

MARKETING

WEEKENDER™

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**Think
Different**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Why do I call my readers experts?

Because they are.

They are marketing communications professionals who work in media, advertising, digital, brand marketing and so on.

04

COVER STORY

We must learn to see ourselves as our customers

23 years ago, when Apple launched its tagline Think Different, it was a response to IBM's slogan Think...

06



14

Thirty Second Cinema.

Part V.
Alan Parker: 'Say hello to Ben'.

How Measurement Leads to A Better Marketing Mix

Just when Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) thought it was out...

18

Your guide to multigeneration online characteristics

Picture the following scenario: You decide to move the advertising and promotion budget...

21

DEMOCRACY 101



“PUTRAJAYA MADE A PROFIT OF RM3.3 MILLION BY BROADCASTING THE WORLD CUP 2018 ON RTM”

According to Aug 1, 2018, Hansard, then Communications & Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo told Parliament the profit came from advertising and sponsorships for the broadcast.



“101 PROJECTS WORTH RM6.61 BILLION HAD BEEN APPROVED THROUGH DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS UNDER THE FORMER PAKATAN HARAPAN ADMINISTRATION.”

Finance Minister Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz in Parliament on Aug 24



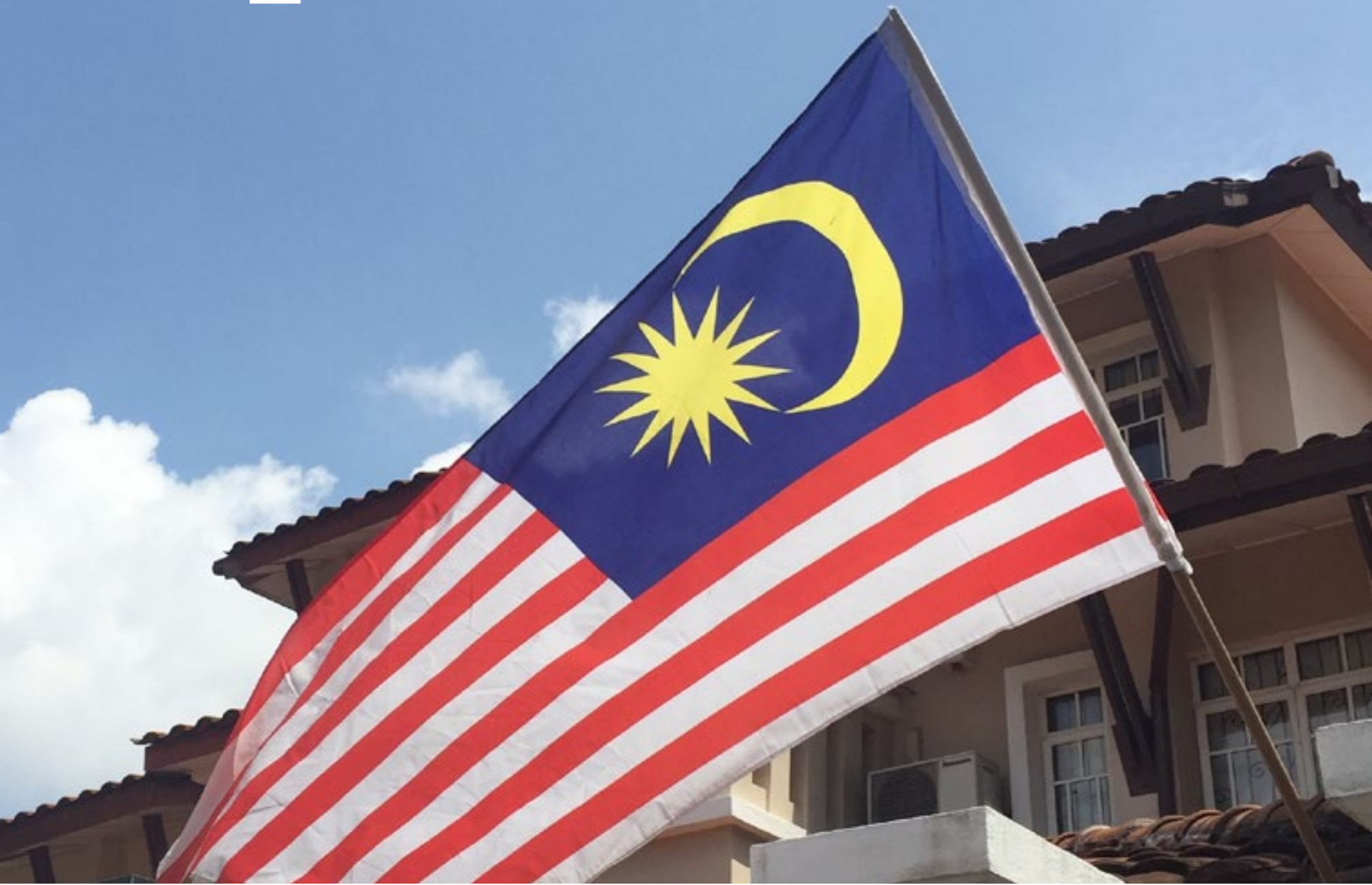
“RM6 BILLION? ASTAGHFIRULLAH!”
Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim (BN-Baling) when Tengku Zafrul revealed the figures.



“PAKATAN HARAPAN WAS ONLY RESPONSIBLE FOR 5.3% OF THE DIRECTLY AWARDED CONTRACTS WORTH RM6.6 BILLION MENTIONED BY FINANCE MINISTER TENGKU ZAFRUL ABDUL AZIZ.”

Former finance minister Lim Guan Eng said most of the RM6.61 billion went to legacy projects (67.7%) and contracts for supplies or services (26.5%) taken on during the BN administration.

Why do I call my readers experts?



Because they are.

They are marketing communications professionals who work in media, advertising, digital, brand marketing and so on.

There is a new journey everyday.

You can throw recession, COVID or any other impossibility their way and they still come out shining.

Our readers are behind

EDITOR'S NOTE

.... In fact, our Finance Minister could learn a thing or two about how procurement processes are juggled by watching some of the antics in our industry. We invented Open Tender from day one. He just has to talk to any of my readers. Because they are real experts...

some of the most memorable advertising and marketing campaigns Malaysians have ever seen.

They are busy gearing up their amazing talent for Merdeka now, and you can witness their work on TV and elsewhere.

Our industry has never asked for handouts, we constantly fight to keep our standards high.

When we put Malaysia on the global map for creative excellence, we don't look for honorific titles.

We deal with idiots who don't know better, with a smile on our faces most times.

Maybe if we were all made Datuks we will be seen differently.

We endure intimidation, slave labour and pretenders earning

stable sky-high salaries who take us for granted.

We fight in the trenches for brands, we don't sleep to meet deadlines. And we have had enough.

Our Merdeka is now here.

I will commit to write about those who think they know what's best for the brand, especially the ones playing with our tax money by disguising lightning-paced procurement processes as the real thing.

In fact, our Finance Minister could learn a thing or two about how procurement processes are juggled by watching some of the antics in our industry.

We invented Open Tender from day one. He just has to talk to any of my readers.

Because they are *real experts*.

Respectfully,



PS: I have 101 reasons to believe the Director-General of Tourism Malaysia could be on his way out. My expert readers know why.





We must learn to see ourselves as our customers

BY THE HAMMER

23 years ago, when Apple launched its tagline *Think Different*, it was a response to IBM's slogan *Think*.

My first encounter with Lai Shu Wei, TM's VP & Head of Marketing (Commercial) also began when he responded to a word I had used in an email to him: *Stealth*.

COVER STORY

I had written about stealth marketing and he was fascinated enough to call me over for a meeting at his Packet One Networks (P1) office where he was the CMO. Readers may remember the colourful building, a larger than life concrete rainbow, at the intersection of Jalan Templer and the Federal Highway in PJ.

The company was founded by an amazing man called Puan Chan Cheong, better known as CC Puan, who I remember loved to shake everybody's hands.



.... the man remains a marketing powerhouse having done 'time' in StandChart, Maxis, Nestlé, Johnson & Johnson during his 'baptism of fire' days...

The rest is history as Telekom Malaysia bought a majority stake in P1 for RM350 million named it Webe Digital and added Shu Wei into their management fold.

While Shu Wei's career went from stealth to stellar, the man remains a

COVER STORY



marketing powerhouse having done 'time' in StandChart, Maxis, Nestlé, Johnson & Johnson during his 'baptism of fire' days.

In a truly historic achievement last year, he

was voted Malaysia's Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of the Year, leading a field of more than 60 CMOs in the race. He'd also clinched Gold as Telco Trailblazer for two years running.

My confession for the week: this story is a first-person narrative paraphrased by me after a long lunch with Shu Wei last Wednesday. There was no wine involved, but a lot of fish (brain food).

I have also chosen to write his thoughts in the way I prefer; no holds-barred, and to my readers' delight.

In fact, Shu Wei is actually reading this story for the first time too...

On Marketing ≈ Life

Shu Wei believes brands and marketing approximate life for what it is. A strategy that misses reality is just a piece of paper with fancy words. Today's marketers are too caught up in jargon and being influenced by many stakeholders in the decisions made.

COVER STORY



Lai Shu Wei winning the ultimate prize in marketing - the Malaysian CMO of the Year Award!

.... Always remember to listen to them, figure out solutions that address their pain points or improve their life and deliver them in the most simplistic manner...

A great marketer should always remember the only true north is the customer. Always remember to listen to them, figure out solutions that address their pain points or improve their life and deliver them in the most simplistic manner.

On drowning in data

If there ever was a convincing scam in marketing today it has got to be data and what it misrepresents. Most data is a wasteland and until the machines mine it with your brand's algorithm in mind, it will remain the romantic bogeyman of marketing.

It satiates members of the board who don't deep dive into the real work of marketing. It legitimises a CMO's role in the organization until the next job offer or the next sales slump whichever come first.

COVER STORY

Data is still very much in its infancy and we overlook the biggest data analyser in the world: the human mind interacting with the universe at large.

Instinct, intuition and insights seem less sexy than analytics, anarchy and automation.

On Reporting

In most of the organisations I have worked with, we tend to mix up the reporting of data and calling them insights. Data points are just information. They do not tell the full picture. The ability to understand the data points with other information surrounding it (it could be trends, competitions, consumer behaviours) gives us the hypothesis to what may have happened, ie. the insights.

I always ask the same questions when doing campaign reviews.

They usually start with “So what?”.

Why are the numbers the way they are?

Why did they go up?



What does a higher result mean to us?

On Flip Thinking

We should commandeer digital machines and not the other way round. Machines can handle the relentless ambition of marketers and should be at the mercy of brands, instead of brands playing victim to their well-articulated unknown.

Open your door to data when you think it works and close your doors when you sense it is nonsense. Too many brand custodians prefer to become prisoners of their own conscience, which is probably the most valuable commodity on the planet. Their conscience should be a compass for the brand.

COVER STORY



*If you can make it in Manhattan you can make it anywhere.
If you can make it in Bukit Bintang....*

But one must also know when to pull the plug. Sometimes we can get it so wrong that it requires a major re-think. There is no shame in doing so. It just makes us come back stronger.

One upon a time I was determined that having an ice cream with “cold beverages” on Friday after work get-togethers was a winning idea. But the combination was too taxing for the average stomach. Bad idea!

On being a jargon-slayer

Let’s look at the term New Normal. It is far from normal

when the WHO says we have to brace ourselves for two years. And when it is back to normal what do we called it then, the Old Normal? Truth is, we are living in the abnormal and as social animals this is a major life-shift. Sugar coating reality as the new normal gives a false sense of security.

In our industry we have many technical buzzwords, ie. FTTH (Fiber-To-The-Home), VDSL (Very-High-Speed Digital Subscriber Line), WTTX (Wireless-To-The x) and the list goes on. These become products we

COVER STORY

**.... ANALYSTS SAID
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OUT...**

bring to customers and the right way to look at this is a complete flip, starting with the customers.

On going crazy...

In a previous role back in 2006, we ran a football campaign for a full month. And for the grand finale, we closed down the entire stretch of Jalan Bukit Bintang and turned it into a fiesta from 6pm onwards until the football finals started at 2am. That particular game

ran into overtime and then a penalty shootout. By the time the game was done, Monday morning traffic had resumed. Prior to the event, everyone was sceptical if we could pull it off and that included me, since it had never been done before.

But we pulled it off!

On great stories...

Last year, TM heeded the call to lower fixed broadband and mobile packages by approximately 25%. Analysts said the reduction would significantly impact TM's performance in subsequent quarters. Nevertheless, unifi disproved its naysayers and it grew out of the initial teething process of its price reduction - fending off eager competitors to turnaround a positive growth of 10%.

Our defence strategy was to hijack Maxis' advertising by mirroring its TV buying strategy during the most critical period (i.e. first 6-weeks of its launch campaign). After studying their buying patterns - channels, programs and even down to the timebelt - we

COVER STORY

optimised the plan on a bi-weekly basis. Whenever there was decrease/increase in competitor spends for any particular program, we would adapt our buying strategy and counter-attack accordingly.

By acting with speed, agility and a little ingenuity, unifi beat the bleak forecast and managed to halt the slide amidst aggressive competition. In this regard, keeping the status quo had never been more celebrated.

In 2016, we launched a new mobile offer. And it was 100% online. We had no physical stores. The portal and the app was crucial to the success of this mobile offer. We had to repeatedly correct the user and customer interfaces to ensure a dynamic yet simple experience to on board seamlessly.

At one point, I was challenging the team to test out the design of the app using only one finger to navigate the app while driving. If we could do this, it would pass the user test and set out a new standard on design.

And we did. It took only three finger clicks.

On results....

Results come in the form of happy faces of people we have impacted. Then comes revenue and fair profit.

I always share the measurements with the various stakeholders. It is important they know the thinking behind it, the behaviour that comes out of it, the results that correspond with it and the contribution it does to the organization.

On insights...

Durian = expensive

Cars = fumes

Moon = Mars

Politics = old

Malaysians = hopeful

Fashion = masks

Internet speed = global weddings

Millennials = a-ha moment

Gen Z = Respect

On COVID, he adds that as the disease moves from siege mentality to herd immunity, peer to peer marketing will rule.

The Hammer is fully booked for lunch till October 2020.



Thirty Second Cinema.

Part V. Alan Parker: 'Say hello to Ben'.

By Paul J Loosley

It would appear that the director Alan Parker fully subscribed to what the British poet Coleridge described as a 'willing suspension of disbelief'. Parker knew that his audience, whether for TVCs or movies, consciously or unconsciously, wanted to fully trust in what they saw and heard.

Believe it or not.

British advertising film directors of the 1970s learnt how to direct credible character through either total reportage (semi-documentary) filmic slight-

BRITISH ADMEN LIGHT-UP THE SILVER SCREEN



of-hand or they extracted supra-realistic performances from either inexperienced or totally amateur actors. The theorist Paul McDonald describes the evaluation of acting as ‘whether or not the actor has become the character’, yet he overlooks the possibility that the actor could, in actuality, *be* the character.

Alan Parker led this verité movement, developing his ability to direct ‘non-actors’ into a skilled and highly personal art. In TV commercial terms Parker’s series of films for Bird’s Eye Beef-Burgers were notable for their almost complete believability. The series featured an unknown, young non-actor called Ben (real name, unbelievably, was Daz Cockerel) rejected any and all attempts to consume any and all other burgers, his perfectly natural delivery coupled with the young boy’s regional accent,

created a realism way beyond anything that had come before, and subsequently created a cult following for the long-running campaign that saw Ben grow, have a girlfriend, ultimately emigrate to Australia and years later, return. And scoffing Bird’s Eye Beef-Burgers throughout. Cynically, having an audience believe so avidly in processed meat products, must be the apex (or nadir) of advertising chicanery.

As Parker himself says, “A film is an organic process, and often things tend to be revealed to you as the story evolves and the actors seek out their own truths”. And it is this philosophy that Parker brought, quite refreshingly to Hollywood features; a chance to believe in the movies.

Parker’s patient skill with non-actors migrated to his

BRITISH ADMEN LIGHT-UP THE SILVER SCREEN

*Bugsy Malone* (1976)*Fame* (1980)*The Commitments* (1991).

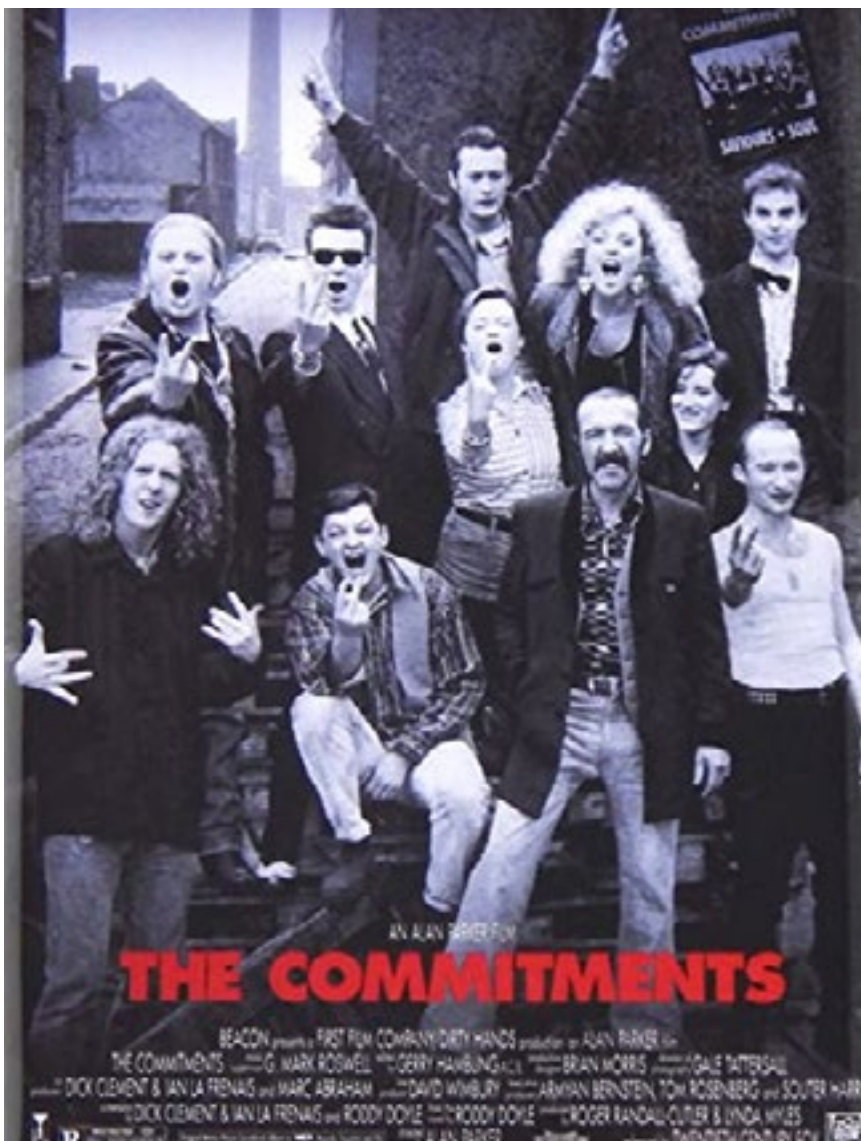
“A film is an organic process, and often things tend to be revealed to you as the story evolves and the actors seek out their own truths”

first cinematic venture *Bugsy Malone* (1976) in which he worked exclusively with amateur children in a pastiche all-singing all dancing 1920s gangster film, kids dressed as adults armed with ‘splurge’ guns that fired custard pies. In *Fame* (1980), a film about kids at a New York performing arts school, there were no famous faces, and most of the singers and dancers, especially in the big dance numbers, were actual students. Later, one of

Parker’s most successful uses of unknowns was in his film of Roddy Doyle’s Irish novel *The Commitments* (1991). The story of a bunch of enthusiastic lower-class Dubliners who, against all the odds, form a pretty good soul band. The main cast were not trained musicians but were assembled into a highly appealing and skilled combo. Their convincing performances, especially when they were singing famous soul songs and improvising dialogue, coupled with Parker’s ‘stolen’ shots of genuine Dublin backstreets, created a captivating and absorbing realism. The poster is enough to prove the point – not a recognisable face in the bunch, yet each a genuinely distinctive character.

Paul McDonald again observes in a section on

BRITISH ADMEN LIGHT-UP THE SILVER SCREEN



Some of Alan Parker's real films'

verisimilitude, "Where film acting is closer to approximating the everyday - it becomes less obvious that the actor is acting". One could therefore argue that if the actor is either authentically 'everyday' or even unprepared, a higher degree of engaged credible spectatorship is achieved. Steven Spielberg (yes, even he) said, 'If a director has to pull too many strings, the actor

becomes a puppet not an artist'. This subtle manipulation is what Parker brought with unparalleled skill from the British 30" TVC to the American big screen.

Parker's films won copious awards of course, including six Oscars, and in 2002 he was made a Knight of the Realm. Sir Alan William Parker, from Islington, son of a house painter, brought a love of natural people and an ability to draw real performances from them to both commercials and the movies. Flying in the face of conventional and the incorrect fear that people would only want to see stars not real people on film.

Alan Parker, the British custodian of realism on film, left us last month.

Believe me, he will be missed.

Next week. Part VI. Hugh Hudson: 'Le chant des oiseaux tapageurs'. And series finale.

Paul J Loosley is an English person who has been in Asia 40 years, 12 as a creative director and 26 making TVCs. Recently awarded a Master's Degree in Film at UCL. And still, for some strange reason, he can't shut-up about advertising. Any feedback; mail p.loosley@gmail.com (please keep it real).

How Measurement Leads to A Better Marketing Mix



By Greg Paull
Co-founder and Principal, R3

With the economy in flux, marketers are faced with deciding how best to slice a smaller pie to shore up current customers and use new approaches to win new ones. The challenge for any marketer is twofold – “What is the right balance and mix?” and “How do I measure success without standardised KPIs?”

You must measure if you mean business

For those that work in the agency industry, there are only two types of people – those

who produce advertising – and the rest. Quite often ‘the rest’ have tried to ‘dabble’ in advertising, rather than just specialise on what they are good at.

Yet, this ‘line’ that the industry has created is going the other way with clients. The so-called people ‘below’ it often hold more esteem than those above it because they are either creating ideas that are measurable, or they are developing strong marketing programs with a direct sales impact.

MARKETING FLUX



For clients – measurement is now sexy.

Test and learn – Measurement is both a science and an art. The leaders in this field set up different marketing mixes and track results. You can't rely on just 'gut feel,' you need to invest in research and learning to build a more efficient model. A good place to start is knowing where you rank

alongside the competition. Without benchmarks, your results will lack meaning.

A good strategy is online and offline – The lines are blurred. Customer experience includes anything related to the brand, from the intelligence of your chatbot, to the sustainability of your packaging and the attitude of the person in charge of dropping off an order at the front door. A successful campaign today can only win with smart online and offline strategy. Smart marketers bring data from all touchpoints to map the way forward.

It doesn't happen unless it happens at retail – All the statistics about decisions made at point of sale continue to be true. Whether it is the UX on an app, to something as simple as an interactive piece of point of sale, right down to the physical retail space, driving shoppers to checkout is still the ultimate aim. Getting to the granular and understanding what drives conversion makes the dollar difference that is a real sign of marketing success.

MARKETING FLUX

... Sophisticated technologies are available now to more accurately measure each campaign element and impact, but unfortunately, this has not made the marketer's job any easier...




Use the right measurement tools - It seems inconceivable now, but years ago, when award entries asked for 'results' the response could very well have been 'the client was very happy.' Sophisticated technologies are available now to more accurately measure each campaign element and impact, but unfortunately,

this has not made the marketer's job any easier. Knowing which tool best aligns to your goals will save you from spending time and money on broken promises.

Don't forget - it's still about ideas - The days are over for purely relying on 'execution' agencies to rollout a campaign. The best marketers are investing in digital agencies that can develop breakthrough thinking. Find partners who understand what is possible, why it's possible and can demonstrate how it's going to work for you and your audience.

Eskimos have twenty-three different words for snow - agencies have even more for integrated, 360 degrees, holistic, demand creation marketing. The onus ultimately is still on the marketer to make sure the overall objectives are met. Let's hope in the process, marketers will get better ideas, with better results.

Greg Paull is principal and co-founder of R3, a global independent consultancy focused on driving transformation for marketers and their agencies. www.rthree.com



Your guide to multigeneration online characteristics

A helicopter view into what you think you already know about the digital generation...

By **Dr. Karling Lee**

Picture the following scenario: You decide to move the advertising and promotion budget from physical to digital channels to align with the trends and enhance the user experience. A slew of social media marketing campaigns take place in various mainstream and key social media. However, the results are discouraging because although the number of “likes” within the social media pages

have increased, conversion rate is low. The campaigns do not seem to make a dent into the sales volume though the social media expenses are creeping up.

If the above sounds familiar then, there is a need to review the scramble toward social media marketing to capture the attention of the multigenerational consumers.

In Asia, today’s major consumers are made up of at

AUDIENCE FOCUS

least six (6) different generations as follows:

Boomers – born before 1965. Many are retiring or retired and have less disposal income. The main social media platform is Facebook though WhatsApp and WeChat are also the staple.

Gen X – born between 1965 – 1979. These consumers are in the either more senior positions, or are starting to stabilize the income. However, the expenses are going to the young adult children who are embarking on tertiary education. The single Gen Xers are excellent consumers as they buy everything and anything on a whim and fancy. They absolutely adore Facebook and though the younger Gen Xers are also on Instagram (IG), it is mainly due to the Gen Z young adults that they have.

Cusper Y – born between 1980-1984 (unique to Asia). Many are earning relatively high income and have sufficient disposal income to splurge on personal interest. They are receptive of any social media platform as long as it meets their needs.

Gen Y – born between 1985-1997 or 1999 (definition differs across Asia). This is the most lucrative consumer group with medium to high disposal income and Boomer parents to bail out if over-spent. Globally, they also form the largest consumer population. Social media marketing often gets to them if appropriately focused on them. They love everything that bears a “Brand” and the more well-known the Brand, the better. Price is never a consideration.



AUDIENCE FOCUS

The common social media platform is mainly Facebook, WhatsApp, WeChat, Line, etc. They are not selective. The more platforms, the better.

Cusper Z – born around 1998-2001 or thereabouts (as definition also differs across Asia). This group is engaged in social media, but will be attracted only to specific social media platforms and campaigns. Have varied interests and groups though the spending power is relatively high. This group is beginning to be wary of social media, and though may have a social media presence in Facebook and Instagram (IG), are less likely to engage with the platform consistently for posting.

Gen Z – in Asia, they are born from 2000-2001 onwards till about 2015. Many of them have started embarking on entrepreneurship from as young as 13 years old. Practicality defines them though the Gen Zs in Asia can be further divided into three 3 distinct categories. They are smart online consumers where they will check out various websites or platforms before making an informed decision. One of the key influencing factors is the number

of reviews for the product and the ranking of the reviews. A very price and quality conscious group of consumers who look more for value for money as well as the company's overall image and reputation, but not the product brand. This group is relatively similar to the Cusper Gen Z in Asia who tend to shy away from social media though will access to download games or watch movies and so forth. YouTube is more their thing as well as TikTok or "touying" (Chinese version of TikTok).

With the above characteristics that are quite different, what digital marketing strategy do you need to think about and to whom should you focus on?

*Dr. Karling Lee is an annual favourite at the Malaysian CMO Conference, her groundbreaking **studies** are highly-sought out by marketers who know what works best for their brands. Her*



expertise in deciphering the digital generation is based on real time surveys and reporting.

How dangerous is Facebook?

In just four days, the reputation of a Buddhist monk who had spent decades fighting for the human rights of Cambodians was destroyed.

A smear campaign linked to the Cambodian government went viral on the social media platform, forcing an activist Buddhist cleric into exile.

First, grainy videos appeared on a fake Facebook page, claiming he had slept with three sisters and their mother. Then a government-controlled religious council defrocked the monk

for having violated Buddhist precepts of celibacy.

The monk, Luon Sovath, was the victim of a smear campaign this summer that relied on fake claims and hastily assembled social media accounts designed to discredit an outspoken critic of the country's authoritarian policies.

The sex charges against Mr. Luon Sovath, one of Cambodia's

NEW YORK TIMES REPORT

most celebrated activist monks, went viral. Copies of the videos, which purported to show Facebook Messenger calls between the monk and some of the women, were shared widely on the social media platform.

Clues in the videos, uncovered by The Times, also undercut the claims. A **New York Times investigation** found evidence that government employees were involved in the creation and posting of the videos on Facebook. An analysis found split-second footage in which key personal information of two government employees briefly flashes onscreen. The employees work for the Press and Quick Reaction Unit, a propaganda arm of the Cambodian cabinet.

As scandals proliferate on its platform, Facebook has been criticized for being too slow in removing problematic accounts and pages, many fake. It took almost a month for Facebook to take down the page on which the videos smearing the Cambodian monk first aired.

“We recognize the important role that Facebook plays in enabling expression in Cambodia. We want people to

feel safe when they’re using our platform, which is why we take reports of impersonation and other violations of our community standards seriously,” said Facebook in a statement.

Ya, ya, we heard it all before.

In Malaysia, when a portal removes questionable reader comments in a matter of minutes after being notified is **summoned** to the federal court in no time.

Facebook has been under fire for disseminating hate speech and disinformation. It has been criticized for failing to detect Russian influence in the 2016 election, providing a platform for political conspiracy theories and allowing false claims about the coronavirus to proliferate.

But its influence is even greater in places like Cambodia, where the social media platform is the only digital interface for millions of people. Since civil liberties are often constricted in such countries, Facebook can be a powerful tool for autocrats to bolster their grip on the state, even as it provides a rare space for free expression and activism.

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We are excited to announce
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