

## EMBRACING THE INTERNET

## Getting wired the Gen Y way

The National Heritage Board's Kimberly Shen collaborates with the public on *Yesterday.sg*.



For this Net-savvy group, personal fulfilment matters

HEDIRMAN SUPIAN  
hedirman@mediacorp.com.sg

MS CELESTINE Chua, 24, quit her \$70,000-a-year job as an assistant brand manager for a Fortune 100 company last year to become a personal development coach. She created *CelestineChua.com*, where she blogs about the topic and advertises her services as a coach, speaker and blogger.

It's not quite the conventional career path most would take. Ms Chua hails from Gen Y – a generation lauded for actively using the tools and reach of the Web to their advantage.

"I'm really passionate about bringing the best out in others. The website provided an avenue for creating value when I share my best advice through it," Ms Chua said.

"My peers and I have much more freedom to do what we want to do. We're not tied to traditions. Somehow, the almost limitless choices that we're used to having online and with everything else digital – from TV channels, YouTube movies and MP3 files – have translated into how we lead our lives."

Indeed, according to Mr Don Tapscott,

author of *Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World*, the focus on freedom of choice and the ability to customise everything – from Facebook profiles to blogs – are some of the defining characteristics of the Gen Y crowd. The increased exposure to information and the constant multi-tasking have wired Gen Y brains differently.

"My generation, the baby boomers, spent 24 hours a week watching TV. When you're the passive recipient of video, that gives you a certain kind of brain," explained Mr Tapscott, who was in Singapore recently for the SAS Premier Business Leadership Series event. "Young people today who have grown up using technology are using an equivalent amount of time being active users instead. They're handling information, thinking, scrutinising, multi-tasking." The new generation, he added, also cares about social justice and are natural collaborators.

Ms Kimberly Shen, an assistant manager at the National Heritage Board, actively collaborates with the public on *Yesterday.sg*, the world's third top museum blog.

"Crowd-sourcing works really well for us. Instead of the usual history textbook lesson, we encourage people to capture their own history or investigate parts of their cultural identity," said Ms Shen.

*Yesterday.sg* has more than 3,500 registered members. Ms Shen has received YouTube videos of people documenting their

personal experiences with Singapore's history. Recently, a mother-and-daughter team made a video on how they hunted down Singapore's first public drinking fountain.

In his book, Mr Tapscott notes that the new breed of constantly wired people tend to authenticate the validity of anything that comes their way because of the amount of information they have to process. But because trends and technology change at a breathless pace, Gen Y is used to rapid innovation and events happening and changing at a whirlwind pace, too.

Try telling that to Xavier Lu, 15, from Maris Stella Secondary School who heads a team of seven student contributors for *techxav.com*. The blog gets more than 30,000 visitors a month and has one of Singapore's top Twitter accounts with more than 124,000 followers (Xiaxue has 13,571 and mrbrown has 5,380).

The students filter through lots of news on technology and cover the newsworthy ones on the blog. They pen opinion pieces as well, advising you on which browsers to use and giving their own take on Twitter.

If there's one thing that this generation is known for, Mr Tapscott noted, is that they try to pair what they love with what they do.

Said Xavier: "It might look like a lot of work but we don't see it that way. It's fun and I like technology. It's important to do what you love. I want to do well but money is secondary for now."

## A little shooter crammed full of features

DIGITAL CAMERA REVIEW  
SAMSUNG 2VIEW ST550

DIGITAL compact cameras these days are stuffed with plenty of innovative features, from three-dimensional imaging sensors to mini projectors. Samsung's latest 2View ST550 camera (below, \$549, with free 8GB microSD card) boasts two liquid crystal displays (LCDs) – a front 1.5-inch LCD and a rear 3.5-inch high-resolution touchscreen LCD.

With such a large touchscreen, there is not much need for buttons. Only the power, optical zoom, shutter release and play buttons sit at the top right corner of the camera. All other settings are controlled via the easy-to-use touchscreen.

The sleek 19.1mm-thin camera packs a 12.2-megapixel image sensor and a 4.6x (27-124mm equivalent of 35mm) optical zoom lens. Thanks to Samsung's Smart Gesture User Interface with gravity sensor, you simply tap the front LCD to activate the self-portrait mode with smile detection. Smile, and your picture is taken. This is a fantastic icebreaker and crowd puller at parties.

However, the smile detection can be too sensitive – once you show your gleaming teeth, the camera grabs a shot. This can be pretty frustrating when you are shooting group pictures, unless you are able to synchronise everyone's smiles.

But you no longer have to hurry back to your group when you shoot in self-timer mode. The front LCD displays the countdown from three to one, so that you know when to stand and smile.

The camera also touts a Children mode, which plays a clown animation to get your

kid's attention. Though I find the clown kind of scary, my nephews seemed amused by it and kept still while I took their pictures.

Battery life appears erratic. On a recent overseas trip, I found the battery dipping dangerously low when I had only shot a one-minute video clip and taken fewer than 80 pictures. The battery level also seems to fluctuate every time I switch on the camera.

It takes around 2.2 seconds to power up the ST550 and 1.5 seconds to shut it down. There is also a slight shutter lag of around 0.5 seconds.

Picture quality is not bad, with smooth skin tones, good colours and nice gradation of tones from shadows to highlights, even at night. However, there seems to be too much sharpening done by the image processor, which causes mild pixel degradation. At ISO 200, you start to notice the noise artifacts; at ISO 400, the noise level becomes evident.

The quality of the 720p high-definition video clips in H.264 format is admirable. Images are crisp, and ambient noise is minimal.

TREVOR TAN

## TECH IN ADDITION

## FAMILY FUN AT WII SPORTS RESORT

Get your family down to Ngee Ann City this weekend to try out Nintendo's latest sports title, *Wii Sports Resort*.

The game relies on the new MotionPlus accessory to capture more accurate movements. You can try out 12 different types of sports that take advantage of MotionPlus. You can skim the waves by wakeboarding and aim for the bull's eye in archery. There's also golf, basketball, table tennis and cycling.

Local sports personalities will make an appearance at the event, including Singapore's Sportswoman of 2009 winner Jasmine Yeong-Nathan, Remy Ong from the Singapore Bowling National Team and former Singapore Lions captain Aide Iskandar.

Venue: Ngee Ann City

Date: Saturday (11am – 9pm), Sunday (11am – 7pm)



Screenshots from *Wii Sports Resort*.

