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For Immediate Release

THE FIVE FUWA MASCOTS HAVE THEIR FANS IN CHINA

CAPTURING THE *SPIRIT* OF THE BEIJING OLYMPICS FOR TWO THIRDS OF CHINESE PEOPLE

July 24, 2008, Hong Kong: The 2008 Beijing Olympics looks all set to break many records, and one of those is in the number of its mascots, with no fewer than five individual Fuwa mascots lining up to represent the spirit of the Beijing Games. According to latest research conducted by The Nielsen Company, awareness of Fuwa as the official mascot of the Beijing Olympics is exceedingly high throughout China, with 98 percent of the population able to name them.

The Nielsen survey about consumer's awareness and opinions of the Fuwa mascots was conducted via Nielsen's Your Voice online panel among 3,087 people aged 15 years old and above between the 23rd and 29th of June 2008. The survey questions were administered without the use of Fuwa imagery, relying solely on the recall of survey respondents.

The Fuwa is certainly among the most well-known 'figure' in China, with a clear majority of Chinese people able to name all five individual mascots, led by Huanhuan (the mascot with the slightly larger flame) as the most well-known (93%), followed by Beibei (89%), Nini (86%), Yingying (80%) and Jingjing (75%) (Table 1). Further demonstrating the popularity

of the Fuwa, six in 10 claimed to like or *really* like them, while over two in 10 are neutral, and a minority of 15 percent dislike them. (Table 2)

Besides their literal meaning of “Welcome to Beijing”, each of the mascots Huanhuan, Yingying, Nini, Beibei and Jingjing also represent an element of nature. As the Nielsen survey reveals, Huanhuan’s association with Fire is most widely and correctly recalled by eight in 10 surveyed. Earth, Sky and Forest and their respective associations with Yingying, Nini and Jingjing were correctly recalled by seven in 10, and over half were able to associate Beibei as a symbol of the Sea.

With such high levels of awareness for the mascots and their themes, Fuwa is certainly *on-message* – two thirds of Chinese people acknowledge that the Fuwa mascots reflect the spirit of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, with two in 10 neutral, and only a minority - one in 10 - in disagreement. (Table 3)

As to those that may have questioned whether five mascots was overkill -- close to six in 10 agree that five are the right number of mascots to represent the Games.

The popularity of the Fuwa appears to match people’s willingness to reach into their back pockets. Of the 57 percent who claimed to have purchased official Olympic merchandise to date, the majority said it featured the Fuwa imagery. Of these, six in 10 bought for themselves, half bought for their children, and three in 10 bought it as gifts for friends or acquaintances.

Meanwhile the Fuwa TV cartoon series has undoubtedly played a key role in building Fuwa’s popularity. According to AGB Nielsen Media Research, the Fuwa series was shown on 20 channels throughout China. Of the people surveyed, two thirds said they, or a member of their family, had watched the Fuwa cartoon series, with the majority tuned in on CCTV, some to provincial TV stations, and one in 10 to Beijing TV.

“The first show of the cartoon series screened on the 8th August, 2007 and was a huge ratings success with Beijing audiences on the Beijing cartoon channel, reaching 2.14 percent, 1.5 percent more than other cartoons aired at the same time,” observed Richard Basil-Jones, managing director, Media Research Asia Pacific, The Nielsen Company.



According to AGB Nielsen Media Research, the time spent by audiences watching the show was equally outstanding. Each Fuwa show is 11-minute long and the first season’s viewing time was seven minutes 39 seconds. This cartoon series is particularly popular among those aged between 4 and 14.

“The high awareness of Fuwa, popularity of its merchandise and the success of the cartoon TV show have all contributed to and a testament to the success of the creation of these mascots and the high level of engagement for the Olympics among Chinese,” added Basil-Jones.

About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing information (ACNielsen), media information (Nielsen Media Research), online intelligence (NetRatings and BuzzMetrics), mobile measurement (Nielsen Mobile), trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in Haarlem, the Netherlands, and New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com

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Table 1

Fuwa Mascot Recall

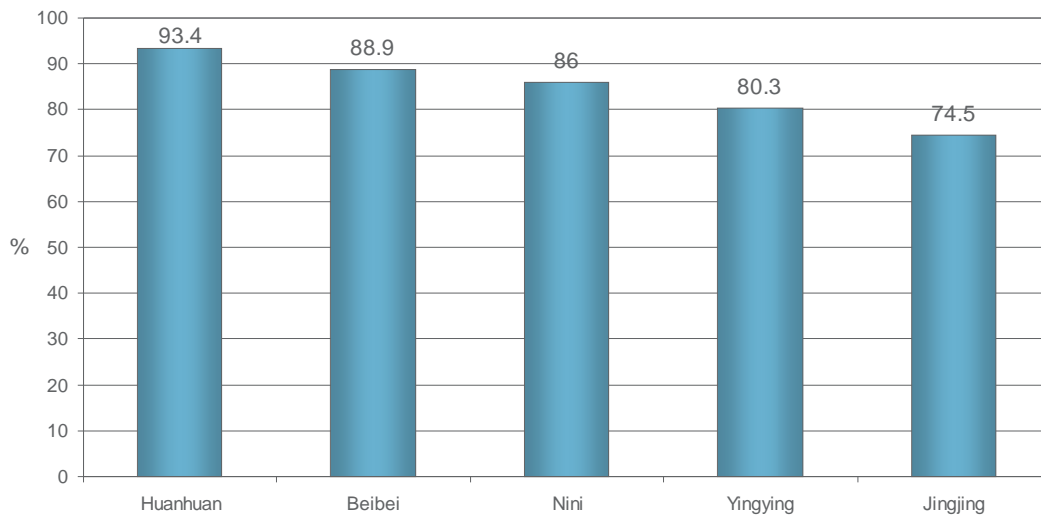


Table 2

To what extent do you like the Fuwa mascots?

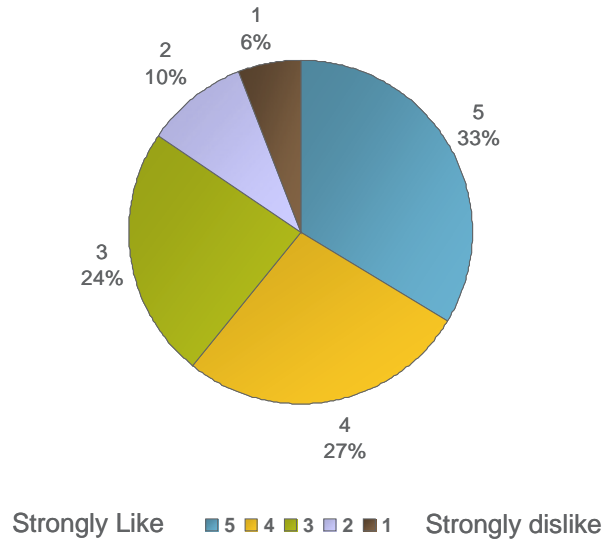


Table 3

To what extent do you believe that the mascots reflect the spirit of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games?

