

Century-old Bakery Transforming for a Future: An Interview with Desmond Wong, CEO of Hang Heung Cake Shop

百年經典 時代蛻變： 恆香老餅家行政總裁王偉樑專訪



Anything related to heritage and traditions has become popular and chic in the consumer markets of late. Taiwanese Castella Sponge Cake, vintage themed cafes, and Hang Heung's traditional bakery. Committed to product innovation, Hang Heung Cake Shop has been under the spotlight again as it infuses modern, new elements to its classic Chinese delicacies. Desmond Wong, CEO of Hang Heung Cake Shop Co. Ltd, has been the driver behind its rejuvenation after taking up the leadership. While keeping superior food quality, he believes the company needs a new positioning and better engaged with consumers in order to sustain the century-old legend.

Famous Across Town and Advancing Through Times

"Hang Heung Cake Shop has been popular for 100 years because of our solid belief to produce fresh products in Hong Kong every day, and our impeccable quality control practice to maintain first-rate quality and unique taste. Our classic handmade Wife Cake and pastries are best-selling items not only among local consumers, but also for overseas tourists as their must-buy souvenirs. Yet, times have changed. Even if we're one of the premier brands, still we have to embrace changes to meet the various needs of the new-generation consumers."

"That's why last year we introduced shortcrust pastry mooncake series with lava custard, matcha and red bean paste as well as Japanese black sesame flavours, packaged in stylish boxes. They were well received by lots of youngsters. In celebration of 100th anniversary this year, we will be launching a retro limited edition, 'Eighth Happiness', that used our classic design for seven mini assorted mooncakes plus one mooncake with five egg yolks, showing the essence of old Hong Kong. We're sure this limited edition will win the hearts of consumers."

近年消費市場喜將傳統奉為時尚：台灣古早味蛋糕、懷舊主題冰室，而恆香老餅家也適逢其會，以中式唐餅風味，注入年輕新鮮元素，再成市場新寵。恆香老餅家有限公司行政總裁王偉樑接手恆香後銳意活化品牌，認為除了品質上的堅持，未來亦需要一個新定位、與消費者更緊密連繫，才能將百年傳奇延續下去。

口碑載道 與時並進

「恆香老餅家能百年不衰，全因堅持每日香港新鮮製造、緊密監控以確保產品水準，貫徹傳統風味。我們尤以傳統手製老婆餅、酥餅最享負盛名、暢銷本地，亦是世界各地遊客必購手信之一。但時代轉變，即使有口皆碑，我們仍須不斷求變，以迎合新世代顧客不同口味。」

「所以去年我們推出流心奶皇、宇治抹茶紅豆、日本黑芝麻口味的曲奇皮系列月餅，並配以時尚的包裝設計，反應極佳，吸引大量年青捧場客。今年100周年更特別推出懷舊復刻版「八星報喜」限定禮盒，沿用當年經典的迷你七星伴五黃設計圖案，充滿香港情懷，相信會受市場歡迎。」

假貨層出不窮 防範勝於一切

有麝自然香，但同時招來不法商人覬覦。曾有老顧客攜帶當時新包裝設計的月餅，到恆香門市抱怨月餅比以往遜色、缺乏濃郁口感，查証後發現原來顧客買了假貨。月餅盒上雖有雷射防偽標籤，但偽冒品上亦有相似標籤，令顧客難以分辨。公司遂決定採用GS1 HK「真的碼」方案，讓抄襲者難以複製、消費者「碼」上辨真偽。

Prevention is Better than Cure for Counterfeits

The company's success has put them under the radar of unscrupulous merchants. There was once a loyal customer who brought a then-new mooncake package to one of Hang Heung's retail shops, complaining about poor quality and taste. They later found out the mooncakes were not made by them. They had put in place a hologram anti-counterfeit label on the package, but unsurprisingly, they found a similar forged hologram on the counterfeit box, making it difficult for consumers to authenticate by naked eyes. They thus decided to adopt GS1 HK REAL Barcode solution to prevent counterfeits and offer consumers instant product authentication by simply scanning a barcode.

"We were once notified of the production of fake Hang Heung mooncakes at a factory in a certain province in Mainland China. I went there to verify and report the counterfeit case but it was time-consuming and exhausting. We also found an illegitimate company acted on behalf of us, by switching the character of our brand. All these show that copycats are difficult to trace and almost impossible to completely annihilate. We think it's more cost effective to educate consumers to distinguish between the real and fake products."



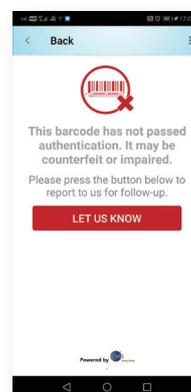
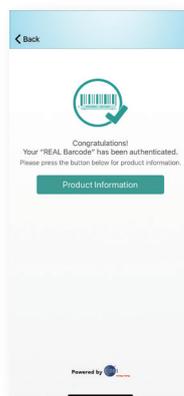
「曾收到消息，內地某省市的廠房正在生產恆香月餅，我便親身到內地驗證舉報，但費時失事；亦有公司以『老恆香餅家』來冒認我們，手法可說是層出不窮、數之不盡。所以教育消費者本身去認清假貨，可能更化算。」

REAL Barcode solution combines GS1 barcode with patented anti-forgery micro printing technology to prevent counterfeits. When consumers scan the REAL barcode / QR code with any mobile device using any app, REAL Barcode app will be activated to do a simple scan and perform product authentication instantly.

「真的碼」方案是一個綜合條碼，融合了多層防修改保安塗層及GS1標準條碼，以及微印刷(micro-print)加密專利技術，能有效防止條碼被複製。當消費者以手機程式掃描該標籤，便會啟動本會「真的碼」手機app掃描條碼，立刻驗證產品真偽。



1 Consumers scan the REAL QR Code with "REAL Barcode" mobile app. 消費者掃描產品上的「真的碼」防偽標籤，便會啟動GS1 HK「真的碼」手機app掃描條碼。



2 Consumers can obtain immediate results from REAL Barcode app and verify product authenticity. 程式會彈出驗證畫面，即時得知產品真偽。



Authenticate Mooncakes and Collect Data Using Barcode Scan

Hang Heung plans to print REAL Barcode label integrated with hologram design onto every mooncake package this year. "Customers are interested in interacting with brand owners in addition to getting high-quality products. This solution not only enables customers to easily verify product authenticity, but also direct them to our online store, facilitating O2O cross selling. We'll keep the anti-counterfeit hologram design to help the elderlies who are not familiar with technologies to have basic verification." Hang Heung has been listening to consumers' opinions and understanding their needs, in hope to strengthen the connection and experience between the brand and consumers continuously.

Desmond acknowledged that the ability to capture data behind the scan activities is key of this solution. "By collecting customer data such as location and time through the REAL barcode scan, our company can gain better insights and make data-driven decisions."

CEO Rolling up Sleeves to Change

Transformation is no easy task. It involves changing a corporate system, and more importantly the adaptation and transition of hundreds of employees and suppliers. For Hang Heung, traditional craftsmanship and product quality must not be sacrificed. "Rome wasn't built in a day, and so does company transformation. We started our own online store www.hangheung.com.hk just in 2019. We took baby steps to open online shops on e-marketplaces like HKTVmall, Zstore and Lazada, before we test the water to expand our online presence on Tmall in the future. The most difficult part in the transformation is delivery. We need to keep our pastries hot and our egg rolls in good condition. Only then we can gain more loyal customers."

Hang Heung opened a pop-up store in Singapore before. Its pastry chef flew there to produce hot, fresh-from-the-oven Wife Cake and other pastries in the store, and attracted loads of local customers. Desmond believes South East Asia will be a key market for Hang Heung in the future. The company is developing frozen pastries for sales in overseas market, allowing consumers to simply bake the pastries hot and serve right away.

A very hands-on kind of executive, Desmond knew inside out his company from business development strategy to details of lotus seed and egg yolks supply. Perhaps it is this commitment and tenacity that makes Hang Heung continues to shine and thrive in the domestic and global markets for years.

掃碼辨月餅真偽 收集數據部署策略

恆香計劃在今年各款月餅包裝上貼上融合雷射防偽技術的「真的碼」標籤。「現時顧客除了期望優質產品，更想與品牌互動。方案既讓顧客分辨真偽貨，又可以連接到公司網店，鼓勵線上線下交叉銷售。我們同時保持雷射防偽設計，讓不諳科技的長輩仍可作基本分辨。」恆香平日用心聆聽消費者意見，明白消費者需要，才做到提升品牌與消費者關聯及體驗。

王偉樑認為方案背後所收集的數據才是癥結所在。「公司能透過顧客掃描，收集顧客所在地點、時間等，有助我們簡單分析、精準決策。」



親力親為 轉型求變

轉型不易，牽涉的不止是公司系統，更是數百名員工、供應商適應和轉變的過程，同時要保持傳統工藝及產品品質。「我相信轉型並非一蹴而至。我們於2019建立自家網店 www.hangheung.com.hk，才逐步在HKTVmall、Zstore、Lazada等平台開店，未來會在Tmall試水溫。過程中最困難的是送貨，必須確保酥餅熱辣辣、蛋卷不會碎成一團，有品質才有回頭客。」

恆香曾在新加坡開設pop-up store，特地請製餅師傅飛往當地、即製熱呼呼的老婆餅及其他餅食，大受當地人歡迎。王偉樑稱未來東南亞是重要發展市場，正研發冰鮮餅食銷往外地，食客只需焗熟便可。

訪問過程中王偉樑由業務方向策略、以至供應商的蓮子/咸蛋黃大小均瞭如指掌，可見他對生意親力親為、傾盡全力。相信是這種嚴謹和堅持，恆香才能一直備受本地人愛戴，同時馳名海外。

