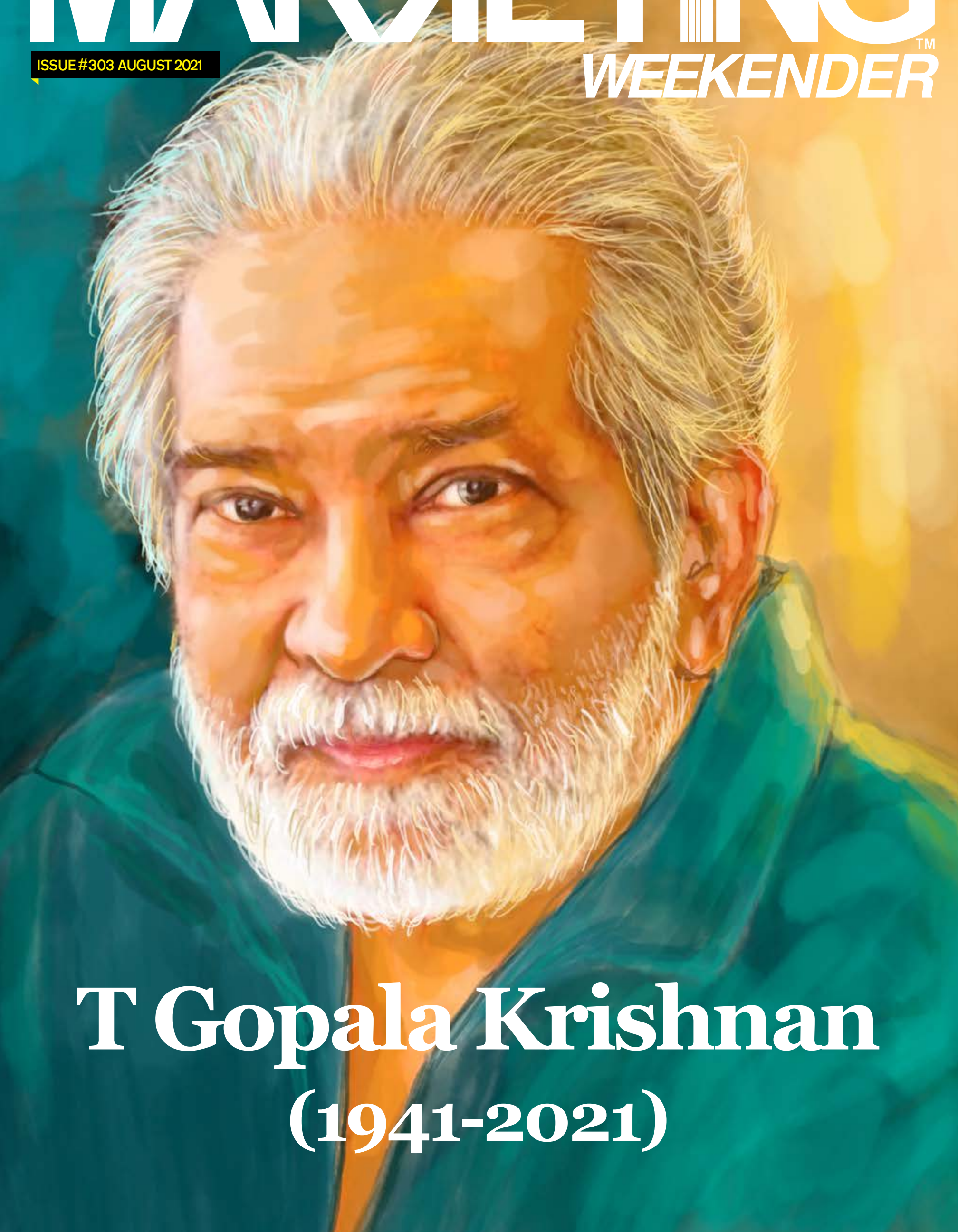


MARKETING

ISSUE #303 AUGUST 2021

WEEKENDER™



T Gopala Krishnan
(1941-2021)

EDITOR'S NOTE

04 The passing of a true legend

T Gopala Krishnan (1941-2021)

He was the greatest.
With a beaming smile and
outstretched hand, he greeted all...

COVER STORY

05



He was like the wind, he
came strong and he went
swiftly. But if we stand
still, we will feel his
breeze.

Admatik:
Malaysian born
'storytech startup'

15

'Storyteching' is the
process of fusing brand
storytelling and tech...

24

The oldest
pre-existing
condition



Are you from the pre Wite Out era?
You know, the times when making
mistakes...

“Everyone should be working as a team. In other words, the winner does not win everything while the loser does not lose everything.”

YDPA Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Al-Musta'in Billah



“The winner cannot take all and the loser should not lose all.”

A much expressed sentiment in our recent politics.

Psychology Today

“The average high school kid today has the same level of anxiety as the average psychiatric patient in the early 1950's.”

Psychology Today



“Marketing is a conversation, not a lecture.”

Hamanoid



The passing of a true legend

He was the greatest.

With a beaming smile and outstretched hand, he greeted all as one and the same. The world was his family.

GopalKrishnan, or TG, was that person who never saw failure in anything. While we stand in shadows, Gopal stood in light.

As an ad man, film maker, he made hundred of stars and helped thousands. From the crew hand to the acclaimed creative directors.

How do I put it? He gave me my break in advertising.

He was everyone's Don and invented the great advertising parties in the 80s. Without fail, every Deepavali for hundreds of

EDITOR'S NOTE

guests if not thousands. And we lived in his glory.

Even the Gatsby was put to shame.

Gopal's collection of vintage cars was second to none.

Many friends used his white Rolls as their wedding car, and Gopal would send his personal driver along.

"Walking is for losers, grow wings," he told me when I started my own company.

I was not making money in my first year and he summoned me to his office to "scold" me, while showing me how to get things done.

Blunt but forgiving, his smile did wonders.

You could take on the world after that.

Thank you forever Gopal.

You are the real GodFather.

His office, Jemima Films in Jalan Pekeliling, was like a Rock of Gibraltar. Everybody passed through this gateway secure in the feeling they had been blessed by the man at the top of the stairs, where his generous office hosted many a lost soul.

He turned away no one.

He feared no one.

He towered over everyone.

Gopal made us all brave, he was contagious.

He was a phenomenon that touched countless lives.

He won Malaysia's first global creative award... for Dunlop tyres.

We all need pause to grieve and respect the passing of a great soul.

Rest in Peace Boss.

You do not need an exclamation mark, you *are* the exclamation mark.





He was like the wind, he came strong and he went swiftly. But if we stand still, we will feel his breeze.

He passed away a few days ago, leaving behind wife, daughter, sons, daughters-in-law, grandsons and granddaughters. We asked his close friends to send us their tributes to this amazing man. Advance apologies for editing because there's never enough space to write about Gopal....

Gopal was the proverbial "trumpeter swan", an irrepressible spirit that could never be contained.

It was this inner sense of rebellion, that defined his persona and the man he was. Gopal fought relentlessly to push the limits and achieve new benchmarks and more importantly, reimagine the

COVER STORY

advertising film industry, in its formative years.

In doing so, he expectedly, ruffled the establishment. But in Gopal's lexicon, there were no mea culpas. His award winning work for Toyota, Astro, Dunlop, Maybank and many more are ample testimony.

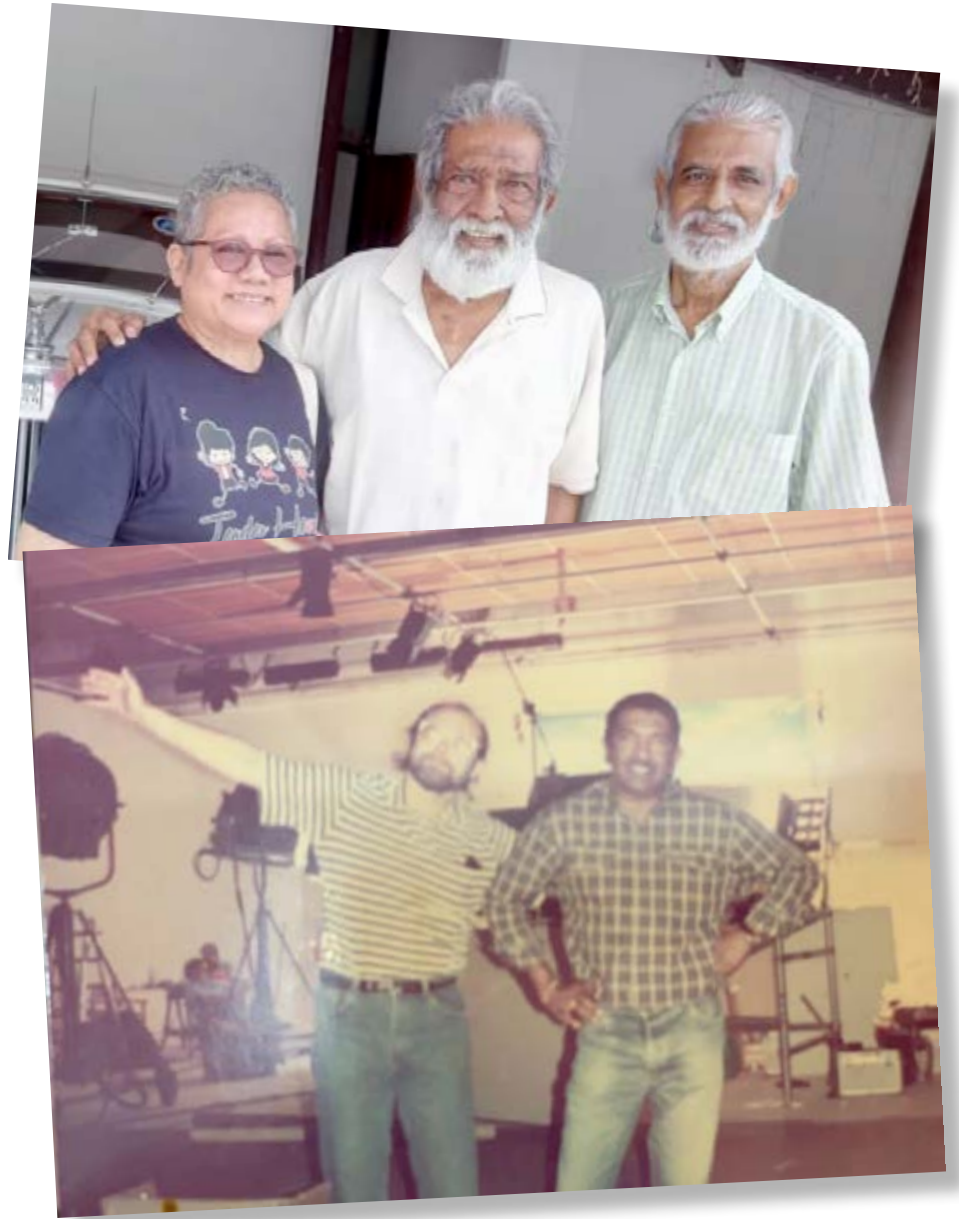
And just in case, there were any imperfections, they were more than adequately compensated by his largesse, sense of charity and above all, his willingness to give of himself. To me, a true mentor. To the world, a friend and ... a genuine one, at that.

*Industry veteran and leader
Datuk Rishya Joseph*

43 years ago I came to Malaysia, and immediately I was a friend. For 43 years Gopal remained a loyal, dependable and firm friend, to myself, Jennifer and eventually our son Alexander. His unique strength, humour and affection will never be forgotten. He was a great man we will hold in our hearts forever.

Paul Loosley & Jennifer Chan.

The last time Suzan and I met Gopal was one year ago. He



was looking frail, but happy to see us. We sat in his beautiful living room, but this time it was crowded with all his boxes and film equipment from Jemima Films.

I reminded him of the first time we met, and he nodded...

I was working at Pearl & Dean then and went downstairs to meet him. There was this big burly bearded man, leaning on his big black Holden, parked by the roadside waiting for me.

After some hellos and handshakes, we got along. And he didn't stop talking, or smoking, for almost an hour,

COVER STORY

driving up and down that same road, all the while describing his vision of a new Film Production House to bring on the “Greatest Show in Town”.

He and Hoo Eek Kee had by then done a few TVCs, but he wanted to take it to the next level with permanent staff.

Needless to say, I joined him as Director/Cinematographer with Suzan Manen as Film Producer. We began work even while the studio was still being put together, at No 6 Jalan Hicks in the heart of KL. Within a year or so, what Gopes had envisaged happened. We were shooting non-stop, earning accolades and creating waves, and Jemima Films truly became the greatest!

Gopes was the greatest PR man I have ever known. Time and again I have seen him work his magic and bring a situation back from the brink. He knew everybody and everyone was his friend.

Rohini Kumar is an ace advertising filmmaker.

I have known Gopal since 1972, during my 6-month internship in the Graphic Art studio at Ogilvy. Later we met in Ted Bates, where he was head



of the TVC department. He frequently introduced me as his “my Melayu brother”. Gopal is legenda. RIP my dear friend

*Datuk Sean Sulong – owner
Lensa Film*

Every occasion I engaged with Mr Gopalkrishnan, I came away feeling there is so much to learn from this gentleman. The Tamil slogan “Nai chap Guinness Stout, unggalukku nallathu” used in the 1970s commercial for Guinness was his work.

One late evening, we all had a fair share of drinks after a meeting at the industry secretariat in Phileo Damansara. We were all chatting just outside the offices. One person from the group sent his driver to bring Gopal’s Range Rover from the basement carpark. The driver brought a Range Rover but it wasn’t Gopal’s. We all sobered up!

Fact: Gopal’s fleet of vehicles needed more than one car park.

COVER STORY

Joe D'Silva - Worked for Media Owners

If there was a centre of gravity for many in the local film industry it would be Gopal Krishnan and Jemima Films on 251, Jalan Pekeliling. His greatest legacy is the time he took for others. Travelling down that long driveway you knew you would be welcomed, listened to, and guided. A father-figure to many by the sheer generosity of his spirit and heart, Gopal was the boss who fought for what you stood for as a human being.

Siobhan Das is a former film producer

In film production, the word "impossible" did not exist in this man's vocabulary. If you can't get it done, the great TG will do it himself! He took no prisoners and made no apologies; he was a friend to all, from the drain sweepers to the Ministers. He could persuade anyone about anything; there was an amazing likeability about him, bigger than life he was, brave, unselfish and deeply religious.

Nothing made him happier to learn that one of his "boys" made it big out there. If you are

or were successful in advertising film production, there is a big possibility that you went through Jemima Films or worked for someone who did.

Every country has a Godfather in advertising film production, we have the great T Gopala Krishnan. RIP to the Boss of Bosses.

Sheen Surinder Singh - owner Passion Pictures

I first set eyes on 'The GodFather' when I worked on the Salem campaigns with JWT back in the 90's. Still rough, he would always say that I needed some decent polishing and we would sit up in his office at Jemima films, late into the evening.

Sharing his experiences and often arguing points of differences, both professional and personal, while we polished off very decent rounds of good whisky. He always had time for me when we meet, often on work. I had the pleasure of doing ad films with him for over 20 years.

Through the years, Gopal became dear to my immediate family and friends and always brought laughter to the table. I

COVER STORY

will miss our occasional meets on Mondays at Rennie's Pub in Jalan Gasing to catch up on the friendly gossip and opportunities in the ad world.

The memories you have left behind will forever lay in the reels of time.

Jerry Rajendram – veteran ad man

Gopal brought into Bates a lot of wonderful joy, fantastic hallmark achievements for our erstwhile clients, but more importantly our Gopal was an exceptional people-oriented person who can make anyone, VVIPs included, weep with joy with his humour and happy lifestyle.

Totally dedicated to his lovely family, we will miss Gopal very much

Charles Chew - the original SuperSuit

If not for Gopal Krishnan, the quality of our Malaysian produced TV commercials today would be very different.

He had the foresight to introduce the Made in Malaysia (MIM) ruling that not only fast tracked the development of professional skills across so many related industries like production houses, talent agencies to grooming an army of experts who are so vital for our work - film directors, DOPs, Art Directors, productions crews, set builders, wardrobe designers, make up artists...

He invested into state of art filming equipment and this created employment and brought in production money from overseas into our economy.

Today, many of us owe our successes and livelihoods to his kindness, vision and passion. We thank and remember him fondly. Gopal is the Godfather of Persatuan Penerbit Film Iklan Malaysia (PPFIM).

Khoo Kay Lye - Filmmaker and President of PPFIM

He started Jemima Films, just the two of us. In a rundown flat. Sharing an office with Maju Film production house. We worked



COVER STORY



non-stop, never seeing the light of day.

My English was terrible. But he kept pushing me. We faced all the western creative directors, managing directors, and clients. All those “champions” always wanted foreign film directors.

So Gopal worked hard to build their trust to be one of the best directors in town. He taught me everything. Finally his hard work paid off. We moved to Jalan Hicks.

He thought me how to drink and made me a member of Royal Selangor Club. What did I know. I was just a humble rubber tapper boy from Tapah.

But Gopal... he never look back and was full of energy carrying a heart full of love for people and always lending a helping hand to those less fortunate. With the smile that no one can say no to.

Ham, I can't write anymore. My heart starts to hurt and my brain is spinning. Love you Gop.

Hoo Eee Kee – regional filmmaker, and ex business partner who is based in Indonesia.

Gopal lived and worked by his own rules – and that's why he had to run his own business. He was a visionary because he saw things differently. That was apparent to those who worked alongside with him during his stint at Ted Bates in the mid-70s.

On his own, Gopal charted a radical path, always sticking to his guns when it came to defending his craft. He was boisterous, notoriously demanding, and gentle as a grizzly bear.

Through his many accomplishments, Gopal was generous to a fault in training his staff, sharing his knowledge, and bringing down the house at any party. (He gave the nursery rhyme *Baa Baa Black Sheep* a comical twist that would have made Peter Seller envious.)

Like most successful entrepreneurs, Gopal was a dreamer.

One of the projects he often talked about was updating some

COVER STORY

of the classic P. Ramlee films. He believed it to be a goldmine. Unfortunately, time and energy were his pitfalls. In his heyday, Gopal would have charged ahead relentlessly.

It's our loss that the dream was not realised. But his legacy lives on. We still have memories of the hundreds of TVCs produced by Gopal's Jemima Films.

Gopal lived by his own rules. No one knew the end was near.

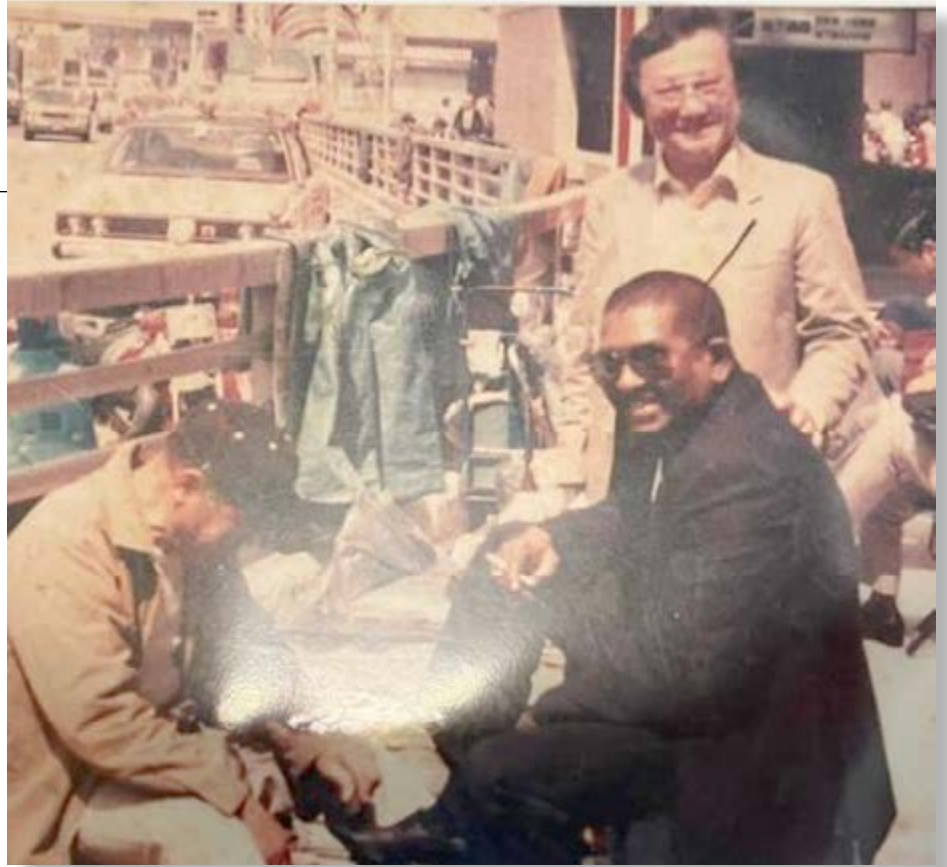
My friend, life will go on in the skies above.

Christie Leo - Former CEO, Waves PR.

Gopal and I go as far back as working together in RTM and then both of us found ourselves in the audio visual department of SH Benson. Gopal was my boss.

We spent a few enjoyable years working together, as anyone will attest that those early days of producing commercials were great days.

Gopal then moved on to set up what was to be an icon for the commercial industry - Jemima (named after his daughter). I don't think there are too many directors, producers or other technical personnel who have not tread the boards at Jemima



and made a name for themselves guided by Gopal. The industry benefitted and blossomed to serve not just Malaysia but the countries around us.

Rest In Peace my friend.

Datuk Faridah Merican & Joe Hasham

Uncle Gopal was a jovial, loving and giving human being.

A maverick who was always against the grain yet down to earth, he was more than happy to teach and correct most of the very senior advertising executives... including myself from the aviation industry.

He will be fondly remembered as a great teacher, friend, philanthropist and a towering human being.

Capt Surendra Singam - Executive Director, Aviation Development Corporation

COVER STORY

Gopal, or Gop, as we all called him was a wonderful husband, father, brother and uncle. He was a Master of his Craft.

The creative spark that made brands come alive and visible.

A friend to all - the young, the old, the good, the bad and the ugly.

Especially to those in need, he always searched for a way to help them.

Ralph Marshall

As a young rookie who had just joined the advertising, I was sent to Jemima Films for one of Ogilvy's TV commercials.

I sort of bumped into Gopal at his office...and what struck me most was his broad welcoming smile.

At each encounter over the years with Gopal was always encouraging and memorable.

In the Hall of Fame for Malaysian Production Houses, Jemima Films was the beacon of excellence under his leadership.

Oh... my wife and I were one of those lucky couples who sat in his beautiful vintage white Rolls Royce on our wedding day.

Thanks Gopal, and God Bless your soul.

Gurdeep Singh Hunter Strategic Communications

When I returned to Malaysia the very first agency I joined was PTM Thompson (JWT). During that time the bulk of the advertising budget was invested in TVCs, so every Art Director worth their salt would by their first year get a big budget TVC approved.

After getting the blessing from your Creative Director and the go ahead from the clients, you'll then get the opportunity to meet the Godfather of commercial film production, the one and the only (from his smile some people has mistaken him to be the long-lost twin brother of Burt Reynolds), Mr Gopal Krishnan.

After having had the privilege of working with him on a number of commercials I began to compile a list of basic rules that I felt every newbie Art Director (who more often than not gravely lack sufficient survival instinct) should know before meeting him.

The gist of it consist of the things that he had thought me - never pretend to know things that you actually know nothing about, be genuine because being

COVER STORY

an imposter is a shitty way to live your life, showing respect to everyone is a reflection of your upbringing, leave a big space in your heart for kindness, never lose faith or your sense of humour, especially when things go wrong, don't be afraid to try something; even if you fail you would learn something new.

It goes on...

Being intoxicated does not give you the excuse of not being a gentleman, the greatest wealth you can accumulate is friendship - obviously there's more but I always felt what he wants for us is to be passionate about life, about the things we do, be courageous, be bold and never forget what it take to be human.

Goodbye my Captain, have a safe and wonderous journey, I'll see you when I see you.

*Datuk Shafri Mohamad,
Executive Chairman - Astana
International*

Dear Gopal,

I'm genuinely sorry to have neglected all our earlier years of closeness in the 70s and 80s these past two or so decades, and had

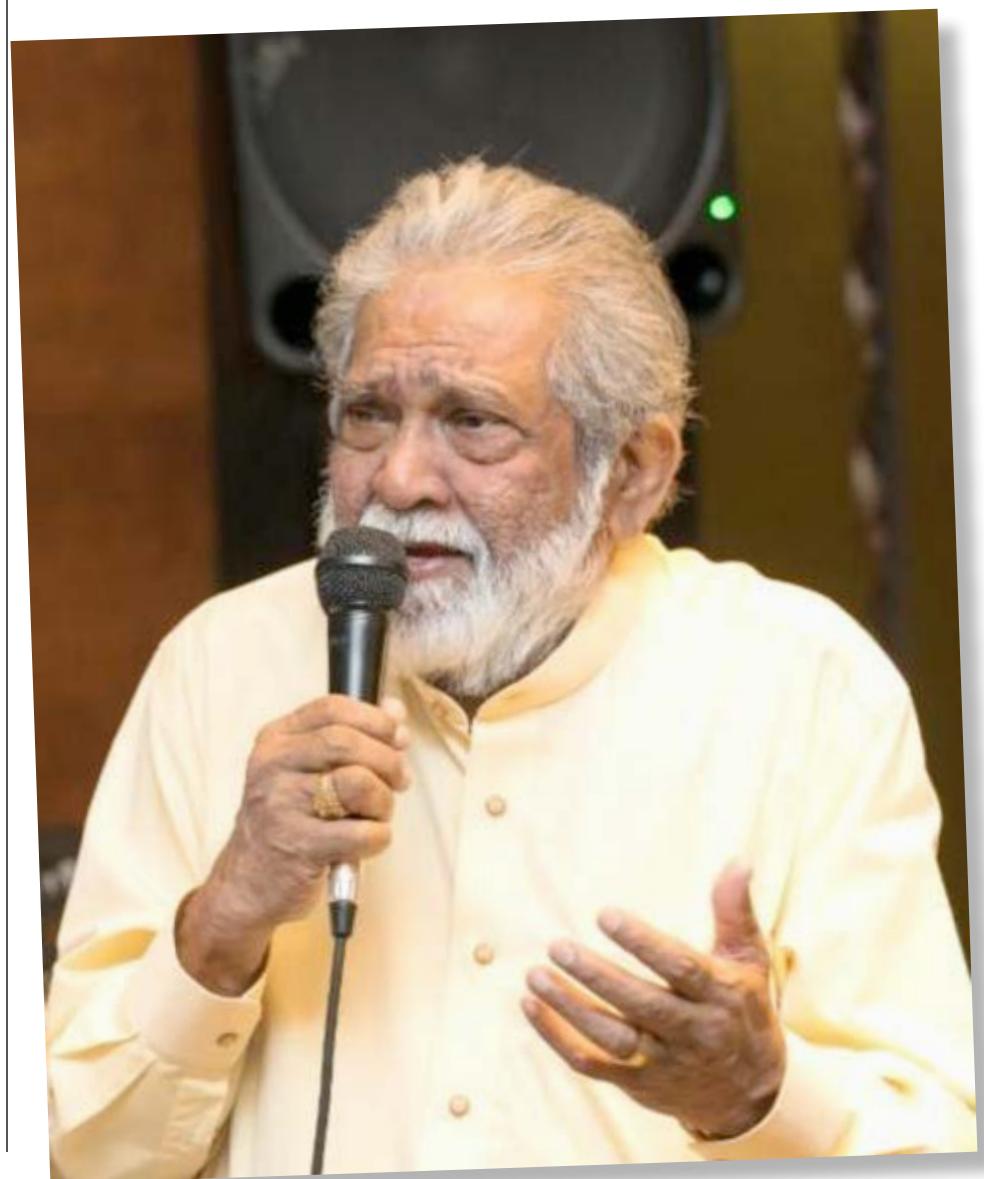
no idea of your illness.

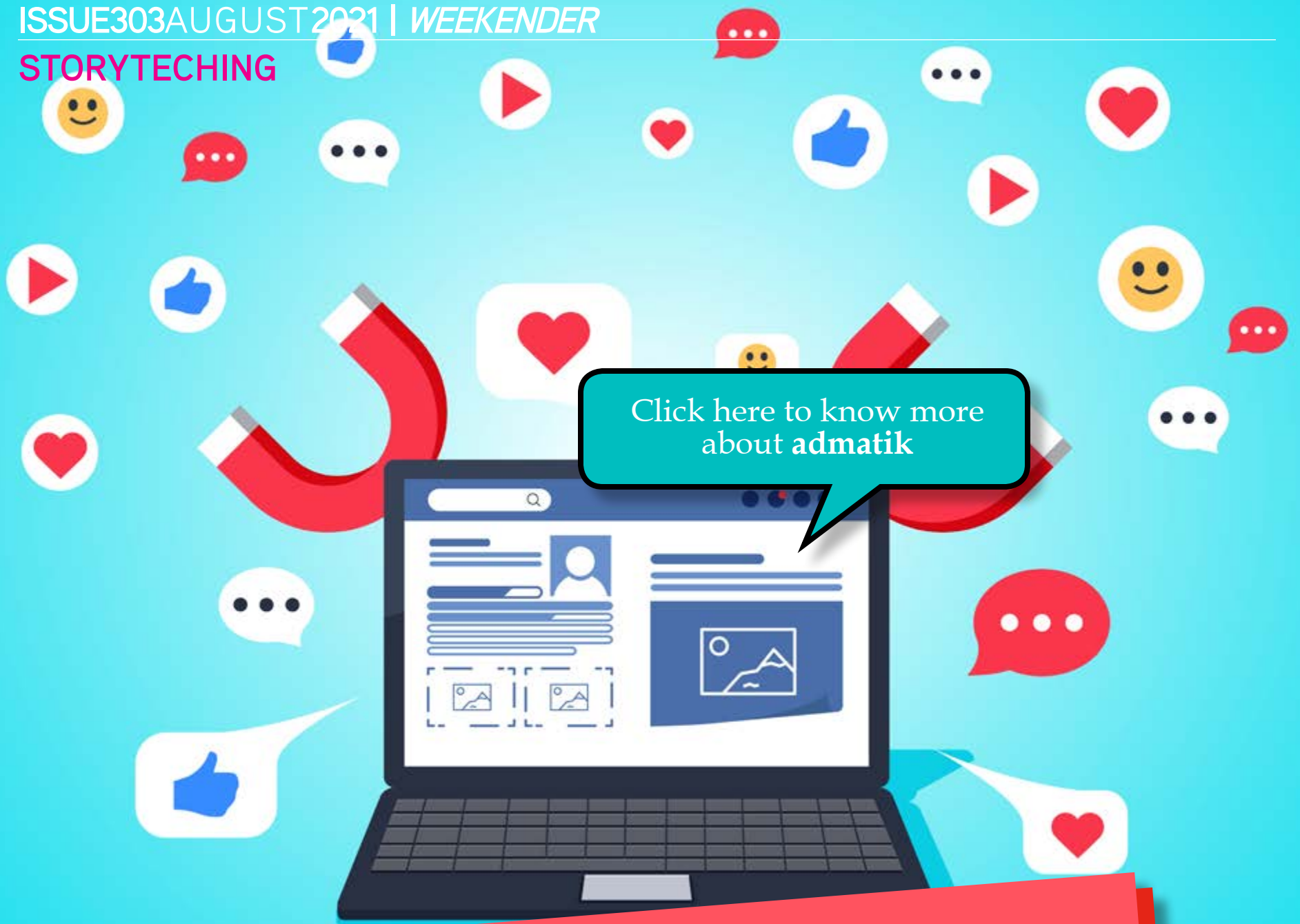
It was Gopal who helped me deliver my earliest clients' cinema commercials here, one for Mopiko and the other for the then MBf's children's savings campaigns.

TV then, via only RTM, was still in only black and white when I returned to Malaysia in late 1974, at least that's what I recall, so colour cinema ads were the rage then.

Rest in peace, Gopal, and thank you for being you.

*Austen Zecha - Founder/
CEO of ISC*





Admatik: Malaysian born 'storytech startup'

'Storyteching' is the process of fusing brand storytelling and tech enabled performance optimization, two often disparately treated concepts that businesses use to engage with its customers'.

This is because it activates the part of the brain that controls the way we feel and hence among consumers, it is used to influence the emotions they associate with a specific brand.

Admatik is a homegrown digital media ecosystem for

STORYTECHING

‘Admatik was born out of one simple purpose – storyteching for all’



*Tony Kan
Founder and
Managing
Director of
Admatik*

brands that recognize the powerful and evolving roles of technology in collecting and conveying stories in today’s increasingly digital society. According to Tony Kan who founded the company in 2019, Admatik was born out of one simple purpose in mind and that is storyteching.

After spending years in various leadership roles across media organizations, and global digital outfits, Tony decided to take on the charge to address one real problem underlying digital advertising, which often went unnoticed – the isolation of performance and storytelling or otherwise also seen as the huge

divide between data and content ductility.

Admatik was conceived as the solution to this issue. By building an end to end campaign ecosystem, Admatik’s clients can leverage the power of storytelling, fueled and enhanced by technology.

To find out more about the technology behind storyteching and understand how Admatik’s solution has helped advertisers so far, **MARKETING Magazine (MM)** reached out to Admatik.

The following is the conversation with Tony (TK), who started off by asserting, “The game is changing, welcome to the age of storyteching.”

STORYTECHING

“I felt it was time we used technology to tell better stories for every type of campaign.”

As the Managing Director of Admatik, how have your experiences over the last two decades helped shape the company’s unique selling proposition as an advertising agency?

I have been a part of this industry for a long time, and working with a few digital startups, I have come to see this gap in the market quite prominently. We always tend to classify campaigns as either ‘branding’ or ‘performance’, designed to serve completely different and disparate brand goals.

This is what has been my bone of contention. Why can’t we do both? Why can’t we merge storytelling and technology into a storyteching approach for all campaigns? Why should a branding campaign not be

expected to drive hard business results and a performance campaign not be expected to be storied?

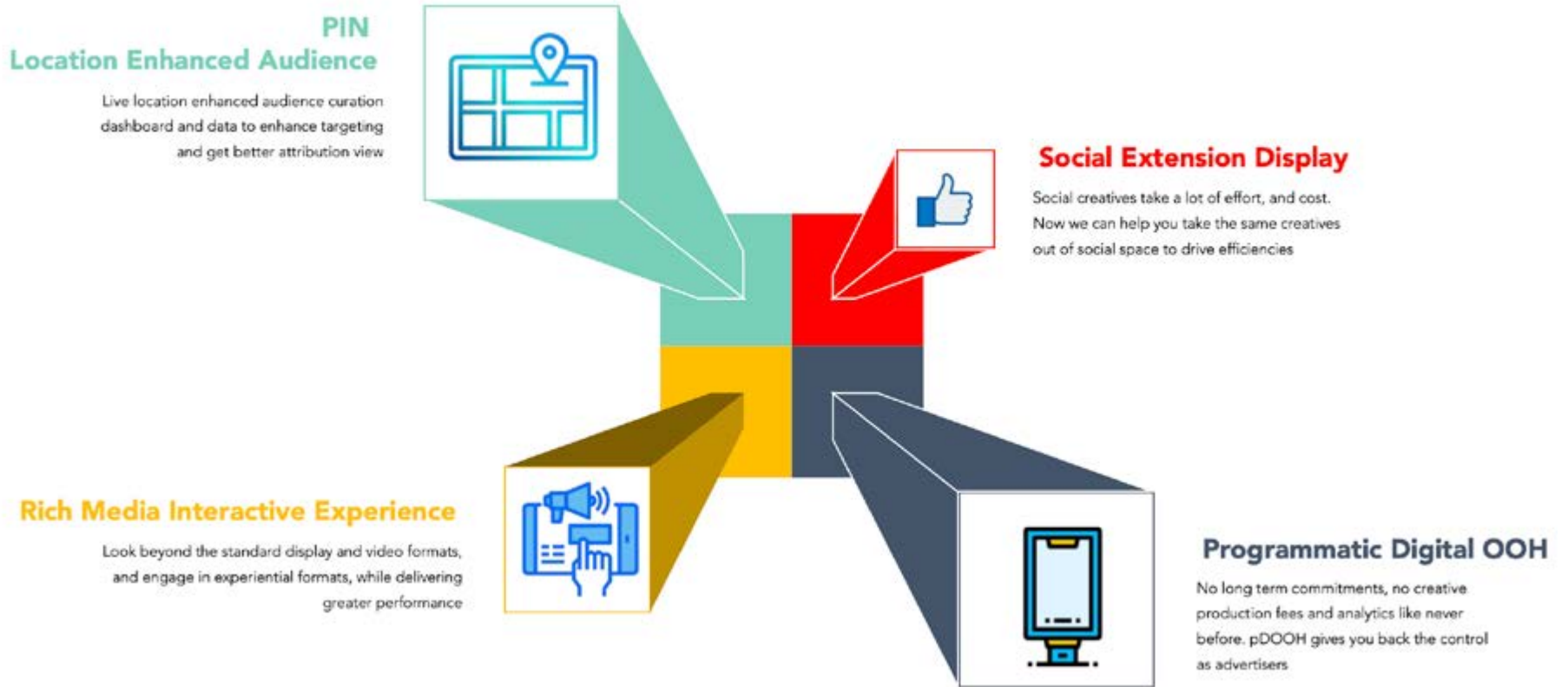
We are using technology widely to do a lot of things, but I felt it was time we used technology to tell better stories for every type of campaign. That was the trigger for starting out with Admatik.

Admatik was launched back in November 2019 which was only a few months before the COVID-19 pandemic caused a nationwide lockdown. How was your experience managing a new business during such precarious times?

Running a startup is a crazy learning experience by itself, but running a startup through the pandemic is like getting a PhD in terms of learning because every learning gets magnified and flexibility is key.

Furthermore, to be able to have a profitable business in Year 1 itself, while COVID is raging, has been somewhat of an unreal ride so far. To be able to think and act quickly, while holding true to the company’s purpose, is a fine balance that we had to master.

STORYTECHING



Admatik's Storytech Ecosystem

But I must say, I'm lucky to have worked with amazing peers in my decades of work in the media industry and I am thankful for the support I received from the industry, without which we would not have survived, let alone thrive in conditions like this.

It also helped that we were very confident about having a differentiated product in the market, all we needed was a chance to prove ourselves. Thankfully we were given chances and am happy to say, we delivered on them well.

If you see our client list, more than 70% of them are repeat clients, which gives us immense confidence.

We also have a lean team at the moment in order to manage costs during the pandemic. Hence our market coverage hasn't been ideal, but we consciously ensured that with limited coverage, we deliver our best to get a repeat business pipeline going.

Thankfully, that has worked well for us and as a startup we have been profitable right from year 1 onwards, despite the fact

STORYTECHING

“We have access to more than a thousand digital OOH screens across Malaysia which enhances our network formidably.”

year 1 was 2020 when Covid ruled our lives and economies.

In Admatik’s website, you are quoted saying, “Ads were being avoided like the plague, while they should be platforms of dialogue and connection” - how does Admatik ensure its clients’ ad is able to penetrate through the crowded digital ad space and achieve this?

At Admatik, we simply follow one rule – Story + Technology for everything we do. These two elements are instrumental for us in breaking clutter with every campaign we run for any brand.

We use technology such as location and movement graphs which provide alternative and deeper insights on audiences, to form very unique approaches towards meeting brand and business objectives.

On the ‘story’ front with our creative automation suite, we

ensure our clients have access to more than 350 different kinds of stories to reach their audience with.

In terms of accountability and measurability, we also ensure we keep the right barometer to measure real business outcomes.

So if you end up running a beautiful brand launch campaign with Admatik, on top of reporting how many unique people in your target group the campaign has reached, we also show how many of them got close to your point of sale either in the digital or physical world.

That’s the ecosystem we are looking at, right from tech enabled story-telling, to tech-fueled audience curation and even tech-backed performance measurement.

This is why I emphasise that we don’t just story-tell, we story-tech.

Can you tell us more about Admatik’s premium publisher network and how it helps your clients achieve impactful results from their advertising campaigns?

Our premium publisher network is defined not just a network in the sense of the word



“On the ‘story’ front with our creative automation suite, we ensure our clients have access to more than 350 different kinds of stories to reach their audience with.”

we know it as. We are talking about screens across the board, from mobile to laptop to desktop and even digital OOH screens; all singularly planned and managed.

We have some owned and operated inventory through publisher partnerships in the digital space, but more importantly we have access to more than a thousand digital OOH screens across Malaysia which enhances our network formidably.

While our digital inventory is able to reach 70% of the online Malaysian population on a monthly basis, we are also using a people-first approach by using our access to mobile device ID based tracking, which maps audiences across Malaysia.

Think of it this way, when you have a story to tell, we just use technology in digital and physical spaces to get the right audience, and reach them on our network across physical and digital spaces.

If we really are serious about blurring the lines between story-telling and technology, it needs to be across ‘digital’ and ‘physical’ spaces with the consumer right at the center of it all.

Moving forward, what are some of your hopes and desires for Admatik and are you open to potential partnerships or collaborations?

Thanks to the support we have received from agencies and clients, we are in a very stable



... While our digital inventory is able to reach 70% of the online Malaysian population on a monthly basis, we are also using a people-first approach by using our access to mobile device ID based tracking, which maps audiences across Malaysia...

‘We are profitable as a company, very lean and yet, delivering well on our clients’ asks’

position and we are thoroughly enjoying applying our approach to tackle business problems across categories on an ongoing basis, not just in Malaysia but for clients in Indonesia and Philippines too.

We are profitable as a company, very lean and yet delivering well on our clients’ asks. Since we’re a lean team, we don’t have optimal market coverage at the moment.

So, if you ask me - that would be our priority and hope - to have a wider reach in terms of clients and agencies in Malaysia and we hope we generate enough interest and deliver with our work.

To answer your second question, yes. We are always open to collaborate and partner with likeminded people and organizations.

I think for us to turn storyteching into a force, we definitely would be more than happy to explore partnerships.

I know for a fact that a lot of organizations believe in the same thing, and if there are like minded ones which want to join forces, we are happy to explore.

Remembering Pradeep Guha



Bharat Avalani remembers Pradeep Guha who passed away on the 21st August 2021. Pradeep was the Chairman of the Asian Federation of Advertising Associations and also revamped the Times of India Group into a media giant.

I first met PG, as Pradeep Guha was known, in Jaipur in 2003. He was the Organizing Chairman of the 23rd Edition of AdAsia organized by the Asian Federation of Advertising

Associations. He pulled off perhaps one of the best ever “AdAsia Congress”.

I last met PG face to face in February, 2019 in Kochi. He was the Organising Chairman of the 44th Edition of the World Advertising Congress organised by the International Advertising Association (IAA).

He gave me the experience of a lifetime.

He invited me to observe how a professional prepares to deliver a speech where Amitabh Bachchan took almost two hours to rehearse and correct his delivery. It was deeply humbling to see how a top iconic star prepares.

Later Pradeep introduced me to Amitabh and took an iconic photo of me with the legend at 2am in the morning.

I enjoyed my interactions and chats with PG. It was full of wit and anecdotes.

He had a generous heart and love for all. RIP PG.



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AWARDS**

TOP 10 MERDEKA TVCS EDITION

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VOTINGFLOW

1

Click [here](#) to log in with your MARKETING Magazine subscriber username & password.

2

Once logged in, you will be able to view all entries for Merdeka TVCs 2021 and you are only allowed to vote for a maximum of 5 TVCs a day.

3

Enjoy voting for your favourite Merdeka TVCs!

Important Note:

You are only allowed to vote ONCE for each TVC.

The oldest pre-existing condition

by Raihan Hadi

The Legend Said...



That The Blue Part
Could Erase Ink

Are you from the pre *Wite Out* era? You know, the times when making mistakes while writing with a pen wasn't an option, and the biggest lie sold to us back then (after democracy of course) was the eraser which had a blue butt, otherwise known as the ink remover?

God knows besides myself exactly how many times I've had to redo my homework on fresh pages for that one lie. But then

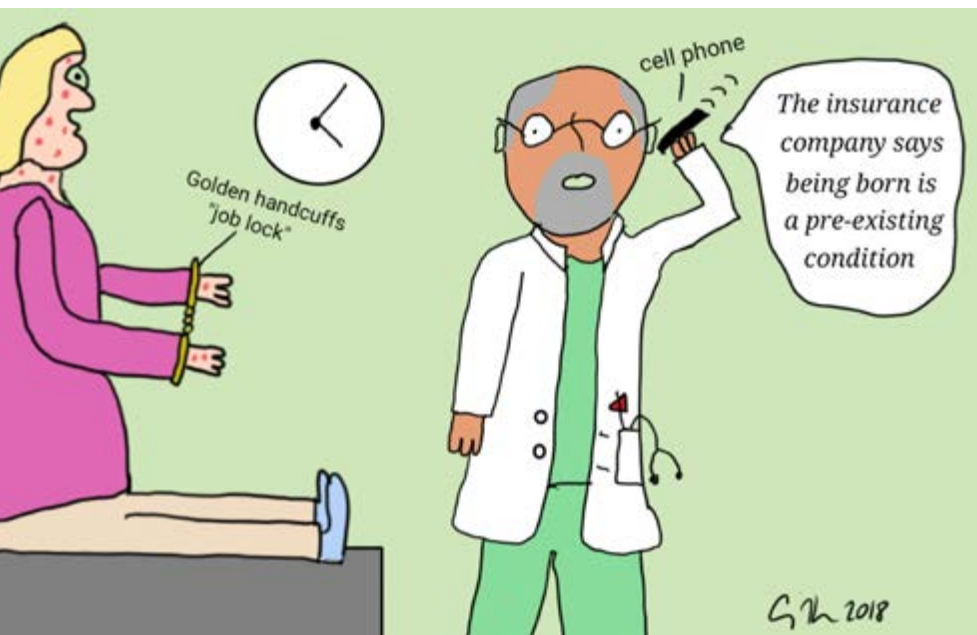
again, lying is the oldest of all habits of us human beings, and so far it has been working very well for the majority of us.

I was wondering about this godforsaken eraser while trying to figure out exactly what to tell my best friend, the life insurance agent at Allianz, who set up the biggest lie of my life for the last two years – that I have a life and health insurance, that too a premium one, at a premium price nonetheless.

The house of lies started showing cracks on a fateful day last year when I willingly decided to slip in the shower, because there's no way that ever happens. Despite the injury to my head, neck and back, and the blinding pain, I went to my GP, got a letter and took myself straight to the hospital to see a specialist.

The doctors asked me to get admitted for observations

LIFE INSURANCE



art by Craig Klugman

and tests, so I had to call my aforementioned best friend for assistance, i.e. a guarantee letter. I had to wait for 6 hours at the hospital that day without getting even a call back.

I hoped for the best and per the Neurosurgeon's advice went back the next day for physiotherapy where "best friend" also scheduled an interview (interrogation really) with the neurosurgeon. Dragging myself across various floors of the hospital, with best friend keeping an eye on my movements very closely, I sat through the interview and from whatever little I could understand of the heated convo in Mandarin, it didn't go very well for Agent BFF as the Neurosurgeon had quite an intolerance against BS and spoke his mind without punctuation.

I was advised by Allianz that day to get an MRI done in order to proceed with the guarantee letter, and boy those MRI's are very expensive, and by this time I had already paid the hospital quite a sum for initial treatment and tests.

Despite the doctor's seriousness, the test reports coming out terribly, and the actual sight of me suffering, my best friend implied that I wasn't actually injured to my face that I was trying to get his sympathy and attention since he's never there. Before I could react, I was slapped with yet another letter from Allianz, and they were calling my injury a pre-existing condition, and they will not be covering the treatment costs.

I was, and to this day, am dumbfounded. Did I slip during birth and got injured, and didn't know about until falling in the shower? Was I actually dreaming about it all, and there actually was no pain? Well trying to turn my head proved otherwise because I was screaming.

The house of lies had crumbled now, I could see everything inside out, and very much helplessly. I don't know who to approach, what to do,

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how to heal, and I'm in pain. Imagine having one of your nerves being stuck between two discs of your cervical (neck) spine, and having to explain to someone how genuine your pain is.

I decided to cancel my policy so that I could at least save some money from the premium, and per my kind landlord's advice, explore alternate therapies like acupuncture. Thoughts turned to words in an email, and best friend was informed.

You'd think the case was closed right?

Nope. Allianz is the modern day Hotel California – you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave.

Just last week, some new guy at the company called me up saying henceforth he'll be my new best friend from Allianz. I looked out to check if the sky was green, confirming the contrary I got back to the chap saying I don't have a policy with Allianz anymore.

Sadly, Allianz never even kept my request to cancel the policy, and kept on piling up the charges for the premium, which to date is yet another handsome amount. And this time, new BFF wannabe

... Allianz is the modern day Hotel California – you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave...

tells me there actually exists a form which I need to fill up in order to file for said cancellation and then wait for approval.

This might sound like the longest rant but every bit of it has happened right here at the heart of Malaysia, and if it has happened with me, it's probably happening with others.

Allianz might not be the only insurance company with pants on fire, but they're my closest example to call your attention to the matter.

By the way, with traditional Chinese treatment I am back to 90% fitness now, so it goes without saying that my injury wasn't a pre-existing condition. Could I say the same about the Allianz and their lying bottoms?

Guess not.

SETH GODIN

The end of the office.

By Seth Godin,
you can follow him [here](#).

Zoom means location doesn't matter.

Over the last 18 months, many of us have felt isolation as part of the dislocation from the office. Easily overlooked, though, is how much faster and more efficient so many systems became.

Now, it's not the communications system that's holding us back, it's our unwillingness to make change happen in concert with our peers.

Organizations have leaned into the opportunity to create nimble, task-oriented decision making and communications hubs, ones that were no longer constrained by physical proximity.

The last forty years have taught us that the technology

that most disrupts established industries is speed. The speed of connection to peers, to suppliers and most of all, to customers.

The speed of decision making, of ignoring sunk costs and of coordinated action. The internet has pushed all of these things forward, and we've just discovered, the office was holding all of them back.

As social creatures, many people very much need a place to go, a community to be part of, a sense of belonging and meaning.

But it's not at all clear that the 1957 office building is the best way to solve those problems.





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