

THiNK BIG

INNOVATE 2011

A TECHNOLOGY & ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM

“Innovation... Inspiring and Driving Change”

October 20, 2011 at the Empire Hotel & Country Club

Keynote Address

By Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar, Minister of Communications, Brunei Darussalam



On the Role of ICT in the New Economy

- The role of ICT, in the new economy, was created so that people would want it, need it and have to have it.
- How is ICT aligned with our vision of 2035?

The 3 visions of 2035:

- recognised for accomplishments of well educated and highly-skilled people
- recognised for the quality of life
- a dynamic and sustainable economy

- We want ICT to be the driver of the new economy. If we look at Brunei, this is what we lack, talent. We can achieve this by building a pool of localized talent, in this there are 2 ways: the 'Grass-Root approach' and through the Educational System. It is a process that we will continue to learn and discover as we go along.
- We have an international standard, the Network Readiness Index, which "measures the propensity for countries to exploit the opportunities offered by information and communications technology." This index is divided into 3 main categories: usage of ICT (among the government, business and individual), environment for ICT in the country and the readiness of the community for ICT; in this index, the smaller the scale, the better for the country.
- For Brunei, the business usage of ICT, in terms of achievement, is the lowest in comparison to government and individual usage. And it is the business usage that we are working to push. For the environment, we have not achieved very much in the political and regulatory sense. And the business and individual readiness of the country is low. Those are the two that we want to work on.
- I may not be tech savvy but, I cannot escape it. We cannot escape the presence of ICT, but to simply be involved. I remember in 1995 we started the internet network in UBD, with a fund of BND180 00 from the university research fund. Back then, we were happy charging people BND5.50 for a 1min call to UK. And today, we've got Viber and Skype where calls are completely free.
- If you ask me what Steve Jobs did for me, they are all simple things, such as allowing me to listen to music, to watch movies and more. They are all simple propositions; however it takes someone like him to build it in such a way that we all desire it.
- Our mission in the Ministry of Communications is to strive for: a sophisticated society, a competitive nation and an excellence in communication. We want to allow for businesses to be run efficiently within a society that is dynamic, creative, innovative and intelligent. We hope people will go through their lives with fulfillment and most importantly preserving the precious assets that we have, which are material goods, time, finance and the environment. As for a competitive nation, we work towards making Brunei a destination of choice for people to come, and live, and to do business.
- An excellence in communication and transportation is what we strive for. We are hoping to build our broadband with our 2 main carriers: DST and TelBru.

Session One: The Big Picture: Igniting the Fires of Entrepreneurship



How do you commercialise an idea into a business? What are the key drivers for success? How can a small country like Brunei foster an environment for innovation effectively?

Address by **Mr Derek Sivers**, Founder, CDBABY, USA

Followed by an open forum discussion with **Mr Javed Ahmad**, Managing Director, Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam Berhad

Moderated by **Mr Keeran Janin**, Founder, MeSixty Sdn Bhd

Derek began his talk by pointing out that people in Silicon Valley live their daily lives aiming for the bigger picture and a long term focus. In an economic downturn, entrepreneurship would flourish as people flock to the safety of actually starting their own company, as you would never be fired if you were the boss of your business.

Derek added that it is important to realize that you are a fish in water, and to try and update and understand your own cultural assumptions; culture is defined as the beliefs and behaviors of the group. As for improvements, we do not have to change our culture and our country, but only our neighborhood, because that is where it all begins. This neighborhood can be made up of a very small group of people that share a very empowering mindset, which embraces risks and brags about their failures. That is all you need.

Open Forum Discussion:

Some of the key highlights in the open forum discussion include:

Keeran: Say in Brunei, we have a hundred people really keen on starting up their own type of Silicon Valley environment. In terms of market, is that enough for a bank to make the changes to make plans more conducive towards local entrepreneurs?

Javed: When we look at entrepreneurship, frankly, banks are the wrong group to talk about it. It's more about the capital received from family and friends and individuals that believe in your idea, whom are also prepared to give you the money. In Brunei, you do not need hundreds of ideas but just a few. You just have to make sure that your business model works, and within Brunei we have the advantage of our small population size, which is a competitive advantage. It is an ideal market environment to test a product and its service. In the pharmaceutical industries, the real success stories are coming from smaller companies and individuals that are hungry to make a difference.

Audience: How ready is Brunei to import the Silicon Valley culture?

Javed: There are signs of it existing in Brunei. It does not have to be a whole set change, as Derek mentioned, US is not Silicon Valley, and Silicon Valley is not the US. Similarly, there would be some individuals who really want to make a difference, who want to start something new and have the ability to. The young individuals I see, at the icentre and so on, are very much a reflection of what is possible within Brunei. These are simply individuals who are passionate and are prepared to try things out.

Keeran: Taking that step, starting a movement and becoming role models. In a country like Brunei, where everybody knows everyone, if one person were to make that huge success, could that then be an influence to the rest of the people to want to do the same thing?

Derek: Role models mean everything. You've got an advantage with Brunei's tight and social community. Proximity makes a huge impact, and it changes your whole mindset and your internal feelings of what you are capable of. It affects how big your dreams are and how high you aim for.

Audience: Red-tape and bureaucracy in Brunei.

Javed: This is an issue that a lot of countries face. One thing that is important is the determination to succeed despite of all the challenges. A lot of it is based on our mindset on how we deal with the situations.

Keeran: When I went to Silicon Valley, one of the things that I noticed was that they were very willing to share their ideas, inside and out, their business models; I could have gone and stolen their ideas. They mentioned that if I could take their ideas and do something better with them, that would be better for everyone in the long run. Whereas, in this region, it is the complete opposite, people are very unwilling to share their ideas until they launch their business. How could you get people to start sharing more, especially in an Asian culture?

Derek: You have to realize that there is nothing to be scared of. However, people have to realize it themselves and they cannot be forced into it. It also comes from that feeling of having enough going on in your life at a point in time. It's the difference between the survivalism mentality versus being at a comfortable level in life. A level where telling someone your idea and having them take it doesn't mean that you aren't going to make next month's rent. It's almost like a status; the more you share the higher your status. Just as the number of cars you have determines your wealth; your status, or the part of town in which you live in determines something about your name in society; your status.

Keeran: Is BIBD prepared to develop and sponsor future 'Silicon Valley' Bruneians if the right person comes along, and, to what extent would BIBD be willing to go with this? On the first level, we have the iCentre which has less than 2 dozen start-up companies. At this stage today, is there any support coming from BIBD?

Javed: An idea was signed off between DST and iCentre about 2 days ago. This idea involves the creation of the critical mass for a new business so that the overall funds and opportunities would increase. Together with that, you have the different know-how to come up with better collective ideas to support the business.

I think that it is an area I feel very comfortable providing support for. This is an idea that has just come up internally at BIBD and so we still need the time to explore and see if we can actually join as partner to create that critical mass.

Audience: The government of Brunei spends a significant amount of money and effort encouraging local entrepreneurship and supporting small businesses. Should government take that highly involved role to encourage the small businesses or should they take the role of being a 'smaller government', in other words, not be involved and let the entrepreneurs get on with it and leave it to the market decide which businesses will succeed and which ones will fall away?

Derek: Government involvement can either make things easier or harder. For example, I recently met an entrepreneur from Belgium who was filling out the many EU forms, to start up his second business in Belgium. When he realized what a hassle it was, he simply decided to move to Singapore to start his business as he knew that it was much easier to set up over there. In that case, the EU government's involvement was making things much harder. However, in Singapore, the government involvement makes things easier.

Keeran: What is the best piece of advice you have been given, and what is the best piece of advice you can give.

Derek: Best piece of advice I would give an entrepreneur would be, to embrace failure, to plan on failure. Just as muscles of our body tear and repair to become bigger and stronger, our brains will only improve when you actually fail at something. For example, failing at a question that you don't know the answer to where the right answer will actually stick with you 10 times longer. This applies to the challenges that we face which will cause you to stumble, and as you keep pursuing it, it will repair you and make you stronger and more prepared for what lies ahead instead of sticking with what you know and making yourself weaker.

Javed: You should look beyond whatever you are able to achieve as that is the only way to improve yourself. A mentor once wrote me a quote by Robert Browning, which said, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" It is one piece of advice that has remained with me.

In the forum, Derek shared about Lean Startup Movement that the audience can take inspiration from.

Lean Startup Movement (theleanstartup.com) is a movement that transforms how new products are built and launched

Session 2: Track 2

ICT- An Entrepreneurial Option for Brunei?

Is ICT entrepreneurship a lucrative opportunity for young entrepreneurs? What kind of support is currently in place in the country? Is there a venture capital funding available for these aspiring entrepreneurs looking to make it in the ICT industry?

An informal session with a panel of leading thought leaders and practitioners

- **Mr Idris Vasi**, CEO, DST Group
- **Mr Brian Koh**, Deputy Director, NUS Enterprise, National University of Singapore & Director, KR Consulting Pte Ltd

Moderated by **Ms Rozana Yunos**, Head of Corporate Affairs, BAG Networks Sdn Bhd



Mr. Brian Koh

- The option of being an entrepreneur: It is a path that is not well taken by the average person. According to Wikipedia, an entrepreneur is someone “who is willing to help launch a new venture or enterprise and accept full responsibility for the outcome.” An entrepreneur “shifts economic resources out of lower and into higher productivity and greater yield.”

- There are 3 ways in which start-ups are established:
 - 1) By Accident.
 - 2) By Engineers who just enjoy developing something new.
 - 3) By Someone who sees a problem and wants to solve it.
- Brunei has a great set up for start-ups. In terms of funds and grants, there is sufficient support in the different areas of start-ups. His Majesty stated in his Titah, “Entrepreneurship is the key to future success”. This sets a perimeter or a culture of what is important for Brunei.
- Some of the challenges in the establishments of start-ups:
 - Building a culture which understands that failure is fine. Celebrating the success of failure.
 - PAF (Parents Acceptance Factor) – applies especially to students/graduates.
 - Building a proper business– How will the business model sustain itself?
 - Networking (to create partnerships). This is one of the things that it often lacking with many engineers. They love their technology but lack the ability to go out and meet people.

Mr. Idris Vasi:

- If you have passion and are willing to take risks, a lot of things can happen and that is what entrepreneurship and start-ups are all about.
- ‘Future funding’- A new initiative, a partnership between DST, BEDB, AITI & iCentre. iCentre provides a great mechanism for companies to come in and use the facilities, but they do not provide funding yet. DST, BEDB & AITI are setting up a small fund for potential start-ups, based on their business plans(‘Future Fund’). These companies can continue to use icentre facilities and can also ask for additional funding if necessary.
- The mechanisms for an entrepreneur to raise funds:
 - Self-funding/ FFF [friends, families & fools]
 - Seed/ angel funding- prototype and demonstration stage
 - VC funding
- The Future Fund can help you receive the seed/angel funding, which one would then scale their business from, take it to the market, test the market and eventually go for their first VC round. With the Future Fund, besides money, we aim to provide mentorship. Between the 3 companies, as well as iCentre, there is the presence of experts in finance, marketing, leadership, etc. However, this does not mean that the business will be taken by the hand and be led, but businesses will be nudged and guided in the right direction. DST can also be a business’s first reference customer.
- These are just baby steps, in terms of what the future fund can do for start-ups, and what we hope is to be able to help to develop, nurture and raise the entrepreneur spirit in Brunei.

Q & A Session Highlights

Q: What do you think of the level of creativity in Brunei?

A: When iCentre first started off, we got quite a good response as we met a need that was already there. In comparison to the rest of the world, the technology element isn't quite there yet. However, the application of technology is more important, so even if you have the greatest technology but have no idea how to use it, it would not be effective. There are many great companies as well as good companies on the tipping point of break through to being great and achieving success. This would serve as an inspiration to the rest of the entrepreneurs in Brunei.

Q: How long does it usually take for an incubatee to become successful?

A: There is no standard, but patience, perseverance and passion(the 3 Ps) is what is required to drive us forward.

Balancing between risk-taking and hand holding.

In the iCentre we play the role of a coach. We know the techniques and the ones that work, and we guide the start-ups. The minute we try to run the company for the entrepreneur, we kill the whole aspect of entrepreneurship.

In the iCentre, we provide a conducive environment. We provide the facilities for a business to start up as well as providing guidance, e.g. writing up one's business plan. We hold competitions, workshops and mentorship both local as well as international.

Q: Brunei has got lots of smarts, maybe the question should not be about whether or not we should have incubator units based in Brunei doing everything, maybe Brunei, being the small but highly intelligent community it is should be taking the lead part in particularly the human networking aspect, leveraging on the human capital side which Brunei scores very highly with. So rather than thinking about ICT being an entrepreneurial option for Brunei, we should maybe think about Brunei taking the lead in just one part of this opportunity.

A: At the end of the day, it all comes down to a culture and mindset. One of the things we try to do with the programmes that we run in the icentre, is to encourage a change in mindset. From this there are 2 outcomes:

We produce entrepreneurs- These are the people who go on to start up companies.

We produce entrepreneurs within the private sectors and multi-national companies- These people would make a great impact as they would be willing to do things differently and change the rules round.

Session Three: “Digital Marketing: the Rules of Engagement”

How do you engage with your audience effectively? How do you get better results from digital marketing? What are the common mistakes you should avoid?

By **Ms Ann Burgraff**, Mentor Advisor, National University Singapore Enterprise & Founding Member, Search Ventures, Singapore

Moderated by **Mr Andrew Dy**, General Manager, Asia Inc Forum



- Digital and social media is effective for tons of things: engaging with your customers, sales, building your brand, customer loyalty, customer service and etc. Digital marketing is just another channel and another vehicle for so many things we have done before, which has become incredibly pervasive in our lives.
- It is not technology but the engagement that matters. Sometimes we get so excited about what we can do with technology, but in digital marketing and social media it is the engagement that matters, whether you are doing it for a business, a government, a non-profit organization or your family.
- Pre-rule: Before you do anything, make sure your efforts support your business goals.
Rules of Engagement:
 - 1) Customer insight- You need to know what your customers are about, what they do online and offline, what they are interested in, what they care about. Know your audience, know your customer.
 - 2) Don't re-purpose, re-imagine- Instead of taking something you've done before and push it into something digital, think about what you can do with the new technology. These new technologies give us so many different ways to communicate and give us new data.

- 3) Don't join the conversation, create it- If you are a company, be the one who initiates the online conversation or the experience that you want to create for your customers. **Old Spice**
- 4) Your brand is a story- Make sure you embrace your story and tell everyone your story. Communicate the feeling you are trying to give. This is a general marketing idea but it sometimes gets lost through all the technology.
- 5) Share control- It is about user-generated content. For example: Youtube, Doritos (users created their own commercial) or **Lacta**
- 6) Be yourself and be transparent- The web is an incredibly transparent place. It is really important then for companies to be honest and transparent when doing any type of communication.
- 7) Stay in touch- More than staying in touch, beware with what you start because you will have to feed it and support it.

The same rules of business apply to online marketing, which is to make sure that you have an objective, a target, a clear message and to measure it. Things that we do in the offline world, we need to do in the online world. They're so basic, but it's easy to get carried away and not do it.

Open Forum Discussion:

Andrew: You've showed us the impact of exposing a business to feedback online, through social media (facebook, twitter). There are however reservations about going online because you are opening up to the unknown. How can you encourage a business to overcome that fear of exposure?

Ann: In general, we need to release control. When we are part of a company/organization, we have this idea that we own the brand. When in actuality, our brand is co-owned with the consumers. The consumers own as much of the brand as you do. With this brings improvement, growth and success. Take a leap of faith and trust your customers and community.

Audience: When there is something negative and potentially damaging, what is your advice in handling that?

Ann: It is a real issue, and competitors use it constantly. I think companies that engage in online conversations need to have crisis plans. Unfortunately, the conversations are going to happen online whether you're monitoring them or not. The best advice I can give you is to be honest and transparent, have a plan and have enough people in place to respond. However, it usually takes up a lot of resources such as money, time and effort.

Audience: I'm speaking in terms of using social media as a channel for communication. If your back-end forces are not ready to catch up or react to the speed in which social media is moving, there will be a pit fall. What are your thoughts about the degree of preparation required before you embrace social media as a communications or customer service channel?

Ann: If your resources are not prepared, you will have to walk slowly. You have to be adequately staffed.

Audience: With ads and campaigns held through social media, such as that of Old Spice and Lacta, it really is a hit or miss. Are there any tips or advice to ensure that these campaigns are going to be successful?

Ann: My biggest advice is to know your customers and really understand where your market is, and what they are interested in. The brands that do that well have much better chance of hitting goals in campaigns. Does it matter whether digital or print? To some degree, what matters is to use the right vehicle to get your message across. Digital isn't better than print or vice versa, it is just another vehicle.

Session Three: Future Flash on the Future of Learning

by **Hajah Salma Haji Abdul Latiff**, Managing Director, Crescent Educators Pte Ltd



- Where are we now in education? In this generation, we have Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Google, which are all used to help teach, learn and communicate, whether it is between students or lecturers. If this is the way students and lecturers are now learning and teaching, can we visualize what education would be like in the future?
- Back in the days of Aristotle, the 'educational model' started off with just one man sharing his ideas to a few people, which led on to those few people teaching another small group of people and another. Then came the industrial revolution; the press machine was created. Teachers used to sit at the front of the classroom teaching, while typing away on their typewriters. The 'educational model' then developed from one man teaching a few people, into one man teaching to a many.
- We can say that the educational scene changed completely when PCs, laptops, the nano technology came to be, which altered the teaching of students. They no longer had to carry heavy books but instead, a little slate called the iPad, or a little device that they carry round in their pockets, called the iPhone. Online education and education through social media, is a constant interactive experience. With the essence of social media: visual learning, Microsoft

kinetics, social media collaborative learning, and e-books it has transformed the educational model from, one man teaching to a few, into many men teaching to many men. We are all students as well as teachers. Everybody is now learning from one another and you cannot necessarily pin point the source of education.

- Going back to the question about what the future of education would be like. In the future, perhaps schools will no longer exist as a vice educational institution, perhaps people will be hired not by their qualifications but on how good they are with technology. We don't know a lot of things, but one constant factor we do know is change. The change of technology trends would be a big influence on the future of education.

Session Four: Social Media, Brand and Entrepreneurship

What are the advantages, opportunities and risks in social media? How does social media play a role in branding? How should businesses leverage on social media?



A discussion with

Mr Delwin Keasberry, Director, ProjekBrunei.com

Ms Azhani Abu Daniel, Social Blogger, Brunei Darussalam

Mr Derek Sivers, Founder, CDBABY, USA

Moderated by **Mr Joon Yeng Hew**, Co-Founder, PigeonLab Pte Ltd

Presentation by Delwin Keasberry:

- The democratization of influence. Once upon a time, our perception about a brand/ company came from the top-down. Now, with the democratization of influence, through social media, our perception has turned and is now bottom up. We have the power to influence one another in the way we think. Whether you like it or not, social media is alive and people are talking. Recently, there was a study done in the US about the form of media the population trusted

most; results show that 55% trust radio ads, 61% trust newspapers, 62% trust what we see on television and 70% trust what we read online. Therefore, we can say that we are more likely to trust what our friends say.

- Brunei FM- They have a Facebook page with the biggest fan base in Brunei; to date, they have over 80,000 fans. What are they doing to catch the attention of so many people? They update frequently, they respond to their audience and they study their audience. Social media makes it possible for us to do these things.
- Is your company talking back to your customers? Do you know what your customers want? Is it a one way communication stream? I challenge you to go home and google your name or your company's name, your school etc. You will find one of 2 things: something or nothing. If you find something, find out what they are saying about you or your company, and if not, think about why no one is talking.
- Social media makes engagement with the community possible. There are 2 ways you can look at social media: You can look at it as an obstacle or you can look at it as an opportunity.

Presentation by Ms. Azhani:

- Social media is a social instrument of communication. It is immediate, has a broad influence, and is easy and free. If your brand/company is out there, it allows more people to find you; it gives you more time to listen and encourages transparency and honesty.

Open Forum Discussion:

Joon Yeng: The opportunities in the market are where the eyes are which is why social media mattered, especially when they've grown to a critical mass which businesses and the public can no longer ignore. What does Social Media mean to you?

Delwin: "Social media is travelling the world without leaving your seat." (Quote found on twitter). It opens up doors and levels the playing fields. So to me, social media is the equalizer.

Azhani: Social media makes our world smaller. We can make contact and communicate with people half way around the world.

Derek: It's all still what you make it for yourself. On the topic of transparency and honesty, I find that there's an ongoing process of the need to be honest. So, honestly, sometimes I don't feel like replying to comments, and honestly, I don't feel like being connected all the time. To me, social media is yet another tool that we have added, but it isn't everything. As Delwin stated, social media is travelling the world without leaving your seat, however, so is reading a great book.

Joon Yeng: According to studies, social media is now the avenue for new business opportunities. However, is social media fitting for every business?

Delwin: I would say not. It would depend on a brand's marketing strategy.

Derek: I would say yes, it is for every business. For the purpose of reaching out to customers and making your company/brand known, yes, every business should have some sort of outreach (a website).

Audience: Should a company have a dedicated online social media management team or should the company simply outsource it to a third party.

Azhani: I think there should be a dedicated online social media team for every company. The people in the company know the company best and would want to do what is best for the company, and when you outsource it to a third party, it shows.

Derek: I think that the businesses which understand that customer service, where you convert angry people to happy people, equals sales, are the successful ones. The biggest investments you can make are in that personal touches. You should probably have your higher paid people engaging in personal customer service. It's about making just one person happy, in the hopes that they will go on to tell other people about you. You never know how big of an audience this particular audience has. It's about the little personal details.

Audience: What is the best way for a company to embrace this change of using social media as a marketing strategy, as a lot of companies in Brunei block connections as work.

Azhani: It's very difficult to block anything these days. People have wireless network or their own internet connection. Companies should update their communications policy and shouldn't be afraid of social media, you should accept the fact that it is there and learn to work around it if not with it.

Delwin: I think sometimes, it is 2 sides of the same coin. On one hand you want to embrace social media, but on the other hand, you do not know how to. If need be, find an expert.

Joon Yeng- What kind of things should you be posting onto the social media network to raise the value of your brand.

Derek: Focus on things that is interesting to others, not to yourself. It's like in life, where you should put others before oneself.

Azhani: You have to engage with your audience. There is no point talking about sales and promotions, you have to give your audience a reason to want to follow you. It's about having a conversation with them, even the little things like saying 'Good Morning' or little words of encouragement for someone who is having a bad day, these little things make a difference.

Delwin: Based on my usage of twitter. I've done a few different campaigns and every now and then, my idea flops. And then there are other ideas which surprisingly work well. There has to be a 2-way communication stream, and with this, being able to open up and receive comments and criticisms from your audience.

Joon Yeng: How quickly can one company respond to rumors about your organization via social media.

Derek: With any negativity or rumor spread about your brand/company, you will have to think about whether responding to that will give it more attention, or is it sometimes better to just leave it. However, sometimes they are purposely doing it because they want you to attack them just so that it will help bring some traffic to their blog. Sometimes you've got to put things into context, for example: you receive 200 comments on a particular blog post. Out of the 200 comments, 10 are criticisms. Instead of focusing on the positive comments, you turn your head completely towards the 10/200 negative comments that you received and put all your time and effort into defending the negativities. Once you put things into perspective, you should realise that those negative comments have not actually done any harm to your company.

Also, sometimes we do forget that there is a real person on the other end of the line. So we've got to remember that we are communicating with an actual human being on the other hand.

Azhani: In Brunei, there isn't a controlling body, but there are laws governing against disinformation, which applies to the internet as well. You could always take steps to assess the situation, or come up with press releases to revert and confirm rumors or, even go to the extent of suing the person.

Delwin: Sometimes, the best place to respond is not necessarily online. Maybe think about picking up the phone or writing a letter, and settle this away from public eyes.

Joon Yeng: With the social media network rapidly growing and with full potential on set, how would you advise the young entrepreneurs in the crowd to spot opportunities leveraging on this growing social media network.

Delwin: There is a saying that "The best way to predict the future is to create it." If it's not there but can imagine it, find a way to create it. If you can dream it, why not pursue it.

Azhani: Chase your dreams, young Simba.

Derek: My advice is to think small and dream tiny. A lot of the things that we call "world changing" today started out as just tiny little toys (E.g PayPal, Twitter). Don't think that you need to dream big and want to change the world, sometimes the best inventions might be the quick, little fun things that people find fascinating.

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