

Chinese New Year

Mice play in 2020



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Traditional red lanterns welcoming Chinese New Year, Jade Island, Beihai Park, Beijing.



The wonderful Chin interpreting team, from left: Patricia Huang, Marcus Liu, Elaine Tian, Sarah Xu (Dairy Australia), Charles Qin OAM, Anna Wang, Laura Liu, Bruce Song, Dairy Australia 20th Anniversary of the Greater China Scholarship Program.

Why is intercultural communication important in a globalised world

A curious client recently raised an interesting query. They asked us if they should make an effort on Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and push their ads out using the Chinese search engine Baidu to reach the local Chinese community in Australia.

To Australians, the behaviour of Chinese consumers inside and outside China may just be passed off as nuance. In fact, while mainland Chinese can only rely on Baidu to get their search results (Google is banned in the country), Chinese residents in Australia prefer Google to Baidu for most of their research needs.

After a meeting with the client to understand their objectives, our intercultural communication specialists advised them to use different platforms like WeChat while maintaining Google SEO to maximize their market reach to the Chinese community in Australia.

This is an example of intercultural communication – communication between different cultures. In this case, it is the subtle difference in communication of mainland Chinese and Australian Chinese. It is not only the language, but also the medium and the social norms.

Though language is definitely an important part of communication, it is not the sole tool to convey the right meaning of your messages to your audience in this increasingly globalised world. That is especially true of business communication. If the message is interpreted the wrong way or worse – appears to be offensive – it will backfire quickly and even become a disaster for the company. The market is littered with headlines of big brands that got it wrong and suffered repercussions.

Whether you are looking to break into a foreign market or engage with local communities from different cultural backgrounds, it is essential to have someone with intercultural competence to advise on your communication strategy. Intercultural communication skills can't simply be picked up by reading books or watching TV. It takes years of real-life experience, exposure and practice.

Intercultural communication is the strength and the central tenet of value-added services at Chin Communications. With Australia's largest in-house team of translators and interpreters, as well as specialists from diverse backgrounds who have lived for substantial periods of time in China, Hong Kong and Singapore, our expertise in different fields and experience from different parts of the Chinese diaspora delivers significant value to our clients.

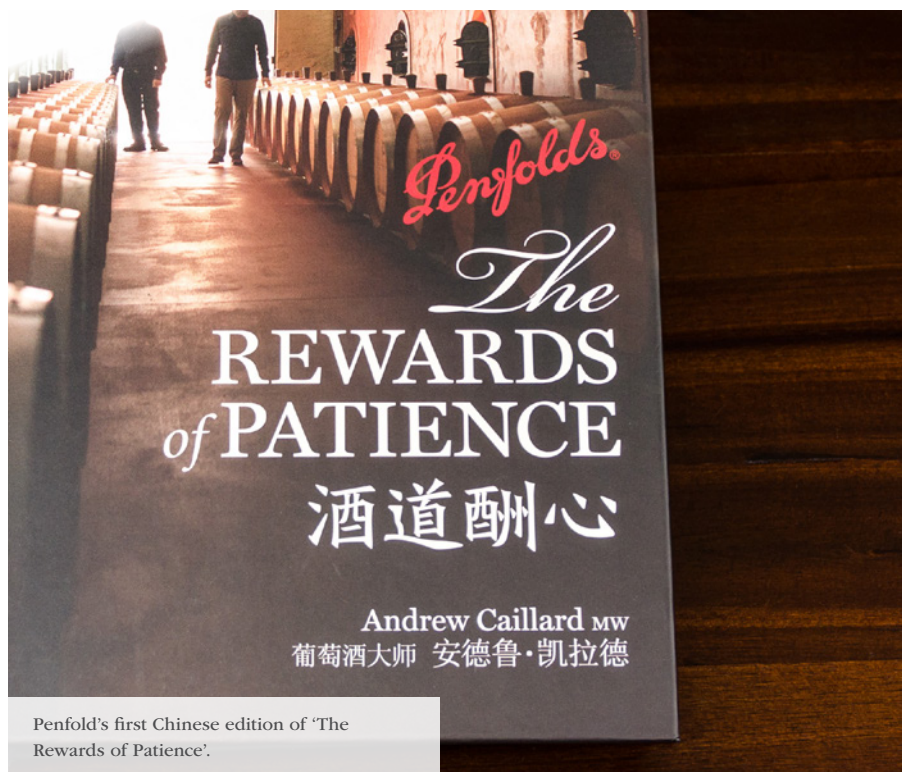
[Read the full article here](#)



Jiangsu delegation business networking with the Victorian Government Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions. Chin's Patricia Huang, far right



Chin provided interpreters for the Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival. Anna Wang and Elaine Tian on the far left.



The Hidden Cost of Chinese Brands and their Registration (or not)

佳可宝¹ – three Chinese characters to represent a well-known Australian brand appeared on the product beverage label destined for China. During our back-translation process, we pointed this out to the client who had no idea.

It happens all the time, I told her, Chinese distributors do the labelling and the exporter and brand owner has no idea. Is it a good name? What does it mean? Who owns the name? These are all critical questions. What if your brand became popular in China – that would be brilliant, wouldn't it. Isn't that what we are all striving for! Penfolds found out the hard way when an enterprising Chinese person registered the now ubiquitous “bēn fù 奔富” or “racing to wealth”. The brand was adopted by the public and became famous; Penfolds had to get it back in a legal wrangle we assume at significant cost.

We've worked with other clients who have faced the same problem and it can cost millions to buy your own brand; others we know went out of business.

So, getting back to my client: I explained what the characters meant (佳: Excellent; 可: Can; 宝: Treasure – combined: an excellent choice that you can treasure). As to who owns it or whether this is another costly problem, we will have to wait and see. The client made the best call: “Put the English brand name back on and we'll go through a proper branding process so that we have control and own the name”.

IP Australia's website has plenty of information about “Protecting your IP in China”. China is no longer the culprit it used to be, in fact it is higher on the list for enforcement than Australia. “Protecting your IP should be a top consideration when entering any foreign market including China”, say the IP experts.

We advise clients to go through a proper process to devise a number of options for a Chinese brand name and to keep it close. Then use a trademark attorney to secure it. Consider all relevant classes, including defensive ones (eg a wine brand might consider registering in other beverage classes). This all takes time and may involve opposition from other trademark owners in China. It is important to act quickly when you are thinking about the China market, not after you've started operations there, or have distributors on the patch. When your drink labels are printed is definitely too late.

[Read the full article here](#)

Marketing Case Study: Business Events Geelong



Business Events Geelong is hoping to attract more Chinese business visitors to Geelong in order to showcase the great conference facilities and tourism destinations around the Bellarine Peninsula.

Geelong has a multi-award winning convention bureau, great venues and function spaces, abundant accommodation and transport options and free management services to deliver wonderful business events.

Chin was engaged to develop a Chinese brand name and logo to bring the opportunity to the Chinese audience in a clever and fun way.



The Chinese brand and logo created for Business Events Geelong.

Our client had already been “given” a couple of options for a Chinese name.

One was more like an invitation to meet up and, to us, was ordinary and rather weak in its impact.

The other had an aura of romance around it and therefore might work for a tourism offering, but wasn't suitable for a business brand.

Chin's marketing and branding team set to work and arrived at a bespoke brand name and logo, through our tailor-made branding process.

The look and feel of the English brand mark, colouring and playful style were replicated in our Chinese version and we commissioned one of our calligraphers to ‘brush stroke’ the final characters – jovial, fun and fresh – but also functioning within the rules of Chinese calligraphy

[For more case studies, please click here](#)

1. Characters have been changed for confidentiality reasons



Chinese red lanterns in market in Beijing, China.

Chinese New Year - Mice Play in 2020



This year Olivia Andrews was commissioned to create our Chinese New Year image

The Rat may not be well regarded in the West, but in Chinese culture it is an honour to be born a Rat as they symbolize good luck and fortune. The Rat is the first in the twelve-year cycle. The story goes that Buddha invited all the animals to a meeting and only 12 came. Buddha asked them to swim across the Heavenly River and the order they arrived became the order of their signs in the Chinese Zodiac. You are probably wondering how a tiny rat beat such animals as the horse, ox and tiger across a raging torrent! Well, the Rat is always one to find a way around a tricky situation; he climbed onto the back of the ox and got ahead in the Rat Race

coming first and not wanting to miss out on anything (FOMO). Buddha then assigned the characteristics to each animal and its year.

As the Year of the Pig has ended in such dire circumstances with the fire catastrophe in Australia dominating world news, we are looking forward to the Rat with a get things done attitude. However, as we wrote twelve years ago in this newsletter, the predominant issue affecting all of us is climate change. Twelve years ago, Rat Al Gore was in the headlines with his Inconvenient Truth movie and road show. The Rat can foretell danger and will abandon the ship. Harnessing the leadership capabilities of the Rat, together we need to get off the rodent wheel and make changes before the ship sinks (Titanic sank in a Rat year).

This is the year of the Metal Rat and such years can be more combative, so we may see protests and unrest – the Vietnam War and Boxer Rebellion started in Rat Years.

Metal symbolises structure so we ought to think about creating a framework for the twelve-year cycle ahead.

The Rat will start to play on 25 January 2020 and will be quiet again when the Ox charges on 12 February 2021

RAT PACK

As is evident in the enterprising way the cunning Rat got across the river, he is a great opportunist who is always on the

lookout for more wealth and generally has plenty of financial acumen, is courageous and not one to shirk responsibility. In fact Rat is one of the hardest working and most ambitious creatures with a streak of the perfectionist and consequently can be intolerant of others.

There is an old Chinese saying: those who hoard grain have much to lose (all who covet must lose - *tān duō bì shī* 贪多必失). If things get tight, Rat will always find a way out. The Rat likes to spend money on himself and his family and close friends and be surrounded by nice things and fashionable clothing. Status, money, title and recognition are all important to Rat.

As the Rat is the first year in the cycle, it is a good year for new beginnings and to leave past disappointments behind. A good year to get married, launch a new product or make a fresh start – to make the most of every opening but to be quick and clever about it.

Change in the world is ripe in this first year and technology will likely dominate – perhaps not in the way we might think though – there could be some backlash as more data leaks and privacy issues emerge; China has introduced a new Encryption Law from 1 January 2020 which means China will have control of all passwords and this may impact anyone with dealings in China, even from overseas. With a US election, there is going to be increased scrutiny of social media and fake news.

As the GFC started in a Rat Year, we



need to take care and beware of instability in financial markets.

China-Australia diplomacy ought to and needs to take a positive turn – it was in a Rat Year that Australia and China established Diplomatic Relations.

RATTING ON

Charismatic and charming with a good sense of humour, Rat makes friends easily and likes a good party. Rats have a keen sense of smell and know how to survive.

They are also very private and do not like people prying or ratting on them. Rat can get stuck into a few too many projects and if they only focused on one thing their success rate would soar. As born leaders able to adapt to any environment, we'd do well to follow them out of the maze.

Thrifty is an apt description of Rat and they have a gift with money making them good financial advisers and savers and, if one wanted to be unkind, mean. As winners they can use their manipulative skills and diplomatic tongues to good effect on the international stage too.

Rats are prone to gossip and criticism and also trying to get a bargain; their tendency to hoard can drive people up the wall!

OF MICE AND MEN

A better boss than employee, rats are creative in literature, music or art, they also make good journalists and broadcasters, financial advisers, entrepreneurs, politicians, stand-

up comedians, historians, racing car drivers, detectives, accountants, engineers, pathologists and spies!

RATATOUILLE

- 袋鼠 dàishǔ, literally “pocket rat” or kangaroo
- 胆小如鼠 dǎn xiǎo rú shǔ, a gall bladder as small as a rat / as timid as a mouse
- 猫鼠同眠 māo shǔ tóng mián, cats and rats sleeping together / corruption so bad that criminals and police are in collusion
- 鼠目寸光 shǔ mù cùn guāng, a rat's eyesight is one inch of light / cannot see beyond one's nose
- 鼠忌器tóu shǔ jì qì, spare the rat to save the vase / the consequences of your action may be much worse than you realised
- 猫哭老鼠 māo kū lǎoshǔ, the cat weeping over the dead mouse / shedding crocodile tears

RAT'S TAIL

Legend has it that in the reign of Qianlong, in 1774 to be precise, Mr Cheng, a county magistrate (mayor), lived in Huai'an in present-day Jiangsu Province. He was a kind-hearted man (unlike many in his profession) who forbade anyone in his office from killing creatures – even rats. He even had one room in his house given over to little creatures where he would leave grain every night. Hundreds of rats

came to eat leaving Mr Cheng and other residents in peace.



Emperor Qianlong riding one of his many majestic horses.

One night when Mr Cheng was asleep downstairs he felt something painful biting his feet. What a shock to see his entire quilt covered in rats chewing on him. He exploded in anger and shouted at them to leave, even taking a stick to them. The rats fled upstairs and Mr Cheng went back to bed. Not for long, the rats came back and continued to plague him. With a stick in one hand and candle in the other, he chased them up the stairs. No sooner had he reached the second floor than a tide of water washed away his bedroom in a flash flood. With a sixth sense, none of them became drowned rats. This story about rats returning a kindness has been passed down through the ages.



A HeroRAT in action for landmine clearance in Siem Reap, Cambodia

SMELLING RATS

Cambodia has the highest ratio of landmine amputees per capita in the world, and has started using 'hero rats' to sniff out unexploded landmines.

The intelligent animals, which possess some of the most sensitive noses in the animal kingdom, have proven to be a faster and safer means of locating the hidden weapons. At a weight of one kilogram rats are too light to detonate the mines and they are more efficient than metal detectors. They sniff out TNT.

Theap Bunthourn, operations coordinator for the project said, "If you take 200 square metres of land, the rats can clear it in 20 to 25 minutes whereas if we used the manual method it would take two or three days."

Cambodia is one of the most heavily land mined countries in the world after decades of civil war. Six million mines are believed to still be in the ground, with over 67,000 people being killed or injured since 1979.

The animals are put to work six days a week in three hour shifts, darting between two handlers standing five metres apart while attached to a harness.

In their downtime, the rats are kept in individual cages and receive regular exercise, and, we hope, some treats for their Year!

Source: (independent.co.uk/)

[Read the full article here](#)



A landmine area in Siem Reap, Cambodia



Disabled landmines in Cambodia

RAT BAGS

Pollies: Kim Beazley, Warren Truss, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Senator Janet Rice, Karen Andrews, Adam Bandt, Jason Clare, Damian Drum, Dr Mike Kelly, Dr Andrew Leigh, Matt Thistlethwaite, Tim Watts, Josh Wilson

Australian interest: Captain James Cook, Patrick White, Hugo Weaving, Andrew Denton, Toni Collette, Daniel Andrews, Anna Bligh, Olivia Newton-John, Delta Goodrem, Tim Winton, Ashleigh Barty, Pat Rafter, Sam Stosur, Thanasi Kokkinakis, Casey Dellacqua, Roy Emerson, John Fitzgerald, Ian Baker-Finch, David Boon, Greg Chappell, Peter Siddle, Tim Paine, Bob Simpson, David Boon, Max Walker, Bill Ponsford

Leaders: US Presidents in abundance: George Washington, Richard Nixon, George HW Bush, Jimmy Carter; also Pope Francis, John McCain, Silvio Berlusconi, Kim il-sung, Robert Mugabe, Catherine 1 of Russia, F.W. de Klerk, Al Gore, Pedro Sanchez (Spanish PM)



Why You May Need to Reconsider Your China Marketing Strategy

In 2014, Uber entered China with an ambition to dominate the ridesharing market in the country, just as it did in the US. But instead, a cash-burning fight with the local rival DiDi ended bitterly for the company. Uber bowed out of the Chinese market in 2016, killing off its Chinese dream in only two years.

Two years later, the reverse happened in Australia. DiDi, now the world's largest ridesharing company, launched its service here in June 2018, taking on the Australian market that Uber has ruled since 2012.

Uber's China tale serves as a reminder to Australian businesses that are trying to break into or expand their existing operation in China: even if you have a great product, a tested marketing model, and a proven track record in Australia, there is no guarantee you will succeed in the Chinese market.

A common mistake international brands make is underestimating the complexity of the Chinese market, which is different in nearly every way, and thus lacking a suitable marketing strategy. Chinese marketers have come up with unique approaches tailored to Chinese consumers. They are vastly different from traditional Western marketing

methods as we know, and yet extremely effective. And in some ways, they are way ahead of us.

To successfully market products or services to the Chinese market, it is crucial to understand the difference in Chinese consumer behaviour and purchasing habits, the Chinese marketing mindset as well as viable methods and channels.

Venturing to China is an exciting journey, but it is also a daunting task. If you ask any Australian business that has been successful there, you are going to hear the same answer: it is not easy.

If planned right, China can become a lucrative market. But without a well thought through strategy, your budgets can blow out rapidly even before you can reap any returns.

To make sure you don't repeat the mistakes that many international businesses have made, getting to understand how the Chinese market works before going in is key. You can get help right here in Australia through experienced marketing and language experts with connections in China. Government support is also likely available with subsidies, expos, or missions for you to learn about the market first-hand. And don't forget there is already a savvy Chinese audience in Australia who can help spread your word.

Want to find out more? Our Chinese marketing experts are just a phone call away.

[Read the full article here](#)

What our clients are saying about us

My experience with Chin Communications has been highly professional, very responsive and their desire to understand the brand in order to create translations that are meaningful and appropriate has been such a breath of fresh air. I would highly recommend Kate and her team for any translation work you require and should I need Chinese translation in the future, they will be the first people I call.

Kym Vercoe
Bundaberg Brewed Drinks

Yingde Investment Pty Ltd has recently won a multi-million dollar Supreme Court case in which Chin Communications was a critical partner. Their translating and interpreting work not only helped build our arguments but in the court discovered critical pieces of evidence which bolstered our case. They also picked up court interpreting errors that could have changed the course of the case.

Wade Guo
Yingde Investment Pty Ltd

We have had the pleasure of working with Chin Communications for several months and found their service exceptional and the quality of their work outstanding. They have also been instrumental in our Chinese brand development. Their knowledge and advice has been invaluable in what, for us, is a new and tricky market. Would highly recommend Chin Communications for any language and intercultural communication needs.

Doris Niesen Baruta
Quists Coffee



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*Best wishes for
the Year of the
Rat. We look
forward to helping
you conquer the
Chinese market!*
