

WISESPOT'S PHILOSOPHY FOR SUCCESS : ALWAYS FINISH WHAT YOU'VE STARTED & NEVER FEAR DIFFICULTY

WISESPOT 的成功哲學：
專挑難事「貫徹始終」

Interviewed by Mr. Sutton Cheung



"We've put great emphasis into the development of new solutions that are based on the latest technology. Without innovation, there can be no sustainable & long-term value," said **Mr. Franky Lai, Chairman & CEO of WiseSpot Company Limited.**

斯博有限公司主席及行政總裁賴永雄：“不創新便沒有持續及長遠的價值，我十分重視利用新技術來研發新產品的執行力。”

Founded in 2001 in Hong Kong, WiseSpot specializes in the development of innovative technologies & products for the telecommunication industry, is well versed in the latest fixed, mobile & IP data technologies, and featured the development of the world's first GSM Music RingBack Tone system as its initial claim to fame. Through the years, WiseSpot has been committed to their capabilities in creating, implementing and integrating best-in-class solutions to support their clients' business needs and operations, from account servicing, product development to after-sales maintenance. Currently, WiseSpot's service foot print spans from Greater China to Singapore, Australia, UK & USA.

As communication technologies continue to evolve, global telecommunication providers are faced with the retardation of subscriber growth, attrition of revenue, and the competition from dot-com service providers. In particular, the encroachment from those emerging OTT services on traditional Telco revenue streams such as voice telephony, IDD & SMS have forced network operators to seek innovative technologies in order to develop new income sources and to trim operating cost. In response to these market trends, WiseSpot has always viewed "Sustained Innovation" as a key factor to the Company's continued success. "Without innovation, there can be no sustainable & long-term value," said Mr. Franky Lai, Chairman & CEO of WiseSpot Company Limited.

World's First GSM RingBack Tone Technology

Franky believes in the importance for a company to be accepted in a specific business area, then move on to get recognition. Hence, WiseSpot has focused primarily on telecommunication applications from day one, pursuing the development of technical solutions that are not yet available in the market. If a new product gains traction, market recognition will ensue. About the Company's implementation of the world's first GSM RingBack Tone solution, "At that time, music ringback tone service was only available on Korea's CDMA network. When we noticed that Hong Kong's telecom operators were looking for ways to expand their income from existing mobile ringtone business, we focused on developing a GSM version of the music ringback tone application, which turned out to be successful," added Mr. Lai. WiseSpot



斯博有限公司 (WiseSpot Company Limited) 於2001年在香港成立，專注於研發電訊業的創新技術與應用項目，精通最新的固網、流動與IP數據技術，並曾以開發出全世界第一台GSM接駁鈴聲系統而馳名海外。WiseSpot多年來堅守業務理念，不斷提升產品創新和專案開發執行的能力，從客戶服務、產品研發至上線後的維修保養均能兼顧。現時，斯博的服務範圍涵蓋大中華地區、新加坡、澳洲、英國及美國。

隨著通訊技術的持續演進，全球電訊商均面對用戶增長放緩、通訊業務收益下降與科網競爭者的威脅。特別是新興的網上應用服務 (Over-the-top, OTT) 不斷蠶食傳統網絡商的語音、長途電話及短訊等收益，逼使電訊網絡商尋求創新技術來開源節流。專攻通訊技術與應用的WiseSpot亦因此視「不斷創新」為公司賴以持續發展的命脈，WiseSpot主席及行政總裁賴永雄指出：「我們不搞創新便沒有持續及長遠的價值，因此我十分重視研發新技術的執行力。」

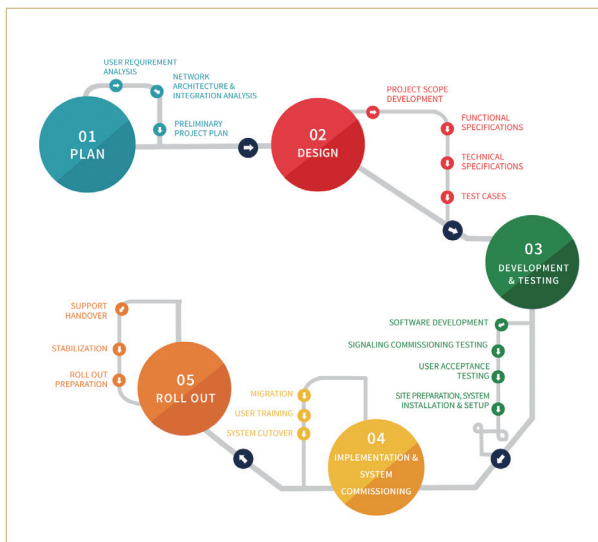
首創GSM接駁鈴聲技術

賴永雄認為一家公司最重要是能在某一業務範疇得到認

provided end-to-end service to telcos on profit sharing basis for both the GSM ringback tone solution and its content management system, from development, installation, implementation, content management operations & maintenance. This service was well received across China, Taiwan & Hong Kong, expanded from music ringback tones to encompass advertising ringback tones as well, thereby establishing a foundation for “Music + Advertising” profits revenue model. Till now, WiseSpot’s differentiations are still firmly grounded in communication network signaling protocols, SIP based applications, database development & Java technology development.

Pick the Best One & Perform The Best

Development of new applications requires technical capabilities, market needs assessment & risk management skills. Any lapse will lead to wastage in manpower, resources, time & opportunity. To safeguard, WiseSpot has established a “Focus Group” process for project selection. From experience, WiseSpot will only select 1-2 projects out of every 10 proposed to focus on for further development. When a product is well researched and developed, there will be bound to be market demand. “Globalized competition has brought on enormous restrictions and pressure on R&D. Sometimes, when you finally complete the development of the hottest technology, the market might have already diminished. This is why we put a lot of emphasize on the pre-development evaluation and in-progress implementation abilities,” Franky added.



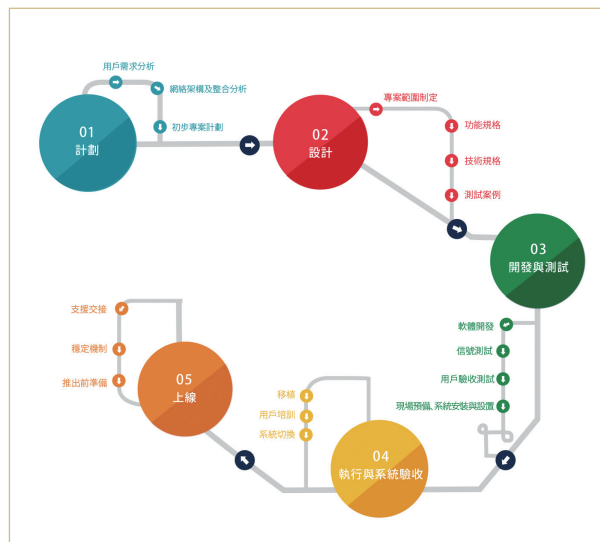
WiseSpot Work flow: Development of new applications requires technical capabilities, market needs assessment & risk management skills.

WiseSpot’s Focus Group is comprised of the Company’s senior management. Its foremost task is to guide fellow colleagues to understand the importance of optimal allocation of the Company’s limited resources. The difficulty of this task lies in the fact that the Company can only focus on 1-2 out of every 10 projects proposed, even though they may all have demonstrated market needs. Therefore, the Focus Group must weigh in on which projects could likely be the most beneficial to the Company, do not deviate from our core competence and can keep the Company on track. Secondly, the Group must be firm towards selecting projects with time-to-market within the next 18-24

同，從而為人認識，因此在創立WiseSpot時以電訊應用為主，追求市場上還沒有的技術產品研發項目，一旦成功便會令市場銘記。關於該公司曾研發世界首創的GSM接駁鈴聲系統，他表示：「當年電訊商希望在手機鈴聲服務的基礎上開發更多元化的收入源。當我們眼見只有韓國CDMA網絡提供接駁鈴聲服務，於是我們便專心在GSM網絡上開發該項應用，並取得成功。」WiseSpot包辦了GSM接駁鈴聲應用及其內容管理系統的開發、安裝、上線、內容管理操作及平台維護等工作，並透過分成方法與電訊商共享盈利。多年下來，系統獲中、港、台電訊商廣泛採用，並從音樂鈴聲擴展至廣告鈴聲，確立了「聽音樂+賣廣告」的模式。直到今天，WiseSpot仍擅長於通訊網絡間的信令系統、SIP應用服務、數據庫開發及Java技術開發等能力。

慎選項目做到最好

開發新應用講求技術能力、市場需求評估及風險管理，偶一不慎便會浪費許多人力物力、時間及機會。因此，該公司成立了「焦點團隊（Focus Group）」制度，為公司挑選的開發項目進行把關。根據經驗，平均每10項被點題的新技術只會挑選其中的一至兩項來開發。集中火力做到最好，自然有市場需求。他表示：「全球化競爭為技術開發工作帶來許多限制與壓力，今天視為熱門的



開發新應用講求技術能力、市場需求評估及風險管理，WiseSpot已建立起一套成功工作流程。

技術，可能到完成開發後，市場便萎縮了，因此我們非常強調事前的評估與過程中的執行力。」

焦點團隊由WiseSpot的精煉幹部組成，首要工作是引導公司同事明白有效運用有限企業資源的重要性。它的難度在於，能被點題的10個概念可能全都有市場需求，但公司只能應付其中2個。所以焦點團隊就需要衡量哪個項目對公司未來發展最有利，不會偏離核心競爭力，令公司不會迷失，也免除同事之間爭執。第二，焦點團隊亦需把關，堅持開發適用於未來18至24個月的產品。

months. "Project with long development cycles can be risky as it can negatively impact the Company's deployment of its working capital. On the other hand, for projects under 12 months, the market could be highly competitive with lots of market players. WiseSpot will not have much competitive advantage under such circumstances," Franky explained. For instance, WiseSpot SIP technology is IP-based rather than the traditional SS7 which can't support any 4G LTE network products. "We started to develop cloud IP related application 18 months ago, a time where there are still not a lot of companies looking into this technology. This gave WiseSpot the head start," he added.

Demonstrate Product Instead Of Concept

Franky is a strong believer in "A Picture is Worth A Thousand Words". Rather than simply presenting a concept on paper, he sees the value in being able to physically demonstrate the product. After all, seeing is believing. Once customers see the actual finished product, they will be inclined to use your version to gain time to market, rather than developing their own. However, since the development process is usually abound with uncertainties, how can one be assured of the new product's success to justify continued investments?

"Throughout the R&D process, if we see stronger signs towards market demand while faced with increasingly difficulties in application development, this could well be the time to assess whether there could be competitors working on the same technology, or whether our core competence is in fact adequate for us to complete the development. This could well be the moment to consider finding a reliable technology partner to work together in order for the product to be completed in a timely fashion and ahead of the competition," Franky explained.

Quoting a failed development to illustrate: WiseSpot had planned to develop a social media gateway product a few years ago. Although the company was able to complete the development entirely using internal resources, they chose to outsource to an overseas company. However, project completion was eventually delayed from 18 months to 30 months, ultimately resulting in the termination of the project. Learning from mistakes, Franky formulated the golden rule of "80% In-house; 20% Outsourced" for WiseSpot's subsequent development projects, thus ensuring time-to-market.

Innovative Development Enhance Corporate Cohesion

On day-to-day operation, Franky has 3 major emphases: 1) Financial Planning, with adequate risk evaluation and profit management; 2) Deciding on the direction for future product development via regular Focus Meetings, and 3) Human Resources Management for team adhesion and talent cultivation. WiseSpot has been blessed with a low attrition rate, with investments into innovative technologies being a key reason. Regular new product launches remain key to sustaining corporate growth, and talents are more willing to stay with a Company that can demonstrate prospects. Participation in new product development often allows for the establishment of both professionalism and camaraderie.

他解釋：「若選擇開發周期過長的技術，會影響公司資本運用，風險過大。若選擇12個月內的技術開發項目，則會有許多公司從事，競爭大，沒有市場優勢。」例如WiseSpot開發SIP技術，是基於IP不是舊式SS7，因為SS7不能支援4G LTE的網絡產品。他說：「我們在18個月前已開拓基於雲IP應用概念，以前沒有人接受，這使我們有機會趕在未有競爭對手前推出市場。」



"Focus Group" meeting
焦點團隊會議

不空談概念 重展示成果

賴永雄強調不要跟客戶只談概念，而要做好產品才給客戶看。因為當客戶看到實物後，為了儘快推出市場，便不會花時間自行研發，直接採用WiseSpot的產品。不過，開發過程中充滿變數，如何預測產品會成功而繼續投資？

賴永雄指出：「在研發的過程中，一旦發現市場需求越來越明顯，同時亦感到開發越來越困難的話，就表示需衡量是否有其他公司也正在開發同一技術？或是我們核心能力是否足夠完成開發？這時便要認真考慮是否找可信賴的技術合作夥伴幫手，讓產品能夠儘快上市，搶佔先機。」



Having invested in their own Product Development Centre, WiseSpot insists on new products aimed at the coming 18-24 months to build competitive advantage. Learning from experience, WiseSpot's golden rule for product development: "80% In-house; 20% Outsourced" to ensure time-to-market.

WiseSpot擁有產品研發中心進行大量科研與測試工作，往往開發技術較市場早18至24個月，確保領先優勢。WiseSpot從經驗中摸索出的成功方法，就是「堅持八成自己做，兩成外判」，這能確保科研項目如期推出。

Constant product development and project deadlines can lead to on-the-job work pressure. Therefore, Franky remains hands-on with the Company's human resources management. In addition to reviewing project deadlines, he is also sensitive to whether his team is under major pressure in order for him to step in in a timely fashion. "Knowing when to ask for help is something that my colleagues have to learn in order to deal with pressure. Obviously, I am always ready to help with problem resolution." Franky regularly reviews progress by project code. If he spots irregularities, he will see to its immediate resolution. "If you find that a colleague is unwilling to talk about major problems, and mid-level management was not aware of them in a timely fashion, it is likely necessary to resolve with better methodologies and people." It is with this philosophy of "Choosing The Right Man For The Right Job" that enabled WiseSpot to manage its offices & R&D center located in different cities within Greater China. Combined with expertise in utilizing cutting-edge technology and mastering of market trends, WiseSpot was able to maintain its competitive advantage over the years through the regular launch of novel, best-in-class solutions.

Always Finish What You've Started

There is an ancient wooden table clock in Franky's office which, when paired with a decorative elephant's tusk given to him by a former boss, very aptly reflected his personal motto, work or play - "Always Finish What You've Started". "Every time a new employee joins, I will share this principle with him or her." Reflecting over a career of over 20 years, which included senior management roles at major network operators, Franky has never once resigned because of emotions or for a better package. He will only make a change for new challenges elsewhere when the current position has reached a stalemate. "Never Quit under Pressure. Do your job well, and better prospects will be sure to entail. This applies to both remuneration as well as career development." Franky said.



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賴永雄的辦公室內有一台古老木製座枱鐘，與前老闆送的象牙擺設配對成「貫徹始終」。這恰好就是他做人做事的座右銘。

他談到一個失敗案例，WiseSpot多年前曾計劃開發一個連繫社交網絡的網關技術。雖然該公司有能力自行研發，卻全數外判予一間海外公司負責。可是整個項目研發過程不斷延長，由18個月延至30個月，最終令該項目胎死腹中。汲取箇中經驗，賴永雄為WiseSpot摸索了一條成功方法，就是「堅持八成自己做，兩成外判」，這能確保科研項目如期推出。

創新發展 凝聚向心力

關於日常的管理，賴永雄強調只針對做好三方面，第一是財務計劃，做好風險評估與利潤管理；第二是定期的焦點會議，認真考慮產品的發展方向；第三是人力資源管理，努力維繫及培養人才。該公司人才流失率低，主要原因是持續從事科技創新。定期推出新產品是企業發展的原動力，有新發展自然能留住好人才。透過參與產品開發，不但建立了團隊專業性，更建立了兄弟班的情誼。

當然，不斷研發新技術及追趕項目死線，會令員工感到壓力，所以賴永雄現時工作重任是親自掌控公司的人力資源管理。除檢視項目進度，也留心同事們會否處於巨大壓力之下，適時幫助他們解決難題。他說：「當面對壓力，同事們要學會抽身並找援手，我亦會幫助他們解決難題。」他會檢視同事的工作量，亦會按項目代號（Project Code）來了解各個項目的工作進度及分析問題，若有異常情況會立即處理。」他認為「知人善任」才能解決問題，「若發現同事遇到極大困難卻不願跟你溝通，中層同事又沒有意識到箇中情況，這便要用更好的方法與人才解決。」憑著這套人才管理哲學，讓WiseSpot能有效管理分佈兩岸三地的公司與產品研發中心。再結合高端技術開發並掌握市場趨勢，不斷推出嶄新的頂級應用和解決方案，保持競爭力。

貫徹始終

賴永雄的辦公室內有一台古老木製座枱鐘，與前老闆送的象牙擺設配對成「貫徹始終」。這恰好就是他做人做事的座右銘。他說：「每位新同事加入，我也會向他講述貫徹始終的道理。」回顧過去20多年工作歷程，賴永雄曾在香港多家主電訊商擔任決策與管理工作，從沒有因不開心或其他更好工作而跳槽，每一次轉工都是因為舊工作沒有進步空間，需要嚐試新挑戰而離職。所以他堅信：「Never Quit under Pressure（不要因壓力而離職），做好這份工，前景一定好。無論是薪酬、個人發展皆源自做好目前的工作。」