WAY TO THE INDUSTRY, ROLE OF DATA, DEVELOPMENT GOING FORWARD - MEET JONATHAN HARDY FROM ADARA

News / Events / Festivals, Personalities

Events are made to meet colleagues, new interesting people related to the industry and to make discoveries. Yes, I would say exactly that - discoveries. Just because when you have an opportunity to discuss and ask probably silly questions which help you deeper understand the issue, it's very close to a discovery.

This time, during Aviation Festival Asia we had an opportunity to talk with Jonathan Hardy, Managing Director, Asia Pacific, ADARA.

With 20 years of experience in the region, Jonathan Hardy is recognized for his knowledge and background in the Asian media industry. Jonathan currently leads the Asia Pacific business for ADARA, the leader in leveraging global travel data to drive future business performance.

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Q. How and why did you choose to work in this industry?

J.H. I started my career in traditional media sales before transitioning into 'new media' during the original dot com boom. Not only has it been interesting to see the digital marketing eco-system develop from there, but recent years have also proven to be very exciting times for the advertising and marketing technology industry in APAC as it continues to lead the global ad spend growth. With the emergence of data-led marketing, I finally believe that we are on track to deliver on the goal of the 'right message, to the right user, at the right time' – a promise that attracted me to make the switch to digital in the first place.

I was specifically attracted to join ADARA in APAC because we have the opportunity to leverage several mega trends: the evolution of data, Asian affluence and the corresponding expansion of the Asia travel industry.

Q. In the modern world people do talk about the role of data, but sometimes without a deep understanding of it. Can you share with us your vision of the role of data?

J.H. It all boils down to personalisation – when companies capture customer data, shared through either purchases or preferences, they can utilise that data to provide better services and offers. At the same time, companies can draw on other customer data, from a variety of sources, to develop a more holistic view of that customer.

ADARA as a travel data co-op allows us to build a 360 view of the traveller, which provides a greater understanding of the customer and therefore better value and customisation. As more and more travel brands join the co-op, our view of the traveller becomes more complete allowing brands to drive a fully personalised marketing strategy and customer experience.

We see great utilisation of this in the airline industry as products become more customisable – for example seat upgrades, baggage purchases, food selection, etc. – and the opportunity to tailor offers to improve purchase rates and yield can be greatly enhanced through the effective use of data.

Q. There are many things to be done to improve many important aspects of travel in Asia-Pacific region, what is your focus? How do you envision its development going forward? What is a ‘must do’ in the nearest future?

It doesn’t matter what the latest travel trend is – millennials, ecotourism, ‘bleisure’ trips, etc. – what matters is leveraging data to know what these travellers need next.

With the DaaS (Data as a Service) market growing rapidly, the travel industry is only going to become more data-centric. Travel companies need to make sure their tech solutions can keep up.

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Not only do they need the right tech stack and CRM systems in place, but they also need to hire the right people to manage their data.

In a data-driven organisation, it is important to break down the silos that exist between sales, marketing, loyalty and IT teams to get them all working more cohesively together. Companies that get this right will be in a better position to use data to market to their customers more effectively.

Q. Tell us a bit more on ADARA's new wins, partnership and plans in the Asia Pacific region

J.H. ADARA is expanding in APAC and our team has doubled in size recently. We have a number of exciting deals in the pipeline and are looking to open up more markets in the region.

Much of this activity has been centred on the core travel categories of aviation and hospitality. Additionally we are working with DMOs and tourism boards to help them measure effectiveness on their marketing spend. Recent clients include the Japanese National Tourism Organization, several Australian state tourism boards, and New Zealand-based tourism marketing agency Tomahawk.

We have also recently taken on a number of new data partnerships, including Onyx Hospitality Group and Trip 101, with several additional airline partnerships in the pipeline, which we intend to announce in due course.

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