

MARKETING WEEKENDER™

ISSUE #276 JANUARY 2021

A portrait of Henry Tan, Group CEO of Astro, wearing a dark blue pinstriped suit jacket over a white shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

Content Convergence has a new home!

Henry Tan - Group CEO, Astro



EDITOR'S NOTE

Ad people helping Ad people

If you are out of a job and have started doing your own thing to survive....we want to try and help you.

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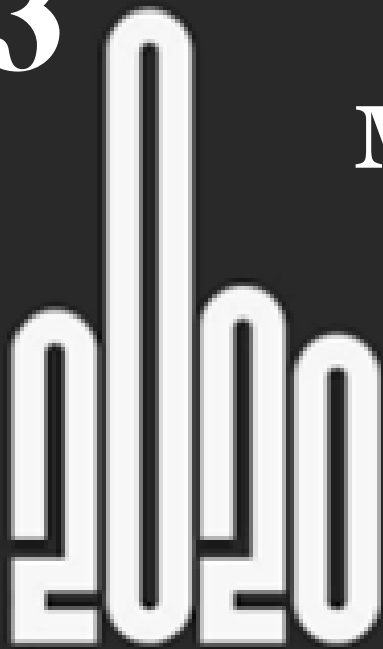
COVER STORY

Astro's new journey as a super-aggregator has begun

After 25 years leading the local media and entertainment industry, Astro Malaysia Holdings Bhd is now on a new...

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TOP TEN MARKETING FOLLIES OF 2020

2020 was the year the marketing industry zoomed its way to nowhere...

The Isolated Cinema



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The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation (DT) of sales & marketing across industries, by increasing pressure for businesses to keep up with the ever-changing demands of customers and their shift to digital platforms.

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Cheryl Goh
Group VP of Marketing
Grab



Tan Lin Nah
Chief Executive Officer
INTI International



Pierre Pang
Group Executive Director
Mamee-Double Decker



Michal Golebiewski
Chief Marketing &
Operations Officer
Microsoft Malaysia



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Marketing Officer
Prudential Assurance
Malaysia Berhad



Michelle Ann Iking
Chief People Officer
SelfDrvn Enterprise



Tan Wai Keat
General Manager
TBM Electrical Store



Jasmine Lee
Chief Marketing Officer
U Mobile

Say What



“GOOGLE ARE DEMONSTRATING HOW EASILY THEY CAN MAKE AUSTRALIAN NEWS PROVIDERS WHO FALL OUT OF THEIR FAVOUR EFFECTIVELY DISAPPEAR FROM THE INTERNET — A CHILLING ILLUSTRATION OF THEIR MARKET POWER.”

Spokesman for Nine, owner of the Herald and The Age, commenting on Google’s recent experiment in intermittently blocking some Australian news sites from search users. Australia announced last month that firms like Google and Facebook would have to pay news media for



“JOBS IN MARKETING WILL BE IN HIGH DEMAND IN MALAYSIA AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC.”

**As reported by
Sade Dayangku**

“EVERYONE THINKS THEY ARE A MARKETER, SO YOU NEED TO TEACH NOT PREACH.”

Hamanoid



“FACEBOOK TARGETS ‘STOP THE STEAL’ CONTENT AHEAD OF INAUGURATION DAY.”

Announcement from the world’s biggest content thief.



Ad people helping Ad people

If you are out of a job and have started doing your own thing to survive....we want to try and help you.



EDITOR'S NOTE

... In a small way, we hope to promote a support system by and for people in the marketing, media and advertising industries through WEEKENDER...

I know we can't help everyone but we wish to start somewhere.

If you are selling products or services to make ends meet, send us the details and we will provide space to promote it.

In a small way, we hope to promote a support system by and for people in the marketing, media and advertising industries through WEEKENDER.

Readership for the WEEKENDER has gone through the roof since its inception last year and our readers could become your customers.

We accept notices about garage sales to catering services,

or just about anything you're doing to generate income, to sustain life without any livelihood.

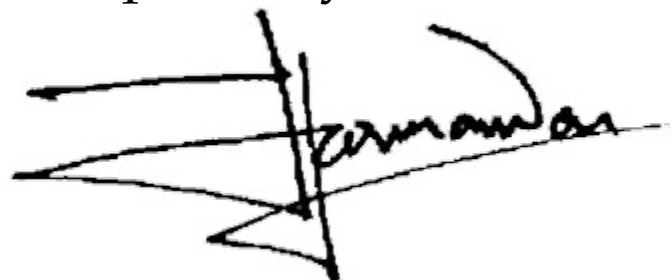
Please email me at ham@adoimagazine with the info.

Like all experiments, allow us the time to get this right.

I will try to make an ad of it, or create a classifieds-style listing.

Thank you, and stay safe.

Respectfully,



Astro's new journey as a super-aggregator has begun

THE HAMMER

After 25 years leading the local media and entertainment industry, Astro Malaysia Holdings Bhd is now on a new. We have heard of digital convergence and media convergence but it was only when I sat down for lunch with Henry last week that I grasped what Content Convergence was going to mean for all of us.

Henry Tan, Group CEO of Astro already made his mark on the global media scene way before he joined Astro, but this time the dynamics are different.

A global pandemic has thrown marketers off their footing in this new reset. We are at a point where the tide is turning in more ways than one.

During this ongoing crises,

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“Our strength in local content has been proven by the fact that local and vernacular content accounted for over two-thirds of all audience viewing.”

where trust deficits grow wider, Nielsen reports that TV recorded a 47% increase in viewership because of the higher credibility of news from this medium.

During the peak of the first lockdown period in March, TV ratings surged to a high of 20.57 (4.6 million Malaysians) with average time spent per person

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increasing to 7:08 (from 5:36 hours).

For Astro, despite legacy issues and the never ending satellite versus streaming argument, it has stepped into a hybrid space where the best of both worlds is becoming a reality.

The fact that Astro has more than 200 channels is already a springboard into Over The Top (OTT) which is no longer an opportunity limited to legacy video or television brands.

Malaysian viewers have opted for streaming services – streaming twice as much online video from services like Netflix

in latest reports.

Incidentally, Astro GO ranks 2nd to Netflix in streaming, and the third ranked player is a very far third.

Netflix has even bought content produced by Astro, which includes Astro First original drama series, *Demon's Path*; Astro Shaw co-produced Malaysian Box Office hit *Hantu Kak Limah and Polis Evo 2*; as well as *Jason's Market Trails* and *Festive Foods*, a heritage showcase of cultural festivals in Malaysia.

But Astro is not getting into the streaming wars.

Gaming the streaming players?

Astro's strategy is to be the Super-Aggregator for Malaysian viewers.

With its 25-year track record in the market, Astro now becomes the partner of choice for streaming players to ride on. Astro's new independently-branded OTT "super content aggregator" app that will be launched this year will provide its content partners - like Warner Media LLC (which owns HBO, Cinemax, Warner TV and Cartoon Network), Disney and NBCUniversal - an alternative

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platform to sell their content in Malaysia.

In May and November 2019, Astro already collaborated with HBO and iQIYI (Chinese search engine giant Baidu Inc's video streaming affiliate) to offer its subscribers preferential pricing for their OTT service.

Just as Astro has a dedicated iQIYI channel, some of Astro's content is being shown on the iQIYI platform, a boon for local talent seeking exposure in the huge Chinese market.

Apart from adding more streaming services into their roster of offerings progressively, the launching of Astro's very own OTT service this year is where the story is at.

"Our strength in local content has been proven by the fact that local and vernacular content accounted for over two-thirds of all audience viewing."

Admittedly, Astro being a legacy service provider is unable to switch over overnight because it is a technological leap. But the race has begun. An in-house broadband service may also be in the works.

Similarly, old TV-viewing habits are slow to change for a majority of Astro's 5.7 million

"This year, we building a new ecosystem so viewers can pivot into the era of streaming where viewers can pick and choose what and when they wish to view..."

subscribers that make up 74% of Malaysian households.

Regardless, Astro is coming up to speed as its Content Convergence strategy is pervasive, traversing mass audiences to micro-communities and groups.

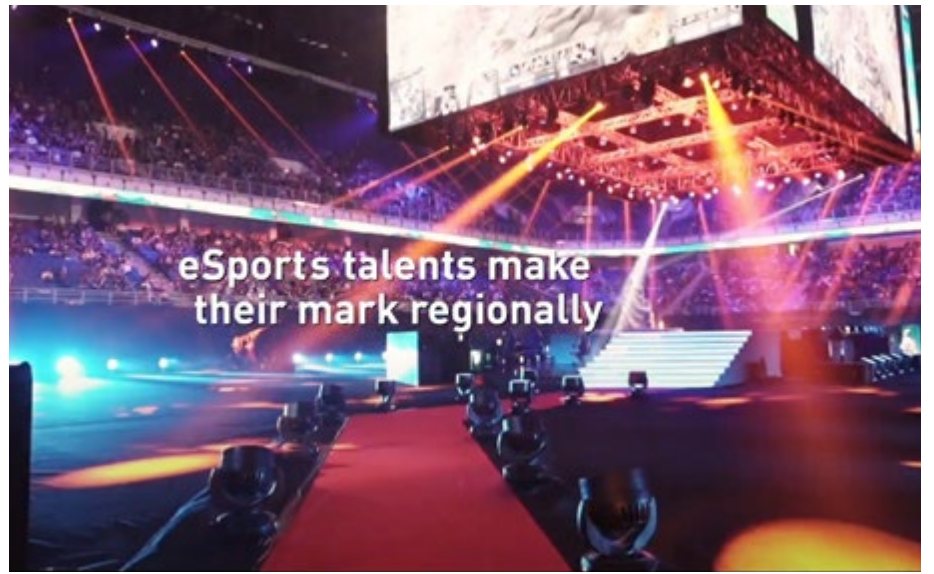
Readers can check out Astro's latest Dream Makers TVC series [here](#).

"This year, we building a new ecosystem so viewers can pivot into the era of streaming where they can pick and choose what and when they wish to view instead of scheduled programming currently offered."

All for One, One for All

Audiences are tired of navigating between multiple services to find what they are looking for. Astro hopes to address the issue of subscription

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fatigue by allowing users group multiple subscriptions under a single umbrella with one account, login, payment preference, etc.

The new ecosystem will offer a single gateway access to an array of content they now access separately through various apps and incorporates Search for seamless navigation under a singular and better bundled price offering. Much like a Video Streaming Search Engine within the same realm.

This model will appeal to the “cord-nevers”, viewers who have never paid for a cable or satellite subscription, who are

unforgiving unless their choice of content is on their platform of choice 24/7.

One sexy app is what they want. And if you go by what most marketers believe, what millennials want, millennials get!

“Cord-cutters” or those disenchanted with linear pay-TV broadcasting will also find the new Astro coming full circle to meet their needs.

Hence, Astro is not joining the streaming wars but embracing all the combatants into their fold, offering them win-win partnerships, allowing them to scale their numbers through

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... The challenge will be in the finer details of contractual arrangements with content providers...

Astro's footprint of more than 74% of Malaysian households.

The new realisation is that streaming services are complementary rather than cannibalistic to Astro's business. Time to streamline streaming services.

Addressable Advertising

The new super aggregation journey seems almost like a rebirth for sorts. But it is clear that the TV business is on the verge of being taken over by super aggregators with pay-tv in pole position to lead and SVODs (Subscription Video on Demand) holding the rest of the power.

Super aggregation is a logical progression for Astro as their history has always been one of securing affiliate relationships with content providers. The challenge will be

in the finer details of contractual arrangements with content providers.

Estimates suggest that at the top of the list of global SVOD syndicators are Netflix, Amazon and Disney+ and will comprise 67% of global SVOD subs, outside of China, by 2025.

Astro is also positioned to blend linear services with the best of the SVOD services. Plus no-one can deliver Live, linear TV with the massive scale of broadcast like Astro.

A single, integrated platform for encoding, storage, delivery, personalization, and data unification. This means advertisers may finally get addressable TV advertising, programmatic TV, or the ability to show different ads to different households while they are watching the same program.

Ah, the media equivalent of heaven!

A peek into this future is evident with Astro's **Ultra Box** which also offers cloud-based video recording and access to 70,000 video-on-demand content. Talk about a sexy interface...

Now, time to look at my super-aggregated **menu** and order lunch!

2020

TOP TEN MARKETING FOLLIES OF 2020

2020 was the year the marketing industry zoomed its way to nowhere. Once again, we pretended to know what the hell we're doing, and the business community pretended to believe us. Hey, we're all in this together, right? Today we look back at some of the advertising and marketing foolishness that made 2020 such a comically horrible year.

In no particular order, here are my
Top Ten Favorite Marketing Follies of 2020.



#1: Gwyneth Paltrow's Vagina Comes Up Roses

In January, the big marketing story was about Gwyneth Paltrow launching a new candle on her *Goop* website called "*This Smells Like My Vagina*." We should have known 2020 was going to be *The Year of the Imbecile* when the candle, priced at \$75, immediately sold out.

I wrote at the time, "*For the record, I have nothing against vaginas. As a matter of fact, I'm quite fond of the little guys. While I am by no means an expert on the subject, I do like to think of myself as a talented amateur. But let's get practical. If you need a candle, and you like the wonderful scent of vagina, why not go to the hardware store, buy yourself a candle for 99¢ then head over to a yoga class in Berkeley? You'll save 74 bucks and get all the vagina smell you'll ever need.*"



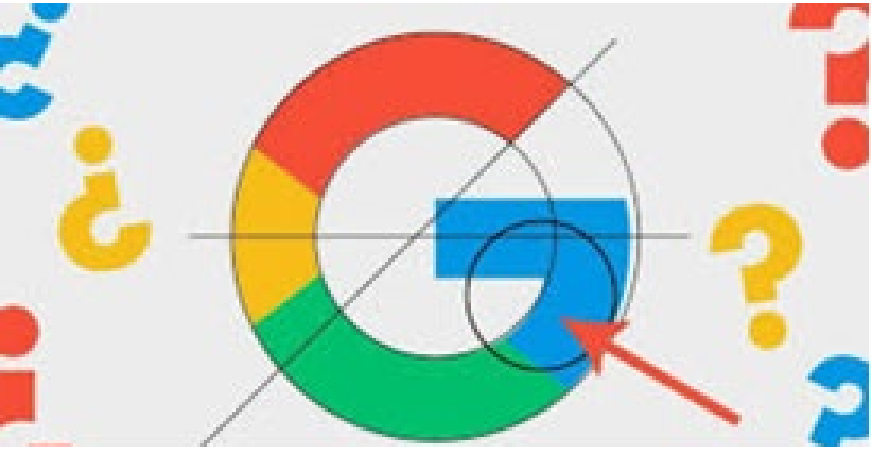
#2: Mark Zuckerberg Wants To Be Understood

If Mark Zuckerberg had grown up on your block he would've been known as "that creepy Zuckerberg kid." He would have been suspected of starting fires and torturing cats. Earlier this year he gave us a peek at what goes on under that disturbing haircut.

In a call with shareholders, the Z-Man announced "*My goal for the next decade isn't to be liked but to be understood.*" Poor thing is misunderstood. My heart goes out...

I wrote at the time: "*Can you imagine...the degree of self-absorption, the infantile self-pity that it takes to make such a statement?*"

I don't think Z-bag has to worry much about being liked. As for being understood, like all cheats and liars, the reason he is repellent is not because he's misunderstood. It's because he's understood all-too-well.



#3: Google Engineers Can't Figure Out Their Privacy Controls Either

We're not as stupid as we think! Well, you're not anyway.

You know how Google and friends keep feeding us horseshit about how easy it is to protect our data by using their privacy controls? And you know how when you try to use those privacy controls you get lost in an impenetrable vortex of bewildering options and incomprehensible terminology?

It turns out Google engineers can't figure this shit out either. Documents released in a lawsuit filed by the State of Arizona against Google this year revealed that Google engineers said...

- *"The current UI feels like it is designed to make things possible, yet difficult enough that people won't figure it out."*

- *"Add me to the list of Googlers who didn't understand how this worked..."*



#4: Uber Flushes \$100 Million Down Online Ad Toilet

Among the many stories of clueless "performance marketers" getting their shorts swiped by the crooks who have colonized the programmatic advertising dreckosystem, my favorite came from Uber.

Kevin Frisch, the former head of performance marketing and CRM at Uber, told the tale of how ad fraud (specifically attribution fraud) ate at least \$100 million of Uber's \$150 million online ad budget...

"We turned off 2/3 of our spend, we turned off 100 million of annual spend out of 150, and basically saw no change..."

Most "performance marketers" have no idea how deeply they're being penetrated by online ad fraud. They don't even know where to look. They have no clue how untrustworthy or irrelevant the numbers they're getting are. Listening

to Frisch tell his story brings it all to life. Perhaps the most deeply disturbing aspect of his story was his description of how nobody gave 1/10 of a flying shit how much money was being pissed away.



#5. Mark Read Tells The Truth

Mark Read, CEO of WPP, the world's largest agency holding company, was guilty of the one unpardonable sin in the ad aristocrat handbook. He accidentally told the truth.

On a call with analysts in August, Read said... *"the average age of someone who works at WPP is less than 30. They don't hark back to the 1980s, luckily."*

In doing so, Read acknowledged out loud and in public something that ad industry hotshots have been denying for years -- their brazen flouting of laws forbidding age discrimination. Read then spent weeks stumbling in his underwear issuing feeble

apologies and pretending that what he said wasn't really what he said. The worst kept secret in the ad business is the enthusiasm with which agency honchos create fictitious rationales for getting rid of older, higher-paid employees. As a result, instead of having the best quality talent create their advertising, marketers have been conned into wasting billions of dollars on idiotic schemes concocted by bumbling amateurs and posers.

The demographic cleansing of experienced, talented people in favor of young, cheap people in the ad industry is not without its consequences:

- Marketers are virtually unanimous in believing that advertising is not as effective as it once was.
- Consumer perceptions of the ad industry are at an all-time low.
- It is widely acknowledged that creativity in advertising has become abysmal.
- Ad fraud and the acceptance of unsavory practices have become normalized.
- The remarkable growth of streaming TV services illustrates that people will pay anything these days to avoid advertising. [More at bobhoffmanswebsite.com](http://bobhoffmanswebsite.com)

SHOWCASE

57°53'45"N, 11°27'57"E

The Isolated Cinema



The global pandemic forced the world's cinemas to close down.

Göteborg Film Festival, the biggest film festival in Scandinavia, is creating The Isolated Cinema on the lighthouse island of Pater Noster. One film enthusiast will be able to enjoy the 2021 festival in total isolation on a rock far out at sea, with film as his or her only companion. Is it you? Apply [here](#).

Client **Goteborg Film Festival**
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