

Social Media Entrepreneur: Linkedin to World Professional Network

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Abstract

Social Media Facebook, Twitter, YouTube (FTY) have grabbed much interest among college students. Students use FTY non-stop, in the classroom. How do professors compete with FTY? FTY generated 1.5 billion followers. But the relevance of FTY in business, government and industry remains unclear. In November 2009, this author employed Social Media Linkedin to connect with world professionals. Organizing 19 E-Leader conferences at Asia and Europe proved to be a Social Media entrepreneurship. Results: 6,000+ professionals were connected via Linkedin, 1000+ professionals attended E-Leader conferences, with 244 board members from 41 countries.

Keywords: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Linkedin, CASA, E-Leader, Academia.edu, Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic Research and Zoominfo

1. EDSIG CONFERENCE

EDSIG conferences have existed for many years. Professional conferences tend to repeat themselves. Engineering professors attend engineering conferences and social science professors attend conferences on social issues. They do not meet. Large conferences get 1000+ attendees with 10 parallel sessions. Speakers present their papers for 20 minutes and leave. There is little interaction among them. This author attended many foreign conferences. The 2008 Russia conference had 100 attendees, but only 15 speakers were non-Russians. Everyone was in the same room. Professors covered topics in the social science, engineering, history, finance, etc. It was interesting to learn areas outside of one's discipline. There were many exchanges among the small groups, Hsu (2008).

2. CHINESE AMERICAN SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

The Chinese American Scholars Association (CASA), was founded for academics, managers, professionals and others who supported the concerns of the Chinese American issues, CASA (2015). CASA was registered with the State of New York and Internal Revenue Service (IRS code Section 501 C-3) as a not-for-profit tax-exempt organization in 1989. CASA ran many workshops and conferences in the New York area with daily attendance of 30 to 450 people. In 2004, emerging markets Brazil, Russia, India and China moved to the global stage. E-Commerce, Internet, robotics, virtualization provided new and innovative ways to learning. This author was elected as the CASA President in 2005. While attending a conference in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2005, this author met Diana Silonova.

Diana was a vice president of Vase Management in Connecticut. Vase is a company that does event planning. After meeting Vase CEO Vee Adusei and obtained the approval of the CASA board, a joint venture E-Leader was formed. E-Leader aims to run international conference in Asia and Europe to address leadership, ethics and related issues.

3. SETTING UP A WEBSITE

Vase Management set up a website to disseminate information. The setup is not difficult, but was continually updated.

4. MARKETING AND OPERATION

To keep the cost down, CASA employed staff in Eastern Europe. They are unpretentious and professional. Yet the cost is much lower than in the US. To do marketing, CASA placed ads with *The Chronicle Higher Education* four times, with limited success. CASA put together an email list of known speakers and continually generated new ones. Marketing is done by emails and follow-ups.

E-Leader is a low-cost operation. There is no physical office, no utility bills (electricity, gas, or water), no rent, and no salaries to be paid. The only cost is to maintain the website and email operations. The major cost for this author is to travel to the different cities to run the conference. University does not cover these expenses, the cost is treated as a tax deduction.

5. LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

To make any conference a success, location is the key. The CASA board decided to run two conferences per year, one in Europe and one in Asia. In June, the temperature ranged 60 to 75 degrees in Europe, ideal for a summer conference because American professors have summers off, while European universities still have classes in June. In January, the temperature was 75 to 90 degrees for Southeast Asia. This was perfect for a winter conference because most places in the US or Europe are cold in winter. Two choices for conference locations: a hotel or a local University. The cost of hotels is prohibitively expensive. With the good contacts from universities, CASA decided to employ universities as local hosts. This worked out well.

6. REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

CEOs, managers, professors, and researchers participated as speakers. CASA charges the speakers only. Speakers are CASA customers. Local attendance, not presenting a paper, is free. CASA does this to encourage local participation.

CASA has a small staff. To collect fees in a foreign country is a major challenge. CASA set up a credit-card online payment. It worked for US credit cards, but not for foreign credit cards. After many trials and errors, the best practice was to get bank checks or certified checks from American speakers. For non-US speakers, they pay by wire transfer. For repeat customers, they can pay cash at the conference site.

7. BENEFITS ATTENDING E-LEADER

Speakers get to visit a city in Europe or Asia and the opportunity to publish his/her paper for possible promotion or tenure. For professors, this is a great incentive. Publication is not important for CEOs or managers. But traveling to a new city to share success stories is very compelling. Registration fees paid to CASA are fully deductible because CASA is a non-profit firm, registered with the US government.

Airfare, hotel and related expenses may be deductible if they are part of a professional development to maintain a job as a professor. For CEOs or managers, the company normally pays all fees. One needs to consult a tax preparer, CPA or accountant to find out tax deductibility for attending E-Leader in USA or foreign countries.

CASA charges low fees (\$300 for the first paper, and \$75 for each additional paper). The speaker gets an online publication and a copy of a CD-ROM. These publications are approved by the US Library of Congress, with two different ISSN numbers. Twenty years ago, people attended conferences, and got a thick volume of conference proceeding, 500 to 1000 pages. It was so heavy. In the E-Leader era, a CD-ROM is much better.

8. EMBRACING LINKEDIN

Since November 2009, this author started connecting professionals on the social network LinkedIn. In the beginning, it was not active. Two or three people were linked in a week. Then this author joined 50 discussion groups. As soon as someone posted a discussion, any one in this group could post a reply. This quickly

became a threaded discussion. One person will say, yes I agree because or I disagree due to A variety of topics were discussed and some topics lasted for more than two years.

This author built a world professional network with 6,000+ first-level contacts and received 97 public endorsements on LinkedIn (2015). Deep Nishar, Senior Vice President of LinkedIn, recognized this author, as "the top 1% most-viewed profile on LinkedIn". A partial list of the public recommendation on E-Leader conference experiences, is cited in the Appendix section of this paper.

What about Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others? 1 billion people are on Facebook daily posting pictures, chatting, etc. Millions are on Twitter, presumably texting. This author was not interested in sharing photos with students. Most of the posts on YouTube are jokes or sex related.

Professors, CEOs, managers should behave in a professional manner. LinkedIn is a network with 300+ million professionals worldwide. It provides the perfect forum for this author. Hundreds of LinkedIn professionals become E-Leader speakers/customers because they value the experiences of attending E-Leader conferences. Academia.edu, Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic Research cited papers of Hsu. Of the 11 papers cited by Academia (2015), the paper on Marketing and Sales Management received 4,646 downloads, top 2% on Academia.edu, Hsu (2010). Zoominfo (2015) cited 48 references of Hsu papers.

9. CONCLUSION

It is ideal to start a business using the Internet. Since 2006, using email marketing, LinkedIn, a local university support, excellent staff, CASA ran 19 successful E-Leader conferences in Asia and Europe. 6,000+ people were connected to this author via LinkedIn. 1000+ attended E-

Leader conferences. CASA has 244 board members from 41 countries. Social Media Entrepreneur for globalization is fantastically rewarding!

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dr. Anthony Troncone of Dominican College, did the proof reading of this paper. Thank Diana Silonova and Vee Adusei of Vase Management, 19 universities/firms in Asia/Europe as local hosts, CASA 244 board members, Dr. Leo Bruno, Prof. Ludmilla Sterbova, Susan Sapsed, Dr. Sidney Castle and many others for promoting E-Leaders. Thank 6,000+ first-level contacts on LinkedIn for continuous support.

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APPENDIX

LINKEDIN PUBLIC TESTIMONIALS

Dr. Abdelbadeh Salem, Professor at Faculty of Computer and Information Science, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt --- Donald is a very active person on the international level and he organized an interesting event titled E-Leader, July 23, 2015.

Dr. Frank Owarish, Executive Director at International Institute for Strategic Research and Training, NYC, USA --- I have known Dr. Donald Hsu for many years and he keeps impressing me as both a practitioner and as a scholar, above all as a leader by his amazing energy. The work he does for the international conferences organized of the Chinese American Scholars Association is absolutely outstanding, bringing together every year, twice a year, leading international scholars and practitioners with forward, constructive thinking on a vast array of issues facing society. Dr. Hsu's work on promoting the concept of E-Leader is ground breaking. It is a pleasure working with Dr. Hsu, July 23, 2015.

Conor Cusack, MPA, International Sales Representative at Global Academic Consultants, Rochester, NY, USA --- Donald Hsu is a highly valued respected colleague. Donald is an extremely accomplished professional, and wears several hats, including President of Chinese American Scholars Association. Don has spearheaded E-Leader Conferences around the world, which led to papers and presentations made by some of the brightest minds in business, education, and organizational development. I cannot bestow a higher recommendation for an individual like Don. Were I to choose someone for a coach or mentor, Don would be that individual. It is my privilege to submit this on behalf of someone for whom I have the utmost respect, July 12, 2015.

Dr. John Teck Choon Teo, Director, School of Service Management at CSM Academy International, Singapore --- Congratulate Prof. Donald Hsu for leading E-Leader Prague 2015 successfully. In all my years of experience, some people stand out for their great qualities and Prof. Hsu is one of those people. He is well known for his personality qualities, intelligence, work ethic, positive attitude, teamwork mentality, leadership, and diligence. He is well respected for organizing E-Leader conferences internationally. I've known him for several years now, he has shown me time and again that he is a positive, motivated leader with amazing potential, June 17, 2015.

Ms. Ambre Ma, Founder LZM Marcom, Shanghai, China --- I attended Dr. Hsu E-Leader conference at Fudan University January 2015. I presented a paper on "Interior Design Trend in Chinese Markets", which is a summary of my research. The conference was composed of the experts with various domains. Dr. Hsu provided a great learning environment and information during the lecture. It was a practical, and well organized conference and I look forward to attending one in the future, April 4, 2015.

Prof. Dr. Mingquan WANG, Associate Professor, Senior Manager of Low-carbon City Research at Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai, China --- Great work and international cooperation which make things happen step by step. Impressive about the operational ability of Donald Hsu and CASA, February 3, 2015.

Prof. Dr. Ludmila Štěrbová, Vice-Dean at University of Economics, Faculty of International Trade, Prague, Czech Republic --- Donald is hard working person with good managerial skills and amazing ideas. He founded the successful E-Leader Conference that is held twice a year and initiated E-Leader Journal. He taught management courses at our University as a visiting professor. Students appreciate his approach learning different business topics, September 13, 2014.

Prof. Adesina Odufowokan, Lecturing at Education/Lecturing, Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu-Ijebu, Ogun-State, Nigeria ----- Donald is a detail-oriented manager who has presided over the affairs of Chinese American Scholars Association. We have had series of conference presentations together.

He has presented top provoking articles that is second to none till date, August 19, 2014.

Krystyna Palonka, PhD., expert at CSPA, lecturer at Alcide de Gasperi University of Euroregional Economy, Warsaw, Poland ---- Donald is committed to his tasks, helping potential partners and kind while providing necessary assistance, very professional and energetic. It is a real pleasure to cooperate with, highly recommended, August 3, 2014.

Paola Corradi, Rise2Up for Expo2015 Business Development Strategy, Milan, Italy --- Dr. Donald HSU is a Positive Thinking person, an excellent Chairman, a Dedicated Researcher, Congress Organizer and Teaming Builder. I had the opportunity to meet him at E-Leader congress in Milan. I appreciated the competence and the friendliness between participants, June 7, 2014.

Karen Melonie Gould MBA, Founder/CEO Fintech B2B Finance Platform, Manchester, UK --- I had the pleasure of working with Donald Hsu at the E Leader Conference Milan 2014 and it was an honor. I found Donald to be so full of wisdom and with a keen sense of humor. I am looking forward to working with Donald in the future, June 6, 2014.

Prof. Kamphol Wipawayangkool, Assistant Professor at Sam Houston State University, Texas, USA --- Donald Hsu was such a great and flexible host at the CASA E-Leader Conference in Bangkok, Thailand 2014. It was my first time attending the conference and it would not be the last. Thank you for arranging such a cordial, intimate, and engaging atmosphere. Thank you, Don, and see you next time, January 17, 2014.

Wael Ramadan, B.Eng., MBA, PhD, PMP, LSSBB, Toronto, Canada -- Donald Hsu is a charismatic leader who is able to inspire professionals, managers and academics towards achieving his vision of a global academic platform at CASA. I have known Don as a collaborative visionary at E-Leader Global Conferences who is able to work across regional and business boundaries. I highly recommend Don, September 11, 2013

Kartika Angkawijaya, Senior Product Information Specialist, Singapore --- I attended E-Leader conference which Donald organized in Singapore. It gives me chance to see different perspective on how different discipline perceive "e". It helps me to see things not only from technical stand points which is my nature but how to use it for greater purposes in more practical manner. January 25, 2013

Dr. Patrick K.C. Low, Appointed Visiting Professor, at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji --- Donald is a very personable Conference organizer and very people-centered. A great person to be with, January 10, 2013

Stephanie Lambert, PhD Researcher at Loughborough University --- I met Donald at the E-Leader conference in Singapore (January 2013). Donald has created an environment where both academics and practitioners can share their work. As Donald puts it, he 'brings people together' and this conference was a great example of that. The people and presentations were eclectic and we all learnt from one another. Donald ensured a supportive and inquisitive nature to the conference and I'd like to thank him for having myself and my colleagues, January 7, 2013.

Christine Merritt, Ph.D., Assistant Director of Strategic Alliances, TAPCO, Wisconsin, USA ---- It is with great pleasure that I strongly recommend Professor Donald Hsu for his innovation as President of Chinese American Scholars Association. I was fortunate to present a paper at the recent E-Leader Berlin Conference in June. I have attended and presented at many conferences. But the way this unique conference was designed, provided numerous opportunities for collaboration and input into different areas of expertise. Too bad, more conferences don't take note of this approach! Everybody benefits. We need more global conversations, July 8, 2012

"The E-Leader conference in Berlin was very interesting, well organized and an excellent opportunity to share research and meet great scholars from all over the world. Congratulations Donald for your great job!" June 15, 2012. Top qualities: Great Results, On Time, Creative ----- Cristina de Azevedo Rosa, Economist, Lisbon, Portugal

"I know Donald Hsu, as President of CASA, a cultural association that facilitates and organizes cultural

exchanges among people from all over the world and working in different settings (university professors, business managers, professionals and students). Thanks to events like E-Leader Conference, CASA gives us the opportunity to meet new people, experiences, projects, approaches, visions that expand our minds and our consciousness. Donald took the strategic importance of cultural exchange and promotes - with great tact and skill - interconnection between different disciplines and people, pointing out an interdependence between business, society and culture. Through his expertise, his interpersonal skills and his tireless activity of scouting, he's managing a really interesting and growing cultural engine." June 14, 2012, ---Paola De Vecchi Galbiati, Disruptive Innovation Expert, Managing Consultant, Biela, Italy

"I met Dr. Donald Hsu, the president of Chinese American Scholars Association (CASA) via LinkedIn. CASA organized the E-Leader conference at Zagreb University, Zagreb, Croatia. The conference was perfect. I met many experienced educators and managers. It was an excellent experience for me in every aspect. I thank Dr. Hsu for the Conference and for the connections I made with participants from all over the world." June 30, 2011 --- Oya Sanli, General Manager, Paydeg Bilgi Islem Programlama Hizm, Istanbul, Turkey

-----Donald Hsu is a person who devotes his life for education, especially for E-leader conference. Every year, he chairs 2 E-leader conferences in different areas with the participation of many scholars, educators, and executives from different universities, organizations. Thanks Donald, E-leader has been organized in Vietnam for the first time very successful. Donald loves Vietnam and will come again in January 2012 to share his knowledge and experience for Vietnam Education. All the bests for you, Donald!" June 29, 2011 --- Chau Dang, Director of TOPICA EDUCATION GROUP - HCMC Branch, Vietnam

-----Donald ensured maximum efforts, knowledge, experience, dedication and excellence in order to reach the E-Leader success. E-Leader Zagreb success, or any previous event is no surprise, because Donald ensured his own and their success through his great engagement. Thanks to Donald, great pleasure to confirm, each project participant was content and eager for further efforts towards E-Leader success. Achieving and motivating others in the same direction is respectful and worth of recommendation." June 23, 2011 --- Darko Lugonja, Head of Section, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, Zagreb, Croatia.
