

PRESTIGE

IN APPRECIATION OF THE VERY BEST IN LIFE
AUGUST 2005

YACHTING FOR SUMMER

MAN OF 2000 BUDDHAS
ANTIQUE RUSSIA
WEDDING SPECIAL
WATCH REPORT SPECIAL

PRINCES OF RAJASTHAN

PLUS
Kady Leyau
Triska Ang
Maureen Wee
Dr Eugene Hong
Dr Michael Lim



PARTNERS

In Life and Business

Good things come in pairs, so goes a Chinese saying. If a couple is already happily bound to each other in destiny, why not double the joy by merging in business as well? Three husband-and-wife teams share their thoughts with **Lyn Chan**

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Dr Ernest Rex Tan
and Ms Grace Chong-Tan
Smile Inc. Dental Surgeons

No Teething Problems

When designing the Smile Inc. Dental Surgeons (SDS), Dr Ernest Rex Tan didn't have to look far to find the best person to oversee the job. In fact he didn't have to look outside his own front door, because his wife, fellow founder and director of the practice, Grace Chong-Tan was perfect for the job.

"Her execution skills are legendary," proclaims Dr Tan with an admiring laugh. He adds that her ability to zoom in on the big picture, eye for detail and the perseverance to see projects through has resulted in the rapid growth of the company, which has enjoyed steady growth since opening in 1997. From the moment Dr Tan decided to break away from a lucrative dental partnership to establish his own legacy, while pursuing his vision of transforming Singapore into the region's dental hub, he knew he wanted his wife to be his partner. Dr Tan sums up: "I wanted to make my business a success and with her, I knew it would be," adding, "I didn't even think about what would happen if she turned me down. I was going to cross the bridge when I came to it."

As flattering as the request was, Ms Chong-Tan admits the decision to leave a high-flying corporate position with the Singapore Tourism Board—where she was key to formulating and implementing Singapore's National Tourism Blueprint, Tourism 21—was not without apprehension.

"It was hard to say good-bye, but the challenge to start something new was appealing," she reminisces. The

mother of a four-year-old boy elaborates: "We were about to get married at the time and I re-evaluated my guiding principles. As a wife, how could I not support my husband and his vision?"

Thus, the business wheels of Smile Inc. were set in motion. There was no looking back as husband and wife forged ahead to realise their dream. Today, Smile Inc is a formidable force in the dental industry. The premier cosmetic dental practice has been earning an unblemished reputation for impeccable service and developing groundbreaking concepts, including the Smile Inc Makeover, which uses Laser Teeth Whitening technology to help patients achieve that million-dollar smile.

The dynamic duo attributes the success of their partnership to complementary personalities. "We share the same temperament and we are both very driven," explains Ms Chong-Tan. Dr Tan interjects: "Yes, we share the same level of commitment and we never procrastinate when we've made up our minds. Failure is not an option." This of course, does not mean differing views are non-existent. "Sure we don't always share the same perspective, but we engage in healthy discussions and always come to an agreement. We always keep the business objectives in mind," says Dr Tan. His wife agrees wholeheartedly: "We both want the best for the company." In Dr Tan's view: "Having my wife work with me is the x-factor. It's the best thing ever."

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