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Herbalife China trapped: illegal direct sales are punished by management turmoil

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[mobile phone news] [Font Tai Zhong small] [Print a copy]

In recent days, Herbalife stated in its announced China investment plan that China has become one of the fastest growing markets for Herbalife worldwide. According to Herbalife's 2017 annual report, its revenue in China in 2017 was 886 million US dollars, ranking second in the world.

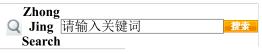
But at the same time, this world-renowned nutrition and weight management company is experiencing the most difficult days since entering the Chinese market. After nearly a year of high-level turmoil, Herbalife China was fined 5.73 million yuan for "infrared direct sales" in recent days, making the company's brand image once again.

Illegal direct sales are punished

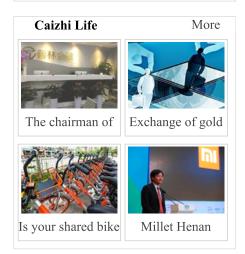
Until today, the reputation of "MLM" is still a shadow of some direct sales companies, and Herbalife is no exception. Entering keywords such as Herbalife, Herbalife meal replacement shake scams, Herbalife MLM, and Herbalife Direct Selling Suicide.

Recently, Herbalife China was investigated and prosecuted by the Bureau of Trade and Industry Supervision of Erqi District, Zhengzhou City, Henan Province for illegal direct sales and was fined 5.73 million yuan.

According to media reports, in July 2017, the Zhengzhou City Erqi District Administration for Industry and Commerce, after receiving the approval from the State Administration for Industry and Commerce to approve the illegal operation of Herbalife (China) Health Products Co., Ltd., investigated the company's alleged irregularities. After a five-month investigation, in December 2017, Herbalife









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(China) Health Products Co., Ltd. received a penalty decision, ordered him to correct the illegal activities, and confiscated illegal sales income of over 5.48 million yuan and a fine of 250,000 yuan. Super 5.73 million yuan.

This is not the first time that Herbalife has been caught in the whirlpool of public opinion due to the "MLM" incident. Even at Herbalife's home base, the United States, Herbalife has been stigmatized by "MLM". In 2012, Wall Street activist Bill Ackerman accused Herbalife of operating a pyramid scheme that made the Herbalife model controversial.

In an interview with a reporter from the International Finance News, Li Xu, head of the China Association of Anti-Traditional Marketing Association, said that many direct sales companies in China are selling products under the banner of direct selling. Although foreign companies such as Herbalife and Amway are all legitimate direct sales companies that have obtained direct sales licenses in China, the "Direct Selling Licenses" only indicate that companies are qualified to engage in direct selling operations, and are not the basis for distinguishing between direct selling and pyramid selling. Herbalife is mainly based on development personnel, and this is the most important feature of MLM.

前康宝莱中级服务商罗涵在《康宝莱市场管理奖金制度》一文中写到:"在康宝莱奖金制度下,基层伙伴赚不到钱又没有什么发展的话,后面的流失率会很高。"而这里的发展指的正是"人员的发展"。

管理层动荡

根据道道與情监控室和第三方数据研究机构海伦国际直销研究中心共同发布的《2017年中国直销企业业绩报告》,2017年中国直销企业业绩排行中,康宝莱排名第9,业绩增长率为-4.68%。

"业绩增长率为负与前任董事长李延亮的离职有很大关系,李延亮现在加入汉德森日用保健品上海有限公司,并'撰写'了如何在康宝莱'挖人'的'攻略',以至于几十位康宝莱管理层员工被汉德森挖走。"一位知情人士向《国际金融报》记者透露。

据记者了解,汉德森成立于2017年1月22日,也是一家取得商务部颁发牌照的直销企业,直销产品为氨基葡萄糖胶囊、维生素C含片等10种保健食品。

一位业内人士表示: "同为直销企业,且主要产品都是保健品,李延亮挖人的做法虽在情理之外,却也在意料之中,毕竟自己一手拉扯大了企业,就这样没有任何理由地被免职了。"

2017年5月,在康宝莱公司的电话会议上,美国总部方面宣布康宝莱中国区总裁李延亮不再担任总裁职务。对于此次人事任免,康宝莱美国总部方面未公示任何原委。

2007年,李延亮取代钱港基出任康宝莱中国区总裁。同年对外表示,希望3年内康宝莱中国能排名全球销售份额第一。然而,10年过去,这个3年目标还没有实现,李延亮已成为康宝莱的过去式。

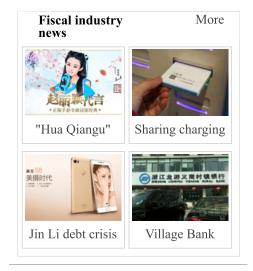
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2017年6月,负责生产研发的副总裁郑群怡接替李延亮成为中国区总 裁,同年11月,郑群怡升任中国区董事长,总裁一职暂且空缺。

2018年1月,在快消品行业工作多年的郭木任职总裁。"直销品和快消品 的销售是两码事,郭木能否再延续李延亮之前创下的成绩,目前来看还是一 个问号。"一位不愿具名的康宝莱经销商表示。

值得注意的是,2018年3月,康宝莱缩减了13款化妆品和1款保健品,这 种大规模的缩减产品在行业内并不多见。一位康宝莱内部人士认为,这与郭 木上台后的战略调整有关。

转型求变

康宝莱也想改变自己目前面临的糟糕局面。

与同为直销巨头的安利设立线下体验馆的做法不同,康宝莱选择了开设 营养俱乐部的模式。俱乐部除了给会员量身定制减肥计划作为品牌理念传递 功能之外,还通过组织美食派对、爬山活动、亲子活动,再次向市场强调, 康宝莱是一种生活方式,而不仅仅是营销。在康宝莱直销员的朋友圈中,各 种水果派对、DIY月饼、插花派对等活动几乎隔三差五就会出现。

"康宝莱想通过这种转型,淡化外界对康宝莱的误解,给消费者塑造主 张积极健康生活方式的品牌形象。"一位业内人士表示。

很明显, 康宝莱想在中国脱胎换骨。

同时,康宝莱还积极发展线上业务。在康宝莱官网上可以发现,康宝莱 目前有1个《今日康宝莱》杂志APP、4个微信公众号及2个微博账号,将培 训、销售、管理、服务都搬到了线上。

不过,这些措施还是保留了直销的基因。比如享受任何服务,包括购买 产品,都须填写康宝莱的资格证号与会员密码,而资格证必须通过康宝莱的 直销人员购买产品,或通过康宝莱直销人员作为推荐人让自己成为销售代表 才可取得。从此,被推荐人的销售行为将反馈到推荐人身上,影响他的销售 报酬、积分和职务晋升。

针对此次康宝莱中国受处罚、高管变动等情况,《国际金融报》记者给 康宝莱中国总部发去采访函,但其相关工作人员表示,采访函需要根据流程 交至康宝莱美国总部, 截至发稿前, 记者未收到回复。

(责任编辑: 关婧)

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