



Asia Case  
Research Centre

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Spring 2005

# The ACRC Bulletin

## Introducing *the Asia Case Research Centre*

*formerly the Centre for Asian Business Cases*

Welcome to the first issue of **The ACRC Bulletin**, the newsletter of the Asia Case Research Centre. Many of you may have known us by our former identity as the Centre for Asian Business Cases (CABC) at The University of Hong Kong.

Since 1997, our mission has been to offer business Cases written in the Asian context, and in the course of our brief history we have produced over 200 Cases spanning the full spectrum of business disciplines. Our Cases have covered a broad range of industries in regional settings, including Mainland China, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Korea and Japan.

The past seven years of Case development have been most interesting, with several milestones to reflect upon. We began operations at the dawn of the Asian financial crisis and bore witness early on to the tumult of Asia's dot-com boom and bust. The new millennium brought a steady flow of developments and rapid changes to the business and economic landscapes of the region. China's WTO accession, the effects of 9/11, the SARS outbreak of 2003 (which shut down our offices for 10 days), and the evolving role of China's private sector have served as some of the major backdrops to our work. Through it all,

we have endeavoured to develop Cases that reflect the changes around us and to disseminate timely, relevant and insightful research.

When we started operations seven years ago, our mandate was to develop a body of Case studies to address the shortage of Asian business learning materials developed from within the region. The Faculty of Business and Economics at The University of Hong Kong saw this as a core component of its mission to deliver quality education through rich and relevant content, and also as an important means of strengthening ties with the business community. In a short period of time, we have progressed significantly along the learning curve and are proud of our growing list of achievements, which include receiving the 2004 Society for Information Management (SIM) Paper award and having several of our Cases selected for international Case competitions. Today we are one of the world's major producers of business Cases, and have built a solid foundation from which to expand.

Having said this, we have undergone a gradual shift over the past two years and have consciously moved towards a new dimension of research-oriented Case series. Though we have been successful under the CABC name, we

believe this is an important point in the growth and life of our organisation and have made the decision to part with our birth name.

As the Asia Case Research Centre (ACRC), our focus will be on addressing emergent research issues that face the academic community, and on developing Cases that offer valuable insights into the latest issues, trends and business practices in the region. Many of our new Cases will emphasise cross-cultural, multi-disciplinary and cross-industry scenarios. Our aim is to move towards developing Case studies in a series of multi-disciplinary frameworks, each framework comprising a network of research issues. This, we believe, will offer more rigorous exposure to Asian business environments and scholarship, fostering innovative perspectives on topics of importance.

**POON**  
Poon Kam Kai Series

*The ACRC is grateful for generous funding from Mr. Dickson Poon, Group Executive Chairman of Dickson Concepts*

Once again, welcome to **The ACRC Bulletin** and to the new Asia Case Research Centre. We invite you to register as an educator on our website (where you can download free samples of our Cases) and hope that you will continue to find our publications useful.

# Joining Hands with HIEBS

**B**reaking away from the traditional mould of Case research, the ACRC has joined hands with the Hong Kong Institute of Economics and Business Strategy (HIEBS) at The University of Hong Kong to produce instructive material meeting the rigorous demands of an economics curriculum for the 21st century: scholarly yet practical. Cases developed with HIEBS are supervised by Professor Richard Wong and Professor K.F. Wong.

## Pioneering Work on Economics Case Research

The ACRC is committed to a professional education that simultaneously adheres to the highest standards of scholarship and takes a practical approach to training students for regional and international leadership. In co-operation with HIEBS, we are complementing our business Cases with economics Case research - a greenfield with enormous potential. By exploring this largely untapped niche, we hope to create an enhanced learning experience for economics students of all levels: providing a systematic exposure to economic theories in the regional context to cultivate superior analytical skills.

The following are some of the Cases that have been released in partnership with HIEBS:

*Competition in the Hong Kong Banking Sector: Interest Rate Wars*



This Case investigates the competitive landscape of the Hong Kong banking industry after the dismantling of Interest Rate Rules in the 1990s. Banks became free to set deposit rates in accordance with market conditions and to develop their competitive strategies. However, given the externally oriented nature of the Hong Kong economy, alongside loose monetary conditions prevailing worldwide since 2001, conclusions about the impact of deregulation can only be tentative at this stage.

*IDD Connections between a Reform-in-progress China and a Deregulated Hong Kong*

This Case investigates the issues and difficulties of international direct-dial (IDD) connection when there is policy asymmetry between two regions. The sudden unilateral increase in interconnection charges by China Telecom in November 2002 was cited as an example and a reason for the failure of accounting rate systems.

*A Tale of Two Cities: Water Supply in Hong Kong and Macau*

This Case investigates the role of the private sector in improving operating performance of a water utility. The productivity of Hong Kong's Water Supply Department and Macau's Water Supply Company are compared and reasons for inefficiencies in Hong Kong's publicly owned water utility are identified. Successful privatisation experiences for vertically integrated water utilities in the UK and other contractual models of water services provision in France and the US are also discussed.



# The Educator's Perspective:

## Interview with Michael Enright



*Professor Michael Enright*

**P**rofessor Michael Enright, a leading expert on international competitiveness and international strategy, joined the faculty of The University of Hong Kong as the first Sun Hung Kai Professor of Business Administration in 1996, after six years on the faculty at the Harvard Business School. Professor Enright teaches courses in business strategy and international business as well as serving as co-director of the Asia-Pacific Competitiveness Programme at Hong Kong University's Institute for Economic Policy and Business Strategy.

Professor Enright has developed over 30 Cases with the Centre to date.

*ACRC: How does your work here differ from your prior work in the United States?*

**Professor Enright:** In some ways the work I do here in Asia is quite similar to what I did in the United States. What's different is the environment. In North America, Western Europe, the economies are relatively stable, and therefore the challenges that managers face are the ones of relatively mature, stable economies, whereas in Asia so many of the economies are relatively volatile - there's a huge variety. So what we see here in Asia are different business situations, and that many of the assumptions that underlie a lot of business teaching in North America or Europe really have to be questioned when you do it in a Asian setting, or any setting where you have economic uncertainty and a much greater variety in terms of levels of economic development, and development of management of firms in general.

*ACRC: What is the value of using Cases in a business curriculum?*

**Professor Enright:** The striking thing about business curricula, as opposed to some other disciplines, is that a business curriculum is often designed to actually train the manager to go out into the business world and make real decisions. And what's striking is that

most traditional modes of instruction may provide people with tools and analytical techniques, but they don't force people into that role of the manager, into the role of the decision-maker. It's not enough, to just do analysis in the business situation. Ultimately it's decisions - that's what managers get paid for.

The Case method in the business setting is really an excellent tool to put people in a low-risk position of making decisions, and in our programmes here at The University of Hong Kong, typically our students will be put in the role of the decision-maker, the CEO, or the finance manager, or in some cases the government policy-maker. It builds up an experience base, and a way of getting people to think about not just doing analysis but of actually making decisions and then trying to figure out how to implement those decisions successfully within organisations. And those are really key skills for managers anywhere in the world today.

*ACRC: How does the Asia Case Research Centre differ from other publishers of Cases?*

**Professor Enright:** Historically the major publishers of Cases have been located in North America or Europe,

and in some senses the Asia Case Research Centre is our version of the types of systems that have been set up and have operated quite successfully in North America and in Europe.

I think the difference here is the knowledge of the region. While there are some aspects of business that are universal and will come up in any economy, there are particular twists, there are particular turns when you have the sorts of environments that we do have in Asia as opposed to North America or Europe.

*ACRC: Could you talk about some of the memorable Cases you have worked on?*

**Professor Enright:** We have a Case on China's accession into the WTO, where we force the students to think through not just the overall implications of China's entry into the WTO, but how China's entry may play out in individual industries, which have different dynamics, and in which China varies in terms of its strengths. And what becomes clear is that WTO accession is not a single monolithic event for China or for the rest of the world, but it's rather an event, or the accession is an event, that has multiple outcomes, that may vary quite dramatically across

industries and across competitor countries.

We have a follow-on Case on the economic rise of China and its impact on neighbouring economies. Throughout Asia and in fact in the rest of the world, China's economic emergence is right at the top of the list in terms of concerns of both corporate managers and economic policy-makers. And again, trying to work through the details of what China's economic emergence means for economies as disparate as the Japanese economy, Korean, Hong Kong, Singaporean, Australian, New Zealand, Indonesian, allows one to really get a sense of the multiplicity of roles that China is playing in the global economy and the vast range of impacts that China is having today and will have in the future on global economy.

*ACRC: What advice would you give to instructors or students who are interested in using Cases?*

**Professor Enright:** For instructors, one has to always remember that a Case is a means to an end rather than an end in and of itself. Many instructors choose Cases and use Cases that they think are interesting stories. But the point behind any Case is not just perhaps an interesting story; a truly valuable Case is one that teaches. It's one that teaches tools, techniques, concepts, ideas; it's a Case that forces

students to do their analysis, to work through the details, not looking for a single magic bullet, but rather to work through the Case in enough depth in order to really understand the underlying issues, and therefore the appropriate tools, techniques, ideas and concepts, that the Cases are designed to teach.

The Cases that wind up being very successful, that wind up having a long shelf-life, are Cases that really teach core business concepts and core business ideas and tools and techniques in interesting ways. For students, Cases provide a very interesting set of possibilities. Again, it's a break in some Cases from more standard textbook learning. But really, students should view Cases as a low-risk means of making important business decisions, and as a mechanism to allow them to learn the appropriate analytical tools and decision tools, but also to think through all the ramifications and implications of their managerial and business decisions. And this is again, something that a textbook simply can't teach you.

*ACRC: How has the nature of business education changed over the last decade or so, compared to what it used to be, or used to be in Asia?*

**Professor Enright:** There are some clear trends in business education, both globally and in Asia. One is

internationalisation of curricula. It was commonplace 10 years ago in many schools to have a curriculum that was dominated by either textbooks or Cases from a single country or a small number of countries. Now we're seeing much greater variety, and a much greater focus on the international aspects of business, as one might expect, as we see globalisation occurring in industry after industry.



Another issue that we see rising quite prominently these days is the issue of uncertainty and volatility, when we can have Internet billionaires virtually overnight, and when we can have some of the world's largest or most venerable companies disappear virtually overnight, we understand that these are areas that really have to be looked at.

In terms of pedagogy, we see a much greater emphasis on using the Case method and other experiential learning methods as a number of schools decided long ago, and more and more schools are deciding, it is difficult to learn business management and business decision-making techniques out of a textbook. That the ability to put oneself and to put one's students into that role of the CEO or the Prime Minister, is a very valuable one, so we're seeing a vast uptick there.

*Michael Enright's Cases may be accessed on [www.acrc.org.hk](http://www.acrc.org.hk). A Quicktime video of the full interview may also be viewed online.*



# MNCs in China



**T**he ACRC recently initiated a strategy Case series on multinational corporations (MNCs) in China to cover issues and challenges faced by the MNCs at different phases of their business development, and to identify strategies that are employed to succeed in this vast and unique marketplace. Cases within this series are being supervised by Dr. Ali Farhoomand, Dr. Zhigang Tao, Dr. Yigang Pan and Dr. Christine Chan.

These China Cases, used individually or collectively, will be effective tools to teach generic frameworks and concepts in strategic analysis, formation and implementation; to highlight dynamics and tensions in a firm's international expansion into emerging and fast-moving markets, and to shed light on critical success factors in doing business in China - in a new market

environment that is substantially different from that of 10 years ago. Examples of issues covered include first-mover vs. late-mover advantages, localisation vs. standardisation, consumer-driven vs. technology-driven strategies, and strategic alliances vs. technology protection.

A number of leading MNCs have been carefully selected for this series, each representing a unique set of issues, while to some extent sharing common challenges or dilemmas. Industries represented range from automotive to pharmaceutical, from home appliances to retail, and from personal computers to telecommunications. Industry notes will be published along with the Cases in order to provide instructors with a broad and up-to-date picture of the relevant industries.

These Cases will further serve as empirical evidence in a more in-depth competitive advantage study addressing businesses operating in markets with high velocity and uncertainty. China is a perfect example of such a market, due to the speed, breadth and depth of changes it has experienced and the social, economic, legal and technological transitions it is undergoing. The competitive landscapes in major industries are being reshaped everyday by older and newer, foreign and domestic players with different corporate agendas and resources.

We are hard at work on these Cases, and companies covered will include General Motors, Volkswagen, Wal-Mart, Carrefour, Nokia, Motorola and others. Our Case on Shanghai Volkswagen is about to be released, and the others will soon follow.

# The Trade & Industry Department SME Case Series

**S**ince the 1980s, Hong Kong's Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) have learned how to do business against the backdrop of China's rapid development, thus placing the city in a unique position within the region. Today, Hong Kong is estimated to have some 300,000 SMEs, which employ nearly 1.5 million people. The Hong Kong Productivity Council further estimates that Hong Kong business people have established about 70,000 businesses in the Pear River Delta, employing a total of about five million people in the region.

Over the course of two years, the ACRC, with the backing of the Trade and Industry Department of the Hong Kong Government, has undertaken the development of a series of Cases to examine the challenges facing small businesses and entrepreneurs in the region and to showcase some innovative approaches to management adopted by leading companies. The Cases are topically diverse and span a range of sectors as well as a range of functional topics. The entire series of Cases is available in both English and Traditional Chinese versions.

The following are some of the case titles within this series.

- *Proactive Medicare Enterprise (HK) Limited:  
Providing Healthcare in Mainland China*
- *Nin Jiom:  
Selling Traditional Chinese Medicine in Modern Hong Kong*
- *OneCard:  
Building a Savings and Benefits Platform*
- *Towngas:  
Achieving Competitive Advantage through Customer Relationship Management*
- *Leccotech:  
The "Whole Product" Concept in Export Marketing*
- *Proactive Medicare Enterprise (HK) Limited:  
Providing Healthcare in Mainland China*
- *Toyland Rubber Manufacturing:  
Building a New Factory in Shanghai*
- *Fenix:  
Diversified Niche Marketing in the Lifestyle Business*
- *Manfield Coatings Co. Ltd.:  
Quality Management as the Winning Formula*
- *Old Company, Modern Marketing Strategy:  
Lessons from Lee Kum Kee*



# Case Spotlight:

# Interview with Dr. Harry Lee



Dr. Harry Lee

**E**arlier this year, the ACRC's Dr. Ali Farhoomand and Phoebe Ho, in collaboration with Dr. Harry Lee, Managing Director of TAL Apparel Limited, were awarded first prize in the prestigious Society for Information Management (SIM) Paper Competition for their case entitled *Stepping up the Value Chain: TAL Apparel Limited*.

The Case provides an overview of TAL's recent information management initiatives in providing vendor-managed inventory and made-to-measure offerings to its major retailer customers. Of interest is how a no-name Hong Kong-based apparel manufacturer has used information technology to gain a competitive advantage in the intensely cut-throat global apparel industry. The Case effectively illustrates how a traditionally weak member in a global industry can use IT to step up the value chain.

The following is an excerpt from an interview conducted with Dr. Harry Lee in February 2004.

*ACRC: Can you tell us briefly how your Company's business has evolved since it split away from its parent (the TAL Group) in the 1980s to become its garment-manufacturing section?*

**Dr. Harry Lee:** In October 1988, we purchased a company in the US, our customer. The company had some small brand names, but were not doing well financially. They designed their own products, and sourced the products. We started to understand the garment business after this purchase. It gave us a complete picture of the wholesale business in the US. We lost a lot of money, primarily because of very poor inventory control. It took us two years to sell the excess inventory...selling at \$3 for a cost of \$10, mostly through secondary

## The ACRC's Top Ten Selling Cases

Dell:  
Selling Directly, Globally

FedExCorp:  
Structural Transformation through e-Business

PricewaterhouseCoopers:  
Building a Global Network

Dairy Farm Group:  
Redesign of Business Systems and Processes

Grey Worldwide:  
Strategic Repositioning through CRM

Hong Kong Disneyland (A):  
The Walt Disney Perspective

China and the Sino-US WTO Agreement

Constructing an e-Supply Chain at Eastern Chemical Company

Citibank's e-Business Strategy for Global Corporate Banking

SCMP.COM:  
Strategic Repositioning of a Newspaper

channels. This is when we learned our lesson about inventory control.

*ACRC: How do you establish trust with your customers to gain access to their points of sale?*

**Dr. Harry Lee:** We have been doing business with them for a long time. They will not give us information for something we don't provide service for. They don't give any major programmes to one vendor to avoid non-performance risk. We assured them that we have multiple factories and if one factory fails, another one will step in. In this sense, we act as multiple vendors with multiple factory locations. They have in fact started sharing sales data with us already, so that we can plan our production better. We only get programme access for products that we manufacture for them. Going forward, business is becoming more and more transparent.

*ACRC: It seems that you are under pressure to move away from a commodity business and move up the product hierarchy. On the other hand, you have conflicting pressures to cut costs and shorten production cycles. How do you reconcile these pressures?*

**Dr. Harry Lee:** These two directions are not contrary to each other. The old management concept (like a cottage factory) is based on obedience - coming to work on time, following orders... worker promoted to supervisor, then mill manager, etc. Those days are gone. Now we rely on systems to manage our business (fabric-testing modules, textile-analysing modules, production breakdowns, process-scheduling). Product changes are very frequent, we make sample runs to anticipate problems, fix problems...in this sense, we are moving towards the electronics assembly model. We are shifting from managing factories to managing information about factories. With quality control, engineering processes, we are cutting costs and streamlining processes.

*ACRC: How will the elimination of quota systems by the end of this year impact your overall strategic position?*

**Dr. Harry Lee:** Today, China, India and Pakistan have a very small quota. These countries, with low-cost labour, will be our major competitors after the quota elimination. There is a huge over-capacity in the garment industry in the world today. The garment industry has a lot of "soft-specs", unlike TV sets, where everything can be put down in black and white. It takes us, even an experienced manufacturer, almost a year to get to know a new customer with unique requirements. This in a sense is an entry-barrier for newcomers. However, there is always room for the low-end competition providing commodity-like products. By providing value-added services, we are creating another entry barrier.

*ACRC: As margins in manufacturing become smaller and smaller, will you consider moving to the more value-adding part of the value chain?*

**Dr. Harry Lee:** Logistics and supply chain management are some of those value-added services we are providing, even for products we do not make. For example, with JC Penney, we act as their third-party logistics provider for their underwear line. Underwear is



not in conflict with our manufacturing portfolio (otherwise there would be conflict of interest from the customer's perspective). The next step is to provide third-party logistics sourcing for their towels from overseas. We would venture into further opportunities for anything that is scalable.

*The full Case, "Stepping up the Value Chain: TAL Apparel Limited", is available on our site: [www.acrc.org.hk](http://www.acrc.org.hk)*

*A paper based on this Case, "Innovation through Supply Chain Reconfiguration", is forthcoming in "MIS Quarterly Executive".*



The following Cases have been recently released by the ACRC.

### **Eurasia International: Total Quality Management in the Shipping Industry**

This Case gives an account of how a ship management company was able to set itself apart from its competitors and from its clients' own in-house technical and crew-management capabilities by embracing a culture of continuous improvement and by implementing Total Quality Management systems.

### **The Shanghai Property Market and Hong Kong Developers**

Once considered Asia's most important economic centre, Shanghai had by 2003 re-emerged as a vibrant and vital metropolis. One of the manifestations of Shanghai's new-found wealth was a rapidly expanding property market that, in the opinions of some analysts, was overheating. As the largest group of non-Mainland investors in Shanghai's property market, Hong Kong-based developers were becoming wary of market conditions in Shanghai

and wondered how they could best position themselves for the future.

### **Regional Development in the Chinese Mainland**

China's economic rise became one of the most important stories in the world economy once the Chinese economy began opening to the rest of the world in 1979. However, this rise was not evenly distributed across all of China's regions. By 2003, some regions had emerged as clear leaders in the economic development process, while

## New Cases



others lagged far behind. Understanding China's regional economies became virtually a prerequisite for success for economic policy and for establishing firm strategies.

### **Old Company, Modern Marketing Strategy: Lessons from Lee Kum Kee**

The sauce company Lee Kum Kee, one of the best known Hong Kong brands, has a long history that began in 1888, and has been run by the same family for four generations. The Case discusses the lessons that can be learnt from this

traditional family business in managing its brand while maintaining and expanding the reach of its products over a whole century.

### **Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts: Gauging Investors' Views on Corporate Social Responsibility**

In January 2003, Mr. Ho Kwok Ping, the co-founder and Chairman of Singapore-based Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts, was debating whether to take his Company public. Mr. Ho wondered whether investors would feel as passionately about the Company's

pro-environment values and initiatives.

The Case also examines whether the economic climate in Asia at the time was suitable for an IPO.

### **TradeCard: Expanding into China**

The Case deals with TradeCard Inc., a New York-based financial supply chain service provider, and its plan to expand into the China market. The Case discusses how a structured B2B online payment system such as TradeCard can be marketed in China, and how TradeCard Inc. can create a critical mass of users in China.

## Taking Stock of Hong Kong's Human Resources

This Case discusses how Hong Kong is transforming itself into a knowledge-based economy. It also provides insights into its socio-economic condition, labour markets and manpower projections to 2005. The Case discusses what it would take for Hong Kong to achieve the status of a knowledge-based economy, what industries Hong Kong should focus on, what kind of people it should attract and develop, and how it can develop its human resources.

### Buyer-Supplier Relationships

In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to buyer-supplier relationships and supply chain management in general. Views of buyer-supplier relationships have evolved from the old school of the 1980s, where buyers and suppliers were seen as part of a zero-sum game, to the more collaborationist outlook of the



1990s, which proposed that buyers and suppliers could co-operate to the benefit of both, to the more network-oriented view of the 2000s, where buyers and suppliers are seen as parts of organic business eco-systems. This Case thus provides an outline of eight real-life examples to illustrate a broad range of buyer-supplier relationships.

### Rediscovering Market Niches in a Traditional Industry

For centuries, Jingdezhen, the "Porcelain Metropolis" of China,

produced and exported the finest porcelain treasures in the world. By the late 20th century, however, the city was in danger of losing its glory. Although its factories still churned out more than a million pieces of porcelain a day, it was facing more competitors at home and abroad than at any time in its history. This Case illustrates the problems of adopting an undifferentiated strategy in a competitive market. It explores how to identify market niches in a traditional industry and examines strategies for building a global brand.



### Hutchison Whampoa Limited and The Cheung Kong Center

In mid-1993, Hutchison Whampoa Limited (HWL) was planning to demolish the Hilton Hotel, one of Hong Kong's oldest and best known landmarks, to make way for a highly lucrative office building. To proceed with the redevelopment plan, HWL proposed to compensate the Hilton Group for an early termination of its 50-year management contract.

Before approaching the Hilton Group for the buy-out, the Chief Development Executive of HWL hoped to convince himself and his directors that the deal was necessary, and that the redevelopment plan would be beneficial to both the Group and its shareholders. The case presents factors that may influence the future development of Hong Kong's office rental market and inspires debate about the emerging trends.



## Staff Profile

**P**hoebe Ho is the manager of the Asia Case Research Centre. Phoebe came to Hong Kong in August 2000 from Canada, where she earned two degrees in engineering from the University of British Columbia. In Canada, she worked as a business analyst in the IT department of Canadian Airlines International, which was her first exposure to a global firm.

Upon arriving in Hong Kong, Phoebe joined the Monitor Group, working on strategy consulting in Asia. She lived in Bangkok for six months while working on the growth strategy for a European beer company. She joined the Centre in January 2002 as a case writer, and subsequently began teaching introductory marketing and management at SPACE, the continuing education arm of the University of Hong Kong. After SPACE, she returned to ACRC to serve as the manager.

In her role, Phoebe writes cases and works on the overall administration and business development of the Centre. Recently, she has been planning for the new ACRC, working

on recruitment and future goals. "The Centre's vision is for us to be more research based", she explains. "I would like for [ACRC] to take on a stronger role in promoting the Case Method at schools in Asia. We are the largest Asia-based case production centre and I see us taking on the distribution of other Asian-context business cases as well".

Phoebe also sees case writers becoming more active in case development. "Before, we would meet the market demand for case studies. Now, we realise we need to tie in cases with theories and provide in-depth analysis on the subjects concerned". Within Hong Kong, she says, "Locally we will take on a leading role in promoting the Case Method in business education, using the research we've developed to foster collaboration among institutions".

Phoebe has found her work at ACRC to be interesting and rewarding. "I'm learning every day with each piece of reading, new research and case writing. I'm working with academics, professors for example. I get inspiration from how they think, work, and learn and share ideas".



Recently she completed a case on TAL Apparel, a Hong Kong-based garment manufacturer. The case focuses on how TAL has used IT to gain an edge in its industry. "The case gave me a personal view of how a Hong Kong family business competes in the global market... this case also gave me a first-hand exposure to witness the evolution of Hong Kong as an economy in the last 20 years", she says.

"I am very excited with the direction we're going at the Centre because there is a lack of understanding in how cases can be used effectively in many disciplines. We can promote people to use cases and the Case Method".



## Designer Profile

Victoria Evans is a freelance graphic designer, formerly with the international brand strategy consultancy, Design Bridge. Victoria specialises in corporate design and has been involved in both corporate projects and packaging design.

Victoria has a unique style and exquisite taste, blending traditional design with modern elements. Of her winning design, she writes:

*The Seal concept was inspired by the red oriental mark placed carefully in a picture. This is only a reference and a source of inspiration. It may be very much seen by locals but it is very distinctive in the international scenario and is a very special feature. It gives interest to a piece & creates tension in the composition. It is placed in a special way to make each piece*

*unique and most important acts like a validation. A seal already implies approval, it's authoritative, it authenticates, has an official look and is a signature.*

*It was created to keep regional heritage and legacy and is made of simple and modern shapes. The nature of the seal has texture that is symbolised by the circles. These can also be read as thinking bubbles, what the Centre produces involves clever thinking, expertise and a special knowledge.*

*Colourwise, it respects the original purple colour and it's combined with orange, its complementary colour.*

Visit [www.acrc.org.hk](http://www.acrc.org.hk) to view the designs by all the finalists in our competition.

# The ACRC's New Logo

**I**n August 2004, we held a logo design competition to mark the occasion of the Centre's rebranding under the ACRC name. We received 180 design entries from students and professionals from Hong Kong, Mainland China, the UK, Denmark, the Philippines and the US. After careful consideration, we are pleased to announce that the "Seal" submitted by London graphic designer Victoria Evans is the winner of our competition.

Congratulations to Victoria Evans, the designer of our logo and the winner of our competition, on her creativity.



## The ACRC Research Team

*Shirley Chan*

*Dr. Michael J. Dilena*

*Jonathan Dworkin*

*Emily Ho*

*Mary Ho*

*Phoebe Ho*

*Amir Hoosain*

*Shamza Khan*

*Jennifer Lee*

*Marissa Macauley*

*Dr. Carola Ramon-Berjano*

*Dr. Kavita Sethi*

*Samuel Tsang*

*Arnaud Vagner*

*Iris Wang*

*Thomas Yang*



ACRC Staff: (front row, l-r): Phoebe Ho, Dr. Carola Ramon-Berjano, Emily Ho, Ariel Li  
(back row, l-r): Dr. Kavita Sethi, Thomas Yang, Shirley Chan, Iris Wang,  
Jonathan Dworkin, Cliff Ng, Jennifer Lee, Samuel Tsang

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The Centre would like to congratulate Carola Ramon-Berjano, who recently completed her Ph.D. in Economics at the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London. Her thesis focused on the impact of globalisation on economic disparities, with an emphasis on Latin American and European policies. Congratulations, Carola!