

The magazine for members of the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong



# DUTCHCHAM MAGAZINE

November/December 2017

**Volume 190**

Media & Communications

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that there is enough healthy  
food for everyone.*

Can you see it in your mind's eye?

Imagine...  
that we can produce more food without  
overtaxing the earth. That we revive  
agricultural land and waste fewer resources.

Imagine...  
that no one has to leave their home to flee  
famine. And that there are fewer conflicts.

Now imagine...  
that it is a bank working towards this vision.  
A bank founded by and for farmers,  
that understands you can achieve more  
together, and knows all about food and how  
to grow it.

Imagine...  
that we help kick-start the smartest  
innovations by our customers and partners  
on a global scale. And jointly address the  
biggest food issues on six continents.

Imagine...  
that we can solve the world food problem  
together. And you can count on us.

Growing a better world together



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Media & Communications



The theme of this DutchCham Magazine is “Media & Communications”. We asked Rob Crins of GBO Innovations to tell us how design can be used for communication. The Interview with a Chief features Rob van der Zanden of Brand Loyalty, which develops tailor-made loyalty concepts for the food retail sector around the world.

The Lead Story is about Saskia Wesseling and Rinske Kuiper, both responsible for our magazine’s cover designs. Saskia was recently featured in the National Geographic Traveller UK with photos depicting Buddhist ceremonies in Yunnan, China.

Finally, we hope to meet you at the last event of this year, the always spectacular SME Christmas Cocktail on Thursday, 14 December!

Maaïke van Meer  
DutchCham Chairman



# Happy people – a key part of business

BrandLoyalty creates innovative, tailor-made loyalty concepts for grocery retailers around the world and Rob van der Zanden, Global Procurement Director, talked to us about how a high level of transparency and good communication are key factors to success in business and keeping people happy.

■ By Donna Mah

## Please tell us a bit about yourself and your work.

I live in Hong Kong with my wife Ingrid and our three children, Juul (9), Sep (7) and Auk (4). We moved here in 2011 for a two-year assignment with BrandLoyalty, and now we have been here almost long enough to be eligible to apply for permanent residency.

My professional career has been in sourcing and for nine years I worked at Edco BV, a leading wholesale company in the Netherlands, before joining BrandLoyalty in 2009. My first trip to Hong Kong and China was 17 years ago which I remember as being very exciting for me.

For 2.5 years at BrandLoyalty I helped to set up the sourcing department for its relatively new business area called Instant Loyalty Promotions. The loyalty programmes are mainly targeted at kids, using collectable items which are often tied to a theme or a movie release. As the business grew, growth opportunities in the APAC region were identified and my family and I were asked to move to Hong Kong.

In my current position as Global Procurement Director at BrandLoyalty, I have the end-responsibility for all sourcing from factories around the world and for our quality department. I am also responsible for managing all the sourcing in Asia and am supported by a very professional multi-cultural team here.

## What makes Hong Kong a good place to be based for your business?

While our offices are spread all over the APAC region in order to be near our customers, Hong Kong as a regional office location is very centrally-located to support all our other functions including sourcing. The work ethic and vibe is very positive here and we are able to find people who are the right fit for our company in Hong Kong. We are always looking for people who are open-minded and enjoy working in multi-cultural environments to join our team and currently have close to 60 different nationalities working at BrandLoyalty.

## What does BrandLoyalty do? What makes the company different?

The company creates innovative and tailor-made loyalty programmes for the world's leading grocery retailers. In fact, we are the global leader for loyalty solutions.



The company was established in Hong Kong in 1995 by Robert van der Wallen. The head office is in the Netherlands and there are now over 20 offices worldwide. BrandLoyalty has run more than 3,000 loyalty programmes and every year it is active in 20,000 shops in over 50 countries. In 2014, the company became part of Alliance Data Systems (ADS), a SEC-listed company that markets loyalty solutions in the US and internationally, creating synergy with BrandLoyalty with its strong position in EMEA and Asia-Pacific markets.

As a company, we are very proud of our people. BrandLoyalty has a great company culture. We are genuine, enthusiastic and proactive. Our culture is part of who we are. Our company is committed to the welfare of our employees as well as the success of our customers.

## How important is communication to your business?

Communication is very important to us. To better serve our clients, who are grocery retailers, we run consumer focus groups, do in-store surveys and conduct interviews with consumers in their homes. This all helps us to better understand consumers' needs and thereby help our clients to improve relationships and build loyalty with consumers. People naturally want to share and show others what they are doing. When we visit people in their homes, they are very welcoming and happy when we show an interest.

By communicating with consumers, clients and vendors, we are able to make sure the features of whatever rewards have been chosen for a loyalty programme are the most relevant and of high quality. For us, we look for rewards that are 1. interesting to consumers, 2. relevant to consumers and 3. high quality.

When clients want to learn more about what we do, we are also happy to share with them. I have had clients ask if they can visit the factory for a programme and I have no problem saying yes to this. My colleagues and I all agree that we should only work with vendors that we would have no problem taking our clients to visit. We offer a high level of transparency that we hope puts all our partners, whether they are clients or vendors, at ease.

For consumers, we believe in creating a combination of emotional and transactional loyalty. This means that we consider what the consumers' wants and needs are from design and customisation of rewards to the design of a mobile app or loyalty programme. It is key to thoroughly understand the decision-making process,



behaviours, motivations and trigger points at each and every stage.

As a company, we work to maintain transparency from all levels by using tools internally to communicate with colleagues and provide regular business updates. Good communication in an ever growing business is of utmost importance to us and is something that we consciously work on cultivating.

## Who are your clients?

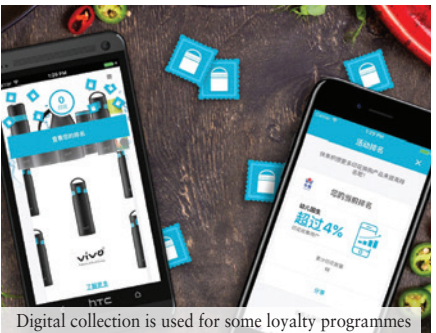
As mentioned before, they are leading grocery retailers around the world. Our customers are based all over the world and include Albert Heijn, Auchan, Lidl, Carrefour, Rewe, Esselunga, Safeway, Lowes, Sobeys, Metro, AEON, York-Benimaru, RT Mart, PX Mart, Big C, Countdown, Alfamart, FairPrice, to name a few.

## What challenges (or opportunities) does your business face?

Some campaigns are more successful than others. Aside from designing a programme with rewards that consumers want, we also provide staff training for retailers. Training videos and incentive plans for top-performing employees are all part of the programmes we offer to build stronger relationships and keep people invested in the campaigns.

If a campaign is very successful, we are able to be flexible and quickly make adjustments to the production of rewards, ie. increase production numbers. If a campaign needs a bit of a boost, we can implement double stamp days to increase in-store traffic. Each campaign is tailor-made for the client with flexibility built-in to help make each programme a success.

In Asia, we are able to test new digital programmes in the region as people are very open to them. There is a high level of adoption of technology in Asia making this possible. In Europe and North America, consumers are more conservative and not as open to digital programmes, therefore the growth of digital is slower than in Asian markets.



## What are some of your future plans for BrandLoyalty?

We are seeing a lot of change happening in different industries, including the grocery retailer market. In some industries, such as hotels or transportation, we have witnessed market disruptions from newcomers AirBnB and Uber. Online shopping has also made a big impact with companies like Alibaba and Amazon creating new markets. However, we don't believe the physical bricks and mortar shops will disappear completely in the future, but a disruption in grocery retail which is yet to come.

BrandLoyalty will continue to invest in our services to be the perfect partners for our clients. Digital and data will be two strong pillars to make sure we stay ahead of the game. An important part of what we do is to make sure we really understand the interests of all the different consumers in our target markets. By doing so, we can better design our programmes to really fit the local needs of the individuals and deliver a better experience!

At BrandLoyalty, "We love happy people." This applies to consumers, clients and colleagues – everyone that is involved in our business.

## Anything else you'd like to share with readers?

BrandLoyalty has the ambition to continue to be a fast growing company in the years to come, so we are always looking for new talent to join the BrandLoyalty family! If anyone has any questions about BrandLoyalty, what we do or career opportunities, feel free to contact me at rob.vanderzanden@brandloyalty-int.com or reach out to our HR department at nathalie.ho@brandloyalty-int.com. •



# Interview with Saskia van Lier, SVP, Talpa Asia

■ By DutchCham

As SVP at Talpa Asia, can you explain exactly what it is you do?

As SVP for Talpa Asia I am responsible for the roll out of key Talpa franchises across Asia as well as other commercial partnerships across the region. This, of course, includes global hit formats such as *The Voice*, *The Voice Kids* and *I Love My Country*, just to mention a few. But Talpa’s catalogue is much more extensive with successful formats across all genres (game shows, reality shows and scripted formats). New formats are brought to market in the Netherlands on a continuous basis. After being brought to market in the Netherlands, they are fine-tuned and prepared for their global roll out. We work with local broadcasters as well as production companies to establish partnerships and assist in localisation to bring proven concepts to their market. We work together with Talpa’s production consultants, who are on the ground, to assist during key production dates in each territory in which the program is set to air. These partnerships start with the production and broadcast of the TV format, of course, but spread across the entire media funnel, from social media activation to replication of commercial partnerships as well as merchandise and out of program activation, just to mention a few areas.

## In which Asian countries is Talpa active?

Talpa is active in all markets worldwide (*The Voice*, for example, is produced in 67 territories globally), with specialists covering the entire globe. The Talpa Asia office covers the following key markets: China & Hong Kong, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea and Japan. In addition to this, we have flying producers active across the markets where our programs are or will go into production.

## How does the TV/media landscape differ in Europe and Asia?

Each market is distinct in culture, taste and local requirements and therefore requires dedicated sales as well as localised production approach. Therefore, it is key to understand and know your client base across the different territories. Also, in some markets which are still developing, for example Cambodia or Myanmar, we need to be creative as resources are more limited. Not all Dutch formats work across the board in Asia, however



Saskia van Lier



global hits such as *The Voice* are successful everywhere they have travelled because of their uniqueness and the positivity they bring to audiences worldwide.

## What TV formats that are also known in the Netherlands are popular in Asia? Why do you think this is the case?

*The Voice* and *The Voice Kids* are very popular in Asia, as they are in the rest of the world, with local versions for many consecutive series in almost all territories across the region. In addition to this, music and shiny floor shows are attracting large viewership, as well as game shows. We are working on different Asian versions of the talent show *The Next Boy/Girl Band* for example, which first aired in the Netherlands in 2016. The winners of the Dutch format, for example, performed during one of Indonesia’s live shows in Jakarta. The show has already been commissioned in Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. In addition, our newest interactive game show *5 Gold Rings* will soon be adapted in different Asian territories. This format will be brought to market together with a dedicated *5 Gold Rings* mobile application, allowing viewers viewers to play along from their couch and win prizes. •



# Did you know that?

- Adults spend on average 6 hours a day online
- 18% of social media users cannot go more than 2 hours without checking
- People have on average 7 social media apps on their phone

■ By Danielle Stegeman, Director & Coach at 1 day offline Limited, 1dayoffline@blackislegroup.com, www.1dayoffline.hk



Danielle Stegeman



Smart phone addiction. Source: Jean Jullien

In this electronic information age, many of us have become very dependent upon technology as it plays an important role in our daily lives. Often times, for the better. Advancing technology provides new opportunities for us to stay informed, connected, entertained and engaged. Devices are becoming smaller, lighter and more portable. And these are good things. But an unintentional side effect of the increasing portability of technology is that it continues to make inroads into areas of our lives where it offers more distraction and harm than benefit. We may not realise that this has conditioned us to become less social, interactive and creative. Nowadays, a wealth of information is instantly and readily available to more people than ever before. This can be overwhelming at times. In such a dynamic world, it becomes increasingly important to stay in control instead of getting carried away by the everyday humdrum routine and the overabundance of digital stimuli. In order to avoid cognitive overload, it is essential to make conscious and sensible choices at all times.

So, if you can’t remember when was the last time you called instead of texted someone to ask how he’s doing, or when you left your phone at home on purpose while going somewhere, you might want to make your life a little less digital to reclaim a small piece of peace of mind.

Here are some steps to remind you to take a break:

- Turn off notifications for email and apps

This prevents you from looking and reacting immediately when you receive something. Instead, set fixed time intervals to check

your email and apps for updates. In this way, you will stay in charge of your digital devices and not the other way around. Moreover, it enhances productivity and efficiency. Our brains are not able to cope with focusing on multiple tasks at once.

- Delete addictive (social media) apps

This will keep you from mindlessly scrolling when you could be engaged in new and real experiences. Give your eyes a rest and your brain some time to daydream. A little boredom in your day opens up the potential for more creative thinking. It’s always possible to reinstall the apps you really miss, but you may be surprised by how little you miss them when you set a few limits.

- Create a technology-free bedroom

Cutting down artificial light exposure before bedtime promotes more and better sleep. So watch your favourite series on the couch and read a book in bed. Or take this valuable opportunity to evaluate your day. This conscious reflection contributes to learning and personal growth. To start your day mindful and relaxed is one reason not to check your email first thing in the morning. This inevitably causes distraction at the expense of productivity and is mentally taxing. Additionally, the same goes for (social media) apps. Also, don’t use your phone to set an alarm, but buy an old fashioned alarm clock instead.

It may sound counterintuitive, but there are many useful apps that can actually help you curtail your phone usage, increase productivity or encourage relaxation. These are definitely worth trying:

- **Moment** tracks how much you use your iPhone or iPad and lets you set daily limits on usage. You’ll be notified when you go over and can set the device to force you off when you reach your limit.
- **Forest** rewards you for not checking your phone with a flourishing forest. The app plants a tree every half hour you leave it open, but quit the app to check other things and your forest will wither before your very eyes. Although it does still mean using your phone, it turns ignoring your messages into an endurance game with fine topiary.
- **DinnerTime Plus** helps parents to get their kids off their screens and to the table. By specifying an exact period of time parents can lock their kids out from their device, meaning they can’t use any apps or see anything beyond their home screen. •



# What are typical differences between Dutch and Chinese web design?

Because of its legacy from Great Britain, Hong Kong is a typical melting pot of Eastern and Western cultures. This ‘East meets West’ phenomenon is inadvertently prevalent in the work and working culture at our web design and development studio, Grayscale.

■ By Jarijn Nijkamp, Account Director & Managing Partner, Grayscale Web Concept & Design Hong Kong, jarijn.nijkamp@grayscale.com.hk, +852 5804 3077, www.grayscale.com.hk



With eight full-time staff, our cultural composition amounts to equal parts Asian and Western. Perhaps not surprisingly, this ratio is applicable to our clientele as well. “So, are there any obvious cultural design differences?” you might wonder. The answer to that is a resounding “maybe”. The challenge in answering that question is a cultural paradox: on one hand, a web design is produced locally somewhere, so therefore it must follow the local culture; on the other hand, most websites are accessible worldwide, commonly follow global design trends and best practices and are predominantly in English.

Interestingly enough, despite cultural differences, our needs are universal: we’re online to find a wedding gift, learn to speak Spanish, rent an AirBnB flat in Thailand, sell a dining table or find a cute date. Whichever platform that gets us to these goals with the least amount of friction will democratically rise above the competition.

So, if the same basic design principles ubiquitously apply to audiences in New York as they do in the New Territories, then what causes design here to look so different?

## The differences

Historically, Chinese websites have a chaotic appearance: every last bit of whitespace on the page has been claimed by an ad, link, blinking gif or something else that demands the user’s attention. These information-driven sites probably followed this pattern because of two theories: 1) to recreate the chaotic bazaar shopping atmosphere they’re familiar with, and 2) because full literacy is a relatively new phenomenon in China, and presenting a list of all search possibilities upfront assists users who are unconfident of their own spelling skills find what they’re looking for.

Interactive design is still in its infancy in Hong Kong. Web design is commonly categorised as a job an IT manager does in their spare time. The evidence of this is obvious: Broadway (the equivalent of MediaMarkt) relies on discontinued software Flash; KFC Hong Kong is not optimised for mobile phones and has not been updated since 2011; and the Hang Seng bank website looks like a phishing attempt.

In Western equivalents of the above examples, it’s clear that it’s not so much a problem of design differences, but design priorities. Local organisations assign no importance, budget and time to the design and development of a site, and continue to rely on traditional marketing. This may work for them for a few more years, but eventually someone will need to stir up the management and introduce the idea of a complete makeover, to win over the mobile-savvy audience.

For those who do take the leap of faith and invest in design, there is some chance competitors may copy their designs (sometimes by literally copying source code) in order to piggyback on someone else’s apparent success. To us, this signals uncertainty, and a lack of expertise to support these organisations. Luckily, that’s where we come in!

## Embrace the diversity

There are certainly differences, and while it’s a loaded topic, from Hong Kong’s perspective we can see that the biggest factor is priority. Great design is a cross-cultural, universal phenomenon. As a bicultural agency, we embrace these differences and apply the best from both cultures in our daily work. That goes for our design work as well as internal operations: our European-style open office is feng shui optimised!

If you believe that your organisation can use a bit of good Asian-European story-telling on the web, please reach out and see how we can help you. •



Google and Skyscanner are both good examples of sites/platforms which let the visitor do something in a fast, easy and intuitive way.

Sources: [https://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content\\_language/all](https://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content_language/all) | <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/19/world/asia/on-china-episode-12-transcript/index.html>  
<http://blog.webcertain.com/understanding-chinese-web-design-why-are-sites-so-incredibly-link-heavy/13/08/2012/>

# Communicating through design

Industrial design as a profession is still a ‘young’ profession. With the rise of production machinery, the need for products especially designed for industrialisation became relevant. This created new opportunities and new professions.

■ By Rob Crins, director / partner GBO Innovation makers, rcrins@gbo.eu, www.gbo.eu



GBO Innovation makers is a design agency that both develops products and also takes responsibility for manufacturing. It underlines the fact that a well-designed product is an absolute necessity. It’s coping with challenges such as fast-moving markets, ever demanding end-users and cost price, production number forecasts and investments on the other side. Our client needs to understand their market and end-users, and we interpret these and other insights to develop innovative products. Objective: growing their business.

Until electronics started to set in, designers had tools such as shape, texture, materials and graphics to communicate with the end-user. For example, soft materials for a handle provides better grip but can also provide an indication as to how to handle the product. Meanwhile, design is used to minimise the mistakes made while interacting with the product – medical equipment has standards that can influence the design just for this reason.

With the further rise of electronics, a new element has been introduced to the designer’s toolbox. The UI, User Interaction. With the help of displays (interfaces), the user can be guided through the functionalities of the products with the help of text, icons and graphics.

In a broader perspective, the UX (User Experience) is the ultimate way of communicating through design. It starts with the packaging that should attract the user while providing all the

necessary information, both legally as well as commercially. The unpacking experience became more and more important in the last decade; numerous videos on YouTube will show you the necessity of creating packaging that underlines the product’s value. The packaging no longer serves as just protection, but has become the first contact point with consumers, adding to the perception of quality. The product itself should be in balance when it comes to the combination of price, function, design and experience. The experience elements such as sound, movement, tactile elements and ease-of-use have been introduced into our profession. We all know that when closing a car door, we distinguish between premium and midrange cars brands by the sound and feeling. This perceived quality also helps the designer to ‘guide’ the user towards the preferred usage and buying decisions.

## The future?

Last year, GBO implemented VR and AR in our process in order to experience the impact of design and having interaction with the product at a very early stage. As IoT (Internet of Things) products will interact with us, it demands again a new discipline in functional design, aesthetics etc. In the future, these techniques will be common for consumers as well, just think of online shopping and having the opportunity to experience the product before actually buying it.

Last, but not least, design awards in some (consumer) markets are a must-have. GBO has been awarded with over 60 international design awards from Red Dot (incl. Best of the Best), iF, GIO etc. The image shown is an example of one of our Red Dot award-winning products for Rioned, the eControl+. This sewer cleaning control unit interacts with the end-user on short and long distance (interface + LED light guide) and a very tactile rotary button. It’s easy-to-use because of a thorough multi-disciplinary development approach. The Red Dot jury experienced the innovation in all aspects.



Combining all these elements into a successful product makes our profession even more challenging. Finding the right combination of all the elements that can affect the success of products underlines the necessity of design as a key success factor for many companies. •



# 10 Reasons you should care about e-mail marketing. Number 8 will surprise you!

OK, I’m not actually going to give a list of reasons. These can be found in various studies, in summaries of those studies and in clickbait-style articles that summarise the summaries of those studies. If you Google “why should I care about e-mail marketing” you’ll find plenty of variations on the same answers: it’s cheap, it’s interactive, it’s personal, it has measurable results and it works!



■ By Sjoerd Willems, Application Support Engineer at Tripolis Solutions, swillems@tripolis.com, <http://www.tripolis.com/>

See for yourself: <https://www.google.com.hk/search?q=reasons+to+use+e-mail+marketing>. If this were an article in a newsletter you would be able to click on this link. And I would be able to measure how many readers clicked on this link. Just saying.

The good news is that all of this is true! But how do you start?

**Step 1** is to acquire e-mail addresses and get permission from the owners to use them. For this you simply ask your potential and existing customers (for the latter group you probably already have them). A signup form on your website is the easiest way. If you have a specific landing page for potential customers (make sure this is where prospects land that find your company via a search engine), this form can be as in-your-face as you want: a popup is not all that unusual and a simple message that says “leave your e-mail address here and we will tell you more about our stuff” can be quite effective.

**Step 2** is to start sending base level e-mails. For existing customers this is a regular newsletter with updates and articles related to your products/services, as well as sporadic one-off e-mails about special offers, specific events, subscription reminders, etc. E-mails like these will make your customers feel that they signed up with the right firm, are great for retention and can be used for upsales. These e-mails should at least include the recipient’s name, for a personal touch, and look good on a mobile device.

For prospects, an introduction campaign can be set up where the recipients receive some tailor-made e-mails over the course of a few days or weeks that informs them about your services and products, and tell them why you are such a great company. The goal of these e-mails is to try and move the prospect to make an appointment or register as a customer. Once this is done they can move to the regular e-mail flow.

**Step 3** is where the fun starts. Most e-mail marketing tools offer a range of functionality that can be used to improve and expand on

the basic setup from step 2. Here’s a non-exhaustive list of things you could do:

- Send content based on recipients’ interests. You can use click behaviour to determine which subjects recipients are interested in. Based on that you can target a specific group of people with e-mails on a certain subject, or you can include content on a certain topic in the regular newsletter only for the people that might care about it.
- Use AB Testing to improve your e-mail content. You can play around with the subject line, layout, colours, button placement, etc. to find out which version works best. Based on the number of opens or clicks for each version you can use the winner in the future.
- Use Real-time content to add immediacy to an e-mail: a countdown timer, a picture related to a recipient’s current location, “only 10 seats left!”, etc.
- Create a win-back campaign for customers that have fallen through the cracks.
- Create automated flows to guide a customer through the life-cycle of a product: “don’t forget to renew your membership”, “it’s time for annual maintenance”, “your coffee supply might be running low again”, etc.
- Create campaigns that trigger on certain events to make your customers feel special and to show that you care: birthdays, purchases, childbirth, returning from holiday, clicks on specific links, etc.
- Use Artificial Intelligence to determine what is a good time to send someone an e-mail and which are the right subjects (or products or offers) to include.

The base level e-mailing from step 2 is easy to set up and should immediately generate positive results. The real gain however, is in the more advanced options. Luckily, none of this is rocket science: with the right tool, setting your e-mail marketing up to include any item on the list above is relatively simple. Feel free to contact me if you need help finding that right tool and I will happily advise you to use ours ;).

# Registering Top Level Domain names in China

Internet usage is truly booming in China, with more than 701 million ‘netizens’ (as of December 2016), China connects more people to the Internet than any other country. In fact, every fourth person on the Internet is from China. Facilitated by the increasing availability of broadband technology and the growing trend towards online shopping and purchasing, the Internet is an attractive business and marketing platform for many European SMEs.

■ By China IPR SME Helpdesk, [question@china-iprhelpdesk.eu](mailto:question@china-iprhelpdesk.eu), [www.ipr-hub.eu](http://www.ipr-hub.eu)

The China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) has also now removed barriers to overseas companies and individuals to register domain names in China, and it is recommended that European SMEs take advantage of this if they are planning on entering the Chinese market or are already in China.

## Domain Name Requirements

From May 2012, .cn and .中国 domain name registrations became available again for private individual registrations (both Chinese and overseas). The process takes a few weeks and currently costs €50-€100.

The following steps are required:

- Translate your domain names into Chinese and find an accredited registrar using either of these sources (domain name registration must be completed through an accredited registrar).
  - International registrars - .cn: <http://cnnic.com.cn/IS/CNym/CNymzcfwjgsq/>
  - International registrars - .中国: <http://cnnic.com.cn/IS/zwym/zgymzcfwjg/>
- Check (the registrar can do this on your behalf) if the particular .cn domain name is available for registration using the CNNIC domain name registry available in English here: <http://www1.cnnic.cn/>
- Complete an application form with business seal of applicant company (to be provided by your registrar)
- Provide a copy of local business certificate in your home country (or copy of passport, driving licence or other official ID, if you apply as an individual). A ‘Letter of Commitment’ must be signed by the registrant (to be provided by your registrar); these will be kept by the CNNIC.
- Submitting originals is not required, nor are copies of trademark certificates to prove a prior right to the requested domain name.

These restrictions are both good news and bad news for European SMEs. The good news is that the removal of the local presence requirements enable European SMEs to register .cn and .中国 domain names, using their European company data and business certificates, without needing to establish a local business unit within China. The flipside of the coin, however, is that after an immense

effort by the Chinese authorities to make the .cn name clean from fake registrants, the same removal of local presence requirements may again make the .cn and .中国 domain names an attractive space for cybersquatters and other online criminals. By keeping the requirement of copies of business certificates and passports for private individual registrations, one can hope that the .cn domain space will not be as attractive to cybersquatters as other completely automated top-level domain names such as .com and .net.

## The new .中国 (.China) top level domain

In July 2010, CNNIC launched the .中国 domain name which was then officially ready for use. According to CNNIC more than 90% of Chinese governmental departments and more than 95% of news websites had already activated .中国 domain names. The new .中国 top level domain name is also expected to further promote Chinese content on websites. Meanwhile, for European businesses, the new .中国 top level domain name (TLD) will provide an inexpensive and efficient way to reach Chinese consumers in their own language.

## What are the rules for registering .中国 domain names?

Registrants of existing .cn domain names with Chinese characters, such as for instance 中文.CN, will automatically be granted the same domain name using the .中国 TLD in both simplified and traditional Chinese.

If SMEs wish to register a domain name containing Chinese characters both under .cn (中文.cn) and under .中国 (中文.中国) SMEs will have to file two registration applications.

Furthermore, it is possible to combine Chinese scripts with Latin characters, Arabic numbers (0-9), and the hyphen, ‘-’, when registering under .中国.

## Take-away message:

Registering Chinese domain names is now a quick, cheap and relatively simple process. To reap the business rewards of reaching Chinese internet surfers in their own language, EU SMEs should take care to register their company and trade mark domain names as early as possible in China. •



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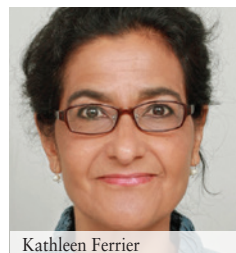
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# Communication, innovation and the new leaders our world needs

In our ever smaller world, media and communication play an ever more important role. That goes for individuals as well as for companies. Therefore, we are all, individuals and businesses alike, confronted with the question: how do I want to present myself, how do I want to be seen, not only in a face-to-face setting but also on the world wide web?



Kathleen Ferrier

■ By Kathleen Ferrier, Member of the Environmental and Energy Business Council EU Chamber of Commerce.

Because there is no escape, not having a profile on Twitter, WeChat, Facebook and/or LinkedIn simply is not an option. Anno 2017, it seems that without a profile on social media, one does not exist. That is why this question is so urgent. How do I want to be seen and heard, or, to speak in media and communication terms: how do I want to be framed?

## Innovation

Curious to find out how people answer this question I decided to check some profiles on LinkedIn and Twitter. The framing was diverse, but what caught my attention is that one quality kept coming back: innovation. "I am an innovative person", "we are an innovative business", "key in our approach is innovation" ... etc.

Innovation is a hot topic in the business world. And it has been so in recent years and undoubtedly, it will continue to be at the top of the list of business concerns. With the speed of technological developments, the vast amount of information and tools at our disposal, the introduction of more and more artificial intelligence in our daily lives and globalisation, companies will continually be asked to innovate to remain relevant in their markets. And this has a reason. The challenges we are facing as a world community actually urges us to be innovative. To preserve our planet and natural resources and to provide our ever-increasing world population with opportunities to live safely, be healthy and lead meaningful lives.

Innovation is also needed because access to information and knowledge is no longer a strategic strength, as these are available everywhere and continuously at our disposal. It is increasingly more valuable for companies and individuals to be able to use information, knowledge and artificial intelligence effectively to solve problems, innovate and improve lives, workplaces and ultimately create a better world.

## Status Quo

Questioning the status quo is an important start of creative thinking and for innovation. As a politician, a member of Dutch parliament for over ten years, I have experienced that when it comes to innovation, the private sector moves faster and more fearlessly than the political sector.

However, the private sector cannot lay back and relax. To keep on track, the status quo, however satisfying and promising, has to be

constantly questioned. For instance, when it comes to diversity and inclusion. That goes for many businesses, also the EU and Dutch businesses in Hong Kong. Questions like: 'how diverse are the boards of our companies?' and 'according to what criteria is new talent recruited?' are useful questions.

## Asian University for Women

For a number of years now, I have been involved in the Asian University for Women (AUW), based in Chittagong, Bangladesh. AUW is a place where over 500 young women get the education they need to become innovative professionals, leaders of their communities, their countries and their continent. After a rigorous process they are selected as the most promising girls from most underprivileged places in 15 Asian countries. Think of rural areas in Afghanistan or Pakistan, the garment industry in Bangladesh or the refugee camps for Rohingya's in Cox's Bazar. They are selected because of their innovative and creative way of thinking, which have literally helped them to survive. During their whole academic career at AUW, they are stimulated to use that innovative and creative thinking, challenging the status quo, because that is what our world needs.

I have been appointed as Honorary Professor in Human Rights at AUW. I travel at least once a year to Chittagong to teach these highly-motivated and brilliant students. Here in Hong Kong, I am involved in mentoring AUW students who come to Hong Kong every summer for internships in a variety of businesses and the banking sector.

Speaking with their supervisors and colleagues here in Hong Kong, I have learned that these internships are not only beneficial for the students, but for the companies as well. New female leaders are being educated in places like AUW. That might seem far away, but every summer, a group of these innovative and creative thinkers come to Hong Kong for internships.

Undoubtedly, for Dutch businesses in Hong Kong it would be an interesting experience to have AUW students as interns. This would be a great opportunity for the students to learn from and in Dutch businesses.

I think that Dutch businesses can reflect what our world needs: a value driven, no-nonsense environment, that seeks to give practical answers to the questions we, as a world community, are facing today. •



# Horse racing will go on

“Life shall remain unchanged for 50 years; horse racing will continue, and the dancing parties will go on,” was the famous pledge by Deng Xiaoping during the Sino-British negotiation concerning Hong Kong’s future after the handover – that the city would carry on being a capitalist city and guaranteeing the lifestyle would not change. So why mention horse racing?



■ By Alfred Tse, Director, Just Media Group Ltd, a@justmedia.hk

Horse racing is one of the favourite pastimes in Hong Kong. Dating back to 17<sup>th</sup> century Britain, modern thoroughbred racing was made popular by royalty and aristocrats, so it’s not surprising that the British colonial government introduced the sport to Hong Kong.

Established in 1884, the Hong Kong Jockey Club is one of the oldest institutions in Hong Kong and the largest taxpayer and community benefactor thanks to its enormous HK\$117 billion annual betting turnover. Recent statistics show that over 12% of the city’s adult population regularly bet on horses. So how did it become so popular?

Horse racing in Hong Kong was once a somewhat festive activity with races held sporadically in Happy Valley and Fanling using amateur jockeys and trainers. In 1972, Major-General Bernard Penfold, then general manager of the Jockey Club, set a mandate to turn horse racing into a professional sport with the introduction of races twice a week, the establishment of an apprentice jockeys’ school and a new racecourse in Shatin.

Seeing an opportunity, our company’s founder predicted that the demand for regular horse racing publications for punters and started publishing one of the city’s first race cards, with details of all the races and betting tips, prior to each race meeting. Specialised racing newspapers were also published to cater for different readership. Forty-five years on, Just Media Group is still the market leader and its race card format has become the industry standard.

Currently, there are 23 racing publications on the market. Just Media Group publishes two of its own racing publications and prints another 10 titles for other racing publishers. The total production accounts for almost half of titles published in Hong Kong.

Life in the racing paper newsroom isn’t easy; one must be an early riser and a night owl. Races are held at Happy Valley every Wednesday evening and at Shatin every Sunday afternoon, with a few exceptions. To prepare, reporters and photographers must be in attendance at the Shatin racecourse at 4 am every morning, in time for the “morning trackwork”. This is where horses perform their daily exercise. The trackwork reflects the physical fitness of a horse; how a trainer trains their horses, and how the riders react with their horses. Experienced reporters

have to clock, observe, take notes about each horse and be able to spot any telltale signs. This is fed to the newsroom for further analysis and editing.

Two days before each race at 8am, the Jockey Club announces the declaration of runners with details of jockeys, weights that they carry and barrier draws etc. Within an hour, the editors and analysts have to compile and process all raw data and output them into a readable format. Speed is of the essence and attention to detail is a must. Punters expect 100% accuracy as it will affect their betting decisions.

Once the pages are compiled, they will be sent to our own printing facilities for printing. With our own presses, unlike other publishers, we are able to get the papers printed quickly. Once printed, they will be distributed to all 300-plus newsstands around Hong Kong before lunchtime.

At noon the following day, the day before the races, the Jockey Club starts accepting bets. Once the betting pool opens, all horses will have been given their odds of winning. The editors and analysts can now write additional articles based on this new information. Within an hour, the “final edition” of the paper is ready for printing and distribution before 1 pm.

The newsroom doesn’t stop here. On race days, the reporters must attend the races and report back with photographs and articles. All race results will then be sent back to our database for analysis and preparation for the next meeting. Evening meetings at Happy Valley are especially tough for the editorial team as the last race doesn’t end until 11 pm, and it takes a few hours before the information can be finalised.

After a few hours’ sleep they have to rise early, to get ready for the next set of declaration of runners for the next meeting. The editors and analysts will then be busy preparing the next issue of racing paper and race cards, and the cycle continues throughout the racing season from September to July.

This is truly a unique publishing operation. And it shows that horse racing and the racing media go hand in hand. Punters need information so they can bet wisely and the Jockey Club needs racing media to promote racing. Surely this unique culture will continue to exist in Hong Kong, even after the “unchanged-for-50-years” pledge.



To read this article, please scan the QR code or visit <http://bit.ly/2zqtRsL>



# Dutch bikes and design thinking

An interview with designer Leonne Cuppen, curator and one of the initiators of YKSI design and Dutch Design Week and designer Daria Biryukova.

■ By DutchCham

Please tell us a little bit about yourself and what it is you do with YKSI Connect?

Leonne: About 25 years ago, I started a design studio together with two colleagues which focussed on furniture and interior design called YKSI Design. A few years ago, I started YKSI Connect, which is more about curation, collaboration and concept thinking. Nowadays, I'm responsible for YKSI Connect and YKSI Expo. For YKSI Expo we collaborate with young designers to create exhibitions, lectures and workshops. Daria is also part of the YKSI Expo team. She is a young designer from Russia and lives in the Netherlands where she did a Master's Degree at the Design Academy.

Daria: I graduated from the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and the Design Academy in Eindhoven. Afterwards, I did an internship at YKSI Design and that's how I met Leonne. In 2015, I started my own design studio based in the YKSI Expo area. I have worked on several research projects, and together with Leonne, I'm involved in the exhibition organisation.

Now you are here in Hong Kong; why specifically here?

Leonne: In 2011, we had a Liberation of Light exhibition in Beijing and Guangzhou. This year, for a conference on infrastructure, I created an exhibition of Dutch bikes for Velocity. Every year it is in a different country, and last June, it was in Arnhem, the Netherlands. After we created the bike exhibition for Velocity, we got in touch with the Dutch Consulate in Guangzhou again. They asked us to give a lecture and workshop on Dutch bike design. We were asked to do this in Hong Kong as well.

Why are Dutch bikes a good example of Dutch design?

Leonne: A bike is quintessentially Dutch, which makes it interesting for foreign countries. It is also an object that is very design-minded. It's about health, lifestyle, social design; so, there are several key topics combined in a bike. A bike is an object that allows us to introduce all the topics that are really innovative at the moment. An exhibition using bikes is a good way to show how we work in the Netherlands.



From what you've seen so far, how does Dutch design differ from design in Asia, and in particular, in China?

Leonne: I think the Netherlands has a unique way of looking at creative processes. Twenty years ago, a designer was a person who only created the shapes at the final stage of the entire process. It was all about form and function, and not about creativity or process thinking. In the early 1990s, this changed. Nowadays, people recognise how important design is. I think this is typically something from the Netherlands. Other countries can learn from us, just like we can learn from the cultural ideas from other countries.

Because of that mindset, do you think there are a lot of opportunities for Dutch design in Asia? Do you already see that happening?

Leonne: Dutch designers are doing really well in foreign countries. Look at Phillips, for example. The company made the transformative change from lighting to healthcare - that's a commercial, economic example. But it is also an example of innovation and a technological way of thinking. There are also a lot of young designers that are doing well in the region.

During your stay in Hong Kong you will give a lecture and workshop on Design Thinking. Can you tell a bit more about this?

Leonne: During the lecture we will talk about what Dutch design means and I'll give an introduction about my work. After that, we will talk specifically about Dutch bikes. We will explain why the Netherlands is so strong in design thinking and how this can be implemented in bike-related projects.

Daria: During the workshop we will introduce different tools of design thinking and how to implement this in bikes. We would like to discuss the problems when it comes to biking and infrastructure in China and Hong Kong. We want to see what solutions the students come up with, and give them the chance to build prototypes.



# How technology can help improve communications – What's in the near future in the industry?

For people who remember a time before cell phones and tablets, it can be impressive to consider how communication has changed. In less than twenty years, the development of technology like wireless Internet, text messaging and smartphones have significantly transformed the way people communicate with each other.

■ By Christiaan Stavorinus, Account Director Asia-Pacific, Global Accounts at PGI, www.PGI.com

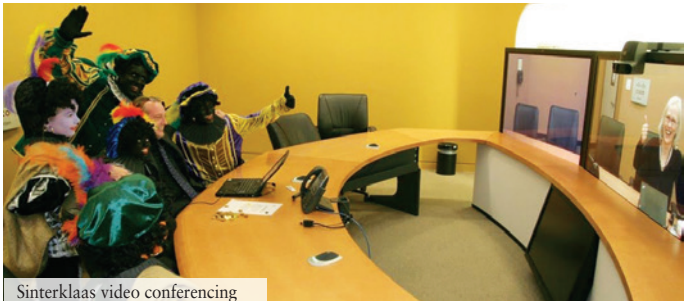


Whether or not you embrace the multitude of new communication devices on the market, there is no getting around the fact that the technology revolutionised the communication process. From the moment we wake up, hop on the MTR and move through a whole succession of work spaces, we keep interacting with people, media and digital resources. Being my own example, technology tremendously helps me to interact with colleagues, partners, customers and suppliers.

Globally, large enterprises are now making the link between collaboration technologies and specific business benefits. According to Dimension Data's global 2016 analysis, the three most vital objectives for collaboration technology are to improve personal productivity, boost sales and accelerate decision making. It doesn't matter what size company you are. Collaboration promises faster reactions, increased efficiency and greater competitiveness.

In particular, cloud-based tools are one of the ways in which new technology is helping to level the field in both SMB and large enterprise segments. By relying on a cloud provider, companies are able to spend their time on business critical and strategic initiatives to further opportunities for business growth. According to Frost and Sullivan, "The Asia-Pacific cloud computing services market is expected to register a CAGR of 26.9 percent during 2014–2021 to reach \$32.02 billion at the end of 2021."

Behind that growth lays the fact that collaboration is becoming progressively more important to businesses, and that technology increasingly matters for collaboration. We ask ourselves, how can



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we stay competitive, are we connecting our mobile knowledge workers with the right tools? How do we strike a balance of flexible working hours? Are we working smarter?

Although email remains a standard method of both internal and external communication, it is not necessarily suited for the volume of today's workload and overflowing email inboxes that lead to stress and missed communications are a common problem. Though more urgent and immediate, phone communications can be interruptive, and people will rarely phone unless something is very important or an instant answer is required. Fortunately, there are a number of other technological tools at our disposal which can help making collaboration more intuitive and efficient.

Here are three technologies that are helping businesses drive collaboration right now.

- Video Conferencing – Once limited to boardrooms and large meeting venues, its reach and accessibility have been greatly expanded by the cloud, and is now enabling any-to-any conferencing between traditional room-based systems, desktop video and mobile devices.
- Interactive white boards – Interactive white boards technology has been adopted by enterprises as a critical collaboration and productivity tool. It can help improve workflows by increasing the engagement in group meetings.
- Social Platforms for business – Collaboration apps and platforms allow businesses to share information, locate experts, coordinate projects, discuss best practises and build communication within and across an organisation. Many of these solutions now incorporate Facebook-like social media aspects, which makes them more attractive to employees.

Work has evolved and the tools we use for work should too. The methods that worked best ten or twenty years ago don't meet the needs of today with the speed that change happens, geographically diverse teams and shifting teams and roles. Collaboration technologies help to shape how work is performed and enable teamwork that leads to better results.



# Capturing a moment and communicating through images

Communication comes in many forms, so we spoke with DutchCham Magazine photographers Rinske Kuiper and Saskia Wesseling about communicating through images and why they enjoy capturing moments to share.

■ By Donna Mah



Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Roberto J. Moreno)  
A photo by someone else that I love. Robert's photo of Amsterdam.  
This to me depicts everything I love about Amsterdam: the freedom I feel when I bike, the tram that is so typical for the city, the late afternoon sun that makes everything look so beautiful. When I look at this photo I can almost smell the Dutch summer and the city I miss more than anything.

## Rinske Kuiper, Photographer, DutchCham Magazine

You have probably seen a number of Rinske Kuiper's photos already in various magazines. Her interest in photography grew from her childhood exposure to photo-taking and has never wavered. Rinske is always looking at the world through her photographer's eyes and shares some of her favourite photos with us.

It has been about seven years since Rinske arrived in Hong Kong. She decided to see more of the world after completing her MA in French Linguistics and European Studies in the Netherlands. She currently works for ERU, a producer of high quality spreadable cheese, as Sales Support Manager Asia. Her work takes her to many different countries in Asia, which are developing markets for the business. On her travels, Rinske always carries a camera to capture the "everyday" moments she witnesses.

"I want to show life the way I see it. It's usually unglamorous things that are just happening around us," she said.

### Taking photos since "forever"

Before digital cameras and smartphones became commonplace, film cameras were used to document moments in our lives. For those who needed a camera on-the-go or for events, disposable cameras could be easily bought for the job. It was on disposable cameras that Rinske took her first shots.

"I've been taking photos since, well, forever!" she told us.

As a child, Rinske and her family would take road trips, and to occupy the children during the hours spent on the road, her parents would give them activity packs, which included a disposable camera. It was from this early exposure to photography that Rinske's interest grew. As a teenager, she got her first "real" mirror camera for graduation from high school.

In her early days as a photographer on a trip to visit her brother in South Africa, she took about 100 photos while whale watching. Unfortunately, only about five of them turned out. This motivated her to hone her craft and develop her eye for shots. She now uses a full-frame Sony digital camera as well as a compact Sony NEX-5N, which she can just pop into her handbag and go.



Rinske Kuiper



Saskia Wesseling



Exercise, Hong Kong, (RS. Kuiper)  
This represents my Hong Kong: the city of endless amounts of concrete, exercise and sweat. I love the intensity in his eyes. He had just been running in the blazing Hong Kong sun, in his own world - listening to something through his headphones. It's the solitude in a densely populated area that touches me.

## A different perspective

Encouraged by her boyfriend, Robert, to do more with her photos, Rinske started putting her photos online. This helped her to focus on her work and really think about what she wanted to shoot.

"I developed an interest in daily life. It's what I see day in and day out and I enjoy capturing the images," she explained. "They are images of common situations we often see, but usually don't document. And I want to show life the way I see it."

For Rinske, it is authentic everyday happenings that she wants to capture. She enjoys looking at things differently. She documents what some may consider to be mundane, as they may happen on a regular basis, but it is documentary work that highlights what many may simply not "see".

"I am, in a way, always looking for a shot. So, I'm really looking and seeing what is going on around me. Many people today are lost in their devices and aren't really taking in what is going on," she added.

## Communicating through images

Today, everyone is a photographer with their mobile devices and post photos on social media all the time. It is a ubiquitous form of communication.

"While I don't think that photos are 'important' per se, they can help to convey a message and that's important. I did a photo-shoot with Sarie Moolenburg during which men told us about women who inspire them. We took simple black and white photos of the men holding a blackboard with a name on it. It was the message brought out that made these photos important," Rinske explained when asked about the importance of photos.

While not everyone sees the same thing when looking at a photo, Rinske enjoys being able to catch a moment not everyone sees. It doesn't always have a clear message, but the message may be different for everyone who views the image.

"Things that touch me or affect me ... I think they're important," she said.



Cambodian boy, Cambodia (RS. Kuiper)  
I had never experienced poverty the way I did in Cambodia. I have travelled to third world countries, but it never hit me as much as it did here. This boy was waiting for his mum who was doing chores near the temples of Angkor Wat. He had some clothes, but not much else. This photo represents the loneliness and poverty that I felt was so prominent in Cambodia. I know it's the projection of my Western perspective of what a future should look like, but it still hurt seeing this much poverty.

## Saskia Wesseling, Photographer, DutchCham Magazine

For over a decade Saskia Wesseling and her family have travelled the globe and lived in a number of different countries. Each move has meant some chaos, but in the chaos, Saskia looked for moments of calmness and beauty through her camera lens. Her work as a photographer means that she seeks to find the joy in ordinary things and to capture these moments in her not so ordinary life.

Saskia and her family have lived in Zürich, Cairo and Guangzhou before moving here, and Saskia describes Hong Kong for her as "the most creative hub of Asia", so she feels her creativity can fully be unleashed here.

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Finding unexpected beauty

“For my photos of Hong Kong, I capture images of unstruck beauty in unlikely places, glory in unrigged alleys. I love the feeling of being overwhelmed by turmoil but suddenly seeing a treasure between the cracks. I am not sure other people see the treasure so I bask in the joy of the discovery. Finding beauty where you expect it is one thing, but this treasure is all the more valuable because it’s so unexpected,” she explained.

Saskia said she “allows her senses to tune in to the raw rhythms and patterns she encounters in the city – art in the boldness of ordinary things”. Within the deterioration that often characterises Hong

Kong’s back streets, she has found inspiration in the unexpected order and what she refers to as the “textural treasure of urban rhythms”.

These urban treasures are the focus of her series +852 – *finding glamour in unglamorous places*.

Happiness in photos

From a young age, Saskia’s father instilled in her a love of photography. He took the time to very patiently explain the relationship between shutter speed, aperture and ISO to her. When she took photos, he had her write down all the numbers for each photo, and after the film was developed and printed, they would critique each photo to figure out what worked and what didn’t.

“My two daughters sometimes show some interest in photography, so I also try to explain how things work to them. It is during these moments that I fully appreciate my father’s patience with me,” Saskia added. “However, the most important thing he taught me was how happy photography could make me, and I am sure I can share this, without even trying hard, with Philine and June.”

After a number of years of taking photos, Saskia won a prestigious photography award sponsored by Stedelijk Museum and Parool newspaper in her late 20s. In the notes, the judges mentioned that they appreciated Saskia’s clear style and that she had her own voice. From that moment on, Saskia had found a companion for life. She would always have her trusted friend, her camera, wherever her travels took her.

Fisherman, Hong Kong, (RS Kuiper)

An image of the contrast we experience in Hong Kong. This man on his boat representing the older rougher city versus the chic and polished Hong Kong. During a T10 he takes care of his property, in rain boots and a Speedo. This is a scene one can see every day in Hong Kong, but if we don’t look carefully, we don’t see what’s happening.



Primary colours in the rain, Vietnam (RS. Kuiper)

No sadness in this photo, just daily life in Ho Chi Minh City, and the determination of the people. During the rainy season, every day around the same time in the afternoon, an outside shower takes place. No one really cares, the rain coats in various colours come out and people continue their journey.



Sayuki applying make-up to an apprentice geisha (maiko). (Saskia Wesseling)



‘Mother Geisha’ Sayuki is sitting at a counter with her pupil. Even this moment of rest shows the hierarchy. (Saskia Wesseling)



The blue door tells a story of life in a backstreet alley. The chair, the shoes, the hat and even the lighter placed in the door tells me a story of a very organised man living his life in the very unorganised alley ways. He finds his silence in the ordinariness of things. (Saskia Wesseling)

Telling stories

“In the Netherlands, I worked as a news journalist, and later, I made radio documentaries. I felt totally at home in my life and in my chosen genre. I thrived on telling stories. Since living outside of my home country, I feel I can tell stories better with my camera. As a foreigner but more then a tourist, I have an outsider’s openness to see, look, feel and wander with some insider knowledge of a place,” she explained.

Saskia’s photos have also recently been used to tell a story in National Geographic Traveller UK (November 2017 issue). Earlier this year, she was travelling in the far north of Yunnan and met a National Geographic journalist. They spent a couple of days together on a farm in rural China and the journalist contacted Saskia after the trip to ask if she would be willing to share her photos with her. Upon seeing the photos, she asked Saskia for permission to send them to her editor. “And the rest, as they say, is history ...” said Saskia. The magazine story features seven of Saskia’s photos.

For one of her series of photos, Saskia spent a week with an Australian geisha based in Japan.

To get the shots she wanted to communicate her story, she explained that there was a need to take the time to get to know her subject and gain her trust. Saskia needed to immerse herself in the situation. “Aside from that, one also needs a bit of luck to get the images that can capture the story,” she added.



These photos of the far north of Yunnan, China by Saskia Wesseling were featured in the November 2017 issue of National Geographic Traveller UK.

The text was written by the amazingly talented journalist Lee Cobaj, and I am proud to have my pictures featured alongside her article.

[LEFT] On the left a portrait of a gorgeous Tibetan in the outskirts of the ancient city Shangri-La, in front of an elaborately decorated purple door. On the right page I photographed a ceremony at the colourful Ganging Sumtseling Monastery.

[RIGHT] The photo on the left side shows a monk playing the Tibetan horn during a ceremony in the Gandeng Sumtseling Monastery. The picture on the right shows a tunnel of brass bells and prayer flags on the way up to the summit of the Shika Mountain.





The train of inhumanity (Saskia Wesseling)  
Myanmar, October 2017. The Rohingya crisis is the focus of worldwide news and still nobody seems capable of stopping the horror. A train pulls in, proudly sponsored by the European Union (EU). In frame and out of focus, the veiled woman breaks the circle of stars. In focus: locals with their backs to her. The EU sponsors trains and plays host to the Myanmar Armed Forces commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, yet the EU seems to have no influence in the Rohingya crisis and protection of human rights in this country. Where is the focus?

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“The only way to gain access to geisha life was to connect with the only foreign geisha. When I felt that she was letting me in, it was an incredibly exciting moment for me. I felt so privileged to be so close to someone and to be allowed to document her life,” she said.

Saskia showed her Hong Kong series photos November 23th and 24th and said that the message she is conveying is to “find beauty in chaos”. If you are interested in seeing her pictures you can send her an email (saskia@saskiawesseling.com) to make an appointment for a viewing.

**Always learning**

Saskia is a big fan of Newsha Tavakolian’s photographic work. Newsha’s work often depicts the lives of women, friends and neighbours in Iran, the evolution of gender-based restrictions and the role of women and showing contrasting images of the stereotypes found in Western media. In 2015, Newsha became a Magnum nominee and in 2017 became an associate. Magnum Photos is an international photographic cooperative owned by its photographer-members.

Saskia was able to participate in a master class run by Newsha earlier this year and spent seven days with Newsha and 10 fellow photographers from around the world. “This was the absolute highlight of my photography career!” Saskia said. In any profession, it is important to continue to learn from others and develop both professionally and personally. •

# New Dutch coalition government: their ambitious tax agenda

After record breaking formation negotiations, four political parties representing the smallest majority possible reached agreement on the formation of a new Dutch coalition government.



Hans Rothuizen

■ By Hans Rothuizen, Tax lawyer at Loyens & Loeff Hong Kong, Hans.rothuizen@loyensloeff.com, www.loyensloeff.com

The liberals of the VVD, the liberal democrats of D66, the Christian-Democrats of CDA and the Christian-Conservatives of the ChristenUnie managed to overcome their differences and published their agreement (*‘regeerakkoord’*), which they gave the motto “confidence in the future”. The plans are hugely ambitious, from experimenting with legalised growing of marihuana to meeting the greenhouse gas targets agreed upon in Paris, and from a large-scale income tax reform to mandatory attention for our national anthem Wilhelmus in elementary schools. Some of the eye-catching tax-related plans are summarised.

## Income tax – substantial reforms

Employment should be incentivised, according to the new Dutch government. Therefore, the Dutch personal income tax rules will be simplified and the rates will be lowered. While the current progressive tax rates go from 36.55% (for income up to EUR 19,000), to 40.8% (up to EUR 67,072) to 52% (applicable to income insofar it exceeds the latter amount), the new rates are 36.93% (income up to EUR 68,800) and 49.5% (income insofar it exceeds that amount). However, all allowances, such as personal allowances (*persoonsgebonden aftrekposten*), and mortgage interest deduction (*hypotheekrenteaftrek*) will only be deductible at the ‘standard’ rate of 36.93%. By contrast, currently allowances may be deducted ‘off the top’, i.e. reducing the part of income that is subject to the highest applicable rate.

The tax-free allowance for tax on net wealth (known as ‘box 3’) will increase from EUR 25,000 to EUR 30,000 (and EUR 60,000 for ‘tax partners’). Furthermore, the new government intends to look into better alternatives for the current tax base (currently, one is deemed to realise a 4% yield on one’s net wealth, although for years now this deemed percentage is considerably higher than the average actual return on investment).

Clearly, with these reduced taxes on income there was a need to offset with additional (tax) income from other sources, as in the end, the government should balance its books as well. Therefore, the ‘low’ VAT rate of 6% (generally applicable to groceries, hairdressers, et cetera as opposed to the ‘regular’ rate of 21% for luxury goods) will be increased to 9%. Also, people owning their home and having fully repaid their mortgage debt will have to pay tax based on the value of their house (some already call this a ‘penalty for having repaid the mortgage debt’). Finally, the regime for expats living in the Netherlands (the so-called ‘30% ruling’) will be limited in time to five years (currently eight).

## Is the Netherlands becoming even more investor-friendly?

The Dutch corporation tax rates (currently 20% for the initial bracket of EUR 200,000 and 25% for the excess) will be reduced to 16% and 21%. This seems corporation-friendly, but it is paid for by the same corporations: the possibility to carry forward tax losses is reduced from nine to six years, and the limitation of interest deductibility, prescribed by the European ‘anti tax avoidance directive’, will be implemented strictly. Also, to avoid that the corporation tax rate reduction leads to all entrepreneurs running their business through a corporate entity (rather than as a sole proprietorship (*eenmanszaak*)), the so-called ‘box 2’ rate for substantial shareholdings will increase from 25% to 28.5%.

Two potentially revolutionary changes in the field of corporate taxation are part of the new plans, albeit that they are described quite vaguely. First, it is stated that dividend tax will be abolished, but in the annex to the agreement, the government already partially pulls back: dividend tax should still be levied in case of abuse and on distributions to ‘low tax jurisdictions’, while no further explanation or background is given. The other major change is the introduction of a withholding tax on interest and royalties, if paid to “countries with very low taxes”. This latter withholding tax is motivated, be it very briefly: it is meant to counter ‘letterbox constructions’.

## What does all of this mean in practice?

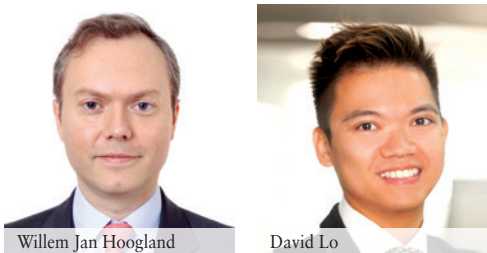
Many grand plans and lots of media coverage: this mix makes it almost impossible not to think about the consequences for your personal situation and for corporations to re-assess their current tax planning. We are receiving questions continuously, but as the new publicised government’s plans generally lack detail, more often than not it is impossible to already provide guidance with any degree of certainty. Moreover, these plans should still be translated into tax bills and be submitted to the Dutch parliament for approval – and keep in mind that the government has the smallest majority possible (while the *Eerste Kamer* elections are already scheduled for 27 May 2019).

As the Prime-Minister Mark Rutte keeps insisting on: every ordinary citizen’s position will improve. For the Dutch community in Hong Kong, the potential new tax on plane tickets may be more relevant, but then again, we may not qualify as merely ‘ordinary’ of course! •



# The Grant of Representation of an Estate

In a previous article we stated that having a basic Hong Kong Will in place is almost as important as having a proper health insurance. We assume, or at least hope, that many of you have now followed up on this advice, i.e. you have put your Hong Kong Will in place, but that you might wonder what the exact process would be upon death and whether or not such process would be without any legal challenges!



■ By Willem Jan Hoogland (taxservices@hkwtj-taxlaw.hk) and David Lo (david.lo@hkwtj-taxlaw.hk), HKWJ Tax Law & Partners Limited

## Probate

The executor(s) of a deceased person that has left a Hong Kong Will, would in such circumstances need to apply for a Grant of Representation from the Hong Kong High Court, broadly called Probate. Basically, this means that the Hong Kong Will needs to be proved as being valid and the Grant itself would be the evidence that the personal representative can ‘deal’ with the assets of the Estate in accordance with the Will. Although such application can be applied for by the personal representative him/herself, often he/she requires the assistance of a local solicitor, especially when international elements play a role, such as different nationalities/domiciles of the deceased person and/or when the Estate of the deceased person is situated in different countries.

Common documents that have to be submitted when applying for such Grant of Representation are: apart from a Hong Kong Identity Card and a Death Certificate, the applicant would need to file and submit to the High Court the original Hong Kong Will, an Affidavit, a Schedule of Assets and Liabilities & an accompanying Affidavit verifying this Schedule including the payment of a fee. The High Court will then consider the submitted documents and may raise requisitions.

## Challenges

Obviously, a Hong Kong Will needs to comply with certain formalities in order to be valid. In Hong Kong these rules are governed by the Wills Ordinance (Cap. 30) and the major formalities are related to the fact that the Hong Kong Will needs to be in writing, signed in a particular way and the presence of witnesses are required. If any of these formalities are in doubt, requisitions may be raised by the Court and other interested parties.

Next to that, the testator needs to have the capacity to make a Hong Kong Will. According to the Wills Ordinance the testator needs to be at least 18 years old, but exceptions exist for married minors. In addition, the testator must have the mental capacity, i.e. one has to be of sound disposing mind and have sufficient capacity to deal with and appreciate the various dispositions of property to which the testator is about to fix his/her signature. In case of any potential weaknesses, one of the witnesses to the Hong Kong Will should be a medical doctor that is able to assess

and state the capacity of the testator. It should be noted that apart from capacity, a testator should also have the knowledge of and give approval to the content of his/her own Hong Kong Will, especially when there are suspicious circumstances under which the Hong Kong Will was drafted and signed.

As stated above already, the probate process will become more complicated and therefore more open to legal challenges when the deceased had more than one nationality or domicile and/or had assets situated in different countries. The main issue would be, the law of succession, i.e. the succession laws of which country can be applied? Would the succession law of one country be preceding over the succession law of the other country or can both laws apply at the same time, but then to different assets of the deceased?

## Example

A person born in Hong Kong moves before the Handover to the Netherlands and acquires, amongst others, Dutch nationality. The person makes a Hong Kong Will in relation to real estate in Hong Kong, but has also assets in the Netherlands. As a result of the Hong Kong Will, the Hong Kong real estate assets will be distributed to the sons, whereas the daughters will be disinherited of these assets. The Hong Kong Will might be challenged in such case by the sisters (and the Probate put on hold by means of a so-called caveat) as they might want to claim that the Hong Kong Will never could have been made/is invalid as the testator is a Dutch citizen, and according to Dutch law, children cannot be disinherited. But, can it be argued that the testator, next to a Dutch nationality, also still had another nationality, such as the Chinese nationality, despite not having a Chinese/HK passport? Is the nationality as such even important to decide or not the Hong Kong Will could be made/is valid? To answer these questions, one would be required not to only look into the Nationality Law of the People’s Republic of China, but also into the international Convention on the Law applicable to Succession to the Estates of Deceased Persons.

## Conclusion

When drafting a Hong Kong Will always ask yourself whether the Will is likely to be challenged by any parties, including the court, and how such potential risks can be reduced to a minimum. •

# Media and communications

*“To fake or not to fake, that is the question” – Variation on William Shakespeare’s Macbeth.*



■ Column by Ralph Ybema, rybema@chinaltd.com.hk

The Wig & Pen Club was an institution in London’s intellectual circles. Steeped in history and traditions the British seem so remarkably adept at preserving, it was the primary platform for prominent lawyers and journalists to exchange views in private circles, away from prying eyes. Quite similar, one would imagine, to the Royal Geographic Society for scientists of repute.

Alas, contrary to the RGS, the Wig & Pen has had to close its Fleet Street doors a number of years back. Perhaps because of this, the then president of the Hong Kong Law Society sought to keep alive the tradition and invited me to an evening of the Wig & Pen Club, Hong Kong branch.

The event was hosted at (where else?) the Foreign Correspondents’ Club and featured two presentations. A lawyer and a journalist each spoke on a set topic, ostensibly as a competition. Yet it quickly transpired that the true objective was not to win the debate, but for each speaker to hurl as much invective and ridicule at the other’s profession as possible in the allotted time. All in good British “old boy” tradition of course, i.e. whilst staying within the boundaries of civilised conversation.

For example, the journalist could argue that the propensity for judges to use flowery language and court stenographers is a collective cover-up for lack of basic writing skills. The lawyer would then retort that surely, journalists use recording devices for their interviews as their average alcohol intake makes it impossible ever to recall what was actually said.

In their professional capacity, lawyers keep journalists at arms’ length. Big ticket deals are usually made public only when laws or stock exchange rules leave no other option. Similarly, journalists will try to keep the lawyers away from their work product for as long as their superiors agree to publish without legal

review. Yet, the legal and journalistic professions have a lot in common.

To wit, both see a lot more written text than they likely care for. Both work under tight deadlines, to deliver virtually error-free work product. Most pertinently though, both have a professional duty to seek the truth and in doing so, to verify their information from multiple sources.

Every lawyer worth his salt knows that the biggest danger is his own client not telling him the whole story. Confronted with the missing pieces at the wrong moment has the potential to kill any case or deal instantly. Likewise, every journalist knows that casting information in its proper context is not just an important skill, at times the difference is a matter of life and death.

Conversely, we all despise ambulance chasers, paparazzi and purveyors of gutter journalism and “fake news”. I think it is safe to say our sense of justice is offended by the unbridled pursuit of dollars over truth. Someone like Donald Trump should know – but wait! Wasn’t he the one railing against fake news? Well yes, but news is not fake just because “The Donald” says it is so ...

At times, Trump must wish he were a rugby referee. As the “sole judge of law and fact”, the ref determines what fake news (yes, even rugby players try to milk the system!) is. Not much benefit in arguing, and that is precisely the point. The ref’s role is not to debate what is true, but to manage the game in a way players don’t get hurt. Which is a lot harder than in, say, badminton!

And therein lies the beauty of the Wig & Pen concept: lawyers and journalists know full well that all the research, multiple sources and factual evidence do not guarantee 100% accuracy. Fake news is everywhere, but the point is not the debate about who is right or wrong. It is to find a way to ensure it does not hurt your case, deal or story, and still achieve your objectives. •





Rogier Hekking  
Consulate General of  
the Kingdom of  
the Netherlands  
in Hong Kong

# Passing the pen

**Who am I:** Rogier Hekking. I arrived in Hong Kong in October to work as Deputy Consul General for the Netherlands.

**My professional background is:** I have worked for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the last ten years, ever since graduating from the Sinology Department of Leiden University. I have had postings in Beijing and Tokyo, and most recently covered the EU's neighbourhood policy in The Hague.

**I moved to Hong Kong because ...** I was lucky enough to have my job application accepted. Hong Kong, with its unique history has always been a crossing point between East and West, which fascinates me. It is also a gateway to China and, in that sense, provides for unique possibilities for Dutch businesses and entrepreneurs to expand their market. At the Dutch Consulate, our goal is to support Dutch businesses here, offer consular services, as well as to constantly work on the overall image of the Netherlands in Hong Kong. I am excited to take part in that mission. Besides all that, Hong Kong is a very vibrant global centre. There are worse places in the world to live!

**My most remarkable work story is:** Being in Hong Kong and working at our Consulate, I am constantly reminded of the first real job I had, as a diplomat in Beijing, and all the ministerial delegations that passed through during and after the Olympic games. As a Mandarin speaker, every now and then I was asked to step in to do interpretation work, whenever my skilled and experienced colleague was not available. Being a translator at such high-level meetings was always nerve-racking, but in the end a very satisfactory experience.

**I find most of my business contacts through:** Networking and bringing people together is an important skill for all people working in diplomacy. Already in my first week in Hong Kong, I noticed that there is no shortage of networking events here. I intend to make full use of these. Apart from that, I reach out to a lot of people on Facebook.

**25 years ago I was ...** I was a typical 10-year old Dutch kid, growing up in Eindhoven, just one year away from being sent off to an international summer camp in Mexico. There, I got a taste of what it is like to be surrounded by foreign cultures, liked it, and never looked back.

**One day I will be:** Leaving Hong Kong on my next adventure and hopefully looking back with satisfaction on my time spent here. •

# Media & Communications

Some time ago I was privileged to hear from a professor about how to define ‘communication’. He told me, “The mutual exchange of information resulting that afterwards neither party understands what has been said”.

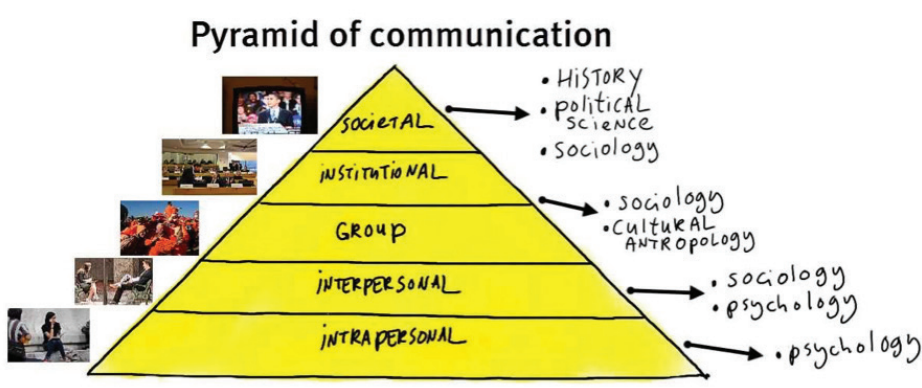
■ By Bernard F. Scheffens, CEO, WSS Asia Ltd.



Who does not know of examples of emails that garnered reactions that were not intended by the sender? Was it the clumsy way of writing of the author, or was there a certain missing capability at the receiving end? Or the well-known closing of a meeting: “Is it clear to everyone?”, when after the meeting it becomes clear, it wasn’t the case ... It demonstrates that we are dealing with one of the most difficult topics in life, to precisely tell others what we mean and for others to understand.

what it means for them, in their own environment, so to speak.

For us, dealing with these change programmes all the time, we estimate the success of the efforts to clean up Hong Kong, to have a balanced approach to waste management where cleaning up landfills, improving recycling and use waste-to-energy installations to generate electricity, to mention a few, is to tackle the enormous amount of food (organic) waste. The critical factor in all this for 70 or more percent, is communication.



While it is difficult to figure out which technology is the best, the big challenge to motivate all stakeholders, ie which companies, in the waste management process. That alone requires a decent piece of communication.

A lot has already been done here. Publications, TV commercials, YouTube videos, statements from key public officials and corporate board members etc, but there are still questions to be answered. Also a continuous stream of communication needs to be in place for the next few crucial years to a targeted

audience, to stakeholders etc.

In the ‘Go Green’ world, this is not different. We are dealing with an integrated change of behaviour, where i.e. psychology, sociology, economics, finance, technology is a part of an integrated message about changing behaviour, one of the most difficult things in life.

Let us not forget the ‘listening’ side of communications. Broadcasting the message is one thing, but listening is the really important part. To understand where the issues are, where the concerns are, how to address them and building bridges within the community all have a role to play.

So, how do we tackle this? First, we need to have a strategy for what we want to achieve and gain community support with the help of media relations. Second, apart from the technology to be used, a communications strategy is needed to transfer the message to the citizens and companies that must participate. Thirdly, there must be a positive element in the message to enhance understanding and buy-in.

From a Go Green perspective, we have no choice. The world is preparing to build a circular economy by 2050. Whilst at the highest level there may be a clear direction, it needs those lower down to support any initiatives to get things done. We have to be clear about what we want, what we need, how to do it. We still have a long way to go. There is still some time, but not much, in terms of change of behaviour.

In the last few years, we have found that in Hong Kong there is sufficient knowledge on which technology would be preferred. But the technology alone will not work if people don’t accept it and will not use it. The implementation needs a carefully designed communications programme.

We all have a responsibility. Not only Government. Not only Parliament. Not only Green NGO’s. Not only companies. All of us. Start to look around and see what you can do and find out what you can do better. We are here to help! Competition all over the world has started to become the best in class. Communicating via Twitter-like media is perhaps not the best way to lead, as before you know it, misinterpretation is rampant.

A list of what you want to achieve must be prepared including, how are you going to get there, what kind of means do you need, how will you involve people to change their way of living, as change is not always a popular subject. I would recommend a ‘tailored’ message as we have different parties in Hong Kong generating waste, in different circumstances. People want to know

Becoming circular creates opportunities-environmental-and business-wise ... perhaps to be discussed in another Go Green article. •





# Haven't yet heard about OnTheList?

OnTheList has been changing the consumer shopping experience since its establishment in January 2016. Hosting weekly flash sales, OnTheList works with a wide range of brands, from apparel to lifestyle and wines. OnTheList members are able to enjoy extremely exclusive discounts up to 90% off, making them truly the best deals in town!



■ By Delphine Lefay, Co-Founder of OnTheList

### The Idea

Co-founded by Delphine Lefay and Diego Dultzin Lacoste, they identified an extremely competitive retail model not yet existing in Hong Kong. Delphine Lefay explains: “I was working in the retail industry and looking for a third-party supplier to clear my old inventory that was taking up valuable warehouse space. I was aware of such suppliers in France, but in Hong Kong I couldn't find a suitable solution. This led me to think that I could apply my brand knowledge and connections to create a business model that would appeal to both brands and consumers. We act as the middleman between members looking for affordable luxury lifestyle products and brands that are looking to sell off past season items.”

### The Start

Starting out in 2016, OnTheList scoured the city for convenient venues and warehouse shell spaces to host all-day pop up shopping events. Loyal OnTheList members would follow OnTheList to its surprise location, either in Central or Causeway Bay, just to enjoy the exclusive prices. Just over a year later, in March 2017, OnTheList found a permanent home, planting its roots right in the heart of Central at 6 Duddell Street. With 7,000 sq ft of space, OnTheList continues to work with premium brands to host flash sales.

### What keeps OnTheList members coming?

According to Diego Dultzin Lacoste, “With our showroom, we will continue to follow our business model of focusing the consumer's mind to purchase within a four-day time frame. Once the product has gone, it's gone. That is the beauty of the business and why it is successful; we tap into the panic purchase by providing products at incredibly attractive prices, which encourages the impulse buy.”

### How do we communicate with members?

OnTheList is a members-only flash sale where interested shoppers just simply need to register their details to sign up. Once they have signed up, they will be assigned a unique member ID and receive exclusive email invitations to all future events.

In addition to sending out weekly emails, social media platforms have also played a vital role in the growth of OnTheList. Since our events only last between 4 to 5 days, social media communication is an efficient and effective tool used to create real-time awareness,

while also extending the information to a wider audience in a short period of time.

OnTheList uses Facebook and Instagram as its primary social media platforms, both having their distinct strengths and serving different purposes. OnTheList's Facebook page is essential for communicating flash sale events. Not only does the platform have a wide variety of audiences ranging from age 18 to 65, many users also access Facebook daily to share information as well as get updates, making it the perfect platform to communicate new happenings. With the many new features that Facebook now offers, it makes it extremely effective to measure brand reach and consumer behaviour.

Through Instagram, OnTheList curates its brand personality showcasing a series of lifestyle and fashion related content. With an increasing number of people now turning to Instagram to get a better understanding of a brand's positioning and presence, OnTheList leverages this to engage audience members in a more fun and refreshing way – showcasing brand highlights and behind-the-scene sneak peeks, ultimately increasing brand and consumer resonance.

### Conclusion

Ultimately, as a pioneering concept in Hong Kong, OnTheList strives to solidify its presence in the retail industry. With a strong understanding of shopping behaviour in Hong Kong, it aims to establish itself as Hong Kong's go to destination for the ultimate flash sale experience, which is reflected by its exponential growth of 100,000 OnTheList members since inception. •

*With the many new features that Facebook now offers, it makes it extremely effective to measure brand reach and consumer behaviour.*

# New beginnings

If there is one thing that can be said about the Dutch, it is that they like to work together to get things done. This is also the case in Hong Kong. Besides the Dutch Chamber there is another association at work in this city. It's members work hard to keep Dutch culture alive for all those that reside here for a short or longer period of time.



■ By Inge Kruithof, Dutch Association, [www.nedverhk.com](http://www.nedverhk.com), [www.facebook.com/NedVerHK](https://www.facebook.com/NedVerHK)



To keep Dutch culture alive, the Dutch Association in Hong Kong organises family events, typical Dutch events like Sinterklaas and the Kings' Games, and is also present at the annual Dutch Remembrance Day (Liberation Day) on May 4th.

Since this past summer, there have been some changes in the board of the Dutch Association. There is a new chairwoman, and also a new chief editor of Dutch quarterly magazine Hollandse Nieuwe. Both women represent a change in the Dutch community. In the last 10 -20 years or so, a lot of Dutch people in Hong Kong were expats. This group is steadily growing smaller, as big Dutch companies are taking a second look at the number of expatriated workers needed overseas. Now we see that the new Dutchies arriving in Hong Kong are the young, adventurous people who want to start a new life in this city. The Dutch community is returning to the old days, as it were!

New board members Angela and Zuba, friends as well as neighbours, are ready for their Hong Kong adventure. Both moved to Hong Kong with their husbands, who are both aircraft pilots for Hong Kong Express. Unlike many expat families, they live close to the airport in Tung Chung, Lantau Island. Both ladies are also looking forward to developing their own careers. How does one make this happen?

For Angela, this has started already. She teaches children Dutch language and culture at the Dutch school, LanguageOne. She came upon this job at one of the Dutch Association's events: the coffee morning at the Consul General's residence. Here she met the manager of LanguageOne who was looking for new teachers. And that's exactly one of the main purposes of the Dutch Association; organising activities and events to give its members an opportunity to create a network.

*The Dutch community is returning to the old days, as it were!*



Zuba graduated earlier this year from the Delft University of Technology at the faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment and is looking to pursue a career in real estate management and development. She started networking through a social network meeting organised by the Dutch Chamber.

On one hand, the Dutch Association, the Dutch Chamber and even the Dutch Consulate caters to different groups of people and represents different interests. On the other hand, it would be nice to work together wherever it brings the community together, whenever it is cost efficient or where we may present our community and our country in a stronger way.

In this light, we are proud of the elections event all three parties co-hosted earlier this year. We also are very happy to have started the new ‘season’ with the joint Welcome Back Party. We are looking forward to more collaborations and events in the times to come!

We hope to see many new faces at the Dutch Association’s events this year. If you ever feel you have news to share with the Dutch community, want to write an article for the *Hollandse Nieuwe*, or you want to advertise a Dutch-related event, please let us know: anything Dutch we’d like to hear about! Because in the end, word of mouth is still the best way of connecting ...

Because in the end, word of mouth is still the best way of connecting ...



Searching for Easter eggs.

# The Magic of Mahjong

Recently, in the middle of a late evening conversation at the bar in Café Gray Deluxe with an acquaintance, who is a young local professor of international law, suddenly looked aghast when he realised how late it was. I was reminded of Cinderella when he stated he had to be somewhere before midnight. The look in his eyes and the expression on his face made me realise that something serious was going on, and that a joke would have been very misplaced.



By Daniel de Blocq van Scheltinga, Managing Director Polarwide Limited

He explained that he had to rush off to a Mahjong parlour nearby to pay off his debts from the previous evening. I enquired as to how much his debt was, and was taken aback when told it was HKD 27,000. When I told him that I did not know how to play Mahjong and had never seen a Mahjong parlour, he asked me if I wanted to come along and see the inside of one. Of course, my curiosity got the better of me despite the late hour, and I said yes!

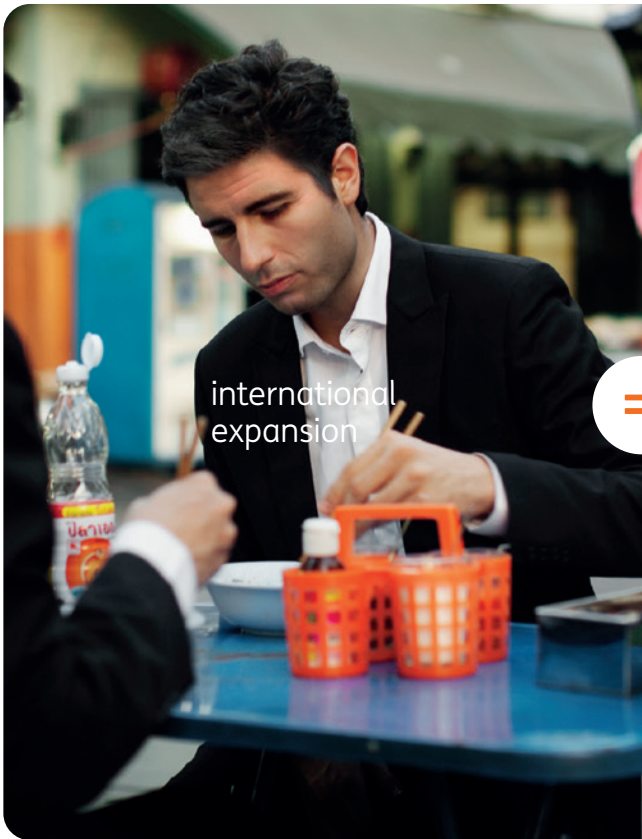
As we walked to the parlour in Wanchai, I was informed that many of the illegal Mahjong parlours were run by the triads, and that they took 15% of all winnings. This gambling was clearly illegal in Hong Kong, where horse racing betting is the only legal form of “gambling” allowed.

The first things that assault the senses when entering the parlour is the noise and the bright lights. With about sixty fully-occupied tables with four players per table, the loud talking, together with the collective noise of the Mahjong tiles hitting the table and each other, created quite a din.

Clearly the place was not used to having a *gweilo* enter the room, as I felt the 240 pairs of eyes all looking at me! It was interesting to note the mix of ages playing, from 30 to 70, and mostly men. The other thing that struck me were the big piles of cash lying on the table near the cashiers. Even stranger were the large bills of 500 and 1000 dollars thumbtacked on the wall behind the cashier: perhaps these were the tips for the evening. The outstanding debt was soon paid, and we quickly left to traverse the quiet evening streets again. A police car was parked outside. My curiosity about Mahjong was born.

The exact origins of Mahjong, sometimes referred to as Chinese Dominos are unknown. It is commonly accepted that it originated in China in the Qing dynasty, but that doesn’t actually tell one much, viewing the length of this dynasty (1644–1912). The word Mahjong may have come from *ma-tsiang* meaning sparrow, in fact in Chinese, the game was originally called 麻雀 meaning sparrow. This possible etymological connection has led to the unproven myth that Confucius invented the game, as he loved birds and especially sparrows. Another factor often cited is that the three dragon tiles used in the game, agree exactly with Confucius’ mentioning of the three noble virtues. These virtues are sincerity, filial piety and

This has now evolved, with the game being viewed as a national cultural treasure and a part of Hong Kong’s heritage.



international expansion



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Passport to Hong Kong

benevolence. If this is correct, then the game was invented well before the Qing dynasty, as Confucius lived from 551 BC to 479 BC. Whatever its origins, it is certainly a strong part of Hong Kong culture. For me the “clack clack” sounds of the tiles being shuffled and stacked (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzcmCvOM2KY>) is just as much a sound forever associated with Hong Kong, as the “beep beep beep beep” of the MTR doors closing, or the RTHK news jingle. In parts of Hong Kong Island like Wanchai one hears it less often than before, but in Sai Ying Pun, Kennedy Town and Ap Lei Chau I still regularly hear Mahjong being played. In the New Territories it is much more common and still part of their way of life.

Mahjong used to be viewed, even until the 1970’s as a working-class game. In ancient China, the educated classes played Chinese Chess which was regarded as a more intelligent form of entertainment, since they could admire their opponent’s tactics and appreciate their strategy.

In Hong Kong of the 1960s and 1970s, Western activities were still regarded as prestigious, particularly among educated people. They therefore preferred to play bridge to show their social status. Mahjong, during that period, was popular among the working classes of Hong Kong. This has now evolved, with the game being viewed as a national cultural treasure and a part of Hong Kong’s heritage.

Interestingly, Mao Zedong banned the game in China during the Cultural Revolution, and this ban on Mahjong was only lifted in 1985 (although gambling is still prohibited). This is despite Mao having stated that, “China has made three tremendous contributions and national treasures to the world. The first is Chinese traditional medicine; the second is the novel Dream of the Red Chamber by Cao Xueqin; and last, but not the least, is the game of Mahjong”. Under Xi Jinping’s anti-corruption drive there has also recently been a movement against government officials playing Mahjong.

FrieslandCampina (Hong Kong) Limited

Nourishing the lives of Hong Kong people across all ages

FrieslandCampina (Hong Kong) Limited (FCHK), a subsidiary of Royal FrieslandCampina, has maintained a long presence in Hong Kong since 1938, providing a full range of high quality and nutritious dairy products, including FRISO infant and toddler milk formula, DUTCH LADY dairy based beverages, OPTIMEL adult nutrition formula and dairy products including BLACK&WHITE and LONGEVITY. For nearly eight decades, FCHK has remained committed to nourishing the lives of local citizens across the whole life span.

*The key is that to play Mahjong one must have a certain mental dexterity, being able to calculate points and remember which tiles have already been played, coupled with the very important social interaction the game brings, is beneficial for one’s mental health.*

Soon after my visit to the parlour I read an interesting article in the Singaporean press entitled “Mahjong may be Hong Kong’s elixir of life”. Mahjong, the article explained, is possibly one of the reasons that the Hong Kong people are the longest living in the world, having surpassed the Japanese, with the average ages being 81 for men and 87 for women. The key is that to play Mahjong one must have a certain mental dexterity, being able to calculate points and remember which tiles have already been played, coupled with the very important social interaction the game brings, is beneficial for one’s mental health. The elderly often play Mahjong with their friends several times a week. And a game can last for hours and hours on end.

Mahjong is a game played with four (sometimes three) players and a set of 144 tiles based on various Chinese characters and symbols on a minimum of 80 cm x 80 cm sized table. There are different regional versions of the game, but usually each player begins by receiving 13 tiles. In turn, players draw and discard tiles until they complete a winning hand using the 14th drawn tile to form 4 melds (or sets) and a pair (the eyes). The game combines skill, memory and of course, luck.

There are certain ways to improve one’s luck, according to old superstitions. One belief is that wearing red underwear will improve one’s chances of winning. How this works if all four players are wearing red underwear is unclear. Others will stow away all books near the game (the word “book” in Chinese is phonetically similar to the word “lose”), get up for a change of scenery during a losing streak to turn the tides, or never touch players on the shoulder while they play for fear of disturbing their fortunes.

Mahjong is not only part of the local culture, it is widely viewed as much more than just a game. Playing Mahjong with someone is said to be a way of discovering a person’s true character. Once players sit down at the Mahjong table, their personalities become more apparent by the way they play. Chinese describe this as *paai bun*, or ethics of Mahjong. Hence, there is an old Chinese tradition of mothers inviting prospective sons-in-law to play Mahjong so they can discover their personality, and see what they are really are like. The suitors were strongly advised to let the prospective mother-in-law win, every time!

There is a saying in Chinese, “Where there are Chinese, there is Mahjong”. As it is popular in all parts of Hong Kong society, originally comes from the Mainland, and is said to reveal one’s real personality, perhaps the Chief Executive should consider a regular Mahjong session with members of the Legislative Council. It would likely be beneficial for the future of Hong Kong! •

Well Suited

Noni Ware, Fashion Director of Quintessentially and former retail editor of British Vogue and Harper’s Bazaar, unveiled the latest key trends on how to successfully dress for business. Menswear tips were provided by Suitsupply – the globe-spanning European brand renowned for its focus on expertly crafted tailoring.  
Wednesday 13 September | Suitsupply



E-Commerce Seminar: How to reach the Chinese consumer online

During this seminar our expert panel, consisting of Arno Nieuwland (e-Commerce Hong Kong), Boudewijn Feith (Esprit), John Skalin (Sino Etail) and Nathan Jansen (1421 Consulting), talked about how Chinese consumers can be reached effectively through e-commerce.  
Thursday 19 October | Intertrust



F, B & A Platform – from farm to plate

During this event we heard about the latest industry-related economic trends in Hong Kong and China from Rabobank’s Dirk Jan Kennis, global strategist, Rabobank International’s Food & Agribusiness Research and Advisory’s (FAR) Farm Inputs team. Martin Rijk organised his famous Dutch oyster tasting at this event.  
Thursday 2 November | Residence of the Dutch Consul General





NEW MEMBERS LISTINGS

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TRADE SHOW CALENDAR

IN THE NETHERLANDS

**Data & Cloud Expo**  
Location: Jaarbeurs Utrecht  
Date: 1-2 November 2017  
Organiser: Jaarbeurs Utrecht  
Email: myexpo@jaarbeurs.nl  
Website: www.dncexpo.nl

**Smart Water Management Symposium**  
Location: Amsterdam RAI  
Date: 2 November 2017  
Organiser: Water Research Foundation  
Email: info@smartwatermanagement.org  
Website: https://sw4eu.com/symposium

**Marine Equipment Trade Show**  
Location: Amsterdam RAI  
Date: 14-16 November 2017  
Organiser: Metstrade  
Email: registration@rai.nl  
Website: www.metstrade.com

**The Stainless Steel World Exhibition & Conference 2017**  
Location: MECC Maastricht  
Date: 28-30 November 2017  
Organiser: Stainless Steel World  
Email: info.zutphrn@kci-world.com  
Website: www.stainless-steel-world.net

**Logistica 2017**  
Location: Jaarbeurs Utrecht  
Date: 28-30 November 2017  
Organiser: Jaarbeur BV  
Email: service@jaarbeurs.nl  
Website: www.logistica-online.nl/nl-NL/Exposant.aspx

TRADE ENQUIRIES

These trade enquiries were received by the Economic Section of the Consulate-General of the Netherlands in Hong Kong. Interested parties may approach the companies directly or contact Betty Liu, Senior Commercial Officer on phone 852 2599 9202 or by fax to 852 2868 5388 or via email economic.section@netherlands-cg.org.hk.

Dutch importers wanted

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**Company:** Stewart Enterprises Ltd  
**Phone:** 852 2865 5901  
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JOB SEEKER

Joyce Lee

I am a senior sourcing, merchandising, supply chain and a quality assurance professional with extensive years of international experiences in multiple categories included jewelry and watches, fashion accessories, garments, homeware, eyewear, footwear, travel retail, baby accessories, premium and gift. Sourcing areas cover China and South-East Asia. Experienced in retail markets included DFS located at the airports, cruise ships, hotel resorts, global chain stores and company's online stores.

Well experienced in start-up business and running overseas buying offices in H.K., managing office operation included recruitment and budgeting. Also, experienced working on B to B e-commerce platform for business development. Solid experienced in managing multi-cultural team, and working well with overseas counterparts, frequent communicating with overseas headquarters.

I think out of the box, proactive and constantly create new business opportunities for the companies I work for. I develop new markets, investigate new product categories/ ideas by adopting appropriate sourcing strategies for achieving the goals.

I am currently looking for a new opportunity in overseas buying offices/retail brand companies/travel retail business regarding with supply chain, sourcing, buying and merchandising.

Thank you!  
Joyce

Go to the Job Seekers page at [www.dutchchamber.hk](http://www.dutchchamber.hk) to find Joyce's CV.

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DUTCHCHAM MEMBERSHIP

The Dutch Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong offers advice and assistance to its members. Areas where we can help include:

- Connectivity**
- ♦ Access to local government and opportunity to give feedback through the International Business Committee
  - ♦ Access to events of the European Chamber of Commerce & members only Platforms & Committees
  - ♦ Active assistance in getting your business set up and getting you connected

- Publicity**
- ♦ Free exposure in the DutchCham magazine and our Membership Guide & Setting Up a Business in HK Guide
  - ♦ Speaking opportunities at Dutch Chamber or other Chambers' events
  - ♦ Free placement of job advertisements

- Networking**
- ♦ Exclusive lunch at the Residence of the Dutch Consul General
  - ♦ Monthly MUNCH (Mingle & Lunch)
  - ♦ Annual Golf Tournament sponsored by ABN AMRO
  - ♦ Corporate cocktails organised by the Chamber

- And more ...**
- ♦ Members price for all events (average discount close to 50%)
  - ♦ 10% off on advertisements in all DutchCham publications

MEMBERSHIP & ANNUAL FEES

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
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| • SME Member         | HK\$ 3,500  |
| • Associate Member   | HK\$ 3,500  |
| • Young Professional | HK\$ 750    |
| • Start-up Member    | HK\$ 1,750  |
| • Overseas Member    | HK\$ 2,500  |

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