**“Conversations On Turning 20”: *From Chalkboard to Check-In: Boon Sian Chai on Embracing Change, China’s Next Travel Chapter & What the Future Holds***

When you get to the ripe young age of 20, you’re bound to collect lots of stories – not only about the past but lessons for the future.

As WiT marks its 20th year in 2025, we turn the spotlight on our community, our tribe pioneers and leaders, to tell their stories and share their views on the evolution of online travel and technology.

We ask them to look back on the past and their early days, reflect on the present and why this moment is pivotal for online travel and get them to imagine the future, the next 20.

This special WiT Studio series, “Conversations On Turning 20”, is the collective story of WiT.

As a Chinese saying goes, 以古为鉴，可以知兴替

“By using history as a mirror, one can understand the rise and fall of things.”

**Episode 20: Boon Sian Chai, Managing Director & Vice President, International Markets, Trip.com Group**

Boon Sian Chai’s journey into travel wasn’t written in the stars, it started with a chalkboard. “I began as a teacher,” said the Managing Director and Vice President of International Markets at Trip.com Group, recalling his early career. “It was purely by accident that I entered the online travel space.”

But sometimes accidents lead to destinies.

While studying for his MBA in Chicago, Chai was introduced to the world of hospitality by a classmate whose father once helmed Hilton International. Around the same time, he witnessed Expedia rise as a platform of choice in the US and he saw the future. “As a frequent traveller myself, I was fascinated. The shift from offline to online was just beginning.”

What followed was a 13-year run at Expedia, with postings in Hong Kong and a front-row seat to the battle for Asia. “Back then, Agoda didn’t speak to Expedia, and Expedia didn’t speak to Booking. It was a turf war,” he said. “Now, the landscape is very different. There’s collaboration, data-sharing, and even feeding inventory between competitors.”

**From West to East: A Cultural Reset**

When COVID hit, Chai made the leap from Expedia to Trip.com. “It wasn’t a long-considered plan. I had moved back to Singapore from Hong Kong, and Trip moved quickly. I interviewed, got an offer within a week, and jumped in.”

What struck him most about working in a Chinese tech company? The sheer velocity.

“In the West, even an MVP had to be 90% ready. In Trip, if it’s working, it ships. They iterate *after* launch. That was a massive shift for me.”

Another surprise: the openness to learning across functions. “In Trip, if you're in tech, you're encouraged to learn about flights, hotels, negotiations – everything. In my previous life, the motto was ‘swim in your swim lane.’ Trip says, ‘explore the ocean.’”

**The Four Pillars: Global Growth + Inbound China**

For decades, the China travel narrative was about outbound. Now, the spotlight is on inbound. And Trip.com is helping drive that shift, with everything from free city tours for first-timers in Beijing and Shanghai, to working with provinces like Chengdu on destination promotion.

“We’re seeing triple-digit growth in inbound,” said Chai. “We’re translating hotel names, training guides, even educating hospitality partners on vegan preferences. It’s about making China welcoming and accessible.”

This focus doesn’t distract from global ambitions. “Inbound is one of four strategic pillars—alongside domestic, outbound, and international,” he explained. “It’s complementary. Once someone experiences the app in China, they’re more likely to use it when they travel elsewhere.”

**Service Over Price: The 5-4-4-3 Playbook**

One of Trip.com’s most talked-about frameworks is the “5443” formula: **Brand + Service: 5  
Tech & Products: 4  
Pricing: 3**

“Of course, we still have best-price guarantees,” he clarified. “But we believe service and tech are what build long-term loyalty. Our loyal users are okay with a 5-7% price premium because they know we’ll deliver.”

**The New Travel Funnel: From Google to Gen Z**

Chai doesn’t mince words when asked about distribution disruption.

“Google will become less relevant, especially in Asia. Social platforms, AI apps, and super apps are already taking over discovery and conversion.”

He cited DeepSeek and YuanBao, AI-powered platforms in China that now guide trip planning through in-depth, conversational interfaces. “We hosted hotel partners from the US and Europe recently. They were stunned by how embedded these apps are in Chinese daily life.”

The real shift, though, may come from the next generation of travellers.

“My nieces and nephews? They book on impulse. They extend trips last minute. They don’t care about hiccups, those are part of the experience.”

To adapt, Chai believes OTAs must become more like video games – tools that let users “play” and personalise. “We need to hand them the controller and let them design their own journey.”

**On Culture, Competition and What’s Next**

So what’s the one thing Asian brands need to break through globally?

“It’s not about East vs. West. It’s about blending the best of both worlds. Hire local. Stay open. Be willing to learn and unlearn,” said Chai.

And as for the next 20 years?

“I think we’ll be living in a world that’s both virtual and in-person. Maybe we’ll travel to space. But what won’t change is the need to feel, to taste, to connect. Technology should amplify that—not replace it.”

Spoken like a man who’s seen travel through many lenses and who’s helping shape the lens through which the next generation will explore.

**FROM CHALKBOARD TO TRAVEL**

00:17.49

Chai

ah it was I would say it was purely by accident. I started off my sort of work career and as ah as a teacher in so in Singapore. In the year 2000, when we had the internet boom, I went to join a startup company and I realized that I did not have a lot of business background and you know management background. So I decided to go to Chicago to do my MBA.

00:40.73

Chai

And during my MBA itself, I met a ah hotelier who was my fellow ah classmate He was working in a higher and his father was used to be the president of Hilton International and he introduced me to the hospitality industry.

00:55.05

Chai

And at that time, I think in 2005 when I was in the US, I started to see a lot of users using Expedia as ah as a platform to to book travel.

01:05.96

Chai

Of course, they were still in the transition of moving from offline to online. But that that really spurred my interest because i mean I'm also a vid traveler. i I did my undergrad in UK and I you know did my master's in in US. So I would love the the world of travel. And that's how I got involved in in in online travel itself.

01:22.87

Chai

I joined Expedia coincidentally, not in Singapore, but was in Hong Kong because they had a role there that was looking after them more of the emerging markets.

**THE EARLY DAYS, AS SEEN FROM HONG KONG**

01:46.97

Chai

yeah At that time, ah there was a lot of manual work, basically, rate loading, although it was using an extranet, but it was very laborious. And at the same time, of course, you still check your competitors, you know so you have to go online and check all the rates, you have to go and look at all the contents, look at all the description.

02:06.92

Chai

i mean Of course, now you still do it, but that at that time, was very, very manual. And and my my recollection of how it was in the early days when I was with Expedia in Hong Kong was,

02:17.91

Chai

The competitors don't move each other. It was a China war, right? Agoda don't speak to Expedia, Expedia don't speak to Woking. There was very, very little collaboration. That was how I saw it. it ah Each one will fight on their own to try to see whether you can gain market share itself.

**THE DEFINING MOMENTS**

02:37.00

Chai

I think it has evolved quite a lot. So if I look at how things have changed, of course, 2008, the financial crisis was one of the defining moments because market crash, you know, people were worried about travel, business travel and and spending and so on.

02:52.48

Chai

But it actually helped the OTAs. Because when hotels need business, they go to the to ah OTAs to really see whether they can grab business. And that's how I think OTAs actually grown ah grown during that period.

03:35.19

Chai

early years for for myself. I think the other defining moment was how Expedia outside of US or even US itself was going on an acquisition trail.

03:46.25

Chai

So basically they acquired Travelocity, Orbitz and then went to Oceana to acquire Wattif. They also had Elon as an investment in in mainland China. They went into j JV with AirAsia and that was when you know the LCC started to emerge as one of the ways to travel.

04:03.52

Chai

And then Trip.com or at that time they call it Ctrip was also going into a lot of partnerships. They were partnering with Booking.com. In fact, Booking Holdings had some shareholding in Ctrip.

04:14.29

Chai

They also partnered with TripAdvisor. And then the you the emergence of Meta in China, China, ah Elon competing against Ctrip and then Meituan as a Groupon kind of company going into hotel travel and and then trip going into acquisition mode like how Expedia was.

04:32.80

Chai

They did a share swap with Expedia and they took on Elon together with Mac Baidu and then we have China and then Tongchen, Elon which is also part of ah the the Tencent company all went under sort of the umbrella of cri including some of the global expansion that Trip did, acquisition of Skyscanner, make my trip, and so on.

**THE MOVE FROM EXPEDIA TO CTRIP: “BECAUSE YOU SAW THE FUTURE?”**

05:26.08

Chai

Yeah, ah and for me to move from Expedia to Trip was also, I would say, not very not exactly planned. ah Because basically when I left Expedia, it was during COVID. I was based in Hong Kong at the time and I moved back to Singapore. And basically ah I needed to find something that's more Singapore based.

05:45.10

Chai

I was very, very close to joining non-online travel company, a global company, but not online. And then Trip came knocking on the door within within a week.

05:56.72

Chai

I had all the interviews done and the offer came and I took it on. So I really admired the speed and the efficiency of how Trip as an organisation went through the interview process in terms of the recruitment.

06:11.15

Chai

That's one of the reasons. And when I spoke to CEO Jane and CEO Seon Singh and the previous CEO Ray, they were really looking at how they can expand internationally.

06:23.09

Chai

I think COVID gave them an opportunity to take a step back to see how they can regroup expand internationally. I saw that as a very similar replicating model of how Expedia expanded in the early years when I joined Expedia.

06:36.34

Chai

In 2008, Expedia was new to Asia as well and they were looking at how to expand. So I i will i would love to use my experience then. Of course, not going through the same thing, but how we can scale and expedite Trip.com's expansion internationally. So that was one of the key key reasons why I decided to take on the the trip role itself.

THE EVOLUTION OF ONLINE TRAVEL: “THOSE WE THOUGHT WOULD GO EXTINCT ARE STILL AROUND”

06:53.85

Chai

And if i talk if I look at how things have evolved, ah collaboration now is very happening across competitors. We are feeding inventories to each other. Wholesalers and travel agents surprisingly still exist.

07:08.05

Chai

We thought five, ten years ago that they're going to go extinct because everything going online, but they're still around. Now, ah API, channel managers, you know, PMS, they are still thriving.

07:19.77

Chai

brands and OTAs are still coexisting. I remember we talked about early years also about loyalty points, about you know ah hotel brands wanting to go direct and you know trying to sideline OTAs but they are still around.

07:33.95

Chai

So they are still coexisting and then more travel products are coming online. right We used to just focus on flights and hotels but now experiences, events, travel services,

07:44.81

Chai

ah restaurants, transportation, those are all just coming up. And if you look at how things are distributing, it's also very interesting. used to be just purely online, but now the the likes of social media, likes of content marketing is really thriving, right? The likes of Instagram, TikTok, and so on. Those are really the ones that's driving how distribution. Of course, the the traditional ones are still Google and and Trivago and Meta and so on, but I think that part of it is a growing green business or growing area.

08:12.79

Chai

That's how I see things going.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? WILL BE STILL BE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME STUFF?

08:41.27

Chai

ah I think those who we thought is going to go extinct or go low like travel agents or wholesalers, they were right on technology.

08:52.14

Chai

they but They are still around, but they will leverage technology a lot more on how they can work with you know traditional OTAs or even brand.com on how they can help to resell. I think that's one thing.

09:04.27

Chai

The other thing is, I think, product ah product personalization and service will still continue to be the way to go, whether it's 5, 10, 15 years, whether AI is going to be still around and so on. Personalization, product localization, ah making sure that it's still very tailored to the individual, that that kind of product enhancements will still there.

09:23.25

Chai

I will give one bold prediction. I think Google is going to be less and less relevant. in the ah in the sort of distribution space or the acquisition space.

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Chai

Because if you look at how social media, if you look at how even AI apps now, people can search for travel information and travel products on those apps itself, on those super apps.

09:45.13

Chai

So Google may start to see less traffic, may start to see less less ah transactions. Of course, it also depends on regions. maybe Maybe the likes of Google may still be very much more relevant, let's say in the US, where less of these apps and so on are around. But in Asia, or to some extent China and so on, I think the search engine ah model in terms of how you do customer acquisition we will get Less and less revenue and those ah super apps or those social media apps or those AI apps itself. Recently, I just started using an AI app in China. DeepSig, for example, everybody is familiar with it.

10:20.76

Chai

But there is this ah app itself that uses DeepSig as underlying AI agent. It's called Yuan Bao. And I just started using those over about two weeks ago.

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Chai

I was very surprised the kind of information, the kind of in-depth analysis they have provided to help travel decisions, to help look at what where to go, but what kind of travel products I look or what kind routes I should take.

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Chai

It's very, very extensive. So I think that those are those apps itself is is going to continue to thrive itself. Those very intelligent apps itself.

**WILL THIS DISRUPTION BE MORE PRONOUNCED IN ASIA? WILL A DIFFERENT ECOSYSTEM EMERGE IN ASIA?**

10:54.86

Chai

Absolutely.

11:14.68

Chai

Yeah, I think it's just a time scale. I think US s and some of the more ah Western countries, they will they will they will pick up, but it's probably at a much slower place.

11:28.22

Chai

We hosted about 2,000 hotel partners, some of them from Europe, some of them from America. They were very, very surprised. Some of them, the first time to mainland China. And when they started to see how the apps were were being used used, whether it's on transportation, on travel, or on food delivery and so on, they were shocked. They said they never expected how how ah technology and how apps are being really widely used in China. So I think it will come as just a matter of time.

11:53.12

Chai

I think Asia will lead the way, followed by Europe um ah and America. that's That's my guess. The other thing that I think is going to happen is we will have more travel time. When I say we have more travel time, meaning that not that we will work less, but it's just that will be much more effective and more efficient at work.

12:09.77

Chai

So much so that we will be able to travel more. so So much so that we can we can work everywhere. We are already working everywhere to some extent with the help of sort of ah COVID as a tailwind, but I think you it's going to get blessed.

12:21.13

Chai

maybe Maybe it's going to be even three-day work week or seven days a week you can work and you can travel at the same time. Hopefully that day will come.

**IT’S REALLY CHINA LEADING THE WAY THOUGH, ISN’T IT? “EFFICIENCY IS THE MAIN DRIVER”**

12:40.19

Chai

I believe so. I believe China in many of the areas is leading the way. But the thing is, you know if you look at it, Why is it leading the way? It's because first of all, it's very efficient driven.

12:54.19

Chai

I think a lot of the technology, a lot the apps and application is really to help people to be more efficient and then we and then with effectiveness. Do they need that in some other regions? Maybe not.

13:05.85

Chai

Do they need that that in some other countries ah in terms of user behaviors and so and so on? It may not be so. So because of that, because there is no underlying need, ah certain regions or certain countries in terms of technology and applications may not need those kind of efficient apps and effective apps because they may want to just have more time to just experience.

13:25.04

Chai

It's okay if I spend three hours or five hours doing a research on travel, but in I think in mainland China, the word efficiency and effectiveness is much more impactful or much more a need for the Chinese.

**HOW HAS WORKING WITHIN THE TRIP CULTURE CHANGED YOU? WHAT ASSUMPTIONS HAS IT CHALLENGED?**

14:04.11

Chai

ah few assumptions. when Again, moving from a Western kind of culture or organization to a very Chinese-centric ah company at the core of it, one of my assumptions was how I learned my my sort of skills in an Expedia, or even in Singapore, is things ah need to be good and perfect or great enough to be launched.

14:29.52

Chai

the The way things work in mainland China, of course in Expedia, they talk about MVP, but the MVP level is 90-95% ready. ah In China, no. I think as long as it's working, just do it.

14:41.50

Chai

Because what happens is that, especially in Trip.com, resources are always there to continue to optimize. They want to actually use the launch as ah as a feedback mechanism to continue to learn about how we can do things better. So that was my one one one of my biggest assumptions that was wrong.

14:59.62

Chai

I didn't expect that you know we can just go with with it even if it's 50% ready. So that was one. The other one is resource investments. This may not be ah purely just solely due in trip itself.

15:14.49

Chai

Or maybe it's just in trip, I'm not sure. But they are less stringent of on resource allocation.

15:19.43

Chai

Not that they don't care about resource allocation and costs, but they're less stringent. I'll give you an example, right? ah In my early days with Expedia so on, every single hit count, you have to fight for it.

15:31.86

Chai

They say, okay, this particular headcount, how am I going to make sure that I generate the return on this particular headcount itself in the next one year or two years and three years? In TRIP.com, they look very long-term. They say, okay, is this the right investments?

15:45.73

Chai

Does it help us to grow in in in Asia, in in Europe, in America in the next five, ten years? Okay, just go with it first. Let's try. Let's give o ourselves more time and space to get the returns. Don't worry about ROI in the short, short term because what we are investing now is really for the long run itself.

16:04.53

Chai

and And that's also how trip.com did. you know did the same philosophy during COVID. we We were one of those OTAs that did not do any headcount cut. In fact, we continued to invest ah in resources. That was also a timely opportunity for Trip.com as an organization to continue to expand internationally. I would say these are the two areas. If you need me to call up one com call up more, is that a Trip as an organization ah promotes and wants everybody to learn about everything.

16:37.08

Chai

Meaning that let's but whether you're in the hotel space or in the frontline interface or your tech technology techie techie or your product manager, they will love for you to learn about how

16:47.52

siew hoon

Good.

16:48.17

Chai

OTAs work or how commercial work when there's negotiatment just negotiation between ah MM's and hotels. They would love you to understand how flight works, how trains work. They always promote that and encourage that. ah Conversely, in the other organization, it's a very, very strict philosophy and and everybody knows it.

17:06.67

Chai

Swim in your swim lace. right That is a very, very core principle. Swim in your swim lanes, leave others to do that stuff. So specialization is a lot more pronounced in Expedia, while ah generalization and learning new things, going across different views of products is also another area. And I would say another area of that. I would say these are the three things that come to my mind.

**HOW ABOUT THE “HARD WORK” ETHIC? MANY WESTERN COMPANIES PROBABLY STRUGGLE TO COMPETE WITH THAT**

18:00.65

Chai

Yeah, so yes, I think hard work is one of the core ethics of Chinese culture or Chinese philosophy, right? But I think if there's if there's one company in in mainland China or in China that promotes work-life balance, it is TRIP.

18:14.99

Chai

Because James, as our co-founder and chairman, he's the one that started off three-day work week in office and two days working from home. Is it going to change the hard working?

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siew hoon

Thank you.

18:25.13

Chai

Is it going to change the mentality of ah ah working very hard, 996 that kind of stuff? It may not change entirely, but at least it's the right direction to encourage managers, encourage leaders to think about giving more time to individuals to to have have time for themselves, have time for travel and so on. So yes, philosophically, ethics in terms of hard work is there as a Chinese culture, but I think as organization, Trip.com is actually moving towards helping companies or helping leaders have more work-life balance. it will It's going to take time because it's a very ingrained work ethic or culture in the in the organization or in in in the in the society itself.

19:06.68

Chai

In fact,

19:08.14

Chai

yeah this ah James is also of promoting childbirth. He's also promoting four-day work week with the with the Chinese government. So there's a lot of things that he's trying to push with with the Chinese government and and how the society works itself. But it's going to take some time. Yes.

**THE BIG STORY NOW: CHINA INBOUND**

19:39.07

Chai

Right. ah So from the Chinese government or from the Chinese economy point of view, right, there is definitely a ah slowdown in terms of domestic consumption.

19:59.22

Chai

And that's why the Chinese ah government, of course, with with a lot of pitching from Tripp.com, is to open up more visa-free, policies for inbound china inbound into China.

20:10.80

Chai

And that's really driving a lot of the inbound gas itself. And not only that, not just visas, but many of the provinces. We were in Chengdu last week where we hosted partners.

20:22.85

Chai

The Chengdu government actually was there to welcome us. They did the presentation. And in the gala dinner, we had performances from different provinces and cities across China.

20:33.89

Chai

who were there because they wanted showcase what China can offer across the country to international travelers. I think that's a big big message to the international travelers. right And for us, we we also are working very closely with our ah provinces and our cities to see how we can help them drive more inbound customers.

20:53.84

Chai

We're seeing very good growth, triple digit growth, as you probably saw our from our our quarterly earnings report. So we are continuing to so do that. How we support that is we're helping hoteliers, we're helping ah travel companies, we're having transport companies translate, making sure that all their languages are readable and understandable in English.

21:12.12

Chai

You'll be very surprised. There's still a lot of hotels in China that doesn't have an English name. And even if they have an English name, that the English name translated to how it's showing on OTAs is incomprehensible. You don't know what they're talking about. So we are helping the Chinese hotels and read re-translate some of the the chinese English names.

21:30.39

Chai

We're helping the the transportation companies help to upskill in terms of how they can communicate ah with the you know non-native speakers in Chinese but through translation apps through ah different languages support systems.

21:44.21

Chai

We are also helping travel agents, travel tour guides in how they can actually host, what are the things to look out for in terms of hosting. you know Indian for example wants go vegetarian, people who are looking for vegan and and all the different different different kind of needs of some of the international travel.

21:59.88

Chai

And of course we also offer free tours for people coming to Shanghai and and Beijing as a first insight into what China is all about. So I think that's going to continue to grow. And if you think about how what impact it's going to be to have on the rest of Asia itself, I mean, if you're driving many people to go to China, then of course they will go less to other regions.

22:19.24

Chai

i'm already We are already seeing Koreans going to China, ah Malaysians is one of the top inbound travelers into China, Indonesians, Thai. In fact, I flew back from mainland China, I saw a lot of ah Malaysians and and Thai people, more more so than Singaporeans. Of course, our population is much smaller.

**HOW WILL THIS NEW INBOUND FOCUS IMPACT TRIP’S OVERALL GOAL OF BEING TOP GLOBAL OTA BY 2030?**

22:50.06

Chai

ah Actually, it's one of our strategy. So in inbound, so basically we have four areas, right? We have domestic, we have outbound, and then we have international, and then we have inbound.

23:02.15

Chai

So it is one of our pillars. Because basically, if you want if you want to show your prowess or you want to drive relevancy, inbound is one of the ways. but when When people come to China and they use the app, they understand how useful it is, how user-friendly it Next time, they whether they travel domestically or they travel regionally, they will also use the app. So I think it is complementary in a sense.

**ABOUT TRIP’S 5-4-4-3 Playbook  
Brand + Service: 5  
Tech & Products: 4  
Pricing: 3**23:58.06

Chai

yeah so so I can't say whether it's not never going to change, but basically we still definitely want to make sure that we we score a 5 in service. We want to score a 5 in technology (REMOVE, HE CONTRADICTS).

24:10.05

Chai

right ah Pricing itself, yes, is important and is relevant, but we believe that if you have good, great service and you have good good technology and and product itself, ah price is less important.

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Chai

Of course, if you are not ah if you're not a regular user, you're not a loyal member of Trip or Ctrip, you may see price as a key determinant.

24:32.37

Chai

But once you have experienced it, for the first time and you see the service differentiation and the product usability t and of user friendliness, I think those two areas will be the core differences. In fact, we know there's a price premium.

24:43.80

Chai

For our Ctrip customers, right when they come to our site, there is a price premium. I mean, like I can't say how many percent, but they're less concerned about price differential up to 7%. They're more concerned about how how do you service them and how you make sure that you know you have great product to support their search or their experiences itself.

25:12.24

Chai

Yeah, I mean, the thing is, we still have best price guarantee.

25:12.41

25:14.12

Chai

If a customer comes in and says, look, I saw a different price on other on other platform, I want a refund or a differential price, we still do that. We still have those price back ah price guarantees, but it's just that it's it's not going to be the way or or the way we're going to pitch our value proposition to our customers.

**THE GLOBAL EXPANSION PLAYBOOK: ASIAN BRANDS HAVE STRUGGLED, WHAT’S THE KEY TO UNLOCKING IT?**

26:15.82

Chai

ah Again, before I joined Trip, and this is just sharing from anecdotes and some of the information that came through from some of the previous Ctrip employees. Before I joined Trip, the way Ctrip or Trip.com expanded overseas is they basically just loaded Chinese staff or Chinese employees all over the world.

26:35.43

Chai

in the expansion. right and I think they realized that this probably didn't work. So they went local. So after COVID itself or during COVID itself, we went much more local. In Singapore, we hired Singaporeans, Thai and and very local people. I think to me, the secret number of the success is to get the best of bold words.

26:51.74

Chai

It is not about Chinese being the great or Americans being great is really making sure that whatever works best for you as an organization to be successful from the cultural perspective, from the work ethics perspective, from the approach and philosophy but perspective, try to mix them together.

27:08.93

Chai

Build a great concoction between these two. then you can be successful because it's not about or purely Asian or purely American or purely European. Try to get the best of both worlds.

27:18.66

Chai

Now, it's of course, it's easier said than done. If it's easily executable, then many global companies were would have been ah very successful. But i think i I think the way to do is be very embracing of all types of culture, all types of philosophies and understand what are the pros and cons and see how you take take take the pros of everyone and try to put them together and make it a success.

**THE NEXT 20**

28:01.07

Chai

ah Maybe it's a contradiction, but I would say it's virtual but in person. I don't know how is it going to be like, but I would say will probably be you know virtual in many ways that we leverage technology, but in person because you still want to experience and feel.

28:17.75

Chai

Because you can be virtual in whatever way, but you can't feel and you can't taste and you can't smell. Of course, maybe you can smell through technology with some scent and so on, but you can you can't experience, you can't eat the food, you can't you know experience the culture. So I think it will be much more towards leveraging technology, but still...

28:36.81

Chai

using in person itself. I think that's one. The other thing is maybe in 20 years time we we will go to space. i don't think it's something that's impossible.

28:48.66

Chai

I think the space travel will be something that makes and it's not going to be not saying not costly but at least it can be affordable for people who wants to you know travel with outside of the earth to some other outer space areas and so maybe traveling around the space just just to get experience maybe not even going to some other planets but just going going into outer space and coming back as ah as a travel experience itself seeing the stars or or something like this I don't know but I think that's something that I hope that we can we can achieve because it's something that people will look forward to.

29:21.86

Chai

um I don't have children, but I have a lot of nieces and nephews and who have a lot of kids and so on.

29:28.79

Chai

And honestly, the way they are traveling is unheard of. Many of them make impulse decisions. many Many of them don't plan ahead. They can go for three days and they set to extend for another two days because they think they want us to travel. over So I think it's a very different.

29:43.85

Chai

We plan ahead. I mean, as as far as my generation is cons concerned, we plan very much far ahead. We want to know exactly what to expect tomorrow, what what no hiccups and so on. But for many of my young nieces and nephews, it's okay. Hiccups, issues are learnings and experiences along the way.

Chai

Just go with it. Just take it as part of the the to journey itself. So it's very, very different thinking.

**HOW MIGHT OTAS ADAPT TO THIS KIND OF THINKING? THINK VIDEO GAMES?**

30:19.69

Chai

Yeah, that's why I think we have to be very personalized. We have to have applications and products that applies to all types of travel and not be fixated to say, I think the users will do this. I will say, leave the decision, leave the products to the users.

30:36.34

Chai

Let them do it the way. Let them use it the way they want it Right. Whatever feedback that comes to you you, you provide and you put it there. Try to be as much more diversified rather than one size fit all.

30:47.94

Chai

I think you have to put the tools in the hands of them so that they can they can play with it as much as possible, depending on their needs and their behaviors.

(might have to leave my prompt in here)

30:56.11

siew hoon

like a video game basically yeah yeah maybe that's the future

30:57.81

Chai

Yeah, exactly.