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Interview with Goh Shu Fen @ APPIES

Thursday, 20 May 2010 09:09



LIFESTYLE INTERVIEW

by Bianca Zen



Goh Shu Fen is a femme formidable of the advertising and marketing industry. Garnering more than a decade of advertising and marketing experience at the big boys of advertising agencies, Ogilvy and M&C Satchi, she stepped up in her career path by starting her own consulting firm, R3 Consulting in 2002.

Shu Fen is based in Singapore but oversees her regional clients like Visa, Johnson & Johnson and Coca Cola and led the global creative review for Singapore airlines. Congress Chairman of Asia Pacific Advertising and Marketing Congress 2010 (APPIES 2010), she hopes the inaugural conference will become the "Cannes of Asia-Pacific for marketers". Her role in APPIES is to provide guidance and support to the organiser, IAS, on the strategic intent of this platform, so that it is clearly differentiated from the rest of the awards, as the only congress that truly focuses on creativity that drives results."

3 beautiful children. An amazing and interesting career. An understanding and supportive husband. Slim and slender. A great cook. What more can a woman asks for?

"I do sincerely feel that sometimes women, have missed out on the joy of being women."

I cannot agree more...

INSTITUTE OF ADVERTISING SINGAPORE

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To dcollided: Hi Cherie! This article was for pure entertainment and I apologise if you are o...

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Why are Yakuza cool but Ah Bengs are not?

Hi ladies, thanks for the comments. Sorry I was not able to reply sooner. Fashion events all ...

Shout Outs!



In comparison to other Asian markets, Singapore advertising is dull. From a creativity perspective, agencies here may pride ourselves of ranking on international creative awards, but honestly, they're often work done on pro bono clients, not big brands. From a media channel point of view, we're falling behind other markets like China in terms of embracing digital media. Online accounts for 17% of advertisers budgets whereas it's a measly 6% in Singapore.

Marketers here still find comfort in the large reach numbers of Straits Times, but hasn't considered critically how consumer media

consumption habits and attitudes towards advertising has changed.

Do you think clients play a big part of the sales in terms of communication to the consumers?

Absolutely. Clients have the final say on how they spend the marketing budgets.

What is your exact role in APPIES?

My role is to provide guidance and support to the organiser, IAS, on the strategic intent of this platform, so that it is clearly differentiated from the rest of the awards, as the only congress that truly focuses on creativity that drives results.

Travelling so often, how do you juggle between career and family?

I have a husband who is amazingly involved and supportive. He runs his own business as well, so we try not to travel at the same time. We find that setting clear expectations with our children helps. They know weekends are entirely devoted to them.

Except for times when we have to entertain, dinner time is family time. We're foodies so eating together is a big part of our family life.

What do you think of online marketing?

I think there are currently a huge digital divide between how consumers are spending their time and where marketers are putting their dollars. People are spending more time online than watching TV or reading print, yet % of dollars spent on digital is still single digits.

From our experience observing these across a number of our clients, this is driven by lack of understanding as well as lack of priority from organisations. Some of our clients' KPIs are still based on the success of how a TVC scores in an ad test!

What would you advise brand managers who are still conservative about marketing and advertising in the World Wide Web?

Have a test and learn attitude. Focus on setting very clear campaign objectives and measures of success. Track and question your agencies closely, reevaluate and reapply.

What do you think of fashion and cosmetic marketing these days?

My immediate response is that it should be much more inspiring. Logic leads to conclusion, but emotion leads to action. Cosmetic brands are trying to put more science in a jar than the average consumer care to understand. If they're that interested, they will be checking out the full story online or check out what others are saying.

At the end of the day, you're selling hope and inspiration. I think Chanel has been more consistent in applying their flavour of elegance and mystique in their marketing.

What would you advise the brand managers of fashion and cosmetic brands on their creative marketing?

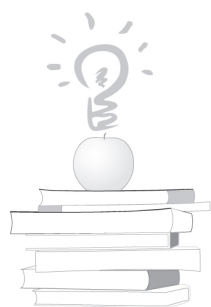
Feel and think like a woman first, marketer second.



 <p>PRESENTER: KIM DAS Vice President / Regional Director DDB Worldwide</p>	<p>CAMPAIGN # 31</p> <p>CAMPAIGN TITLE: SunStopper COUNTRY: Singapore AGENCY: DDB Worldwide CLIENT: Johnson & Johnson Pte Ltd</p>	<p>CLIENT CREDITS: KARINA ONG Group Brand Manager</p> <p>AGENCY CREDITS: AIVONNE CHONG Senior Account Director</p> <p>NEIL JOHNSON Chief Creative Officer</p> <p>JOJI JACOB Executive Creative Director</p> <p>JEFF CHEONG Executive Creative Director Tribal DDB Singapore</p> <p>MARTIN LOO Creative Group Head Tribal DDB Singapore</p> <p>ALFRED LIM Creative Group Head Tribal DDB Singapore</p>
		
<p>CAMPAIGN SUMMARY: This is the story of how Neutrogena managed to eclipse the competition by hijacking the "lunar event of 2009". With a trailing category share, Neutrogena needed to create a big bang with a small budget - they found it in the form of the total eclipse and a clever guerilla campaign to "stop the sun". Seizing the opportunity and became the (un)official telecasters of the event, with viral film, blogs, social networking, and sampling, Neutrogena successfully returned from the dark side of the moon with an impressive 30% YOY growth.</p>		

What 5 wrong things do you think brand managers/clients are usually making?

1. Not understanding what really makes their consumers tick and where they stack up versus their competitors.
2. Not having a clear point of view about their brand, what they can credibly own and stand for.
3. Trying to say too many things in one ad - usually this is a classic case of unfocused strategy.
4. When evaluating creative work, they evaluate with their head more than with their heart. (when all research shows that consumers respond with their emotions).
5. They do not trust their agencies, and try to take over the agencies' job. At R3, we believe that if a client is doing an agency's job, then they're with the wrong agency.



You founded R3 in 2002, a firm focused on helping clients improve ROI from their marketing. Share with us a success story.

Unlike other consultancies, we tend to work with clients on a longer term basis. For J&J, we have been consulting to them since 2004, helping the company across 15 markets in APAC, move from paying their agency on a commission model to a performance based fee model.

Through this process, both agencies and J&J, are aligned to achieving marketing goals and sales, further strengthening their relationships with their roster of agencies. We extended our footprint with J&J globally and was tasked to help them manage their global media pitch two years ago, J&J had an estimated spend of US\$1.2B so that was

a great feather on our cap.

What do you think of bloggers and their new found influence in the internet?

For sure they make the job of communications and PR professionals more complex, but the good thing is that they play a critical role in keeping everyone honest.

Of course, we know bloggers are not altruistic in their pursuit of fame or following, but at least it can offer an alternative point of view, which consumers hunger for in markets where mass media is highly regulated



You love to cook. Any particular meal that you find extremely nutritious and yet delicious for the busy modern women?

My comfort food is teochew porridge with steamed fish, chye poh omelette and preserved bean curd. You don't need to be a kitchen goddess to whip up this meal. My great-grandmother in China lived to the 90s on just porridge and fish, so it can't be that bad for you.

In your own definition, what makes a woman modern and smart?

I'm not sure what modern means but would interpret it as being relevant for the times that we live in now. I believe it's an attitude of loving yourself and your life, being true to what really matters to you and giving more than you care to receive. This may sound too philosophical, but I do sincerely feel that sometimes women, have missed out on the joy of being women.

We have allowed our career success come to define who we are. We have taken the strength and independence we exert in the boardroom, back to our homes or to our private lives. We should remind ourselves that it's okay to share our insecurities, to be pampered and to be taken care of.

<p>CAMPAIGN # 34</p>  <p>PRESENTER: JACOB THOMAS Senior Account Executive Ogilvy Singapore</p>	<p>CAMPAIGN TITLE: The Random Camera Project COUNTRY: Singapore AGENCY: Ogilvy Singapore CLIENT: Getty Images</p>  <p>CAMPAIGN SUMMARY: In 2009, Getty Images' revenue from the creative agency segment was stagnating. Stock images had become heavily commoditized and customers knew they had plenty of options. Our approach was to elevate Getty Images' proposition from seller of images to provider of creative inspiration. Through the Random Camera Project, we drove high levels of engagement with creative minds by providing them a platform to inspire others with their creativity and be inspired in turn. This unlocked new sales opportunities and leads for Getty Images' sales team.</p>	<p>CLIENT CREDITS: ANDREA MAPA Marketing Specialist</p> <p>AGENCY CREDITS: JACOB THOMAS Senior Account Executive</p> <p>COLIN WAN Team Director</p> <p>ELYN WONG Head of Art</p> <p>ROSS FOWLER Senior Copywriter</p> <p>ALVIN CHIN Business Controller</p>
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What, to you, is being financially independent?

When you can do what you want without having to worry about a mortgage. Retirement is not really on my agenda, as I'm restless and full of ideas and things I want to do.

Do you think you are financially savvy and smart? Why?

I think I am financially savvy...except for the occasions when I pay too much for a pair of Louboutin, see my point about emotions? The secret to financial independence is really to keep your overheads low so that you can make your money work for you. I come from a humble background and intend to raise my children to live simply.

Although we can afford it, we still choose to live in HDB and drive Toyota. Because I have three young kids, we can't take big risks with our investments. We have done better with our property investments than stocks.

What does the phrase "MyFatPocket" remind you of?

Wads of mullah ready to escape to the tills of Chanel and On Pedder.

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