The pioneering spirit
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Being international is not only a commercial claim for MS SMIB: it is ontologically linked to the Mastère and this SMIB Mag is a tribute to it. You’ll discover great career paths from our Alumni located all around the world, including the most remote places. This shows the diversity of our program and how open-minded and bold you all are on a daily basis. While celebrating its 20th Anniversary in 2016, we were all wondering why and how our Alumni ‘escaped’ from their original country to relocate abroad from home. With this magazine, we aim at providing an answer to it!

In moments of international doubts and turmoil, we believe it is more than ever important to strengthen the links that tie-up our community, or with other communities. Hence you will also discover in the magazine news about the traditional business trips of last class (Miami, Ho Chi Minh, Milan), including their local charity actions.

This edition is also a chance to present you all some of the missions that SMIBs from Singapore conduct as consulting teams for Asian-based companies, including start-ups launched by former SMIBs!

I wish you a great reading of the magazine, and do not forget that we always look for new articles and contributions!

Anne-Flore Maman Larraufie (Ph.D)
Academic Director of MS SMIB
(Cergy – La Défense – Singapore)
The team

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I'm very pleased to be able to give you some words about the SMIB, in this very special day, because it is today the 20th birthday of the SMIB.

In ESSEC we love the SMIB, because the SMIB is very significative of the spirit of ESSEC, of the strategy of ESSEC. As you all know we call our strategy “3 I”, which means:
I for innovation
I for involvement
I for internationalisation

And the SMIB is the perfect illustration of those 3 “I”s. First because it has always had a spirit of innovation in the SMIB. When the SMIB was created 20 years ago, it was with the name of SIAI, and it was with this idea of being innovative and internationalized and it was the first one to be dedicated to international commerce, this puts since the beginning the spirit of innovation.

The second “I” is involvement, and involvement is the main characteristic of the SMIB, involvement in the pedagogy and especially with the experiences that the students have in the companies with our partners in the different places on the world. This involvement is also a social involvement and this is of course very important in the mindness of ESSEC. Another aspect is the fact that involvement means being able to go out of the comfort zone, it is the boldness of the program, and of course this is the spirit of ESSEC.

The third “I” is internationalization. We all know that we have now the campus of Singapore, we are building new campuses in the world, particularly in Africa, in Morocco, in? In the future in Latin America, and the SMIB has been pioneering for this kind of internationalization. The SMIB is in 3 continents, allows its students to go in different parts of the world. This internationalization, is of course a key element of the DNA of the SMIB.

That’s why it’s a very special birthday, that’s why we are very happy to have this gathering of all of you. When you entered the SMIB, you entered a family of 45,000 people. Today you belong to this family, and this family has the spirit of ESSEC the spirit of the SMIB.

Thank you for all of that.

Jean-Michel Blanquer’s speech for the SMIB 20th anniversary.
From North and Latin America

François KAHN
SMIB 2013-2014

ORANGE BUSINESS SERVICES
MONTREAL CANADA

The SMIB, my springboard to Canada

I used to be an engineer and was willing to stay in France and work for an airline company. Back in 2013, before the SMIB, if you had told me that I would work in Canada for the top management of a telecom company, I would have laughed at you. But it was before I joined the ESSEC Business School to meet amazing people, learn a lot about Business and Finance and above all about myself. The little icing on the cake offered by the SMIB changed my life: a MBA Exchange semester in Canada at Queen’s University. I did not expect to fall in love with this amazing and beautiful country, with the kindness and manners of the Canadian people, with this quality of life full of simple but also crazy activities.

I am back in Canada with a VIE (Volontariat International en Entreprise) contract since December 2015 working for the Consulting Practice of Orange Business Services as Business Analyst for the Head of Consulting North America. Let me sum up my experience in Canada in one word: Opportunity.

Professional opportunity to work in a small team, with the Head of Consulting challenging me directly in the office, to use everything I had learned and experienced to create and implement the full reworking of the Consulting Practice at a management level, but also to support the Finance and Billing team in front of the Top Executive Management, and the Sales and Pre-Sales teams during their RFP and Bids. The real freedom of having an official position but the opportunity to add value to any team, to any colleague in the office, and to see your work notified and rewarded by the top management.

A mix of professional/personal opportunity to work in an exciting and positive environment full of Quebeckers, Americans and young motivated French people, where we all call ourselves by our first name from the delivery guy to the VPs, where the US-based VPs and Orange Business Services Top Executive love to visit us, where we have the freedom to be totally flexible: working at home when there is 35 cm of snow or -30 degrees Celsius outside, working from Toronto, Taipei or Paris, but also working late until midnight or 3 am for a bid or a RFP.

And of course, the opportunity to have a great quality of life outside of the office: what an amazing life! Winter is about cross-country skiing in the Mont-Royal whenever I want, skiing until late night after work just outside of Montreal, enjoying an unhealthy Poutine after a long and cold walk, dancing outside in January during the IglooFest, going to the Bell Centre to watch the best hockey team of the world (am I unbiased?) les Canadiens de Montreal, eating Maple Syrup in a sugar bush ...

Summer is about music and comedy festivals, nonstop from June to September, kayaking in the St.-Lawrence River, losing your train of thought or enjoying tom-tom drums during a sunset in the Mont-Royal, enjoying the amazing landscape during the “Colors” in October, hiking in amazing national parks or chilling in the open terraces and rooftops to grab a drink or eat dinner with the people you love ... One place, two lives.
Last but not least, it’s a life of gathering: an opportunity to get to know Canadian people – you must need to understand their French Canadian accent first – and learn and reuse their “Tabernacle”, “Je m’en calice”, “Il pleut-tu”, or “Bienvenue” when somebody thank you, but also to meet the expats from France but also from anywhere in the world in an open-minded, friendly and peaceful relations. Something I will never give up now I get the chance to have it.

And talking about opportunity, I am moving to New York City for the rest of the year as my position is slightly changing and my new boss based there. Another experience, another place but still, a lot of opportunities.


Pour beaucoup, trouver un point commun entre ces trois projets serait un vrai casse-tête; mais vous l’avez deviné, ce qui lie Hotel Bleu, Sanofi et le GM guide to: Trade Management, c’est le SMIB. Le SMIB m’a permis de développer des bases solides dans un ensemble de compétences essentielles et variées : stratégie, management, marketing, finance; enrichi par la diversité culturelle et les personnalités de chacun de mes camarades de la promotion 2014/2015.

Après avoir obtenu un diplôme d’ingénieur à l’école nationale de la statistique et de l’analyse de l’information (ENSAI), j’ai choisi de suivre ce programme afin de compléter ma formation initiale. Le cursus ESSEC/ EGADÉ (Mexique) m’a permis d’obtenir sur un an et demi un double diplôme en stratégie et en marketing. Début 2016, je rentre sur le marché du travail, « enfin » me diront certains.

C’est donc à Sanofi que je me lance. Je passe un an dans le service Trade and Revenue management au sein de la région Afrique, Middle-East, South Asia and Russia (AMESAR). Ce service créé en 2015 vise à répondre au bouleversement que subit l’industrie pharmaceutique mettant sous pression les marges de l’entreprise et ses revenus. En charge de développer un ensemble de méthodologie pour l’ensemble des pays de la région, j’ai le plaisir de rencontrer Livio Moretti qui me propose de participer à l’écriture d’un livre sur le Trade Management. Je contribue à ce livre en écrivant
sur les thèmes du revenue management et de
la data science incluant théorie et cas pratiques.
Début 2017, je rejoins le projet BlyOND (intégration post-signature de Boehringer Ingelheim) en tant que project manager et commercial analyst. Je travaille de manière transverse et active avec le commercial, le réglementaire, le légal, la finance ou encore les ressources humaines pour l’ensemble des pays AMESA.

En parallèle de mes activités à Sanofi, je lance avec une amie la marque Hotel Bleu : Hotel Bleu représente le voyage, le rêve, le masculin/féminin. Inspirée de l’univers d’un film, chaque collection se crée à travers une ambiance intime, intemporelle et intense. La chemise et la veste, essentielles du vestiaire masculin, se glissent dans la valise et se coordonnent en toutes saisons pour une tenue adaptée au rythme de la vie contemporaine, citadine et exigeante. Hotel Bleu est une marque respectueuse de l’artisanat français, où chaque pièce est pensée et fabriquée dans son atelier parisien.

Sanofi est actuellement en pleine réorganisation afin de répondre aux changements de l’industrie pharmaceutique. Des opportunités devraient se présenter. J’y suis actuellement en CDD.

Une première version du livre a été proposé à un ensemble d’éditeurs. Nous sommes actuellement en négociation avec Springer.

Paola GAITANSMIB
2008-2009
AUDI BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

From Bogota to Paris and back to Bogota

I graduated from my master’s degree SMIB in 2009. As a part of the program, I did my internship at Nissan France for 9 months in the Sales and Allocation Ordering department. Since then, I have been working in the automotive industry with people around the world. When I returned back to my hometown, Bogota, Colombia, I started to work as Planning and Logistics Manager at Cinascar Colombia, a company of Hyundai which imports Chinese vehicles. After 4 1/2 years, I started to work as a Brand Manager at Porsche during almost 3 years. And now, one month ago, I started to work as Senior Product Manager at Audi. Definitively, SMIB enhanced not only my academy background but also my professional career and gave me the basis of strategies of doing international business.
From Asia
Benjamin CROUTON

From France to China

STRATEGIC PLANNING MANAGER CHINA AND ASIA
SMIB 13/14

The reason why I decided to join the SMIB program, and the new possibilities that the SMIB program offered me in the end, show how much anyone who is integrating the program should, before anything else, come with an open mind. This reality, together with the fact that joining this program is the opportunity to meet an incredible and unprecedented blend of international people, is what I take away from the revealing year I spent in the SMIB program!

Joining from a business background, I came in looking for the opportunity to deepen an expertise in themes such as strategy, finance, excel... and get access to the consulting world. And while taking part in a great variety of classes, some of which I did not even have in mind before integrating the program, did answer my first expectation, I realized my inclination was in the end far more toward the industry, and more specifically one I had only explored on the surface until then, healthcare. Strongly encouraged by our administration to candidate to a complementary program called chair, I therefore benefitted both from advanced strategy and finance classes taught by passionate people, and from a program which was going to make me as operational as it gets for my first job to come in the pharmaceutical industry.

This program, as anything else I think, is as much what it intrinsically offers as the use you decide to make of it. Hours spent individually thinking about well-thought and comprehensive business problems, days spent collectively working on challenging group projects, deepening our business acumen and learning from all team members’ past experiences, a significant number of optional classes to go beyond and enrich the main program...

But also the moments shared outside with people from so many different horizons, making the saying “work hard, party hard” pretty true to me, all those are the many reasons why one can, if he really wants to, make this year unforgettable and impactful!

Today, I get to take up again an international career in healthcare in China, after two years of an amazing experience in a first major pharmaceutical company, and a significant part of this “dream-come-true” I owe to the SMIB program.

Pierre LECAT

From Singapore to France

HEAD OF GROWTH AND DATA OF BIM APP
SMIB 2012/2013

Diplômé d’une école de commerce post-bac avec spécialisation marketing, je suis entré dans le monde du travail en 2010 en intégrant l’équipe de communication de Toyota France. Deux ans plus tard, je suis entré au SMIB avec pour ambition de
donner un coup de fouet à mon début de carrière. Ayant déjà vécu précédemment en Espagne et au Royaume-Uni, j’ai tout de suite voulu m’expatrier à nouveau. J’ai donc choisi de partir un an sur le campus de Singapour pour suivre mon mastère spécialisé. Le SMIB a été une expérience incroyable et m’a permis de mettre un pied dans la culture asiatique. Je suis devenu un grand passionné de la culture asiatique et j’ai depuis visité l’ensemble des pays de l’Asie du Sud-Est, dont certains à plusieurs reprises !


Le large spectre de matières que propose le SMIB m’a apporté une réelle polyvalence que je retrouve aujourd’hui dans mon métier : savoir gérer des projets, comprendre les enjeux d’un business model, travailler en équipe, analyser et savoir répondre à des problématiques diverses, parler en public. Le SMIB a également renforcé mon esprit international et même si Sarenza et Bim sont des entreprises françaises, elles ont pour ambition de devenir de véritables acteurs internationaux.

Chuyuan LI

From China to Paris

VAN CLEEF and ARPELS
SMIB 2015/2016

Back in China, I was a student of French language and literature. Like most of the young graduates, I had few professional experience and a not-so-clear picture for the future. While I have become increasingly interested in climbing the business stages of my career ladder, there are number of missing rungs. When I don’t know something that limits my game, my response is to learn and climb higher. That’s when SMIB fit into my chessboards.

The eight-month intense program is like an activator: the first day I would found myself struggling with the accounting principles, the next day we were given a task of firm valuation for a CAC 40 company. Marketing, strategy, management and other courses broadened my horizon; regular social networks pushed me out of my comfort zone; study trip in Milano created opportunity to talk face to face with international companies… It feels like grow up in eight-month in a professional way: fulfilling, stressful and rewarding.

Just like the signification of icon “Alhambra”, my experience in Van Cleef & Arpels is a capital written “LUCK”. Thanks to Lysiane, I found my internship in one of the most prestigious jewelry brands in the world, and worked near the birth place of the Maison – place Vendôme. Walking by every day, I had chance to appreciate the fabulous pieces, became one of the witness of the launching of the new collection, and explored the universe of fine jewelry at l’Ecole VCA.

Van Cleef & Arpels is like an artist in the luxury industry – keeping its mysterious and fairy design, and “slow life” philosophy. Like each of its pieces that take years to polish, the working style in VCA is a pursuit of perfection, every detail counts. In the team of client development in Europe, we worked and developed the programs to ensure the best practice of customer relationship management.
As an intern, I was quickly given autonomy to operate on a monthly program from A to Z: contact with agency, communicate between markets with the headquarter, and push forward the process to fit the timeline. My manager gave me enough freedom to organize my daily work, and we had a weekly meeting to summarize and plan for the next week – working is extremely efficient.

Again with the luck, I have extended my internship to a three-month CDD during which I am responsible for a Chinese client project. One step further, I have my own project with more responsibilities. This is a challenge as well as an adventure – interviewing different people, redefining what is possible – is what makes both my work and life interesting. I tended to be a compulsive goal-oriented planner. Given trust, I throw myself thoroughly into this project, working interactively with back office accountants, salespeople and boutique managers from different markets. Sometimes I found myself changing languages rapidly several times in just one hour: have a conference call with Chinese salesperson with mother tongue, ask for information in English with the UK team, and then discuss in French with my manager. It was such a dynamic environment! During the last weeks, I easily found myself plunging into the numbers and graphs and left late from the office. What brings me is the joy of contributing my knowledge as a Chinese person to a French company.

What comes along with Van Cleef & Arpels is my fabulous life in the center of Paris, and finally learn to live like a Parisien: visit museums and expositions, jogging along the Seine, sip a café at terrace for a lazy afternoon, have fun with friends or colleagues in Friday evenings... I was used to the tranquil in Cergy, and now more adapted to the noise and lively at rue Montorgeuil.

Hemingway says “Paris est une fête”, and I believe that for me this festival has just started. SMIB opened a window, introducing me in front of the world of luxury; Van Cleef & Arpels approached me, took me for a ride and enriched me with stories and savoir-faire. Next adventure will soon come, whatever it is, I wish that it’s still in Paris!
From Australia

Gregoire PATACQ
Process Scientist at the Australian Research Wine Institute
SMIB 2014/2015

From Paris to Adélaïde, Australia

In a constant research of improvement. That is probably what led me to apply to ESSEC and for the SMIB. Full track in Singapore from 2014 to 2015, I am today working for the Australian Wine Research Institute in Australia, focussing on innovation and luxury.

With 2 years’ work experience as an agronomy engineer prior to apply to the SMIB, my will to re-engage with a superior education aiming to an excellent level was fulfilled once I stepped first in ESSEC in late August 2014. Being a Singapore full-track offered me this opportunity to get in touch with the bursting South-East Asian economies and the ultra-dynamic landscape of companies that are crafting tomorrow’s global situation. In direct relation with many French and international companies and with a full-on 1-year program led by Anne-Flore Maman, my desire to get to the next level was granted. The school took me on a journey where values such as entrepreneurship and excellence were paramount. Finding a meaning and a strong resonance. Its application was made through the creation of an app (ticktalk) that we did in a unique partnership with the National University of Singapore.

I was involved in playing Australian football with the Singapore team, it allowed me to find connec-

tions to do my final mission for my thesis, dedicated to the situation of luxury for the wine industry in South-Australia. The solutions proposed helped to create my current job, dedicated to luxury and innovation for the Australian wine industry.

Evolving today around some of the most prestigious Australian wineries, we currently approach the market with design thinking tools. Highly customer centric, my role brings education on some key luxury aspects and allow the wineries to better understand an evolving market (especially with the impressive surge of the inline Chinese market, super thirsty of boutique wines and education on western style wines). The other part of the position is to come up with creative solutions in a currently saturated market. Finding a real differentiation through authentic and cut hrough concepts is key to a true approach of the end-consumers, in research of renewal in this centuries old industry.

From Africa

Yann ASSOR
Head of Corporate Finance
SMIB Executive 2001

Que dire du Mastère SIAI, 16 ans après?

Petit flash back...

2000 : Le Mastère SIAI commençait déjà à faire parler de lui. Il s’agissait d’un des premiers cursus Master Spécialisé Grande Écoles avec une forte consonance stratégie internationale et un corps
professionnal digne des meilleurs MBA européens. Je fus parmi les 15 chanceux du mastère à avoir participé à l'échange avec l'université de Thunderbird (je m'en souviens encore!). Je n'oublie pas mes chers camarades de profils et d'horizons différents qui m'ont enrichi de leur personnalité et de leur diversité (que de bons souvenirs).

Ce préambule étant fait, revenons à l'essentiel. Il n'existe pas de réussite sans passion. Ma passion je l'ai trouvé au sein du Mastère et précisément à l'occasion du forum entreprises organisé par l'ESSEC ou étaient rassemblées les plus grandes banques d'affaires de l'époque (dont Lehman Brothers!). Je savais désormais ce que je voulais faire de ma vie. Ce ne fut pas chose simple croyez-moi. Stage en Corporate Finance chez HSBC, puis tragédie du 11 septembre 2001 et début de la crise. C'est dans l'adversité que l'on apprend à se connaître! Mon objectif était clair : garder le contact avec les métiers de banque d'affaires et renforcer mon bagage technique Corporate Finance. Je postule au sein de KMPG au département évaluation d'entreprises où je suis resté près de 3 ans. Puis un chasseur de tête me propose l'opportunité d'entrer au sein de la prestigieuse Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations ou je dirigerais les opérations M&A Europe pour le groupe Transdev.

Après avoir parcouru l'Espagne, l'Italie et l'Allemagne à réaliser des acquisitions pour cette merveilleuse entreprise, je pars rejoindre les équipes Fusions Acquisition de PwC. Au bout de 5 ans on me propose de développer l'activité banque d'affaires de PwC au Maroc. Sans aucune hésitation j'accepte malgré toutes les incertitudes possibles, question d'intuition (ne jamais négliger votre intuition!). Le développement de nos activités Fusions Acquisitions ont accompagné le boom des économies africaines et m'ont permis de prendre aujourd'hui la responsabilité des activités fusions acquisitions de PwC pour le Maghreb et l'Afrique de l'Ouest. J'attends avec impatience les 40 ans du Mastère pour vous décrire mes 20 prochaines années...

À bientôt!

From Middle East

Jean-Baptiste FLOUR
GENERAL MANAGERInternational SOS SMIB 2008/2009

From Paris to Iraq & Iraqi Kurdistan

À la sortie de mon Master SMIB et après un court passage dans l'industrie aéronautique (9 mois chez Eurocopter), j'ai rejoint International SOS – le leader mondial de l'assistance médicale et sécuritaire. International SOS est un modèle d'entrepreneuriat réussi – l'entreprise ayant été fondée il y a 32 ans par le Docteur Pascal Rey Herme et Monsieur Arnaud Vaissié, qui dirigent encore la société à ce jour. Le groupe compte aujourd'hui 11,000 collaborateurs et est présent dans plus de 90 pays.

J'ai donc commencé ma carrière chez International SOS en 2010 avec un premier emploi au sein du département « Sécurité » (la joint-venture entre International SOS et Contrôle Risks) dans un rôle opérationnel avec principalement des missions de conseil et de consulting sur la région Europe Centrale, Afrique – Maghreb. Expérience au cours de laquelle j’ai eu la chance de jouer un rôle actif dans la gestion des crises ayant affecté la région durant cette période (coupes d’état au Niger et au Mali, événements en Côte d’Ivoire, Printemps Arabe, etc.) nécessitant le rapatriement de nombreux clients.
J’ai rejoint ensuite notre bureau de Toronto afin de faire bénéficier à nos clients Canadiens de cette expertise « terrain » en les accompagnant dans le développement de leurs projets internationaux dans les pays à risque.

En 2014, basculant dans le département « Medical Services », International SOS m’a proposé de prendre la direction de notre filiale Tchadienne à N’Djamena. J’y ai donc déménagé - passant de l’hiver Canadien à la chaleur de l’Afrique, accompagné de ma femme et de mes 2 enfants, et nous y avons vécu 2 ans. Présent depuis 15 ans au Tchad, International SOS opère 2 cliniques à N’Djamena - donnant ainsi accès à des soins de qualités et aux standards internationaux à plus de 7,000 bénéficiaires dont 98 % de Tchadiens. Également nous soutenons les projets pétroliers dans le sud du pays en fournissant des services médicaux (cliniques) sur ces sites isolés. Cette filiale dont j’ai eu la responsabilité, était composée d’une centaine d’employés dont 85 % de Tchadiens. Expérience très enrichissante autant par son dépaysement que par les responsabilités qui m’ont été confiées et l’autonomie dont je jouissais, elle a également eu son lot de difficultés : un climat sécuritaire complexe (le pays s’est engagé en guerre contre Boko Haram en janvier 2015 - le Tchad devenant dès lors plus menacé), un environnement économique en souffrance (crise pétrolière - 80 % de notre activité étant liée à ce secteur) et enfin ses nombreux défis quotidiens (le Tchad étant un pays dépourvu de tout).

Depuis le mois de juillet 2016 - je suis basé à Dubaï d’où je dirige notre filiale Irak et Kurdistan. 4ème plus gros pays producteur de pétrole derrière la Russie, l’Arabie Saoudite et les États-Unis, l’Irak représente un enjeu commercial considérable mêlé à des problématiques médicales et sécuritaires uniques, ce qui rend l’activité dans ces pays compliquées. Pourtant la plupart des grandes compagnies pétrolières y sont présentes avec un afflux important d’expatriés de toutes nationalités. Là aussi nous « médicalisons » les sites pétroliers, principalement dans la région de Bassora au sud de l’Irak et d’Erbil au Kurdistan Irakien. L’Irak est la plus grosse filiale du Moyen Orient pour International SOS – avec plus d’une cinquantaine de projets au total, soit environ 250 employés. Pour cela j’ai la chance de pouvoir m’appuyer sur une équipe expérimentée et multiculturelle (Opérations Managers, Médecins, Commerciaux, Supply Chain, RH, Financiers, etc.) répartie entre notre Head Office à Dubaï et l’Irak où je passe 50 % de mon temps. En de nombreux points notre activité, et donc mon métier, est comparable à ce que j’ai connu auparavant au Tchad mais dans un environnement commercial bien plus large (le Tchad produit 120,000 barils par jour, contre 4,5 millions pour l’Irak!) et un contexte sécuritaire difficile (la guerre contre l’EI au Kurdistan dont la capitale Erbil n’est qu’à 80 km de Mosul et les déplacements dans la région de Bassora n’étant possible que sous escorte armée et véhicules blindés). Nous y proposons des solutions de services médicaux intégrés et complets : personnel médical expérimenté (médecins et infirmiers), médicaments, consommables et matériel médical, formations aux premiers secours, analyses de risques, etc.

Comme dans tout poste de direction, je suis sollicité sur des sujets très variés. On apprend certes principalement de ses expériences professionnelles - mais mon passage au sein du Master SMIB, par son caractère pluridisciplinaire, continue de m’aider aujourd’hui à me positionner sur des sujets requérant une bonne culture générale du monde des affaires (achats, RH, finance et comptabilité, commerce international, marketing, etc.). Je n’oublie pas enfin que le SMIB est la première « entreprise internationale » dans laquelle j’ai travaillé - ce qui contribue aujourd’hui à la satisfaction que j’ai à diriger une équipe comprenant plus de 15 nationalités différentes.
From Europe

Agathe CERCEAU
Business Development Director Marlink
SMIB 2003/2004

From Canada to Paris

As far as I can remember I have always dreamt of Space: spaceships, stars, Moon, astronauts, its still-to-be-discovered part of mystery. Growing up, didn’t have the stomach to become an astronaut, but what about being a space engineer! Graduated from engineering school in space, I realized I wanted to go beyond the technical features, to see what else was at stake in the space field! When I integrated the ESSEC SMIB back in 2003, it was a revelation! I belonged to the business developers’ kind!

Then, I was very lucky to integrate a start-up-like company in the Airbus group, at a project manager position. As it was a quite small company at these early stages, I had the chance to be given very quickly extended responsibilities. How exciting it was to build commercial strategies, developing customers’ networks, managing bids, winning contracts that would enable the sustainability and growth of the business. Create, challenge, compete and win, all in all enhancing my entrepreneurial and business appetite.

Then, I have been taking different opportunities as Business Development manager and then Merger & Acquisition manager, evolving along with the company business successes.

If I have one piece of advice to share, it would be my mantra: get out of your office, get out of your comfort zone, raise challenges, take risks, nothing is impossible, have fun, and go ahead! I have never regretted it!

I have applied it again recently, taking the fantastic opportunity to join a highly dynamic, agile and very international company in the satellite communication business, as Business Development Director.

We’ll see where the next step brings me... maybe to create my own company!

Sébastien PARSINI
SMIB 2006

SMIB Executive master

After nearly 8 years of business experiences in several international companies, I wanted to complete my Business School degree (ISG) education with the ESSEC SMIB Executive Master in 2004.

This objective was mostly to reinforce my career with a focused training program, high-level teachers and business cases within a leading international Business School like ESSEC.

In few words, I have especially appreciated the level of the diversified courses and mostly the discovery of the SMIB program, interesting business cases and the final thesis to introduce to a jury. I also liked the interaction between professors and students such as the good mood and global posi-
tive attitude during the 18-month courses.

The best for me was the diversity of people and experiences and the fantastic exchanges between all participants. In addition, we have done a really well organized trip in Brazil where we had the opportunity to meet with local, international and French organizations.

This specific Master gave me the opportunity to have a positive boost in my career to reach some great international Sales Management positions.

Finally, I would highly recommend ESSEC Education and particularly the SMIB.

Nice memories

The SMIB program is really team-work oriented, so even in these two short semesters of 2009-2010, we built strong ties within the group. Since graduation we worked together, we hired each other, we went to each other’s wedding, some 100%-SMIB babies were born, time went by. Some of us never really left Singapore, and the others, like me, have the feeling to come home whenever they stop by because there’s always someone they know in The Lion City, even though the school itself moved from Bugis to One North. For 5 years, I got the chance to be based in another vibrant Asian city, Bangkok, and to travel extensively throughout the region (up to Mongolia!), stumbling upon many younger and older SMIBs in my professional life. Now I’m back in Europe/France, I’ve switched industries from aeronautic to finance, and I’ve also switched from corporate to entrepreneurship. Because if anything, the SMIB program makes you realize there is no boundary to what you can do in life. I hope all my classmates are doing well and I wish them the best. Before we know it time will come to plan our 10-year reunion!
The Asian Strategy Challenge (ASC)

Learning by doing in the SMIB style

This 6-month consulting mission is the best way to put in practice all soft and hard skills needed to become a qualified consultant. Students have to act as a real consulting team, under the supervision of an ESSEC coach, on a mission that is proposed by a company or an economic cluster located in APAC. Both the company and the coach grade the students and can eventually pursue the collaboration through an internship or job offer... This mission is complimentary from the school side, with companies invited to give whatever they want, to contribute to the SMIB development.

This year’s projects are diverse and reflect students’ field of interests.

We worked on developing olfactory scents to be implemented in remote areas.

Sodexo has developed some villages where workers of big construction companies, live for a few years. They live away from their families and experiment difficulties regarding their quality of life. Aligned with its global objective of improving the quality of life of its consumers and clients, Sodexo experimented smell diffusers in Malaysia.

We got the chance to visit for 2 full days the Sodexo Village of one of the biggest construction site of APAC. It was a chance to turn our school project into a real project and make things real.

With a team of 4 SMIB students, we provide an 8-months consulting mission for the french jewelry maker Van Cleef & Arpels, under the supervision of the APAC Head of Marketing, based in Singapore. Our work is primarily to assess the digital strategy in the current markets where Van Cleef is currently present (Singapore, Thailand, Australia...), and to define an expansion strategy based on in-depth country analysis. During the year we learned a lot about the jewelry industry, how luxury brands design their communication, and the general & demographics trends in APAC.

Pierre-Jean Housse, Estelle Lê, Tong Wang, Gabriel du Chalard de Taveau.
KYKLO is a Bangkok-based start-up, specialized in B2B electrical and mechanical e-commerce solutions. KYKLO enables retailers and distributors to start selling online under their brand.com domain within 48 hours and capture the massive and untapped B2B e-commerce potential.

Our missions focused on two main points: market studies, with market sizing on various countries and competitor analysis; and “go-to-market strategies” for selected countries, based on previous analysis.

We processed by periodic meeting every two weeks, by skype with the two founders. During our mission, we created analytical reports, content for future commercial use and databases of main actors for selected countries. Our final work consisted in recommendations for the expansion of the company in the short/medium-run.

Jean AMALRIC, Robin CIPRIANI, Thomas POLLIAND

For our ASC Project we are working with Axa Insurance to consolidate the relevance of a disruptive insurance product in cooperation with a marketing insight agency and to build the marketing strategy to address the Singaporean market. To work on this project we decided to build a multinational team of 6 students not only coming from different countries but also different backgrounds (pharmacist, engineer, business, human resources).

Our experience during this project was not only about doing an analytical job it had a real human dimension. We got the chance to conduct focus group to understand the need of the young Singaporean, but also to work closely with the top management of Axa.

Even though we are working for a big company this project helped us to develop an entrepreneurship spirit. Within the company we had to conduct some change management and to develop a whole new concept while dealing with all the management process of a multinational company.

Guillaume Kurtz, Paul Pico, Arnaud Philibert, Zhenzhen Jin, Laurianne Valla, Edouard Bouthelier
**Project Name:**
**FRENCH MARITIME POSITIONING IN ASIA**

The French Maritime Cluster is working closely with ESSEC Students - as part of their Asian Strategic Challenge (ASC) - to release a report on the South-East Asian Maritime sector and the French positioning in the region. In 2015-2016 the focus was on the Maritime Singaporean market with Mapping of the Singapore Maritime market, its strategy and main actors as well as its international presence. This year, the aim is to continue the survey on the Maritime Singaporean market and figure out how the French Maritime economy can compete or build synergies with Singapore industry.

The first results of the study have been presented during a workshop held at ESSEC where professionals from the sector had the opportunity to give their feedback and guide the students. It was also a great opportunity to meet some peers and create synergy/partnerships.

Many topics were discussed, but the most important ones dealt with Environment issues, Technology & New Trends, as well as Education & Marketing.

Due to the current Maritime turmoil, the industry is facing several changes. The value chain should move from a cost-oriented towards a customer-focused industry, using technology and digitalization as a way to correctly monetize their services.

One other challenge is the ability for the industry to attract and retain talents. How to make it? How to make the Industry attractive?

It seems there is plenty of work ahead of the ESSEC students!

The Asian Strategy Challenge have been for us one of the main project of this year.

Working 7 months side by side with a company on a real project for them is a great chance for us. We worked with Nutriset, a French medium size company specialized in food to fight malnutrition. Historically, their market are the institutions (governments, UN agencies...) and the NGOs.

Our ASC project was a project to launch a first Business to Consumer product in two different countries of South East Asia (Indonesia and the Philippines).

It was not only very interesting and a great experience but also very challenging for both of us and the company. We have had to study everything from the food market to the regulation in those two countries.

Hopefully we also had one tutor of ESSEC that really helped us to know how to build our report and our analysis.

As a conclusion we would say that this consulting experience was truly enriching and gave us strong project management skills as well as a nice overview of what is it to build something from scratch inside a team.

Our motivation: build a product that might be on the market soon and which will definitely fight malnutrition!

Maïlys Rastoin, Titouan Jestin and Romain Hahn
BUSINESS TRIP
2015-2016

Each year SMIB students are invited to organize and take part in a Business Trip abroad to enhance their international profile and grow their network. Last year 3 trips were organized from the Cergy and Singapore campuses.

MIAMI

At the end of February 2016, we had the opportunity to go to a business trip taking place in Miami. During a week, we discovered dozens of dynamic companies and sectors: cosmetics, real estate, logistics, consulting... We even met the mayor of the city of Miami and the French consul who dedicated us a whole reception in order to discuss with the most influential French professionals settled in the region. We also learnt to know and appreciate this beautiful city thanks to a guided culinary tour organized by Dr Brands, a cosmetics company. Through this evening, we enjoyed the Miami way of life, its animated nights and its diversity towards South America. The business trip taught us a lot on Miami. We would not have guessed how much the city is evolving and turning into a real business hub.

More than just a trendy holiday destination or a place full of night clubs, Miami is one of the cities attracting the more investors. It benefits largely from its ideal facilities: a harbor enabling Miami to connect with the world, a booming real estate sector resulting into a more secure city and great incentives for businesses to settle.

All the success stories we heard and the enriching exchanges we had inspired us and strengthened our ability to work in an international context. We would like of course to thank once again all the professionals who agreed to spend some time with us as well as Anne Flore Maman and Lysiane Toussay who helped us managing the interviews. Thanks to them, this experience was at the core of the SMIB programme.
SMIB FOR SMILES
2015 – 2016

From 10 years now, the SMIB Community has launched its own charity club called “SMIB for SMILES” (SFS). This student association was created in Singapore but is now also present in Cergy. Along the years, many projects have been achieved. This year, the SMILES team, led by Alixia BOULET in Singapore and Martin GAYMARD in Cergy, is introducing new projects.

10 years from now, the SMIB Community launched its own charity association called “SMIB for SMILES” (SFS). This student association created in Singapore is now active on both campuses. Along the years, many projects have been achieved. This year, the SFS team, led by Lina TAGRI in Singapore and Elise ATAYA in Cergy, is introducing new projects.

The main mission of the association is to improve the education conditions of underprivileged children. In order to do so, the members undertake concrete actions to help existing organizations and to increase the interest of our fellow students to involve in such projects.

This year, both teams have launched new projects that aim to lead local actions in the education field and to established long-term partnerships with local actors. Therefore, the team in Cergy is working with a school from the foundation Espérance Banlieues. Together, they are looking for ways to make the school sustainable and to gather funds for its operation. In Singapore, the team is... (I have no clue).

In 2017, the SFS team in Cergy focused on the creation and implementation of a long-term project with a school from the foundation Espérance Banlieues. Located in Sartrouville, the school was created in 2016 and welcomes 15 children aged between 7 and 11 so far. While developing a new way of educating children that face school failure, the school allows them to be part of their education, also giving the family an important role to play, and gain fundamental skills: write, read and count. Their goal is to have four classes in the next school year and open high-school classes. To do so, the school needs new funds and we are involved in the fund gathering. Our project is to establish an exhaustive data-base of possible sponsors for the school and to contact them. On the long term, the school is also looking for involvement in the school-life such as participation to cultural visits, shared moments with the children or help for the development of the school.

This project is a real opportunity for SMIB students to get involved in a concrete social and local project with an even more concrete impact on local populations. Not only did we focused on this project this year, we also conducted various events either for “Le Maillon” a social grocery in Cergy in partnership with the French Food Bank in order to collect food on ESSEC Campus from students, teachers and administration staff. This food will be redistributed to underprivileged families at a symbolic price.