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In-Focus: Up close with Roger Yuen, Councilor of SITF & CEO/Founder of Clozette

Roger Yuen lives by a "die-die must-do list" that keeps on him track every week.

"I aim to run 5km every day; I struggle but I am managing to do it three or four days a week. I travel a lot, but I aim to be home by the weekend. I set a date with my family to have a nice dinner every Friday, barring emergencies."

It is this penchant for setting goals that has enabled Roger to effectively juggle his roles as entrepreneur, SITF councillor, husband and father.

As a "child of the Internet era", Roger has worked for the likes of Softbank Forum, Ziff-Davis, ZDNet and CNet, and honed his entrepreneurial instincts with these organisations. "The mantra of these companies then was that the Internet will change the way we live, work and play. It's true and still holds true," he says.

The industry, with its "infinite possibilities" for changing lives, continues to fascinate him. He went on to co-found managed security services company e-Cop and is a seed investor and Board member of social media monitoring firm Brandtology. His latest venture is as founder and Chief Executive Officer of Clozette, a fashion social network.



Roger Yuen with his team @ & Clozette

Clozette provides a virtual platform for fashion brands, retailers, designers and artisans to engage and interact with consumers and fashionistas. Driven by user-generated fashion content, it delivers insights and analytics about consumers' preferences and what is trending in the world of fashion and style.

"I'm very proud of Clozette," says Roger. The company has received funding from SEED Ventures IV, a fund under the Singapore National Research Foundation managed by Walden International, and established a partnership with Glam Media, the world's largest women-focused online media company with more than 200 million users worldwide. It has been successful in garnering support from marquee luxury and fashion brands, and it has given Roger an opportunity to "marry Silicon Valley and High Street fashion and explore the metrosexual aspects of my nature in my mature years".

Asked for the reason behind his drive and the secret behind his successes, Roger likes to quote American football coach Vince Lombardi: "The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary."

"I believe strongly in this philosophy; and that Lady Luck needs to smile upon you," he says.

He acknowledges that his work ethic makes him somewhat demanding as a boss. "I like things done immediately and am anal about punctuality," he says.



Roger with his family

But he also knows better than to bring this work ethic home. "My wife says I still act like a CEO at home and she brings me down to earth," he says. "I try to focus on the family when home and make effort to connect with my two sons and be a fun dad."



Roger with his sons in one exotic holiday

Away from work, Roger likes holidaying in exotic places with the family, spending time on the beach, and lists golf and reading crime mysteries among his favourite pastimes. But most of all, he loves to cook. He likes nothing better than to dream up interesting recipes and experiment with them, and has even appeared on a few food programmes on television.

For Roger, it looks like Internet entrepreneurship is not the only passion that is burning. "I started cooking before I was 10 and that fire is still in me," he says.