are still similar kinds of existence.</p> <p>QQ music, the sound quality will be a little better, it can also choose according to your playback device to adapt to the sound quality.</p>	<p>according to your favorite music style. You can hear many good works and discover many new artists. The only bad thing is that many songs have no copyright, which is a great pity. Copyright protection is the key to the sustainable development of music in the new media era. So much attention has been paid to copyright control of online music.</p>	<p>apple music. But I've used NetEase Cloud, Apple Music, Kugou Music, Xiami Music. A lot of people are using cool dogs these days.</p>	<p>And I think NetEase cloud music attracts me most is its comments, the outpouring of emotion in the song in the comments, so I think it is a special social media.</p>
<p><b>Q6:</b> What do you think the purpose of why consumers use these social media?</p>	<p>The purpose of using music social media is mostly to find music. Discover new music or find a better musical experience. The NetEase cloud provides rich music styles and diverse functions to listeners and achieves social purposes while listening to music. Using other music social media such as Xiami and Weibo has a similar purpose. Social media, such as Weibo, are more used to learn</p>	<p>I think it's for music or making friends. Therefore, I think this is also the reason why most people use NetEase cloud, because NetEase cloud is more inclined to operate this product as a community, and users have a sense of belonging and cohesion. Users can upload their own radio stations, music stories, everyone can express themselves easily. "Personalized recommendation", "private</p>	<p>From my point of view, as a Chinese, different social media is mainly used because of copyright issues. If there is not the music that I want in this music media, I would go to another one that has the copyright. NetEase cloud did a really good job. Their information system is very good. Daily recommend songs match my taste. They are also developing social-network functions. You can find someone who listens to the</p>	<p>I think music media provides users with a new way of communication, which is simple and convenient for users. The purpose of most users is to post comments and communicate through private messages. In addition, discover new music, the recommendation function provided by Xiami and NetEase cloud also facilitate more users.</p>

	information or share their own lives.	FM" functions, also according to the user's music habit automatically match.	same music as you, and there are many comments about this song so that you can chat with each other. If you use Weibo, you can find a lot of good musicians and you can find them after Weibo has more users. And I always find what I like on Weibo, I can also interact with the artists I like.	
<b>Q7:</b> What do you think the consumer motivation during using social media?	Music social media provides consumers with an online platform to express their feelings freely. Share your thoughts and understandings in the virtual space of the Internet. Some listeners also use social media in order to improve their appreciation of music and communicate freely and express their opinions and understandings of music.	I think in terms of music, people use it because they like listening to music. In other perspectives, some people want to find like-minded people, such as the same taste in music, like the same musician. Such communication is also a way to make friends in the digital age. I think more people communicate through the functions provided by social media, such as the comment area of NetEase cloud, communication area and so on.	I think there is a lot of youth who used NetEase Cloud. Through NetEase Cloud Music, I can look at the playlists of my friends, and then find those friends who have the same taste as me, sometimes I can find good things in their playlist. On Weibo, you can pay attention to the musicians you like, and the number of Weibo fans is also a factor that everyone concerned about because you can know the popularity of your favorite artists by the number of Weibo fans.	I think I agree with the previous interviewees you mentioned. Because users of music social media must be looking for music in the first place. Social platforms in the digital age also allow users to communicate with each other in the process. That's something the traditional music industry can't do.

**Table 3**  
**Customers' Use of Social Media**

Type	Social Media Tools	Purpose
Social networks	WeChat	Sharing music, discovering new music, reading news
Content communities	NetEase Cloud	Listening to music, joining artist fan page, posting comments, discovering new music, download playlist, creating playlist, view friend's playlist, viewing content (Music, music video, live performance), searching content, viewing daily content recommendation, purchasing albums and concerts
	Weibo	Searching artist information, viewing content (Music video, live performance), reading news, searching content, joining artist fan page, discovering new artists, posting comments, reading Weibo of registered friends
	Xiami Music	Browsing recommendation, discovering new music, posting comments, downloading music
Other virtual communities	Baidu TieBar	Posting comments and questions to community, participating events, communicating with users, discovering new information

### **Reliability and validity**

Quantitative research made up the observable and quantifiable facts originate the concepts of reliability and validity (Golafshani, 2003). Reliability means the degree to which small population research can occur on a large scale, and validity describes the measurement of whether to capture the accurate phenomenon (Golafshani, 2003). In this part, researcher will discuss how these were applied in this study.

**Internal Validity.** The internal validity depends on whether the data collection in the finding of this study given credible (Yin, 1989). The main strategy is data from multiple sources can increase the validity and reliability (Yin, 1989). This study collects

multiple cases that help to infer coincidental events in the causal relationship (Yin, 1989).

**External Validity.** External validity means the extent to the generalizability of the study result. The finding of this qualitative research can possibly apply to other situations. These help in making related field decisions in the future. Furthermore, the result of these decisions also can use for evaluation and used to improve decisions. The researcher has provided a rich thick description that the readers be able to make the decision.

**Reliability.** This part describes the extent to which the result of this study can be replicated in other similarity situation (Merriam, 2014). The reliability of a qualitative study depends on the consistency between data and results (Merriam, 2014). In the current study, adequate and appropriate case selection was SME's who are acknowledged and experienced SME's who are acknowledged and experienced. These samples were verified the sampling adequacy by the replication.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study uses a qualitative multiple-case study methodology to solve the research objective. Social media is playing an increasingly important role in the spread of music, under this background, this study focuses on the effect that the digital age takes to music industry and the consumers' motivation. According to the result and discussion of this study, the researcher found out digital age increase shareability, communicative and innovation. Theses mainly reflect on social media provide the new function platforms to musicians and users. From the user experiences of social media, consumer motivation includes extending social relationships and identity, users' participation in two-way interaction between person and organizations, and a sense of enjoyment.

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