



insight 360°

quarterly newsletter

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MSPA
ASIA/PACIFIC

www.mspa-ap.org

from the editors desk

A very warm Happy New Year to you from the team at MSPA-AP. We hope you've enjoyed some special time with family and friends, and now looking forward to painting a fresh, productive and successful 2016.

Thank you for taking time to join us for the first MSPA-AP Insight Newsletter of the year. We'll review stories and photos from the Sydney Conference, and let you know about plans for 2016. We've got articles from members and tips from 'The Expert'.

I'm sure all Conference attendees will agree, that Peter Rogers and the event team, with special mention to Michelle Pascoe, arranged a poignant and stimulating conference. An immense thank you to them for their time and dedication.

As President Saidul Haq mentioned in his recent email to you, MSPA-AP had a constructive 2015 holding workshops and webinars, redesigning the website and commencing Shopper Certifications. The year ahead promises more benefits for our members, the introduction of an awards program for mystery shopping excellence, and a lively conference to be held in Mumbai, India in November.

As always, your feedback and contributions to your Newsletter are encouraged, so contact us with suggestions for improvement or additional inclusions to this communication.



Keira Mackenzie-Smith

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MSPA® ASIA/PACIFIC new members

A good start to 2016 with three new members. We welcome you aboard and look forward to meeting you soon.

- Taiwan Trend Research, Co., Ltd. (TTR) Taiwan
- PT. Melia Sukma Inspirasi, Indonesia
- Bare Associates India Pvt Ltd, India



Successful Sydney Conference 2015

The sunny shores of Darling Harbour, Sydney played the perfect host for our 11th annual 2015 Conference gathering members from 17 countries for three days of networking, learning, discussions and debates. The tireless Conference Committee, headed by Sydney-sider and ex-President Peter Rogers, provided a diverse and memorable group of contemporary speakers who's topics provided plenty of stimulating post-conference deliberations.

Proceedings kicked off with the always thought-provoking Dr Simon Longstaff from the St James Ethics Centre. As one of Australia's leading 'thinkers', Dr Longstaff challenged us with stirringly-significant ethical scenarios impacting our industry. He certainly left the audience pondering possible solutions for these likely conundrums.

Paul Van Veenendaal, from CSBA, followed Dr Longstaff with a detailed presentation providing attention-grabbing ideas for the future growth of mystery shopping business.

The annual international panel discussion hosted by MSPA-AP President Saidul M Haq gave conference attendees a unique chance to listen and question industry leaders on global mystery shopping matters. The illustrious debating team this year included Aftab Anwar, MSPA-AP Founder and Global Board Director, Yvonne Kinzel, President MSPA-EU, Mike Bare, Founder MSPA-NA, Veronica Boxberg Karlsson, Founder MSPA-EU and MSPA Global Board Chairman, Nigel Cover.

We were treated to mystery shopping theory as seen through the eyes of Professor Charlie Benrimoj from the University of Sydney, who with his co-presenter John Bell, Pharmacist, presented their findings from a study into 'patient' mystery shopping.

The second day of the conference saw two incredibly diverse speakers in Rowan Lodge from Aesop and Chris Brindley from Metro Bank in the UK who presented their interesting client experiences of MS programs. Chris was a big hit attracting a rare full house on the morning after the gala dinner. His appeal even enticed three people from the Banking Industry to attend just his presentation. In the case of Aesop, we learnt the global company is still yet to implement a mystery shopping program that can truly capture functional feedback on the sensory and 'emotional' service given in their stores.

Of course, for most, the measure of conference success is opportunity to network. Thanks to the welcome drinks, the speed networking organised by Michelle Pascoe, the gala dinner cruise on Sydney Harbour and the manageable number of attendees, we believe everyone had the best opportunity to spend valuable time with individual members forming new friendships and strong bonds.

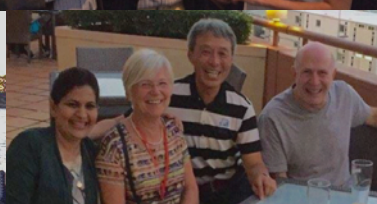
Thanks again go to Peter Rogers, Anu Mehta, Michelle Pascoe, Bhairavi Sagar, Saidul Haq and Keira Mackenzie-Smith for all their time and hard work that went into staging this tremendous event.

speakers



MSPA[®] ASIA/PACIFIC annual conference

sydney, november 2015





Upcoming - Networking Event Mumbai, India

We are pleased to announce that another MSPA-AP Networking Event for members and non-members will take place in **Mumbai, India** in late **February 2016**.

MSPA-AP Board Director, Bhairavi Sagar from Onion Insights will host the event and notify you all of venue and timings in the next week. Members and non-members welcome from all over our region.

Please attend if you're in town. We'd love to see you.

MSPA-AP Shopper Certification

The MSPA recognizes that Mystery Shopping is a profession, not just a hobby.

As in the case of other professions, we believe that a means of addressing shopper standardization—education and certification is necessary. In response to this need, we have developed the Online MSPA-AP Shopper Certification program.

Companies are always looking to hire the best and the brightest, and Certification is one method of setting you apart from the rest.

See the [website](#) for costs and more details -



Upcoming – Questionnaires and Guidelines Webinar

The next free, members-only Webinar will be held on **Tuesday 2 February**. Put it in your diaries.

This session includes a replay of MSPA-AP member Steven Di Pietro's recorded webinar from February 2013. The information in this webinar is invaluable knowledge for creating smart questions and avoiding making dire survey mistakes.

Shortly, you will receive an email from Anu requesting your webinar registration. The invitation will outline the scheduled time and if you can't make it, then please register and we'll be sure to send you the presentation and recording.

MSPA[®] ASIA/PACIFIC snippet

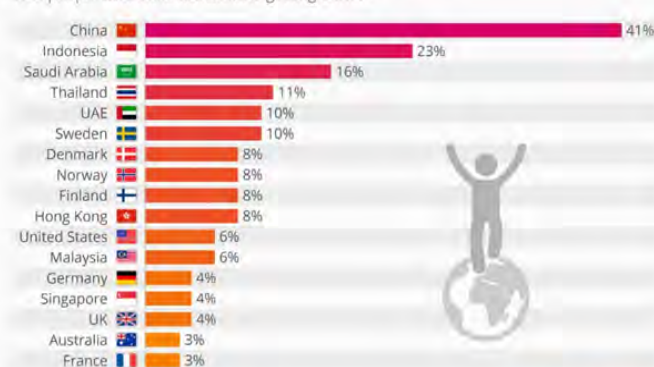
In looking forward, you may be interested to know that, "these days, people in China are the world's most optimistic by far."

In fact, someone in China is more than twice as likely as someone from another country (out of 17 surveyed) to say that the world is improving. The research, conducted by YouGov, found that Indonesia was the next most optimistic country with 23 percent of respondents saying the world is getting better.

People in the United States and Britain were far more pessimistic with only 6 and 4 percent respectively feeling that the world is improving."

The World's Most Optimistic Countries

% of people who think the world is getting better*



*November - December 2015; n = 18,335
Source: YouGov

@statistaCharts

statista

article

asia pacific mystery shopping trends in 2016

In October 2015, the International Monetary Fund released the 2016 World Economic Outlook with expectations for a sluggish 3.6% inflation. Europe can expect a moderate growth, US much like 2015 but Asia looks like the wildcard.

In our region, many of our client industries depending heavily on China will be affected by its slowing growth. Countries expected to decelerate include China, Japan, until Q4 2016, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and areas of developing Asia. Providing politics remain stable, markets in Pakistan and Bangladesh continue to be firm. With neutral growth expected in Malaysia and Indonesia, reductions in oil prices affecting the Middle East and weaker global demand for Australian minerals, focus is with countries anticipating positive expansion. Growth front runners in the region are likely to be India with economic and infrastructure reforms and low commodity prices encouraging consumer spending, and the Philippines and Vietnam both benefiting from investment booms.

How does this affect mystery shopping?

By looking at local industry economic forecasts for the twelve months ahead, perhaps you can draw your own conclusions.

- Global travel spending growth expected at around 4% with much of this disbursed in our region with 500,000 hotel rooms planned in Asia Pacific countries in 2016
- Low oil prices positively affecting sales in the automotive and travel industry
- Interest rates at record lows impacting banking in the region
- Expected Asia spending surge in Health Care
- Greater retail spending online. Online sales in APAC expected to reach US\$1.3 trillion by 2019, growing at 18.5% over next five years. Only need to look to China's recent 'Singles Day' 24-hour online spend record of US\$9.3 billion
- Estimated 81% of shoppers conduct online research before buying, and almost all are very close to making their purchasing decision before visiting the store in person
- Average mobile user consumes more than 65 minutes of live video a day and this number is growing fast. Millennials look at live streaming video the same way past generations viewed television. The future of knowledge and culture is in digital, not print
- Sharing economy giants like Airbnb and Uber are encouraging consumer demand for faster service, online facilities and more reliable accessibility
- Pacific Rim forecasted for unusually bad weather in 2016 as one of three strongest El Nino's since 1950 is expected to cause major disruptions, droughts and floods

MSPA[®] international round-up



MSPA Europe Annual Conference Corinthia Hotel St. George Malta - 24—26 May 2016

In 2016 we will travel to the beautiful Island of Malta for our conference on the 24-26 May 2016. Malta packs glorious variety into its small archipelago, including prehistoric temples, fossil-studded cliffs, hidden coves, thrilling scuba diving and a history of remarkable intensity.

The theme of this year's conference is: **Your Future Now**

"Increasing Relevance and Creating Demand for Mystery Shopping"

The programme will be packed with interesting and informative speakers from across Europe and beyond, all with the objective of helping you develop your business by focusing on the issues that matter to our industry today. **Don't delay, register today!**

The preliminary program will be published in January and registration is open. [Click here](#) for the full program, information & Online registration are available.

MSPA-EU Education Week

The first **MSPA-EU** members 'Education Week' was held in Amsterdam last month, and they are delighted to report that this 3-day event was a great success. The objectives of the Education Week were two-fold. Firstly, to provide members with access to expert speakers from our industry to share their experience across a whole range of important topics. Secondly, to provide the delegates with a chance to network with their peers and share ideas at an operational level.

16 participants from 10 different countries attended one or more of the workshops, and everyone who attended found great value in the sessions. Indeed, with an overall feedback total of 4.85 (out of 5), this can be viewed as MSPA-EU's most successful workshop since they began this format of education for members in 2013.

MSPA Africa Event 2016 Kenzi Tower Hotel, Casablanca, Morocco - 3 March 2016

MSPA Europe is organising its first meeting in Africa, to be held in Casablanca, Morocco.

The event will take place at the Kenzi Tower Hotel, Casablanca, 3rd of March 2016.

An informal dinner is planned for the evening of 2nd March.

Do you have business in Africa or are you looking for business opportunities / business partners in Africa?

[Click here](#) for the full program, information & online registration is available.

MSPA-NA CXE3 Conference Puerto Rico 2016

Mark your calendars! **MSPA-NA** have already begun planning so save the date

October 19 – 21, 2016

**El Conquistador Resort in Fajardo,
Puerto Rico.**

[Click here](#) for info on Puerto Rico

[Click here](#) for info on the Resort

MSPA-NA 'ShopperFest' Las Vegas—24-26 June 2016

This unique opportunity allows shoppers and MSPs to have an open forum to discuss any questions, concerns and provide feedback.

On top of that, shoppers had the opportunity to become certified in a number of areas!

[Click here](#) for more information.

Click the icons for international
MSPA websites

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NORTH AMERICA

case study exchange



Article By Ed Dean, JETT Asia, Shanghai

At your service: change, and change 2.0

The story so far...

“A happy customer is the best business model” is a favourite business quotes because it’s short, it’s simple, and it’s true!

When price and product quality are equivalent your differentiating factor is the quality of your service. This is true for any service business – and for any client. A focus on quality and consistent service is fundamental for building a strong brand.

However, while this is obvious today, it’s an idea that developed only in the late 90’s. The growth of the internet and social media since the 90’s and 00’s have only increased the importance of service as consumers can easily share their grievances about poor service.

When we founded our business in China in 2004 we were often asked: “why would I pay money to train my team when I know they’re going to leave anyway”. As you can imagine, we struggled! However, our growth since then from zero staff to a full-time team of 40 is a testament to this change in focus.

International brands still have a deeper understanding of the value of service, but things progress fast in China and in the past five years there has been strong growth in interest from local brands both large and small.

Today we see a focus on service from even the most traditional State Owned Enterprises, and this change in attitude and focus is due to two major trends.

The first of these is the developing and maturing nature of China’s service sector, and more widely of the Chinese economy. The 2000’s in China witnessed a focus on customer acquisition and growth. Understandably, customer retention and consolidation are more recent trends.

The second trend is globalisation. Many service businesses have achieved what they were working towards: relative parity between the service experience in their stores everywhere. By focusing on service standards, procedures, hiring policies and training, you can walk into a North Face store or an InterContinental hotel in Beijing, London, New York or Rio and your experience will be relatively consistent.

It’s great to see an increased focus on service as great service is a win-win-win for everyone.

What do we see looking into the future?

Looking into the future we see accelerated change, and we believe things are going to change more in the next five years than in the past fifteen.

We are entering a world where today’s huge developments in technology are going to disrupt the traditionally people-focused service industry substantially. Three examples which come to mind:

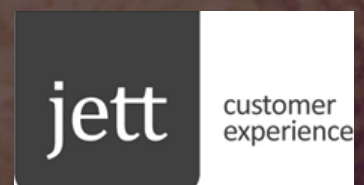
1. ■ Payment. Mobile payments will soon become a reality, and retail banking will be shaken up as the Millennial generation comes of age. We are going to see a huge proliferation in new brands, technologies, and even currencies which smooth-out the least-enjoyable part of any shopping spree.

2. ■ Big data. As the price of data-storage and the software for analysing data continue to fall, service brands are going to understand their customers better than ever. Customer knowledge will be right up to date, extremely detailed, and easily accessible. Facial recognition software will recognise customers as they enter. As you arrive at your hotel or at the airport, the system will know who you are, and what your room or seat preferences are. The new branch of your favourite chain restaurant will already know your favourite Saturday brunch order.

3. ■ Mix of online and offline. Why should customers be limited by the lack of physical storage space at a store? Buying online, while in-store, will become straightforward. In terms of e-commerce, tracking software is more sophisticated every year, and able to track your habits across multiple devices. Walk into a store and the Sales Associate will show you the jacket you recently looked at online but didn’t buy yet.

Happy hour again?

We started by emphasising the importance of happy customers, but we can’t know whether the above developments will produce customers that are happier than before. There are concerns about privacy and the ethics of the powers that technology gives those who use it. However, there are exciting opportunities for brands that are able to meet their customers’ evolving expectations.



MSPA[®] ASIA/PACIFIC features

sound bytes

Nabil Rizkallah
GWR Consulting
Dubai



GWR Consulting is the Leading Customer Experience company in the region providing Mystery Shopping, Customer Satisfaction Surveys, Journey Mapping and training. They help their Clients to understand their customer needs so they can greatly improve their services, sales and business performance in real time. GWR Consulting will customize a mystery shopping program to give accurate and informative reports based on the quality of client service offerings to secure a customer base and improve sales efficiency. Reports test every aspect of client operations from staff response times, staff appearance, product choice, to other critical service factors.

How is business in your country?

Business is positive and progressing. Nowadays, there is a large demand from companies to enhance their customer experience methods in Dubai, where our headquarters is present. Dubai's shift from an oil-reliant economy to one that is service and tourism oriented deviated the customer experience scale. All in all, business was never better in Dubai and region, and our partners abroad couldn't agree more.

What are some of the issues you are facing? Have you solved them?

The issues that we are facing are the multicultural differences, language barriers, and large expanded populations due to our large geographical presence. Our commitment to the quality control industry for hospitality, retail, automotive, schools and government agencies in the Gulf Corporation Council, Levant, and North Africa region is essential. Recruiting best-fit talent, developing innovative technology, and consulting with measurable results makes us strive for continual process improvement.

What's a recent positive development you have seen in the industry or your business?

The positive development that we have seen in the industry is the recent shift towards B2B development and Customer Experience services. Furthermore, by partnering our business with some of the best-known brands in the region allowed us to expand and reach a higher demographic. We are currently opening a new office in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which will be a positive progress for 2016

[Click here to find out more about G.W.R Consulting](#)

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ask the expert

“What should we include in a client proposal?”

The points below, about this very subject, came from a recent MSPA-EU Education Workshop. The workshop was attended by staff from large and small mystery shopping organisations across Europe, and they all agreed on the following essential proposal inclusions and ones that would be nice to have but not always necessary:

Essential inclusions:

- Short intro of company
- Sample size
- Methodology
- Timing (set up and waves)
- Why the project is going ahead
(client background, description of project)
- Pricing
- Quality control
- Project and Data confidentiality
- Validation process
- Shopper profile
- Goals and targets (deliverables)
- Ethics (as guided by MSPA)
- Terms and conditions, purchases
- Contact details
- Project follow-up tasks

Nice-to-have inclusions:

- MSPA or other association logo
- Ethics
- Expectations of client
- Examples of reporting
- Client references/testimonials
- Unique selling points
- The MSP team
- Other related company products

“What tips do you have to develop a Mystery Shopping website that will set me apart from the competition?”

The most important website features that will engage a client when they're searching for a new provider are:

- Good Search Engine Optimisation ranking so the client sees you ahead of the competition
- Visual appeal – colours, photos, simple design – and easy site navigation
- Concise information and a clear sense of your offerings
- Contact details (that are easy to find)
- Invitation for the client to take action – email contact, newsletter to sign up to or free quote process
- Testimonials by current clients - third party validation
- What locations you service

On average, it “takes about 50 milliseconds (that's 0.05 seconds) for users to form an opinion about your website that determines whether they like your site or not, whether they'll stay or leave” ([Conversionxl](#)).

Good luck and happy mystery shopping!

To Ask the Expert

Please email mSPA-ap@mysteryshop.org



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2015-16

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case study exchange leader award



Our inaugural award for Case Study excellence was announced at the MSPA-AP Conference in Sydney in November. The winner of the 2015 Case Study Exchange Leader is Michelle Pascoe from OOPS, Australia for her piece on mystery shopping in Gymsnasiums which appeared in the August 2015 Insight Newsletter.

Congratulations Michelle!

What makes a Case Study successful? A one-page story of industry experience demonstrating MSPA standards, ethics and values while sharing knowledge and thought-provoking ideas from our daily mystery shopping lives.

quarterly quote

Professional Standards and Ethical Conduct – Applying the Code

Responsibilities to the Business Community

MSPA Members will not intentionally abuse confidence in the business community. At no time is mystery shopping information to be used to intentionally mislead the business community.

Instances of abuse in the business community undermine the credibility of our industry.

Jim Chong

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