



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS 2021

the ***silk*** initiative

We are the future-focused insight, strategy, and innovation people



TSI is one of the world's few Asia-based consumer goods brand consultancies sitting at the intersection of foresight, strategy, innovation, and creative development. From our base in Shanghai, we help clients around the world make smarter brand and product decisions by combining our tools and services, excellent advisory, future-focused thinking, and tangible, actionable assets. Our end-to-end consulting solutions are offered entirely in-house, something we like to call "Data In. Assets Out. Measurable Results."

The Silk Initiative was born out of the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement, with the purpose of helping Australian F&B brands navigate the complex Chinese market. Since that time, we've evolved to address an ever-growing web of needs from multinational and competitor brands around the world. Whether it's a family-run business in Perth, a 110-year-old global confectionery company from Virginia, or one of the world's hottest alternative protein darlings, TSI works to help them all future-proof their businesses and bring goodness to the world.

Our people are seen as partners for sustainable growth. A combined experience of 100+ years in technical consumer insights, advanced analytics, design-led thinking and innovation, and brand strategy consulting across Asia, North America, and Australia assure our clients achieve exceptional results.

A few of our favourite speaking topics include:

- Keeping up with the rapid pace of change across the Asia-Pacific market
- Aligning geopolitical concerns with corporate focus
- Integrating into a marketplace that isn't hungry for foreign brands
- Improving communication across global teams
- Dealing with risk-averse boards
- Ensuring marketing and branding departments understand the Asian market
- Semiotics, sustainable design, and new product development

To book a speaker, or to learn more, please contact John Pabon at john@thesilkinitiative.com



ANDREW KUILER FOUNDER & CEO



A native Australian, Andrew has managed a global career in leadership positions at large multinational agencies in Shanghai, New York, and Sydney before carving out his own path with the launch of TSI.

With nearly 20 years of experience working with major brands including Campbell's, PepsiCo, Arla, VitaCoco, Goodman Fielder, Pizza Hut, Unilever, US Dairy, and Mars Wrigley, he has a strong understanding of the strategic approach brands need to thrive. His insights on the Asian consumer market and branding have also led to his being featured in major publications, including Entrepreneur Magazine and Smart Insights, and in front of think tanks, financial institutions, and government organizations.

When he's not helping clients prosper, you'll find Andrew entertaining guests over a home-cooked meal, experimenting with new cuisines, or showcasing his 35 years of study on the bagpipes – much to the delight of his neighbours.

Topical focus areas

- Realising your brand story, in Asia and around the world
- Working with cross-functional stakeholders
- Entrepreneurship
- Mixed research methodologies to uncover and realize market opportunities

Past speaking engagements

- The Australia-China Business Council
- Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ)
- Australian Trade Commission
- Entrepreneur Magazine
- Global Beverage Innovation Conference, London
- Natural Products West Expo
- New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
- Trade Office of the United States of America

“My love for food goes all the way back to when I was growing up in country Victoria, Australia. As a child of immigrant parents, and with Chinese godparents, I was exposed to foods from all over the world.”

ANDREW CAMERON

DIRECTOR



As a Director with The Silk Initiative (TSI), Andrew helps ensure our clients meet their research and brand strategy objectives. From ensuring accurate data collection to producing strategic stories from the data that's collected, he works with clients to identify the most effective strategies to propel their brands forward.

Originally from Sydney, Australia, he started his career at Milward Brown. There, Andrew specialised in taking quantitative research projects from conception to completion for some of the world's largest brands including Kellogg's, Blackmores, and Unilever. He has a real passion for research and love for Asia, which led him to TSI. Here, he leverages his wide expertise to help clients prosper within the local market.

An avid traveller and an enthusiastic sportsman, when he's not out on the football or cricket field indulging his competitive side, you'll find him in the kitchen experimenting with new and exotic recipes.

“By approaching things on a personal level I can help educate, connect, and solve problems more effectively, helping my clients get to the right answers quickly.”

Topical focus areas

- Australia-China relations
- Asian consumer trends
- Food and beverage trends in Asia
- Quantitative research
- The future of wellness and nutraceuticals

Past speaking engagements

- Australia-China Business Council
- Australia-China Emerging Leaders' Summit
- Nice Guys on Business Podcast
- Trade and Investment, Queensland
- Trade Office of the United States of America





EVELYN HUSSAIN

DIRECTOR



Evelyn heads TSI's innovation practice – focusing on transforming data and human-led insights into innovation engagements that are methodological, meaningful, and measurable. Her strength lies in concept development, being fully able to visualise and apply ideas into tangible executions. She ensures TSI's creative processes and frameworks stay ahead of the curve when it comes to best-in-class innovation.

A designer at her core, she believes in human interaction and human-centred design whether it's for a product, technology, or service. Her academic background in Sustainability Design, and an MBA, means she can easily straddle the creative and commercial divides. Her hearty love for food, and ears on the ground, put her in prime position to help future-proof F&B brands in Asia.

Topical focus areas

- Circular Economy and new product development
- Leveraging digital platforms for innovation initiatives across regions
- Brand naming for the Chinese market
- The plant-based revolution in Southeast Asia
- Data in. Assets out.

Past speaking engagements

- Insight Innovation Exchange (IIE) Conference 2019, keynote speaker
- TechExeter Annual Conference
- The American Chamber of Commerce Food, Agriculture, and Beverage Conference

“I’m an eternal student and believe continuous learning is best when shared.”

ERIC LIN DIRECTOR



Eric works as a Director for Client Services within TSI's Insight & Strategy team, with responsibility for leading client engagements across China and Asia-Pacific, capitalising on his client-side professional experience.

He has uniquely straddled both agency and client-side, enabling him to have first-hand knowledge in translating insights into executable plans for marketing, sales, and R&D teams. Originally from Taiwan, Eric graduated with an MA in Applied Law and a BA in Marketing. With over seven years of experience with Kantar and five years client-side marketing and category building experience in China and Australia, he has a proven record of transforming categories and portfolios across high-demand Asian markets.

In his spare time, you'll find Eric either in the gym or creating an underwater playground for his fish.

Topical focus areas

- Localisation of global marketing strategies to succeed in Asia-Pacific
- Keys to win with Asia's consumers
- The rise of nationalism in China post-Covid, its impact on geopolitics and what it means for brands

Past speaking engagements

- Ferrero
- Hawley & Hazel
- Kantar
- Kimberly Clark
- Master Kong
- Mengniu
- The Real Pet Food Company

“How do you really know consultants can speak to your most pressing problems? One way is to listen to those who’ve been where you are.”





GOLDEN HUANG CLIENT MANAGER



Golden works alongside TSI's portfolio of clients to ensure accurate and timely insights, relevant particularly to evolving consumer segments. This is as useful to brands coming into China as for Chinese companies exploring international markets.

As a globally recognised expert in semiotic and anthropological research, he possesses extensive knowledge in political economy, sociology, cultural insights, and creative strategy for branding. This is especially acute with the visual representation of complex societal trends. His experience developing strategies for brands like Unilever, Disney, Coty, Ford, and Givaudan, as well as working with the Hong Kong Government to provide macro-social insights on welfare, mobility, and popular culture, shows a unique portfolio of work.

A Shanghai native, Golden's passion is in integrating his sense of aesthetics and street culture into wider cultural insights for the business world.

Topical focus areas

- Chinese counter-culture
- Chinese millennials and youth culture
- Qualitative research
- Semiotic and visual symbolic decoding

Past speaking engagements

- Absolute Vodka
- The City of New York
- The Engagious Podcast
- Kjeldsen's
- New York University
- Pamu Farms
- Pepsi
- The Victorian State Government

“Street culture is a critical part of today’s China as it’s a key channel of communication, especially for younger early adopters.”

QI ZHANG ANALYST



For clients coming to China, getting language right can spell the difference between failure and success. Qi's unique passion for linguistics helps guide TSI's clients through the proper approach to brand conceptualisation to ensure a brand's positioning is on point in today's China.

She has gained a deep understanding of the food and beverage industry from her education and previous work experience. Born and raised in Hubei Province, a place famous for a wide range of snacks, Qi has sensitive taste buds and a huge passion for food. She graduated from Huazhong Agricultural University with a bachelor's degree in Food Science and Engineering. With a master's degree in Applied Translation from the University of Leeds, Qi is also confident in providing professional suggestions regarding brand localisation.

Out of the office, you'll often find Qi struggling to scale a climbing wall or testing out the latest recipes in her tiny apartment kitchen.

“Language is about so much more than words. No matter which one you speak, they hold immense historical, cultural, and conceptual nuance.”

Topical focus areas

- Language, culture, and localisation
- Sustainability for a new generation of Asian consumer
- Chinese consumer insight, China market observation

Past speaking engagements

- Beyond Meat
- Edgewell
- Oravida
- The a2 Milk Company
- The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
- The University of Leeds





**To book a speaker, or
to learn more, please
contact John Pabon at
john@thesilkinitiative.com**

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www.thesilkinitiative.com

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