

MARKETING

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WEEKENDER™



Complain!
Complain!
Complain!

(the walls have spoken)



EDITOR'S NOTE

The day Jude Mohan paid my bill and I sought justice!

Blast from the past...the days when ad folk had fun. It was one of those Friday evenings at the Cheers pub in Bukit Damansara. The time when it was still a dingy old-style tavern run by a couple...

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How 400,000 users SYOK sendiri every month.

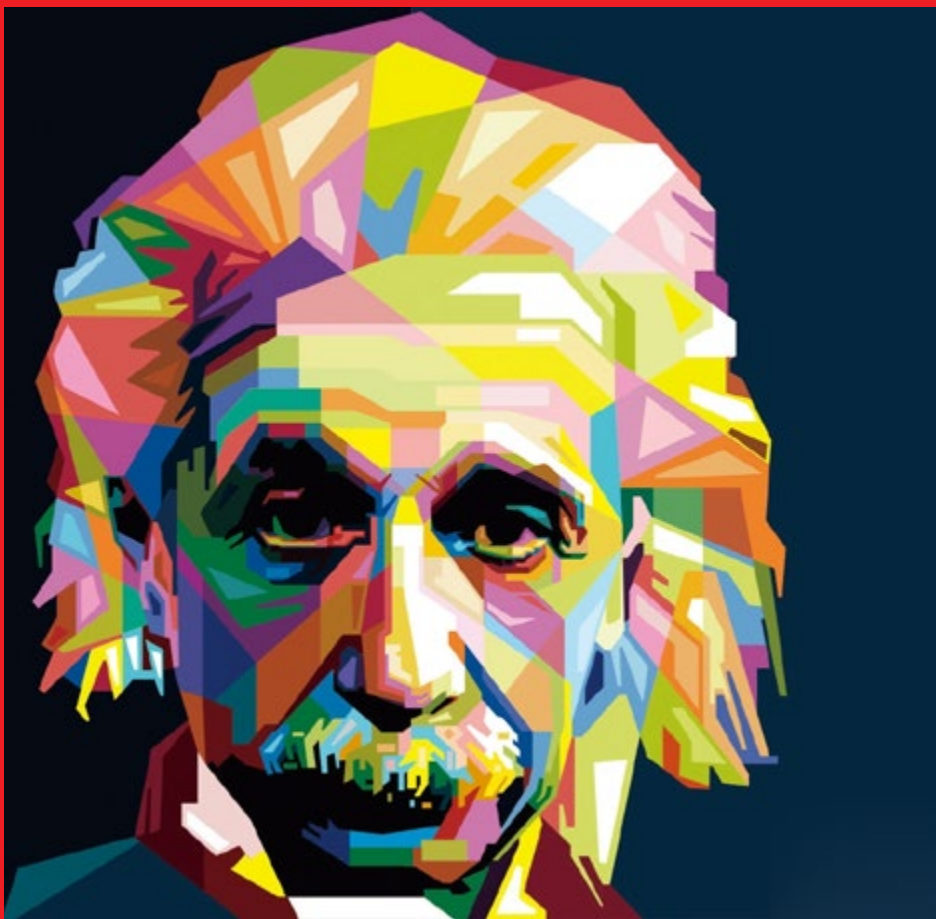
Now in its third year, Astro Radio's lifestyle and entertainment app SYOK is breaking new ground...

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Say What



“THE ONLY WAY TO GROW WITH YOUR MARKETING IS TO BECOME COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE.”



“THE IMPORTANT THING IS NOT TO STOP QUESTIONING. CURIOSITY HAS ITS OWN REASON FOR EXISTING.”

Albert Einstein

“CONFIDENCE ISN'T ‘THEY WILL LIKE ME.’ CONFIDENCE IS ‘I’LL BE FINE IF THEY DON’T.’”

Christina Grimmie



“I HAVE MANY PROBLEMS IN MY LIFE. BUT MY LIPS DON'T KNOW THAT. THEY JUST KEEP SMILING.”

Charlie Chaplin





The day Jude Mohan paid my bill and I sought justice!

Blast from the past....the days when ad folk had fun.

It was one of those Friday evenings at the Cheers pub in Bukit Damansara. The time when it was still a dingy old-style tavern run by a couple (I believe they were the Wongs) whose husband's main passions were fishing, drinking and gambling on anything under the sun.

My pals from the industry had just finished one of our infamous KL Club lunches at a Banana Leaf joint in PJ. And as it was the practice then, we'd shamelessly write-off the rest of the day drinking at the nearest watering hole. Or shall I say, indulging in some good fellowship.

Incidentally, the KL Club was an ad-hoc social club of 69 (don't ask me why 69) free-wheeling

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L-R: Sheen, turbanned stranger, Eddie Tong, Charles Chew, Koh Seng Tee, Jerry Rajendram, Sivanathan Krishnan.

ad industry friends whose only pre-requisite for membership was a blatant disregard for pompousness plus a sudden urge to merge and consume copious amounts of alcohol.

Our self-proclaimed Lifetime Chairman was Eddie Tong (the late), who by virtue of his seniority did not have to pay any bill during our congregations. Sifu, as our Chairman was affectionately called, taught us how to 'die a little' every day.

Anyway, back to my story.

It was way after lunch, and we had already finished a couple of bottles of Scotch (single malt was

unheard of in those days); our group had also grown to about 50 people. A motley crew of MDs, CDs (there were no ECDs or CCOs in those days), film editors, PR folk, ad wannabes and some curious onlookers who thought advertising was about hard work and pain (little did they know they were right).

My good friend Jude Mohan (he used to have two As in his name) who ran an ad agency for the Berjaya Group decided to call it a day around 6pm. He left with a few of his groupies for a last drink at a pub nearer his home (such establishments were

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termed the 'last stops before the border').

But little did I know that he had paid the entire bill for all of us before leaving.

Shortly after, we also decided to leave. I asked the Wongs for the bill which came up to a little over RM400. KL Club members all dutifully chipped in (minus our suitably inebriated Lifetime Chairman) to settle the damage and were on our way.

It was only after a few days, as I was chatting with Jude Mohan about a pitch he had won, that I realised we had been double-billed for our drinks at Cheers. We were all shocked!

After a flash KL Club EGM on the matter (a bitch session that lasted all of 40 seconds), I decided to confront the Wongs that same evening, only to be told that no such thing happened.

Unfortunately, we had not kept our receipts and that was the end of that.

The Wongs had a practiced way of reacting to customer complaints.

One evening, a dear friend of ours, Bob Seymour who ran Bozell Advertising, found a dead cockroach in his friend's beehoon. He immediately took them to task over this, but they just brushed it off saying he was being petty.

So Bob did what every righteous British gentleman would do: he wrote a Letter of Complaint to the Pub. Fat load of good that did. Because Wong showed me the letter and told everyone Bob was overreacting. "The audacity of Bob to fuss over one dead measly cockroach" tickled him to no end!

Nobody won when the Wongs were in charge. They had mastered the art of making you look like guilty even if your bill had been paid – twice!

This article first appeared in a past issue of ADOI, MARKETING magazine's predecessor. To check out all old issues, visit issuu.com/marketingmagazine.com.my

All the news that matters, explained to you in 15 mins!



AWANI Tonight, your bite-sized daily newsbrief, debuts on Feb 1.

In a first for a local channel, Astro's *AWANI Tonight* aims to be the final news capsule to round off the day at 9.45pm from Mondays to Fridays.

The English news programme promises to pack all the news that matter with facts, insights, and bite-sized analysis behind major headlines of the day in a 15-minute power-packed segment.

Anchored by award-winning

journalist Cynthia Ng, the programme is a welcome respite in this age of news overload.

Cynthia says, "*AWANI Tonight* aims to cut through the noise, ask pertinent questions of major news of the day so that our audience is well-equipped with information they need to evaluate and form their opinions."

She has done in-depth interviews with top newsmakers and influential leaders including a rare interview with Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa

EVOLUTION OF NEWS

Billah Shah in conjunction with His Majesty's coronation as Malaysia's 16th Yang di-Pertuan

Agong; and with Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of International Monetary Fund.



Ashwad Ismail, Head and Editor-in-Chief of *Astro AWANI*, said, "One of the reasons behind this effort is to address the current need for concise news. *Astro AWANI*'s reputation as the nation's most trusted news brand pushes us to provide coverage that is impartial, credible and reliable. *AWANI Tonight* is also part of our commitment to enhance our English content offering, having

built reputable news commentary such as *Consider This* hosted by Melisa Idris and Sharaad Kuttan. Building on the success of *Consider This*, which recorded 4.8 million unique viewers in 2020, I trust that *AWANI Tonight* will take it further as we are placing it prior to our news commentary programme and keeping it succinctly timed at 15 minutes."

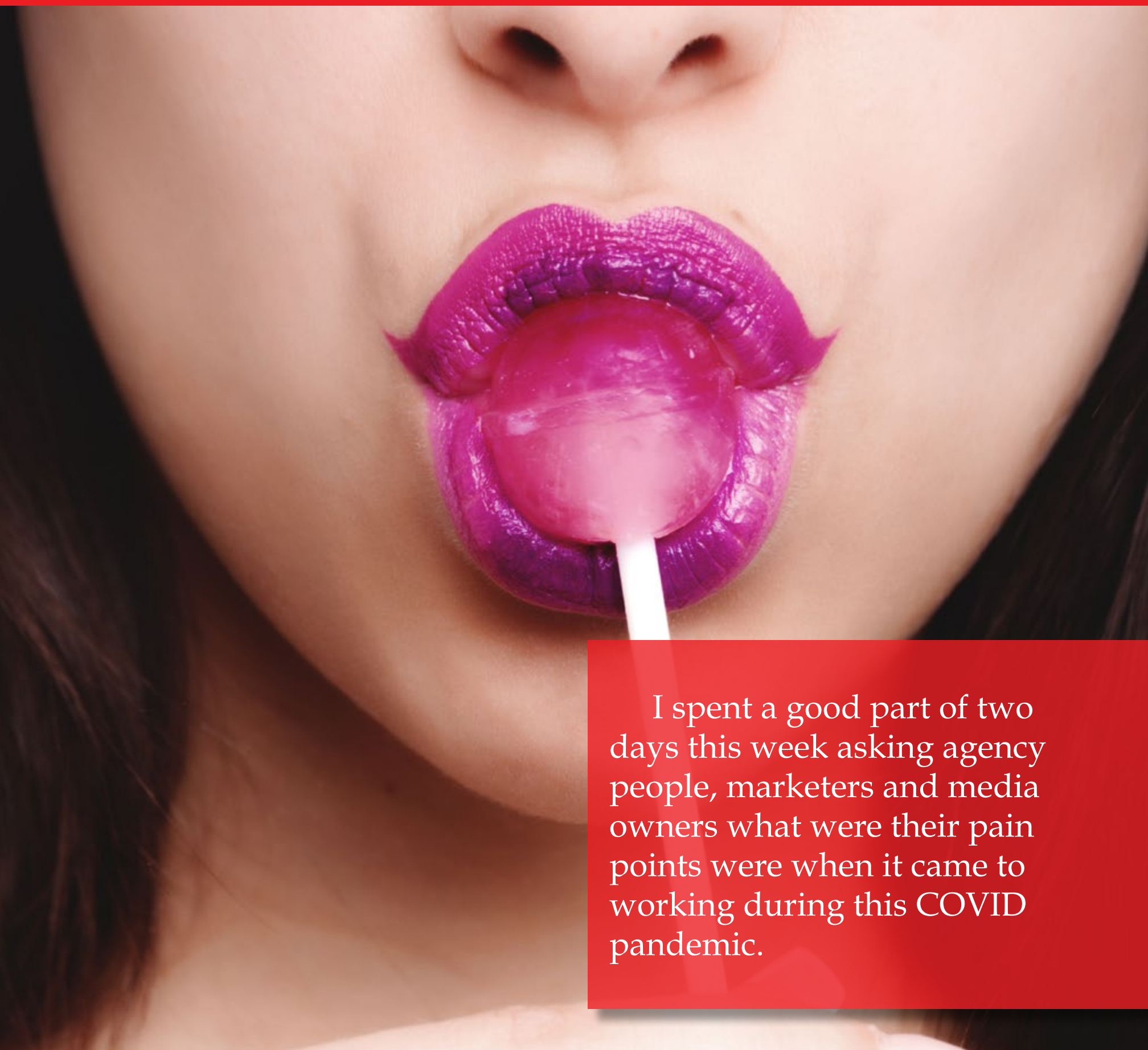
AWANI Tonight is on Astro AWANI (CH 501),
Astro GO, Astro AWANI website and app.

**Watch a preview of
AWANI Tonight here**

Whole lot of bitchin' going on

*How listening to what's wrong
can make us better*

BY THE HAMMER

A close-up photograph of a person's mouth. The person is wearing bright, vibrant pink lipstick. A round, pink lollipop is held in their mouth, with the white stick extending downwards. The background is a solid, bright red color.

I spent a good part of two days this week asking agency people, marketers and media owners what were their pain points were when it came to working during this COVID pandemic.



Agencies, in this context refers to brand, media and/or digital agencies.

After WhatsApping and talking to some 20 people, I realised they were being very polite with their responses; most certainly not the sort of content you readers will read let alone relish. But when I told them I will not publish their names and keep my sources anonymous, it unleashed a torrent of brickbats as they started to really *belasah* me on their gripes.

Now, if I published them all verbatim I won't have enough pages to cover all the complaints. For the sake of decency, I

“Many of my peers in the industry agree with this: agency people like to bullshit a lot.”

have paraphrased some of the responses in an anecdotal manner and neatly arranged them under separate headings. You may find a complaint you can relate to (hopefully, not

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personally). And if so, there may be hope that this article will get you thinking about how we work together.

All responses have been edited for brevity, clarity and unprintable language.

Marketers bitching about Agencies:

“Agencies are still stuck in the old ways of working. But they love to pretend that they are progressive and future-proof and all that.”

“I am shown all these amazing creative awards they have won, but I always wonder why they have never won any with my brand.”

“Agencies think money grows on trees.”

“Agency people have fancy job titles to their names but they don't measure up to the status. For example, can someone tell me how am I supposed to talk to a Global Head of Business?”

“Some agencies love to bring their whole company when they come for meetings. Maybe they don't have enough people on staff.”

“Many of my peers in the industry agree with this: agency people like to bullshit a lot.”



“Clients think they are God. And yet they complain we have egos!”

“If agencies can leave their egos at their office or home, life can be more pleasant.”

“Agencies forget who is paying their bills.”

“Digital agencies think they are God's gift to the world. Just because you look nerdy, are young, have an attitude, a bald head with microscopic earrings does not mean you are smart. Grow up!”

COVER STORY

“Media owners should be more thankful to us.”



Agencies bitching about Marketers:

“I don’t think my client has ever studied Marketing as a subject. Most of his thinking is based on sales work. He can’t even write a decent report.”

This was repeated many many times: “Clients think they are God. And yet they complain we have egos!”

“I deal with marketing people who are at entry level in their jobs and this is frustrating and insulting.”

“It is tiring educating marketers on how to do their work. They do not have a growth learning mindset and like to stay in their comfort zones. In fact, they think they do not need to learn (God-complex issue again).”

“There are very few clients who are respectful towards agencies. I’ll settle for decency and common courtesy at least.”

“Some days, I feel that all the client’s problems belong to the agency! We are not just a bouncing board but a punching bag.”

“Clients expect us to pay for the bills when we meet socially. I am a young agency person, and I find this presumption on their part disgusting.”

“Clients hammer us for not being digital enough, and yet their own ecosystems are dated.”

“Marketers kill ideas by overthinking stuff. They are a boring lot really!”

Agencies bitching about Media Owners:

“Media owners keep doing the same things and expect different outcomes. They don’t think outside the box.”

“They always dodge data,

COVER STORY

even when the truth is staring in their face.”

“Media owners always think we are here to rob them of revenue. They don’t say it, but they’d rather deal direct with clients.”

“I don’t know how to evaluate the efficacy of media platforms and most media owners are shifty about their numbers. Like we are here to rob them of their livelihoods.”

“Media owners do not give us enough stuff that we can use in our sales pitch to clients. They don’t understand that we are in the solutions business.”

“Most media owners think that their job is over once they have given us their rate card.”

“Digital media owners think their business paths are paved with gold.”

“Media owners should be more thankful to us.”

Media Owners bitching about Agencies:

“Agencies always expect us to cover for their revenue shortfalls and mistakes with clients. We actually pay the salaries of agency people.”

“Agencies assume all media owners are happy to give 50%

“Agencies love to tell us how to do our jobs. I suppose they get that from their clients. Or it is their superior complex mentality, or their clothes look better.”

discounts!”

“Agencies treat their suppliers in a condescending manner. Their clients treat us better. Respect begets respect.”

“Agencies love to tell us how to do our jobs. I suppose they get that from their clients. Or it is their superior complex mentality, or their clothes look better.”

“Agencies do not appreciate the amount of money and resources we invest in becoming media owners. They just brush off our existence as something they have to handle because the clients want them to.”

“Agencies take forever, sometimes years, to pay us. Even though their clients have already paid them.”

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“We are always the last to get paid on the food chain, by agencies. And not after they have discounted our invoice for the umpteenth time.”



“Agencies always oversell and underprice us to clients, then they backpedal to us expecting us to fulfill their empty promises. They are forever terrified of their clients.”

This says it all: “I better stop saying anything more, for fear of being punished by agencies. They can act like gangsters sometimes.”

Production Houses bitching about Agencies:

“Agencies want us to do their creative work for them, present to their clients for them, sell the final work to them and then they delay our payment for a year, at least!”

“Agencies think they have superior creative input compared to us, but most times this is not true. And their clients can see that.”

“Many agencies take the credit for work that was actually done by us.”

“If you are a lazy agency working with a good production house, you can become famous very fast. And confuse the marketplace about your own credibility.”

“We are always the last to get paid on the food chain, by agencies. And not after they have discounted our invoice for the umpteenth time.”

Ed’s Note: Phew, this is tiring. OK children, can we get back to work....?

** Belasah is a Malay term that means “let them have it”. Responses having any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events are purely coincidental.*

SHOWCASE



Marketing Agencies throughout the UK have come together to launch the “Save 2021 Sale” in a bid to revive the economy.

More than 30 agencies have signed up to offer a 33% discount off their first three months work – the time it takes to prepare a new campaign.

The initiative, pioneered by ad agency LONDON Advertising and supported by Pimento, the independent agency network that covers the entire spectrum of communications.

The move is designed to encourage clients to prepare now for the return to normal trading when vaccinations against Covid reaches a level which triggers an unlocking of the economy.

As part of the campaign, LONDON advertising and Pimento will be running a fully integrated marketing campaign, including a series of ads on Ocean Outdoor premium digital sites. The list of participating agencies is growing daily and includes firms offering PR, social media, advertising, brand, design, event, media, data analytics, marketing automation and digital marketing.



How 400,000 users SYOK sendiri every month.

Now in its third year, Astro Radio's lifestyle and entertainment app SYOK is breaking new ground in engagement. Their tagline Everything Got sums it up: high-quality radio streaming, fun articles and videos, cool SYOKcasts, contests and an enviable range of content offerings on-the-go anytime, anywhere.

Let's unpack this....

SYOK.MY**Live Radio**

Access high-quality streams of 26 radio brands, 17 of which are Astro Radio's, including the No.1 radio brand in each language segment.

Podcasts

Since its launch in July 2019, SYOKcast has produced a growing inventory of uniquely Malaysian show formats; from talk shows to docu-dramas. In 2020 alone, SYOKcast Originals achieved over half a million listens, mainly contributed by its Malay podcast offerings. One of the long-running show, Confession Bilik Gelap, featuring prominent figures such as Sherry Alhadad, Naim Daniel, Cik B, and many others, captured more than 210,000 listens.

Original Videos

Dedicated to producing original video content appealing to multi-racial Malaysians. Some of the original titles produced include SYOK Seram, SYOKExplores, Malaysian Made.

So where is the syok for marketers?

With over 400k monthly average users, SYOK was, is, and will continue to be the preferred



choice for lots of Malaysians out there when they are on the go.

Brand marketers can engage with their consumers via SYOK, from branded podcasts to video sponsorship, customized contests, and many others.

Programmatic ads and more opportunities will be available soon for brands to connect with their target on-the-go. Stay tuned with **Quake** for latest updates of content and advertising packages from Astro.

Readers can also download SYOK and watch the exclusive videos showcasing all winners in Malaysian **CMO Awards 2020!**



**Syok is a colloquial term that means "very appealing"*

Google Looking for a Fight



In Australia, 95% of online searches are conducted through Google. **This week**, in a shit fight with government authorities, Google threatened to shut down its entire Aussie operation.

The parties are fighting over how and how much Google should pay news media for links and previews of stories that appear on Google.

Google says it helps news

... They argue that Google doesn't just provide links, they monetize these links by advertising in and around them and make money harvesting valuable data about the people who use them. They argue that the news media at the other end of the link should be stakeholders in how the spoils are divided...

media by sending them readers, and that Google should retain the power to determine how much they chose to pay media. They also argue that unfettered linking is the backbone of the web and it shouldn't be constrained by government meddling.

The government argues that the power of Google, Facebook,

and other tech giants is way out of control and that they have built a good deal of their wealth on monopolistic practices and the work of news media who they exploit without fair compensation. They argue that Google doesn't just provide links, they monetize these links by advertising in and around them and make money harvesting valuable data about the people who use them. They argue that the news media at the other end of the link should be stakeholders in how the spoils are divided.

The fight doesn't seem to be about the principle of news media getting compensated, Google has already agreed to that in France. The fight is over control of who gets to decide how much to compensate the news media and under what terms.

The ferocity of the Google response indicates to me that they view this as the beginning of a fight that is likely to spread globally. This is not just about money. The ad tech industry has shown itself to be above government control in some areas. They are not likely to go quietly.

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(or the world)**