

MARKETING

ISSUE #370 APRIL 2023

WEEKENDER

TURNING

**Datin Sri Sharifah
Menyalara Hussein
(Lara)**

CEO & Founding Partner
M&C Saatchi Kuala Lumpur.

EDITOR'S NOTE

04

celcomdigi



The coming of a super brand.

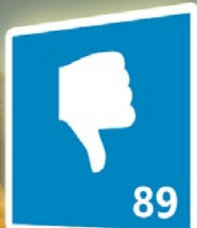
COVER STORY

08



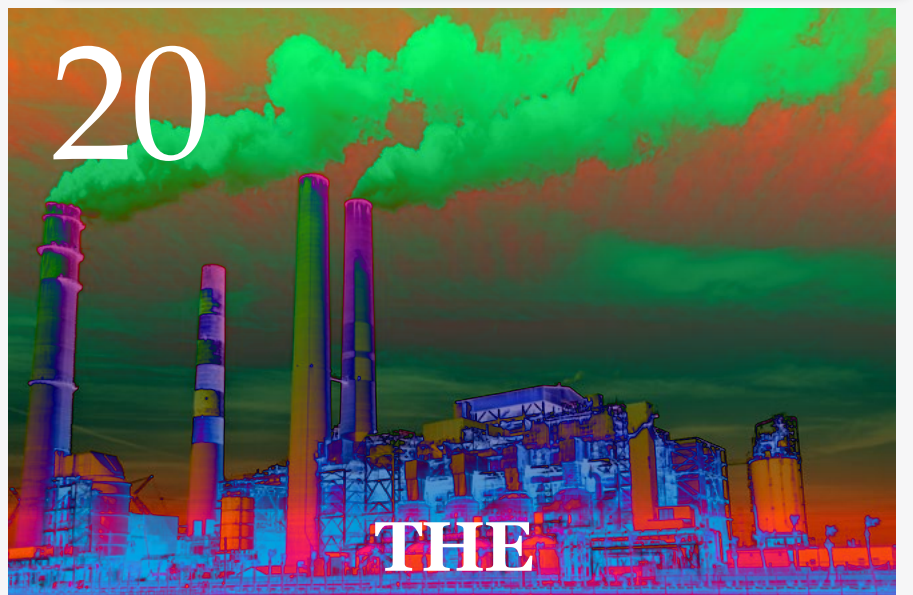
The birth of M&C Saatchi Malaysia

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I am here to de-influence you

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THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF ADVERTISING

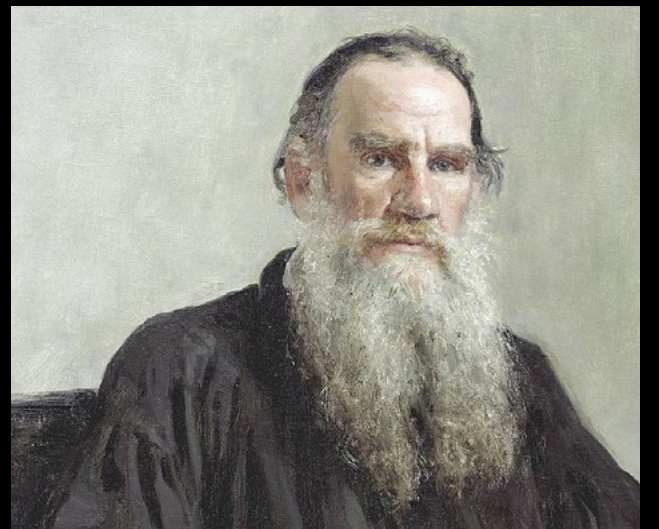


**“True friends
stab you in
the front.”**

Oscar Wilde

**“Everyone thinks of
changing the world,
but no one thinks of
changing himself.”**

Leo Tolstoy



**“I get up every morning
and it’s going to be a
great day. You never
know when it’s going
to be over so I refuse to
have a bad day.”**

Paul Henderson

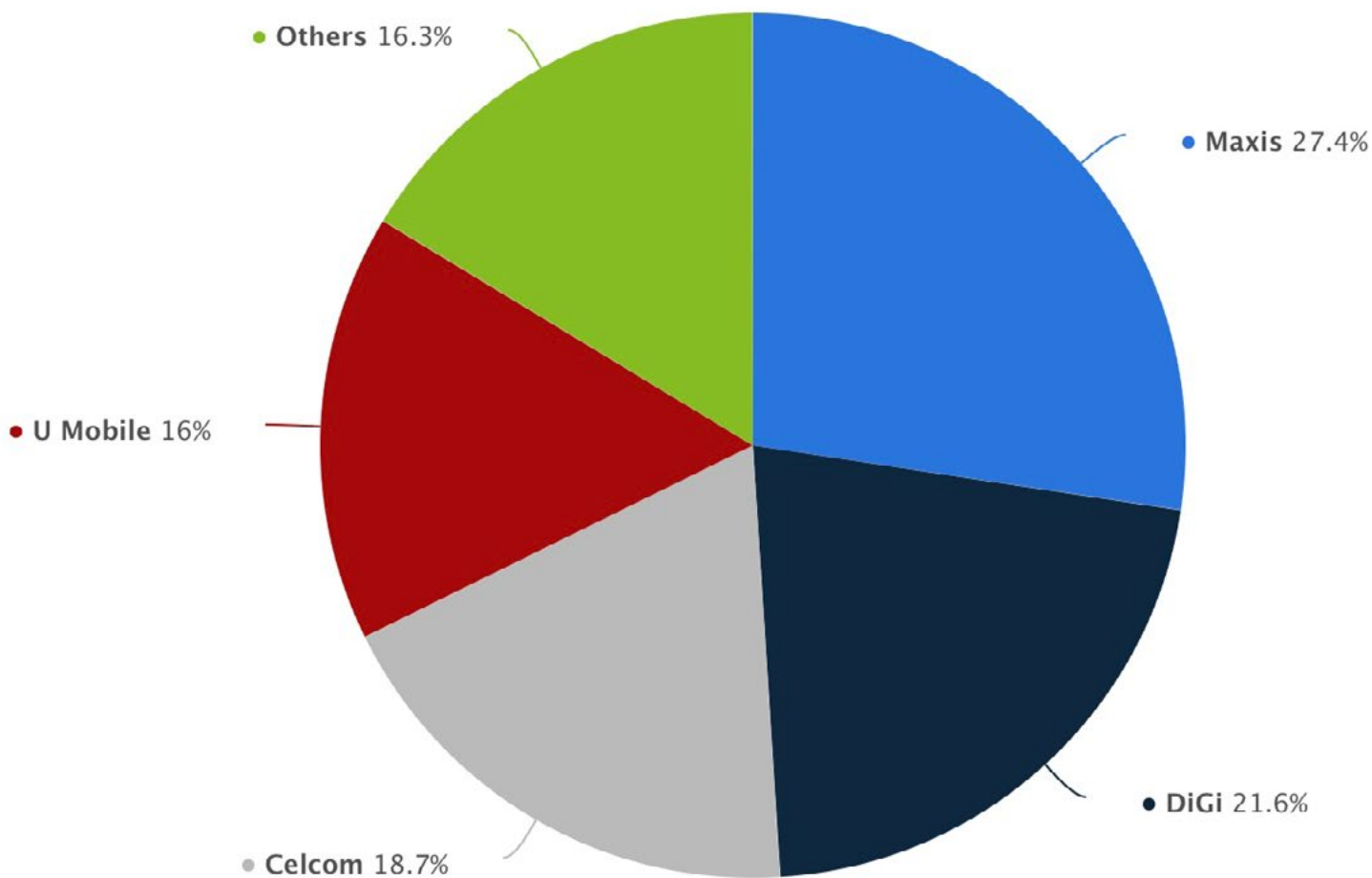
**“A man with a
briefcase can
steal more than
a hundred men
with guns”**

Mario Puzo



The coming of a super brand.

Market share of mobile subscribers in Malaysia in 2021



© Statista 2023

Yes, I am talking about CelcomDigi.

In 2021, Maxis held the largest share of mobile subscribers in Malaysia with 27.4 percent of the market share. DiGi followed closely behind with 21.6 percent. These two, along with Celcom and U Mobile, are the major mobile telecommunication

service providers in Malaysia.

If you look at this latest market share pie-chart from *Statista*, it means that more than 40% of the market is in CelcomDigi's hands. Is this good for the market is my question?

We should soon be seeing how this dual-brand comes into its own as a differentiated choice

celcomdigi



from the combination two names with strong equity from each.

When two telco brands merge, it is important to establish a new brand identity that combines the strengths of both companies. This new brand identity should also communicate a clear message to the target audience.

The monumental cost of rebranding is another interesting space to watch on how this evolves. We are on the cusp of a great marketing case study. I am sure that once respective contractual obligations are over for the incumbent agencies, we will see a centralisation of their combined brand trust.

Merging two telco brands can be a complex process, but

with the right strategy and communication, it can lead to a more successful and powerful brand.

Here are some examples where this has been done elsewhere...

T-Mobile and Sprint merger

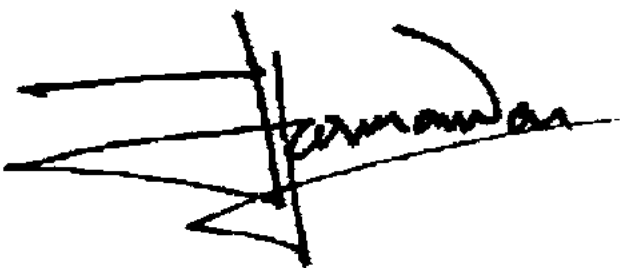
In April 2020, T-Mobile completed its merger with Sprint, becoming the third-largest wireless carrier in the US market. T-Mobile rebranded its stores and marketing materials to reflect the new company's branding and messaging. They also launched an aggressive marketing campaign that highlighted the benefits of the merger. The campaign was called

EDITOR'S NOTE

“New T-Mobile,” and it aimed to show customers that the merger was a positive change. T-Mobile used multiple channels to reach customers, including TV commercials, digital ads, and social media campaigns. The marketing efforts paid off, as the company gained 1.7 million new customers in Q1 2021.

EE and Orange merger

In 2010, Orange and T-Mobile merged to create EE, which is now the largest mobile network operator in the UK. The new brand was designed to represent the strengths of both companies, and the marketing campaign emphasized the benefits of the merger, such as the largest 4G network in the UK and improved customer service. EE used a variety of marketing channels to promote the new brand, including TV commercials, print ads, and social media campaigns. The campaign was successful, and EE gained a significant market share in the UK market.

**INDUSTRY NEWS:**

The CelcomDigi media account is up for review and the incumbents are Mindshare and IPG MediaBrands. Of course, many other media players have also been invited. A similar exercise is also being conducted by U-Mobile. The TNB media and creative business is now up for review.

PEOPLE MOVES:

Dentsu's Dheeraj Raina has left the building, he is about to resurface somewhere important (locally) in a major role (globally?). KFC Malaysia's CMO Chan May Ling is also moving, we believe she is joining another industry. And for those of you are wondering if Datuk Michael Chan is still in Media Prima Omnia, the quick answer is No. We have no details to share on this except to say that we wish Datuk well.

**BEST SELLING
BOOK EARLY**



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NO 1000167498



making good

resentations great

BY JOE NAJIB

(AHMAD NAFIZUL MAF'UZ
BIN AHMAD NAJIB)

10 MAY 2023
8.30AM - 5.30PM

EASTIN HOTEL
PUSAT DAGANG, 13, JALAN 16/11,
SEKSYEN 16, 46350 PETALING JAYA,
SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN



The birth of M&C Saatchi Malaysia.

THE HAMMER

This is a story I have never written before, but since this year is when M&C Saatchi turns 20 in Malaysia, the time has come...

Lara was already a shining star in the advertising industry



Management team with Lara, from left: Cindy Lim, Director of Business & Growth; Leow Men Lih, CFO; Marzuki Maani, ECD; Nisha Devina Roy, MD; Rohan Korde, Chief Strategy Officer; Henry Yap, ECD; Doris Lo, Business Director; Yew Pong Hor, ECD.

about 20 years ago, and after doing senior spells in Bates and Dentsu, Young and Rubicam (DY&R), she was running Brand Energy, a specialist media and content environment agency which was the marketing arm of NTV7 as CEO and partner.

Lara was a driven leader and wished to be part of an international network as a CEO with a little skin in the game. My task was to explore how Brand Energy could propel her dream.

At that time, I was running my magazine in Singapore and Malaysia and on the cusp of launching into Indonesia. And in my line of work, I get a lot of requests from bosses looking for people. I am not a head-hunter, but when all parties are on the same page I do make the connections.

This made me a natural matchmaker of sorts.

That's how I was key to Dato'

COVER STORY

Borhan helming Astro Radio (AMP then), SP Lee becoming CEO of Dentsu Malaysia, and a couple more high-level moves I can't write about.

Anyway, back to Lara...

Very quickly, I made a list of possible networks we could talk to. The list eventually whittled down to Publicis (who was on an acquisition trail), BBH (which eventually was bought over by Publicis) and M&C Saatchi which was the new tiger in the region with offices in Sydney and Singapore.

Ooh la la Lara

The first meeting was with the Asia Pacific Chairman of Publicis, Guillaume Levy-Lambert or Giom for short. He flew down to KL to meet Lara for dinner at the Ritz-Carlton. Giom was enamoured by Lara and was comfortable speaking in French to Lara, who did her schooling in France and graduated from Sorbonne University. I left early after marvelling at Lara speaking French.

Nothing came of that encounter, but Giom went on to expand Publicis in the region with acquisitions in



A picture of when Lara turned 20

other countries. Giom never left Singapore, and is an amazing conceptual artist who later co-founded The MaGMA Collection, comprising 500 contemporary artworks from China and South-East Asia built by him and his life partner Mark Goh.

Since I was spending half my time in Singapore in those days, I next arranged a meeting for Lara to meet Ben Fennell, the CEO of BBH AsiaPacific whose offices were in Duxton Hill Singapore. It was a pleasant exchange and I could sense that BBH shared Lara's enthusiasm as they were in expansion seeking mode. I later had the pleasure of meeting Sir John Hegarty himself in Singapore and many years

COVER STORY

... As it was a time of much movement and flux, I sensed that when it came to mergers and acquisitions, the same suitors were talking to the same people...

later Ben in London, when he was CEO of BBH London. The delightful Ben was very candid and shared that Malaysia was not on their expansion map.

As it was a time of much movement and flux, I sensed that when it came to mergers and acquisitions, the same suitors were talking to the same people. It was like one big jigsaw puzzle quickly running out of empty spaces that fit.

I was close to M&C Saatchi Singapore then and the CEO was a wonderful chap called Huw Griffith while another dear friend Goh Shu Fen was their Business Development Director.

Lord Maurice Saatchi, a

British-Iraqi businessman, set up M&C Saatchi in 1995 after his departure from Saatchi & Saatchi, the famous agency he and his brother Charles Saatchi ran for two decades.

I sensed M&C Saatchi could be a good fit, they were humble, hungry and full of heart.

So I arranged a meeting for Lara at this newly independent network. Long story short, the magic happened and the chemistry was contagious. Soon after, the big boss of M&C Saatchi AsiaPac and later Worldwide Chairman Tom Dery flew in, and the deal was on.

With a staff number you could count on one hand, Lara was off and running. I think Marzuki and Juliana were in the original team that joined Lara. I remember coming to their office and there more desks than people. The year was 2003.

By the end of 2003, they were handling RM30 million worth of business with campaigns for ntv7's rebranding, Celcom-In-play, Lam Soon's Naturel cooking oil and Anta-bax anti bacteria soap, and incoming clients were Bank Simpanan Nasional, Impiana chain of hotels, and more..



M&C Saatchi Malaysia's 10th Anniversary

... By the end of 2003, they were handling RM30 million worth of business with campaigns...

Even though M&C Saatchi Kuala Lumpur began with two clients, it is today an award-winning creative company with more than 120 of the industry's best talents, connecting specialist expertise across strategic

planning, design and multi-channel communications.

Their clients include and have included Celcom Axiata Berhad, Tourism Malaysia, BOH, Axiata Corporate and Branding, Sime Darby Property, Ford, Hong Leong Bank, MBSB, MDEC, CIMB and Etika.

Lara is also the first Malaysian woman to win the prestigious Women Leading Change Awards (WLCA) organised annually by Campaign Asia magazine. The award champions female change makers, leaders, achievers and rising stars in the media, advertising and marketing industry.

Lara says, "The very name – Women Leading Change Awards



Reunion at 20th

– is a great reminder that female leaders are indeed driving change across the whole of Asia-Pacific. I look forward to seeing more winners from Malaysia in years to come.”

Global advertising legend Lord Maurice Saatchi, commented, “How do you get an amazing track record like Lara Hussein in business, politics and public service?” M&C Saatchi Malaysia with its component units of Design Factory (Below the Line) and M&C Saatchi-i (Digital) drives brand transformation and has partnered with multiple blue chip clients on their brand journeys.

On the next level, Lara is strengthening the agency’s key

“The very name – Women Leading Change Awards – is a great reminder that female leaders are indeed driving change across the whole of Asia-Pacific.”

operations team and beefing up its content production arm, Watermelon Productions. She also talks about The Source Asia, “It is a ‘one-stop’ qualitative/quantitative research agency in town, where clients can obtain the view of their customers. The

COVER STORY

agency will be independently run under the M&C Saatchi Group based in London. The branch in Kuala Lumpur will serve the needs of Malaysian clients, as well as the Southeast Asia region.”

Moving forward, she talks excitedly about her strengthened management team (see page 7)..

Nisha Devina Roy helms the newly created role of Managing Director at M&C Saatchi. More creative firepower comes with Yew Pong Hor as executive creative director. The addition of these senior leaders continues M&C Saatchi’s momentum. Then there is Cindy Lim, Director of Business & Growth....

**Some Notable Campaigns**

COVER STORY



Proudly flying our people since 1947.
This is Malaysia Airlines.

PROUDLY MALAYSIAN
FLY MALAYSIA



MeReka
MERDEKA
Create your own
face mask design



Big or small  **sooka**

Pilihan di hujung jari



GONG XI NASI LEMAK
INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS

Some Notable Campaigns

THE MALKETEER STRIKES!



I am here to de-influence you

Have you heard about the latest trend on TikTok and Instagram?

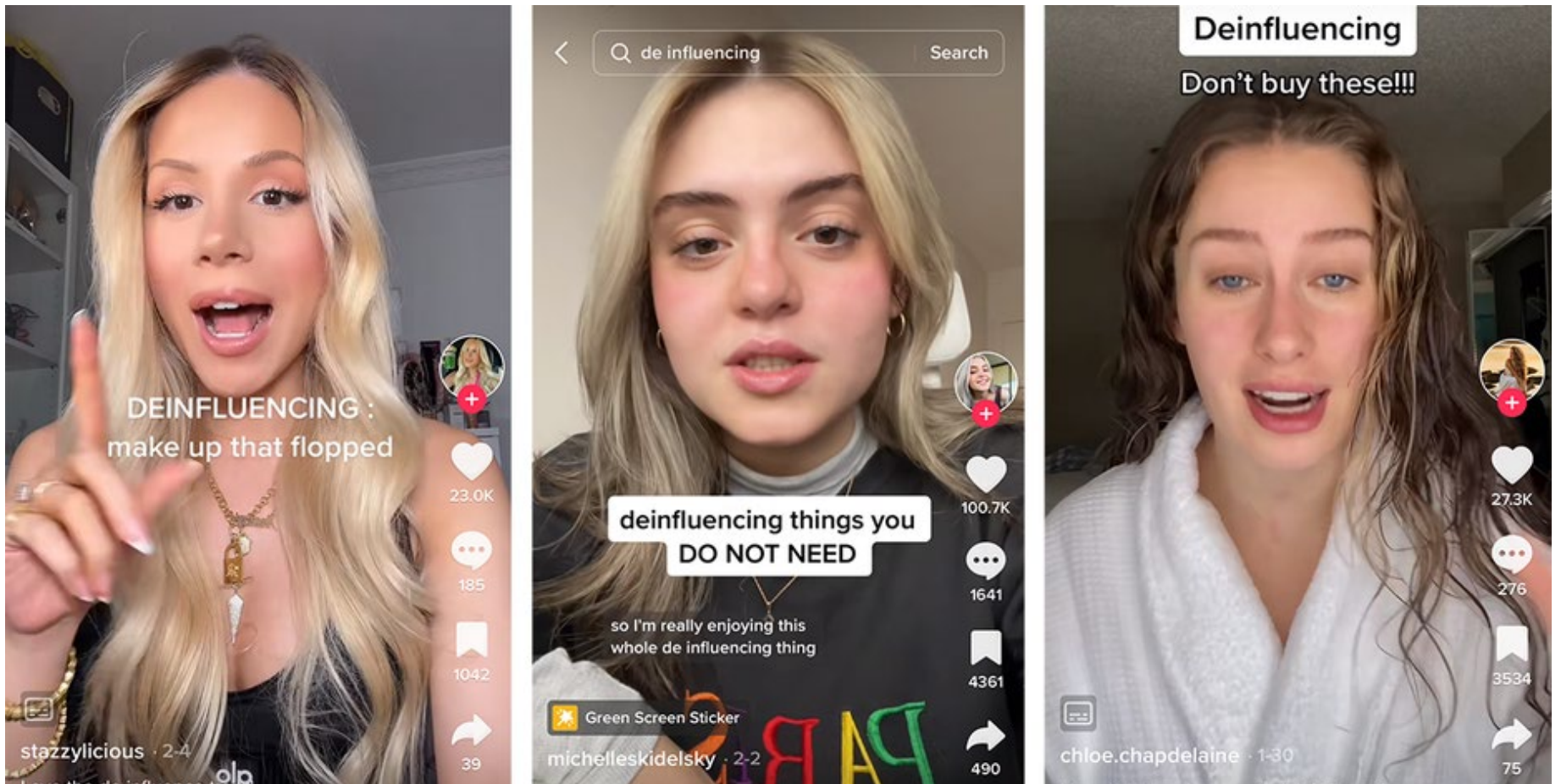
It's called deinfluencing, and it's simply about influencers telling their followers what NOT to buy or support.

Deinfluencers are individuals who use social media platforms

to vehemently discourage their followers from buying certain products or supporting causes under the noble guise of sustainability and wastage.

Many are questioning if TikTok's new deinfluencing trend is genuinely an antidote to a global culture of

THE MALKETEER STRIKES!



overconsumption, or is it just another marketing ploy to stay relevant during tough economic times? Or for some politicians in Bolehland, an innovative opportunity to get elected?

Interestingly, on the home front, as Malaysia gears up for its state assembly elections in Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Penang, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan - in July or August 2023 - there is a growing concern about the role of this emerging movement of deinfluencers in further shaping the nation's political landscape besides their usual task of influencing market sentiments and brand performances.

The Deinfluencing movement started surfacing in January 2023 in the United States, seemingly as an authentic attempt to join the dots between trend cycles, unethical labour practices and excess waste, taking root in the fashion and beauty industry. It has been reported that the deinfluencing hashtag has been viewed more than 100 million times on TikTok.

However, the impact of deinfluencers on an election process can be a pretty sophisticated and highly controversial issue that requires indepth study which Malaysia's upcoming state assembly polls could throw up some fascinating

THE MALKETEER STRIKES!

answers. It is an established fact that Malaysia is a country where social media usage is high. Influencers can sway public opinion and mobilise voters in favour of a particular political party or candidate.

This is particularly true for our #Undi18 voters who are more likely to be strongly influenced by social media and online content.

Just like the influencers, the unexpected emergence of deinfluencers can also make an impact on market sentiments and brand performances. With their ability to reach millions of followers in real-time, deinfluencers can also make or break a brand's reputation with a single post.

Deinfluencing is also Influencing, much like a double-edged sword.

That's why I cannot help wonder if the "Green Wave" of GE15 was a case of deinfluencers trouncing influencers. After all hate speech and poison pen letters of the past have run rampant for decades now, with no signs of corrective action. Deinfluencers are simply

individuals who use social media platforms to vehemently discourage their followers from buying certain products or supporting causes under the noble guise of sustainability and wastage.

As Malaysia's state assembly elections for the six states approach, the impact of the deinfluencers is a worrisome concern. As responsible citizens, we must also be aware of their potential impact on voter behaviour and the rakyat as a whole.

Deinfluencers may lack the expertise or fact-checking rigour of traditional news media, leading possibly to the spread of misinformation. Unlike traditional political advertisements or endorsements, deinfluencer posts may not be regulated or monitored for accuracy and fairness, leading to the spread of misinformation that undermine the integrity of an electoral process.

That's why I am here to deinfluence you on whom NOT to vote!

To read more from The Malketeer, click [here](#).

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It's obvious that the structure of the advertising business has changed in recent years. Not quite so obvious is that the nature of the business has also changed.

Advertising has become industrialized. A field of business becomes "industrialized" when it is optimized for efficiency over craftsmanship.

If you're making commodity products -- pencils, nail clippers, shoe laces, cars -- optimizing for efficiency can be an excellent business strategy. Money is

saved and once a satisfactory template model is created, reproducing thousands of copies is economical and advantageous.

It's a little different, however, when you're selling a service that is intended to be uniquely individual. In that case, optimizing efficiency over craftsmanship can have bad results. I think you know where this is going.

I don't think I'm being unfair when I say that the quality of advertising has gotten worse in recent years. Substantially worse.

BOB HOFFMAN

“I don’t think I’m being unfair when I say that the quality of advertising has gotten worse in recent years. Substantially worse.”

I will provide data to prove this to non-believers a little further down.

What I have found in my recent travels is that this is also true of our media strategies. Off the record chats with executives in media have opened my eyes to the fact that they, too, feel they are being pressed for efficiency over craftsmanship.

Imagined efficiencies are the drivers of programmatic buying. The fact that programmatic is notoriously dodgy and wasteful is not lost on media people.

But sadly, agency management knows that turning buys over to a shady mechanized process is a type of faux-efficiency you can defend and monetize.

You have to credit the media agencies - and the entire agency business - for their ability to **hide the true costs of their “efficiencies” from their customers.** Among all the scandals, improprieties, and damaging revelations that the press has uncovered about adtech and online advertising, has there been EVEN ONE that has been exposed by an agency? That’s what ya call a rhetorical question because everyone with a functioning neuron knows the answer is a big flaming no.

It’s not surprising that this has happened in advertising. When customers demand all-you-can-eat at reduced prices; when investors demand high returns regardless of circumstances; when “good enough” is the standard unit of quality, it is inevitable that craftsmanship will take a back seat.

There are several manifestations of industrialization apparent in the ad industry now.

- First is consolidation. A tiny number of organizations control



“We’re having a talent crisis, meaning there is not a shortage of talented professionals as much as a broader industry failure...”

an enormous amount of the market.

- The ascendancy of online advertising. Because programmatic buying rides on a bed of technology, it has the appearance of efficiency. The fact that much of it is wildly inefficient is of little consequence. It is a very useful tool by which “industrialized” agencies can be profitable without paying for expensive craftspeople, and with little danger of clueless clients understanding what’s actually going on.

- People both inside and outside the ad business believe that the quality of advertising has gotten far worse. A headline in the NY Times not long ago stated, “The Advertising Industry Has A Problem. People Hate Ads.” Research indicates that regard for our industry has hovered at new lows in recent years.

A recent study showed that compared to 20 years ago, twice as many people said they found advertising annoying.

- Talented people don’t want to work in advertising. According to the ANA (Association of National Advertisers) “We’re having a talent crisis, meaning there is not a shortage of talented professionals as much as a broader industry failure to convince them that full-time advertising roles are worth taking.”

It’s clear that the leaders of the ad industry - regardless of disingenuous pronouncements to the contrary - are satisfied with the state of things.

The best thing that could happen to the advertising business would be for clients to suddenly demand craftsmanship. Ain’t holdin’ my breath.

TRENDING

MOST READ ON MARKETINGMAGAZINE.COM.MY

(21th April 2023 – 28th April 2023)

The Edge publisher buys stake in Star Media

Business media The Edge and its owner Tong Kooi Ong have secured a 5.42 percent stake in Star Media Group - publisher of English daily The Star - making them substantial shareholders.

Pageviews: 2,305



13 agencies in three and a half days

That's what we did last week! With our ace driver and Head of Despatch En Hamdy and COO Vishnu Devarajan, we hit the roads of KL and PJ on a whistle stop tour for The Ham Report.

Pageviews: 2,102



Astro inspires to open hearts with a true story brought to life by the entertain-meisters of Talon Creative.

Love letter from Rohana Abdullah to her foster mother, Chee Hoi Lan, a retired kindergarten teacher.

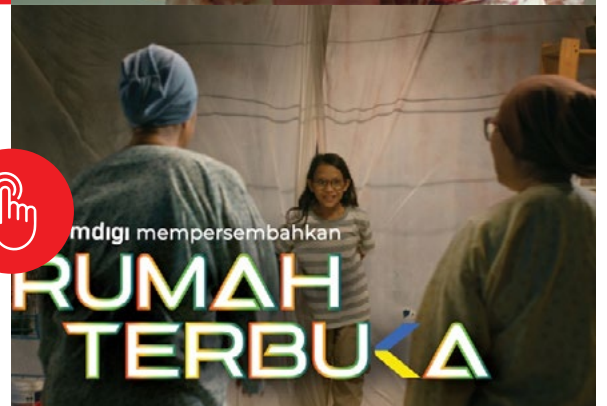
Pageviews: 2,011



CelcomDigi inspires a spirit of unity in celebrating togetherness this Raya season

This Hari Raya, CelcomDigi Berhad inspires Malaysians to unite and celebrate our unique...

Pageviews: 1,975



DENTSU CREATIVE Malaysia Releases its First Music Video as It Forays into Entertainment

DENTSU CREATIVE (DC) has announced the launch of its brand-new music video production...

Pageviews: 1,587



DAVID DROGA IS NOT INVITED TO JUDGE THIS SHOW

David is probably the most decorated advertising creative director on the planet, certainly the most awarded, but we regret to inform you that only client-side marketing leaders are allowed to judge The APPIES.

Apologies David.



Online Submission:
<https://appies.com.my>



Closing Date
30 June 2023