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Alibaba Hosts Fourth Taobao Maker Festival

Kicks off with fashion show, record number of new products set for launch

Hangzhou, China, 12 September 2019 – Taobao, China’s largest mobile commerce destination and a platform that nurtures entrepreneurship and innovation, today kicked off its fourth Taobao Maker Festival.

The signature offline event within the Alibaba ecosystem celebrates the maker spirit of China’s young entrepreneurs. The event continues to expand in scale, with the 2019 festival held at two different Hangzhou venues. It will showcase over 1,000 new and creative products, along with the most exciting avant-garde designs at the Broken Bridge Fashion Show, which opens the two-week festival.

“The Taobao Maker Festival offers a creative and exciting experience for both our makers and visitors. Taobao has increasingly become the go-to platform for incubating new concepts, new designs and new products. The products that premier during this year’s Festival will have a strong appeal among young people, especially the Generation Z, who long for new experiences,” said Chris Tung, chief marketing officer of Alibaba Group.

Highlights of this year’s Festival

Building on the success of its previous events, Taobao has located this year’s Festival to a landmark known for youth culture and creativity: the Hangzhou Boiler Factory, which will operate as the main venue, along with a secondary venue near Hangzhou’s scenic West Lake. The exhibition will cluster around six themes: technology, Chinese culture, trends, design, food and creativity. The Broken Bridge Fashion Show, which drew a huge crowd last year, will return on Sept. 12 with even more fascinating brands and designers. Also taking place at the West Lake venue will be a six-day intangible cultural heritage exhibition on Solitary Hill and a lantern carnival dedicated to the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Featured new products will include a vegan meat launched by Hong Kong social enterprise GreenMonday, powered exoskeletons launched by C-Exoskeleton, a virtual-reality headset launched by HTC and simultaneous translation technology launched by iFlytek, among many others.

With a focus on fashion trends popular among Generation Z and an aim to support young designers pursue their dreams, the Broken Bridge Fashion Show will continue to feature both Chinese and international brands, as well as world-renowned independent designers including Chayalan, Koche, Chen Peng, Ban Xiaoxue, Wanbing Huang, Li-Ning, Particle Fever and Kappa. Many of the fashion houses will launch special-edition designs at the Festival.

Utilizing Alibaba's economy to create synergies

"Brands and merchants will not only have the opportunity to showcase their innovative products and interact with users in the Alibaba ecosystem *during* the event, but they can also leverage social and content tools embedded in Taobao and Tmall to increase the impact *after* the Festival," Tung noted.

Alibaba's entire economy will also participate at this year's Festival to enhance the experience for participants. For example, Ele.me, Alibaba Group's local services platform, has created a "rocket dining hall" built from parts of a Long March rocket to offer a fun dining experience for visitors. Fliggy, Alibaba Group's online travel platform, will provide visitors with Hangzhou sightseeing suggestions.

Nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship

Taobao continues to strengthen its status as the go-to platform for new brands and products. In the coming three years, Taobao plans to incubate 200,000 merchants with over RMB5 million each in annual sales. Taobao statistics released in July this year showed that new merchants who joined Taobao over the past three years achieved a total turnover of nearly RMB500 billion in the 2019 fiscal year. As of the end of 2018, there were nearly 50,000 independent designers running their business on Taobao, most of whom are in their 20s and early 30s. Their creativity resonates well with younger customers who value originality and personality.

"Innovation and craftsmanship are fundamental to Taobao's core values. By rewarding and incentivizing innovative merchants, Taobao will continue provide the best products for our customers and help to support our growth. We are committed to becoming an international leading platform for new trends and to showcase the unique creativity of Chinese entrepreneurs'," said Fan Jiang, president of Taobao and Tmall.

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About Taobao

Launched in 2003, Taobao Marketplace (www.taobao.com) is social commerce platform that allows consumers to enjoy an engaging, personalized shopping experience, optimized by big-data analytics. Through highly relevant and engaging content and real-time updates from merchants, consumers can learn about products and new trends as well as interact with each other and their favorite merchants and Key Opinion Leaders on Taobao Marketplace. Merchants on Taobao Marketplace are primarily individuals and small businesses. According to Analysis, Taobao Marketplace was China's largest mobile commerce destination in terms of gross merchandise value in fiscal year 2019, having a large and continuously increasing user group. Taobao Marketplace is a business of Alibaba Group.

About Alibaba Group

Alibaba Group's mission is to make it easy to do business anywhere. The company aims to build the future infrastructure of commerce. It envisions that its customers will meet, work and live at Alibaba, and that it will be a company that lasts at least 102 years.

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