

Welcome to 12th Edition of the MBA Newsletter



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

China Study Tour July 2011



So it is time again for the annual MBA trip to China; an eclectic mix of business visits, university lectures, cultural experiences and exciting, exploratory jaunts in the extraordinary city of Beijing. The city itself is home to an astonishing 19.6 million people and when compared to London's 7.5 million you start to understand the size of the place. The city is most notable for its famous landmarks and tourist hot spots such as the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, Dao nightclub and of course the Great Wall, which is only an hours drive to the north of the city.

(Editors note – the roads have much improved since 2007!)



To get a quick perspective on 'business in China' it is important to ask one question; can you name one Chinese brand? Not brands which are made in China that is easy, just about everything, but what about brands or products which are developed,

designed or invented by the Chinese? It is a difficult one to answer as there are not too many. The MBA group this year was able to visit the head office of the biggest of these private organisations in the country, Lenovo. This large organisation is the manufacturer of computer hardware and notably bought IBMs home PC business in 2004 for \$1.75 billion. Lenovo's business is built around R&D and innovation in the consumer PC market, something that you find rare in China, a country that prides itself on its efficient manufacturing skills more than its development skills.

This particular issue was highlighted during our time at the Beijing University, who kindly hosted us at their tranquil campus located in the center of the city. The site is a welcome break from the crowded streets and has some notable alumni, some of whom were at the forefront of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests for democracy. This year we had lectures on China's social and economic issues and the cultural trepidation of dealing with the Chinese in business.

The nightlife in Beijing offers an assortment of entertainment from fantastic restaurants serving local delicacies to bizarre street food of questionable source and palatability. In one nautically themed bar the alcohol fueled owner plays the accordion while barely keeping his footing on the stage and charging £1 a pint for the privilege. This led to a few late nights and a few tired faces in the morning - all in the name of cultural and academic research of course! The bars found in the down town Hutong districts are catering to the local folk of Beijing and are much smaller, simpler and traditional to those in the city, right down to the 'authentic' toilet facilities which we won't be too graphic about - let's just say they strengthen your thighs! There are more up market establishments charging Capital City prices and frequented by the rich and elite such as the world famous Dao Nightclub where Beijing's playboys and girls are found.



Shopping is another important pastime for the locals with the city again presenting different options for shopping at differing price ranges. The students had a tour of one the Wanda Group's flagship shopping and entertainment

complexes in the city selling top end designer clothes and accessories. Staff from Wanda gave a presentation about the organization's strategy, investments plans and financing - a real eye opener. On the opposite scale there is the infamous Silk Market where you can see all of China's skills in one place; a building full of fake clothing and electrical devices all for the taking at incredibly low prices if you have the appropriate skills of negotiation which your gullible author lacked in abundance!

The city is one of the most diverse in the world and offers some truly amazing attractions. We were lucky enough to visit the Forbidden City, built in 1406 during the Ming Dynasty it was the Palace for the Emperor alone and entry was forbidden for the people of the country; hence the name. Of course, no visit to China would be complete without a trip to one of the 7 modern wonders of the world, the Great Wall of China. Built over many generation

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starting in the 6th century BC its purpose was to protect the people of China from invasion by the Mongolians.

The trip was a great success with everyone enjoying themselves and truly cementing strong friendships. It is a tight and tiring schedule in an exhausting city that never sleeps, but I'm sure everyone will agree with me when I say it is a country that everyone should visit at some stage in their lives.

Chris Heywood EMBA Cohort 3

MBA Alumni News

Ahmed Ali Jaleel

After a 10-year education gap since his Engineering studies in 90's, Ahmed Ali Jaleel enrolled on a distance learning Diploma in Management Studies programme in 2006. In 2007, Jaleel joined the full time MBA programme at MMU, assisted and encouraged by his academic mentor, Dr Hameed (first Vice Chancellor of The Maldives National University) and Dr Colin, his tutor during his Graduate Diploma in Management.

At the time, he was in his late 30s and had been working in a Maldivian telecommunications company for 9 years as Assistant Customer Services Manager, overseeing the smooth operation of the company's Call Center operations, Fault Management and Installation Control functions.

Jaleel explains that the *"MBA provided a wider spectrum of business knowledge and gave me a better insight to areas of studies, helpful in my profession to achieve better results. Also, it opened more opportunities for me to enhance my private consultancy service to SMEs."*

Jaleel recalled many of the programme's benefits, including; developing the ability to critically evaluate situations, utilisation of short-cut approaches when providing solutions, building confidence to express himself with relevant knowledge to support his arguments and the realisation of ever-changing concepts, business models and frameworks in the contemporary business environment.

Following his MBA, the major changes Jaleel noticed to his professional outlook included *"...building and speed-up of thought processes, boosting self-confidence and ability to be more critical in the design, review and revision work on products and services."*



On his return to Maldives in October 2008, he was promoted to the position of Services Development Manager. The following year, he was appointed to the Customer Experience Board (CEB) and elected as a member of Employee Forum Management Committee, for which he now serves as Chairman.

The highlights of Jaleel's MBA were many. Notably: *"The friendly staff, especially MBA team; the team building exercises at Peak District with colleagues; the business study trip visit to Prague and last but not least, the team presentation sessions, which provided the opportunity to increase my capacity to work with different skill sets, different mind-sets, and a mix of different professionals from different cultures - yet be able to collectively achieve results."*

"I have already recommended and assisted in sending mature students to do full-time MBA at MMU. I would continue doing so in the future."



In March 2011, Manchester Metropolitan Business School hosted the first meeting of the re-launched AMBA (North West) Alumni Association.

This association provides a networking opportunity for students past and present from AMBA accredited Business Schools in the North West (Lancaster School of Management, Manchester Business School, Salford Business School and of course MMUBS). The event was entitled "Developing and Marketing your Personal Competitive Advantage" and was introduced by the new Chief Executive of AMBA – Sharon Bamford. This was followed by two speakers: John Ryley, whose subject was 'Leading and Delivering Change' and Mark Williams who pointed out the advantages of using LinkedIn for personal marketing.

After the meeting, over wine and nibbles, there was an opportunity to network. The joint chairs of the North West Association – Alison Stock and Daniel Sheratte – took this opportunity to discuss future possible events with the members. Many more events are being planned for the coming year – watch out for announcements.



John Ryley



Mark Williams



Sharon Bamford, Chief Executive of AMBA

Professional Innovator Challenge

Once again, future pro.manchester is giving you the chance to put your wits to the test against some of the city's most innovative young professionals and take part in the future pro · manchester Professional Innovator Challenge 2011.

The challenge offers a great opportunity for members and partner organisations to show that their rising stars have got the ability to innovate and seize on opportunities.

To register your interest, follow the link below:
www.futurepromanchester.co.uk/professionalinnovator2012registeryourinterest

In 2010, students from MMU took part and had a wonderful experience. This year, we're looking for our MBA students to represent MMU and impress the judges!



Your Views are Valued

Have you got any ideas for the MBA programme?

Any interesting stories, internet links, information, contacts or questions you would like to share?

If so, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Contact us on MBA@mmu.ac.uk

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Next Generation MBAs

Congratulations to Nikki Armitage who gave birth to Harry Alexander on 2nd October 2010, weighing in at 7lb 13oz. Congratulations go to Chris March Jones and more so to his wife Beth, who announced the arrival of Toby on 8th March 2011 at 8lb 8oz.

Both Chris and Nikki are both part-way through their MBAs and have taken out time to produce the first editions for the Class of 2011!

We wish you all the very best.

For further details of this joining fee offer please contact Daniel Sheratte at d.sheratte@mmu.ac.uk.



And Finally...

We would like to thank those organisations that made such a contribution to the MBA this year:

David Wilkinson, Chairman Unit Communications

Andy Kitchin, Sales Director, Hydes Brewery

Massimo Norro, Unilever

John Falder, Managing Director, HMG Paints

Nick Cook, Managing Director, Williams Motor Company

Tom Hattersley (Alumnus MMUBS MBA), Siemens

Manchester United

BDO

Jaguar Land Rover

