

Dear friends and supporters of Dialogue in the Dark

Another three months have gone by since the last issue of our newsletter. DiD HK has achieved huge progress in establishing our long term presence in Hong Kong and Mainland China. I am happy to share with all of you the various updates here. We understand well that only with the continuous involvement and support of our friends will our future success be guaranteed.

Workshops

We have just completed our second series of workshops in Hong Kong with excellent support and response from participants. Through our volunteer teams, our workshop has improved further with new games and greater mastery of facilitation skill to help participants in consolidating their learning and insight from the experience. Evaluations submitted by participants show improvement in the scores. With the reputation of our training program growing, we have decided to run another series of workshops from 15 to 18 September, 2009.

We are also working hard to develop the China market. We believe every successful social enterprise should take advantage of the size of China market to scale up its operation and create bigger impact. The first Dialogue in the Dark executive training workshop in China will start on 13 June and run until 20 June. We are in partnership with a unique group of business executives, NGOs and foundations to pull off this first event in China. A seminar was held on Social Entrepreneurship in April inviting Mr. Heinecke, Dr. Tse and Mr. Chong Chanyau as speakers. This seminar was well received. We sincerely thank all our volunteers involved in making our successful entrance into China.

Successful Completion of Capital Raise

Following our decision to set up Dialogue in the Dark experiential exhibition in Hong Kong, we have successfully completed our capital call of HKD 3 millions. The approach we took is to gain maximum engagement from our supporters and let them become active shareholders. With this in mind, we did our best to solicit capital from all volunteers and future stakeholders of DiD HK. This is

quite a different approach from the main stream business where the key driver of a business will strive to control the majority shareholding of the company. We also hope the success of DiD HK in accomplishing both the social mission and the financial sustainability will trigger a healthy growth of social investment market.

Permanent Experiential Exhibition in Hong Kong

We have signed a collaboration agreement with Dialogue Social Enterprise of Germany to become their official and exclusive franchisee in Hong Kong. In July, a working team will be sent to Hamburg and Frankfurt to learn everything on the setting up and the daily management of Dialogue in the Dark experiential exhibition. We are still actively looking for the best venue as our future site for workshop, exhibition as well as our main office. We expect to set up the exhibition before the end of the year.

Partnership with Mainstream Businesses as Our Key Strategy for Business

Ashoka named this kind of partnership as hybrid value chain. There are markets which are accessible only through the social involvement of the community. A good example of this is Gramme Banks' operation. Without the involvement of the community, the cost to access the bottom of the social pyramid will prove to be excessive and not viable. However it is equally important for social entrepreneurs to realize the benefit of partnership with established business channels and infra-structure. This approach will not only reduce substantially the cost of entrance but also turn potential competitors as allies.

We believe the collaboration with mainstream businesses will enable DiD HK to access the market with minimal investment in human resource and infra-structure building. Mainstream businesses also gain a convenient entrance into a different market which is more socially motivated rather than just financially justified.

It will be our strategy to establish such partnerships with leading professional training companies, education institutions, tourist industry operators etc. Any business opportunity for using the service of our visually impaired personnel and employing total darkness will be actively pursued.

What's Coming Next?

The next important milestone for us will be our entrance into the education market and the use of Dialogue in the Dark workshop and exhibition to deliver liberal study for students in Hong Kong. We are currently approaching schools to introduce the concept. The biggest hurdle is the limited funding allocated for each school for this purpose. Our volunteers are re-designing the workshop to tailor it for young students as well as figuring out the effective business model to make it a viable business. We see the need to bring awareness of diversity, empathy to others and respect for different talents to the younger generation as one important means to achieve our social mission. We welcome those who have passion for the well-being of the future generation to join us as volunteers and work on this project.

Volunteers Needed

As DiD continues to expand, we need more volunteers with different skills to join in. Currently we have three volunteer teams respectively responsible for social marketing, product development and operation support.

If any of you are interested to be involved, please do not hesitate to contact us. DiD cannot promise to make you rich, but we will ensure every volunteer will enjoy the experience and through the process, build friendship with many like-minded people to create social impact. Please contact us through emailing DiDhk.info@gmail.com or calling Idy Cheung at (852) 28910438.

DiD Hong Kong Limited
Co-founders
KK Tse and Patrick Cheung