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Press Release

SPEAK MANDARIN CAMPAIGN 2007/2008 FACTSHEET

Now into its 29th year, the Speak Mandarin Campaign (SMC) was first launched in 1979 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, with the main objective of encouraging Chinese Singaporeans to speak Mandarin as a common language instead of using dialects. This proved to be very successful, and since the 1990s, the campaign realigned its focus towards encouraging English-speaking Chinese professionals and young people to learn and speak Mandarin in their daily lives.

While the Campaign highlights the use of Mandarin for economic and business competitiveness, it also strongly promotes Mandarin as an avenue to understanding one's roots and Chinese culture. In the last three years, a lifestyle oriented approach is being used to reach out to and engage Singapore's English-speaking Chinese professionals and youth, particularly those in the 'post-65 generation'. Using the tagline '华语COOL', SMC collaborates with leisure, lifestyle and entertainment partners to reach out in a light and non-intrusive way to effectively touch the hearts and minds of this target group.

Target Audience

English Speaking Chinese Singaporeans (Primary target)

The primary target audience that the campaign focuses on is the post-1965 English Speaking Chinese Singaporeans. They can be further characterized as Professionals, Managers, Executives and Businessmen (PMEBs) in their 30s and 40s, Youth – people aged between 15-29 and students aged below 15.

Mandarin Speaking Singaporeans (Secondary target)

The secondary target audience for the campaign are the Chinese Singaporeans who comfortably use Mandarin in their everyday lives as their main language of business as well as communication.



Objectives & Approach

English-speaking Chinese Singaporeans

The Speak Mandarin Campaign adopts a non-intrusive lifestyle approach, via the use of movies, music and pop culture, to position Mandarin as a fun and enjoyable language.

These entry points shift the mindset of Mandarin being a difficult language to master to one which everyone can choose to be open to encountering via our everyday activities.

Mandarin-speaking Singaporeans

The Speak Mandarin Campaign aims to draw their attention to speaking better Mandarin and a deeper appreciation of Chinese culture. This goes beyond just using Mandarin as a functional language but to a better appreciation of the beauty of Mandarin, which is not only succinct but also extremely visual and aural.

With positioning the language to be hip and cool, the campaign also aims to inspire this group of target audience to take pride in speaking the language well.

The Current Campaign Year SMC 07/08

SMC 07/08 aims to promote Mandarin as an enjoyable, fun and a living language via popular lifestyle activities to show how Chinese Singaporeans can embrace Mandarin in their daily lives. The tagline is “Speak Mandarin - Are You Game?” and in Chinese, “讲华语, 你肯吗?”. The “Speak Mandarin Are You Game!” intimates and reminds our target audience that most Singaporeans have learnt Mandarin in school and can speak Mandarin. SMC also retains its “华语 Cool!” branding which is now familiar and popular among Chinese Singaporeans.

Starting 5 November 2007, the campaign will run for 12 months, featuring a series of fun and engaging programmes and activities by its partners. Key strands of SMC 07/08 are **Sports, Culture** and **The Arts, Design and Lifestyle**. More details of the campaign and partners as well as the events calendar are available online at www.mandarin.org.sg.