

## **MarketingPulse 2018**

### **Breakout Session 1: The Fine Art of Customer Engagement in Asia**

#### **Synopsis**

With the advancing development of new lifestyle technology, there's stronger demand from consumers than ever for uniqueness. How to engage them through various channels to deliver your message and boost brand loyalty? Our panel representing the ecosystem of the marketing industry – a brand, an agency, a social media platform and a KOL – analyses how to effectively draw their attention via omni-channel, O2O marketing and influencer engagement. They also share insights on winning the hearts of Asian consumers, and forecast upcoming retail trends across the region.

#### **Moderator**

- **Dr Royce Yuen JP**  
Co-founder and CEO, MaLogic Holdings Limited

#### **Speakers**

- **Ms Gunyarak Piyakhun**  
First Executive Vice President (Marketing Strategy & Business Intelligence), Siam Piwat Company Limited
- **Mr Kosuke Sogo**  
CEO & Co-founder, AnyMind Group
- **Ms Jennie So**  
General Manager, International, SINA Corp & Weibo Corp
- **Mr Erwan Heussaff**  
Founder, The Fat Kid Inside Inc.

Ms Gunyarak Piyakhun first introduced its company project “The Ideapolis shopping mall” in Bangkok, which is 40-years-old, and it witnessed the fast changing retail landscape and continuously adapted its strategy to meet the new customers’ demand. It revamps ideas to cope with the changes in customer behaviour and the proliferation of other malls. “When the game

changes you need to change with it,” she said. “What we did we called it ‘transformation’ because we transformed inside out”.

Siam Piwat revamped the Ideapolis shopping mall redefining its value proposition based on the idea of market place. There are so many shopping malls and Ideapolis was the first one standing out as a place where fashion, technology, and lifestyle were coexisting together. It became a brand by providing a different shopping experience that made customers going and coming back to spend more time there more than simply shopping.

The 4 strategies used to generate, increase, and keep the traffic, were the following: firstly, impressing consumers and connecting with them; Ideapolis created an interactive place with digital closet and multimedia interactions. Secondly, engaging the tenants in the mission. Ideapolis was the place where the first flagship store of Under Amour and Lush were located. These two brands provided a unique retail concept with boutiques that people would visit because they could not find the same store elsewhere. Also, the F&B tenants created unique menu and special food experience and made food one of the attractions of Ideapolis. Thirdly, brands such as Walk to Talk, created limited editions, special technology available in the mall and it provided an exceptional lifestyle by launching a first ever collection of brands. Ideapolis collaborated with designers to create an up-side down Christmas tree to offer a real customer experience and so it does for other festivities. Fourthly, retail is about the future. Building a brand is easy, but sustaining a brand is much harder as it requires efforts to remain relevant for your customers.

Ideapolis also used data analytics to identify customers’ habits and segment people per interest in order to personalise the service. For the last factor, the brand is using interactive signs to permit an easier navigation for the customer. As result, Ideapolis saw its traffic increased by 20% and its revenues by 50%.

The second speaker was Mr Kosuke Sogo, from AnyMind Group, whose goal is to find and reach KOL for businesses. Nowadays, lot of companies pay attention to use the right influencers for marketing activities. Indeed, they must be aligned with people and their interests and to achieve this, the use of technologies for collecting data is essential. It has been proven that 92% of media users trust UGC and WOM more than ads to purchase products or services.

“People trust people and not robots anymore, especially millennials,” Kosuke said. Brands need to involve people and give them a reason to buy their products.

Micro-influencers may actually work better than macro-influencers, even though they have less followers, they have a higher engagement rate, and it is easier for them to target the right audience. With AI technology, influencers are able to understand who are their followers based on different variables such demographics. Micro-influencers are the next big thing and they will become the new macro-influencers.

Following up on Kosuke Sogo’s presentation, Jennie So discussed the power of KOLs in China. Now, In China, 70% of KOLs are female and are between 23 and 25-years-old. KOLs are gradually upgraded with the development of social platform.

Factually, KOLs are this driving business. SINA Corp and Weibo collaborated with some brands and Jennie So presented several case studies. Firstly, an *experience* case with SHISEIDO which sent products to 20 micro-influencers and let them try the product to write product reviews for their fans. The number of viewers was close to 4 Million. A *Branding* case with the handbag brand COACH. During Mother’s Day, COACH launched the hashtag #MyFirstCoah, which could be your first Coach’s handbag but also your daily-life coach. This hashtag went viral and has created a real movement on social media. A *Conversion* case with the online Chinese brand called maimaigre.com, which is a selling car platform. The brand hired a Hong Kong artist that people like. He made videos and posted those videos on Weibo as a live streaming. Those videos reached an average of 7.5M views and 2.717 cars were ordered because of this action.

Erwan Heussaff is an influencer and creates content about F&B and travel. He started posting videos in 2011, and step by step he grew a community of fans around him. In 2012, he decided to become a brand himself, and collaborated with media agencies to create ads. He is the writer, distributor, and video maker of his business and he communicates directly with brands to create personalized content.

Social media is such a powerful tool and it must be used with a purpose strategy. In fact, there are a lot of influencers but most of them they have no real marketing strategy and they need one to survive such a crowded community. Erwan defines himself as a trusted voice able to engage customers and involve them in a real movement or brand community such as RedBull

for example. The secret to engage users is to be authentic and never forget the origins of the success as transparency is key to maintain relationship with the fans.

“One person can change the world and create changes where is needed, but brands need to be part of that and collaborate,” Erwan Heussaff concluded.

All the speakers shared one vision. The future of their business, despite the nature relies on their customers’ choice, therefore they have to adapt to their evolving needs. Social media are more than an advertising tool, they are a powerful CRM tool to understand the market

The Q&A session focused on the KOLs and the concept of trust. KOLs are either KOLs or actual celebrities. They have strong personal branding and can be used to enhance image and credibility temporary. They are useful for representing several products, but not the brand. This trend as other ones such as mobile payments in China are continuously changing and if it is the time to decide now, KOLs are still there.