

# **Synopsis**

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**Team 6 Semester 2**

## **Intro: Finding a seat at the lunch table.**

Through my synopsis, I hope to guide you through my experience at KEA for the past five months. I want to share my growth and newly discovered knowledge. To do that, I will share my story. I will begin by admitting my first day at KEA was intimidating, while still exciting. I tried to clear my mind of any pre-conceived notions and expectations. I can remember back to when I first introduced myself to a crowd of new faces, and the class room suddenly felt so big.

## **Project One: Harboe.**

Public speaking had never been a strong suite of mine. Speaking to new people in general, has never come easily. From the start, we were prompted to form working groups. Already, the class was familiar with each other, and I wasn't sure quite where that left me. Already, a small challenge had presented itself. I am already used to independent work, and small minor group projects. I jumped into a group with no idea of how other people worked, other student's flow and methods. Teammates have to rely on each other, and communication is key. My initial major concern was that I would not be able to keep up with the group. I was honest about my concern from the beginning, but in return received overwhelming support from my teammates. I offered my skill set, my strengths and weaknesses. But, most importantly throughout the process, I learned the importance of listening.

I think it's fair to say that this first project was a crash course and introduction to the overall approach and methods of writing a report. This was my first introduction to the QISH model. I was quickly picking up and familiarizing myself with the different phases of research, insight to analysis to conclusions. The structure was completely new to me and I quickly had to adapt to the organization and structure of communicating our findings. This was also my first time working with a client. However, I found ways to contribute my previous experiences and knowledge to the group. I helped to formulate a concept of a launch plan, based from research into Chinese culture. I felt it was important to formulate ideas based from the perspectives of an everyday Chinese consumer. Although I did not have any direct knowledge of Chinese culture, I prioritized my research by taking the information I gathered from writing about the target group. I used a survey as a starting point to gather a small sample of the age range, gender, geographic location of beer consumers on China from an open forum. However the most valuable information came from user comments where a conversation was held about people's personal preferences of taste and observed the social connection they had to different types of beers.

## **Design and Sagaz.**

This design course was a part of the curriculum that I was particularly looking forward to. I had studied fine art at SUNY Purchase independently for a few years, and I've wanted to incorporate those concepts to

a digital platform. One of the biggest distinctions that had stood out to me was the function of visual communication for designers versus fine artists. One point was made, that made me think for a long while after the class: Art is a form of self-expression, regardless of the audience. Design is created so serve as a mode of communication FOR the audience. With the understanding that design's fundamental purpose is to have functionality, I was able to have a clear direction for the development of my personal designs. However, when design is done well, and exceeds its fundamental purpose, it has the capacity to become art (and can still be self expressive). This was a source of inspiration when developing a team logo, which was a learning experience in its own right.

One of the most interesting assignments for design class, was creating a visual identity for our group. This includes selecting a name, defining who we are as a group, and effectively communicating it. The brainstorming process was a great exercise. Again, the majority of the group members, I have not worked with before. Through a small and fun game got the creative juices flowing to being us to our official name: 42. The game was automatic writing, used as a creative exercise. 42 was originally inspired to be the answer to everything, the reference drawing from the Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy, "answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe and everything." As a creative company, we could provide the answers for clients. Not to mention it stuck since it was descriptive of the 4 girls and 2 guys in our group, already the answer to solve our ultimate question: what do we call ourselves?

Our client, Sagaz publishing was our next creative project. My role in this project included: researching competitors, describe the project management, write a conclusion, organize and review the overall analysis report. For our solution and presentation, I described our design concepts including: styles, mood boards, colors, design elements, and typography. I also talked about the personas and scenarios and described the functionalities of our final application concept: GuestGuide. My overall experience here emulates the previous project. However, because this was a design class, our brainstorming sessions were visually oriented. I felt confident in this area, and picked up some very useful, and not to mention fun, techniques.

### **Project Three: VEGA.**

By building upon my experience of the previous two projects throughout the semester, I felt confident to handle the intensity of the "32 Hour Project" I had become familiar with the work flow and team members. Our group immediately went to work, and the transition into this project was smooth since we were already familiar with each other's strengths and weaknesses. One of my strengths was in writing. The group came together and came to an agreement with a direction to work towards, established personas, target audiences and ambassadors. I took the responsibility of writing descriptions, and organizing the flow of the overall paper.

After the feedback, I was provided a sense of clarity about the holes in the report. I believe the teams intentions were all there, however much of our insight discussions got lost in communication and did not

make it to the report in as clear of a manner as intended. The importance of building strong communication had presented itself. I believe that our group consists of very talented people who all have their strengths, but it was easy to fall into those roles. In a sense, there was some isolation and at times a binary structure of people's involvement for certain tasks. Although a difficult task, it is important to reach out and make the effort to search for consistency amongst a group. Even if that means to stop and ask the most seemingly obvious questions. Again, this perspective falls back to the focus of direct social interaction and communication, where I have discovered my furthest personal growth.

### **Literature.**

The Tipping Point was an excellent read about communications. It drew from relatable, real life instances to describe different types of communicators in an interesting and captivating way. The writing style was also clear and concise. I realized a struggle I have with my writing is that I tend to make it too wordy and fill it with unnecessary jargon. I feel the Tipping Point made an example of how good writing does not to be so descriptive to be compelling. The author describes the flow of communication and paths of information. He goes into detail about three main types of characters: Connectors, Mavens and Salesmen. I learned about these personality types, I started to recognize these characteristics in the people I knew, and have previously worked with.

Readings from media technology complemented my studies from Purchase. For instance the article *Everyware* discusses ubiquitous computing. I was able to relate this reading to my studies of surveillance technologies at Purchase. Rafael Lozano Hemmer is a new media artist who utilizes a wide range of technologies such as phone cameras to measure biometric information. He also uses computer tracking systems to measure random passer-bys shadows, which provokes video art portraits to be projected in a public space. Lozano Hemmer's artwork conveys technologies integration into everyday life, and provokes a dialogue about the social implications of ubiquitous computing, especially its role in modern surveillance.

### **And finally.**

In any education or experience in general there will always be something to learn. Experiences are not so linear, and there is not just one right way develop. I like to visualize my growth as rhizomatic learning, where any knowledge gained is in some way are interconnected with one another. It's fair to conclude that my education at SUNY Purchase, is quite liberal and conceptual. What I had been missing however, is the method of implementing it in a professional work environment. I believe KEA offers an effective structure and emulates real world processes, and introduced me to the missing piece in placing valuable perspectives I've learned up until today. I can remember vividly from a communications lecture, loosely quoted: You may have something very valuable to say, but if you don't know how to communicate it, no one will hear it.