



LUI DESIGN LTD

Triumph of Will & Vision

The true spirit of enterprise finds expression in the inspirational story of ANDREA SVENNUNGSSON LUI who succeeded against all odds.

Lui Design was founded in 2000, albeit in an interestingly circumstantial manner. “I was employed in a retail design and project management consultancy firm 2 years prior to starting Lui Design but projects dried up and they couldn’t pay my salary for almost a year. I was in so much distress I contemplated quitting the industry,” Andrea Lui, founder and MD of Lui Design Ltd.

“Things finally looked up when the dispute settled. Then, people I met in the retail industry approached me for design and project management work. It was all unexpected but I had nothing to lose by trying.

“I took on a couple of small projects, and did everything from designing, drafting, photocopying, accounting, answering phones, attending meetings and even delivering drawings. It went on for almost 6 months before I hired my first draftsman. The rest is history and Lui Design never looked back.”

Early Start

“When Lui Design was formed, there were only a handful of firms doing what we do. In the last 10 years, China and Macau provided plentiful opportunities whereby the number of retail design and project management firms also grew exponentially. To cope with the growing competition, we focus on constantly raising the quality of service we offer and keeping the bar above others. We keep abreast of our clients’ needs.

“Our line of work relies a lot on word of mouth, as people move around in the retail industry. It is always reassuring when we get calls from previous clients who have relocated to other brands. These indicate that they choose to work with us, and not because they have no



choice.

“We came in at a time when international luxury retail started to boom in China, while most of the others were still heavily vested in hotel and corporate projects. Design and project management firms for luxury retail did not exist in China and barely in Hong Kong, so we were at an advantage to fill the niche as most international luxury retailers needed a facilitator in the region with the know-how and language skills.”

Quality Difference

“We are a service-oriented company, thus our value is directly proportional to the level of service we provide. We offer a unique understanding of what luxury retailers need. We facilitate projects applying effective management methodologies and make certain everyday that we are not just a mailbox or messenger, which many firms are, unfortunately.

“One of the most important aspects in building a successful and long-term working relationship with clients is to establish trust, which has to be earned over time. Trust is built by presenting unambiguous, insightful, informative, and unbiased opinions and options, whilst always protecting the clients’ interests and working towards their objectives, allowing them to make the most viable decisions given the circumstances, time after time. Lui Design is very mindful when it comes to establishing trust with our clients.”

The Grand Plan

The Swedish group M2 Retail Group acquired Lui Design in the fall of 2013, with offices in Sweden, Denmark, Hong Kong and China. One of the few, and undoubtedly among the first European retail design specialists to enter the Asia Pacific market, it celebrated 10 years of service in Asia in 2014.

“Combined, we are now a company of 80 strong, which provides us with a much larger capacity and a bigger share in the market. In addition to the luxury arm, we now can provide roll out and supply chain support as well. Our aim is to be more accessible, resourceful, and more efficient when serving both luxury and premium retailers, covering a much larger geographic territory. We believe in being cutting-edge and up-to-date on our services and networks, therefore we profusely explore new ground and provide continuous training to our staff.

“However, we are also simple and very old school, but imbue the traits which I believe apply to every success story – hard work, integrity and perseverance. Given what I said in the beginning about the founding of the firm being circumstantial, receiving ‘The Most Trusted Retail Store Designer’ award for 2015, after being established for 15 years is truly an auspicious moment. As I’ve learned, timing is important; seize the opportunity when it presents itself, take calculated risks, be sensible, make informed decisions, take ownership of what you do, and have a good team with these same values to back you.” ■

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