

## Workshop report

18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### **TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference: Workshop B: Tracking the Millennial traveller**

Workshop B, moderated by **Charlotte Turner, Editor of TRBusiness**, looked at **Tracking the Millennial traveller** with presentations by **Cheryl Lim, Partner, McKinsey & Company**, Singapore-based bloggers and influencers, **Uli Chan** and **Christabel Chua**, and **Grant Fleming, Operations and Marketing Director Asia at Lagardère Travel Retail**.

**Cheryl Lim** told the audience that 60% of the world's Millennials reside in Asia, of which almost two thirds are from China or India. They are starting to enter their peak spending years, with Asian Millennial traveller spend expected to grow by 1.6 in less than a decade. By 2020, Asian Millennial travellers will command 38% of the total travel spend in Asia.

Lim discussed the survey results on Asian Millennial travellers, which was based on Visa's Global Travel Intentions Survey covering 25 countries, as well as focus group discussions with China, India, Indonesia and Singapore. These four countries represent 70% of Asia's population and 50% of Asia's GDP. There are three similarities amongst Asian Millennial travellers regardless of country. The first of these is a desire for flexibility and independence, with only 22% of travellers reporting using a packaged tour on their last holiday and in some countries this figure falls to as little as 9%. The second is in relation to data. Asian Millennial travellers consult a range of information, both online and traditional. The third is that there is a distinct absence of brand loyalty among Asian Millennial travellers. Price, convenience and reliability play a more important role than a brand name.

Lim also revealed that the survey results show that Asian Millennial travellers have more differences by country than similarities. For example, Chinese Millennial travellers are the highest spenders amongst Asian Millennial travellers, whereas Indonesian Millennial travellers are the most price

conscious. Singaporean Millennial travellers love researching before booking their trips, consulting a wide range of information sources. The implications for the industry are three-fold – know your audience, focus on personalisation, sell time, convenience and fuss-free travel.

According to **Uli Chan**, Asian Millennial travellers want to live like a local and like to become immersed in foreign culture. They want to have unique experiences, enjoying temporary installations, pop ups, festivals and multi-disciplinary retail spaces. They also want to document and share their shopping and travel moments with friends and online followers.

Chan said that photographs are important as they can be shared with friends, and encouraged travel retailers to create visual spaces in shops with hashtags to encourage sharing. For Chan, some of the most successful tactics brands can employ are providing unique experiences. These can be experiential retail, exciting social media communication and avoiding corporate-style messaging in favour of a strong, meaningful personality.

**Christabel Chua** shared her travel experience and thoughts on how brands can make travel a more Millennial-friendly experience, with a big focus on the need for convenience. In order to encourage Millennial travellers to shop at the airport, she recommended personalisation and ‘perks’ such as reward cards.

**Grant Fleming** outlined the initiatives Lagardère Travel Retail has been undertaking to make retail more attractive to the Millennial traveller, from empowering staff with digital access to product ranges and pricing, to featuring multi-lingual robots that interact with customers. Asian Millennial travellers are innovators immersed in the digital world, have a deep connection with visionary brands, and are looking for new experiences. The good news is that Millennial travellers are spending a considerable amount of money on travel, and they also love to shop.

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