



MIGUEL Z. BOY

Award Category: HeforShe Man of the Year

Candidate's Company/organization: Boomi

Current Position: Founder

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Candidate's Story-based Essay

“The most alluring thing a woman can have is confidence,” said a modern-day feminist, Beyoncé Knowles. I, too, am a modern-day feminist, for I also believe in equality of opportunity and acknowledge that there needs to be an environment, unlike before, that allows women to strive to inspire the rest of us to do better. My first influential woman figure was, without a doubt, my mother. She was part of the first graduating class of women in the Peruvian military more than 20 years ago. She together with my dad made sure that we received the best education, as they believed it was an ever-lasting investment. This emphasis on education was a stepping stone for me to ensure I engage in conversations, seminars, and readings that taught me the differences of opportunity. From then, the list of inspirational women does not stop, including professors, scientists, artists, accountants, politicians. My former boss, Paula Mueller, from whom I learned that we must recognize our strengths and weaknesses and work accordingly by exploiting the former while improving the latter. The idea of our business, Boomi, originated from Ella, my co-founder's sister, whose commitment towards a zero-waste lifestyle and sustainability inspired the creation of a company that focuses on the empowerment of the individual to take control of their own lifestyle and transform it into a sustainable one through goods and education.

When Emmanuel and I started to reflect upon all of our partnerships, we realized that they were all women. We approached these women to work together or got onboard projects that were led by women because we focused on their talent, their passion they have for their projects and their

drive to make a difference. The amazing women that we have worked with unfolded their own paths in a society that continues to tell them they cannot, they should not, or they must do things in a certain way. These women have helped us refine our company and solidify our mission, such as Alizee from ZeroWaste Shanghai, the founder of French Dragon Laure-Anne, Pauline from Feiy.co, Lea from Eco & More, Captain Bar's manager Giulia, Ksusha from UseDem, our business consultant Jessica, Marissa from Hummus House, Ziyu from Beeziro, Agness from UnCaffe Bar, and Berenika from Jing'an Market. We also had the pleasure to work with amazing influencers such as Ana Terra, La Petite, and Mei. Last but not least, our former and current team members, Tanya, Sahar, and Julia, are women who have helped us make Boomi more than just a dream. All these women and more have enhanced our journey as they have taught us that entrepreneurship is about breaking barriers and creating solutions.

So, let's get something straight. Boomi, the start-up I co-founded, would simply not exist without women. The powerful, creative, incredibly hard-working, and innovative women are the ones that we are continually learning from and looking towards as role models. These women were not given the power and position they currently hold, but instead, they created it, shaped it, and unfolded it in their own singular forms.

The women we have encountered in our journey have conclusively proven that the standards have changed and that the game is now co-ed, as it should have always been. The participation of women fosters further innovation, pushes our limits as entrepreneurs and inspire us to embrace the task and responsibility of ensuring a fair environment of accomplished women to continue to expand.

We want to also demonstrate to other men that if they have not been collaborating with other women, not only are they behind with the times but also are just wasting fantastic opportunities. So my pledge is to do as much as I can to contribute to ending inequality of opportunity so that more women can become role models for younger girls and boys. We should all be feminists, as confident women are the ones who run a better world.



GINA LI

Award Category: Innovator of the Year

Candidate's Company/organization: Beach Creative

Current Position: CEO & Co-Founder

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Candidate's Story-based Essay

As entrepreneurship continues its growth, it is becoming much more than starting a business

or creating the next big idea. It has evolved into an attitude, a way of thinking and acting that one embraces as a way of life.

The nomination of Gina Li for Innovator of the Year reflects her fearless journey from starting her first small local marketing and events business to taking a leap into the innovation technology space. Her unique ability to bridge international creativity, local entrepreneurship and nurturing talented people in a cross-cultural work environment has been a key to helping Chinese entrepreneurs innovate. Her vision, fearlessness and intelligence creates the common language and confidence that allows the team and clients of Beach Creative to thrive and push into the unknown.

Hailing from a small nickel town Jinchang from Gangsu, Gina made her first bold step by moving alone to Shanghai in 2003 after being accepted to study Shanghai University of Finance and Economics. After experiencing being a “white collar” worker in the skylines of Shanghai, she wanted something more challenging. Thus she started from scratch and began on a different path for over 10 years. She started her first business Vita-Ads in 2010,

servicing the marketing and event needs for the booming real estate industry. During these years in Vital-Ad she developed a keen ability to understand her clients' vision and translate them into highly creative solutions and experiences. By the time of 2013, the real estate market was changing and she could see that she needed to change too. That opportunity came along on the beach in Thailand when she met Andrew Wong an Australian Industrial Designer who recently left frog design Germany to take a chance to explore design and innovation in China.

Gina and Andrew formed Beach Creative in July 2013, it was a collaboration whereby Andrew led the creative side and Gina managed the business side. They started with only 1 intern and Andrew's 9+ years of global design experience at that time combined with Gina's 5 years of business&management experience. For the first few years, Beach struggled to gain any footing offering design services to the Chinese market, naturally Andrew took an approach that reflected the process that worked internationally. In those formative years Gina strived to sell that approach but struggled as the new generation of Chinese entrepreneurs and managers worked differently and failed to see the value of design services that Beach offered. At this low point, is when Gina took a chance to change the approach. Gina recognized the opportunity for Beach to offer more than just design services and began its growth into the development ideas with innovative thinking, design and prototyping powered by a small group of highly talented international thinkers, designers and builders. This evolution of Beach was possible through Gina's ability to interpret the goals, needs and ideas between Chinese and Western cultures into a unified vision that brought the teams together. Her talent was not about finding common ground between the 2 teams but her ability to actually create a new vision that drew both teams together. This is not as simple as it seems. It requires her ability to not just understand the ideas and vision from the leads of both sides, but the rest of the team. Gina has a great ability to engage with all levels from the creative, technology development teams on both sides and learn from their ideas, opinions and experience to form a new vision of the product or project that is uniquely her own yet becomes the seed of acceptance and inspiration for both teams. Enabling Beach and their clients to work as one.

She has always wished to be able to create something that is truly valuable to the market and this year will be the beginning of showing the world what Gina can do. With products releasing such as the world's first fully digitalized telescope, to robotic baristas being able to serve coffee and cocktails just the way you want it and a logistics robot she has been developing for years will be officially launched in Shanghai and much more surprises ahead. To her, every product development is endless just like innovation and innovation doesn't stop as life doesn't stop.

To define Gina as an innovator, it is to understand how she has the natural talent to listen, learn and understand people and enable change in the methods and approach of different industries, teams and culture, and to create innovation as one.



TAIHING TIAN

Award Category: Entrepreneur of the Year

Candidate's Company/organization: Switching-Time

Current Position: Co-founder & MD

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Candidate's Story-based Essay

- Joanne Gong, Account Manager at Switching-Time, 14 years of industry experience.

By the end of 2019, Taiwing's agency received the highest honor in the Chinese PR-industry: by Campaign, it was appointed Greater China PR-Agency of the Year, setting it not only on par, but ahead of, industry giants like Ogilvy and Hill & Knowlton. This, and many more reasons, is why we, with immense pride, nominate Taiwing Tian as a candidate for Entrepreneur of the Year. A key principle in Tai Chi is that of softness overcoming hardness. However, it's emphasized that softness doesn't mean to be looser or listless. Instead, it's about having real, inner strength and resilience. Such is the leadership of Taiwing Tian. With key characteristics like courage, humility, resilience, vision, commitment, strength, warmth and heart, Taiwing leads the way for her agency and her team. Her leadership has fostered a culture of trust and courage in her agency

Switching-Time, that spreads across the entire ecosystem, encompassing team members on all levels, clients and partners, all testifying to Taiwing's unbound commitment to their success, and the "Taiwing effect" on the entire team.

After founding the agency in 2012, Taiwing's leadership built a fast-growing firm who in 2018 grew 86% (from a multi-million USD billing base) and won Campaign's 'Greater China Independent Agency of the Year' with marquee clients like adidas group, L'Oreal Group LVMH and Pernod Ricard. However, Taiwing knew that 2019 would be the year that truly would define the agency. It's one thing to grow as a new firm. To take it to the next level and create an agency that would be on par with the big 4A agencies, set up for sustainable growth for years to come, would be quite another. This is especially true in the PR industry, where agencies push their team members too constantly overwork, leading to industry wide problems like 45% average staff turnover, which in turn is a great contributor to the staggering industry average client turnover: 45%.

In 2019, Taiwing launched the CEO strategy: C stands for Current Client Focus, E for Education and Learning, and O for Operational Excellence. In essence, the agency should grow through focus on current clients or their referrals. This would positively impact team balance, as well as guarantee the quality of work, as no time would be wasted chasing "maybe" revenue. Education means putting great emphasis on team capability development: Taiwing launched STudent, an academy for all team members, to make sure people work smarter, not harder. In addition, to raise the operational excellence, she hired Finance and HR Directors. In an industry full of talkers, Taiwing is quite the opposite. Her humility has trickled down the ranks. At Switching-Time, one constantly finds incredible achievements, but nobody who's screaming to take the glory. Instead, the focus is on celebrating the group's successes, where everyone feels that they are a part.

And what successes in 2019 there has been to celebrate under Taiwing's leadership:

- Revenue growth is 11 percent (confidential: from a multi-million USD of total billing), impressive especially as it follows a year with 86% growth
- Solid profitability increase even though building off last year's record-setting numbers
- Among the ten largest current clients, 70% increased their budgets with the agency, and

their revenue grew with incredible 65%

- Incredible less than 5% client turnover (compare to industry average of around 45%)
- Added a whopping 19 new brands to the roster including Victoria's Secret, L'Occitane, Kiehl's, Helena Rubinstein, FILA and Christofle.

But most importantly, and in line with Taiwing's CEO Strategy to grow through focus on Existing Clients:

- 50% of the new brands were awarded the agency with NO PITCH, as a result of client recommendations
- 50% of the new brands were awarded the agency based on referral pitch, where we were referred by our clients -0% was due to open pitch. Switching-Time didn't participate in a single open pitch during 2019.

Non-financial highlights include:

- 90% of team members dedicated 40 hours to learning over the year
- incredible 10% total staff turnover (vs industry average 45%)
- 13 award wins in international awards programs, proving world-class work
- HR focus resulted in 30% less time to fill an open position (vs last year) as well as 80% of new hires pass probation (vs 60% last year), both which has a huge impact on the life balance for the teams as well as the client satisfaction.
- Most impressive: despite revenue and profitability growth, the team logged 20% less overtime-hours vs last year.

But let's hear it from the clients and the team members:

"Taiwing is the best agency leader in China, in my opinion. She brings energy and passion into everything she does. She is a fantastic leader for her teams, who has been very stable: we have been with Switching-Time since 2014 and still work the same account team. I know they stay because of Taiwing, as I see how she cares about them. Lee Jeans is today the number one denim brand in China, and Taiwing has been crucial in getting us there and keeping us here."

- Vincy Ho, Senior Marketing Director of Lee Jeans

"I have worked with Taiwing in her previous agency. And we started to work together again after she founded Switching-Time. Taiwing is very caring for her team, which makes her team very

stable. And inspired by Taiwing, her team brings the same passion, energy and fresh ideas into our collaboration as she does – I call it the “Taiwing Effect”!

- Jerome He, Communication Director of Lancome China

“I joined Switching-Time when the company only had three employees. I joined because I had worked with Taiwing before and I trust her immensely as a person and a boss. And what a journey! We are today over 30 people and the culture at the agency is warm, friendly and we can all be honest and tell Taiwing what we think, she really listens.”