

MARKETING

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WEEKENDERTM



Meet Datuk Lai Shu Wei

The Property Industry 'disruptor'.

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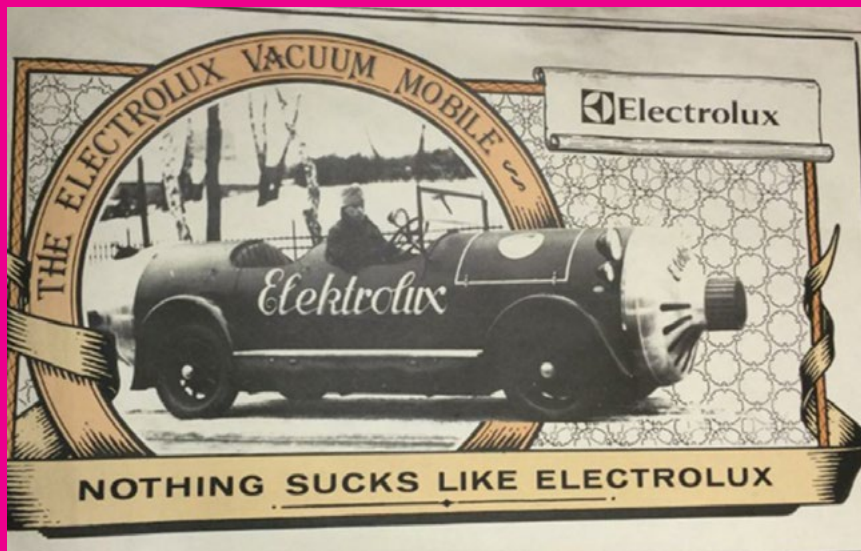


“No one is perfect until you fall in love with them.”

Andy Rooney, host of CBS's 60 Minutes TV show

“We can use MyTax system to access personal information of an individual with only their identity card number. You don't even need their password!”

Netizen backlash on IRB's online portal for taxpayers on March 1, 2023.



Electrolux sold products successfully in the UK using the slogan


“Nothing sucks like Electrolux”
in the 70s.

Sunglass Hut's slogan is “Sitting on Faces Since 2001” and that's exactly what they still do to this day.



EDITOR'S NOTE

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Marketing has enough tools, and dos and don'ts. What it now needs is heart. 





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Datuk Lai Shu Wei

Back to the Basics

It has been nearly two years since Datuk Lai Shu Wei made the decision to join the property industry.

Refreshed after a well-deserved Chinese New Year break, the father of one, spoke of how after 25 years in branding

COVER STORY

and marketing, he saw the immediate need to focus on the fundamentals of going back to basics in Sime Darby Property.

Datuk Shu Wei's enthusiasm for his craft and passion for the brand was infectious. This permeated the conversation as he explained how he implemented his plans to take Sime Darby Property to the next level, culminating in winning the recent Putra Brand's Marketer of The Year Award.

His wealth of experience is thanks to his background in the telecommunications and FMCG sectors. As winner of the Malaysian CMO of the Year 2019 Award, Datuk Shu Wei knew that some strategies and initiatives from those industries would work just as effectively in the property development game.

The first strategy he implemented was to use the RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed) approach.

This framework helped define roles and responsibilities within Sime Darby Property and ensured that the right people were in the right place. It effectively helped streamline the

“It was about putting fundamentals in place, going back to having the right people in the right role, and going for the right thing, the right structure, and working with the right people and partners”

COVER STORY

sales and marketing process and made it more efficient.

“It was about putting fundamentals in place, going back to having the right people in the right role, and going for the right thing, the right

structure, working with the right people and partners,” said Datuk Shu Wei.

The go-getter also wanted his staff to take more risks and speak out if they saw something wrong.



Datuk Lai Shu Wei
Chief Marketing & Sales Officer



... These guys are experts. When I raise concerns they immediately know the right solutions. But they must have the courage to execute and make the changes...





Syamtriyanti Salleh
Head, Strategic Media
& Communications

“I once asked someone about a particular process. I felt that it was not efficient. I asked the staff, ‘What do you think?’

The staff agreed that it could be better. I said, ‘If that’s the case, make the necessary changes, and I will back you’.

These guys are experts. When I raise concerns they immediately know the right solutions. But they

must have the courage to execute and make the changes. He admitted that what he implemented was not rocket science.

That is why it is always good to have an open channel so we can talk about these things,” said Datuk Shu Wei.

“It sounds easy, but we had to find a way to work around the ‘problems’ we faced.”



Leong Weng Kit
General Manager, Marketing & Sales -
Township & Industrial Development

By 'problems', Datuk Shu Wei meant Sime Darby Property's success.

The company continues to grow with new township developments. This was where

some of the 'messaging' regarding the brand became a little muddled.

Datuk Shu Wei had to attend meetings with over a dozen agencies involved in different projects. He then set a compass

COVER STORY

that defined the company's direction.

This helped to focus the efforts of the sales and marketing teams towards achieving the company's goals.

“We were highly decentralised with different sets of project teams working separately. That led to some bad habits,” said Datuk Shu Wei.



Syed Mohd Salehuddin Wafa
Head, Partnerships, Events &
Customer Experience

COVER STORY



Abdul Jami Shaik
General Manager, Marketing &
Sales - Integrated & Statutory
Development

Each project team is different, and some would only promote their development. They lost sight of what worked – the Sime Darby Property name. There was no singular, unifying theme, with Sime Darby Property at its core. So, we would get standalone brands.

“The first thing I did was to craft clear roles and responsibilities, and structure the organisation accordingly.

That meant the tone and strategy were the same for all development projects to ensure a common message or theme.”

Among them are the five key



Mohamad Fitri Mohd Isa
Head, Sales Operations

moments to ensure customers enjoy a memorable experience throughout their home ownership journey, from buying, waiting for completion, key collection, feedback, and living in a Sime Darby Property township.

“We started these initiatives in 2021. We measure the customer experience using the Net Promoter Score (NPS),” he said.

“When customers collect their unit keys, they receive a handover survey to rate their customer

COVER STORY

Vinod Nurlhaq Nair
Head, Digital Marketing



experience. This data will be in our system and we internally consolidate the data into a live dashboard.”

He said the NPS result is important as it is one of its corporate scorecards (KPI). As such, the live dashboard is displayed across all digital screens in the HQ office and soon will include all project township offices as well.

The entire team can view the NPS score as it is updated in real-time.

“We heard our customers complain about house defects, and we launched this programme which aimed to rectify defects within 30 days, with good workmanship,” said Datuk Shu Wei.

“The customer experience teams work closely and conduct regular meetings with Township Community Service (TCS) and contractors to ensure defects are rectified.

“As part of this initiative, we also plan to start implementing

COVER STORY

Jim Daryl Teo
General Manager, Commercial
Analysis, Reporting and
Performance



NPS on our contractors to be accountable for driving the result together. We provide regular training to TCS and the contractor teams.”

The next step towards strengthening Sime Darby Property was the appointment of the right agency partners to externalise the purpose, vision, missions, and values of the company.

By appointing the right

agency partners, Datuk Shu Wei ensured that the company’s message was effectively communicated to potential buyers.

“I want people who buy our properties to know they can trust us to finish a project and be responsible developers,” said Datuk Shu Wei.

“There are many projects out there, and it is important that we understand the customers’ needs

COVER STORY

and segmentations well.

“When they see the name Sime Darby Property, they know that it stands for something – quality, dependability, and an unwavering commitment to our customers ... that the name Sime Darby Property has gravitas.”

We do not just build houses. We build townships and homes and businesses for the people and communities. There is always a balance between what we need to do, how we do it, and what we do thereafter, to ensure that the development is sustainable.

“Everything the company does is to ensure that the community prospers.”

One example is the ongoing effort to revitalize an existing park in Taman Subang Ria, Subang Jaya, situated close to the lake in SS12.

When the company began work, some residents assumed it was for another high-rise project, as it was on an expensive plot of real estate.

Residents were surprised but delighted to learn that Sime Darby Property was developing the area into a place where



The Serenade at The Glades, Putra Heights
Entrance view. Artist's impression

COVER STORY

“There is no need to have multiple parties sorting out one problem.”

families and communities could gather. This was Sime Darby Property’s way of giving back to the community.

Those close to Datuk Shu Wei would know that he walks the talk and always puts people first. Sime Darby Property has always recognised that as an integral part of its business.

“This industry as a whole is very process-oriented. By that, I mean if your house has a defect, I have a set number of days to fix it,” he said.

“However, I know of cases where some buyers need to make numerous phone calls just to get an appointment with the contractor.

The problem starts when the contractor comes over and sees

another issue, and tells the house buyer, ‘Oh, this is not my area. I’ll get someone else to come over to take a look’. The customer then has to make another appointment.

“This is considered acceptable in the industry. But I disagree with it. We must change that attitude. We need to be more results-oriented.”

He said if there was a problem, it was only proper for the company to fix it straight away.

“There is no need to have multiple parties sorting out one problem.”

Datuk Shu Wei’s hard work and vision were rewarded at the recent Putra Brand Awards, held in Kuala Lumpur. Sime Darby Property bagged two titles.

The first was for Property Development, which went back to what Datuk Shu Wei had wanted to build on – trust and responsibility.

Winning the second award – Marketer of the Year – was testament to how Datuk Shu Wei and his team had turned Sime Darby Property from ‘just another developer’ to one that had gained recognition industry-wide, and beyond.



Astro plays ball with marketers, in partnership with the Malaysian Football League.

“The match had been very physical so far, but the referee kept most things in check with some wise calls on run of play.

Electricity at this MFL game has been running high and at stake were the rights to be official broadcaster of Liga Malaysia - the Perlawanan Sumbangsih, Liga Super, Piala FA and Piala Malaysia.

The moment came...in the final minutes of a goalless game.

It was a long lob from the corner which nobody saw coming. The ball had escaped by bobbing over some daring body slides and even the clutches of the keeper.

It landed at the feet of one Astrordinary player who was

undecided on taking a direct shot to the far side of the net, or squeeze it between two screaming defenders.

The crowd leapt to its feet. Astro didn't waver.

Everything happened in a flash...

GOOOOAAAAALLLLL!!

The whistle blew and marketers jumped for joy in the euphoria.

Astro clinched the strategic partnership with Malaysian Football League (MFL) to champion Malaysian football as the official broadcaster of Liga Malaysia and powerhouse coverage will never be the same again.”

FOOTBALL FEVER



THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2022™ LIVE VIEWING EVENT

Over 5,000 Malaysians of different races and ethnicities gathered and cheered for THE SAME GOAL, screamed and cried while hugging each other. Watch [here](#).

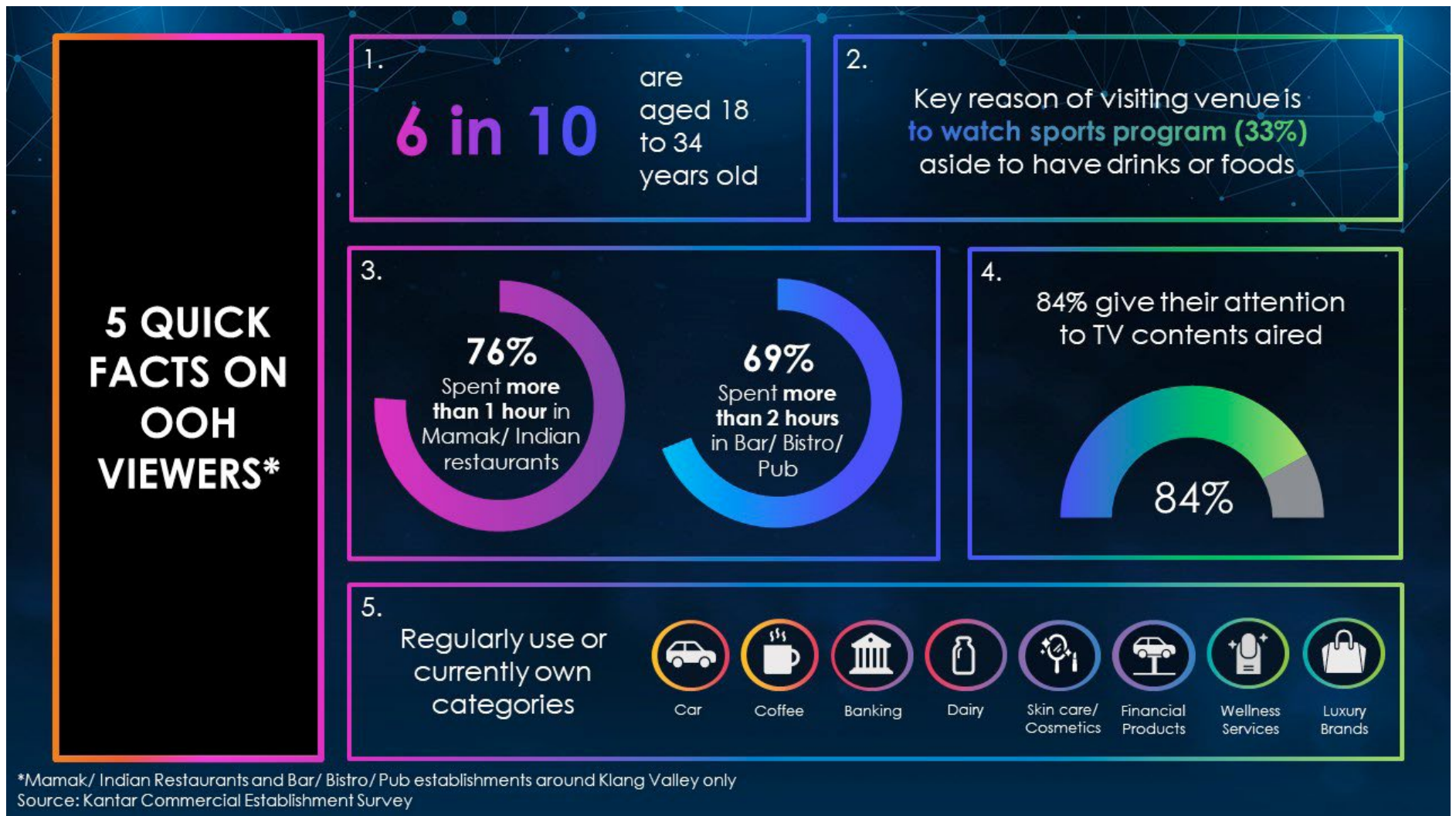
Malaysians have only one focus when their country plays big and only football delivers this awesome connection power.

“... as the official broadcaster of Liga Malaysia, powerhouse coverage will never be the same again.”

Imagine how the fanaticism grows frenzy-crazy when Liga Malaysia combines football with patriotism, eg. the AFF match between Malaysia and Thailand scored higher views than any World Cup or EPL match!

Liga Malaysia commenced 24 Feb 2023 through to 17 Dec 2023. While live sports continue to deliver large-scale TV viewership, fans also want more conversation and engagement beyond live matches through additional video and

FOOTBALL FEVER



“... Marketers can make effective use of their budget and engage a broad range of demographics and a vast spectrum...”

other content, social media, and interactive games/competitions.

Marketing during big events is perceived to be coming with a high price tag. But this is not

necessarily true. Marketers can make effective use of their budget and engage a broad range of demographics and a vast spectrum of levels of fandom – from diehard fans to casual followers in unique, dynamic ways.

For full details, contact Astro Media Solutions to score your marketing goals [here](#).



Netcore Cloud's PLG Mindset Event in Malaysia Showcases the Power of Product-First Approach for Business Growth

Netcore Cloud, a prominent Software as a Service (SaaS) provider, hosted The PLG Mindset event at the luxurious Eastin Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on February 23, 2023. The event was centred around product-led growth (PLG) and how businesses can leverage this approach to drive growth.

Product-led growth (PLG) which is a go-to-market strategy

PRODUCT-LED GROWTH



that emphasizes the use of the product as the primary driver of customer acquisition, retention, and expansion has been increasingly gaining the attention of brands. In a PLG strategy, businesses prioritize the product experience and its ability to drive customer adoption and growth, rather than relying on sales and marketing efforts alone.

With a product-led approach, therefore businesses aim to create a product that is so valuable and user-friendly that it drives

customer adoption and growth through positive word-of-mouth recommendations, product referrals, and increased user engagement. This approach often involves offering a free or low-cost version of the product, allowing users to experience the value of the product before upgrading to a more advanced version with additional features and capabilities.

Product-led growth strategies prioritize customer experience, and the goal is to create a product

PRODUCT-LED GROWTH



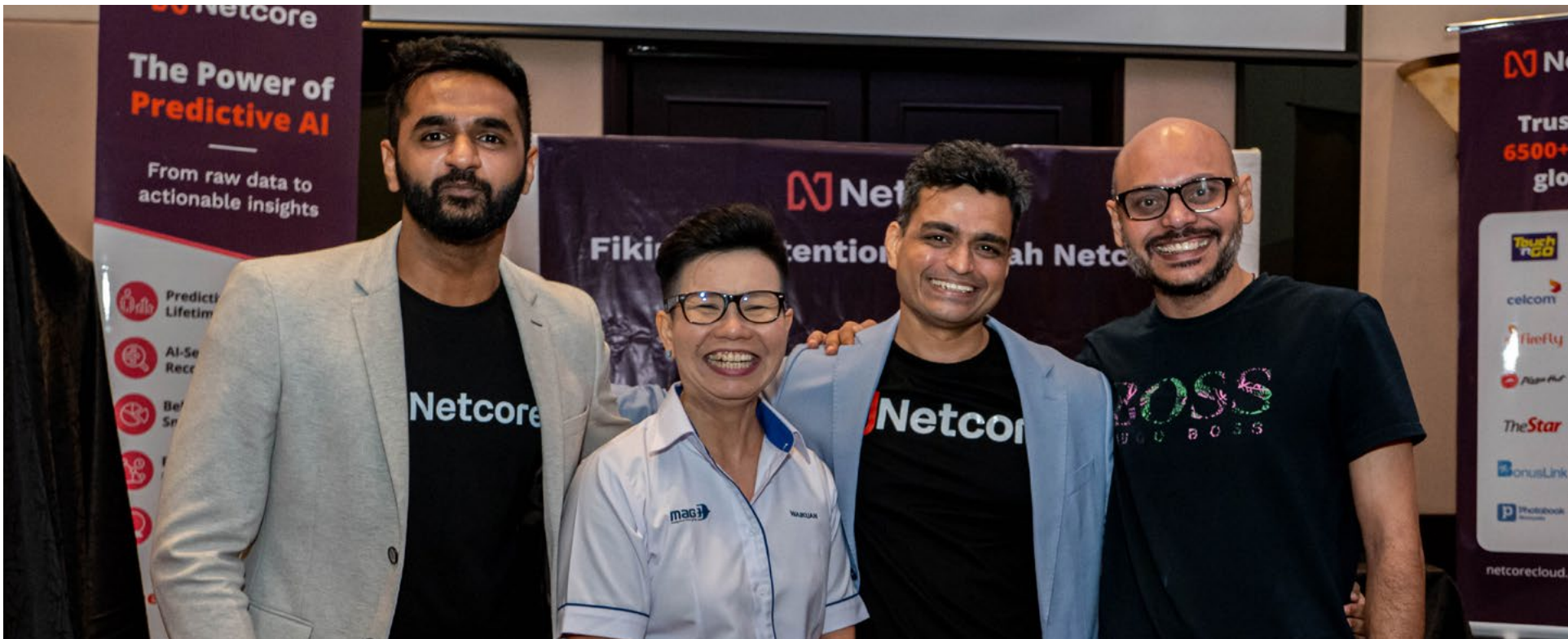
that drives customer engagement and loyalty. This approach is particularly effective in the technology industry, where customers expect a user-friendly and intuitive product experience. By focusing on the product, PLG can drive sustainable growth by creating a virtuous cycle of customer acquisition, retention, and expansion.

With a focus on unlocking product-led growth strategies and insights, The PLG Mindset

event by Netcore Cloud featured an impressive lineup of speakers who shared their expertise with the attendees. The event aimed to help brands deliver exceptional experiences that drive revenue growth and retention. Among the brands that participated in this insightful event were Domino's, Bonuslink, DoctorOnCall, Malaysia Airlines and FMT News.

On the stage, respected experts such as Linda Hassan

PRODUCT-LED GROWTH



from Domino's Pizza Malaysia & Singapore, Waikuan Wong from Malaysian Airlines, Azeem Abu Bakar from FMT News, and Varun Atul Vashishtha from Beam Mobility presented their perspectives on achieving reliable and continuous revenue. They deliberated on diverse methods to utilize PLG as a means of enhancing revenue expansion and customer retention.

According to Waikuan Wong, data provides guiding principles but not the final decision, therefore, a more targeted approach is necessary for achieving effective customer engagement. This is where the PLG approach is most suitable. Linda Hassan also chimed in, stating that while building brand equity is important, it is equally essential to focus on increasing

customer equity. Customer equity can be improved by creating delightful experiences for customers, which in turn increases their lifetime value.

The event offered an outstanding chance for enterprises to gain valuable knowledge and discover how to attain product-led growth from distinguished industry specialists. Brands have consistently struggled with achieving a long customer lifetime value, and the PLG Mindset event shed light on the crucial steps required to achieve this. As Azeem Abu Bakar from FMT News highlighted, maintaining the discipline to continuously “wow” customers is critical in creating the most effective customer retention strategy.



Everything is Over All at Once

Photo by Brie Odom Mabey

... Twitter has about 6 million users in Malaysia, but advertisers seldom buy into it. It isn't over, because it never really got started here...

If recent events in the marketing world are anything to go by, whatever we were used to and trusted, seems to be Over with a capital O. Like finished, or headed to a twilight zone.

Twitter seems over. Globally. Media agencies are advising their clients to pause spends there while Elon Musk fires people with numbing regularity, rather like a troubled man-child throwing toys out his pram.

Twitter has about 6 million users in Malaysia, but advertisers seldom buy into it. It isn't over, because it never really got started here.

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

The Atlantic recently ran a piece saying Instagram is Over. To quote, ““Gen Z’s relationship with Instagram is much like millennials’ relationship with Facebook: Begrudgingly necessary,” said Casey Lewis, a youth-culture consultant who writes the youth-culture newsletter *After School*. “They don’t want to be on it, but they feel it’s weird if they’re not.”

You could argue that was in the USA: but even in Malaysia, Tik Tok is the fastest growing app, close to surpassing Insta in total numbers.

Then we go to the view from Mountain View. Google.

Search could be Over, say the experts. Because Chat GPT provides more contextual and conversational answers, compared to Google Search’s list of links where you don’t often feel lucky, though there is a button for that.

Some marketing experts are saying loyalty clubs are Over. Because the cost and investment made in creating and driving loyalty could be targeting consumers who will buy from the brand anyways.

So in a loyalty program the brand ends up discounting its

... Data also shows more than 30% of consumers can be switched away from the brand they planned to buy, inside a retail store...

products to consumers who are loyal anyways, instead of focusing on new consumers who have never bought before. This has been argued by Byron Sharp amongst others. The pandemic also changed consumer habits, and they seem less loyal than before. Data also shows more than 30% of consumers can be switched away from the brand they planned to buy, inside a retail store.

All this makes for depressing reading if you are a marketer or an agency in the field.

With so many things in danger of being Over, what exactly Still Remains?

What, if anything, is Not Over, but possibly Still Going Strong?

Some truths still remain.

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

... Consumers still value the real world. E-commerce, online delivery platforms are seeing a fall from the heights of the pandemic...

Content's relevance over advertising still remains. People may watch YouTube with their fingers poised on the "Skip" button, but they are still going there to watch the content. The popularity of YouTube Still Endures, and Malaysia is one of the heaviest consuming nations of its content.

Creative triggers like celebrities used in surprising ways and animals that tug on heartstrings never go out of style. This year's best Super Bowl ads featured Ben Affleck in a social experiment at a Dunkin Donuts, and another ad riffed on the simple and lasting relationship between a girl and her dog.

Performance marketing still remains. Driving leads and

sales is now a major part of conversations across multiple clients. The danger however comes when brands think they don't need to build brand anymore, and can only do performance marketing. We have seen many clients that went too heavy in the performance direction are coming back to the centre, to build brand recognition and affinity.

Brands remain.

Consumers still value the real world. E-commerce, online delivery platforms are seeing a fall from the heights of the pandemic. Their traffic and sales volumes are finding a new normal: higher than the pre-pandemic years, but lower than the pandemic peaks.

And when consumers are in the real world, real world advertising still has a chance to be relevant and exciting. While we see acres of empty static sites, digital out of Home is booming, and leading media owners in this space are adding capacity. Legacy static billboard companies are trying to transition faster to digital screens.

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

... The Truth, as always, lies somewhere in between, and in finding the balance...

The industry is probably now at 50% static and 50% digital spend, which means that digital has grown by around 45% in the last 3 years. Will it continue to grow? Probably, though not at the same rate.

The Truth, as always, lies somewhere in between, and in finding the balance.

So, what should brands do with the Things That Might Soon Be Over, like Facebook and Instagram?

Simply put, brands, marketers and agencies need to engage with complexity. A good media solution would require retaining some channels that can still provide some results, even if those results don't come with the same return on investment as they did in the past. At the same time, brands need to leave their comfort zones and experiment with new platforms and creative formats.

The future beckons, and yet we must navigate the present to get to the future. So I took the easy way out and asked Chat GPT how we should navigate the future of marketing.

Its answer:

— Navigating the future of marketing requires a holistic approach that takes into account various factors, including emerging technologies, shifting consumer behavior, and changing market dynamics. Here are some key considerations to keep in mind:

1. Embrace emerging technologies: As technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace, it's important to stay on top of the latest innovations and trends in marketing. This could include artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, chatbots, and other emerging technologies that can help you reach and engage with your target audience in new and innovative ways.
2. Prioritize personalization: Today's consumers expect personalized experiences that are tailored to their needs and preferences. This

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

Photo by Diego Rodriguez



means leveraging data and analytics to better understand your audience and deliver personalized content and messaging across all touchpoints.

3. Focus on customer experience:

In a crowded marketplace, customer experience can be a key differentiator.

By prioritizing customer experience, you can create a seamless and enjoyable journey for your customers, from initial awareness to post-purchase support.

4. Build trust and authenticity:

Consumers are increasingly wary of traditional marketing tactics, and are looking for brands that they can trust and relate to on a personal level. Building trust and authenticity requires a commitment to transparency, honesty, and delivering on your brand promise.

5. Stay agile and adaptable:

The marketing landscape is

constantly evolving, so it's important to remain flexible and adaptable in the face of changing trends and consumer behaviors. This means regularly testing and refining your marketing strategies, and being willing to pivot as needed to stay ahead of the curve.

By keeping these considerations in mind, you can navigate the future of marketing with confidence and stay ahead of the competition.

If we do the above, maybe Everything Won't Be Over, but New Things May Begin.



Sandeep Joseph is the CEO and co-founder of Ampersand Advisory, a strategic media and data-driven consultancy. The company's mission is "business results now!" and it has won

numerous local and international awards. The views expressed here are the author's own: you can debate with him at sandeep@ampersand-advisory.com



WHY IS THIS LOGO RACING BACKWARDS?