

INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCER

A world traveller from childhood, Jenny Tsai has always been curious about the connections between people and places. As the CEO of Wearisma, a marketing and influencer platform Tsai founded in London in 2014, this entrepreneur has had ample opportunity to nurture that interest and work with people all over the globe and from too many backgrounds to count.

Tsai gradually made her way to the UK to study at Cambridge after an already impressive history of international travel. Born in Taiwan and raised in Canada, Tsai decided to study in the United States before moving her education overseas. This experience with different views on living and learning has informed her decisions and encouraged her tendency to understand how people construct their lives. “I’ve always enjoyed building things,” she smiles, and her degree in development coupled with her training in engineering is a testament to this truth.

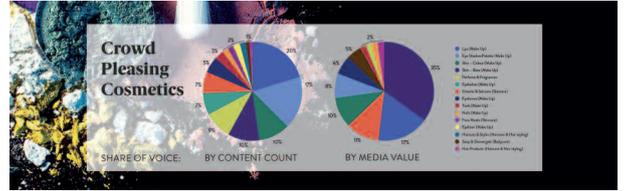
When asked about the work Wearisma does, Tsai’s face lights up. “We provide technology and insights to help our global brands’ clients” in areas ranging from fashion to travel, “make investment decisions and measure their impact in influencer marketing”. In effect, Wearisma connects

individual influencers and global brands by streamlining the matching process through technology so that brands can make informed decisions about their advertising in and impact on communities across the globe. Tsai’s love of building shines through her company’s dedication to strengthening online platforms and assembling a reputation of international trust for her clients.

“I really saw first-hand from my experience in the media industry how social media has grown and is growing, absolutely massively, and that really made me think of whether or not any brands had the tools to use in order to operate in this space,” she says. Such forward thinking has come to be the norm in Tsai’s workplace as she and her team work to provide the best services available in branding matchmaking.

Her diverse education in policy, training as an engineer and subsequent work in the media industry truly gives her a well-balanced perspective on the practical and human elements necessary for her line of work. “I really appreciate the power of human creativity on one hand as well as the data and analytics side of things,” Tsai explains. This variety has served her well as she has connected to different people from across the world, all of whom think about the world in different ways. “It was very important to build together a team to make sure that the product itself is very human-centric”, accessible for every user and still effectively “powered by as much data as is relevant”.

One way Tsai’s expat experience has come in handy in her quest for a human-centric and accessible product is her habit of picking up the languages of the places



in which she lives. She explains: “when you’ve lived in different places, you get curious about what’s happening, and one way to really learn about the place you live in and to connect with people you meet is through languages”. Communication is key and Tsai has done her utmost to ensure that both her professional and personal lives reflect her efforts to understand cultures around the world.

Wearisma teaches that lesson to its brands as well, illustrating the ways in which “the key is to really understand how you can, as a brand, have a globally consistent message that is locally and culturally relevant to everyone”. Language is one important method of understanding local culture and Tsai knows it.

So do the influencers Tsai connects with her clients. When asked what makes an influencer an influencer, Tsai says: “they are the mouths behind the word-of-mouth marketing that we’re used to”. When wondering where to travel, what brands of clothing to buy, and even how to live a more sustainable life, people have begun to look to influencers as they might once have looked exclusively to the recommendations of friends and family.

These influencers are “individuals who create very valuable and trusted content that informs their followers on social media” about a variety of subjects, and “compared with traditional media channels, they are often more linked to publishing content because it relates to them”.

This personalisation is key as the influencers themselves are their own brand, building “a relationship with their audience that is more based on relatability”.

When asked what makes influencers so successful, Tsai states: “I think we live in a world that has a lot of noise.” She believes influencers’ success stems from the fact that they are “authentic and that they’re very transparent with their messaging”.

Forever cultivating her love of the international, Tsai describes her work with multinational brands and influencers from foreign areas as “fantastic”. Wearisma and her team “work with influencers across more than 47 countries, including very diverse countries from Brazil to China to Mexico”. Through her work, Tsai experiences a variety of influencers around the world, from people who focus on “identity and background” in the UK to “mum influencers” in Japan.

As for advice to aspiring influencers, Tsai suggests: “once you know what you really love and know a lot about, just make that into your content focus, and the authentic and the passion really comes out”. As we have learned, authenticity is key in cutting through the noise of modern culture and media.

Tsai says that her favourite thing about her work at Wearisma “is always the people who have helped you along the way”. From “the investors, the supporters, and the really great ecosystems of other fellow entrepreneurs as well as institutions”, Tsai feels that she has been able to build a supportive network for her professional life in London. After 15 years in the city, she would know.

Her team is a huge part of this community and Tsai describes them as “fantastic” and “from very different backgrounds”. “Some are more engineering, some are more creative, but just the fact that we can all put our minds together in creating something very special and valuable is I think what makes a difference”.

As for general life in London, Tsai’s experience is community-driven as well. “I think one doesn’t ever feel really foreign—because it’s such a diverse city where everyone comes from a different background.”

It seems to me that Tsai’s love for diversity is her biggest strength as she embraces the characteristics that make each culture unique in her quest to unearth the intricacies of human interest and interaction.

“One way Tsai’s expat experience has come in handy in her quest for a human-centric and accessible product is her habit of picking up the languages of the places in which she lives.”



Kay Teekell is the communication and events intern at FOCUS while she studies in London. Originally from Texas, she is completing her degree in English literature at Southwestern University and can be contacted at marketing@focus-info.org.