

www.mar

popculture

# MAR<sup>→</sup>ETING<sup>TM</sup>

## WEEKENDER

ISSUE #291 MAY 2021

# Woman In Progress

MDEC CEO Surina Shukri believes to disrupt, one has to disrupt oneself.



EDITOR'S NOTE

04

# We Love You

We are at a very critical stage as healthcare capacity is severely strained – urgent and decisive action...

07

COVER STORY

## The Calling....

It was the early autumn of 2018, and the S&P 500 had just lost 6.9% in its biggest one-month slide in seven years...

06

You are a home chef, a farmer, restaurateur or an SME business with ambitions to flourish and grow...

**THIS AD PACKAGE WITH ASTRO CAN ELEVATE YOUR SME BUSINESS INTO THE BIG LEAGUE**

16

## Grow your out-of-home sales & fast





“MAKING A BIG  
LIFE CHANGE IS  
SCARY, BUT YOU  
KNOW WHAT’S EVEN  
SCARIER? REGRET.”

Zig Ziglar



“I DO NOT FIX  
PROBLEMS.  
I FIX MY  
THINKING. THEN  
PROBLEMS FIX  
THEMSELVES.”

Louise Hay



“TWITTER IS  
A BATHROOM  
WALL.”

Dave Chappelle, on the Tonight  
Show with Jimmy Fallon last  
week.

# We Love You



We are at a very critical stage as healthcare capacity is severely strained – urgent and decisive action is overdue. Resources, especially frontline health workers, are severely strained – imperative to use AI and automation, cut down on bureaucratic paperwork, and co-opt the private sector. The rakyat are fatigued after more than a year of pandemic – empower and stop blaming the rakyat for the failures in pandemic management.

**1. Strengthen the lockdown in an evidence-based manner.** Use evidence to identify the sectors, activities, places, and situations where substantial transmission occurs - and strengthen the lockdown in these areas.

Acknowledge that COVID-19 spreads through air borne transmission and address the issue of ventilation in buildings and confined spaces.

**2. Free mass targeted testing.**

**Why?** So that infectious contacts can be very rapidly identified, even if asymptomatic, and isolated immediately. Use RTK-Ag – it's an excellent test of infectivity, produces results within minutes, and is much cheaper. Do not delay further action (HSO / isolation / treatment / further contact tracing), do not add additional burden on health workers, do not impose additional costs, do not add to paperwork, etc. by repeating PCR.



**3. Community management of Covid-19.** Use digital tools to automate the triage process, eliminate paperwork and bureaucracy, minimize the need for health workers. Co-opt private GPs to be involved in the home monitoring (supported by digital tools) of Covid-19 for low-risk patients and the release order.

**4. Optimize the use of low-risk centres (such as PKRC MAEPS).** Only for those who are unable to isolate safely at home – do not abuse its use.

**5. Hospital and ICU management of Covid-19.** Expand Covid-19 beds and ICUs by integrating the public, GLC, and private sectors. This has been said many times but current efforts are feeble. Make use of powers to requisition private property already allowed by legislation.

**6. Vaccinations. In the short term, prioritize and rapidly scale up (using all possible resources – private sector, military, NGOs) vaccinations in the most heavily affected areas.** Given supply

constraints, prioritize vaccinating many with one dose rather than fewer with two doses. This may result in a delayed 2nd dose.

**7. Risk communications to educate and empower.** People are partners and the solution – not the problem. Self-risk assessment

**8. Socioeconomic plan for a smooth and safe exit / step down from MCOs.** The MCO will not end the pandemic – plan for the long haul, where we have to live with the virus by adopting evidence-based and targeted measures depending on the local epidemiological situation. Give families, businesses, and industry a road map of what measures would be used and in what situation so that plans can be made, and continuity maximized.

*From concerned media personalities in consultation with medical experts.*



## Championing local businesses

In a specially-tailored package, between ads and transactions, your brand can access a network of e-Commerce, retail and distribution channels with customized marketing strategies.

At the same time, leveraging on 5.7 millions households that Astro serves across the entire media ecosystem, engaging with millions of Malaysians who are looking to be entertained, educated and informed.

# THIS AD PACKAGE WITH ASTRO CAN ELEVATE YOUR SME BUSINESS INTO THE BIG LEAGUE

You are a home chef, a farmer, restaurateur or an SME business with ambitions to flourish and grow.

Now, for a limited period, Astro through a smart partnership with Jolly Belly Fresh Mart offers you that chance.



- SME clients to take up any Astro ad package, starts from RM3,000.
- One time set up fee RM1,000
- List up to 10 products in Jolly Belly Fresh Mart
- Call-to-Action commercials (Radio, TVC or Digital) direct consumers on to **Jolly Belly Fresh Mart**, which is ranked as a leading retail website in Malaysia.

Contact the Astro Media Solutions team at [mediasolutions@astro.com.my](mailto:mediasolutions@astro.com.my) or check out **brochure** for full details.



# The Calling....

It was the early autumn of 2018, and the S&P 500 had just lost 6.9% in its biggest one-month slide in seven years. The New York Times splashed a cover picture of migrants to the US trapped by Trump's immigration policies. A lot was happening...

Malaysia-born Surina Shukri finished her tenure as head of Strategy Commercial Banking at JPMorgan Chase & Co earlier that year, and was strolling back to her apartment after a long walk in Central Park. New York had been her home for 18 years, and she was at the epicentre of the global business universe.

At 10am sharp the phone rang. It was the Malaysian Prime Minister's office on the line. The call lasted 6 mins 11 seconds. At the end of it, she was asked to write a vision paper - what she would do with MDEC if she were to helm it. And she had 36 hours to complete it.

Surina cancelled all appointments and started working immediately. She wrapped up the paper before midnight the next day, and hit Send to the PM's Office. And that was it.

She worried about uprooting herself and her entire family back to Malaysia, but she thought to herself - this was National Service. Two months later, she was asked to return to KL for interviews.

The rest is the story of one woman who broke the glass ceiling in a 30-month career that spanned two Prime Ministers and a global pandemic while firmly focussing on the nation's Digital Agenda....





Image courtesy of Tatler Malaysia.

# LEAP OF FAITH: From The Big Apple to Cyberjaya

*Surina Shukri powers Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) by leading from the front.*

Having been a breast cancer survivor, her resilient never-say-die attitude was just what was needed at a time when the Pakatan Harapan government had won power and was finding its footing.

Surina is a woman of many talents and being enterprising is top on the list.

She is an angel investor, as part of the 37 Angels network, where she helps screen and invest



## COVER STORY

into startups via SheNovation Ventures, a NY-based company she founded that focuses on the blockchain sector.

“I was investing in companies, learning as much as I could particularly about crypto and blockchain before I got the call to come back and serve the country.”

“I recognize that people like me, don’t usually work for the government. So me being in MDEC changes the status quo.”

## Top 50

Six months ago, for her efforts in spearheading the #DigitalvsCovid campaign, Surina was named the World’s 50 Most Influential People Revolutionising Governance in the Agile 50 list.

The list is a joint initiative by Apolitical and the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on Agile Governance and was created from over 300 nominations from governments, international organisations, NGOs and companies across the globe.

Since we got word that Surina may be leaving MDEC, we thought this story would be timely....

**... Her task was clear: to build Malaysia’s digital economy on three strategic pillars - digitally skilled Malaysians, digitally powered businesses and digital investments...**

## It began on January 16, 2019...

Her first day at work was also a massive townhall with all **staff** from the get-go.

And she continues to show people what the art of the possible actually is.

Her task was clear: to build Malaysia’s digital economy on three strategic pillars - digitally skilled Malaysians, digitally powered businesses and digital investments.

Just three weeks into her job, Surina (a seasoned investment banker) hit the ground with an investment mission for Data Centre investments with the likes of Microsoft, Google, Amazon.



## COVER STORY

# “2021 is the year of execution which can coalesce expertise from business and government to drive regulatory reform that triggers innovation and rekindles economic growth,”

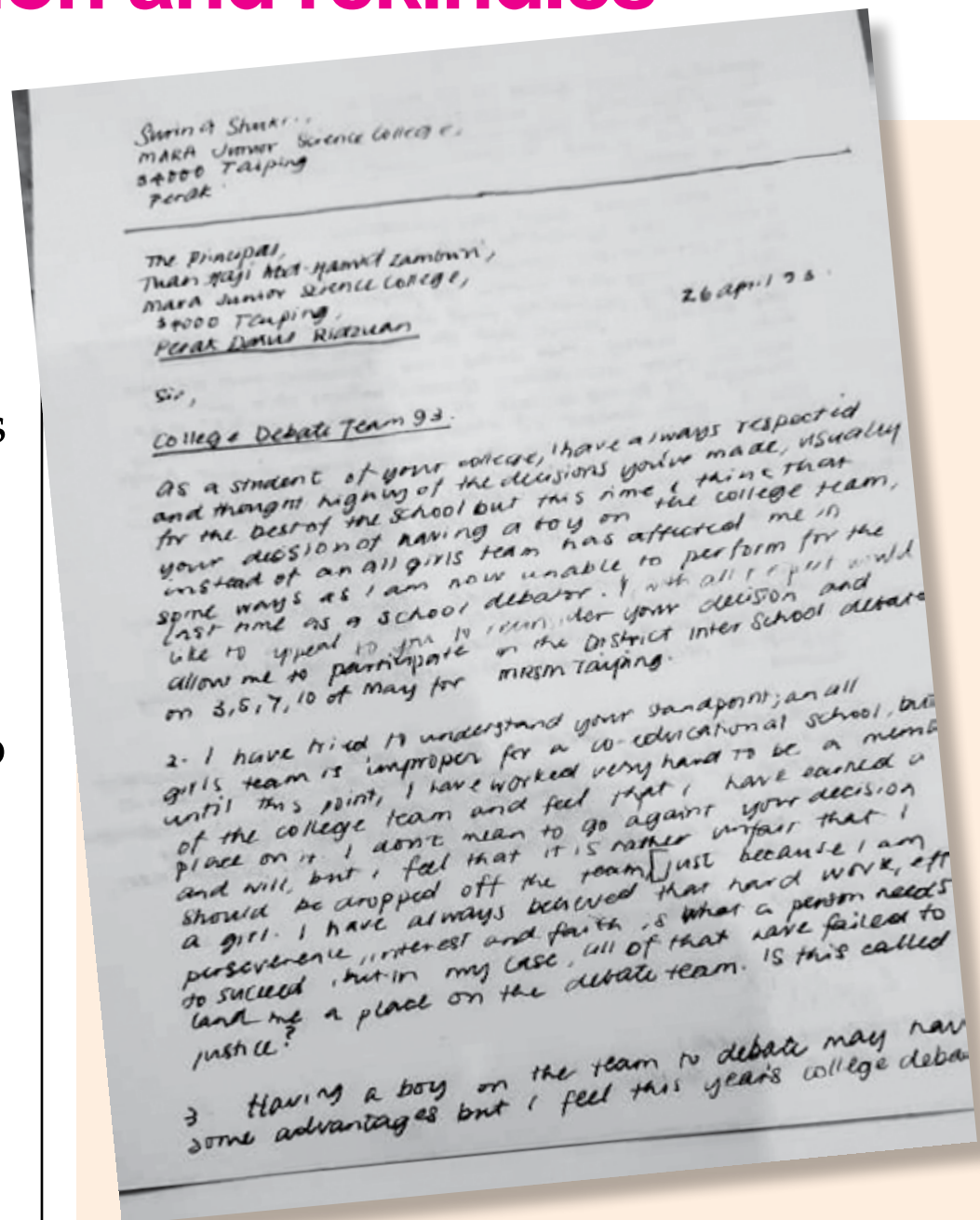
“For the first seven months, I lived away from my husband and kids, out of a suitcase, working 16-hour days seven days a week to help build a robust digital economy for Malaysia.”

Once, on a long-haul flight, she was restless and penned her thoughts into a PowerPoint video that was eventually finished up as a corporate video. Here’s the original video she edited and wrote herself. Click [here](#).

Last year, 45 MSC-status projects were approved with investments totaling almost RM4 billion and 3,800 jobs.

This year, Juwai IQI, a China digital real estate and media company chose to build their 1,000-person technology and data team in Kuala Lumpur.

“2021 is the year of execution which can coalesce expertise from business and government to drive regulatory reform that triggers innovation and rekindles economic growth,” she declares.



## DOING THE RIGHT THING

Resolve: Surina has always fought for her place in the sun. In secondary school she wrote a letter to her principal who decided to replace her on the debate team with another schoolmate.

She got her way in the end.



## COVER STORY

**“In 2020, we helped facilitate USD140million of Series A and above funding for startups.”**

### On Talent, Training, Tenacity....

People and the economy are our priority. Digital jobs and skills will continue to take centrestage.

Our recent analysis among various job search sites, namely LinkedIn, Jobstreet, Monster, Indeed and Jobstore, show an increasing demand for digital jobs and a total of 47,000 tech-related jobs were advertised in all five portals up to February 2021.

Do not forget that “digital talents” also refer to skills like problem-solving, communication and emotional intelligence.

It is not limited to just technical expertise.

Also constantly ask yourself, “What superpowers do I possess?”

It is time to acknowledge your awesomeness and let others know about it.

We learned that businesses are now asking “how” to go digital, instead of “why”.

### REFLECTIONS PRE-MDEC

“I paused for a moment to think why 2018 – the year I left JPMorgan Chase – was a pivotal year for me.

It forced me to be comfortable with the uncomfortable, with disruption and with uncertainty.

Not only did I find answers to the questions I sought out, I also feel like I am living my best life.

I am proud to say I am a Woman In Progress and will always be.”

### On Power Structures....

I’m at peace with what I’m doing and who I am.

Our issues have always been in execution.

There’s always a risk in taking up government positions given the shifting sands in the political landscape and many things beyond my control.

I don’t wish to get into the technocrats vs bureaucrats vs politicians debate, as my mandate from Day One has been very clear: to serve the industry and the people.





I am grateful I have a very supportive independent Board of Directors.

While our primary focus is on capacity and capability building, which we shoulder quite a bit as a government developmental agency, it's like a spartan race.

So our sustainability mechanism is to inspire the private sector to keep the momentum going. Partnerships with big digital companies like Mastercard, Visa, Australia Trade help us scale up.

I have always seen the democratization of digital through a national lens.... as a right of every Malaysian.

We believe in building an inclusive society that's integrated with technology. Human-centric....similar to what Japan has. Society 5.0.

We call it Malaysia 5.0.





## COVER STORY

If one were to highlight Surina's achievements at MDEC, it'll probably stretch a few pages, so here are some highlights over the last 12 months.

- Engaged more than 1 million people, provided training to ~120K Malaysians, Helped upskill more than 5K people, trained 10K digital freelancers and provided free digital courses via #LetsLearnDigital campaign, launched MyDigitalWorkForce Work In Tech (MYWiT) as an extension of the **#MyDigitalWorkforce** Movement to re-skill and up-skill Malaysians in line with the government's Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint which aims to create 500,000 jobs by 2025.
- Steered MDEC's delivery of government's Penjana economic stimulus programs which benefited 210K MSME in ecommerce and catalyzed RM 1.87 billion in sales for Malaysian businesses

- Launched 100 Go Digital, designed to fast track SME digital adoption
- Drove Digital thought leadership through #SayaDigitalMonth – national conferences including SME Digital Summit, MyDigitalWorkforce, Gig & Freelancer Summit and Young Creators Summit with 1.5mm reach
- Won bid for Malaysia to host RISE in 2022-2025, the largest technology conference in Asia
- Drew visibility to the best of Malaysia's tech ecosystem through #MalaysiaTechMonth umbrella campaign uniting disparate tech industry events and engagements
- Galvanized digital as a national agenda with Digital Economy Task Force as precursor for National Digital Economy & 4IR Council chaired by Prime Minister



## COVER STORY

**What's on the horizon for you?**

The lessons I learned from being in government are that it's a lot more complex than we think, we need more people who understand execution and run programmes like a business.

When the time comes for me to go, the saddest part will be in leaving the senior team I built who joined MDEC for its mission and the chance to serve the country.

At the end of the day, Malaysia's digital future lies in the hands of her people.

*No official announcement has been made as yet on the tenure of Surina's contract.*





# *Condolences*

Our deepest condolences & heartfelt sympathies to  
the family and loved ones of

**Datuk Wong Sai Wan**



**You will be dearly missed**

**Dato Siew Ka Wei | Lee Cheun Wei | Robin Ling |  
Datuk Hasnul Hassan | Phillip Karuppiah | Lim Chang Meng |  
Michelle Chen | Sabli bin Sibil | Joseph Raj | Peter A Das  
&**

**All Colleagues from Ancom, Redberry & Malay Mail**



A composite image featuring a man's profile in the foreground and a city street at night in the background. The man has a beard and is wearing sunglasses. The background shows a city street with a bus stop, illuminated by streetlights and city lights. A red line graphic runs diagonally across the image.

# LIGHT UP THE WORLD WITH BROADSIGN

Better tools for  
out-of-home

Visit [broadsign.com](https://broadsign.com)



# Grow your out-of-home sales & fast

by Remi Roques,  
*General Manager Broadsign APAC*



The current trend in out-of-home advertising is the digitalisation of media panels and the utilisation of programmatic tools. While digital screens are the way to go in premium locations, replacing static with digital panels in some areas may not make business sense. The audience levels in most regional and residential environments simply do not bring the revenue expected to cover the initial investment of switching to digital screens while

keeping in mind that most Out-Of-Home media assets are still static. The number of digital display units is still between 5% and 10% of OOH units worldwide.

So, if you are an Out-Of-Home media owner with a mix of static and digital panels and have explored all options for digitalisation of your billboards, what is your growth strategy to increase your revenue? How do you maximise the yield of each single media asset?



## OPINION PIECE

2020 was defined by COVID, and in the OOH space, by an associated revenue drop for most media owners around the world. Unless you have outdoor media assets near essential places of business, for example grocery stores, your sales almost definitely decreased in 2020 as compared to 2019. But this year is the year for recovery, which begs the question, how fast can your sales team get your business back on track?

Make no mistake, your competitors are not waiting around for campaigns to fall into their laps - nor should they be. Now is the time to act, to take bold steps and make smart investments to put your business on the path to a faster and more complete recovery. In particular, you should focus on adopting technology that will allow your sales team to work as efficiently as possible.

Consider the typical OOH sales process: A sales executive gets campaign details from a potential customer. They'll then have to verify inventory availability to create a proposal, which can take a fair amount of time to research. And by the time the proposal has been

**... Because OOH inventory is limited and perishable, it's to be expected that this kind of situation will arise...**

sent over to the customer for review, somebody else in the organization might have booked some of the inventory included in the proposal.

Because OOH inventory is limited and perishable, it's to be expected that this kind of situation will arise if you don't have the tools that can prevent it. Fortunately, dedicated OOH sales software is built to deal with just these problems.

The two big issues here are the difficulties in accessing booking information and the friction involved in creating sales briefs manually. If you can shave time off of these processes, you'll enable your team to spend their time doing what they do best: making deals. Selling more means selling faster and turning around sales briefs quickly.



## OPINION PIECE

## ... Everything can be handled in one shot, and then altered later if the customer changes their mind...

In out-of-home, this will be most easily accomplished by adopting a purpose-made inventory management system for OOH. This will show the availability of static, transit or digital inventory in real-time, and also allow your team to place panels on hold or book them outright with just a few clicks. This offers a dramatic savings of time, as there's no longer any need to go digging through spreadsheets to see what is available, and no need for back-and-forth emails to finalize a deal. Everything can be handled in one shot, and then altered later if the customer changes their mind. Adopting this kind of solution is the best investment you can make to support your sales team and help them and focus on selling instead of administrative tasks.

When your sales executives prepare their proposals and check for avails in one central system, you also want to make sure your inventory is being sold at the 'right' price, i.e. the price dictated by demand. For example, if your clients have recently inquired about a specific region, you want to make sure that the rate for the inventory in this region reflects the demand on the panels. A good OOH sales tool will have dynamic rate cards that your revenue generation team can adjust in real-time based on sales pressure and other environmental factors, like the type of buy, client or season.

And, if selling is a collaborative activity in your organisation, your sales managers, coordinators, or revenue management team likely want to review proposals before they go out to clients. In cases like this, you'll want to make sure your OOH sales platform of choice includes a review and approval workflow.

An added benefit to adopting this type of dedicated OOH sales solution is that it can help record all sold campaigns and contracts, including revenue coming from installation, production, creative



## OUT OF HOME

**... Nowadays,  
all modern  
platforms are  
cloud-based  
solutions.  
They require  
no investment  
cost for  
expensive  
on-premises  
hardware,  
installation or  
IT support....**

development, and any fees charged beyond the base media revenue. This allows you to work with a single, central repository for all contracts for auditing and reporting - something your finance team will appreciate for regulatory and compliance reasons. This is also a great resource for you and the rest of the management team to extract meaningful reports to drive the growth of your business.

Nowadays, all modern platforms are cloud-based

solutions. They require no investment cost for expensive on-premises hardware, installation or IT support. Maintenance and upgrades are the responsibility of the software vendor who performs these tasks remotely. The infrastructure is scalable and grow as your business expands. Cloud-based solutions have less downtime and are also faster to onboard. It means more time spent growing sales and your business.

If you are still using Excel or a cumbersome sales tool, you're doing too much manual work to properly compete in the coming years in OOH. Now is the time to upgrade by investing in a dedicated OOH sales tool, such as our own Broadsign Direct. To find out more about how technology can help you master the OOH medium, and to sell inventory more effectively faster, visit us at [Broadsign.com](https://Broadsign.com).







# DIVINELY CLEAN

Find it in [www.plazalama.com](http://www.plazalama.com)





# On The Dangers of Tracking

*Bob Hoffman was invited to speak to some members of Parliament in the UK. They are considering legislation to [protect kids](#) from online surveillance. Here's an excerpt of what he shared...*



Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to speak on the important topic of surveillance in online advertising.

Advertising's traditional job has been to impart information to people. Today, however, certain types of advertising have become equally concerned with collecting information about people. I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say that a good deal of online advertising can be viewed as spyware that only looks like advertising.

Most researchers estimate that about five display ads out of 10,000 get clicked on. But almost every one of those 10,000 ads is capable of harvesting information about the person the ad is served to.

Like most of you, I'm not a computer scientist or a software engineer. But you don't have to be an automotive engineer to understand that a car can run you over.

Our ability to use software to track people around the web and reach each individual with personalized advertising was sure to make advertising more relevant, more timely, and more likable.

Our ability to listen to consumer conversations through social media and react quickly couldn't help but connect brands more closely with their customers.



But advertising has gotten worse, not better.

Rather than creating advertising that is “more relevant, more timely and more likable” we are creating advertising that is more annoying, more disliked, and more avoided.

One study showed that of all forms of advertising, the eight types most disliked by consumers were all forms of *online* advertising.

In 2017 I wrote a book entitled “*BadMen: How Advertising Went from a Minor Annoyance to a Major Menace.*” In that book I wrote that we know the dangers that accrue when governments know everything about us, follow us everywhere, read our communications, and know who we talk to and what we talk about.

As we move about the web, trackers relentlessly gather information about where we go, what we look at, and what we interact with.

This information is then fed into algorithms which are formulas that are derived from our behavior and to some extent describe our personality.

## ... For years, the advertising and marketing industries have been hiding behind the skirts of Facebook and other online platforms...

For example, my Facebook page is completely different from yours. It is based on the algorithms that describe me. My page shows me content and ads that are likely to be more engaging to me.

The purpose of these algorithms is primarily to keep visitors “inside the corral” of the publisher or the platform. The more time I spend in their corral, the more money the platform can realize from selling ad space.

Surveillance marketing is little more than ten years old but it has already helped drive a wedge of intolerance into democratic societies.

For years, the advertising and marketing industries have been hiding behind the skirts of Facebook and other online platforms.



## ... There is no reason online advertising can't be viable without spying on us...

While these companies have taken the heat, it has been largely unrecognized by the public and by policy makers that it is for the sole benefit of the advertising and marketing industry that Facebook and others do their work.

Facebook derives 99% of its revenue from advertising. We are the hidden hand that guides and finances these dangerous practices.

And how does the advertising industry justify the damage we are doing?

The first and most dishonest of the claims is that the free internet is reliant on surveillance for its revenue model. This is simply not true.

Traditional media -- TV, radio, press, outdoor -- did very well for decades without tracking. There is no reason online advertising can't be viable without spying on us.

Is the free internet reliant on advertising? Yes.

Is it reliant on tracking? No. Last month Apple changed its operating system to give its iPhone and iPad users the choice of being tracked or not. Initial reports say that 96% of people here in the US chose not to be tracked.

Only 4% voted for "more relevant advertising."

You might find it amusing that marketers claim that tracking provides such relevant advertising when data shows you have to run 10,000 ads to get five people to click.

Ending tracking, ending surveillance, ending spying on the public is not a panacea for all the problems of the digital world. But it is a great place to start. We need to get rid of tracking – not advertising – to help make the web what it ought to be.

Thank you for listening.

*Bob Hoffman is author of "Advertising For Skeptics", "BadMen: How Advertising Went*



*From A Minor Annoyance To A Major Menace" and several other books about advertising.*



# S O S

END 2 OON

© UNICEF/UN0452716/Sharma/AFP

## HELP UNICEF SAVE LIVES IN INDIA NOW

UNICEF is racing against time to save lives as a deadly wave of COVID-19 infections hits India. Hospitals are overwhelmed and what is urgently needed now is oxygen availability to help children and families cope with the devastating impact of the virus. It takes 1,430 donors giving RM500 each to get 1 Oxygen Generation Plant (OGP). UNICEF is looking to provide 50 units of OGP to India. Your urgent support could make all the difference.



Scan or click  
[bit.ly/urgent-help-india](https://bit.ly/urgent-help-india) to donate now:

(All donations will go towards supporting UNICEF's India Emergency Appeal.)