

2014 Taiwan Cyber Young Lions Competition Final Brief



The Whole is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts: Taiwan's Energy Crisis, the Big Dilemma of Our Generation

The Client

Thinking Taiwan Foundation (小英教育基金會), led by Tsai Ing-Wen, former chairperson of the Democratic Progressive Party in Taiwan, was established in 2012 to develop charity projects and public policy. The foundation's mission is to further the power of thinking, action and society through deliberation and discussion of public policy, action to show compassion to local communities, and acting as a catalyst for social action through participation.

The Context

Imagine this. You woke up in a hospital and found out both of your legs were amputated from the knees down. The doctor said you were in a very bad car accident and it was the only way to save you. Everything changed. You are no longer able to go wherever you want to go and do whatever you used to do. You are now dependent on your friends, family, even strangers, for many things, including going to the bathroom.

That almost complete dependence on others for daily workings is the same challenge Taiwan faces. With 99% reliance on fuel from abroad, Taiwan would not be able to function if its energy supply sources are disrupted, or worse yet, cut off for more than 30 days, due to very limited oil reserve stockpile. No fuel, no electricity. Now imagine what would happen to you when the country's electric grid runs out of juice. Energy, along with water, food, and environment, are inextricably linked sectors, and that actions in one area will have impacts on more than one of the others. These four sectors are the foundation of a country's national security, and social and economic prosperity and stability.

Is there anything that can be done to make Taiwan more energy self-sufficient? We believe so. We also believe that there are things that must be done, not just for the future generations, but for our generation. We are at a pivotal point where our environment is changing rapidly on an unprecedented scale: climate change is no longer a questionable myth, as the world began 2014 with unusual number of extreme weather events; continuing violence in the Middle East sparked concerns about oil supply disruptions; pollutions in one country travel through air and oceans to other parts of the world; the list goes on.

Our number one foe is ourselves. This second part of the competition challenges your ability to see the big picture and connect the dots. Are you ready? We hope you are, because we are.

The Challenge

- Taiwan is a net energy importer, with 99.23% of the country's energy sources - oil, gas, coal, and nuclear - being imported from other regions/countries including the Middle East, Australia, China, etc. Unlike its American or Chinese counterparts, Taiwan is but a minor player in an international energy market dominated by great power politics, extremely vulnerable to market fluctuation, price volatility, and international political instability. This fact is rarely reported.
- In addition, lacking enough suitable geographical locations to develop renewable energy, Taiwan has very limited options in mitigating its energy security vulnerability.
- Unfortunately, party politics and corporate lobbying also hamper meaningful public policy discussions.
- Mainstream news media outlets are plagued by tabloid journalism, lacking the journalistic ethics and standards necessary to serve as a constructive platform and an intelligent information source for public policy discussion.
- Language barrier also prevents widely-available relevant English sources from being readily accessible to the majority of the Taiwanese public.
- In Europe, where many state governments are very concerned about energy security, the average retail price per 1 litre of unleaded gasoline is NTD 61.50. In Taiwan, under government subsidies, the same 1 litre of unleaded gasoline costs only NTD 35.4; public outcry occurs whenever the fuel price goes up.
- Many people feel apathetic towards the challenges faced by the country. Many people complain yet do not take actions to change.

Objectives

- To raise awareness. By this, we mean making people feel the urgency, and think hard and seriously about Taiwan's energy crisis and future.
- To encourage each social media user to be a behaviour-influencer and action-instigator.
- By April 2015, we would like to see the per capita energy consumption in Taiwan decrease from 10,237 to 8,400 kWh (in Japan, per capita energy consumption in 2010 was 8,399 kWh).

Audience

Everyone.

Mandatories

- We are looking for something that is creative and has the potential to change our society from a deeper level. Think big, think laterally, with passion. **[continue on the next page]**
- Tone of Voice

Positively engaging and encouraging, yet dazzled with a sense of urgency.

- Must be able to depoliticise the energy crisis issue. This important issue has been hijacked by politics for too long.
- The judges will not consider “switching off the lights when they are not in use” as an idea creative enough for this competition. For one, it’s very boring, and two, it has been proposed way too many times.