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ATG Interviews Max Phua

John Long

John Long Associates, johnlong429@gmail.com

Katina Strauch

Against the Grain, kstrauch@comcast.net

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ATG Interviews Max Phua

World Scientific Publishing Co.

by **John Long** (John Long Associates) <JohnLong429@gmail.com>

and **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*) <kstrauch@comcast.net>

To follow is a conversation between John Long and Max Phua of World Scientific Publishing Co.

JL: *Could you give our readers a little history lesson in how WSPC began its publishing business?*

MP: World Scientific Publishing was established by our chairman **Dr. K. K. Phua** and managing director **Mrs. Doreen Liu** over 30 years ago for two primary reasons — to create a community-minded and author-centric independent publisher which

provides great service to both our authors and readers and to publish high-quality content from scientists around the world. Nobel Laureates in Physics **Professor C. N. Yang** and **Professor Abdul Salam** at that time felt many quality books and journal papers written by researchers from developing countries like China, India, South America, and Eastern Europe were not given enough attention and not published in international journals or their books were not marketed internationally, and had advised our founders to establish a truly global academic publisher with the mission to disseminate high-quality and relevant research and knowledge globally.

JL: *You indicated that you had recently returned from India where WSPC has an office in Chennai. WSPC has a salient representation throughout Asia, but could you tell us a little bit about WSPC's global activities?*

MP: Around fifty percent of our market and authors are from North

and South America, twenty-five percent from Europe and the rest from Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. Our two largest offices outside Asia are in New Jersey and London where we have around 15 colleagues in each office performing editorial, sales/marketing, and customer service roles. All our offices are closely integrated, and we operate very much like a single entity allowing quick response to authors, readers, librarians, distributors, and agents. Our headquarters in Singapore is a melting pot of colleagues from all over the world allowing us to understand the needs of our global customers

JL: *The wide scope of your publishing program is astonishing. I first became aware of WSPC in the late 1970's and WSPC's publishing program in physics. I think you have about twenty different subject areas now. Could you comment?*

MP: We started our publishing program in Physics as our chairman was a scientist in the area of High Energy Physics. He was recently awarded an APS fellowship. We expanded to

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Contact Information:

World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.
5 Toh Tuck Link, Singapore 596224
Phone: 65-6466-5775
Fax: 65-6467-7667
Email: wspc@wspc.com.sg
Website: www.worldscientific.com

other areas in Physical Sciences and Engineering after scientists around the world learned of our mission and support what we are trying to accomplish. Over the last 15 years, our publishing program has grown to include fields in life sciences, medicine, environmental science, business, economics, and Asian Studies. We are also developing significant and important programs on nanotechnology, energy, and materials science.

JL: *I noticed that your physics publishing program includes authors such as Nobel Laureates Claude Cohen-Tannoudji (1997) and Leon Cooper (1972). Can you talk about some of your authors?*

MP: One of the core missions of **World Scientific** is to work closely with our authors and provide them with as much support, from manuscript preparation to sales and marketing. A majority of our authors are very satisfied with working with us, and many are close friends whom we work with for many years. We are honored to have many Nobel Laureates like **Claude Cohen-Tannoudji** and **Leon Cooper** among our authors and also long-standing relations with Nobel Laureates like **P. W. Anderson**, **Ahmed Zewai**, and U.S. Secretary of Energy **Steve Chu**, himself a Nobel Prize winner. Some Nobel Laureates like **Eric Maskin**, who is the book series editor of our Series on Economic Theory, works closely with us to publish and develop the best books in their fields. Our authors are our partners, and we strive to continue developing and improving on our author-centric culture.

JL: *Tell us about WSPC's eBook publishing program? I understand that you publish about 300 new eBook titles per year.*

MP: We publish around 300 new eBooks a year and have around 5,000 eBooks in total so far. We have been developing our reference book program with e-versions of many top-quality handbooks and MRWs in the pipeline. Our yearly eBooks program looks to grow to 500 in the next three years. We have both a pick-and-choose model and also subject collections from various science and technology disciplines to business and medicine. We have received tremendous support from librarians on our eBook program and look to work closely with librarians to serve the information needs of their users.

JL: *Just looking at one example, WSPC has a large publishing program with regard to nanotechnology, and I think that ATG readers are probably wondering how WSPC tracks hot areas (like nano) throughout the sciences.*

MP: In addition to our in-house publishers and seniors editors, of whom many were former professors, scientists, and lecturers, we seek the advise of our managing editors, journal or book series board members, individual authors, and our network of advisors to spot trends and identify hot areas to publish. One good example, is the **World Scientific Series in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology**, of which the chief editor is **Frans Spaepen**

against the grain people profile

President and CEO, IGI Global
701 East Chocolate Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033
Phone: 717-533-8845 x.122 • Fax: 717-533-8661
<Mehdi@IGI-Global.com> • www.igi-global.com

Dr. Mehdi Khosrow-Pour

BORN AND LIVED: Place of Birth: Iran; Living in the U.S. since 1974.

EARLY LIFE: Lived in Florida during the 1970s through the early 1980s. Received a BBA and MS from the **University of Miami**; MBA from **Florida Institute of Technology**; and a Doctorate in Business Administration from **Nova Southeastern University**.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: On the Faculty of the Business School at Penn State Harrisburg from 1982-2000 as an Associate Professor of Information Systems. Founded **IGI Global**, an international academic reference publisher in 1988. **IGI Global** provides comprehensive research publications (books, journals, encyclopedias, cases, proceedings, and databases) on information technology applied to education, social science, library science, healthcare, business management, public administration, and computer science. Offering premier, peer-reviewed publications to international researchers, librarians, and universities, **IGI Global** actively publishes under five imprints — Information Science Reference, Business Science Reference, Medical Information Science Reference, Engineering Science Reference, and IGI Publishing.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I like to run, swim, read, listen to music, scuba dive, and fly.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *Limits to Growth* by **Donella H. Meadows**; *The Sands of Time* by **Sidney Sheldon**; and *The World is Flat* by **Thomas L. Friedman**.

PETS: I love my two beautiful girls (cats), Basha and Anar.

PHILOSOPHY: My formula for success is (Success = Intelligence + Hard Work + Determination + Commitment).

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Completing my first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Information Systems* (5 Vols.) in 2006 and then the Second Edition (8 Vols.) in 2011.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: To obtain my Professional Pilot License.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Although one might assume that technological innovations will completely change knowledge dissemination, in my opinion, the pace of this change will be slower than the pace of forthcoming technological changes. However, we will notice a much stronger move toward the utilization of mobile systems for accessing knowledge by knowledge seekers, as well as much greater utilization of specialized aggregated databases in academic libraries worldwide. 🌱



from **Harvard**. Together with an editorial board consisting of world-leading academics in this field like **Dawn Borell (UPenn)**, **Jeff Grossman (MIT)**, **Mark Lundstrom (Purdue)**, and **Mark Reed (Yale)**, we are able to obtain good advise and insights in the field of nanotechnology so that the content and research we publish are at the forefront of the field, providing readers with high-quality and useful information.

JL: *Thanks so much for keeping ATG readers apprised of WSPC's fascinating, professional, and STM publishing activities.* 🌱

Rumors from page 40

Rebecca even has a full time job at the **U. of Alabama School of Law** as communications manager. She sent me two pictures of her children, **Ella** and **Connor**. Watch for them in a future issue of **ATG!**

One person I wish I could get to **Charleston** some day is **Lynne Rienner**. Apparently there is some upstart meeting that has the nerve to conflict with the

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