



2018
**Singapore
FinTech
Champions**

 LightbulbCapital

Dear Reader,

Welcome to Lightbulb Capital's 2018 Singapore FinTech Champions List published to coincide with the Singapore FinTech Festival. It showcases and celebrates the diversity and talent in the Singapore FinTech community.

In order to create this list, we identified some of the key people making a difference in the industry and sent a short questionnaire asking them to highlight their primary focus, their key challenges and some more personal skills and attributes that we would otherwise never know. The resulting answers enable us to paint a broad picture of the focus and challenges of the FinTech industry in Singapore and to uncover some entertaining personal insights from those who shape the future.

We discover that engaging and collaborating with banks is seen as both an opportunity and a challenge. There is also a general consensus that a clearer regulatory framework would be helpful.

Many of those working in established financial institutions describe the challenge of embracing change and innovation in a regulated and traditional setting and offer some useful suggestions to improve this. Lightbulb Capital's "Innovation Culture Catalyst" program provides a perfect solution for this!

We also discover a rather serious theme when it comes to selection of "most influential book" with Ray Dalio's *Principles* cited well above The Bible, novelists are all but absent. On a more light-hearted note, we learn that the hidden talents of the pillars of our industry include the ability to read backwards and mouth-catching of flying peanuts.

To find out who exactly possess these rare skills and gain deeper insights into what is keeping your peers busy and sleepless, we invite you to browse the Champions List.

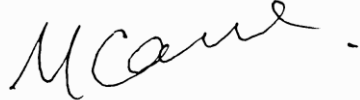
We thank all those who responded and apologize to the many important community members who we certainly missed: our Rolodex is not universal, but feel free to correct that by getting in touch.

We hope that you enjoy reading through the mini-interviews and if you want to know more, consider reaching out to the individuals who make up this inclusive community. They mostly don't bite!

Thanks to Yvonne Lim in our team who worked very hard to compile this list of Champions.



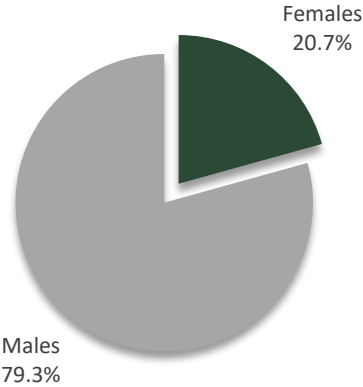
Daniel Liebau
Co-Founder



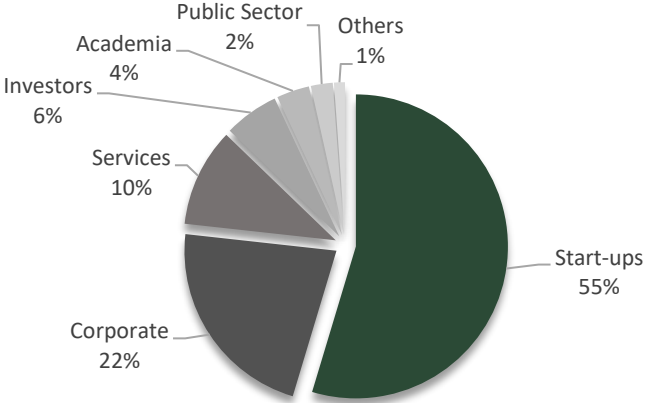
Matthew Cannon
Co-Founder

Population Demographics

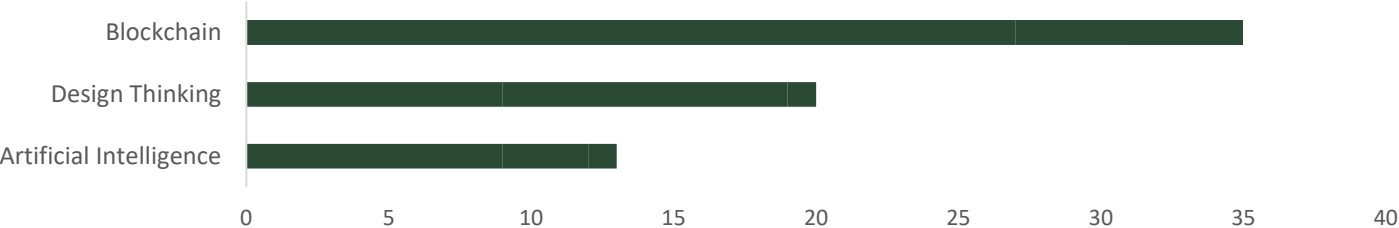
Gender



Grouping

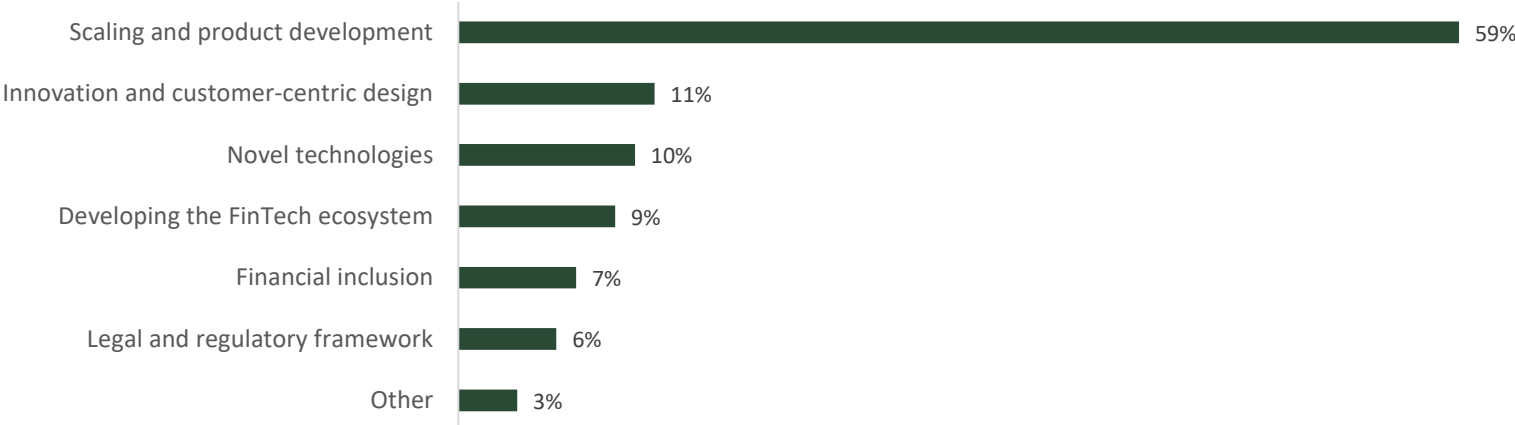


Themes

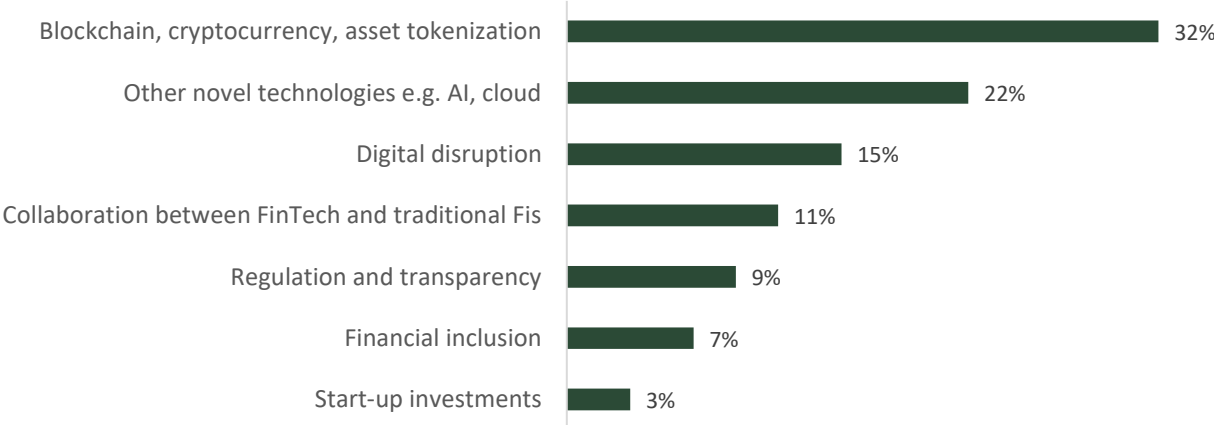


Key Highlights

What is the single most important thing you are working on right now? *



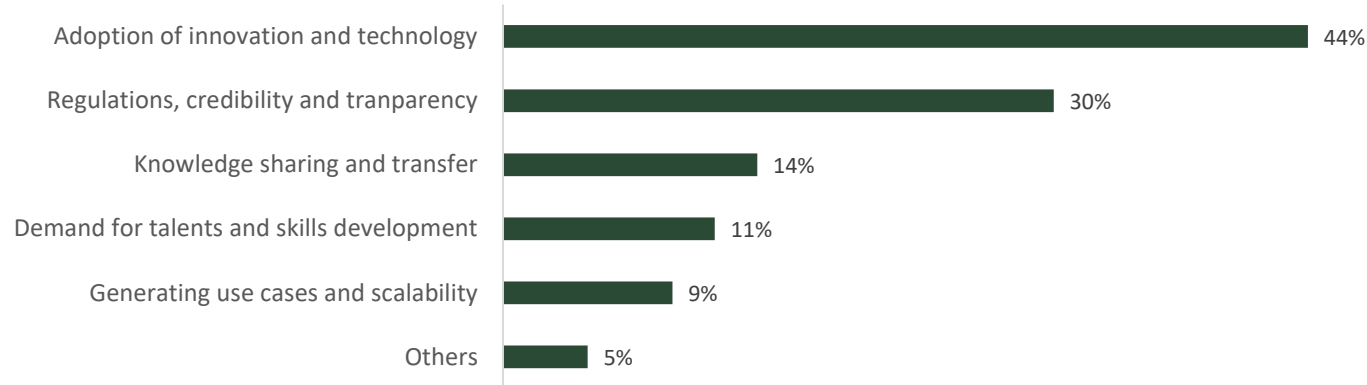
What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? *



*Answers can fall into one or more of the categories that we defined

Key Highlights

What do you think the industry is struggling with? *



*Answers can fall into one or more of the categories that we defined

Most recommended book

- Principles by Ray Dalio

Special mentions

- Their children
- Simon Sinek
- *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi
- *Zero to One* by Peter Thiel
- *Radical Candour* by Kim Scott
- *The Hard Thing About Hard Things* by Ben Horowitz
- *Atlas Shrug* by Ayn Rand
- *Sapiens* by Yuval Noah Harari

Our top 5 amusing talent picks

- Ultra-long-distance inline skating
- Losing small objects between airplane seats
- Worm farm lifecycle management skills
- Gorilla impersonation
- There are no useless talents

Champions List

Sinuhé Arroyo	Taiger	Start-ups	Max Kantelia	Anquan Capital	Start-ups
James Aylan	UBS	Corporate	Raghav Kapoor	Zilliqa	Start-ups
Elyse Barg	MyCreditCompass	Start-ups	Zennon Kapron	Smartkarma	Start-ups
Stephen Barnham	MetLife	Corporate	Robert Kliman	Kapronasia	Services
Atif Basir	Asset Algo	Start-ups	Malik Kotadia	ANZ Bank	Corporate
Hans Brown	BNY Mellon	Corporate	Roy Lai	Finnovation Labs	Services
Vincent Caldeira	Bondlinc	Start-ups	Will Lawton	InfoCorp Technologies	Start-ups
Jianjia Chan	Fjord	Services	Julien Le Noble	Eigencat	Start-ups
Alice Chen	Investacrowd	Start-ups	David Lee Kuo Chuen	Smartfolios	Start-ups
Chia Hock Lai	Singapore FinTech Association	Others	Nicholas Lee	BlockAsset Ventures	Academia
Chionh Chye Kit	Cynopsis Solutions	Start-ups	Geoff Leeming	Great Eastern Life Assurance	Corporate
Alvin Chua	Traceto.io	Start-ups	Xanne Leo	Pragma	Start-ups
Emma Cui	Institute of Blockchain	Start-ups	Antony Lewis	Infinitus	Start-ups
Walter de Oude	LongHash	Services	Lim Lai Cheng	R3	Start-ups
Matthew Dibb	Singapore Life	Start-ups	Fernn Lim	SMU Academy	Academia
Alistair Duff	Astronaut Capital	Investors	Freddy Lim	OCBC	Corporate
William Egan	DrumG Technologies	Start-ups	Scott Littlewood	StashAway	Start-ups
Michele Ferrario	Sherpa Marktes	Start-ups	Ned Lowe	DAVOS Custody	Start-ups
Marcelo García Casil	StashAway	Start-ups	Artur Luhaäär	Blockchain Technologies	Start-ups
Markus Gnirck	Maecenas	Start-ups	Loi Luu	Amazon Web Services	Corporate
Richard Green	tryb Group	Investors	Gerald Mackenzie	Smartly	Start-ups
Andrea Hajdu-Howe	Aberdeen Standard Investments	Corporate	Alex Manson	Kyber Network	Start-ups
Melody He	Antler	Investors	Ankur Mehrotra	Credit Suisse	Corporate
John Ho Hee Jung	Spartan Group	Investors	Dipen Mehta	Standard Chartered Bank	Corporate
Vivien Jong	Standard Chartered Bank	Corporate	Sopnendu Mohanty	Grab	Corporate
	BNP Paribas Wealth Management	Corporate	Todd Morakis	Amazon Web Services	Corporate
				Monetary Authority of Singapore	Public Sector
				JST Systems	Start-ups

Champions List

Blake Ong	HelloKana	Start-ups	Karen Teoh	Kommerce	Start-ups
Thiago Paiva	Liquia Digital Assets	Services	Philip Teo	Traderwave	Start-ups
Ned Phillips	Bambu	Start-ups	Steve Tunstall	Inzsure	Start-ups
Bhaskar Prabhakara	WeInvest	Start-ups	Gerben Visser	FinTech Consortium	Investors
Tobias Puehse	Mastercard Labs	Corporate	Altona Widjaja	OCBC NISP	Corporate
Quah Zheng Wei	Ceito	Services	Ben Wilton	Symphony Communications	Corporate
Dasarathi Rajagopalan	EACIIT	Start-ups	Zing Yang	Litecoin Foundation	Start-ups
Samir Rath	BlueFire AI	Start-ups	Val Yap	PAL Network	Start-ups
Jan Reinmueller	KPMG Digital Village	Services		PolicyPal Singapore	Start-ups
Douglas Streeter Rolph	Singapore University of Technology and Design	Academia	Lawrence Yong	MoolahSense	Start-ups
Jon Scheele	API Learning Lab	Services	Yvonne Zhang	Aquifer Institute	Start-ups
Patrick Schueffel	Haute école de gestion Fribourg	Academia	Zhuang Sheng Quan	Kryptos Associates	Start-ups
Paul Schulte	Schulte Research	Services			
Roland Schwinn	Sygnum AG	Start-ups			
Edgar Seah	Hedera Hashgraph	Start-ups			
Mark Shmulevich	Bloomio	Start-ups			
Cynthia Siantar	Oriente	Start-ups			
Arvin Singh	Hoolah	Start-ups			
Arisa Siong	Infocomm and Media Development Authority	Public Sector			
Stuart Smith	United Overseas Bank	Corporate			
Laurence Smith	SmartUp.io	Start-ups			
Benjamin Soh	Gibraltar Stock Exchange Group	Start-ups			
Leah Stockley	Standard Chartered Bank	Corporate			
Omar Taheri	Spark Plus	Start-ups			
Henry Tang	Funding Societies	Start-ups			



PUBLIC SERVICE

FOR

initiating and running the
Singapore FinTech Festival and
making it such a success



Sopnendu Mohanty

Chief FinTech Officer
Monetary Authority of Singapore



Monetary Authority
of Singapore

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Honestly, it was hard initially to describe my job as Chief FinTech Officer given that this is a role in a new and evolving field. I could take a safe position and consequentially restrict the possibilities of what my team and I can achieve by creating a definition for the role. I would describe my job as being partly concrete with structured things to do such as building policies and platforms around payments and partly exploratory with creating roadmaps and visions to discover and develop new areas.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We have a few priorities in front of us, and we have almost completed implementing our payment strategy. Now we need to focus on FinTech adoption. We will continue to build private and public infrastructure which will support the growth of the digital economy and develop the ecosystem further to make Singapore a vibrant global destination of innovation.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Artificial intelligence (AI) will drive significant shifts in the construct of financial systems. AI will expedite automation of processes which are predictable and repetitive in nature. Predictive AI will augment human talent to deliver purposeful and delightful financial services.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I will not say the industry is struggling with any particular matter but the better way to think of the situation now is this: transformation to the new construct is time consuming as it involves change in three key core areas: Culture, Capability and Computing.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Very likely running a restaurant. I love cooking and the magic of culinary innovation. It is a beautiful blend of chemistry, culture and creativity.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My all-time favourite book: *The Fountainhead* by Ayn Rand and the two ancient Indian epics Ramayana and Mahabharata.

What is your most useless talent?

My most useless talent will be what I learned in school. It is outdated and irrelevant largely. Continuous learning is the best survival skills.

FOR

all the thinking she does to foster collaboration and advancement of novel tech at the government level



Arisa Siong

Executive Manager
Infocomm and Media Development
Authority of Singapore



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I work on digital economy enabling policies.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

On how new technologies such as AI and blockchain change the need and scope for regulation and policy design.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

New technologies will fundamentally alter how market decisions are made, e.g. blockchain (autonomous), AI (automatic) and IoT and robotics (machine executed), and in doing so create new market constructs and signals (tokens and data). This will present a need for new economic frameworks and analytical tools to examine new market dynamics.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Walled gardens, a focus on preserving existing margins; more of the same.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Something that actually makes the world a better place.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I like stuff from British mathematician Hannah Fry quite a lot, she's funny.

What is your most useless talent?

Tennis...



ACADEMIA

FOR

launching FinTech education programs for working professionals



Dr. Lim Lai Cheng

Executive Director
SMU Academy



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are the professional training arm of Singapore Management University and a large part of what we do surrounds capacity building in financial services and FinTech.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The single most important thing that we are doing is to get the message across to businesses and people that our work, life and business will be radically transformed by new technologies and that this will require us to have an appetite for innovation and business strategies that harness data, emerging technologies such as AI, machine learning, IoT and cloud.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Blockchain and its potential for application across industries such as law, finance, education, manufacturing and trade.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry is struggling with change management strategy as well as a culture of innovation to lay the foundation for the adoption of new technologies.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be looking into the transformative power of technology to enhance education and the creative arts.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I am currently reading a book on Alibaba's cloud strategy by Ben Tian, Group Director at Alibaba. The expansion of Alibaba technology into areas such as healthcare, aeronautics, legal tech, apart from manufacturing, ecommerce and retail is very impressive.

What is your most useless talent?

The one I buried in the ground.

FOR

being the first finance professor to move into a design- and technology-focused university



Douglas Streeter Rolph

Senior Lecturer of Finance
Singapore University of Technology
and Design



SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I teach and research on FinTech innovation and financial markets. I also design new graduate courses and programs, again on finance and business.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am developing courses on how digital innovation is reshaping the competitive landscape for financial services. The courses will help people understand how to move forward given the changes caused by disruptive FinTech.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The movement towards providing greater access to financial services for those traditionally underserved by banks and financial institutions. Financial inclusion has moved beyond the realm of good intention and there are a number of FinTech service providers making tangible headway in this area.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The trust gap between FinTech-based service providers and customers. This gap limits the growth of FinTech-based services (especially in the ASEAN region). Traditional, "branded" financial institutions can have customer relationships that span generations, and these long-term relationships create a perception of trust. Closing this gap will help widen the addressable market open to FinTechs.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

It's hard for me to imagine doing something besides teaching and research. If not finance, it would be philosophy or political economy.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I like *The Most Important Thing* by Howard Mark. He lays out how to think clearly about what is happening in financial markets, and especially how to separate the important forces from the fads and buzzwords that surround the markets.

What is your most useless talent?

I can build screen scrapers in Perl.

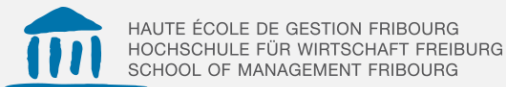
FOR

being an advocate of
tokenization of real assets and
being willing to research on ICO
scams and what they mean



Patrick Schueffel

Professor & Liaison Officer
Haute école de gestion Fribourg



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I try to understand which impact new technologies have on the banking and finance industry and strive to explain and exploit new opportunities in this area. And I attempt to warn of potential drawbacks.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Jointly with some friends and colleagues, I've formed a thinktank and we're working on an entirely new way to tokenize and distribute digital assets. This solution is of particular importance to me as I hope it will make digital assets accessible to a broader range of people and help to create more liquid markets. Soon I can tell more details...

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am absolutely thrilled by the notion of asset tokenization. Tokenization is the process of creating a representation of an asset by a digital token. This concept allows almost anyone to tokenize virtually any asset. It will not only help to democratize capital markets, but also to increase liquidity and thus increase overall efficiency and wealth.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The banking industry is struggling with two things, one reinforcing the other: outdated technology and outdated thinking. Many banks sit on legacy systems which are immensely costly to replace, so they postpone investments until the cows come home. As no money is around for new technologies, the mental perspective of what could potentially be feasible gets narrowed down to the extreme. With old technologies and old thinking, the profitability decreases further and even less money for investment is available.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Provided that there would be some sort of income that keeps me and the family afloat, I'd be a skydive instructor or dive master.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Reading *Epistemology: The Theory of Knowledge* by Gerald Jones, Daniel Cardinal and Jeremy Hayward during my doctorate studies had a lasting effect on me. It helps me challenge alleged truths and to question those who claim to be in possession of it.

What is your most useless talent?

I can juggle three balls.



CORPORATE

FOR

expanding on existing design thinking frameworks and adapting them to work in his environment



James Aylen

Head of UBS EVOLVE – The Centre for Design Thinking and Innovation
UBS



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

EVOLVE's vision is to transform the way we provide services to our clients and staff. By leveraging the teams, ideas and skills across the UBS group from our offices around the world, we build partnerships with technology firms, academia and disruptive FinTech start-ups with whom we develop solutions that meet the needs of our fast-growing wealth management clientele.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We have a number of projects in the artificial intelligence space. As we look at the future of financial services we believe that the finance industry is going to have to leverage on AI to maximize its efficiencies in processes and services. There are so many opportunities in this space and it is inspiring to work on so many of these.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I love the client centricity that I see in the market. Initially this was driven by the FinTech start-up community, but recently there has been an increase in focus by traditional firms. To me this is a major win for the consumer as they will receive better services, more in tune to what will make their lives better and easier.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I would say that data is the major challenge for traditional firms. They have a large set of legacy information, however, cleansing it and putting it to work for the benefit of their clients is a major challenge.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

If I were not in the finance industry I think I would be a teacher. The disruption over the next decade on almost every industry by technology is immense and getting our generation ready for this would be a privilege.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I would recommend anyone to read *Exponential Organization – Why New Organizations Are Ten Times Better, Faster and Cheaper Than Yours (And What to Do About It)* by Salim Ismail from the Singularity University.

What is your most useless talent?

I have an ability to remember useless facts, none of which seem to help at all in day to day life!

FOR

taking on the challenge to work on innovation culture in a traditional insurance company



Stephen Barnham

Chief Information Officer
MetLife



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Future proofing our business through digitization.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Developing the ability to work with more speed and agility. Inability to do so will result in us losing our competitive edge.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The ability of early stage companies to leverage on technology to disrupt our industry.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Ability to move fast with agility.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Calligraphy artist.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Lean Enterprise by Obie Fernandez and Trevor Owens.

What is your most useless talent?

Fear.

FOR

driving innovation through collaborating
with other financial services firms and
using novel tech to do it



Hans Brown

Head of International Technology
BNY Mellon



BNY MELLON

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Leading a high performing team that uses technology to deliver the best client experience to our institutional clients. We focus on the result and not the technology, we believe that technology is an enabler to successful outcomes.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

My team is working on using data, APIs and advanced machine learning to support our clients better and enable successful outcomes for their investment decisions. This is being run in parallel to improving the resiliency of our systems to make sure that we are ready to support our clients now and in future.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The focus on talent and developing and nurturing a diverse palette of talent women and men to address the challenges of the future.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Translating technology advances into practical and real use cases that support clients and the ecosystem. Technology for its own sake has a place, but making it useful and useable will always be the discerning factor.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would probably be designing and building bridges to survive extreme weather. I am a trained structural and civil engineer and I love building things that are practical, useful and resilient.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Book I am reading at the moment by Max Tegmark called *Life 3.0*. I love the energy and the opening up of possibilities in the book.

What is your most useless talent?

Ultra long distance inline skating. I once skated for 24 hours solo in France as part of the Le Mans Inline skate race.

FOR
considering novel ways of
investment in a traditional
environment



Richard Green

Head of Product Management, APAC
Aberdeen Standard Investments



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I spend time developing and driving our Product strategy for the APAC region, managing our team and also quite some time on innovation. In Product, we look to continually evolve the types of products that we offer to our clients – to address changing markets and changing needs. This includes digital tools and services, which enhance client and customer experience. In innovation, I am currently looking at various aspects: including organizational change.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

One of the areas I would call out is the challenge of execution. Research shows that businesses are generally fine to generate ideas. Taking those ideas through execution can prove challenging. I am currently looking at how organization factors have a part to play.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The ability to simplify and customize. Finance has remained quite a technical and remote area, removed from everyday life in many respects. We are now both better enabled, and indeed required, to consider how we can make the world of finance much more accessible.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The pace of change, the requirement to understand a changing landscape, and indeed get to grips with technical aspects of technology. It means you cannot simply pay lip service to continuous learning – it's now an absolute requirement for all levels of the business.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

One area of interest is how to improve communities and urban living spaces. I am quite inspired when I read some of the ways that various people have improved their cities. I also take an interest in how transformative infrastructure can be - it is something we can take for granted, but is basically a foundation to so much of today's striving for improvement.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I would say that actually it's the combined effect of consuming a variety of information sources that has had the most effect. It's all about connecting the dots.

What is your most useless talent?

A memory for movie lines. It's by no means going to win me a top seat on Mastermind.

FOR

exploring how smart contracts
can be used in the future of
financial markets / OTC business



John Ho Hee Jung

Head, Legal, Financial Markets
Standard Chartered Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I oversee and manage a legal team providing legal advisory, transactional and documentation support for the Financial Markets business globally. I support the digitization in SCB and adoption of new or innovative initiatives such as blockchain distributed ledger technology and smart contracts.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am working on the legal and regulatory framework for the use of blockchain-based smart contract as it has tremendous potential to transform the way businesses enter into, perform and enforce transactions. In a nutshell, a smart contract is a piece of software that stores rules for negotiating the terms of an agreement, automatically verifies fulfilment, and then executes the agreed terms. Smart contracts allow the automation of processes, increase efficiency and lower costs, reduce operational risk and increase transparency.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am excited about the growing trend of the adoption of blockchain distributed ledger technology (DLT) in banking and finance, particularly in digital payments, remittances, trade finance, capital markets and financial services. DLT's defining features are its distributed and immutable ledger and advanced cryptography, which enable the transfer of a range of assets among parties securely and inexpensively without third-party intermediaries. It is important as DLT has the potential to improve efficiency, scalability, lower costs, provide greater transparency, security and trust in the financial system.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Today's hype surrounding DLT can lead to the temptation to try to use DLT to solve everything which may not be realistic. Despite this hype, it remains a nascent technology with considerable challenges that needs to be addressed. Significant hurdles remain in the large-scale implementation, ranging from user trust and adoption to technology barriers (including integration, interoperability and scalability), anti-money laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) concerns, cybersecurity risks, regulatory and compliance obstacles, absence of harmonised formal legal framework in some markets and high initial IT set up costs.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would like to give back to the community by raising funds for charitable organizations that help underprivileged children in less developed countries.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

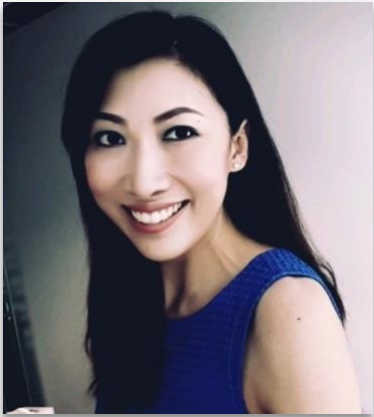
I would recommend the book *Performance Breakthrough – A Radical Approach to Success at Work* by Cathy Salit. It is an enlightening inspirational book about how to grow as a person and as a professional.

What is your most useless talent?

I can flip a pen around my thumb.

FOR

building an innovation hub inside a bank where cross-disciplinary teams meet



Vivien Jong

Asia Chief Digital Officer
BNP Paribas Wealth Management



BNP PARIBAS
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

My work revolves around creating new business values, while leading the organization towards an experimental culture of innovation and problem solving.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Commercialization of our digital innovations and initiatives. Why is this so important? Well, we are a bank, we need to know our ROI – be it in the form of dollars and cents, or NPS. It allows everyone in the organization to understand that there are new business values created.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Cloud computing – not only does this greatly ease the constraints on scalability, open banking/API growth will also be greatly motivated.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Banks are mammoth organizations, upskilling within banks, across all functions – legal, compliance, tech, risk, security, business stakeholders – is certainly much slower than the pace of the ecosystem. There is always an inertia to the unknown, making change difficult. If you do not understand something (be it a regulation or a new tech), how can you support it within the bank? The unfortunate fact is, you have to roll up your sleeves, get your hands dirty in order to understand better. Get into the ecosystem, instead of armchair learning.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

MedTech or HealthTech.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My sons - I look at them, and I hope to make the world a better learning place for their generation. I imagine that my colleagues and friends would also hope for a good learning culture for their loved ones. And that is why I am trying in my own way to pay it forward - whether it is from my own experiences or from shared experiences of people I truly respect.

What is your most useless talent?

My answer: How can any talent be useless?

My wonderful team's answer: scoffing down Pringles by the minute, staying in my car to read and reply emails and traumatising my team.

FOR

being an early investigator of blockchain as an investment banking tech manager



Robert Kliman

Head of Technology, Fixed Income, Derivatives & Market Risk
ANZ Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I'm responsible for the Front Office Markets technology systems for the non-FX business of ANZ Markets.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Creating a roadmap for future investment supporting our Market Risk, Derivatives and Fixed Income businesses.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Cloud adoption has the power to radically change the way initiatives are delivered and managed – we need to do more in financial services.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Cloud adoption – disparate global regulators with differing views are stalling adoption for key Systems of Record.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Running a beach bar somewhere!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The saying “Where there’s a will, there’s a way” – in my experience, I’ve come across too many people who fall into the category of “Where there’s no will, there’s no way.”

What is your most useless talent?

Being able to speak Polish fluently and not really ever using this talent to my advantage!

FOR

having started and built one of the first innovation labs in the country



Nicholas Lee

Head, Group Customer Experience & Innovation
Great Eastern Life Assurance



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

My team and I work with a multitude of internal and external stakeholders to make insurance a more elegant, meaningful and humanistic experience for our existing and potential customers, while taking into consideration the business needs of the organization.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Playing with ideas around how insurance can be experienced differently in the future, based on changing consumer habits, emerging technology and existing organization assets/competitive advantage. It would be insane to believe that the insurance industry is immune from disruption. Companies need to be continually playing with new business models, building new capabilities and prototyping new journeys, and be ready to pivot when the opportunities arise.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The push towards increased transparency (in the insurance experience) for the consumer is not only generally good for customers but will also push insurers to re-imagine how we can deliver better services, more meaningful experiences and do good business without relying on "friction" to charge customers for these services.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The quote "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them" rings true for the industry. I don't think there's a shortage of ideas but the industry, to a large extent, needs diversity of leaders with different business backgrounds and experiences so there is enough belief that there are other better ways of delivering insurance (and not just the one way everyone in the industry is familiar with.) It all starts with belief, a willingness to search for a better way, and then finding the opportunity to test out these new ideas. Having said that, I think we are getting there, slowly but surely.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Still playing with ideas... just somewhere else.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I studied business and also majored in psychology in university. So, when I came across *Yes! 50 Secrets from the Science of Persuasion* by Robert Cialdini a few years ago, it brought back good memories. More importantly, it reminded me of how important psychology was to what I was doing, and how I could use psychology as a point of reference when redesigning the insurance experience.

What is your most useless talent?

There is no such thing as a useless talent. You just haven't found a need for it yet.

FOR

going back to school and
studying innovation



Fernn Lim

Head, Culture and FinTech Acceleration
OCBC Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am currently driving OCBC Bank's corporate innovation and FinTech ecosystem's engagement plans. I lead the corporate accelerator and am in charge of hunting the best global FinTech companies to jointly solve some of the greatest industry problems. I also oversee OCBC's FinTech ecosystem engagement plans and am in charge of designing a series of FinTech events and digital training programmes.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Mindset change. At the end of it, innovation is always about the people. Build the people and their teams first. The projects will follow.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Beyond Banking. The truth is, no one wakes up thinking of banking and banks can't rely on their traditional business model anymore. Beyond Banking forces banks to constantly think of new business model innovations and work towards building an ecosystem of products and services that makes customers lives seamless and easier.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I'm not sure if struggling is the right word. I think we have done a lot over the past 3 years. It's about how fast we can innovate towards the greater ambition the entire industry has.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Wouldn't know, would I?

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

How Will You Measure Your Life by Professor Clayton Christensen. It's such a great read for professionals who want to apply business strategies into their own lives. Given this digital landscape that we are racing in, sometimes we tend to forget that family and friends are what matters most in life.

What is your most useless talent?

Cooking – I'm useless at it and oh wait, I can't call it a talent.

FOR

being able to pick the best of both worlds, entrepreneurial and corporate, for progress



Ned Lowe

Global Financial Services Solutions
Architect
Amazon Web Services



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I help financial institutions that are interested in moving to the cloud with their journey. This ranges from presenting the art of the possible, to solving deep technical questions.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Helping to democratize access to services. That might mean cloud services in general, but I also mean helping banks with Open Banking (with all the improvements that will drive for the end consumer) and creating a API ecosystem with FinTechs. When we lower the barrier for accessing a service, the overall solutions we can build all become better.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The trend towards the better use of data for sure. The 'segment of one' (personalizing the customer experience, tailored banking/insurance products, etc.), UX improvements through usage data, machine learning to identify fraud, IoT to improve supply chain financing – I could go on forever! Both the use cases and the technology behind them deeply excites me.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Silos. DevOps was about breaking down one set of barriers, but there are others – for example between Application and Infrastructure teams, enterprise and FinTech, customers and technologists. We have to get better at breaking down walls.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I have a dream of creating a transient community of builders, ideators and inventors. People would be continuously coming and going, but we'd all get together each day to conceptualize and validate ideas for a better future. I'd be doing that, instead of just talking about it!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

When I was 8, I read the Amstrad CPC6128 user manual – and in particular learnt BASIC programming. That book has defined my life, and I sometimes wonder what I would be doing now if I hadn't had access to it. My recommendation is obviously not that specific manual – but to give your children or younger relatives exposure to programming as early as possible (even if it's just a book!)

What is your most useless talent?

I can open any beer bottle with my teeth. Wait, that isn't useless at all!

FOR

executing an investment deal with a local FinTech firm from within a global financial services company



Gerald Mackenzie

Director – Innovation and Business Transformation
Credit Suisse



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Exploring new, digitally-enabled business models and client offerings for our Private Banking and Investment Banking businesses. Enabling our business leaders to embrace innovation and digital business models to constantly enhance our delivery to clients.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Understanding of a client's holistic wealth context, to ensure we can provide the most relevant and personalized advice possible.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Machine learning and the journey to artificial intelligence. Allowing machines to help with the more standardized elements of our service model, whilst people focus on added value for our clients.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The pace of change and client expectations. Financial services have been slow to adapt to new business models due to various factors, but the value chains in our business are being disintermediated and it is critical for firms to understand how they can create sustainable value for clients as they look to the future.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Backcountry skiing guide.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari. He, more than any other author, has helped me put my place in the world into perspective!

What is your most useless talent?

Fly Fishing.

FOR

launching an innovative intrapreneur's program in a bank



Alex Manson

SC Ventures
Standard Chartered Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Developing a culture of intrapreneurship, FinTech investments, ventures building.

At SC Ventures, we want to introduce new ways of thinking about banking. By experimenting both internally and externally, we can generate a constant flow of ideas. Through our Intrapreneur Programme, colleagues with an idea that could change the Bank – perhaps a small efficiency change on the one hand or a completely new business model on the other, are given the tools and environment to develop, experiment and validate their ideas in our eXellerator labs.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Rewiring the DNA in banking. So banking is not only viable but thrives as a great place to engage with, for the sake of prosperity in our markets.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Disruption. Clients expect more, immediately, seamlessly – and much cheaper... So FinTech disruption is not a threat but rather, redemption!

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Legacy. I don't really mean technology although it is a part of it, but rather, business models and mindsets which need to change.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Trying other ways to have a positive impact.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Les Misérables by Victor Hugo.

What is your most useless talent?

Playing Chess. (AI already took care of that one some time ago...)

FOR

his diverse experience, from banker to start-up to tech giant - always focused on FinTech



Ankur Mehrotra

Managing Director, Head of Financial Services
Grab



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Working on building the largest FinTech lender in Southeast Asia.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am super excited about the work we are doing at Grab on financial inclusion in Southeast Asia. We are working on enabling credit to the few hundred million middle economy consumers who do not have any access to any credit. They are invisible to the banks as they operate in the cash economy. Our mission is to change the course of history and expedite bringing on this segment to the credit-enabled economy. This has trickle down effects on the economy in each country. We are also working on enabling credit to the MSME segment, which is about 30-50% of the GDP in ASEAN.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Leveraging alternative and more data sources to revolutionize credit scoring and risk management.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Unified and integrated processes across ASEAN would greatly speed up the evolution of the ecosystem.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Drinking wine and travelling!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari by Robin Sharma.

What is your most useless talent?

I rather not share. :)

FOR

advocating prototyping to Executive Committees around the region



Dipen Mehta

Head, Digital Innovation & Prototyping,
APAC
Amazon Web Services



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I work with our enterprise customers to help them drive top line revenue growth through breakthrough new products and services by leveraging Amazon's approach to innovation. This includes working across the various Amazon business units, our technology platform and external ecosystem partners to bring our customer's offerings to market.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

It's hard to say, in fact not sure there is specific thing! I'm certainly spending most of my time trying to help the leadership of many large companies to embrace experimentation as a means to developing and delivering innovative solutions to market. This is core to Amazon's product and service development ethos and is echoed across the industry as evidenced by the many successful FinTech start-ups across the world. Develop hypotheses, validate your assumptions via experiments and then you'll guarantee you're delighting your customers.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Artificial intelligence (AI) for sure. AI is changing the game in so many ways. The access to super high powered, low cost technology infrastructure has enabled organizations of all sizes to leverage machine learning and AI to change the way they do business - from reducing operational overhead to re-defining the customer experience.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

At a high level, I think financial institutions are struggling with regulation. But more specifically, it isn't the regulation itself, but the cost to be compliant. In fact, this notion of cost is the root of many of the industry's problems - margin compression through a number of factors; FinTech start-ups and new market competition from other non-regulated adjacent companies have driven up their operating costs and lowered their top line revenue growth. This is where emerging technologies, such as ML/AI can really help the industry - it's a rare unicorn type of technology that can assist in lowering bottom line/operating costs while allowing new products or services to be created that will drive top line revenue.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I'd be a carpenter... It's just a great mix of using your hands to create something and it relies heavily on my engineering background. It's also relatively recession proof - everyone needs furniture of some sort - hard to be disrupted by another FinTech :-)

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Lean Enterprise - has totally changed the way I think about how companies currently and should operate.

What is your most useless talent?

I am one of the best elbow coin snatchers in Singapore!

FOR

moving into FinTech from market research and supporting the community



Tobias Puehse

Vice President
Mastercard Labs, Asia Pacific



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We create new product platforms, connect with FinTechs to scale, augment the innovation capabilities of our customers, and drive a future view of commerce and beyond.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Driving digital transformations linked to new commerce surfaces, artificial intelligence & data, new payment flows, and inclusive growth.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Cash displacement.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The speed of transformation is accelerating with consumers expecting a better experience.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Design thinking and consumer interaction design.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Super Intelligence by Nick Bostrom.

What is your most useless talent?

Mobile games and building complex ecosystems or crushing a lot of candy.

FOR

supporting a local bank in all things
design thinking



Stuart Smith

Regional Head of Engagement Platforms &
User Experience, Group Retail Digital Bank
United Overseas Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Building a digital bank.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Designing and building new ways to engage customers within our digital bank. It's core to our digital bank philosophy.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am most excited about the confluence of trends. Advanced technologies, data and design blending together to create new digital banking experiences. It's important because if we don't do it, someone else will.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think struggling is too strong a term. Like many sectors, the finance sector is adapting to the digital economy. Perhaps in some areas, this is not happening quickly enough. For me, knowledge and understanding of digital (and not just the technology) is key.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Design, data, technology in another sector.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Web of Life by Fritjof Capra and *The Future of Money* by Bernard Lietaer.

What is your most useless talent?

Most of my talents are useless.

FOR

focusing on and supporting young people who are interested in novel technology



Leah Stockley

Head – Digital Change Management
Standard Chartered Bank



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Our Transformation team was set up to inspire our technologists to continuously question, challenge and improve how they work. Motivating our teams to be high performers who have a say in what they create and deliver, is the most effective way to improve delivery of tech solutions to our customers.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Our aim is to empower our teams and allow them room to experiment and improve. To enable this, my team puts a lot of focus on other teams (i.e. risk, governance, business, HR) to educate them on the same ethos. Whilst our tech teams must be disciplined to protect customers and satisfy regulators, the bank must allow them greater freedom and responsibility if we are to retain our best engineers and really delight our customers and deliver better business value.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Financial regulators are discussing the importance of experimentation to allow innovation and are supporting organizations to take small measured risks to drive better services to customers. It's important that regulators provide a clear message and frameworks which encourage banks to innovate and evolve. It's heartening to see regulators like MAS taking the lead on this.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Banking, specifically, is struggling with the rate of change! Many people hate change and are afraid to

adapt. They are often tied to their siloed roles instead of realising it's their skills and work ethic that add value to the organization, not their current role. Banks are also hundreds of years old with a historical command and control culture, so we need to look at traditional leadership structure to empower and support our teams. Our biggest challenge (and the reason why I love my role) is how to inspire experienced individuals to embrace change and life-long learning; to experiment with new ways of doing things.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Having previously been a consultant for years, I've worked across various industries. In that time, gaming/lottery was the most interesting and innovative. Current technology leaps mean every industry is struggling to cope with the rate of change, so I would find and enjoy great challenges anywhere. Government, healthcare, retail... All these industries have a lot of potential to drive improvements in culture and tech delivery. Or perhaps I'd finally get back into writing and/or open that little café I've always thought about!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Currently my favourite place for inspiration is Blinkist. A great app to quickly gain high level info on a range of topics, so I can choose whether to deep dive into the full books when the 'blinks' are not enough.

What is your most useless talent?

I'm an ace at guitar hero... Which is an even more useless talent now that my Nintendo Wii is no longer working!

FOR

taking on the challenge to drive innovation in the world's safest bank



Altona Widjaja

Head of New Digital Ventures
OCBC NISP



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I connect the world of innovation from outside into the institution.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Embedding our capabilities into people's lives to meet their expectations of a friction-less, relevant and seamless experience.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Faster technology adoption cycle by customers and institutions which makes lives better. Whether we realized it or not, we have been adapting from the agricultural era to now. Technology is evolving at faster and faster rate, so does its adoption rate. Institutions must therefore be able to cope with those expectations.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Banks are in the business of trust, holding people's money, and lending it to others more in need etc. Inherently we have been built to safeguard, protect that trust with strict rules and governance. It's not that easy for the industry to adapt with a faster rate of change.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Can't think of anywhere else I'd rather be =) as I am in an intersection of finance and technology.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari.

What is your most useless talent?

I can flip my tongue upside down.

FOR

being both commercial and technical
and leading adoption of next
generation collaboration tools



Ben Wilton

Technical Account Manager
Symphony Communications LLC



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I assist firms in the financial markets with their objectives to collaborate, improve on, and automate current processes through technology and innovative ideas.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am working on process automation of Buy-Side/Sell-Side swaps negotiation using Symphony. This is typically a manualized process which is done over spreadsheets, and prone to errors and delays. Using Symphony's secure communications for Bot-to-Bot workflow and object orientated communication, time to construct these deals and manual processes will be greatly reduced.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Business Process Management (BPM) tools – their implementations are shaping the future of workflow, and creating a repeatable, structured process, which can then be measured and improved iteratively. We are seeing a new level of maturity in their usage in the market today.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Meeting the stringent compliance requirements, both locally and globally. Each country has different market regulations which change often and require process and technology reviews at regular intervals.

As a vendor servicing the global markets, we focus strongly to ensure our clients have all the tools at their disposal to adhere to these regulations.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Opening my own restaurant! I'm a true foodie at heart and aside from technology, this is my other passion.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Oddly, my biggest influences came directly from my parents at a young age. They told me that "Anything is possible, as long as you put your heart and mind into it, you will be successful."

Too often, we doubt ourselves, which is commonly the source of our failures

What is your most useless talent?

Worm farm lifecycle management skills



INVESTORS

FOR

researching and financing
blockchain start-ups here and
everywhere else in the world



Matthew Dobb

CEO

Astronaut Capital

ASTRONAUT | CAPITAL

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Astronaut Capital is an investment manager and research house focused on digital assets and cryptocurrencies.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Providing an investment vehicle for institutions to safely and efficiently invest in digital assets. The cryptocurrency ecosystem is complicated, fragmented and difficult for traditional managers to understand.

We seek to provide the gateway for asset allocators to gain portfolio diversification in a traditional manner.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Growth and adoption of cryptocurrencies is continuing to increase. While we are very early, there are so many opportunities for the space to grow and real innovation to take space.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Transparency and credibility are concerns for any new market. Bad actors can ruin it for the masses in a very short period of time.

While I don't believe this to be unique to cryptocurrency, it is certainly a hurdle it must get over.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Web and graphics design. I've never professionally done it, it's a side hobby.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Joe Rogan Experience. I love it.

What is your most useless talent?

I can drink a pint of beer in under 3 seconds (although it is a rite of passage for most Australians).

FOR

starting the FinTech
movement in Singapore



Markus Gnirck

Co-Founder & Director
tryb Group



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Investing in and building out the new digital railways of the financial industry.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Backing great FinTech entrepreneurs in ASEAN that are transforming the financial industry.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

An open FinTech ecosystem where many stakeholders (entrepreneurs, institutions, governments, investors) are collaborating to build better financial services. It is exciting to see how existing consumer and business ecosystems and channels introduce financial services to the underserved markets in Asia and leverage a new trust in digital connectivity. Asia, especially ASEAN, will be on the forefront of innovation and we at tryb are proud to be part of it.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Allowing knowledge and talent to flow move seamlessly across borders and have common data and regulation standards across jurisdictions. ASEAN needs to grow together even further to provide better connectivity and scale for innovation. Strategic investors such as tryb can help navigate and open doors, but governments got to facilitate a fertile ground in order to have sustainable, long term growth of companies.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Learning Chinese and invest in entrepreneurs.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Tribes by Seth Godin

What is your most useless talent?

Getting too much stuff done.

FOR

taking the bold step from a global premier financial services firm to support early stage (FinTech) start-ups



Andrea Hajdu-Howe

Global Partner
Antler



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am a Partner at a Start-up Generator VC Firm.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Ensuring Antler is able to execute its global mission of enabling great founders to build great companies.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Smart money looking at pre-seed funding as a credible alternative to later stage investments.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Finding and keeping talents, because there are so many exciting opportunities for young people to explore.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be a lawyer. Square, but true.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Amateur dramatics.

What is your most useless talent?

I can make my kids laugh.

FOR

seeing the opportunity in blockchain early and building a business from scratch around it



Melody He

Co-Founder & Managing Partner
Spartan Group



SPARTAN

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We invest in and advise blockchain projects.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Understanding how to help blockchain projects achieve real mainstream adoption. Projects in blockchain need to show real traction in user adoption.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

We are seeing more mainstream talents coming into the blockchain/crypto space.

Smart people + time + money = something great will be created!

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Chasing short-term gains. Cryptocurrency has made a lot of early participants rich in a relatively short period of time without much real traction in revenue or user base. Many people in crypto want to ride the hype but are not willing to put in long-term commitment.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Acting!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I recently read a book called *Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win* by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin. It reminds me of how important it is to take responsibility in our work and life. It has been a great concept to introduce to my kids too.

What is your most useless talent?

I can sing a good number of red army songs from being in a school choir in China in the 80's. Can't show them off anymore ;)

FOR

building a cryptocurrency / digital asset index before we all thought about it



David Lee Kuo Chuen

Co-Founder
BlockAsset Ventures



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Harnessing technology for inclusion.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Financial inclusion. Sustainability.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Distribution of trust and wealth. Sustainable growth through inclusion!

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Purification of motive. It is never enough.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I am not. I learn and share.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel) by Pope Francis.

What is your most useless talent?

Daydream.

FOR

being a resilient, self-funded entrepreneur doing a lot of educational work with corporates



Gerben Visser

Founder
FinTech Consortium

FinTech
Consortium

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Incubating FinTech projects that have (hopefully) a sustainable and meaningful impact of driving financial innovation forward.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

To deepen our incubation capability suite and further the international expansion beyond our offices in Singapore, Bahrain and US.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

In a relatively short span of 5 years, FinTech, as an industry, has reached a level of sustainability, attained a stage of maturity and obtained critical mass. It has now become a global force to be reckoned with.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Although I observe an accelerating brain drain from traditional industries into FinTech, which is, in essence, powering our system, the breadth and depth of entrepreneurial talent is disproportionate to the career prospects and opportunities at large.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Sailing and fighting plastic oceans.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles of Stoicism: a good start would be *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius.

What is your most useless talent?

I speak Dutch!



SERVICES

FOR

inspiring and supporting
women in the ecosystem to be
brave, bold and generous



Jianjia Chan

Program Director
Fjord

FJORD™

Design and Innovation from
Accenture Interactive

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

An acquisition by Accenture, Fjord is a design and innovation company that specializes in service design, ethnographic research and design thinking in bringing about business transformation for our clients. Besides continually ordering Post-Its™ and Sharpies, I manage the people, processes and projects at Fjord Singapore.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The single, most important thing we are working on right now is having the user, the customer being in the centre of everything we design and create. It's so important because that's really the only thing that makes sense.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

There is a common theme across our projects and it's typically around working better with others, more collaboratively, and more transparently. It's important because the systems we work with need to support and emulate the way people work together in person – and not many systems out there do this successfully.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Not struggling, but there is a challenge around pseudo innovation, or using the word innovation just for the sake of it. Businesses and individuals know that innovation is needed to evolve and keep competitive, but not everyone recognises the change and investment needed in order to make it happen to bring about proper cultural change.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Writing and illustrating a children's book to encourage girls to get involved in the finance industry.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Gin.

What is your most useless talent?

I am able to eat horrendously hot (temperature-wise) food and liquids at remarkable speeds, so I am told.

FOR

supporting early stage
blockchain entrepreneurs



Emma Cui

CEO (Singapore)
LongHash



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We invest in early stage blockchain start-ups and help them to grow with our technical expertise and widespread influence.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Establishing LongHash as the premier blockchain incubator globally. As an early stage investor, it is important to win the trust of our stakeholders. Start-ups need to trust that we can help them to grow beyond simply giving them money. Investors need to believe in our ability to get the best deal flow and also in our acumen in identifying top projects. The public needs to trust that we are on a social mission to build a more inclusive society through the promotion of blockchain technology.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Traditional VCs and investors are starting to take notice of the blockchain industry and we can see more money entering the space. This is important as the influx of capital will help to accelerate the growth of the industry. All the grand visions of how blockchain can revolutionize the world will only come to fruition with sufficient funds poured into research and development.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry can do better in terms of regulations and governance. Without clear guidelines, major players in the industry are forced to take a passive approach for fear of getting on the wrong side of the law. For example, most banks are afraid to work with blockchain companies for fear of being fined or having their license revoked. Without a bank account, legitimate blockchain companies find it difficult to operate. Innovation is stifled, and progress of the industry is hindered.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Most probably consulting, having come from McKinsey prior to this.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Came across Vitalik's private talk in early 2015 which made me curious enough to read Ethereum's whitepaper. That made me realise the potential of blockchain technology to re-architecture the entire society.

What is your most useless talent?

I'd like to know too... Haha.

FOR

his insights into the China FinTech ecosystem and its consumers



Zennon Kapron

Director
Kapronasia



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We help financial institutions and technology companies understand the Asian financial services industry.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Helping make a material difference in how successful our clients are. FinTech is changing the way the banking industry operates. Being aware of and on top of the changes is critical.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

"Post-technology". There is so much discussion and hype around technologies like AI and blockchain. What financial institutions actually do with the technology will define the future of the industry for decades.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry as a whole struggles with what to do with FinTech. In certain areas, third party companies are making significant inroads in disrupting the status quo, whereas in others, they are still to make a dent.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Technology. We are only at the start of what technology can do for the industry and humanity in general. Being part of, and hopefully enabling, that change is a unique opportunity and experience.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My newborn son. He looks at everyday as a brand new adventure. I strive for the same.

What is your most useless talent?

Herding cats in the name of progress.

FOR

being a premier moderator at FinTech and blockchain conferences in Asia and elsewhere



Malik Kotadia

Co-Founder & Chairman
Finnovation Labs



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Venture growth company in the FinTech space. We help best-in-class FinTechs grow their businesses, based on the 3 M pillars: Market (expansion into new geographies and relevant segments), Mentorship and Marketing (business development, customer insights and UX etc.)

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Helping bridge the gap between progressive banks and great FinTechs in the region. It is important because banks bring robust compliance practices, resources and customers, while FinTechs bring speed, flexible architecture and straight-through processes. While this should conceptually be a marriage made in heaven, there are challenges in operationalizing such a partnership. That's where we come in!

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

In the FinTech 1.0 era (till 2015/16), the talk was all about FinTechs eating the banks' lunch, breakfast and dinner. In the past 2-3 years, however, the entire narrative has moved from competition to cooperation, more specifically 'co-opetition'. We find this promising and game changing.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Finding a viable way to quantify the benefits of innovation and FinTech partnerships. Most banks want to expand their innovation horizons and initiatives, but are hamstrung by traditional P&L and balance sheet understanding.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Focusing on completing my upcoming 2 books. And then working on my next 2.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My own books that I have written, and am writing. Apart from these, I am researching a lot on modern physics (general relativity, quantum mechanics and superstring theory, as well as the quest for quantum gravity), and this is having a profound impact on my understanding of 'reality'.

What is your most useless talent?

Understanding how to navigate large, complex, global organisations :)

FOR

hitting the ground running and creating FinTech industry reports about the Singapore ecosystem



Thiago Paiva

Partner

Liquia Digital Assets

LIQUIA

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are doing investment banking for the new digital asset economy. In summary, we are supporting companies and fund managers to fundraise globally in a faster and more affordable way by using security tokens (digital tokens backed by real assets and complying to security regulations).

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are working on tokenizing a Latin American venture fund enabling investors from all over the world to invest in start-ups in that region in a much easier and cheaper way.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am very excited about security tokens and digital assets as I believe they are disrupting how the traditional capital market works, which will create more opportunities for entrepreneurs in the market.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think regulation is still an issue for the industry, especially in the crypto and blockchain world. As there aren't regulations specifically designed for them, it limits how FinTech and companies can use that technology to innovate in a safe and compliant way. It also makes investors more reluctant to invest in start-ups in a grey zone.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I've always been interested in topics like leadership and culture. I would probably be doing or studying something related to these topics.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Simon Sinek has been a major influence on how I think about leadership. There are some great videos of his speeches on YouTube.

What is your most useless talent?

I am not proud of it (not anymore) but I was a great Magic: The Gathering (card game) player. I wasted countless hours playing that game when I was younger.

FOR

launching the first liquid
cryptocurrency fund inside of a
regulated entity (to our knowledge)



Quah Zheng Wei

Chief Executive Officer
Ceito



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

At Ceito, we believe in a tokenized world. Our proprietary technology allows you to tokenize anything easily, from shares and services to collectibles and donation campaigns. We take care of tokenization while you focus on your business.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are finalizing the details on an issuance of Security Tokens that are compliant with MAS. This is so important as the tokenization of securities allows the blockchain community to start building towards a 70 trillion dollar market.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Ironically, I am excited about the lacklustre ICO market! After the crazy bull market last year, this is a much needed ice age to weed out the bad actors and bring project valuations back to earth (from the moon). It also signifies the beginning of a maturing industry.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry is battling against an unjustified period of bad media coverage. Most articles prefer to focus on a small number of bad actors. This, coupled with a high failure rate usually expected from early stage projects, are causing the industry to suffer.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I will be a National Geographic photographer! I follow all of their social media accounts and secretly hope to join them one day.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Atticus from *How to Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee followed his moral codes regardless of the environment he was in. Stay true to yourself and be a good human.

What is your most useless talent?

I can eat crabs and other crustaceans with chopsticks.

FOR

learning the theory of innovation and start-up life and then executing to build his own business within a Big4



Jan Reinmueller

Partner, Head & Founder
KPMG Digital Village

KPMG
Digital Village™

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Helping companies to transform for future relevance.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Making sure that financial services leaders understand that technology alone won't solve their existing challenges. It's all about addressing key pain-points and unmet needs of customers and at the same time establish a digital mindset within the organization.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

If there is one technology which really excites me – it would be blockchain. It also seems to be the most exciting trend in the industry at the moment. Blockchain addresses fundamental old problems that the industry has in a cost-efficient and secure way.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Lots of confusion around all these new technologies and where to start.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Working in the logistics industry and helping them to transform into a payments company. We are in an industrial convergence era, where boundaries are redefined between industries by shifting from single to cross-industry experiences.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Lean Start-Up Methodology by Eric Ries.

What is your most useless talent?

Being a DJ I guess...

FOR

his practical work on Open Banking



Jon Scheele

Open Banking Consultant
API Learning Lab



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I help financial services firms enhance their customer value proposition by leveraging on their own and their partners' capabilities using Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). A building block of the digital economy, APIs enable firms to seamlessly connect to distribution channels and supply chains across financial institutions, FinTech, e-Commerce, retail and logistics. I help firms achieve this through strategy consulting, implementation and training.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am currently running a course in Building Financial Services Open APIs. The course equips professionals with the skills to define, plan and launch an API capability in their firm, build a partner ecosystem across complementary industries, and perform the new role of API Product Manager. Building this people capability is essential for financial services firms to thrive in the digital economy.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Open Banking is fostering the environment for innovators to create new financial products and services and interweave them into our connected lives. And not just banking: insurance, payments, wealth management and trade will all become more accessible and more flexibly meet our needs due to the connections enabled by APIs.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think people are very positive about the opportunities afforded by new technologies, but unsure how to integrate them all and operate in a more autonomous, yet connected, way.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

If I wasn't in the finance industry, I would still be applying new technologies to improve businesses and showing others how to also. In this world of fast-paced technological change, there is a need for people to continually update their skills and their mindsets.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My favourite book right now is *Choose Yourself* by James Altucher. It's about how we can, and must, chart our own paths and make our own opportunities in a more connected, yet autonomous, world.

What is your most useless talent?

I can name just about any tune (classical, jazz, or rock'n'roll) written up to the 1990s, but very little afterwards.

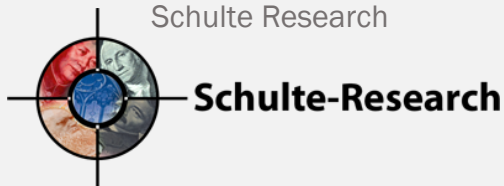
FOR

research showing clearly how banks' budgets are tiny compared to tech firms to build financial services



Paul Schulte

Chairman and Editor
Schulte Research



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

FinTech research for public equity investors, private equity entities, and sovereign wealth funds.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Amazon vs Alibaba vs Walmart in India.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Bifurcation of digital world – Huawei/Alibaba vs Qualcomm/Apple/AWS. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CLOUD.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

How to deal with a split digital world with huge political implications. Does this turn into a US/China Cold War? Does a change in Congress to Democrat control slow or reverse this? How hard will the Pentagon push this Cold War independent of Trump?

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

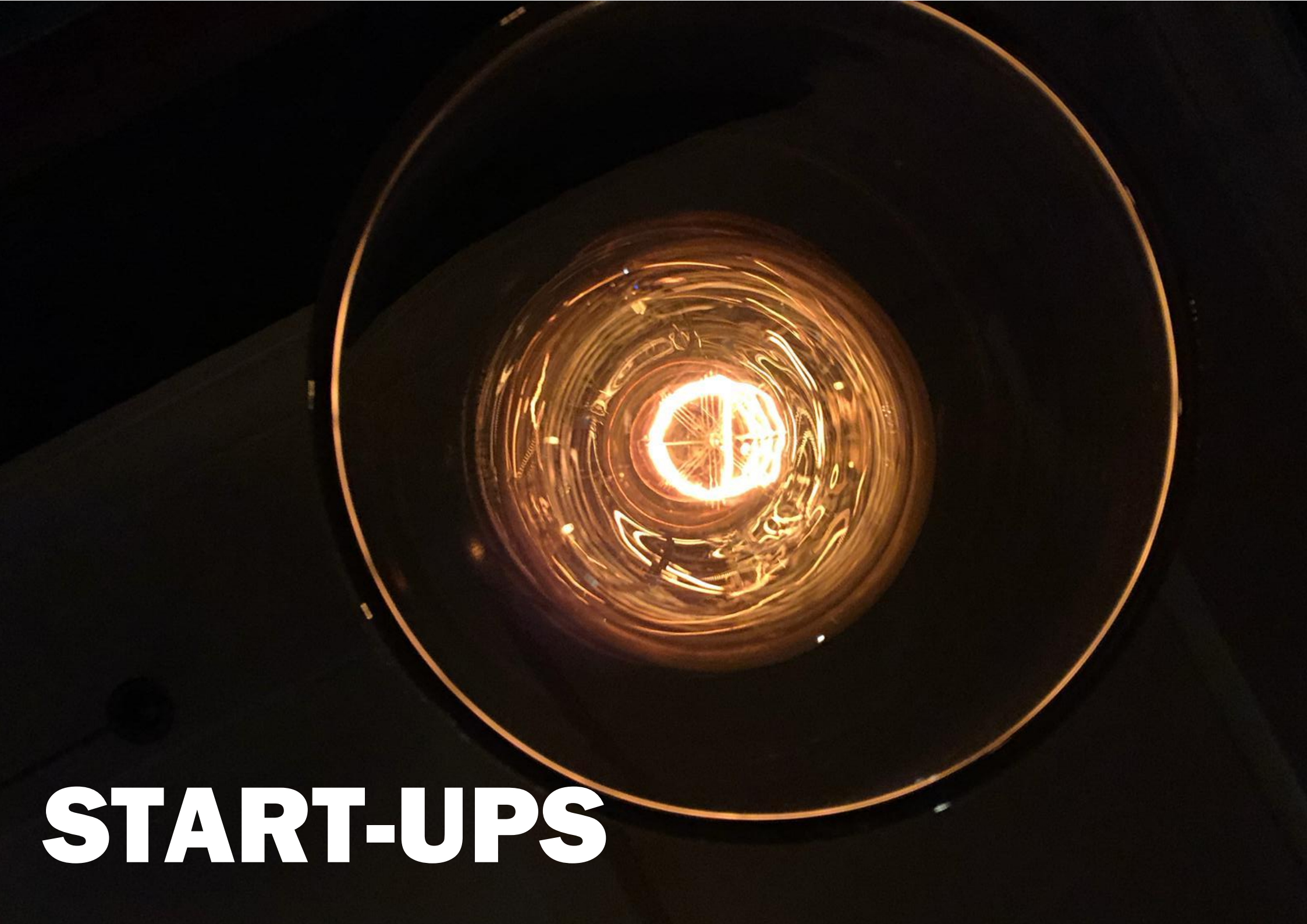
Drug and alcohol counselling.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Imperial Twilight by Stephen Platt. Great book to understand the century of humiliation and why China has zero interest in being treated like a vassal state of the US. House of Trump; House of Putin – how Trump has been bought and paid for by Russia for 25 years.

What is your most useless talent?

I tend to overly-complexify things.



START-UPS

FOR
showing us that there's (a lot)
more to AI than just machine
learning



Dr Sinuhé Arroyo

Founder & CEO
TAIGER



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

TAIGER is an artificial intelligence company, and we build software that automates complex cognitive tasks for businesses and governments. We are the pioneers of Knowledge Work Automation (KWA).

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are working on raising funds for TAIGER's Series B, for our next stage of explosive growth. This Series B is critical to us as we see massive demand for our effective solutions and need to continue meeting that demand.

In addition to that, it is my honour to be appointed as a Committee Member of the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA) Committee, whose mandate is to define and drive the technology roadmap in Singapore. Nothing is more exciting than realizing your background and vision are part of Singapore's journey towards becoming a Smart Nation.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Every organization in the industry is seeking to optimize operational efficiencies, which is to reduce cost, increase speed, and eliminate human errors.

However, for most of them, it is an uphill task as the journey requires a depth of experience and capabilities which they do not possess.

As such, many of them do not have the know-how on allocating proper resources to build capabilities around that.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

For decades, the industry has been struggling with automating tasks that are complex, yet tedious and manual for humans to perform. Previously, the only way to solve these problems was to increase the workforce, leading to rising costs with little efficiency gain. The technology now exists to perform higher orders of reasoning and natural language processing and we've developed it to allow the automation of previously infeasible tasks.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would probably be an academic, a professor at a university somewhere to cultivate the next generation of AI leaders.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Hard Thing About Hard Things by Ben Horowitz.

What is your most useless talent?

I have the uncanny ability to lose small objects between airplane seats.

FOR

being the youngest person (we know of) to explain cryptocurrencies to the world



Elyse Barg

Founder, High School Student
MyCreditCompass



MyCreditCompass

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I act as a bridge between complex financial concepts, new financial technology and public understanding.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am currently working on building the official MyCreditCompass platform.

The world of finance and financial technology is a dynamic realm full of visionaries seeking to push the boundaries of possibility. Having built upon decades of solid practice, we are developing new products and ideas at an unprecedented rate. However, as we continue to further enhance our sophisticated networks, it may be difficult for people outside of the industry to understand the intricacies of our ever-evolving financial frameworks.

With MyCreditCompass, I aim to bridge the gap between confusion and proper understanding, helping to encourage the public to become meaningfully engaged with the financial infrastructure that supports them in their everyday lives.

I am extremely excited to see MyCreditCompass help its users to navigate their financial affairs and establish their own sense of direction in life.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am really excited about the development of blockchain technology and its potential role in the financial world. It feels like we are standing at the crossroads between two completely different sets of ideology. Adopting blockchain-based infrastructure will have a profound effect on the structure of the global economy, which I

discussed in my TEDx talk 'Cryptocurrencies – Cool, So What?' Considering how powerful this new technology is, I think that it is extremely important to stay informed about its development.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think that the industry is struggling with a lack of human connection. As FinTech becomes increasingly advanced, I think that it is important to ensure that we pause and make sure that we are all on the same page. When people aren't given a chance to see what's lying behind all the jargon and complexity, they are denied the chance to understand what's really going on. To outsiders right now, FinTech may seem like an elitist playpen. It is an absolute honour to be allowed to join this community. However, in failing to reconcile our vision with public understanding, we are putting ourselves in a very precarious position. A lack of understanding fosters a sense of scepticism and mistrust, and I believe that if it is left unaddressed it will always be fintech's biggest weakness.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be focusing more on my work to empower young entrepreneurs around the world. Whilst I have started using a public Instagram profile (@elysebarg_) in order to connect with other young business people, I would like to put more focus into networks and infrastructure to support young leaders.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

When Breath Becomes Air by the late Dr. Paul Kalanithi

What is your most useless talent?

Teaching my dog new words for old tricks

FOR

building the first robo-advisor that covers both private investments and public securities



Atif Basir

Founder & COO
Asset Algo

Asset Algo

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Asset Algo is an investment platform that gives users access to professional fund managers of active strategies in a Managed Account structure. Our proprietary portfolio construction algorithms create customized portfolios for individual users based on their risk profiles. We plan to add passive investment strategies using dynamic asset allocation in the near future. P2P lending and P2P insurance are also in the pipeline.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Looking for more fund managers. A shortlist of 22 fund managers have gone through our proprietary qualitative and quantitative due diligence process and only 4 have made it on to our platform. We need to add a few more.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Digital assets, blockchain, IoT, there are many but if I had to select one it would be artificial intelligence. Data is an asset in today's world and is now being intelligently collected. We feel that within the next seven to eight years, AI will change the way we live. Technology is already commoditizing basic investment advice. At Asset Algo, we want to be at the forefront of this AI revolution.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Good God, the list is long. I could write a book but let me stay focused on wealth management and Asset Algo. We are on the brink of the largest transfer of wealth in the history of mankind. According to experts, most of this transfer is not going to be smooth due to poor financial planning, but those who succeed in their inheritance may not be well served unless wealth managers, not just digitize to gain operational efficiencies, but start to innovate to serve the new "class" of investors.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would probably be avoiding my banker/wealth manager.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Recent articles and videos from Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

Interviews.

FOR

focusing on fixed income product as a basis for a FinTech business supporting the private banking industry



Vincent Caldeira

Chief Technology Officer
Bondlinc



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

At a high level, my work is to oversee the design and development of technology solutions to business problems faced by the banking industry in the domain of fixed income product distribution.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

At the moment, my team is developing a real-time data streaming platform that allows us to collect, process, and analyse product reference data, corporate action events, market pricing and financial news. This is crucial piece of technology as the streaming data allows us to generate and deliver timely notifications and actionable insights to our trading solution, and ultimately help us move towards some form of distributed electronic exchange for fixed income products.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am excited to see that more and more banks are finally starting to understand the benefits and required approach towards using cloud technology, not just for infrastructure but also leveraging Platform-As-A-Service offerings. With this trend, both internal technology teams and external partners get the ability to move more quickly to establish more agile delivery practices, adopt new technology components or architecture models, and progress in the DevOps space towards Continuous Delivery Models

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry is struggling with a current system landscape whereby a high number of proprietary,

legacy systems built on monolith architecture have been integrated or rather interfaced through service layers using either data replication or point-to-point messaging approach. As a result, it is hard to evolve or replace components and additional layers of data replication. Business logic has to be built to serve new digital needs, with complexity and maintenance costs increasing over time.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Likely going back to the Healthcare industry where I started my career, as I believe it is probably one of the top 3 industries right now in terms of possibilities to improve processes and outcome (in terms of quality of service) with the right use of new technologies. Or if I follow my passion, go full-time into performance sports management as I am already involved through my kids in both the tennis and running communities.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Being skeptical by nature, there isn't really a particular source of influence for me as I tend to keep reading and comparing different viewpoints. Right now, I am reading *The Culture Code: The Secrets of Highly Successful Groups* by Daniel Coyle which shares some interesting findings about organizational performance that could seem quite contrary to what a lot of leadership and organizational theory books have been teaching us.

What is your most useless talent?

Making cynical jokes.

FOR

**setting up blockchain start-up and
advocating best practice in the token
markets**



Alice Chen

Co-Founder & Chief Legal Officer
InvestaCrowd



InvestaCrowd

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are tokenizing private securities using blockchain and creating a secondary market for the trading of tokenized securities to bring liquidity to traditionally illiquid private securities (such as real estate, private equity, venture capital interests). Tokenization is the process of converting ownership of an asset into a digital representation using blockchain.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

InvestaCrowd currently holds a Capital Markets Services license to deal in securities, and we have already started helping companies tokenize private securities. However, tokenizing private securities only solves the first part of providing liquidity. You need a licensed secondary market exchange where the security tokens can be traded in order to provide true liquidity. This is top on my list as chief legal and for the business – obtaining a license from the MAS to operate one of the first security token exchange platforms in Asia.

Aside from my business, I am a huge advocate for establishing self-regulatory frameworks and best practices for the token market through my involvement in organizations such as ACCESS (Singapore Cryptocurrency and Blockchain Industry Association) and GITA (Global ICO Transparency Alliance).

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

We are definitely seeing a lot of interest from the traditional finance world in tokenizing real assets. We get numerous inbound inquiries from some of these traditional players to tokenize their fund or a real estate project. The prospect of being able to tokenize a portion of a commercial building or real estate funds that very few have access to traditionally is exciting because, for the first time, we have the potential to provide public market liquidity to private securities.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Adoption. Just like anything “new,” there will be a period where it will take the early adaptors to test out the tech, the regulations, the products being offered before there will be mass adoption.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be a yoga instructor.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I've been listening a lot recently to a podcast called *Flipping* by Clay Collins, in particular, the series on “Tokenize the World: A Security Token Documentary.” It really resonated with me because it highlighted some of the key issues and inefficiencies in the public markets and reaffirmed the direction our company is headed and focusing all our attention on STOs.

What is your most useless talent?

I'd say if it's a talent, it can't be useless.

FOR

supporting the blockchain ecosystem in one of the most critical areas (KYC)



Chionh Chye Kit

CEO

Cynopsis Solutions, Traceto.io



cynopsis.co



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

RegTech company promoting regulatory inclusion and using technology to solve regulatory problems for clients. We service the underserved market of small to medium-sized companies including FinTech and blockchain start-ups trying to meet regulatory standards.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are building traceto.io, a decentralized KYC utility and protocol for the cryptocurrency ecosystem so that it can revolutionize the current inefficient way of doing KYC. With traceto.io network, we combine our deep regulatory knowledge with latest technologies, including blockchain and artificial intelligence, to bring about a better regulatory outcome for the cryptocurrency sector globally.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The current focus on RegTech by regulators around the world is very encouraging for the work we are doing at both Cynopsis Solutions and traceto.io

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Regulatory compliance is never an easy task. In fact, it is very complex. We believe that we can help our clients achieve better regulatory and compliance outcomes.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would probably be a teacher.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I would suggest the book *Innovation as Usual* by Paddy Miller and Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg. Basically, it encourages the mindset shift of coming to work every day, applying the mentality of how to "innovate" as opposed to "business as usual." Only through innovating can results and outcomes be improved.

What is your most useless talent?

If it is useless, it is not a talent.

FOR
establishing the first education
facility with pure focus on
blockchain



Alvin Chua

President
Institute of Blockchain™



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are a blockchain school that provides blockchain education, certification and research.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are working on the Blockchain Industry Best Practices (BIBP), as this would help any entity in the blockchain ecosystem understand and adopt best practices in this industry.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The mass adoption of blockchain in years to come. This is one of the emerging technologies in the FinTech space that will help organizations save costs, man-hours and improve business processes.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Referring to MAS 100 FinTech Problems, there are still many areas of pain points the industry faces. We continually need innovative solutions, good technology, collective efforts and bright minds in this space to solve the pain points.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Education and volunteering have always been my passion. I would either teach or go to a United Nations volunteering assignment.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Prof David Lee's *Handbook of Digital Currency: Bitcoin, Innovation, Financial Instruments, and Big Data* has inspired me to be involved in the FinTech and blockchain space. One key takeaway from the book is how blockchain could potentially have an impact on the welfare of people and even out the inequality.

What is your most useless talent?

I can climb mountains, but sometimes I just feel that I can't get through a simple challenge.

FOR

picking the best name a start-up can have in insurance and executing relentlessly over the last 4 years



Walter de Oude

CEO and Founder
Singapore Life



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

A tech platform that will revolutionize offerings in the wealth and life insurance industries.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Platform expansion. We've built brilliant core capabilities. We now take them to the next level.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Technology is changing the way people think. It is becoming hygiene to think that digitally executed wealth is the only way it should be.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Catching up with today's tech capabilities. They are held back by legacy systems. We don't have that problem.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Playing golf.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

LinkedIn.

What is your most useless talent?

I can solve a Rubik's cube in a few minutes!

FOR
challenging established financial
technology using blockchain and
working towards convergence



Alistair Duff

Co-Founder, Head of APAC
DrumG Technologies



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

DrumG builds and operates next generation enterprise distributed ledger-based applications and networks for the regulated financial services industry. We take a "ledger appropriate" approach, utilizing a rigorous evaluation framework for platform selection to deliver business value for our clients.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are building out the Titanium Network which is a decentralized, anonymous and cryptographically secured OTC consensus data network amongst financial institutions. It's important not just because of the reduction in costs and improved workflows that the technology provides, but returns data sovereignty to the institutions that power the network, laying the foundation for additional value-added services utilizing that data.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Deployment. Deployment and excitement are two words that are rarely combined but after years of experience and of proof of concepts in the enterprise blockchain space, and as we sit firmly in the trough of disillusionment, having real applications being deployed within financial institutions in the next year is critical. Given the ease of integration and product design of the Titanium Network, this product's live deployment in mid-2019 will play a key part in driving blockchain adoption within regulated markets.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Deployment. So many projects appear to have failed or stalled in the enterprise blockchain space. There are a number of reasons for this, from taking an overly ambitious "boil the ocean" approach through to overestimating the current readiness of this emerging technology or just not focusing on what is really needed to deploy solutions within regulated financial markets. We take a deploy-early-and-often approach, end-to-end proof of business value rather than an isolated proof of concepts and the product is designed for interoperability with existing infrastructure from the outset rather than as an afterthought.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would probably spend more time on my other passion – electronic music.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Simon Sinek's *Start With Why*. I first saw this Ted talk years ago when I worked at a bank and whilst I found it interesting, it's only when we started forming DrumG that I really appreciated the value of defining our purpose and reason we exist rather than instinctively focusing on the what and the how.

What is your most useless talent?

I used to play the bagpipes. There is something about being a lone piper playing in the highlands of Scotland but when played in urbanized Singapore however, it's just plain noise pollution.

FOR

tackling SME challenges and using his FX know-how to build a tech startup



William Egan

CEO & Founder
Sherpa Markets



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

A technology company delivering innovative foreign exchange solutions.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Keeping existing customers impressed and happy through continuous innovation.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The willingness of companies to question the status quo and look for partners offering innovative solutions that help expand their businesses and grow their revenues.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Companies delivering too much vapourware and discussion and not enough live product. It is easy to have a good idea and story, but true value comes from execution and delivery. Start with an idea, even a small one, build it, deliver it and move on from there.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be a farmer. I find the challenge of taking a long-term view and growing value in a slow and steady manner through hard work and taking calculated risks, coupled with being out in nature and working with big machines is such an attractive thought.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand is a book that I have read many times and I never cease to find it poignant.

What is your most useless talent?

Spinning a basketball on my finger.

FOR
making intelligent investing
accessible to everyone



Michele Ferrario

Co-Founder & CEO
StashAway



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We have built a digital platform that makes it easy and cost-effective to invest intelligently. We are now working on constantly improving it.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am working on "spreading the word" about StashAway. To fulfil our mission of "empowering people to build wealth in the long-term," we need to ensure that our platform is used by a lot of people to manage a significant part of their savings. As part of this, I am also working on launching StashAway internationally: we are about to make our services available in Malaysia!

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am very happy to see regulators around the world pushing the financial services industry to be more open through so called "Open Banking" regulations. Customers' experiences with industry players will improve very significantly as a consequence of more openness and therefore, more competition.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The wealth management industry in Southeast Asia is struggling with being customer-focused. Unfortunately, what is best for customers often clashes with what is best for financial services firms' economics, and as of today I see most firms putting their economics first, and customers' interests second.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

After spending the first half of my career around financial services, I spent the last 7 years building consumer internet companies. So, I guess that if I was not trying to improve investing, I would probably be working on using technology to improve some other aspects of life... My mum was a teacher and I'm passionate about education, so maybe in the education area?

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I recently read *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott and I found it particularly useful for anybody trying to build a team and a culture.

What is your most useless talent?

I can move my ears without changing face expression (actually not so useless: it makes my kids laugh!)

FOR

making the tokenization of
fine art a reality



Marcelo García Casil

Founder & CEO
Maecenas

Maecenas

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Maecenas is the NASDAQ of Fine Art. Maecenas allows everyone to invest in masterpieces that would otherwise be out of reach. By leveraging on blockchain technology, we tokenize multi-million dollar artworks to create liquidity and transparency so that investors can build their own art portfolios without having to rely on art dealers or auction houses, which are expensive and inefficient.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Having launched our platform and having successfully tokenized our first artwork (a painting by Andy Warhol which raised ~\$1.7m), we are now focusing on making our platform scalable so that we can grow and continue building on our success.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Self-investment. There is strong evidence that millennials do not trust banks and prefer to be in control of their wealth. They also favour platforms which are easy to use, which is why UX has grown in importance over the last few years. In a traditional market such as fine art, we believe that this trend will play in our favour, as millennials are more tech-savvy and keen on making their own investment decisions. We envisage them being our primary client base as they will see in Maecenas an innovative way to invest in a type of art that otherwise they could not own.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

In the age of electronic trading, the art market is struggling to stay relevant. The new generation has a different mindset and when they start managing their families' wealth, they will demand modern platforms because they've grown up with smartphones and are used to dealing with almost everything in their lives digitally. As a traditional industry, it is no surprise that the way in which fine art is transacted hasn't changed for centuries. The fact that there is little competition also doesn't help – the two largest auction houses combined control more than half of the market.

A disruptive technology such as a blockchain presents the opportunity for a change of dynamics which can benefit the industry as a whole, creating transparency, openness and liquidity in a market that is in desperate need for it.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Probably working on some AI project. I've always found AI to be fascinating.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I like to read the essays from Paul Graham – some are very insightful and thought provoking. I also like to read sci-fi as I feel it helps my mind to stay fresh and creative. William Gibson is one of my favourite authors.

What is your most useless talent?

I can't think of any.

FOR

having the vision to architect a whole new ecosystem around a high performance blockchain protocol



Max Kantelia

Co-Founder
Anquan Capital, Zilliqa



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am a deep tech entrepreneur specializing in building scalable companies in the blockchain and cybersecurity spaces.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Scalable and secure private and public blockchain platforms. We cannot deploy large scale blockchain applications without high throughput blockchains, secure smart contract languages and hardware rooted security.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Securities tokenization. It will change the way that we issue, trade and administer traditional securities such as equities, bonds and real estate. This is future state digital investment banking.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Security. We are still trying to protect software with software.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Something to do with cars, wine or fashion!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Think Different - Here's to the crazy ones advertisement by Apple.

What is your most useless talent?

Reading backwards.

FOR

embracing the platform business model and riding the regulatory change wave to create value for investors and insight providers



Raghav Kapoor (Raj)

Co-Founder & CEO
Smartkarma



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are a global investment research network that enables independent analysts to publish their insights. Institutional investors can access the research and communicate with these Insight Providers through our platform via a single subscription fee. We help analysts reach new audiences and empower the buy-side with unbiased, differentiated research.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are building the world's largest investment research network which stands independent of incumbent bank research departments. This involves building a global sales and marketing machine, and rapidly growing our global client base. We have grown from a single office in Singapore to have presence across Hong Kong, New York City, London and Frankfurt.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Greater regulatory scrutiny calls for greater accountability in procurement practices. This trend has led to a focus on the unbundling of products and

services provided by vendors. For the buy-side, this means investment research must be purchased outright and can no longer be factored into bundled billings, such as brokerage commissions. Boiled down, paying for research presents a new procurement conundrum in itself.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

There's no universally accepted way of pricing research. And without standardized mechanisms, justifying the cost paid for research would be difficult.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be teaching kids, running a family office, and focusing on church mission.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Bible.

What is your most useless talent?

I once held the world record for India's youngest karate blackbelt.

FOR

working on financial inclusion innovation, the collateralization of livestock in developing markets



Roy Lai Kian Ming

Founder & CEO
InfoCorp Technologies



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

InfoCorp Technologies is a FinTech company that provides the infrastructure to accelerate financial inclusion to the unbanked and underserved communities using blockchain technology. It designs solutions for small bank consortiums in emerging countries to facilitate inter-bank transactions and provides consultancy services to clearing houses and central banks on implementations and testing of real-time payment systems, and to corporate clients on implementations and operations of distributed ledger technologies for production use.

Our project Sentinel Chain is a blockchain-based international marketplace for cross-border financial services and the world's platform to accept the use of livestock as collateral. Taking a unique approach to the last mile problem of financial inclusion, the Sentinel Chain model establishes livestock provenance through the creation of livestock insurance on blockchain – this provides the unbanked with a new opportunity: the real possibility of accepting livestock as 'collateral' for loans.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are preparing for Sentinel Chain's launch of its first use case in Myanmar scheduled for Q1 in 2019. This will be the first use case for SENC and facilitates the creation of livestock insurance. Myanmar has a cattle population size of 17.035million with cost of per cattle ranging from US\$365 to US\$1460. In 2014, 8.96million of Myanmar's population borrow for a farm or business, and the legal cap of unsecured borrowing in Myanmar is 30% per annum. The completion of this use case will set the stage for Myanmar farmers to gain wider access to financing using livestock as collateral.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Growing usage of blockchain to solve financial inclusion

problems. 1.2 billion people globally cannot access formal financial services and have to turn to other means to raise cash, often at astronomically high interest, or at a risk of grave loss, perpetuating the poverty cycle.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

There are too many solutions out there and not enough real world use cases. Too many scams that compromise genuine projects out there that truly started with a vision to make an impact.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be working with the farming community in Myanmar to share why adoption is so important for their future, their livelihoods and their loved ones. They are, I dare say, a large part of the 1.2 billion globally without access to formal financial services. They will be uplifted out of a lot of financial hardships when we create the means for them to transform their existing livestock into a new asset class that they can use to raise collateral-backed insurance policies and access significantly lower interest loans, cash etc.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto Polar's classic book – *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere*. It talks about capitalism in the developing world, showing how property rights are the key to overcoming poverty.

Professor Michael Porter's Ted Talk – *The Case for Letting Business Solve Social Problems*. He argues that profitability can result in the growth of a business solution to massive problems.

What is your most useless talent?

My wife says its my ability to recall any film I had watched, within 3 seconds of seeing it.

FOR

stepping out of a large private bank to create a digital solution for investors



Will Lawton

CEO
Eigencat



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Digital investment solution.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Delivering an innovative multi asset class portfolio platform for wealth managers and individuals to manage the risk and performance parameters of their investments.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Digitization – it can truly support both the wealth manager and client to deliver a superior service with desired results for all.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Digitization – a challenge to the existing business models with a high perceived cost in an industry that struggles with change.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Sailing.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Valentino Rossi.

What is your most useless talent?

I can pull wheelies on a motorbike.

FOR

building a B2B wealth advisory and investment platform in Singapore



Julien Le Noble

Co-Founder

Smartfolios (a business unit of Finantix)



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We provide global private banks and wealth managers a suite of components and APIs they can use to digitize their business across channels and devices.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are expanding our suite of modules to answer the needs of private banks across the advisory and investment value chain which leverages the 20 years experience of Finantix in this space, in particular around discretionary portfolio management and client engagement.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Artificial intelligence is on its way to revolutionize the way we live our lives and I believe for the better. Financial services will be no exception.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Regulators are challenged to keep up with technological innovation coming in all shapes and forms. In Singapore, we are fortunate that the MAS is supporting and even enabling the ecosystem as a matter of priority.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Saving lives.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Reading the economist provides me a sound perspective on the world that surrounds us.

What is your most useless talent?

None of the above.

FOR

building a practice around the critical subject of cybersecurity



Geoff Leeming

Partner & Co-Founder
Pragma



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We help companies secure their digital future.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

A secure hosted MAS TRM compliant cloud platform. Cybersecurity is essential to a FinTech's survival, and highly important to their B2B and B2C clients, but building and running it successfully is a niche skill. We develop and host on behalf of FinTechs, so they can concentrate on building their business.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The cloud. It's completely changing how we do IT and opening up so many possibilities. I used to run security for investment banks: I can do more and better for a FinTech now in the cloud than I used to be able to do for a tier-1 bank in an on-premises data centre. Serverless, infrastructure as code, automated security – these are all fundamental shifts in the way we create systems.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Large corporations are struggling to come to terms with innovation and change (this is nothing new). Cloud is accelerating the pace of that change and levelling the playing field for the new entrants. It happens because more corporations are run as central planned economies, not free markets: the Bazaar will always beat the Cathedral in the long run.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Making things, or on a motorbike a very long way from a Starbucks.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds by Charles Mackay. Published in 1841, it's still relevant and fascinating nearly two centuries later.

What is your most useless talent?

I can tell you what time it is. This would be useful if people didn't have watches.

FOR

tackling a real-world problem in the world of digital asset and cryptocurrency wallet access



Xanne Leo

Co-Founder & CEO
Infinitus



Infinitus

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

INF is a blockchain company based in Singapore and Hong Kong.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are helping cryptocurrency users safekeep their private keys. This is important because there is no help at all should one misplace or forget their private keys to his wallet. There is no reset password button nor a customer service hotline.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

We see blockchain projects shifting from building base chains and infrastructure tech/platforms to developing applications. This is in tandem with the growing trend of mass adoption. Without practical and functional applications for the real-world users, blockchain will always be a concept and a "nice idea."

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry is struggling with too much tech mumbo jumbo. It is currently still a space for geeks and nerds. Anyone without technical knowledge and computer science background will have a steep learning curve to just figure out general broad concepts of blockchain, consensus algorithm, token economics and etc... We need to make things simpler. People never have to understand triangulation and location tracking technology to enjoy the benefits of Uber and blockchain applications should be the same too.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Erm... Selling funds... Still finance I guess.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

It has to be Netflix. It has brought a lot of joy to my life and to my family. The epitome of disruptive technology.

What is your most useless talent?

My ability to be oblivious to my surroundings and people. I think you cannot see me.....

FOR

his comprehensive, yet easy-to-understand book on blockchain



Antony Lewis

Director of Research
R3



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

R3 builds blockchain technology to transform the way the world does business. The Corda platform is a cutting edge blockchain platform that removes costly friction in business transactions by enabling businesses to transact directly.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I'm currently working with central banks to explore the use of blockchain technology for interbank payments. The tokenization of cash is the single most important thing to unlock the value of blockchains for almost all uses.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am excited about the tokenization of everything. By releasing digital assets from account-based systems and holding them as token-based systems, assets can be freer to move, transactions can be made less risky, and all parties can get more value out of their assets.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry needs to address regulations that were created for the account-based paradigm that may no longer be relevant in a token-based world with decentralized infrastructure.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I'd probably spend more time writing blog spots and explainer books to help with the learning curve of understanding blockchain technology.

Outside of technology, I'd love to learn more about how Chinese and Western medicine overlap. We have a long way to go to fully understanding how the human body works.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Going to answer in a slightly different way – here's what I have to offer:

I write www.bitsonblocks.net which is a blog followed by business people to understand more about bitcoins, blockchain technology and FinTech.

I have also written a book called *The Basics of Bitcoins and Blockchains*. I wrote it for business people and students who may not have a technical background but want to learn about cryptocurrencies, ICOs, and business blockchains. It's on Amazon.

What is your most useless talent?

I can snowboard. Pretty useless in Singapore where there are no mountains, and no snow.

FOR

developing an asset allocation model based on the economic cycle rather than Modern Portfolio Theory



Freddy Lim

Co-Founder & Chief Investment Officer
StashAway



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I design, stress test and build systematic investment engines. At StashAway, I am the architect behind Economic Regime-based Asset Allocation (ERAA) which is an algorithm that identifies the right mix of asset classes (globally) for a given economic regime. ERAA also makes forward looking adjustments based on medium term valuation gaps.

As CIO, I also chair StashAway's investment committee that provides independent human oversight to our algorithms. I also provide regular market insights to our clients and appear regularly on media to share my opinions.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am working towards a deep-learning algorithm that builds global portfolios with minimal currency swings. Unlike US and Europe, local markets in Asia (and LATAM) pale in size and depth which forces Asian investors to invest globally. Depending on which country you are from, FX hedging (and maintaining it) can be very costly and complex than most envision.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Greater awareness and willingness of the general public to use digital financial services. This demand would in turn motivate financial institutions to be more proactive in applying technological innovations to create efficiency and cost savings for consumers.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Two challenges stand out. Firstly, the finance industry needs to keep up with the different tastes and demands of the next generation of clients (millennials). At the same time, the industry also needs to cope with more stringent regulatory compliance requirements.

Applying technological innovations more proactively is the way to go. In particular, I keep a close eye on developments in the Cross-Border Payment and RegTech sector.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I am currently doing something I have always loved doing. I can't imagine any other path. In the next life, if I am not allowed to be an investment professional, I would most likely be teaching in a university as it's the intellectual nature of what I do that really stimulates me.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Zero to One by Peter Thiel.

What is your most useless talent?

Ping Pong.

FOR

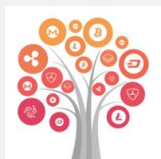
building out a solution for (arguably) the most important challenge in crypto: custody



Scott Littlewood

COO, Fund Manager

DAVOS Custody, Blockchain Technologies



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I safeguard and manage digital assets for clients.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are building infrastructure to bridge the gap between centralized and decentralized worlds using traditional and familiar licensed services for an untraditional asset class.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Regulatory clarity has started to emerge this year, with multiple jurisdictions coming out with or preparing license requirements for crypto asset management, exchanges and custodians. This organizes the market and instills confidence among investors.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Traditional finance support. Try opening a bank account with the words crypto or blockchain in your business description. It's changing though, albeit slowly.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Competitive video gaming.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Reminiscences of a Stock Operator by Edwin Lefèvre and... *dons tinfoil hat* *Fingerprints of Gods: The Evidence of Earth's Lost Civilisation* by Graham Hancock.

What is your most useless talent?

I have been told my gorilla impersonation is exceptional.

FOR

applying investment theory to the nascent space of utility tokens



Artur Luhaäär

CEO & Co-Founder
Smartly



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am building a platform to simplify investing for the average person.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Making our product even simpler. It is important because investing is complicated for average people and needs to be simplified, in order for them to make better decisions independently.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Bank API-s and digital identities. Interconnectivity is the "today" in almost all other industries except finance (in Southeast Asia), which is ironic for an industry that impacts everyone. While open-API platforms threaten banks' monopolies, they are a necessity for the development of the industry. Digital identities, on the other hand, reduce friction for customers (not having to submit the same data every time when signing up), but also removes the burden for financial service providers to verify the validity of data provided to them and instead trust the government.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Incentives. In asset management, distributors sell products that make them, not the customer, the most money. New KYC/AML requirements add to the cost base of institutions, forcing them even more to take a short-term, profit maximizing approach.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

A sous chef in a Parisian restaurant (unfortunately I don't speak French so here I am).

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles by Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

Perfect memory of comedy movie scenes and characters.

FOR
getting us closer to real
decentralization through token
swap technology



Loi Luu

Co-Founder & CEO
Kyber Network



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Kyber has developed an on-chain liquidity protocol that allows decentralized token swaps to be possible on any platform, including blockchain wallets, websites and smart contracts. Utilizing our protocol, developers can build important payment and financial flows that require multiple value exchanges, including instant token swap services, ERC20 payments, and innovative financial DApps.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are heavily focused on educating our community, especially developers, on the benefits of Kyber's protocol. We are also working closely with different top projects in the space to encourage more integrations and utilization of the protocol for their liquidity needs and for crucial payment and financial flows. For example, the most popular blockchain wallet in China, imToken, has integrated with Kyber to allow their users to conveniently swap tokens without leaving their wallet. The popular decentralised virtual game Etheremon recently integrated with Kyber to allow players to pay for in-game services using ERC20 tokens.

By enabling value exchange to be performed seamlessly and tokens to be usable anytime, anywhere, Kyber Network is helping to connect all these disparate, isolated token ecosystems and allow decentralized payments and finance to flourish.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Improving both user experience and scalability is crucial to greater adoption of decentralised technologies and applications. We are excited that more projects are starting to provide really good user experience, for example wallets like Trust Wallet and imToken. There

are also promising projects like Zilliqa emerging and attempting to improve scalability for decentralized applications.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

There is still a very small number of DApp users in the entire space, and usability and user experience of DApps still have much room for improvement. Currently, the entire network can get congested and be very slow sometimes, and transaction fees can be quite high. New users might also be fearful of using DApps due to many scams that have occurred before.

As such, user education on using DApps and managing their own private key is extremely important. In addition, scalability of the network and improving the entire user experience is key to achieving widespread adoption.

At Kyber, we are actively trying to work with other ecosystem players to educate users and also solve the scalability problem. Kyber has started the development of Gormos – a powerful new open-sourced scalability solution for the entire decentralised ecosystem. It is proposed for applications that require fast settlement, low cost, and low latency scalability solution. Examples include exchanges, social networks and online games.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Probably academic research on computer security or programming languages.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Sovereign Individual by James Dale Davidson

What is your most useless talent?

Having no talent.

FOR

moving into regulated digital asset trading early and thinking beyond the bubble and wild west



Todd Morakis

Co-Founder
JST Systems



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are a start-up that provides financial services in the blockchain space.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Our company's business strategy.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Regulations. As the regulators make the rules clearer around the world, the crypto asset class will start gaining more credibility.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Credibility. This would be normal for a new asset class. It will take time and regulations that will help.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be working in the front office of an international sports team... either Chelsea or Yankees.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles by Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

There are no useless talents, it is all about finding a use for your talent.

FOR

being the youngest FinTech entrepreneur (we know of) in Singapore to build a personal finance proposition helping customers better manage their costs



Blake Ong

Co-Founder
HelloKana

hellokana

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Sometimes it ends with an explanation of the portmanteau term “FinTech.” Oftentimes I love to share about my fortuitous introduction into the industry – from building a FinTech coworking space to developing a FX trading platform, and now, working on a robo-advisory project with my Co-Founder, Diego Rojas at HelloKana

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

On a completely un-FinTech-y note, I channel a lot of my spare time in my not-for-profit venture – Naked Nature. It's a zero-waste business and it's all about making low-waste, plastic-free living an affordable reality. Having gone through the journey myself, I hope to inspire and empower more people to do the same. It's a business that gives back to causes I care about – fighting climate change and helping those in poverty.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I'm most excited about automation. Automation streamlines processes, minimizes human errors and frees up so much more time for us to actually work on higher-value activities. In fact, that's exactly what HelloKana aims to do. It's important to know where your money comes and goes, but most of us don't or can't do it because it's either too troublesome or time consuming to have to consolidate across our multiple cards and accounts. What HelloKana does is to automatically aggregate and analyze your transaction data. We provide you the tools and insight for you to manage your money, without you needing to spend hours tracking every single bill you've incurred over the last month.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

FinTech is often synonymous with its ability to disrupt the financial sector and across geographical environments with the enablement of tech. When regulations fail to keep up with the pace of innovation, this leaves FinTechs finding themselves operating in grey areas and risking running afoul of existing rules. A classic chicken and egg discourse, but I think this can be reconciled meanwhile via establishing surveillance standards. At least, they can raise flags early and lay the groundwork for future regulatory developments.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I believe in the power of tech in enabling positive change so most probably HealthTech!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The book – *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi. It's a profound journey through the author's words exploring the very meaning of being human and reading about his confrontation with his own mortality as he wrote the book. It's a stark reminder of how fragile our lives are and it always drives me to live everyday better, like it's my last. When you're in that mindset, you allow yourself to go beyond your boundaries; mentally and physically. And that's really contributed a lot to my personal growth.

What is your most useless talent?

I do a great job in scouting out the best food places around town. I'm my friends' burpple, basically. Hit me up for food recommendations!

FOR

being a serial entrepreneur, raising money from institutions, building a great team and focusing on B2B innovation



Ned Phillips

Founder & CEO
Bambu



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We make saving and investment digital and simple.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

People Like Me is our AI tool which recommends ideal financial goals based on people with similar profiles to yours. The technology prompts individuals to learn from their peers. Also, we believe everyone deserves to have a stable financial future.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Realizing that finance doesn't have to be as complicated as we think it is. There has been a stigma that finance is a tough cookie to crack. However, more and more people are seeing it clearly now. Finance should be simple.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The understanding of the definition of FinTech. It is actually a simplification of finance.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be the owner of an ice cream van selling coconut ice cream to triathletes at events.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Hard Way by Mark Jenkins. It is a series of short stories of danger, survival, and the soul of adventure. Each chapter unfolds a new lesson to learn. My favourite quote is "when the going gets tough, it's unacceptable to whine, it's acceptable to say nothing, but it's admirable to revel in it."

What is your most useless talent?

Juggling.

FOR

being humble, focused and outcome-driven... because it pays off



Bhaskar Prabhakara

CEO
WeInvest



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

WeInvest started with the primary vision of making the investing process an easy and a rewarding experience for customers. We work closely with banks and other financial institutions to develop a wealth management platform that addresses the pain points in the investment journey – for both HNI and emerging affluent customers.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The highest priority right now is to be able to manage the scaling of WeInvest from a 3 client, 30 people organization to a 7-10 client 120 people organization, where teams, roles and work culture is well aligned and working in step, like a machine.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Investors' preference for robo-advisory provided by bank as against standalone D2C players excites us because we always believed that banks and FIs would be the trusted custodians of peoples' savings and wealth and thus built our business model accordingly.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I believe the industry is struggling with establishing trust and credibility among end-customers. Many a times, the channel's interest supersedes the interests of end-customers, thus leading to sub-optimal results. I believe that digital can help resolve this to a large extent – both for the HNI as well as emerging affluent segment.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would have pursued my passion of being a landscape photographer.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand has a long-time influence on me. It helped me make better sense of the fast-changing societal context from socialist 1970s and 1980s to a more capitalist 2000s and beyond.

What is your most useless talent?

Whistling songs.

FOR

combining UX / UI skills with a solid background in accounting - a rare breed



Dasarathi Rajagopalan

Senior Business Analyst/Project Manager
EACIIT



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I work on finance and technology related projects. I am able to adapt to any workplace. I try to maintain a fast pace during my work shift to remain focused while completing my projects. I strive to be efficient and to ensure all work is completed properly and without error. Recently, I have led a team of 5 people. I take my position seriously, and am completely dedicated and driven to succeed.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am actually not working on a project right now.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Tokenization of assets. The possibilities of the concept are massive. If a Picasso painting is tokenized, imagine what owning 1% of the painting would feel like?

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Frauds and scams. People start raising money without a viable product or service offering and a few bad apples could potentially ruin the market.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Chill, have a bowl of ramen and beer, be zen.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Olympian Karoly Takács. When he was part of the Hungarian Army during training in 1938, his right hand was badly injured when a faulty grenade exploded. Takács switched to shooting with his left hand instead. He practiced in secret, surprising his countrymen when he won the Hungarian national pistol shooting championship in the spring of 1939. He was also a member of the Hungarian team that won the 1939 UIT World Shooting Championships in the event. The Olympic Games scheduled for 1940 and 1944 were cancelled due to the second World War, but Takács surprised the world by winning the gold medal at 1948 Summer Olympics in London.

What is your most useless talent?

I can use my tongue to touch my nose if that falls under the purview of talent, oh also I can move my ears.

FOR

building artificial intelligence in capital markets that solves for a real challenge in China



Samir Rath

CEO
BlueFire AI



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We use machine intelligence to enable better investment decision-making for institutional investors.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are working on forecasting impact of corporate management decisions that we algorithmically extract from PRWires, NewsWires, InvestorWires or Regulatory Disclosures on eventual quality and value of cashflow for the corporate.

This is today done with very expensive human capital by the industry, limiting the focus of the industry to a very small fraction of companies globally that require capital. We will enable the industry to evaluate the risk-return profile associated with mid-caps and small-caps as effectively as they are able to do today for large-caps. We hope to decrease the cost of investing for the industry and the cost of capital for corporates.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Globally, but much more so in NY and London, a lot of C-Suite executives in our industry are starting to act on changing business models and workflows that have kind of remained the same for the last 20 years. They understand the role technology will play in the evolution of the in industry.

Lloyd Blankfein, CEO of Goldman Sachs, considers GS to be a technology company. Ray Dalio, founder of Bridgewater Associates (world's largest hedge fund), has invested heavily in creating Systematized Intelligence Labs to use analytics and artificial intelligence to automate investment decision making.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The industry is struggling with change and deeply set cultures. Incentive structures for most employees are aligned today to continue their work as usual with sadly more downside if they try to do something new. Most companies have created a "Digital" or "Innovation" department/lab, which is great for PR and board meetings, but the fact that these stay segregated from actual business lines, have no budget and no control for larger decision making, means nothing innovative actually happens at a scale that would matter to the company's future.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be working on inventing new mathematics for representing human decision-making paths that would be understandable and usable by machines. We are still at very early stages of the fourth industrial revolution, as some refer to it, and the mathematics that exists today can only effectively automate in 2 scenarios:

- Simple linear decision paths (inductive and deductive logic)
- Patterns that repeat themselves persistently and we have a lot of data for algorithms to learn from either supervised by human experts or unsupervised.

This however represents the very percentage of what our human brain can do.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Escape from Freedom by Eric Fromm.

What is your most useless talent?

I am good at pig Latin.

FOR

understanding the future impact of asset digitization and embracing the opportunity despite a solid traditional job



Roland Schwinn

Managing Director
Sygnum AG



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We offer our clients and partners an integrated solution to securely issue, store, trade and manage digital assets.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Building the AML/KYC framework for digital assets. It's important, because currently no AML/KYC regime exists for digital assets. This is one of the reasons why banks and other financial institutions are still reluctant to deal with digital assets.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The digitization of assets has started. In the "new world" people call it security tokens. In the "old world" it's being looked at as the tokenization of already traded assets (i.e. equity, debt, commodities, real estate etc.) The digitization of assets will change the way value is transferred today and is the next stage in the evolution of trading, clearing and settlement.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

One of the important elements in the world of digital assets is trusted storage and custody. As long as funds cannot be stored safely with trusted custodians, long term capital cannot be invested into digital assets. Another weak element in the value chain is the lack of banks offering banking services around digital assets. One of the reasons for that is the still missing AML/KYC framework.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Making more active use of my guitar and bass collection.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Deep Purple's *Highway Star* (on Live in Japan) and W.A. Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto in A* (KV622).

What is your most useless talent?

Roaming bookshops, buying tons of books and then not reading them.

FOR

returning to Singapore to bring the next generation consensus technology to the region



Edgar Seah

Head of Asia Pacific Region
Hedera Hashgraph



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I run Asia for the most exciting company in the distributed ledger technology space. We are building a public ledger for the mainstream, where multinational corporations and governments can launch applications.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The single most important thing I'm working on right now is recruiting large corporations in Asia to participate in governing the Hedera public ledger. In order to have a public ledger that corporations and governments can trust, you need proper governance, and this council we are putting together will be made up of 39 of the largest, most trusted corporations from around the world, representing a world-class governing body to guide the public ledger for the mainstream.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The growth of distributed ledger technology (DLT) within the financial services sector. DLT disrupts some of the established systems and opens up new opportunities such as tokenization (and democratization) of illiquid assets.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I see firms waste too much money on technology systems that don't deliver results. This usually stems from firms not prioritizing technology enough.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be spending my time exploring new technologies.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I follow any content by and about Naval Ravikant (@naval on Twitter).

What is your most useless talent?

I'm really good at Minesweeper.

FOR

supporting equity crowdfunding and
share trading in the blockchain
context



Mark Shmulevich

Co-Founder
Bloomio



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

At Bloomio, we connect start-ups and individual investors, helping the former to secure funding and the latter to easily tap into the VC industry.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Addressing start-up investment liquidity issues by implementing a secondary market platform where investors can trade start-up tokens representing a percentage of start-up equity.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Massive growth of corporate VC (150+ funds added annually over the last years, compared to 30-50 added per year before that). More well-established organizations are starting to or intensifying their start-up investment. It is a significant opportunity for all relevant stakeholders.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Awareness is the key challenge. At Bloomio, we have recently conducted a study which shows us that beginner investors' growing interest in start-ups still doesn't translate into corresponding actual investment increase. The main reason behind it is that this kind of investment still does not look accessible.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I do it, so there is no "if": artificial intelligence. It will radically transform the way we all live in the next 10-15 years.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Tribal Leadership by Dave Logan, Hallee Fischer-Wright and John King.

What is your most useless talent?

Overthink.

FOR

not giving in to groupthink and progressing her career in FinTech



Cynthia Siantar

Regional Strategy & Business
Development Director
Oriente



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

At Oriente, we provide real-time credit scoring, on demand lending and other tailored financial solutions to unlock economic potential of millions of underserved people in emerging markets.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Growing Oriente's Indonesia business and committing to provide affordable access to credit for millions of underbanked Indonesians.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Increasing awareness of the importance of financial literacy education in emerging markets. By educating the masses on how to manage their personal finances well, they will be able to make better long-term investment decisions, meet emergency financial needs or even kickstart their own businesses.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

While I am seeing some great examples of collaboration between financial institutions and FinTech start-ups, the majority of the incumbents are still resistant to change as they are simply not incentivized to do so.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Education Tech.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles by Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

I wouldn't say it's useless, but not particularly useful either. I play the Pipa, a traditional Chinese musical instrument.

FOR

stepping out of a large corporation to provide zero-interest instalment payments to consumers



Arvin Singh

Co-Founder and COO
hoolah



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We are working to build stronger relationships between merchants and customers by providing a zero-interest instalment payment solution.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Bringing new merchants on board with hoolah to allow them to benefit from greater conversion rates. As the ops lead, this means ongoing refinement of a process that begins with early merchant interactions and lasts through the merchant's future with hoolah.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

It looks like more mid-stage funding is taking place for Southeast Asian start-ups. I think this is important to drive more mid-stage companies and create an ongoing cycle of entrepreneurs in the ecosystem.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

There is a lot of noise in FinTech. I'm continuously contacted by companies pitching services that aren't relevant for my business and with messages that aren't tailored. It may be more of a business development practice that needs to change.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I'd be in the tech industry, looking to solve other pain points. I still think there's a lot of work to be done in the field of recruitment. One likely constant is that it would be a B2B business even if there were consumer-facing elements, similar to hoolah.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

<https://www.alexanderjarvis.com/> -- for saving me hours of running around.

What is your most useless talent?

Knowing far too much about the Toronto Raptors (basketball team).

FOR

really pushing forward digital
FinTech education



Laurence Smith

Global Head of Digital Transformation
SmartUp.io



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We help companies accelerate their digital transformation by making learning fun again and removing the fear around digital and change. We are transforming the entire financial services industry by being the Future Enabled Skills platform for all the financial services companies in Singapore. We help bankers and FinTech entrepreneurs re-invent themselves and be future ready.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Working with two different governments in Asia on national level initiatives to build the next generation of FinTech entrepreneurs and bank innovators! Especially being challenged to work on how you engage super busy banks in learning about FinTech, Bitcoin, Blockchain, AI, Big Data and Analytics...

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

That so many organizations are thinking deeply and experimenting around how they can innovate and solve real problems with blockchain.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The biggest challenge I hear about is helping the banks and bankers 'get digital' and understand the opportunities and threats of FinTech and non-traditional competitors and disruptive start-ups.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Driving innovation somewhere else that matters and that touches millions of people's lives!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Exponential Wisdom podcast by Peter Diamandis.

What is your most useless talent?

I can speak enough Korean to be amusing but not enough to be useful!

FOR

starting a utility token exchange
and focusing on institutional
level controls and governance



Benjamin Soh

Executive Director
Gibraltar Stock Exchange Group



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am developing the Group's growth strategy together with the Global Executive Committee and am in charge of executing it in newer markets, especially in Asia.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are working on delivering the Global Securities Protocol, which is an open technology solution that is initially targeted at transforming the global capital markets. It is important as we want to reduce friction and bring efficiencies to the traditional financial services industry, which will bring about greater inclusion and equality.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

I am excited about the recent trend of collaboration in the FinTech industry. I see more and more partnerships horizontally, and this is important as more synergies can be achieved and lead to greater pace of development.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think the larger financial institutions need to be more open to partnerships. The usual model of owning solely a product life cycle, from ideation of an innovative product, design, development, implementation marketing, enhancement etc takes too much time in today's fast-paced world, and may ultimately render such product outdated and miss the short window of opportunity. Hopefully, they can be open to partnerships and have a collaborative attitude just like the FinTech firms we see today.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Probably sports-related as that is what I love! It does have similarities to what I do with passion today (fast-paced, teamwork required... etc)

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie. Life is all about living with the people around us, no matter what business we are in.

What is your most useless talent?

I can catch food (peanuts etc) that is thrown into the air with my mouth all the time!

FOR

starting up a firm supporting
offline roadshows for tech firms
to attract funding



Omar Taheri

CEO

Spark Plus

Spark+

ROADSHOWS WITH A SPARK

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I roadshow listed companies to meet with investors in Asia. Essentially connecting cool ideas with investors.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The single most important thing would be to change the way corporate access is conducted. There are too many small- and mid-cap companies in the system that get missed as banks and brokers have no incentive to cover them. Our firm tries to bring the spotlight on such companies.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The regulatory change that is happening called MiFID2 is changing the transparency of the brokerage industry. The transparency on execution, research and corporate access is currently happening across Europe. Essentially, fund managers will need to pay for corporate access and won't be able to consume it for free. There are currently spill over effects into Asia as well due to some of the European banks and asset managers being in the region. I think this is important as you can now choose to pay for what you consume from your broker.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

I think the industry is struggling with the constant changes in regulation. For example, with MiFID2, it is currently mainly affecting Europe, but some asset managers and brokers are applying the same standards into their Asian operations. To have certain asset managers and brokers on different regulatory standards is creating struggles within their own organizations. For

example, an asset manager in Europe needs to take note of every meeting they take if it's organized by another broker and have a price to it. However, in Asia this is not the case unless the asset managers headquarters are in Europe. This is creating some struggles among big groups as they need to revamp their entire mode of operation.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I would be a poker player, I really enjoy the psychology behind the game. You still need to be able to calculate the probability of winning a hand, alongside being able to read a person. I do like understanding patterns and human behaviour, so I think it would be a very fitting career path for me.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My favourite book of all times is *Tools of Titans* by Tim Ferriss. This was a book I read that gave me courage to start my own business. It gave me a good understanding of how different high performers operate across different fields be it in entertainment, sports or business. There was one quote that stuck with me and got me hungry about being able to do anything. The quote was by Jamie Foxx (actor, musician, businessman): "What's on the other side of fear? Nothing."

The book is full of useful advice and encouragement of how top performers in their respective fields operate.

What is your most useless talent?

I have a killer serve in table tennis, all it has gotten me is some serious street cred at local table tennis halls.

FOR

working at one of Singapore's most promising FinTech start-ups



Henry Tang

Business Development Analyst
Funding Societies



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Funding Societies helps to connect small and medium-sized enterprises in Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia with retail and institutional lenders. We are a digital lending platform which aims to reduce the financing gap, and to realise financial inclusion for SMEs in Southeast Asia.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

We are penetrating the different industries from a FinTech angle and to fill in the financing gaps identified through unconventional means. We've already established collaborations with various strategic partners that have expertise in their respective fields, and also exploring innovative solutions to their current problems.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Increased awareness and adoption of alternative finance in this part of the world! While still far from the matured scene in US, UK and China, the alternative lending space here in Southeast Asia has demonstrated phenomenal growth in the recent years, led predominantly by increased activity here in Singapore.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Studies have revealed that SMEs are currently underserved by the banks, due to shorter operational or credit history, possible poor past financial standing etc. The lack of access to financing faced by SMEs is a very real issue that has yet to be addressed adequately. As information about alternative finance becomes increasingly available, there is still a large segment of the market that is unaware and yet to embrace the rise of alternative finance.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

If I was not in the finance industry, I would still be very much active in the technology and innovation space. There is really so much more that businesses can innovate and achieve with the use of technology, regardless of the industry.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Would certainly recommend the book *Radical Candour* by Kim Scott. It helps one to be a better manager and people person in the workplace.

"Be humble, helpful, offer guidance in person and immediately, praise in public, criticize in private, and don't personalize."

What is your most useless talent?

Not sure if this is a talent, but I could fold a shirt within 3 seconds!

FOR

focusing on financial inclusion in Africa through the use of blockchain and game theory



Karen Teoh

Chief Operation Officer
Kommerce



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Cat herding a new species of cat.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

The Kommerce fund raise and operationalization, concurrently.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Self-sovereign data rights. Technology, for once, can enhance governance and accountability from the ground up – instead of enabling misfeasance from inadequate governance.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Filtering out marginal cost saving technology from truly meaningful, fundamental technology that increases wealth and creates financial inclusion, while quantifying and hedging risk.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Headhunting, technology?

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Lawlessness and Economics by Avinash K Dixit.

What is your most useless talent?

I remember super market prices. And interest rates. And exchange rates. From many years ago.

FOR

developing a mobile-friendly
technical chart analysis software
for day traders



Philip Teo

Founder & CEO
Traderwave



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We developed the next generation trading workflow solutions for global traders.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Collaborating and integrating with complementary partners and tools to add value to our customers.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The opening up of the ecosystem to focus on more collaboration and integration.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Legacy technologies and a very siloed way of thinking towards creating value for customers.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I will be focusing on financial literacy education, that's another area that is very close to my heart.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

My Life and Work – an autobiography by Henry Ford. The book shares the thoughts and actions of Henry Ford on how businesses should be run as a form of service and not purely from the angle of profit maximisation.

What is your most useless talent?

Making sarcastic jokes.

FOR

his contributions to the InsurTech +
blockchain ecosystem based on his
long corporate career



Steve Tunstall

CEO
Inzsure



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

End to end insurance for SMEs in Singapore and Malaysia.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Launching in Singapore and Malaysia. The platform is complete, we are approved to enter the MAS sandbox in Singapore with our application in with BNM in Malaysia too. We just need to get going!

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Being more focused on the customer. The commercial insurance sector can do a lot more to be transparent and genuinely educate customers on balance sheet protection opportunities, not just hard sell.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

There is a lot of talk about change – but not much delivery. Inzsure is all about changing that.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I'm not involved in the finance industry. I'm focused on customer protections and risk management. Getting good advice around insurances choices – and getting claims paid – is a critical part of that.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Antifragile by Nassim Taleb. I'm trying to read it for about the fifth time – I find it heavy going. I learn something new each time, the challenge is practical application.

What is your most useless talent?

An over-developed talent for trying to find greener grass. I'm the world's oldest millennial. After seven career changes and fifteen different jobs, I finally found my passion.

FOR
pushing for the next level of
governance in the digital asset
investment industry



Zing Yang

Director, Board of Directors
Litecoin Foundation



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I am working towards helping to create a tokenized world where value can flow freely. This comes in the form of payments using cryptocurrencies, as well as unlocking the value of illiquid assets through tokenization and exchange.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Democratizing access to financial services by giving people access to consumption and choice and creating frictionless global exchange. I am advocating payments using Litecoin, while also helping VNX with building an ecosystem and marketplace for tokenized venture capital assets.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Asset tokenization. Tokenization is a method that converts rights to an asset into a digital token. I see this as a natural progression of investable funds. It allows for fractional ownership of asset, inclusivity and access for the masses, higher liquidity, price transparency, decreasing intermediaries, mobility and transferability.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Transformation of people and legacy systems. Classic case of David (FinTech start-ups) vs. Goliath (big banks). The rivalry is intensifying and people need to be reskilled to take digital transformation seriously.

The development of a FinTech DNA remains a sensitive topic for big financial corporations. Innovation is much easier to implement in a modern IT environment yet much of traditional banking infrastructure is clunky and IT integration is patchy and time-consuming. Banks are also under extreme pressure to pass on profits to customers, stemming from a growingly savvy customer base educated in its financial rights by easier access to online news and financial advice. The war for talent is also real. Change is hard for most people and our brains do not cope well with uncertainty. To achieve a breakthrough, mindsets, habits, skills and incentive structures need to be closely reviewed.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Doing research into positive psychology and how we can live purposeful, healthy and happy lives.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

I keep a gratitude journal (I recommend the Panda Planner) where on a daily basis I reflect and write about the following things: 3 things I'm grateful for, 3 things I'm excited about, Affirmation, Today's Priorities and Schedule (I strongly believe what is important needs to be scheduled) and 3 wins for the day and 3 areas I'll work on improving and how.

What is your most useless talent?

That's a trick question – if it's a talent, it's not useless. But okay, laughing contagiously. :)

FOR

working on building an insurance infrastructure for digital assets



Val Yap

CEO & Founder

PAL Network, PolicyPal Singapore



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

As the captain of a growing, fast-paced FinTech startup, the day-to-day hustle requires me to wear different hats. Every decision made is integral to shape the company – from recruiting exceptional talents to spearheading strategic opportunities. I believe it is important to develop a foresight of the company's roadmap and have practical, achievable priorities to maximize the results.

Product positioning and investor/client relations management are just some of the few responsibilities I manage on a daily basis. I also allocate sufficient time to whiteboard sketches and brainstorm sessions with my teams to develop new features suitable for integration with the PAL Network protocol.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

I am conscientiously working on creating an inclusive workplace environment for my PAL Network hires. Many start-ups face the problem of overlooking details like team-building efforts. At PAL Network, I make sure to provide considerable attention to my hires, from 1-to-1 feedback sessions to informal bonding sessions.

I strongly believe that early-stage start-up CEOs should be extremely involved not just in the recruiting process of new hires but also in the integration into their specific teams and roles.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The evolution of the insurance sector. Digital disruptions in the traditional financial services sector create an opportunity for InsurTech companies and insurers to revamp their business models. There's a pressing need to integrate transformative technologies into the existing operations. If not, businesses will stagnate and potentially lose market share to other innovators.

More insurers are working with us to use blockchain technology to automate policy inception. Business logic is built into the smart contracts which allow the policies to be inceptioned in minutes. This helps to lower the onboarding costs and accelerate the underwriting process, hence minimising the consumer drop-out rate.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

The finance industry needs to cultivate a high stamina to keep up with the development of technologies such as blockchain to innovate product lifecycles. Much of the industry is still using cumbersome and expensive operating models, and it is often a long process to integrate innovation with their existing systems.

With PAL Network, we build a dual-layered protocol for financial assets, with the vision of building an ecosystem where individuals and partners can design and customise new financial products.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

I enjoy a good challenge and am constantly pushing my limits, so I would see myself being in the tech industry. I was hooked into tech since young, and I learnt how tech can create amazing solutions to improve lives. Or I would be an artist driving new initiatives on new ideas.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

The Hard Thing About Hard Things by Ben Horowitz. It was given to me by another founder friend whom I respect a lot. This book taught me about resilience during tough times, and the importance of grit.

What is your most useless talent?

I think I am pretty good at craftsmanship of handmade jewellery and acrylic painting. Unfortunately, you can get them off the shelves at affordable prices now. Today, I apply my creativity to solve the challenges in building the business.

FOR

being granted the first CMS license for dealing in securities as a FinTech firm in Singapore



Lawrence Yong

CEO
MoolahSense

MoolahSense

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

We transform business lending to realise dreams and reward decisions.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Connecting the dots on creditworthiness. It is important so that more deserving businesses get adequately financed to grow.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Application of blockchain and data analytics. These will lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness, and lower the barriers and cost of business lending.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

SME loans as an asset class is still nascent and hence have not yet garnered wide adoption amongst investors.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Haven't given it much thought, but surely, I will most likely be involved in something futuristic.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles by Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

Every talent is precious!

FOR

working on the resolution of business challenges in the trade finance space through blockchain technology



Yvonne Zhang

CEO & Founder
Aquifer Institute



AQUIFER

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Reduce senseless debt, breathing new life into trade finance.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Making smart contracts legal in Singapore, this is the only way that transfer of value and sharing of risk in a decentralized ecosystem can be sustainable in the real world.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Open collaboration across borders of corporate entities and jurisdictions to deliver production ready solutions ASAP. This is a welcome change from the 'all hype, no follow through' habit of throwing money at POCs without the necessary sharing of learnings (positive and negative). We need real progress if we want to create real impact.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Data localization; waiting for essential regulatory policies (such as the Payments Act, VACC, RMO reform in Singapore, PSD2 in Europe) to properly rollout as supporting infrastructure for enterprise implementation of innovation.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Teaching at universities on sustainability, technology development and welfare economics.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Principles by Ray Dalio.

What is your most useless talent?

Archery.

FOR

launching one of the very first liquid digital asset trading fund in Singapore



Zhuang Sheng Quan

Co-Founder
Kryptos Associates

KRYPTOS ASSOCIATES

How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

I run a crypto-focused hedge fund involved in both algorithmic trading and seed stage investing.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Scaling up the first crypto hedge fund in Singapore. We aim to invest in viable blockchain companies to help build up the ecosystem.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

The growth of decentralized organizations and solutions. It will give birth to a whole new industry that requires and benefits from decentralization.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Regulations, mainly because this is a new industry. However, I expect regulations to be established and mature in the next few years.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Another technology startup.

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Zero to One by Peter Thiel.

What is your most useless talent?

Ability to sleep for almost an entire day.



OTHERS

FOR

making the Singapore FinTech Association prominent in the world through MOUs



Chia Hock Lai

President

Singapore FinTech Association (SFA)



How would you explain what you are currently doing to a person who doesn't know anything about it?

Promoting and developing Singapore as a leading FinTech hub and financial blockchain centre.

What is the most important thing you are working on right now? How are you making it happen?

Building a strong brand of SFA especially overseas so that Singapore can attract more FinTechs and incumbents to set up base in Singapore and create more local jobs and opportunities.

What is one trend in the industry that you are most excited about? Why?

Tokenization of securities coupled with stablecoin. Blockchain is ideal for capital markets use cases and tokenization of securities could be a multi-trillion industry, bringing tremendous opportunities, efficiencies and jobs to Singapore. As an established international financial centre and a leading FinTech hub, it is logical for Singapore to become the next financial blockchain centre.

What do you think the industry is struggling with? Why?

Tech talents! As the ecosystem continues to grow with more FinTechs and many incumbents started their digital transformation, the demand for talents is higher than ever.

If you were not involved in the finance industry, what would you be doing right now?

Building lots of prototypes because I am a social coder and I like to tinker with new things and new technologies!

Recommend one thing (a book, a blog, a video, anything) that has a major influence on you.

Barking Up the Wrong Tree by Eric Barket. I can relate to many of the examples quoted in the book.

What is your most useless talent?

I can draw pretty well but not a talent I can monetize for the time being, lol.

About Lightbulb Capital

Singapore based Lightbulb Capital was founded in 2014 in Hong Kong to help realize the potential of innovation and novel technologies to transform financial services. The company is a corporate finance boutique with focus on FinTech and blockchain. The firm helps clients with early-stage fund raising including selective seed investment. The two principals use their combined experience of over 50 years in investment banking, technology and entrepreneurship to help founders successfully launch their ventures through genuine partnership and engagement. They leverage a global network of financial institutions, investors and growth companies to find capital, business partners and customers for clients.

Lightbulb Capital Digital Pte. Ltd. is a Sponsor Firm on the Gibraltar Blockchain Exchange (GBX).

The Innovation Education arm offers executive training focused on the critical areas of innovation culture, creativity and design thinking as well as FinTech and blockchain to help all stakeholders in multinational companies understand the impact of technology on their own businesses and to embrace change. These consist of highly recommended programmes, individually tailored and delivered at the clients' premises, in partnership with leading universities or through webinars or online learning modules that can scale globally.



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