

STRATEGISING IDEAS

CONTENT STRATEGIST TAN TUAN TYNN MAKES PLANNING LOOK EASY



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Born in Sitiawan, Perak, Tan Tuan Tynn spent a good amount of time shuffling between Sitiawan, Washington DC and Kuala Lumpur during her formative years in school. Growing up with a father who was in the military, she credits her nomadic lifestyle for helping shape her into a more adaptive and organised person. She now works on marketing strategies and is the brand custodian for AdEasy, an online rental service for traditional ad space.

We sit down for a chat as she tells us about the beauty of being employed at a start-up and what it's like working with her team at AdEasy.

DID YOU MAKE A SWITCH FROM CORPORATE AND WHERE DID YOU WORK PREVIOUSLY?

I made the switch because I wanted to develop my skill set in marketing – my main focus in college. My role at AdEasy is actually my first job in a field I wanted to be in since leaving college! My first job was as a Merchandiser for Macy's, America's leading department store chain. There I learned the ropes of what goes on behind-the-scenes in the world of retail.

When I returned to Malaysia in 2013, I joined the Uniqlo Manager Candidate program. I was trained to be a Store Manager and was posted in several major outlets across the Klang Valley while at the same time I helped establish a few Uniqlo outlets around Malaysia. I was there for almost two years, and after that I joined an events agency where I managed large-scale corporate events to smaller-scale seminars and roadshows for brands like HP and RedHat. Seeking for a better work-life balance, I left the event agency and joined AdEasy, an online marketplace for offline ad space. We enable businesses (mainly SMEs) to book traditional ad space (radio, billboards, newspaper, out-of-home, etc.) easily and conveniently, just like how one would book a trip online.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FIRST WEEK ON THE JOB.

I will not forget my welcome lunch with the team on my first day. I was feeling a bit unwell as I was having sore throat and

cough that day, and as companies usually do, they had a welcome lunch for me. The conversations during lunch ranged from various contrabands to fantasies of owning a private island and private jet; all while I was eating my porridge while the rest of the team savoured a variety of delicious *dim sum*. It was exciting as it was my first time working in a start-up, and as there were only six of us back then, it was interesting to get used to working with such a close-knit team!

WAS IT ALWAYS YOUR PLAN TO BE WHERE YOU ARE NOW?

I guess I never imagined working for a cool startup like AdEasy. When I was in college, I always thought I'd be joining some MNC and becoming a corporate slave. But as you can see, my previous work experiences were nothing like that. After graduating, I realised I didn't want the typical 9-to-5 office job.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AT ADEASY AND WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT IT?

My current job scope involves coming up with marketing strategies and plans for AdEasy. As the brand custodian, everything I do is for the long-term health of the brand. Generally, what makes me the happiest about the job is the freedom to experiment with new ideas. The whole team is quite open to trying new concepts as long as it goes well with our brand guidelines. And the fact that we all have a similar sense of humour makes it a fun working environment. It's also a pet-friendly workplace! I love bringing my dog to work with me (or else he'll be home alone) and it's nice that my colleagues enjoy having him around too!

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING AND POSITIVE?

The opportunity to learn and develop my skills while still having time for friends and family makes this job so satisfying. When

I'm not at work, I enjoy exploring new places with my friends and family, be it a new bar in town, or a different activity to try (painting class, indoor sports, or a clay-making workshop!).

WHAT HAVE YOU ACQUIRED IN TERMS OF WORK EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE WORKING HERE?

I've been developing my knowledge of the marketing industry both locally and globally, as well as understanding clients' needs through things like proposal pitching. I'm very much in-tuned with the best practices thanks to guidance from my bosses, Therine Goh and Melissa Sim. They've been such great help through things such as sharing of informational content and practising the 'open door concept', where we are encouraged to approach them any time we have any concerns, questions or requests. I also try to keep myself in the loop of what's happening in the marketing/advertising industry by attending workshops, some including the *Facebook Marketing Workshop* by Miss Mafia and *Customer Acquisition Tactics* webinar by Neil Patel.

WHAT ARE THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS/ EXPERIENCES WORKING FOR THIS CURRENT ORGANISATION?

Going for a team-building session at Breakout (an escape game) with the team! It was great fun seeing a different side of my colleagues, working hard to solve the riddles together. Another memorable experience was when we had a welcome prank for our newest colleague, Firdaus. Playing on the notion that people tend to dress their best on their first day, the whole team decided to come to work in formal wear on Firdaus' first day. It was nice seeing everyone in the team suiting up and looking so formal in our chilled office environment (picture an open office concept but with a bunch of employees in suits and slacks). Firdaus, clad in his shirt and jeans walked in and was so confused. He even privately approached a few of us to clarify the dress code. We just went on with the story and pretended it's normal to dress formal to work. On his second day, we wore our usual casual clothes again while Firdaus wore a shirt, tie, and a pair of slacks! The look on Firdaus' face when he walked in to office that day made it all worth it!

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY DUTIES?

Where to go for lunch! (kidding!) One of the challenges I face includes constantly brainstorming for new creative concepts. Sometimes, I do end up hitting a creative roadblock but it's usually overcome by taking a breather and looking for inspiration elsewhere. I do this by going through content on *Ads of the World*, checking out campaigns on a website called *Activation Ideas*, and by watching viral videos on Facebook.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKING AT AN SME?

You have a more hands-on approach to the business and direction of it. Things are faster-paced, as in you only need to go through a few key people for decision-making, rather than several departments and layers of authority. I'm all about efficiency, and sitting around waiting for an approval to move through the pipeline really irks me.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR FREE TIME?

My hobbies include playing card games (Monopoly Deal and Exploding Kittens anyone?) and spending time with my adorable Pomeranian, Bro.