

LEADERS 领导者

“I don’t look to jump over 7-foot bars: I look around for 1-foot bars that I can step over.”
— Warren Buffett



On the Cover

Entering a new year generally comes with a fresh sense of optimism and hope for bigger and better things. This issue, we met with several leaders who have clear visions for their future and who have managed to implement significant change and achieve positive results despite the difficulties in the global economy.

As Founder and Chairman of Kingdom Holding Company, HRH Prince Alwaleed bin Talal is very vocal about the need for change in the Middle East. He urges Arab countries to “start adopting at least some

of what the people want”. Of the East/West divide, he states, “We have to do our best to make sure the gap is bridged among those communities” and points out the steps being taken to “educate people in our region about the American system and its way of life,” something his foundation plays a huge role in accomplishing.

Kevin Ryan, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Gilt Groupe, has taken advantage of the many changes in the retail sector to create one of the most successful online businesses in the market today. In achieving growth in this business climate, he notes that while you need a vision that works, “you have to keep your mind open and realize the company has created something that allows you to go in another direction that you didn’t think of”.

Olivia Lum is no stranger to change. Growing up in a hut with no proper sanitation and no running water, she became acutely aware of the value of water at a very young age. This led her to create Hyflux Ltd., one of the world’s leading fully integrated water solutions companies. The goal of the company, Lum says, is to provide, “reliable, long-term solutions to the challenges of water scarcity and water pollution...” and while she is well aware of the magnitude of change that must take place to succeed, she notes that, “It is defeatist to say that something cannot be done when you have not even tried.” It is not surprising that she has recently received the 2011 Ernst & Young World Entrepreneur of the Year award.

The RLJ Companies’ Founder and Chairman Robert Johnson is also heavily focused on the importance of change, in particular for African-Americans, whom he notes are at a significant disadvantage today, regardless of the strides that have been made over the years. As a result, he is determined to empower “African-Americans who have the capability to create value and wealth...” and says this can happen by increasing “access to education but also access to capital”. His creation of the RLJ Rule is a crucial step towards bringing about much-needed structural advances.

As Mayor of Bucharest, The Honorable Sorin Mircea Oprescu has demonstrated a unique vision for making “quality of life a priority for Bucharest and its residents”. His goal for the city is to encourage future investments by drastically reducing “excessive bureaucracy” as well as making the city worthy of the title ‘Little Paris’ once again. He is confident that with the changes he intends to implement, there will be more reasons for residents “to be proud of their city”.

In exclusive interviews that follow, Alwaleed (page 10), Ryan (page 21), Lum (page 18), Johnson (page 14), and Oprescu (page 121), clockwise from top left, provide us with much confidence that things will move in the right direction and that the new year will indeed prove to be a promising and positive one. ●

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