

Russell Reynolds Associates' *Conversations on Convergence* features the thoughts and ideas of top decision makers in the world of convergence. We are helping to cut through the hype around this topic by speaking directly with those who are defining the future of this industry. Read them all on our Web site at www.russellreynolds.com.



Conversations on Convergence: No. 1, 2009



Richard B. Kimber, Chief Executive Officer, Friendster

Richard Kimber is CEO of Friendster, a leading global online social network. He leads Friendster's global business, guiding the company's operations in Asia as well as the United States.

Richard has strong Internet credentials, a notable track record of managing operations in several international locations, a deep network and knowledge of the Asia Pacific region, experience in consumer Internet monetization and strategy, marketing and sales expertise.

Before joining Friendster, Richard was the regional managing director of South Asia at Google, where he successfully led business operations and strategic partnerships across the region. Prior to that, he was the CEO of FirstDirect Bank in the UK and worked in senior roles in the USA and Hong Kong. Richard holds an MBA in Strategy and Finance and a BSc in Psychology and Statistics from Macquarie University in Australia.

Q. What is your assessment of the current state of the convergence space?

A. Convergence is a very exciting domain for us: social media is essentially the convergence of

“Social media is essentially the convergence of entertainment, communication and the Internet.”

entertainment, communication and the Internet. We're seeing constant activity across all fronts. Convergence is changing the very way that content is distributed and exchanged. Mobile phones are playing a big role in convergence, too.

Today's mobile handsets are Internet-access devices, so that changes everything.

Q. What are some of the things going on in this space now?

A. First of all, people are definitely spending much more time on social networking—it's becoming a destination. For example, Friendster is a portal for our users: it's a starting point from which people access the rest of the web.

We're also seeing very interesting things happen with singers and music groups: the Internet is powering the launch and the success of a variety of new artists in Asia. All sorts of specific genres of music here have huge followings. In fact, Friendster is working with Asian artists to get exclusive content, and to develop ways that artists can interact directly with fans to set up concert tours.

Q. What challenges does convergence bring to your company?

A. Much of what we're doing now is very “cutting edge.” Some people we speak with about partnerships want proven business models before they agree to certain deals, but there just isn't any history available for a

“There is no blueprint yet for how this will all play out.”

lot of these opportunities! There is no blueprint yet for how this will all play out, especially in Asia where there are so many different economies and cultures and ways of doing business. Being nimble is clearly a key attribute for success.



Q. Are there any special opportunities that come from being in the Asian market?

A. Well, one opportunity is certainly the scale of the region: this region has an enormous population. The potential for growth here is tremendous. Another opportunity is the widespread penetration

“Social networking by mobile phone now represents a big part of mobile data traffic.”

of mobile phones. Mobile broadband is popular in Asia, and it’s growing. Social networking by mobile phone represents a big part of mobile data traffic. In fact, Friendster is a top-5 global generator of mobile Internet traffic on

a global basis. Our brand has a real resonance throughout Asia; we’re looking to leverage it as a “white-label” service.

Q. What are the human capital implications?

A. We need people with experience in Asia; people who know how things are done in Asia; people

“We have too much to do and not enough people to help us do it.”

who have relationships built upon trust already in place across the region. We need people who know and understand the Internet and who have experience with different

kinds of media and different kinds of content. And we need people who understand mobile phones and the mobile Internet. Unfortunately, people with this combination of skills aren’t exactly hanging thick on trees! Right now, we have too much to do and not enough people to help us do it.

Q. How important is innovation? How important is content?

A. Innovation is extremely important: We spend 99% of our time working to innovate, and 1% working on what already exists. Content is also very important of course, but technology is a bigger challenge right now. Our site is evolving all the time. We’re scaling our platforms, adding

new features and functions. We’re looking for ways that technology can help us deliver a whole range of value-added services, like music and games.

Q. What do you see on the horizon?

A. Convergence isn’t just a theory, it’s a reality. Convergence is going to change the balance of power in a lot of industries.

Think about our reach and distribution as compared to other mass media; we have incredible depth and granularity in our user data. We have very precise data about who “watches” our “shows.” We also know a lot of demographic data about who forwards content, and about who they forwarded it to, and about what those people then did with it. These insights are increasingly important. These aren’t just industries converging, these are industries colliding! We are going to see dramatic changes in the power dynamics through these structural shifts.

“These aren’t industries converging, these are industries colliding! We’re going to see dramatic changes in the power dynamics.”

About Russell Reynolds Associates

Leadership. In today's ever-changing global business environment, success is driven by the talent, vision and leadership capabilities of senior executives.

Russell Reynolds Associates is a leading global executive search and assessment firm with more than 300 consultants based in 39 offices worldwide. Our consultants work closely with public and private organizations to identify, assess and recruit senior executives and board members to drive long-term growth and success. We value teamwork, serving our clients with a collaborative approach that spans our international network of sector and functional experts.

Our in-depth knowledge of major industries and our clients' specific business challenges, combined with our understanding of who and what makes an effective leader ensure that our clients secure the best leadership teams for the ongoing success of their businesses. For more information, please visit us at www.russellreynolds.com.

Our Communications and Convergence Practice

The Russell Reynolds Associates' Communications and Convergence Practice sits at the intersection of dynamic digital content, which is reshaping the way we work and play, and wireless and broadband networks, which keep us connected seamlessly around the globe. We also have significant experience in helping our clients recruit in the managed services and outsourcing areas. The combination of our experience with service providers as well as infrastructure solution providers (who design, build, and deploy their platforms and networks) allows us to work at the forefront of technologies including IPTV, WiMAX, FTTx, IMS, Ethernet, 3G/4G and VoIP. Finally, our success with assisting media and content providers and aggregators to leverage these powerful new technologies positions us at the heart of the convergence movement as the key human capital solutions provider on a global basis.

© 2009 Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc. Trademarks and brands mentioned herein are the property of their respective rights holders.

Americas

Atlanta

1180 Peachtree St., NE
Suite 2250
Atlanta, GA 30309-3521
United States of America
Tel: +1-404-577-3000

Boston

One Federal Street
25th Floor
Boston, MA 02110-1007
United States of America
Tel: +1-617-523-1111

Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires Plaza
Manuela Sáenz 323
Seventh Floor, Suites 14 and 15
C1107CBP Buenos Aires
Argentina
Tel: +54-11-4118-8900

Chicago

200 South Wacker Drive
Suite 2900
Chicago, IL 60606-5802
United States of America
Tel: +1-312-993-9696

Dallas

8401 N. Central Expressway
Suite 650
Dallas, TX 75225-4404
United States of America
Tel: +1-214-220-2033

Houston

600 Travis Street
Suite 2200
Houston, TX 77002-2901
United States of America
Tel: +1-713-754-5995

Los Angeles

11100 Santa Monica Blvd.
Suite 350
Los Angeles, CA 90025-3384
United States of America
Tel: +1-310-775-8940

Menlo Park

2500 Sand Hill Road
Suite 105
Menlo Park, CA 94025-7015
United States of America
Tel: +1-650-233-2400

Mexico City

Torre Reforma
Paseo de la Reforma
115-1502
Lomas de Chapultepec
11000 México, D.F.
México
Tel: +52-55-5249-5130

Minneapolis/St. Paul

225 South Sixth Street
Suite 2550
Minneapolis, MN 55402-3900
United States of America
Tel: +1-612-332-6966

New York

200 Park Avenue
Suite 2300
New York, NY 10166-0002
United States of America
Tel: +1-212-351-2000

San Francisco

101 California Street
Suite 2900
San Francisco, CA 94111-5829
United States of America
Tel: +1-415-352-3300

São Paulo

Av. Nações Unidas, 8.501
11º Andar
05425-070 São Paulo
Brazil
Tel: +55-11-3566-2400

Stamford

301 Tresser Boulevard
Suite 1210
Stamford, CT 06901-3250
United States of America
Tel: +1-203-905-3341

Toronto

Scotia Plaza, Suite 3410
40 King Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 3Y2
Canada
Tel: +1-416-364-3355

Washington, D.C.

1701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20006-5810
United States of America
Tel: +1-202-654-7800

Asia/Pacific

Beijing

Suite 1320, China World Tower I
No. 1 Jian Guo Men Wai Avenue
Beijing 100004
China
Tel: +86-10-6505-2688

Hong Kong

Room 1801, Alexandra House
18 Chater Road Central
Hong Kong
Tel: +852-2523-9123

Melbourne

15th Floor
Bourke Place
600 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Australia
Tel: +61-3-9603-1300

Mumbai

Unit 9(A), Grand Hyatt Plaza
Santacruz (East)
Mumbai 400 055
India
Tel: +91-22-6733-2222

New Delhi

A4, Tower A
The Qutab Hotel and Apartments
Shaheed Jeet Sing Marg
New Delhi 110 116
India
Tel: +91-11-4603-4600

Shanghai

Room 4504, Jin Mao Tower
88 Century Avenue
Pudong, Shanghai 200121
China
Tel: +86-21-6163-0888

Singapore

2 Shenton Way
#08-01 SGX Centre 1
Singapore 068804
Singapore
Tel: +65-6225-1811

Sydney

Level 40 Aurora Place
88 Phillip Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia
Tel: +61-2-9258-3100

Tokyo

Izumi Garden Tower 14F
1-6-1 Roppongi
Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-6014
Japan
Tel: +81-3-5114-3700

Europe

Amsterdam

World Trade Center
Tower H, 18th Floor
Zuidplein 148
1077 XV Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31-20-305-7630

Barcelona

Edificio Prisma
Avda. Diagonal, 613, 2ªA
08028 Barcelona
Spain
Tel: +34-93-494-9400

Brussels

Boulevard St.-Michel 27
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32-2-743-12-20

Copenhagen

Østergade 1, 1st Floor
DK-1100 Copenhagen K
Denmark
Tel: +45-33-69-23-20

Frankfurt

MesseTurm
60308 Frankfurt/Main
Germany
Tel: +49-69-75-60-90-0

Hamburg

Stadthausbrücke
1-3/Fleethof
20355 Hamburg
Germany
Tel: +49-40-480-661-0

London

24 St. James's Square
London SW1Y 4HZ
United Kingdom
Tel: +44-20-7839-7788

Madrid

Calle Miguel Angel, 11
Seventh Floor
28010 Madrid
Spain
Tel: +34-91-319-7100

Milan

Via Mascheroni, 5
20123 Milan
Italy
Tel: +39-02-430-0151

Munich

Ludwigstraße 7
80539 Munich
Germany
Tel: +49-89-24-89-81-3

Paris

7, Place Vendôme
75001 Paris
France
Tel: +33-1-49-26-13-00

Stockholm

Hamngatan 27
SE-111 47 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel: +46-8-545-074-40

Warsaw

Belvedere Plaza
ul. Belwederska 23
00-761 Warsaw
Poland
Tel: +48-22-851-68-38

Zürich

Genferstrasse 21
8002 Zürich
Switzerland
Tel: +41-44-447-30-30