

INTERVIEW THE EXPERTS



Q&A

By Gerald Chuah

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OVER the past decade, media habits have increasingly evolved into a more complex mix of intensity and fragmentation. Therefore, traditional media has to embrace and work in tandem with the new and social media.

To address the evolution and convergence of electronic and print media, the Audit Bureau of Circulations Malaysia (ABC Malaysia) is organising the 16th ABC Media Workshop 2014 conference and workshop themed "Economics of Media Convergence," to be held at Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) from May 22 to 25.

Speaking at a press conference recently, organising chairman Ben Chew, who is also the managing director of communications company Isobar Malaysia said: "The upcoming workshop will glean insights from a plethora of professionals who will explore the extensive and multifarious facets of this evolving media scenario".

The workshop features 13 speakers in a thematic sequence, as well as panel sessions.

Among them are prominent industry leaders such as Astro Radio ceo Dr Jake Abdullah and Tune Group Sdn Bhd head of media and property Margaret Au Yong, CEO of Celcom Axiata Berhad Datuk Sri Shazalli Ramli;

Regional executive creative director of APAC Isobar Graham Kelly, Air Asia country head Kenny Wong, Leo Burnett Malaysia chief catalyst of creative strategy and innovations Milan Agnihotri;

CEO of Television Networks Media Prima Ahmad Izham Omar, founder and managing director of Media Sys Entertainment Solutions Tapan Pai, and CEO of Carat Media Services Bala Pomaleh.

These gurus will postulate insights on how the industry should (or could) alter their attitudes and focus on leveraging trends, best practices, and developments in convergence;

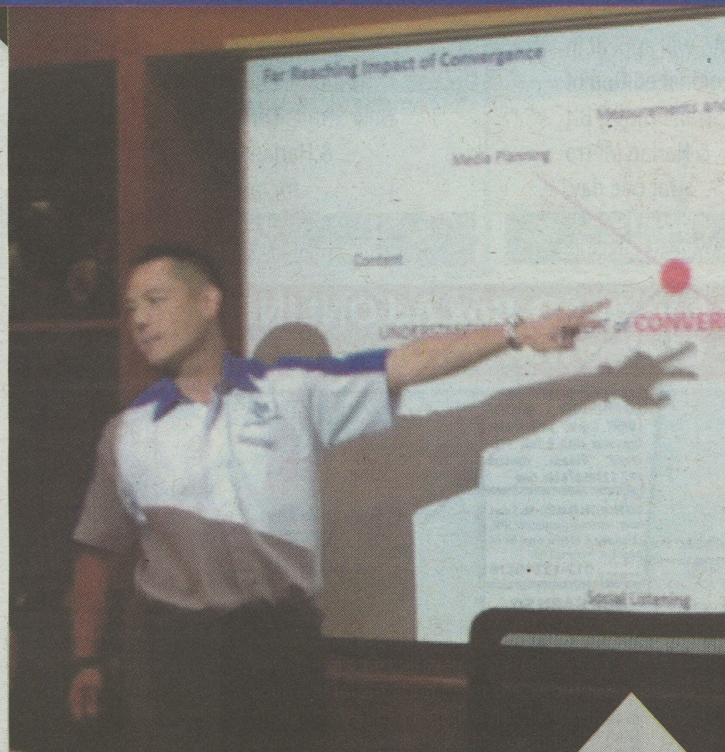
Understand how to think, strategise, create efficient communication solutions, and engagement besides measuring and maximising impact.

"Being in the industry for a long time, they are in touch with what's going on, and are the biggest proponents of change as they have seen the past, are embracing the present and preparing for the future," added Chew.

LOCATION

Chew said they decided to hold the conference in Ho Chin Minh City, Vietnam,

MEDIA CONVERGENCE CONFERENCE



"In terms of media convergence there are no two ways about it, either it becomes more expensive or more effective; and we have to decide the outcome. Ultimately, it is all about the content. We cannot give up being creative when it comes to crafting content. Technology without content is dead, and this is the mainstay of what we have to deal with for a long time."

— BEN CHEW, ORGANISING CHAIRMAN OF ABC MALAYSIA

as it is the largest and most vibrant city with a population of over nine million people.

"Ho Chi Minh city's superior GDP growth vis a vis all of Vietnam, and its hi-tech parks is the Vietnamese version of Silicon Valley, which naturally lends greater relevance to the theme that makes for the 16th Media Conference and Workshop to be held ther," said Chew.

In this Q&A, Chew explains the challenges involved in and what to

expect at the upcoming conference.

Q: Please explain the topic "Economics of Media Convergence".

With so many media platforms vying for attention, a lot of media planning and marketing decisions have to be made on how we reach out to consumers, and how the whole process of consumer interaction is changing quickly due to convergence.

Multiscreen is dictating the way we reach out to customers. Nowadays, everything converges into the screen whether it is phablet, phone, or television, which competes for time and attention from the consumers.

Q: The usual topic of debate was digital vs print media in the 90s, is this still relevant?

It is not about competition anymore, it has moved on from there. It is clear that the world has embraced digital, and it depends how far each market is embracing digital entirely. Everybody knows the role of digital, now it is about how print is assimilated and integrated into the digital world.

Print still has a role to play in digital. It is not either or, it is both; as every media touch point will end up on the computer screen. It is about how all these touch points can be integrated to meet the consumer's communication needs.

For example, newspaper ads are no longer static, with e-newspapers, people still consume the same information but in a different format.

Q: Moving forward what is the role and relevance of traditional media?

In a world of information overload, newspapers are still seen as a credible source of information to set the record straight. Maybe, there shouldn't be too many lengthy articles. Perhaps a more effective solution is to come out with bite size information which is constantly being updated in faster and shorter intervals. Nowadays, everything goes back to the internet space. Customers crave for more information. Something may start at the peak of the news, and go back to social media to share more information about a particular topic.

Q: Who should attend this ABC conference and what is the expected outcome?

Those who should attend this conference include media, advertising, marketing practitioners, public relations, social media and integrated communication practitioners, GLCs and MNCs.

In short, most people who are involved in communication industry should be thinking about this, including the government, as it is harder and harder to reach the audience.

I think participants will emerge from this conference and become more future proof in the landscape of convergence, and they will understand how the media scenario will evolve quickly by understanding insights, trends, practices and how to maximise its impact.



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