STIMY Ep 46: Azran Osman-Rani (Research Notes)

1	971: CHILDHOOD
Dad: Economics Professor, Uni Kebangsaan Malaysia - Grandpa: War hero - LEFTENAN hassan Tassin - Grandma: Ethnic Chinese, adopted by Malay family Mum, Dr Safiah Osman: Education Professor, Universiti Malaya - Grandpa: Indian-Ceylonese-Muslim - Grandma: Bugis descent **Has Chinese, Indian & Indonesian blood	 Born in 1971, General Hospital - then Kampung Pandan, Bangsar Telai & TTDI up till Form 5 BUT you also lived overseas In Manila, when your dad did his PhD [age 1-2] In NYC, when your <i>mum</i> did her PhD [age 9-10] Often attributed the roots of your success to your upbringing. Your parents are 2 former university professors - Love of books Cultivating an environment where you were encouraged to speak up & speak out even at the age of 4 to professors & academics! Showed your paintings to all of your parents' friends Unorthodox interest, unorthodox upbringing - only natural that you were drawn to the American philosophy of a broad liberal arts education? Rather than study pure engineering
Outliers book by Malcolm Gladwell, 10,000 hours	
Stanford has skiing on Saturday, back drive 3 hours to surf at Half Moon Bay = perfect temperate climate, Mediterranean	- Terrified of snow.

1990- 1995: Stanford University

- -
- 1990 1994: B Sc, Electrical Engineering 1994-1995: MSc, Management Science & Engineering -

	 Before the era of Yahoo/Google, the dot com/e-commerce boom; only big name was HP: What was Stanford like back in the early 1990s? Degree was electrical engineering but barely did any: took psychology, ballroom dancing, sailing, civilisation classes
Encouraged to work on final project across multi-disciplines	 Encouraged: independent thinking, question accepted notion, value public discourse

	 Final year project: Build an elevator sst using water Worked with mechanical & aeronautical engineer & learn to work w/ other disciplines
FRISBEE	 Back in Malaysia, you used to play competitive field hockey. How did you go from that, to discovering & participating in ultimate frisbee? In Stanford, they said girls play field hockey, men play ice hockey
	 1993/4 (final year of uni): Your ultimate frisbee team finished regular season as No. 1 ranked team in the States - with a <i>perfect undefeated record</i> [no other team had done it before] Went to National Championship tournament in Louisiana - top 12 teams: won all pool games & semi finals IMMENSE PRESSURE: Lost game 20-17 Couldn't channel that stress & pressure
	- Stayed for a masters
He's one of the guys who never had a plan / dream of I want to do something & that became life philosophy - think it's dangerous to have long-term dreams as you might get tunnel vision	 You knew you didn't want to be an electrical engineer. So how did consulting end up on your radar? University seniors told you you won't be stuck doing the same thing, but diff projects in diff industries Younger sis: Research analyst Bro: Petronas exe in Uzbekistan US was just coming out of recession. Southeast Asia was booming - 11 rejections! How did you end up in SG?

Aug 1995 - Feb 2000: Associate, Booz Allen Hamilton

Joined Booz in Singapore	 Thailand: Worked for largest bank in credit risk management Help them decide which loan to keep alive and what to cut and let clients die You had to learn everything on the go That was the most defining moment in my career, just the speed of learning
1996 Disaster	 1996 presentation to senior management of Indonesian client that was a disaster! Can you share? = it went SO BAD, was told if you didn't address shortcomings, career is OVER Your career would be OVER. What did you do to address it?
	1997/8 ASEAN Finance Crisis (2-3 years into career)

 Previously doing engineering & operations work eg advise oil & gas companies Nature of your work must've changed? Had to pivot & learn all about finance at a time when the Internet wasn't really a thing yet! Now had to advise banks remains stable & liquid as all other work had dried up - get corporate finance & risk management textbooks & read, ca folks on the phone = BIG THING to commit and say I'll learn; didn't really have internet with Coursera = reinvent yourself professionally 	
--	--

March 2000 - Jan 2003: Associate Partner, McKinsey

Asia Pacific Corporate Finance & Strategy Practice

2001: Korea

Wife: Former broadcast journalist & political researcher

- Then the 1st dotcom boom happened, things were very bad in Asia. how did you end up moving you & your family, including your then 3-year-old eldest son!) to Korea?
- Very hard to be accepted by a homogenous culture that isn't very open, especially to non-whites.
 - But you managed to win their trust! HOW?
- You loved Korea so much (M&A scene), you wanted to ask your partner for a permanent transfer. So... how did you end up back in KL?
 - Phone call from McKinsey in SG: Need Azran for Malaysia

Feb 2002 - March 2003: Senior VP & Head, Business Transformation: Bursa Malaysia

Oversight of the corporate and organizational restructuring of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange (KLSE) to demutualise into a for-profit corporation and preparation for public listing as Bursa Malaysia Berhad

BURSA: Turn Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange into a public listed entity	 You had a close relationship with Mohammed Azlan Hashim, Bursa's former executive chairman How did he convince you to take a 50% pay cut & join Bursa as the Senior VP & Head of Business Transformation?
	 Any highlights from that time?
	 Not long after Mohammed Azlan Hashim left Bursa, you left too to join Astro! How did that happen? Phone call from investment banker (client is Astro): Astro wants to go from being a Malaysian to international company - do you want to help expand with capital raise? Spend a couple billion.

March 2004 - June 2007: Senior Director, BD, Astro All Asia Networks

- Evaluated all major growth initiatives & built a portfolio of 12 InT media, entertainment & tech businesses in Indonesia, India, China, SG & HK from business plan to fully-operational businesses
- Oversight responsibility for government and PR, secure licenses & regulatory approvals & license admin & compliance

	 To set the context: you <i>didn't</i> know anything about the technology, media & entertainment world.
 Indonesia in 10 months: Hired 450 people Start 5 Indonesian cable channels Launch a national sales & distribution network Built a broadcast center 	 Phenomenal work in Indonesia after only 10 months! But you had to wind down the business & retrench the 450 staff you hired. One of the big failures you often attribute to. What happened? Legal battle over licensing & shareholding issues between Astro & Lippo What could've been done differently?

July 2007 - Jan 2015: CEO, AirAsia X Berhad

- World's pioneer low-cost long-haul airline

Growth: From business plan start-up to IPO (5238:KL, AAX:MK) in 6 years, the first and only public-listed long-haul LCC airline. From zero to US\$1 billion in annual revenue.

Operational Efficiency: World's lowest unit cost airline with industry-leading technical reliability and on-time performance.

Innovation: We pioneered Assigned seating, LCC flatbed seats (Winner of Best LCC Premium Class by Skytrax in 2013 and 2014), Fly-thru connecting transfers, Quiet Zone, Empty Seat Options, among other industry-leading innovations.

 July 2007 (age 36): Appointed CEO of AirAsia X Nov 2007: Launched AirAsia X's 	 2007, Age 36: How did you end up as the CEO of a new airline? Phone call from Tony Fernandes
 1st inaugural flight to Gold Coast, Australia Led start-up team that developed business plan, raised capital, secured relevant licenses & approvals, acquired aircraft 	 With AirAsia X, you didn't want to build a new airline, but a new AIRLINE MODEL that people around you said couldn't be done = WHY did no one believe the LONG-HAUL LOW COST AIRLINE MODEL would work? Laker Airways went bankrupt in 1982, Oasis Hong Kong AIRLINES IN 2008 (collapsed, owing £270m to banks & other
 Context: No one believed Going against BIG GLOBAL GIANTS from day 1: Qantas, British Airways, American Airlines Had to lease the Airasia brand 	 Southwest, Easyjet: We don't do this, we use small planes to fly short distances = this business model doesn't work Core Airasia Board didn't want to have anything to do with it Had to lease the Airasia brand, operate as standalone airline, no parental guarantees = put together a detailed business plan, raised capital from InT, acquired 1st plane
 Long haul airlines (Cathay) have big whitebody jets: 	 Main challenge: You must've spotted a market gap. What could you do, that your competitors weren't doing, to make this long-haul low cost model work?

 average plane utilisation is 12 hours - i.e. 50% of time, planes are in the air & land = solution: highest utilisation of planes + more seats every plane = your unit cost is halved (½) ** Flight distance/unit cost: The longer you go, no longer a cost advantage. As you go long haul, you don't have cost advantage (the way short haul has) Prob with that: Based on same assumptions of how you use the plane = big BREAKTHROUGH INSIGHT Ans: Serve a very distinct customer segment who are more price sensitive Other airlines served premium (fine China). TIME CONVENIENCE overrules cost Plane has idle time of 12 hours 	 How did you create such a massive unit cost difference? Agile aircraft rotation & scheduling planes to max use (16-17 hours more a day; 30% more use) 30% more seats, even when priced at 50% less 1, 2, 3, 4 plan: Size, Affordable, Reliable, Convenient We need to be big: \$1 billion company If we're small: not enough planes or destinations = size goal Must have unit cost of US\$0.02/seat/km = lowest in the world RyanAir is \$0.05, AirAsia is \$0.04 3 out of 4 hours, plane must be in the air 4 out of 5 seats must be filled with happy people Nov 2007 Observations: On the 1st flight: 50% were Australians from Gold Coast going to KL, but 80% didn't end in KL (came with surf boards, waited for the next transit to Phuket etc.) EVERY AIRLINE DIDN'T WANT TO PROVIDE CONNECTING FLIGHT:
 2008 Financial Crisis All banks who committed to aircraft financing pulled out [Lehman totters, Merill seeks buyer, AIG hunts for cash] Oil price went crazy: Was in range of \$50-75 which is what our business was based on BUT in 1st 6 months of 2008, suddenly oil x2 to \$147/barrel Oil is 50% of airline cost = no plan could've anticipated this shock + all banks advised airlines to hedge their fuel to mitigate risk of oil volatility = that's what made airlines dip, including us Dec 2008: Oil price collapsed 	 All banks who committed to aircraft financing pulled out [Lehman totters, Merill seeks buyer, AIG hunts for cash] Same year, oil price went crazy: BUT in 1st 6 months of 2008, oil went from \$50-75> \$147/barrel Oil is 50% of airline cost = no plan could've anticipated this shock Agreed to hedge your fuel to mitigate risk of oil price volatility **For an entire year, AirAsia X worked with only 1 plane: to survive, you must grow Now everyone CAN'T fly Secured a meeting in London with a European export credit agency, a last resort to secure financing for the company. If you didn't succeed, GAME OVER. Flew to London with Tan Sri Tony Fernandes & Datuk Kamarudin Meranun Gave "Pitch of a lifetime" - "if they didn't buy it, we

to \$32/barrel [our price was locked at \$100/barrel] ⇒ result: 50 airlines went bankrupt in 2018	 were screwed. Game over." = MIRACULOUSLY SUCCEEDED Approval came 6 weeks later Dec 2008: 50 airlines went bankrupt SUDDEN oil price dip: \$32/barrel [but our price was locked at \$100/barrel] How did you avoid bankruptcy? Narrow escape The bank that was counterparty to our contract went bankrupt first.
1st marathon - 12 Oct 2008: Borneo Marathon race	 12 Oct 2008: Inaugural Borneo Marathon race - very 1st long-distance race [2019] Set target of running under 4 hours: BOMBED by finishing at 4 hours 18 minutes = clearly disappointing During the race, I kept resetting my targets (legs completely cramped, body exhausted). At the race, lots of could've/should've/would've
Issue 2: Natural disasters every year: - 2010: Iceland volcano erupt - closed entire European airspace for 1 week - 1000s of passengers	 Every year after that, it's one shock after the other. What's the tipping point - decide when to pull out of the market? (E.g. Christchurch in 2012)
stranded in London, KL - 2011: Japan earthquake, tsunami & nuclear tragedy - 2012: Christchurch - AirAsia just started	 LEARNED TO BE FLEXIBLE & NIMBLE; you often say you don't have a long-term plan as it might give you tunnel vision.
flights, then Christchurch had 2 earthquakes & it was so tough, <u>had to pull</u> <u>out of that market</u>	 1. Ensure information flows UP very quickly. BUT team had scaled to 2500 people strong, and people worked in silos! Cabin crew members didn't know the engineering team etc. Initial: Know everyone, but scaled to 2500 team members, open door policy isn't enough Steps:
2014 - 3 black swan events [so rare, but massive impact] 1. March: MH 317 plane missing 2. July: MH 17 shot down	 Monthly dialogue & people are encouraged to speak Accepting multi currencies on flights
 3. Dec: QZ01 fatal crash Brutal plunge of demand from China & Australia - massive impact on entire industry Demand from China & Australia (2 core markets) plunged by over 30% 	 2. Don't wait for customers to make decisions, go in their face & TELL them to fly to places they hadn't dreamt possible before - HOW do you keep introducing new stuff? Not about providing cheap seats SO: Observe how customers react to product People thought crazy; the 1st to offer world's flat beds
Issue 3: Restrictive Policies & Regulations (to limit competition with national airlines) - deal with this every year	 3. Restrictive policies & regulations, to limit competition with national airlines
What were some of your biggest mistakes?	 4. In-flight entertainment (every seat - latest digital touch screen & instant messaging)

	 NOT popular buying movies; even when offered for free, less than 30% were watching (most wants to sleep & Hollywood charges exorbitant fee for per screen/seat/flight) \$15 million write-off = simple Samsung galaxy units BUT saved on fuel price ** 5. Had to close Abu Dhabi route 3 months after launching - main lesson learned? Long-haul: have a reasonable market size [be big fish in smaller pond] Pulled out of London & Paris
 2013/14 Skytrax World's Best Low-Cost Airline Business Class flatbed seats Quiet Zone Fly-Thru connections Seat assignments & upgrade options In-flight entertainment services People won't pay \$10 for content = scrapped a \$12 million write-off But after removing, realised planes are 2 tonnes lighter, fuel price saved! 	 Developed business model that broke airline conventions Competitors were eyeing you, easy to replicate your successes. How did you stay ahead of the pack? Your features copied by competitors, who looked at: flight schedule seat map for more seats meal/entertainment not provided as part of bundle & Singapore Airlines thought you'd fail - launched replicate & hired your Commercial Director! Breakthrough product features Flat bed business class seats Pay a \$20 fee to have a "chance" to get a row of empty seats *AirAsia X evolved into a hub carrier
	 Within 6 years from AirAsia X's launch, went from: 1 rented airplane → 26 Over 2500 team members 1st low-cost long-haul airline to be publicly listed in 2013 IPO that had a \$1 billion valuation - JUNE 2013
iFlix	 How iFlix came to you: = Monday morning breakfast at a Starbucks in Midvalley with Mark Britt (Group CEO, who'd built Internet TV platform in Australia) Followed by meeting with Patrick Grove in his office that afternoon Was there a particular moment where something clicked and you knew you wanted to give this a shot? Why excited about iFlix? [idea of TV channels is obsolete] 17-year-old son remembers watching TV on TV channel 8 year kid watches same thing on iPad (on demand)

	Why excited about emerging markets?	
	 Focus: Provide localised content 	
April 2015 - April 2019: iflix - 2015 - 2017: CEO - May 2017 - 2019: Investor & Advisor		
Investors said: No chance against Netflix MGM - Multi-year content licensing partnership: provide premium in-demand TV & film content 2015 - *Had launched in Malaysia & Thailand - Would enter: Thailand, Indonesia	 See a trend: Like to start at companies where from D1, go against big global giants! Who was iflix going to be for customers? What was the value prop of iflix? Didn't have size, scale or resources - must think creatively When you started in 2015, you had a few people, laptops, NO PRODUCT - what was the plan? 115 investors rejected you Aug 2015 MGM investment (Chairman & CEO, Gary Barber, joined iflix's advisory board) + Indonesia's SCM in 2016 - how did that happen? Every round, had to raise USD 100 million 	
Competitor: Astro, Disney, Fox - Lots of dominant paid-TV competitors, big existing customer base, lots of cash - 2016: Netflix & Amazon Prime Video entered SEA market - Malaysia: Astro's On The Go, Telekom's HyppTV; - SG's Hooq for India, Thai & Philippines - Viu: In SG - HBO Go: HK & Philippines And PIRACY -	 When going against giants, the only thing you have is SPEED & PIVOT Having secured investment, what were your immediate priorities? 2016: Netflix & Amazon Prime Video just entered Southeast Asian market In Msia itself, there's Astro's On The Go & Telekom's HyppTV And PIRACY LOCAL CONTENT: Intention from Day 1: Spend 50% of content budget on original productions, like Netflix? July 2017: ol! Jaga Mulut - iflix's 1st Malaysian OG series Content = for stickiness & loyalty 	
 TV subscription taking off in US; Most companies gave 30-day free trial: then convert to paid subscribers Hypothesis: Preferred payment channel Most SEA countries use Cash-on Delivery (most don't 	 Dec 2015: Barely 6 months after launch, got 1 million subscribers 2 months later, got 1.5 mil Early challenge: Get users to pay After a few months of launch: Had people using, but hardly anyone wants an iflix subscription People continuously get free trials Hypothesis: Preferred payment channel 	

 have e-wallets/credit card) - so experimented with COD to collect payments from trial users: On 28th & 29th of 30-day trial, offer users option to pay SGD 3 subscription fee by cash - send a motorcyclist to house to collect cash = assess if new payment option has impact NO, people don't want to pay Payment channel NOT the issue Usage is not validation: People might use/enjoy, but validation is only when they're willing to pay for it 	 How did you test? ** Not a retail product; but a B2B2C model - how did this model come about? Integration with Telcos (Telekom Malaysia & Digi): Most iflix deals with Telcos (who package iflix w/ subscriptions) & not public
Rapid expansion	 RAPID EXPANSION was a priority - why? Scaled from small team in Malaysia, to team of 700 across 30 countries in Asia, Middle East & Africa in less than 3 years Want to expand to Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand
	 Unique iflix features: Tech focus: How to make long-form content stream/buffer at sub -1 speed Let you download & watch offline on MRT Parental controls 16k hours of content = 50% Hollywood; 50% regional/local, with local subtitles , 30 exclusive titles & dedicated kids section No advertisement All for price of 1 pirated DVD Radically reduced cost: only hardware we have is laptop; software engineer writes code; don't need set up boxes Bundled with telco data & cached on telco networks 1-year iflix/TM bundle
June 2017 - Now: Chairman & Investor, MoneyMatch - Met founders when they 1st had idea; mentored them via WatchTower & Friends for 2 years - saw how business model evolved	
2015 [had thought health prob was prevalent]	 2015: How Naluri Idea started Visited former Stanford mates in SF, who worked at Omada Health (valued \$600 million in 2019) = online coaching progs to help everyday Americans prevent chronic health issues (e.g.

	 diabetes) using <u>behavioural science</u>. user design <u>& human interaction</u> Saw people get addicted to <i>TV entertainment</i> What did you do to see if a similar Omada Health model could be built in Malaysia? Research: Prob is in <u>behaviour</u> - 75% people don't follow doctor advice to change diet/lifestyle when learning he's diabetic It took you 2 years from take SF visit to start Naluri - what pushed you?
May 2017 now	: CEO & Co-Founder, Naluri Hidup
= Digital Health tech company - use beha - Behavioural coaching & psychologi	viour science, data science, and digital design. cal support for those at risk of chronic conditions e.g. heart disease, = make better health more accessible to all
 Azran has obesity, hypertension & high-cholesterol genes Prob: Not everyone has access/resources to care needed to change lives for better - wait months for specialist 2 co-founders: Dr Jeremy Ting: Healthcare & tech specialist Dr Hariyati Shahrima Abdul Majid - Biggest Loser Asia fame 	 You've gone all in with Naluri! Betting your kids' education, life savings, EPF, ASB - why?! More activity (than outcome/results) oriented = quantifiable, clinically outcome
	 Health has always been siloed, you wanted to take it down: dieticians to cardiologists & financial planners. BUT learning from iFlix, also want it to be incredibly localised.
	 Features: Personal professional health coach - checks regularly online Structure programs: personalifed to emotional, mental & physical needs *Team of qualified psychologists: Trained to handle pressures of chronic diseases & lifestyle changes Food + thought journal
	 Naluri runs an incredible interdisciplinary platform, but for some might feel it's a lot. A jack of all trades. Which can feel overwhelming - is this a concern? SJMC known for 2 things
 *Localisation matters most Mamak v kale/quinoa Make deals with other regional health service providers = use B2B2C model to launch Naluri PACKAGING is crucial 	 **Uphill battle: digital therapeutics is new in Malaysia - sounds like market isn't ready, must educate them - how do you do it? E.g. retirement planning to Malaysians: spend now, think later
- BAD when bundling w/ digital insurance;	Customer segments: - B2B2C: you've always done it, how do you deal with the long tail? - Naluri app launched on AppStore/Google Play in
 By 2020: Has 13k users across Malaysia, SG & Indonesia 	 Natur application of Appstore/Google Play in April 2018: went live officially less than 1 year, but has list of corporate clients Worked with: Celcom Corporate employers: Petronas, Pfizer,

	AHA Insurance - Insurance companies - Pharmaceutical companies - Hospitals - = there's breadth in diff revenue models to pursue
	 60 employees; most people in 20 years old - the only way to energise my staff: sit with them, try to intersection of 3 things: What you're good at (skills you bring to table) What you're passionate about What big problem do you care about in this world: what you read & talk about
May 2018 (age 47): Car accident while cycling - routine trip home = major injuries, hospitalised for 1 week	Felt fear, depression, anxiety + how to provide for family + new company
 D7: Took 1st steps (thou legs were fractured) - but the small wins gave momentum D33: Start on treadmills, increase time D47: Run on treadmill Less than 6 months after the accident → 2018 Ironman 70.3 World Championships 	 May 2018 car accident had a huge impact - how'd it change you? Discovered a powerful purpose: Can't change circumstances, but in full control of <i>how I respond to them</i> A BROKEN CRAYON: Documentary that documented your recovery - premiered on iflixFREE & iflixVIP on 11 April 2019 What kids learn: Life isn't about avoiding risk, you WILL get hit by roadblocks, but about getting back up
 Don't use outcome goals, but BEHAVIOUR goals Do action goals (not AVOID goals, e.g. avoid eating this) 	
- 2019: 90 investors said no	
 COVID hit, just as final papers were to be signed in early 2020 	 2020: COVID When you began in 2017, you gave yourself a 5 years self-imposed deadline to make Naluri work Why?
	 Wily? Before well-funded Silicon Valley startups expand Go deeper in Indon & SG; start in Philippines & Thai How has that changed with COVID? Global Market Insights: Market valuation for digital health estimated to rise to over \$639.4 billion by 2026 Indonesia: High smartphone penetration & mobile data access
	 FUNDING: 2019: 90 investors said no, but By July 2019: Raised \$1.5 million April 2020: Raised \$1.1 million in pre-series A = gives you 12-15 months runway
	 Duopharma Biotech Bhd (Malaysia) RHL Ventures (KL) M Venture Partners (SG) Just closed another fundraising round - how has your

	experience been? - Before & during pandemic Been getting clients! - Aug 2020: Malaysia Aviation Group - partnership to provide psychological health support - Nov 2020: Airasia health
Dec 2020 - Now: Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, National University of Malaysia	
Content Creator	 YouTube: why create YouTube videos? Lets keep things positively personal 30 days and 30 years
	 Suffer from confirmation bias (decide on things quickly) - so who are your mirrors? (I explain, they clarify & ask things) - have BOD; Chapter 8 acts as mirror & sounding board

External Links:

- Azran Osman-Rani: Website, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook
- Naluri Hidup