

# MARKETING

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WEEKENDER™



## THE DAWN OF A NEW MINISTRY

Siew Ping, Ram, Ivan, Joseph

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# 04



## Lime in the Coconut

Perhaps some lime in the coconut is exactly what one needs to enjoy having a certain bird in the cage...who am I to tell? While we just finished resetting, recharging and reconnecting the media industry at the 16th Malaysian...

## COVER STORY

## THE DAWN OF A NEW MINISTRY!



When Zuckerberg notoriously proclaimed this as the digital game-changer, ears instantly pricked up across the globe and everyone wanted in on the... METAVERSE!

# 06

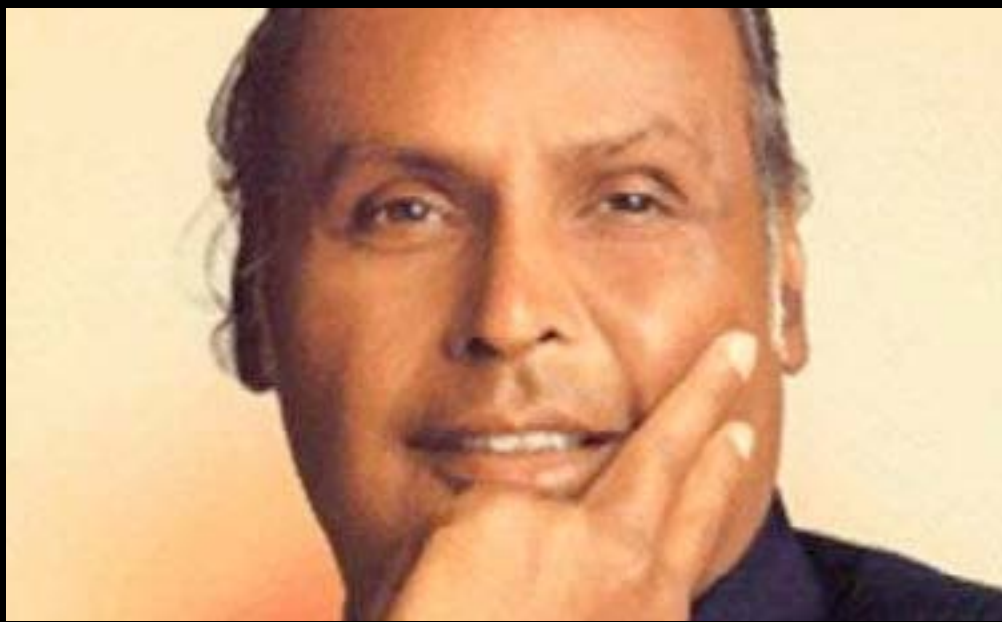


## Malaysian Media Conference 2022

# Say What

**“Everywhere is walking distance if you have the time”**

Steven Wright, American stand-up comedian, Actor, Writer and Film producer.



**“Only when you dream it, you can do it”**

Shri Dhirubai H. Ambani - Indian business magnate



**“Love is like war: easy to begin but very hard to stop”**

H.L. Mencken, American journalist, Cultural critic and Scholar of American English.

**“It is not so important to know everything as to appreciate what we learn”**

Hannah More, English religious writer, Philanthropist and Poet.





# Lime in the Coconut

Perhaps some lime in the coconut is exactly what one needs to enjoy having a certain bird in the cage...who am I to tell?

While we just finished resetting, recharging and reconnecting the media industry at the 16th Malaysian Media Conference (MMC) this Wednesday, my team and I are still recovering from the awesomeness that transpired at the event.

With a series of masterclasses delivered by some of the most inspiring people in the country, coupled with the expert panel sessions that took place during the conference, it's only fitting to say that we all went back home that night with more wisdom and better foresight to tackle the endemic phase we're currently going through.

Even though I sometimes agree with people when they say that advertising is somewhat

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“Customers aren’t just customers anymore, they’re your audience.”

dead with all the logic and data and analytics making the magic take a backseat, we gotta realize that everything is content nowadays - and CONTENT. IS. KING.

Customers aren’t just customers anymore, they’re your audience. Hence it’s not about just selling anymore, it’s about connecting with your audience with creative and relevant content at the right place and time - making one hundred use of addressability.

But with so much tech in the fore and background of everything, we mustn’t forget about where the real magic lies - human connections. It’s as simple as meeting your friends just to hangout, impossible at a large scale yet very much doable on a small and medium scale. A great conversation can always

lead to wonders, so no matter how digitized you are, always remember to connect with your audience on a personal level, otherwise you’re just another creep with binoculars and a bag of chips.

Last but not least, with the metaverse now becoming a dinner table topic, it’s time for us media folks to really put our heads together and figure stuff out. It’s not just about e-commerce or NFTs, there’s more to that world and those of you with all the amazing as well as stupid ideas out there - brainstorm with each other. Stanley Clement has taught us well this year and we shouldn’t let that go to waste.

I really can’t wait to experience how the wisdom we’ve all gained from MMC 2022 pans out in real life.

Those of you who couldn’t make it, you were missed!

Enjoy the **snaps!**



Raihan Hadi  
Chief Content Officer



**RESET RECHARGE RECONNECT**

# Malaysian Media Conference (MMC) returns with a Big Bang

## MMC2022



*Programmatic DOOH Steps Into The Mainstream panels with Srikanth Ramachandran, Founder & Group CEO of Moving Walls as the moderator*

*Prof Harmandar Singh,  
CEO + Founder of  
Marketing Magazine*



*Sheila Shanmugam, Chief Executive Officer Mindshare Group Malaysia*



## MMC2022



*Kenny Ong, Chief Executive Officer Astro Radio, Rocketfuel & Astro Media Solutions*



*Shashankh Bhatt, Digital Growth & Strategy Consultant of Netcore Solutions*

*Prof Harmandar Singh, CEO + Founder of Marketing Magazine with Sheila Shanmugam, Chief Executive Officer Mindshare Group Malaysia*



**MMC2022**

*Srikanth  
Ramachandran,  
Founder & Group  
CEO of Moving  
Walls*



*Chen Chow,  
Co Founder  
of Fave*

**MMC2022**

*Creating High Impact Personalised CX Strategies For Customer Engagement And Retention panels with Shashankh Bhatt, Digital Growth & Strategy Consultant of Netcore Solutions as the moderator*



*Nicholas Sagau,  
Chief Operating  
Officer, Rev Media  
Group*

MMC2022



*Christopher Ng,  
Group CEO  
Trinity42  
(FKA  
Panpages  
Trinity)*



*Mahek Shah, Head, Account Management Airasia Media Group | Airasia Ads*

**MMC2022**

*Marisha Lakhiani,  
VP Marketing  
MindValley*



*Recharging The Local Media Economy & Landscape panel with Nicolas Sagau as the moderator*

MMC2022



*Chayenne  
Tan, Director,  
Performance  
Marketing  
CIMB*

*Abhishek  
Bhattacharjee  
– Managing  
Director of  
Publicis Media*



MMC2022



*Weldon Fung, Social Solutions Lead, Southeast Asia of Meltwater*



*Maresh Starling – CEO of Redberry Sdn Bhd, President, OAAM*



*The Art Of Being Stupid by Stanley Clement, CEO of Mediabrands Content Studio*

MMC2022



*Kiron Kesav – Chief Strategy Officer of OMG*



*The Omnichannel Latest Trends In Asia by Jane Lattimore, Regional Service Line Leader (APAC), Market Strategy & Understanding, Ipsos*



*Eldon D'Cruz, Head of Strategy of Wavemaker*

MMC2022



*Ranganathan Somanathan, Co-Founder & Curator of RSquared Global Ventures*



*Andy Othman,  
Head of Division,  
Digital Ecosystem  
Development of  
MCMC*





# THE DAWN OF A NEW MINISTRY!

*Ministry XR Changing the Domain for Brands Moving into Web 3.0 – Anticipating the Death of Social Media as We Once Knew It!*

When Zuckerberg notoriously proclaimed this as the digital game-changer, ears instantly pricked up across the globe and everyone wanted in on the.... METAVERSE!

With every Tom, Dick and Avatar a so-called digital expert since then, does anyone really understand what the Metaverse actually is and how it can benefit brands? Well,

there's one agency ahead of the game that's literally graduated to Ministerial status that can!

You don't simply create a Metaverse overnight but rather years of planning, investment and specialised skillset execution that has brought the 'Ministry' to the tipping point of being the Metaverse specialists ASEAN over.

## COVERSTORY

Made famous by Marvel's Spiderverse, the term "with great power comes great responsibility" should certainly bear more weight than it does in today's technology-infused "web"-space. Creators of transformative platforms have an ethical responsibility to empower humankind. Such was the case when Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web back in the 80s, giving it away for free for society to access, connect and interact, while continuing to build and innovate upon it.

And while this interconnected network of computers has never been more robust as it is today, especially with the advent of Web 3.0 and the metaverse, many (including Berners-Lee himself) contend that the internet, as we know it, is broken, owing to numerous factors, among which include corporate demands, centralised data, misuse of science and above all – profits!

"If the purpose of building transformative technology is simply to make money, before a single code is written, society is already doomed! As innovators at the forefront of technology, we have an obligation to humanity. It is our duty to incite change for



*Ivan Gerard Khoo, CEO of Ministry XR*

the betterment of humankind," says Ivan Gerard Khoo, a creative and music industry entrepreneur turned CEO of Ministry XR, which he founded in 2017, with a mission to redefine the digital realm by placing power back in the hands of society.

Ministry XR's stylish Malaysian office in Mont Kiara houses a team that specialises in the development of Spatial Computing interfaces including Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), Mixed Reality (MR), Multimodal Interaction and Tangible User Interface. Through a squad of experienced storytellers, real-time content

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*Dr. Andrew Yew, Chief Technology Officer*

developers and UX/UI designers, Ministry XR creates immersive, engaging and memorable experiences that effectively elevate communication standards towards industry 5.0.

We took some time to speak to Ivan and his “cabinet” members at Ministry XR, including Dr. Andrew Yew, Chief Technology Officer; Joseph Anthony, Chief Experience Officer; and Lim Siew Ping, Chief Strategy Officer; to learn more about the organisation and its latest venture into the metaverse with an all-new platform – Xanadu – set to redefine the virtual space, especially for brands and the Malaysian society as a whole. Welcome to Xanadu – boldly go where no avatar has gone before!

## What led to the creation of Ministry XR?

**Ivan:** Opportunities avail when the system is fundamentally flawed. We began to see cracks appearing in the Malaysian media and music industry, and I was motivated to address it with immersive technologies, including AR and VR. This brought about a desire to make a lasting impact on society with Spatial Computing (ubiquitous computing), with AR and VR taking centre stage in the human-computer interface.

With the realisation of a “broken internet”, we embarked upon a mission to return the Malaysian Media and Creative scene back to Malaysians by building a platform that fosters economic opportunities to ultimately repackage the internet for the betterment of the people.

## Who exactly is Ministry XR? Could it place Malaysia at the forefront of game-changing XR technology?

**Ivan:** Ministry XR has long been in the domain of developing AR and VR solutions for brands across the globe. For many years now, we have also been in the process of developing an all-

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inclusive XR platform over the internet that is about to come to fruition this Merdeka of which we are all extremely excited about.

**DR Andrew:** Ministry XR fully recognises the game-changing opportunities that XR can bring to both the public and commercial sector. When the pandemic started, it solidified our belief that “phygital” experiences (that is, physical and digital seamlessly mixed) could become a new normal and provide people better ways to connect and engage in life. Subsequently, we entered into designing and developing metaverse platforms for clients imbued with our design philosophies for their specific virtual events.

Ministry XR builds metaverse experiences by combining deep and emerging technology with XR. Most recently, we’ve deployed proprietary metaverse solutions across enterprise, corporate and marketing sectors with like-minded clients including brands such as Tiger, Herbalife and MISC Berhad.

Our ultimate ambition is to bring forth our communal public-service ideas and solutions

inscribing a direct impact on society. A significant aspect of our mission is the digital betterment of society, which means we aim for our initiatives to have a positive impact on the environment, morality, equality and fairness to all.

**How does one make sense of this gobbledegook that is on the tips of lips of most marketers, such as XR and more so, the metaverse?**

**Ivan:** These terms may seem relatively new, but the concept(s) has been around for decades. It has been called many things - cyber-physical, ubiquitous computing, internet of things, spatial computing, and most recently, metaverse.

The metaverse essentially describes human interactions over the internet either by entering into virtual reality, or with internet content embedded in our environment, augmenting our reality. It will profoundly improve the way we learn, work, play and communicate, directly impacting the way we live. This ties back to the concept of digital ubiquity, where humankind is holistically empowered digitally, without being aware of

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omnipresent computers.

This reconciliation of man, machine and environment will empower machines with an unprecedented amount of data on the environment and more concerningly, people. But if these machines are in the hands of a few centralized corporations that are driven by corporate greed, we will then likely have a society that is far more broken than what it already is today.

### How does Ministry XR provide value for brands, and how can they effectively engage in the metaverse?

**Ivan:** The early phase of today's metaverses are primarily

VR experiences and ours is somewhat similar. The first such experience we deployed was in 2020 for the much-acclaimed Tiger Virtual Street Food Fest surpassing all marketing metrics set by the client.

With VR, creativity is no longer bound by flat screens. Rather, escapism through entertainment is amplified with immersive technologies. To date, Ministry XR has built six branded metaverses. With the return of physical events, we are seeing clients opting to run both concurrently, making the experience more "phygital".

The metaverse enables the evolution of advertising for both

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*Joseph Anthony, Chief Experience Officer*

brands and agencies. With the limitless possibilities, we can foster business innovation and that's the exciting aspect of it all! Presently, we're only scratching the surface of brand-building possibilities. Brands can truly optimise their budgets on the metaverse connecting with Gen Y's & Z's building connections where there are no boundaries.

**Joe:** What we are essentially doing is lowering physical and digital barriers to give better interaction and engagement between brands and consumers

never before possible. While we understand that physical forms of marketing have better visibility and impact, they are expensive and have an audience limit due to space and physical limitation. However, it is non-intrusive and could probably create a stronger affinity or greater 'brand love' with targeted stakeholders.

Digital marketing, on the other hand, affordable as it is, can never have the same impact as physical advertising because of the digital noise. Digital marketing as it is, is deemed too intrusive and therefore lacks brand love.

With XR and the metaverse, so-called phygital marketing can benefit by creating new spaces and new experiences to engage new audiences. We are spearheading huge visibility to a wide audience unlimited by spacial or creative confines.

Engagement with the audience is also amplified by means of games and entertainment with instant rewards as a hook. It is also an affordable option (think physical vs. digital advertising pricing) while generating buzz and awareness.

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**Today, many outfits are jumping onto the metaverse bandwagon, most even claiming to be experts in the field. How is Ministry XR different and what separates it from the rest?**

**Ivan:** Our transition into the metaverse era where society is empowered by digital ubiquity has already begun. A metaverse isn't just about virtual entertainment, immersive games, phygital experiences, brand engagements, the new social media or cryptocurrency's NFT goldmine. It is all of that and more. It represents an opportunity to fix all that's broken today - broken democracy, broken financial systems, broken media, broken society, broken humanity. That's where we fill the divide!

**Joe:** We have built a series of "metaverses" that are proven to work! Most stories about metaverses that are coming up are merely just that - a never ending preview of what's to come.

We're also taking our independently created 'Xanadu' metaverse to the next level by targeting the masses (not just a brand's select audience). Our



*Lim Siew Ping, Chief Strategy Officer*

objective is to drive a genuine love and connection to our Xanadu platform by showcasing immersive festivities that Malaysians can relate to and feel a part of.

Metaverses out there fail to connect with the public at large. That's why Xanadu has teamed up with FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS - to not only focus on marketing Xanadu but also be part of the conceptual development of the product, to give Xanadu a lot more heart compared to others in the marketplace. We are targeting mass adoption, and aim to make Xanadu as accessible as possible so stakeholders gain a full understanding of how it actually functions.

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**You've talked quite a bit about Xanadu. Written to fame by Richard Christian Danus in 1980, Xanadu is a musical fantasy film that captured audiences around the world. What exactly is Xanadu and how can Ministry XR create value for brands with Xanadu?**

**Ivan:** Xanadu is an alternate social and consumer platform with activities that span across entertainment, work and education. Participants are instantly immersed into culture and entertainment, as there are live concerts, games and celebrity interactions, as well as art within

an NFT gallery. At its core Xanadu fosters the democracy of branded content – a digital economy that is enabled by a metaverse medium, rewarding brands, creatives and end users equally.

Xanadu provides creative minds with the opportunity to express their artistry and work in new captivating ways and for brands to create engagement for the largest demographics of today and tomorrow. It is an extension of reality over the internet. The design principles of Xanadu are based on the desire to improve lives by making the internet more rewarding and productive in tackling environmental and humanitarian issues.

Our plan on “repackaging the internet” with Xanadu stems from two core transformative technologies, the first being Extended Reality, comprising AR and VR, and the second is Decentralised Architecture, or blockchain. Based on these principles, we are creating an innovative business model that is designed to drive economic democracy through business transparency, drive fair and



organic sharing of rewards and subsequently propel developers and content creators to make constant improvements to the platform.

For brands, Xanadu presents an immense opportunity to create better experiences for their audiences and give more to consumers. - more than 'advertising' - by creating immersive brand experiences

that resonate and practical applications for convenience.

**There is talk within the brand and marketing fraternity that there are still many risks for brands looking to venture into the metaverse. What are your opinions on this? Are these concerns warranted?**

**Joe:** Famously proclaimed, Change is the only constant

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(in life). Currently, and unfortunately, consumers are more forward thinking than brands are - we've seen this since the rise of YouTube.

Brands can no longer sit and wait in what seems more comfortable to them while consumers move into the metaverse where more forward-thinking brands will gain more attention. The local advertising and marketing fraternity currently gravitate to the old world of conservatism rather than understanding that creative ideas for engagement and problem-solving strategies can be boundless in the metaverse, especially on a platform like Xanadu.

Xanadu was created to set the creative agencies, media houses and brand marketers free so

that they can expound on real engagement. Just look at NFTs alone and how they have opened up a world of opportunities. Where are the campaigns for that? Where are the brands? And how about games that lead to real world rewards, and in-world interactions that lead to click-through?

A prime example of forward-thinking brands is Sony Pictures Malaysia who have seen the winds of change and we are currently looking at building a series of exciting movie-themed activities on Xanadu where we will feature promotions from upcoming Sony Pictures movie releases – hold onto your seats!

**But with the metaverse still being relatively new, how can brands navigate through**

## COVERSTORY

**a virtual world that is still being defined? In a cutthroat competitive landscape, how do brands win the metaverse war?**

**Ivan:** A brand's metaverse is essentially its digital personality projected online with the capacity of delivering better results (with the right strategy) as that is the undisputed nature of immersive technologies. Within the next few years, questioning if a brand is 'in a metaverse' will be as passe as asking if a brand has its proprietary 'website'. As the metaverse has a high degree of nascent tech values, brands that establish its presence first will more likely leave a more compelling impression. Xanadu is built specifically for brands that are interested in creating sophisticated interactive engagements digitally and foster meaningful connections with society. Ministry XR can guide brands through the tricky terrain with brands liberated from having to build a proprietary XR App, saving massive marketing bucks in the conquest of connecting with consumers.

**Joe:** Let me let you in on a secret, it's called the 'Merdekaverse'! The first ever metaverse National Day event

in the world! A mass-scale showcase and case study as to how brands, creatives and everyday people can navigate the metaverse in a community spirited way!

Completely free for anyone to enter, Merdekaverse will be an immersive three-weeklong interactive carnival celebrating iconic Merdeka moments such as a digital re-enactment of Tunku Abdul Rahman (Merdeka, Merdeka, Merdeka!) coming to digital life during a national day parade. Simply put, the Merdekaverse will be a highly engaging, all-encompassing and riveting extravaganza that will break down barriers between Malaysians and the metaverse. Highlights include the avatar resurrection of Malaysia's beloved singer, Sudirman for a concert by the beach followed by a national fireworks display just to name a few. The Merdekaverse will also incorporate four Malaysian-themed games that are set to draw the attention and engagement of participants - *Banjir Surf, KLCC Climb, Lari sampai Pengsan* and the *Malaysian Treasure Hunt*.

We will also introduce our own metaverse creations such as

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DJ Raohu who resonates with the youth, and working mothers who slog to “make it”. She is someone who all Malaysians can relate to. DJ Raohu is a Tiger Mom and may also be a true representation of Malaysia - a country that is ferociously making things happen and always doing whatever it can so that everyone can have a good time, no matter how difficult the day gets

### **But why start with Merdekaverse?**

**Ivan:** It’s part of the bigger picture of telling the story of the new freedom that we can all have in the metaverse - all of us being there as a united people, supporting one another, with artists having the freedom to create more. It’s our ultimate demonstration to stakeholders of a new way forward! What better way than through the auspicious period of time of our independence.

### **What are the future plans of Ministry XR and Xanadu?**

**Ivan:** We plan on releasing a metaverse web browser by the end of the year, technically termed ‘web browser 3.0’. The platform will have all the AR/VR

tools that will take society into the era of ubiquitous computing engineered on a decentralised platform with a decentralised financial model that drives economic democracy. The key to this transformation is a pioneering business model - built on ideals that place people before profits.

**DR Andrew:** Xanadu is not merely a metaverse, not merely a virtual world, a game, or an application. It’s a scalable and versatile platform for immersive digital and web applications where the founders are placing all their ideals and beliefs in its design and roadmap.

New technologies for user identity management, content management, e-commerce, finance, socialising, user generated content, etc., are going to be developed and integrated with our values of environment, morality, equality and fairness.

I see Ministry XR moving forward as being the main research and development hub for XR, ubiquitous computing, web, and web3 technologies for the Xanadu platform. Even with years of development, the fun part is the journey has only just begun!

You okay?



Yeah, I'm fine. I'm fine, but... Yeah, I'm fine. Well, if you have a minute, have you seen the weather lately? I mean, does the sun ever come out? Been a while, you ask me. All I'm saying is there just aren't seasons like there used to be. But look, there's no point complaining. We have our health and that's enough – even if I've been feeling exhausted lately. You think it could be the full moon? Whatever it is, I haven't slept a wink. And John's snoring more and more... feels like sleeping next to heavy machinery. But look, I mean, apart from that, I'm fine. Even if my youngest has been giving me some trouble. Couldn't care less, that kid. Comes home at any hour, and then it's headphones on, ear drums out. Of course I tell him, but does he listen? Of course he doesn't. Gets it from his dad. But look... I guess you've got to let them sow their... what's the expression? Wild oats. And apart from that... Oh yeah, the guy who just moved in on the sixth floor. Seriously getting on my nerves with all those flowerpots. How come everyone wants to turn their balcony into a vegetable garden? There's dirt all over the place! Those are shared spaces. Shared. You'd think I was making this up, but I'm totally serious. Unbelievable! But yeah, apart from that, I'm totally fine. And when it's not them, it's the neighbours next door with the dog that won't stop barking. No, but seriously? Are they riling it up on purpose? How can it be so small and yet make so much noise? I mean, dog trainers exist, don't they? Oh Lord... Peace and quiet is a rarity these days. You've really got to have patience. Luckily, I do have some, but I don't know when it might run out. But well, apart from that, everything's fine.



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