

MRSS 2006 Annual General Meeting

The MRSS AGM for 2006 was held during a luncheon at the Malacca Room, Inter-Continental Hotel

Mrs. Chong Lee Sah, President of MRSS kicked off the session with a run-down of the past year's and planned 2006 activities as well as 2005 financial statements.



The key highlights were :

As of June 2006, there are about 91 individual MRSS members – an increase from 79 members in 2005. There are plans to drive membership among buyers of research and mid-level researchers from the agency side.

The MRSS Market Research Seminars 2006 (May to Nov) was revamped to include MR and non MR modules with longer sessions for depth coverage. To date, response has been encouraging for the MR modules although lukewarm for the non MR modules.

Forthcoming events in the second half of 2006 will include Research Day (in cooperation with AdAsia), Research Forums and Breakfast Talk scheduled for August (Dr. Terry Beed on "Professional Standards"/ October/ December with a social event in December.

Accounts

Lee Sah reviewed the accounts and attributed the decrease in 2006 revenue to three main factors:

- (1) the out-sourcing of administrative functions where previously committee members volunteered their time to take on various administrative tasks,
- (2) increase in events held in 2005 and
- (3) printing of new brochures and folders.

Priya Tandan proposed the approval of the accounts, and Frank Boey seconded.

The auditors, C.N. Tiew & Co. was re-appointed, as proposed by Chan Siew Hoong and seconded by Clive Wright.



Committee Members

There were some changes:

Sheonagh Kennedy (Asian Strategies) to take over from Greg Coops as the Social & Events Secretary. Clive Wright to step down from External Relations role. Our thanks and appreciation for Greg's and Clive's past contributions. The functions of External Relations will be assumed under PR/ Publicity which is under the charge of Melanie Ng.

Initiatives

Lee Sah then took on the stage to introduce two initiatives undertaken by MRSS:

- (1) Professional Standards & Guidelines Initiative
- (2) Interviewer Certification Initiative

Professional Standards & Guidelines Initiative

MRSS has formed a Professional Standards Committee, which is similar to ESOMAR with the key roles as:

- A forum for complaints from the public, research users, other bodies, etc
- A watchdog for the adherence of professional research standards (The MRSS Code of Conduct in particular)
- A reviewer of the existing Code (strengthening it in existing and new areas e.g., concerning research that is publicized in the public arena)
- A liaison role with ESOMAR in terms of the national self regulation initiatives entitled "Responsible Research Regulation" (Kathy Joe has been in contact with MRSS on this)
- Provider of the MRSS Arbitration Service
- Author of a voluntary "Terms of Business" MRSS members are free to use in proposals
- Educator for MRSS members on their responsibilities under the MRSS code
- Other areas as the MRSS Committee requests

27 members voted to move ahead with this initiative and the committee.

PSC members are:

Chairman - Greg Coops (Asian Strategies)
Vice Chairman - Kevin Reagan (Research Pacific)
Member - Priya Tandan (TNS)
Member - Chua Cheh Mian (A.C. Nielsen)

The President of MRSS will also serve as Chairman of the PSC Review Board.

Interviewer Certification Initiative

The key objectives are:

- Provide official certification for market research interviewers
- Improve the professionalism of interviewers engaged by accredited market research organisations

Cheh Mian presented an overview of the initiative and the plan to launch this by end Q3/early Q4.



The current task force comprised of :

Chairman	Chua Cheh Mian (A.C. Nielsen)
Secretary	Claude Lee (TNS)
Members	Frank/ Thomas (Joshua Research)
	Katrina Goh (Proba)
	Spencer (Blackbox)
	Cecilia (A.C. Nielsen)
	Olivia/ Audrey (RI)

27 members voted to move ahead with the initiative



Closing Forum

Priya took the stage later and moderated a lively discussion on: (1) Feedback on MRSS Education Seminar and (2) How to Drive Membership and Participation in MRSS.

Committee members will review suggestions by members to set action plans in the July monthly meeting.

Priya then ended the AGM and thanked participants for their attendance.



Ralph Lauren the most popular designer brand globally and in Singapore, but Louis Vuitton is the brand most locals aspire to if money was no object.

Singapore, June 2006 – According to a global online survey of 21,000 consumers in 42 countries conducted by ACNielsen, Ralph Lauren is the world's most popular designer brand followed by Christian Dior, Giorgio Armani, and Gucci. Yet when it comes to the most coveted brand if money were no object, Italian fashion powerhouses take the lead, with Giorgio Armani the most aspired-to, closely followed by Gucci.

ACNielsen's global online survey was conducted on the Internet in November 2005, asking 21,000 consumers in 42 markets across Europe, UAE, North and Latin America, and Asia Pacific, including 500 respondents from Singapore, about their current and aspirational fashion brand purchasing.

Across the globe, 15 percent of global internet consumers purchase Ralph Lauren, with Christian Dior (13%), Giorgio Armani (12%), and Gucci (12%) completing the top four designer brands currently most purchased among the world's internet consumers.

In Asia Pacific, the popularity of these brands were in line with the world ranking, except that Louis Vuitton also made the top five ranking, with at least one in ten claiming to have bought the French brand's products. In fact, nine of the top 10 markets with most people buying Louis Vuitton products hailed from Asia Pacific, with Hong Kong (23%) and Japan (17%) topping the list.

In Singapore, Ralph Lauren has emerged as the most popular designer brand with a quarter of Singaporean respondents claiming that they purchase Ralph Lauren (25%). The other three brands reported to have been purchased by at least one out of every 10 locals are DKNY (17%), Gucci (15%), and Louis Vuitton (14%). (Table 1)

"These internationally acclaimed designers understand that strong brands make for profitable businesses. They are not merely selling fashion – they are selling an image – something consumers are willing to pay a premium for," said Mr Ashok Charan, Managing Director of ACNielsen Research Singapore.

Most aspired brands... if money were no object

When asked which designer brands they would buy if money were no object, consumers in Asia Pacific certainly had their own list – leading consumers in all other regions in their aspirations towards Louis Vuitton and Gucci (both 32%). Other brands that top the list amongst Asia Pacific consumers include Giorgio Armani (28%), Chanel (22%), Versace (22%) and Christian Dior (22%).

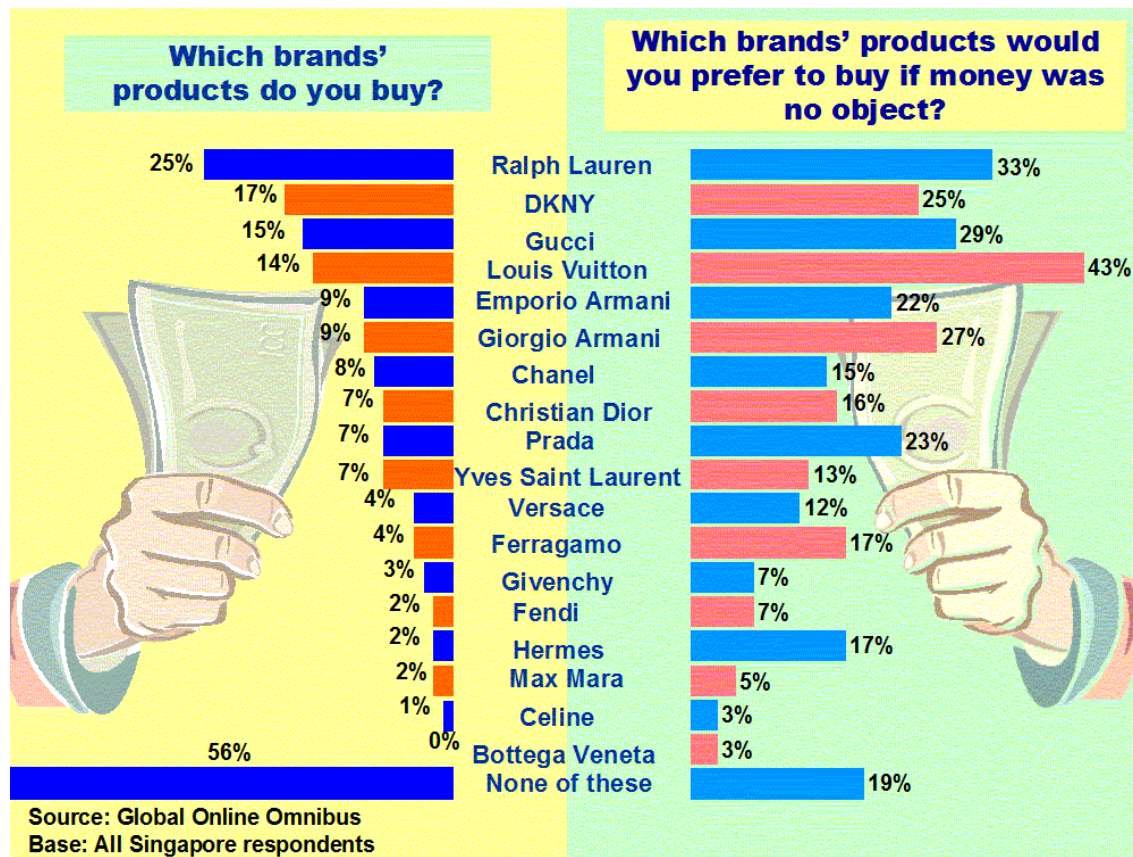
In Singapore, Louis Vuitton emerges as the most desired designer brand (43%). Other brands which made it to the top five most wanted list are Ralph Lauren (33%), Gucci (29%), Giorgio Armani (27%), and DKNY (25%).

"To be successful in diverse international markets, these designer brands have to consistently ensure the 'values' their designs represent will transcend cultures and age groups, although it is not an easy feat in the fickle fashion industry where trends and fads are the order of the day," added Mr Charan.

The ACNielsen Global Online Survey, the largest twice-yearly survey of its kind, is aimed to gauge consumers' current confidence levels, spending habits/intentions, current major

concerns and attitudes and opinions to a variety of issues. The most recent wave of the survey took place in November 2005 and polled over 23,500 consumers –

regular Internet users – in 42 markets in Europe, North and Latin America, Asia-Pacific region, Africa (Republic of South Africa) and the Middle East (UAE).



Millward Brown's *Demand and Activation* (D&A™), a framework that helps marketers better understand the complexities of the consumer journey to purchase, is achieving widespread recognition across the industry.



The framework has been integrated into a new research and planning tool, Connections, that provides advertisers and communications planners with valuable insights into how media can influence consumers throughout the purchase pathway. D&A also received a positive reception from the market research industry when presented at a recent ESOMAR conference, the paper was nominated as the best of the conference. The paper was presented by Shiv Moulee, Director of the Marketing Solutions Group. Entitled "Connecting with consumers: The right place and the right time", it was written in conjunction with Neerja Wable.



Shiv Moulee

Connections is an exclusive consumer-led, research and communications planning tool that allows marketers and communications planners to analyze, evaluate and measure all connection points available to brands. It has just been launched by WPP's GroupM agency partners Maxus, MediaCom, Mediaedge:cia and MindShare in association with Millward Brown and is powered by the D&A approach.

The D&A approach distinguishes between contact points ("touchpoints") that work mainly on priming long-term "demand" for a brand and those that work to close a sale or "activate" this demand such as in-store promotions or shelf displays.

Millward Brown and ACSR join forces to create one of China's most powerful research agencies

Millward Brown, a global leader and recognized authority in brand, communications and media research, has signed a joint venture agreement with ACSR, one of China's oldest and most respected market research agencies. The deal sees Millward Brown, through its parent WPP, acquiring the majority of ACSR's stock.

With offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou and formidable data collection facilities across urban and rural China, ACSR is widely recognized as one of China's most innovative and dynamic marketing research consultancies.

It offers clients qualitative and quantitative research solutions to their brand, communications, customer service and strategic retail management business issues.

ACSR and Millward Brown's existing operations will merge to create a powerful full service, vertically integrated business that will see the new company become a top five market research player in the Chinese market.

The new company will be known as Millward Brown ACSR.



THE LEADING EDGE ASIA EXPANDED



The Leading Edge celebrated the launch of its new office at the Red Dot Traffic Building by hosting two conferences for marketers, brand managers and market researchers in Asia. Both events took place at the Red Dot Design Museum. The first conference on May 24th focussed on branding and innovation to generate organic growth through a series of papers and case studies. The second event on May 25th focussed on brand building in the healthcare market.

The Leading Edge has added to its team with the appointment of senior consultant Marika Lind. Marika has been with The leading Edge since 1999 where she has gained experience across a wide range of industries including Food, Retail, Consumer healthcare and Household products. For the past 3 years Marika has lived and worked across Asia and will now be relocating from Japan to the Singapore office.



“Marika will be a real asset to the team and to the clients that she will be working with. She has experience across the wide range of research and consulting processes utilised within The Leading Edge and has special expertise in branding, innovations, semiotics and market frameworks.” said Dominic Lefebvre, Regional Director Asia, The Leading Edge.

Kadence Asia Pacific Continues to Expand its Regional HQ with New Research Appointments

B2b specialist Kadence Asia Pacific has appointed Stacey Foong and Janice Loo as Project Manager and Research Executive respectively. Stacy will be responsible for coordinating both qualitative and quantitative projects across the Asia Pacific region. Janice will play a key role supporting the research team in project management and production of final deliverables.



Stacey joins Kadence with over 5 years of market research experience having previously worked in data processing and Client servicing roles at AMI and The Research Pacific Group. Originally from Malaysia, Stacey has handled regional and single country studies; full service and fieldwork projects. With particular focus on IT, Telecom and travel industries, Stacy has worked with major multinational end-clients as well as European and US research firms.

Prior to joining Kadence, Janice worked as Management Trainee with Audi Asia Pacific, assisting in marketing and PR activities. A graduated with a bachelor degree in Business Management from the University of Manchester,



Janice has worked in numerous multinational companies and been exposed to a variety of industries including Information Technology, Shipping and the Automotive sector.

Managing Director Piers Lee says multinationals, European and US market research firms growing request for Asian market intelligence have contributed to the firm's rapid growth over the past 18 months. 'Looking forward, the increased interest in Asia Pacific and greater Asian markets will inevitably drive demand for more b2b research. In anticipation we have expanded our team to ensure that regional projects can be run smoothly and efficiently. Bringing additional industry specialists like Stacey and Janice into the Kadence team extends our ability to provide actionable research and insights across Asia.'

For any further information please contact Sebastien Barnard, +65 6513 4200, sbarnard@sg.kadence.com

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