

Northeast Asia Regional Program



J. Jenny Hyun | Seoul, KOREA
Marketing Director
Tong Yang Magic

J. Jenny Hyun oversees all product development, design, and marketing activities for Tong Yang Magic, a subsidiary of the Tong Yang Group that manufactures and exports home appliances. As director of original equipment manufacturer (OEM) sourcing, Ms. Hyun is well positioned to implement a company-wide "Green is Magic" initiative she launched in 2010 that includes development of home appliances with energy-saving capabilities and public awareness campaigns in partnership with NGOs and governmental organizations. On her fellowship, Ms. Hyun explored water saving and recycling technologies; effective techniques to market green products to consumers; strategies to gain buy-in when launching organization-wide sustainability initiatives; and ways to effectively lead design teams.

Ms. Hyun met with leaders in government and the private sector for discussions on environmental sustainability, renewable energy initiatives, and marketing sustainability to internal and external constituencies. Discussions were held with entities such as the ENERGY STAR and WaterSense programs; the Department of Energy's Industrial Technologies program; as well as AccountAbility and the Aspen Institute. She discussed strategies to develop and evaluate CSR and environmental initiatives, as well as ways to market a company's new platform to its customers.

Ms. Hyun's fellowship involved conversations regarding best practices in the management of design professionals. She was heartened to learn the challenges she faces are in no way unique. Needing to provide clear direction and strategy to employees valued for their creativity can seem at cross purposes. Discussions at leading design firms such as Ideo, Frog Design and Smart Design revealed ways to empower designers while balancing the needs of the organization, which requires walking a fine line and constantly examining internal policies and practices.

A highlight of Ms. Hyun's fellowship was a visit and tour of Pittsburgh's David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the first "green" convention center in the world. Ms. Hyun received details of the facility's many innovative sustainability design features, including a self-contained water recycling center. Learning how environmental considerations were incorporated into the design and construction of the building provided a tangible example of how sustainability can be practically incorporated into the daily operations of a business.

Ms. Hyun came to an unanticipated conclusion during her program, which is that pursuing an aggressive green strategy may not be the right thing for her company. Though the overall aim is one that is admirable, pursuing a path of sustainability may not be right for every organization. Institutions should undertake a thorough review of the status quo within their organizations in terms of energy usage and other green initiatives before deciding if they wish to pursue a large-scale strategy.

As a result of her fellowship, Ms. Hyun will apply several findings to the marketing and design team at Tong Yang. She plans to "extend brainstorming and need-finding portion of design process" in order for management and designers to have their voices heard from the onset of projects. Prototypes of new design ideas will be created in very rough form in order for designers to see mock-ups of initial designs early in the brainstorming process, and to understand and accept that not all ideas will make it beyond this phase. Lastly, while she has avoided involvement in initial design discussions in the past, Ms. Hyun's fellowship experience made her realize the importance of increased communication with the creative team in order to avoid conflict and misunderstanding of organizational aims and objectives further along in the process.

Leaders bettering the world around them.