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THE ONES WHO WILL
HELP SHAPE MALAYSIA'S
DIGITAL ECONOMY



DIGERATI



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Learning to say 'NO'



**SEE WAI HUN,
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**JURIS
TECHNOLOGIES**
CEO

NEARLY two decades years after beginning her entrepreneurial journey, See Wai Hun believes that having a product means nothing without distribution and brand awareness.

But at the same time, she will admit that she is still struggling to get this right. "We're a bunch of geeks in a company with an entrepreneurial culture, despite being around for 18 years."

That company, Juris Technologies Bhd, today owns its own suite of credit management tools used by almost 20 financial institutions.

But she acknowledges that hiring senior talent from established companies has been difficult.

These executives come into Juris Technologies aiming to apply their tried-and-tested processes and knowhow in areas such as project management, only to hit a wall on realising that the company has its own way of managing projects, and does not offer the same support level they have been used to.

They find resistance to their approach, and as a result, they tend to leave.

This leaves Wai Hun with a problem. "How do I build an organisation to sustain our growth and power our expansion regionally? I have tried, but cannot seem to marry external hires into our way of doing things," she says.

The answer, for now, is to create its own training programme to elevate staff performance to the next

level – or to "create our own heroes," as Wai Hun describes it, and more importantly, "Highlight the core values the company identifies itself with."

The core values also serve as an effective filter of potential hires, she says.

This limited talent pool she has to work with puts into context how impressive her achievement has been in building Juris Technologies into a company that has retained earnings in excess of RM10 million.

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The leading market position she has carved for Juris Technologies over the years, coupled with prudent cost discipline, leads her to be in the enviable – or dangerous – position of saying, "We have money, but don't know what to do with it."

She acknowledges that it can be dangerous for entrepreneurs to be in such a situation as it usually leads them to get distracted.

"I have realised that most businesses fail because once they get traction, the entrepreneurs get distracted, and instead of improving the product that won them that traction, they go into different verticals that they are not good at," she says.

She has been there herself. "We hardly took money out of the company and so were sitting on a large pile of retained earnings and I started thinking, those global e-commerce merchants seem to be doing very well.

"[We] ended up launching our own e-commerce site, selling furniture. We were also going into tenders as part of other company's bids," she says.

Fortunately for Wai Hun, she was set right by no less a personality than Chris Zook, author of *Profit From the Core*, which talks about the need for entrepreneurs to build on, and strengthen, their core products to keep competition away and continue to generate revenue.

She met him in New York when attending a 2014 entrepreneur summit he was speaking at. His advice for her to stop working on other businesses and strengthen her core credit management platform left a strong impact.

"We stopped focusing on the e-commerce site and I stopped going into joint tenders, although I have to admit this was tough to do as you are walking away from opportunity," she says.

But that's what strategy is about as well, being able to say, 'No.'