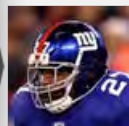


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Chinese Media Aiming High in City

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By LAURA KUSISTO

Four major Chinese media companies are expanding their presence in New York City as they lay the groundwork to begin competing on a global stage.

Xinhua, one of the Chinese government's main news outlets and propaganda arms, last year moved into the top floor of an office building on Broadway with 30 journalists and lit up a 60-foot video screen with its logo nearby in Times Square.



Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

The Chinese news agency Xinhua's billboard in Times Square.

Meanwhile, China Daily, the largest English-language newspaper in China, has increased its presence here to more than 20 journalists and other employees, and China Central Television, the main state broadcasting agency, plans to hire 62 journalists here and in other parts of the country.

Smaller media operations are also setting up shop here. Caijing Magazine, a largely independent publication dedicated to covering business, has expansion plans, according to its New York correspondent, Yu Wang. She said there's demand in particular for coverage of the trade surplus, the currency debate and the unfamiliar workings of the New York Stock Exchange.

Journalists and senior advisers to these Chinese media companies concede

they're a long way from rivaling the likes of Reuters and CNN. But they also have

big ambitions for covering U.S. news and reporting it—not only in China, but in other parts of the world.

The Chinese government, which funds most of the country's media organizations, has plans to make enormous investments in global expansion, according to Chinese media experts.

The media outlets want to put their own spin on such events in the U.S. as Occupy Wall Street and the America-China currency debate. They also want to compete more with U.S. media in the struggle over culture and ideas.

"Whether China wants it or not, China has become more globalized in the last 30 years...but the global news media has been dominated by Western media companies," said Weihua Chen, a columnist for China Daily, the country's largest English-language daily.

"I think in a sense, the Chinese feel their voices are not heard and are underrepresented in news media," he added.

For the New York economy this is good news. As Chinese outlets grow in the media capital of the country, they promise to lease office space, hire workers and even rent valuable signs.

The most visible sign of growing Chinese presence here is the blue-and-silver LED sign set up by Xinhua overlooking the offices of major media companies, such as Reuters and Conde Nast.

Brokers, journalists and bureaucrats say that at least several more Chinese media companies are searching for office space—similar to Chinese banks a couple of years ago, when a number of major players inked large office deals.

"The next wave is the Chinese media companies. I see a bunch of the other Chinese media companies [looking for offices], the way the banks did two or three years ago," said Greg Kraut, a principal at Avison & Young, who has represented a number of Chinese firms, including Chinese International Capital Corp.

China Daily, which has grown to more than 20 journalists and other employees, had two or three employees, geared mainly toward circulation, when it opened its first office in 1983, according to Ji Tao, editor of China Daily's U.S. bureau.

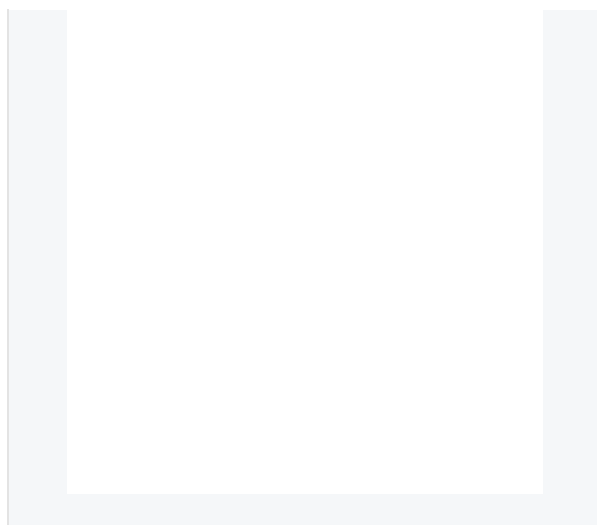
The paper, which has a China edition targeted at expats and an American one for diplomats and academics, moved in September to a much larger, 6,000-square-foot office at 1500 Broadway, which is also home to ABC Television Times Square Studios.

Mr. Chen said there was a voracious appetite in China for coverage of Occupy Wall Street. He published pictures of the arrests at the Brooklyn Bridge on his blog and said he got 150,000 clicks in China overnight.

But his newspaper column often steers clear of contentious issues, chronicling his experience at a Broadway show or adventures at his daughter's college in Massachusetts.

Experts say that's typical of the current coverage by Chinese media in the U.S., which tiptoes around sensitive topics and hews more toward coverage of culture and finance. Still, they say, these modest beginnings pose a long-term challenge to ailing Western media companies.

Chinese media operations obviously are starting out far behind Western media companies and have many more government-imposed constraints. But experts say the organizations like Xinhua are packaging content for sale to media outlets in developing countries, similar to the Associated Press or Reuters, but much cheaper.



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"These state media entities don't operate under market principles. They're able to create, package and distribute at bargain-basement rates," said Phelim Kine, Asia researcher for Human Rights Watch.

The first U.S. show China Central TV plans to produce will focus on business and include dispatches from New York, according to a person familiar with the matter. "Their intention-and it's a gradual step-by-step approach-is to be competitive with CNN International, BBC World News and Al Jazeera English," the person said.

"Entertainment companies are looking for collaborations and partnerships. Media outlets are encouraged to go out," said Orville Schell, director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at the Asia Society in New York and a former dean of the journalism school at the University of California, Berkeley."China is in this mode of trying to write itself larger in the world and gain a more positive image," he added.

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