



Alumna Xu Chen
Subject MA Asia Pacific Business
Graduated 2007
Place of Work Shanghai Muro Industrial Company
Position Vice President



Shanghai Muro Industrial Company manufactures and sells ink to distributors across China. Xu Chen founded the company in 2001, and since then it has established itself as the leading manufacturer in the industry and holds the biggest share of the market.

Xu studied Asia Pacific Management, graduating in 2007, and returned to China to continue running the business. She is responsible for 30 members of staff in the office, dealing with all operational aspects of running the business from accounting to marketing.

Great minds *go on to* great places

Why did you choose to study at Royal Holloway?

At the time I applied Royal Holloway was one of the best universities in the UK and it still performs well in the league tables, so I thought that it would be good for my career to study at such a place. I really like the sense of history and tradition on the campus, and its position relative to London. I'm happy with my decision because I met many good friends and the tutors were also excellent.

Why did you choose to study Asia Pacific Business?

My company is focused on business in the Asia Pacific region, so the course is very relevant to what I am interested in. I thought that the modules would each help me in my career, because, as Vice President, I make financial, business and marketing decisions. So I thought that studying the course would enable me to take my company further.

What were your favourite aspects of the course?

The Human Resources module was my favourite aspect of the course. In the class there were students from many different nationalities and

so you learn about how human resources differs from country to country. Our business partners are based in Japan and Korea, so it's very helpful to learn about different management systems. The course exposed me to different cultures and ways of thinking. The university offered many opportunities throughout the course to hear from senior managers in big MNCs like Sony, and my tutors were really supportive.

How did you find studying in the UK?

At first it was hard because the language was difficult and I couldn't speak very good English, but my skills definitely improved over the months that I was there. I have many good memories of the university because the experience is really unique. You have different friends from different countries and experience different cultures, and that's quite exciting.

Do your studies help you in your career?

Marketing strategy in particular is very helpful in my current role. Before I went to university I didn't have a very formal system of marketing and didn't fully grasp the strategy required in a marketing plan. After studying the course I was able to implement a

new strategy in my own company, so really the skills I learn whilst studying have been very helpful in my career.

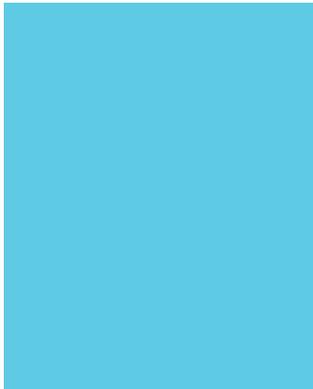
What was your work experience prior to starting the course?

Prior to starting the course I was running a business with my sister. Ten years ago I was working in the stationary industry, selling the ink contained in ball pens in a trading company based in Korea. From this concept I set up a business with my sister in Shanghai. To start with there were only two of us working in the business so we had to do everything by ourselves. It was very tough; we had to carry the company. But after that the whole Chinese economy was booming, so there were improved opportunities for us to set up partnerships and acquire clients. After expanding the business we took on more staff and started trading with foreign partners. Ten years later, I'm managing 30 staff, we have set up another two companies, and have a greater distribution, double the size of two years ago.



people with passion

“I really like the sense of history and tradition on the campus.”



Tell us about your current role.

I am the VP of Shanghai Muro Industrial Company. I am primarily responsible for accounting and operations in the office. My business partner is working out of the office, so I take care of managing the staff. I enjoy the pressure. I am currently working on marketing and selling a new product to the Chinese market, and am involved in every aspect of getting this product out to the market, from quality control to ensuring that the project is delivered on time. It's very difficult when you bring a new product to the market, so that is taking up quite a lot of my time.

What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of our business's achievements. We have achieved over a 50% share in the China market and we hope to maintain our status as the leader in the industry. We are well known amongst our competitors and we work hard to maintain this.

Do you enjoy running your own company?

I have a great team of staff working on different projects. I like to get involved in each of these teams, so I would consider myself a real team player. Having said that, the best part of running your own business is the power to make your own decisions as well as the flexible working hours.

What challenges are you facing?

Challenges happen every day in business, but right now I am experiencing some personal challenges. I have a small baby and so I have to work hard to get some balance between work and home life. I am looking to delegate some parts of my job to a member of the team so that I have more time to spend at home.

Do you have any tips for students thinking about studying abroad?

My tips would be: don't hang out with Chinese classmates too much because if you are always with Chinese people you won't be able to improve your English and to properly learn about the local culture. Why come all this way and make the financial investment if you don't want to integrate? That's the most important thing, as well as studying hard. I hope that everyone has a good time at Royal Holloway, because it's a great place.

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