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"Found In Translation"

By Tim Love

Thank you, Mark.

(Slide #1: Emerging Technology, Consumers & Choice)

The Sponsors have asked me to talk about what I am seeing about the subject of this conference---emerging technology, consumers and choice, as I wander the planet across different cultures and time zones.

I lived and worked in Europe for 6 years in the 90's. And, until recently, my base of explorations was in Tokyo working with our Nissan client, globally. Since, December, I have been based in New York at Omnicom's headquarters, but my global role has had me on the road, out of the country, more than 50% of the time ever since.

Some people I work with think I am permanently jet-lagged. You really do get disoriented...kind of lost. Like the Bill Murray movie you are Lost in Translation, when you go to Asia (because it is a whole half day ahead of New York time) and then, you're Lost again, when you come back. When you have to also tack on Europe, too, you may as well just keep on going around the planet.

Alison Fahey, editor of AdWeek recently told me, I am the "The Man From Nowhere." My wife, Kate, would tend to agree-- The Man from Nowhere who seems to be Lost in Translation.

Living in Europe in the 1990's during the time following the fall of the Berlin wall and being part of the expansion of business across that region and globally was a mind-opening experience

for a kid from Ohio. Living in Japan was whole other, different degree of challenge. You know, when you are as far away as Japan from New York some people treat you like you live on another planet.

I cannot tell you how often someone back in New York would say to me over the mobile phone, “I will call you first thing in the morning at 9:00am, when I get in the office.” I would respond, “Well, actually that’s 10:00pm at night, for me.

They would stumble and say—“Oh.” And, after pausing, temporarily challenged by the contemplation of this difference, they would say, “Oh, Ok. How about if I call you at noon?”

“Well, that would 1:00am in the morning, my time.

Then, really trying to make it work, they would say, “Ok, How about if I wait until the end of my day, before I go to Grand Central for the train, like around 5:00pm?”

Well, that’s 6:00am for me!

Believe me, I know how hard it is. Just think about it. What do you try to do on Friday afternoon? Finish as much of your work as you can, so you can try to enjoy the weekend. And, if you want to have a conversation with someone in Asia before the weekend....that’s Saturday morning in Asia.

So, Saturday mornings for global brand-building in Japan or Asia are not so great. Unless you are persistent and train people to understand and experience the time difference.

Monday’s are pretty good, because the rest of the world has not opened up the week yet. But, hey, Monday’s are Monday, pretty much, no matter where you are on the planet. So my theme today ...

(Slide#2: Found In Translation)

“Found in Translation”. I have found some things that might help you and the industry embrace the creative future that is unfolding for marketing and advertising. It is an exciting future, dynamic with change, sometimes daunting.

My objective today is to share some ideas with you. It is how I am seeing the landscape for my company and the industries we are engaged with, especially the industries represented by the communications technologies here at this conference. I hope these ideas will help you consider how you see the world of marketing communications and business.

I believe there has never been a better time to be in the communications business. Our industry has tremendous potential for explosive growth, if we are ready to change with rapidly changing in communication technology.

I was born into the communications business. My Dad was a TV and Radio repairman with his own business, working out of home.

(Slide: Love Radio & Television)

That’s my sister, there in 1952, next to Dad’s sign in our front yard of our house in Ohio where I grew up. My Dad had TV’s and radios all over the house, in every room. Something was always on, while he was working all day long. I was a “child of the media”, before I knew it, before this became a popular term.

I grew up with the excitement of new media and new ideas, the creativity of expression, observable in the news, advertising and entertainment. I came to believe that an idea is not an idea, unless it changes the way you see the world.

For me, advertising wasn’t a career. I saw it as way -- To help make the world a better place. It’s fitting, that my first assignment in this business was a public service campaign for the Peace Corps. The idea for Peace Corps was: “Don’t crawl under a rock, get into Action.”

Believe me, it was impossible to “crawl under a rock” growing up with TV’s and radios in virtually every room of our little house.

We had every kind of new media technology for TV and radio before anyone else in town. My favorite one, before color TV and the Walkman, was—“Space Command.” Great name for the first remote control TV device. It even sounds “far out” -- SPACE... Command.

Holding this little Space Command box in my hand, I could “command space and change channels without getting up off the couch.” Pretty amazing. It literally changed the way I saw the world.

Later, as a college art major, I became enthralled with advertising and communications. I won an award in a national creative competition and an invitation to go on, to study for a Masters in Communications.

The studies, at that time were focused on the effects communications technologies have on society. I read and absorbed all of Marshall McLuhan’s writings and wrote my final paper on his theories.

(Slide: McLuhan comments)

McLuhan suggested, by understanding the effects of media technology, we can better understand people and how to communicate with them. McLuhan’s concepts like “the medium is the message” and his forecast of a “global village” intrigued me. He predicted that, right about now, there would be massive social and economic change, due to what he forecast from the “collision of the electronic media” of TV, Radio and the computer. He said the Dick Tracy wrist-watch radio would become a reality.

Here’s the way some people thought “the future” might look, with the influx of new communications technologies affecting the world.

(Show: 1984)

1984. Wow, it is hard to believe that vision of the future is already 22 years old, now. Incidentally, that “video” only ran once. It was an early example of “buzz.”

There is no denying the effect new technologies have had on us and our industry. Fortunately, it hasn't been quite as Orwell predicted.

(Slide: Binoculars)

So how is the emerging landscape for marketing and advertising, looking?

It is sometimes hard to see the changes new communications technologies are having on us. It can be hard to see the effects, when you are fixed in one geographic location.

(Slide: Fish Bowl)

On the issue of who discovered the water, we know for certain it wasn't the fish.

As we all know, the media world we are looking at today is much, much more than Television and Radio. It is also, much, much more than where we are sitting. The global media landscape is different than what we see here in America and different than how things have been over the past 25 years.

(Slide: Media is globally dispersed)

You all know, the media is now truly globally dispersed. The village McLuhan predicted is here. And, these developments in new communications technologies are supercharging perception

(Slide: Control of Information/Individualized)

We have seen how control of information is more individualized, more individually controlled than ever before. We can store it, replay it, revise and redirect it and, we can opt out of it, too! It's not static. It's more mobile and so are we.

(Slide: New Intercultural Society)

It is a new intercultural global society.

This is a world of business where Borders...

(Slide: Borders and Nations less Relevant)

and Nations are less relevant... rendered less dominant by open trade, consolidation of industries across the planet and, importantly, the ubiquity of media, directly connecting us into a global community.

(Slide: Gaps in Understanding)

We have seen, there are huge gaps in understanding. These gaps in understanding are the tensions that can cause some problems. I can only speak about the gaps in understanding from my area of expertise. That is, observing and understanding how ideas effect people's perceptions, beliefs and ultimately, their behavior.

There are THREE IDEAS, I've learned regarding global brand-building, which can help us have an enlightened view of the emerging technology, consumers and choices available.

(Slide: #1 New Media Technologies are creating..)

First, New media technologies are creating a global economy of inclusion, not exclusion.

(Slide: These technologies have changed the environment...)

These communications technologies have changed the environment brands, or any other organizing concept functions.

Actions, ideas and behaviors can no longer remain isolated from being perceived.

Excuse me a second, before I go on, to the next point...

(Stop and Obliviously Light Cigar)

Does my cigar smoke bother anyone? (put it out in glass of water).

That's the point. We've come to understand the concept of second hand smoke. But this has evolved in this interconnected media world to the concept of...second-hand culture.

Twenty-five years ago, we would have been here with more than half of the room smoking away. Remember? We'd be on a plane with people next to us or ourselves smoking and we just didn't think anything about it. If this happened on a plane today, the person would be tossed out in mid-air.

This is a new world for content creators, the idea people and the communications specialists of all the media. Our conversations and messaging are accessible in a far more transparent world. Like the concept of second-hand smoke, we need to become more sensitive with our communications. There is no global consumer, only you and me and 6.5-billion individuals. Just like my cigar smoke, communications can go where we don't intend it to go, get seen and heard by people it is not intended for. And, sometimes, like smoke, it can leave a disturbing smell.

(Slide: Unobjective Frame of Reference)

One of the key issues is the relatively unobjective frame of reference we have right here in the United States:

(Slide: 20% have passport)

According to the Bureau of Transportation Services, only approximately 20% of Americans have a passport and 86% have been to Canada and Mexico.

Thomas Friedman says this world is “flat.” While I agree that this what is happening with the technology, I am not sure “flat” doesn’t still look like this to some of my friends here in the U.S.!

(Slide: Steinberg’s View of The World)

It really is very interesting, to study the effects of media throughout history. Changes in media technology have had profound effects on societies and economies. It can be unsettling, the changes these technologies bring. Some people embrace change and others try to control it or resist.

Sir Thomas Moore wrote about this in 1516 in his book Utopia. It was written against the backdrop of the expansion of the canal system across Europe. These canals of commerce opened up villages and towns to a flow of new ideas, beliefs, foods, styles, stories and culture from other towns and places. It was a kind of internet in a way, back then.

Some people got nervous about the new ideas and wanted to retrench to resist modernization. Groups formed, like the French Huguenots and others, who wanted more control. They sought perfectionism and they set up controlled communities. This eventually evolved into the Shaker societies that developed then in the new world.

Interesting concept, some of these communities. Several attempted to control their way of life, their views and even advocated celibacy to control the community. It was a manifestation of human nature’s reaction to a rapidly changing world of new information and ideas.

Isolate or integrate? This is not new. As our emerging global society strains to adjust to the economic and social possibilities of new communications technologies, we see some of these same tendencies in business today---to isolate or integrate?

Martin Luther King had a very interesting perspective related to the changing business and social landscape, created with the explosion of communications technologies of TV and radio in the 1960's,

(Slide: MLK Quote)

He said: “There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society with a large segment of people in that society who feel that they have no stake in it, who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have a stake in their society protect that society, but when they don’t have it, they unconsciously want to destroy it.”

The emerging media technologies are indeed creating a global economy that is more inclusive. This will increasingly effect how we communicate and the way economies and businesses address the needs and desires of the broader marketplace of consumers.

(Slide: Developing Mkts are Youth Culture)

The Second Idea is that: The developing markets are predominantly a youth culture, where word-of-mouth, the most persuasive media ever, is being fueled by new technologies.

There is a huge emerging youth culture, globally. It tends to be in the developing world, rather than in the markets we are used to dealing with. There is a whole new generation of marketer coming along, who embrace the exciting new world of global marketing. They have seen how challenging and interesting this is. They are used to diversity and they like it. They can sense it when they are in a room of people who are not seeing the global village that they compete in. It’s just not as interesting or fun. More importantly, it isn’t as relevant.

This new generation of marketing person, understands how the world market looks. They get the numbers and scale difference

between the developed markets and the developing markets of the world.

(Slide: Youth Development Gap Comparison)

This chart shows the gap between the "developed" world (the usual nine markets of the US, Japan, Germany, France, UK, Spain, Italy, Australia/New Zealand and Canada) there are approximately 800 million people in these markets. But, the "developing" world is where the bulk of the planet's population exists (5.7 billion people) and where the markets today (and for tomorrow) are forming brand perceptions.

In the developed world, the mean age is 36 years old, whereas in the developed markets the mean age is about 24. This is a gigantic difference. One only needs to recall that the mean age in the US in the 1960's, when I was growing up, was 24. Remember how this dominant youthful population effected our styles, music, political beliefs, behaviors and just about everything? You see this when you spend time in the environment of the developing world.

The interconnected, emerging technologies has brought the world closer together. In fact, if the global village were a community of 100 people, this is how it would look.

(Slide: 100 People in the World- Chart)

Isn't it interesting that the composition of the global village is about 60% Asians, 20% Europeans and only 5% Americans.

In the village, Mandarin is the predominant language, over English and 6 people possess about 60% of all the village's wealth—all from the US.

What is of real concern for those of us in the communications business is the poor rate of literacy development--70% of the village cannot read. In Afghanistan the mean age is 17 and the

literacy rate for men is about 30 %, while for the women in that country it is only about 20%. Egypt's literacy rate is about 51%, with the literacy rate for women less than this figure. So, this global village is much different than what it might look like walking to this conference in New York today. And, the convergence and proliferation of new technologies, like mobile, are having a dramatic, altering effect on all economies and how they are connected.

What we are looking at, is a very different world emerging for consumers and choice. One of the biggest marketing trends is the growth in importance for Word-of-Mouth.

(Show: Word of Mouth Chart)

From the standpoint of advertising, the most persuasive and powerful medium ever is "Word-of-Mouth." Personal testimony.

It has always been the way people check ideas, through other people's first-hand experience. People trust someone else's experience and witness, especially a friend or family-member's, far more than someone they don't know, telling or selling them on an idea.

Today, word-of-mouth is carried by a much faster and more pervasive means. It is mobile and wireless technologies converging.

More than ever before in human history, an idea, is more transmittable, more broadly perceivable, more able to be compared with other opinion/word-of-mouth, or imitated. Mobile technology isn't a cell phone, it is a word of mouth medium. Internet isn't a web, it is a word of mouth catalyst.

Yahoo and our OMD media partner company recently joined forces to understand the emerging global youth culture.

(Slide: Yahoo and OMD Global Research)

According to the Yahoo/OMD study, in the 1960's, TV and FM radio launched a generation of youth bent on creating new forms of community and self-expression, forcing advertisers to adapt.

In Yahoo/OMD's recent in-depth study of 13-24 year olds in 11 countries, youth's use of interactive and wireless technologies has created a global generation highly accustomed to personalizing their experiences with interactive media. This "My Media Generation" is driven by a desire to personalize their media. It is giving rise to very different attitudes and responses toward advertising and messages.

Interestingly, a separate study by the Stanford Institute on the Quality of Life shows that 27% of heavy internet users are spending less time talking to friends and family over the telephone and 15% spend less time talking face to face with friends and loved ones. Does that hit home or what?

Here's the bottom line conclusion Yahoo and OMD made regarding the "My Media Generation".

(Slide: The Global My Media Generation...)

"The global My Media Generation, the first to grow up with an array of interactive and wireless technology at its fingertips, has seized these tools to cope with the pressure of youth and fulfill the basic needs for community, self-expression and personalization."

(Slide: Internet Most Essential)

The Yahoo/OMD research shows that the internet is an essential medium for youth across most countries. We need to crossover from thinking of the internet or mobile as separate media, and instead, embrace the convergence of apertures that individuals have in their hands. Looking at it this way, will help us make the leap from the science of technology, to the art of creative communication and accountability we are seeking to achieve for our clients.

The youth study also indicates how the internet allows the youth to feel connected to a global community. This chart shows the percentage of youth in the study who communicate with friends in different cities and countries because of the internet. The world's youth are more likely to communicate with diverse cultures in chat rooms, etc. than prior generations.

(Slide: Internet connections friends/ outsiders)

Note the figures for America lag other geographies.

Interestingly, mobile devices ...

(Slide: Mobile Phones Picture)

are the lynchpin of connectedness for youth. You see this for sure in places like Japan, where the “thumb tribes” are an evident part of the culture. Have you ever been on the Tokyo Metro or to Harajuku? Amazing.

And, the use of the mobile technology is growing dramatically. Again, according to the study, American youths are less developed in their mobile messaging than global counterparts, but they are rapidly catching up.

(Slide: Phone Functions Used)

US youths use an average of 5.5 functions on their mobile phones, whereas their global counterparts use between 7 to 9 functions.

In a separate analysis, OMD figures with multitasking, we now have been able to turn the 24-hour day into 39 hours of activity. Welcome to the 39-hour day. Actually the figure of 39 hours is for all adults. For younger people OMD tells me, the figure is something more like 43 hours due to multitasking.

(Slide: Knowledge/Attention Economy)

All this means, there has been a shift from The Knowledge Economy of the first 25 years of the internet, to The Attention Economy. Getting attention will be more challenging than ever.

A recent study by Bellweather Leadership puts all this in perspective. It said that “The connectedness of consumers means that they move information faster than traditional advertising techniques allow. Consumers know whether something is good or not, before the advertising can convince them. The challenge is to plan at consumer velocity.”

The third idea, I suggest, is that we need a New Frame of Reference for Global Brand-Building. The secret to global brand building is the frame-of-reference one adopts to inform your strategic decisions.

“Think Global/Act Local was a stage in the evolution of the marketing process. It helped global marketers address newly opened trade borders created by the expansion of communications technologies and the socio-political and economic differences in markets like Russia, the Middle East, India and China.

However, this frame-of-reference has become obsolete. It assumes marketing communication borders that no longer exist. I have found it to be less helpful strategically today than when I started out on the road to global brand-building in the late 1970’s, before the internet, before mobile.

I recommend a frame-of-reference I call “Think Like the Sun.”

I believe the first truly global brand experience was Y2K. The world changed at the commencement of the new millennium with Y2K. This event marked the end of globalization as we knew it and set the stage for a new age of marketing communications.

Remember? There was great anticipation and concern prior to Y2K, which touched more consumers on the planet, than any prior event in the history of mankind. People didn't just hear about Y2K, or see reports of it on the news, they experienced the new year themselves.

As Y2K dawned with the Sun on an island east of New Zealand, advanced communications technologies transmitted the experience to the world's consumers--live. And, they in turn had their own personal experience, in their own location, to perceive the reality of Y2K, themselves. Reality TV of a new kind.

A great sense of awe grew across the planet, with each new celebration. As daylight evolved, it became a day unlike many consumers had experienced before. The next hyper- global "perception" experiences were, unfortunately, "911" and tragedies since, like the Tsunami in Southeast Asia or Hurricane Katrina. A key difference was more people experienced Y2K, first hand, beyond observing it in the media.

Now we know, the Sun actually does not rise and set. It is we here on earth that revolve. In this increasingly smaller, interconnected communications marketplace, consumer perceptions are more borderless. The result is a word-of-mouth community. To anticipate the needs of a world of consumers who are more in touch with each other, "Think Like The Sun" offers a more objective frame-of-reference for building brands.

It is a DIFFERENT way to THINK, than the media model of the last 25 years.

Why think like the Sun? Because of the effect media is having on brands globally, because it requires us to focus on brands, markets and act as global citizens and because multiculturalism is where, I believe, brand-building is headed.

I found an interesting example of Think Like The Sun, several weeks ago in the New York Times business section. It was an article about the planned launch of the international version of Al Jazeera. According to the article, they were planning to start

broadcasting this Spring, internationally. What caught my interest was the way Al Jazeera are planning to cover the news.

They will start their broadcast day in Kuala Lumpur at 9am, for 4 hours, then it will shift broadcasting to Doha, for 11 hours, then to London, for 5 hours and finally end the last 4 hours of the broadcast day, out of Washington DC. So, 24 hours of continuous news coverage. Got it?

I sat for three hours trying to work out what this looks like. Trying to figure out, how they are going to be reporting on the world's events. Here is what it looks like:

(Slide of planned Al Jazeera Broadcast Schedule)

They are Thinking Like The Sun. They plan to broadcast the news as it unfolds with the day, with the sun, from east to west. I am not sure that this will be picked up by a carrier in the US, and certainly it would have to conform to our FCC guidelines, but it, nonetheless, represents an interesting way to plan to deliver the news. CNN doesn't do news this way. Fox doesn't. BBC doesn't either. Very interesting.

Now, what can you take away from what I am seeing? What can you do to capitalize on this new world that is emerging at the speed of light and sound-- this emerging world of technology, consumers and choice?

There are four indicated actions I recommend for your consideration.

(Slide: Indicated Actions: builds with each new point)

First, adopt a new frame of reference.

(Build #1 "Adopt a New Frame of Reference.")

We need to be more "change-ready" in this global business environment. We need to get comfortable with being

uncomfortable. This will help us be more innovative and to seize opportunities.

Try "Think Like The Sun." Try using it to inform your business strategy. It can provide insight into your customers, consumers and your competition. It can change how you structure your business and your message to get attention in the global village.

Take notice of the possibility of "second-hand culture." Be aware, if there has been an evolution in transparency for your product, your company and for you, individually.

I think one of the interesting things to do is to look for early signs and trends in culture that can effect the brand.

(Slide: DDB SignBank)

DDB has recently launched a global planning tool to be on the lookout for evidence of cultural change. The new model, called SignBank, predicts trends that can develop from smaller isolated insights – “signs” – that illuminate present and future behavior. The concept was created by a sociologist in the Copenhagen office in 2003 and has been quietly expanded into the largest worldwide trend-spotting network.

Two, consider how--

(Slide: 2) Symbols, Sounds and Visuals will have more value)

the rapid explosion of communications technologies has rendered the creation of symbols, sounds and visual ideas to be more valuable , than ever before. Want a good example? Here's one.

(Slide: iPod Graphic)

(Show: Pepsi spot)

And, #3--

(Slide: 3) Win with Partnerships & Collaboration)

let your strategy be informed, that winning will increasingly depend on partnering and collaboration. Partnering with the communication technologies that are emerging. Collaboration among marketing disciplines, talents and locations to bring objectivity, understanding and insight to our clients about their consumers.

Our clients are asking us to create ways to make marketing simpler for them in a more complex playing field.

The complexity of media apertures, a marketer's own business structures and hierarchies and the diversity of cultures that ideas must connect with, can be daunting, I know.

I have found a principle that that helps turn this complexity into a bit more manageable simplicity in the emerging global village.

It is a principle built on the idea of focus. This principle can help you "make marketing simpler":

***(Slide: Take care of the Brand, first
the Agency, second
Individual agendas, third.***

these are not mutually exclusive.)

Take care of the brand, first, the agency second, and individual agendas, third. These are not mutually exclusive. I did not say take care of the client first. I said, take care of the brand, first. In the advertising and marketing services business, we co-own the brand. We don't have a business, if we don't take care of the brand--- first, and that means their consumer is the boss.

You cannot control everything in this emerging world, let us learn from history. Our clients are urging the communications industry to see the opportunity for greater integration of strategy and ideas combined with deeper understanding of multiculturalism.

Isolate or integrate? Is it blowing up sound, or muffling sound? If you don't want to get hit by a train, get off the tracks. Clients, the media and marketing services companies must integrate through partnerships and enhanced collaboration.

There is one more thing I would suggest for each of us involved in the communications business--- a reminder really. It inspires me.

(Video: Think Different)

Think Different. Keep thinking different. There has never been a more exciting time to be in the communications business.

That's what I Found in Translation.

(Slide: Thank You)

Thank you for inviting me to share these ideas with you