

谢震  
Jason Xie

# 谢震的 “逆”选择

## Jason Xie: Making Smart Choices

“ ‘人生就是你所有选择的总和’——从1999年选择报考中欧国际工商学院，到2008年初加入艺龙网，再到2011年5月由艺龙网业务拓展副总裁晋升为首席运营官，谢震经历了多次不同寻常的人生选择。”

**诺** 贝尔文学奖获得者、法国文学家与哲学家阿尔贝·加缪曾经说过：“Life is the sum of all your choices.（人生就是你所有选择的总和）”道理虽然朴素，但艺龙网首席运营官谢震（MBA 2000）先生对此却深有体会。

1999年，正在宝洁公司工作的谢震面临着一次重要抉择，是去美国还是在中国读MBA？作为1993年南通市高考理科状元，谢震在南京大学经济学系读书期间依然表现突出，毕业时以优异的成绩被素有职业经理人的“黄埔军校”之称的宝洁公司录取，负责南方某区域的营销业务，优越的工作环境和职业前景不言而喻，但也正是在宝洁的经历让谢震开阔了视野，做出了重回校园的决定。

即使是在14年后，谢震回忆起第一次来到中欧国际工商学院的情景，记忆依然如此清晰。中欧给了他耳目一新的感觉：贝·柯·弗联合设计师事务所（PCF）设计的美丽校园，MBA招生办公室详尽细致的课程介绍，与国际

“ As French writer and philosopher Albert Camus so eloquently put it, 'Life is the sum of all your choices'. Jason Xie chose to join China Europe International Business School in 1999, decided to work for eLong.com in 2008 and assumed the position of Chief Operating Officer at eLong in May 2011. These are just a few of the smart choices he has made so far. ”

文/王晓红 By Wendy Wang

After topping the list of Nantong students who took the National College Entrance Examination (Science) in 1993, Jason Xie went on to do a degree in economics at Nanjing University (NU). Once again graduating at the top of his class at NU, he got an offer from Procter & Gamble (P&G) to work as a member of its sales team, with responsibility for one segment of the South China market. Despite the company's very attractive working environment and career development opportunities, Xie chose to leave in 1999 to do an MBA that would provide him with the theoretical knowledge needed to complement his practical skills. He just had to decide whether to study at an American or Chinese business school. He chose CEIBS.

It was 14 years ago, but Xie can still vividly recall the first time he saw CEIBS' Shanghai Campus. He was

impressed – and surprised. Lovely campus designed by Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, well-designed courses introduced by the admissions office and high-calibre faculty with experience teaching at top-notch international business schools; all these were determining factors that convinced him to stay in China and enrol at CEIBS. His excellent performances in both the written test and the follow-up interview secured him a place.

### **It's more important to decide what not to do**

After graduating from CEIBS, Xie held jobs at Citibank and FedEx. Then in January 2008, he again made a choice that significantly changed his life. He and a number of former P&G colleagues joined eLong.com as senior executives. He served as Vice President of Web and Business Development. At that time, eLong had been listed on the NASDAQ

for four years, but it was still not well-known. It attracted new clients by distributing leaflets in airports and train stations. About 85% of the reservations were made over the phone. Aware of the company's lack of steady progress, the new management made a critical choice to put forward a different strategy. They decided to scrap everything else and focus only on offering an online hotel reservation service.

Choosing what not to do means giving up something; and that requires courage. The new management had no experience in the hotel industry. So giving up on travel and airline ticket booking services, the very areas in which they had experience, would put them under great internal and external pressure. However based on their rich experience in marketing and considerable business acumen, all the new executives reached the same conclusion: the company must push

一流商学院接轨的教授团队……一切都在天平的一端增添了砝码，最终让他放弃了赴美留学的念头，而选择了报考中欧，并以优异的笔试和面试成绩被学院录取。

## “决定不做什么比决定做什么更重要”

中欧毕业之后，谢震曾经在花旗银行、联邦快递担任高管职位。2008年1月，谢震与原先几位在宝洁的同事一起作为新的高管团队加入艺龙，谢震担任网站部与企业发展部副总裁一职，这是他人生的又一次重大选择。当时，艺龙已经在美国上市近四年，但在中国仍是一家名声不响的公司，主要依靠在飞机场和火车站发卡来获取新客户，85%以上的订单来自电话预订。面对公司不温不火的发展状态，新任高管团队很快做出了一个重要战略决定：停止其他业务，专注于酒店预订，并将重点放在在线预订上。

选择不做什么意味着放弃，这需要很大的勇气。新的高管团队以前并没有从事酒店和旅游行业的经验，放弃旅游度假产品和机票业务，无疑要顶住外界和内部的巨大压力。但他们基于自己丰富的营销经验和敏锐的商业判断，一致认为必须放弃酒店预订以外的业务，并制定了“赢得中国在线酒店预订第一”的愿景。回忆起当时的情形，谢震说：

“我们在中欧管理课程中学过，战略就是做选择；先选择不做什么，让我们可以更加专注，‘一次良好的撤退，应与一次伟大的胜利一样受到嘉奖’。”

## “撤退，是为了更好地进攻”

当然，艺龙并没有真的撤退，而是在另一个领域发起了强势进攻。在选择专注于酒店预订之后，高管团队对公司的业务现状进行了仔细梳理，很快就找到一个突破口——迅速增加签约酒店

数量。公司当时的签约酒店约为4500家（如今是36000家），数量有限的根本原因在于传统电话预订方式的局限性和成本控制。销售代表通常只能在电话中和客人交谈3-5分钟，推荐3-5家酒店。了解到这一情况后，谢震和其他高管们都很兴奋，因为在线预订不存在这一问题，多给客人一些选择，一定会吸引越来越多的客户。

不过，迅速增加签约酒店并非易事。谢震和其他几位高管想到了一个策略，那就是调集原先管理机场和火车站发卡人员的团队负责人，让这些实干精神很强的负责人在寻找酒店和与酒店谈判时充分发挥个人优势。事实证明他们的想法是对的，公司的“善举”也赢得了回报——艺龙在裁减机场、火车站发卡人员时，保留了一部分发卡人员的管理者；这些管理者在签约新酒店的过程中中大显身手，从2008年5月到年底的短短7个月内，艺龙的签约酒店数量增加到了约10000家。

## “公司可以和我们一起创业，投资他们的项目”

谈及如何管理下属，谢震最大的体会是尊重人才，并进行有效的授权。除了让员工拥有发挥个人才能的空间之外，谢震和艺龙的其他高管们在人才管理上还有着更为创新的模式，“如果一些优秀的员工一定要离开公司去创业，那么公司可以和我们一起创业，投资他们的项目。”谢震认为，在移动互联网时代，个人凭借优秀的创意可以相对容易地获得资金，不是人才越来越依靠企业，而是企业越来越依靠人才；公司投资员工的创业项目，可以让人才的能力发挥到极致，也可以分享他们的成功。

2013年，艺龙宣布设立一亿美元的移动旅行创新基金，用于投资移动旅行领域里的创新，包括内部和外部创新。在解释为何设立如此高额的创新基

金时，谢震说：“计算机上的在线预订主要依靠几大门户网站上的搜索引擎营销，过去很多的成功经验都无法复制到移动端的业务中；在移动端的营销方法上，创新更为重要，因此我们设立了这个基金，鼓励员工的内部创新，并吸引有价值的外部创新。”

最近，艺龙的最大股东Expedia做出决定，拿出10%的股份奖励给高管团队，这些股份价值数千万美元。在拥有比较幸运的人生的同时，谢震也希望自己可以帮助更多的人。早在加入艺龙后不久，他就响应CEO的号召，和其他高管们一起每年拿出工资的5-10%，资助表现突出的基层员工参加专业培训课程，迄今已有6年时间，受惠员工达500多名。

## “爱事业、爱家庭、爱旅行、爱中欧”

工作之余，谢震的爱好是旅行和户外运动。他说：“从某种意义上来说，也许我们每个人都是日复一日推石上山的西西弗斯，大部分日子都是按照同样的节奏周而复始地进行，但是旅游可以打破这种节奏，让我们暂时离开自己的那块‘石头’和那座‘山’，去寻找更多的风景。”

2012年12月底，谢震联合芒果网总裁黄志文（EMBA 2006）、去哪儿网首席运营官彭笑玫（EMBA 2011）共同发起了“中欧校友亲子俱乐部”，其口号是“爱事业、爱家庭、爱旅行、爱中欧”。俱乐部旨在提供一个平台，让校友们在旅游中感受亲情之趣，体会自然之美。从2013年3月仅20多人参加的徽杭古道徒步，到同年7月近300名中欧校友和家属参加的海洋航行者号邮轮之旅，俱乐部迅速得到了众多校友的青睐，他们在活动中不仅放松了心情，更可以聊天叙旧，把酒话桑麻。不知道他们的下一站又会向着何处出发……



*Life* IS  
THE SUM OF  
ALL YOUR CHOICES

ahead with its plan to focus on online hotel reservations. Their new vision was to “become China’s leading hotel booking marketplace”. Recalling that crucial moment, Xie says, “We learned in management class that crafting a strategy involves making choices. The first thing is always to choose what not to do. It can help you focus. A wise retreat should be praised just as much as a great victory.”

### **Retreat and regroup**

After carefully studying eLong’s past unsatisfactory performance in hotel reservation, the senior executives reached the conclusion that a feasible solution to the company’s problem was to collaborate with more hotels. Only 4,500 hotels were bookable on

eLong back then. Now the number has increased to 36,000. Why were there so few bookable hotels in the early days? Xie and his colleagues soon discovered the reasons. One was the limitation of telephone booking and the other was cost control. Because salespeople could talk with potential clients on the phone for only three to five minutes, only three to five hotels could be recommended. Xie and his colleagues were very excited after they identified the specific challenges they had to overcome. They knew that the more cost effective method of online reservation had no time limit and therefore more hotel options could be provided. They were confident that eLong could attract more clients if reservations were made online.

Their next challenge was figuring

out how to rapidly increase the number of bookable hotels on eLong.com. It was not an easy task. Xie and his colleagues decided to assign the task to those who had once managed the leaflet distributing teams. The senior executives believed that these were people with strong execution skills. They could identify new hotels and successfully negotiate to get them on board. The decision proved to be effective, and the team delivered an outstanding performance. The number of available hotels on eLong.com increased to about 10,000 within the 7-month period from May 2008 to December 2008.

### **Tangible support for employee ventures**

The best way to manage people, in

Xie's opinion, is to respect and empower them. So at eLong, talented engineers and product managers are given a lot of freedom to make their own decisions. In addition to empowering employees, Xie and other senior executives adopted another very innovative people management policy. He explains, "If excellent employees wish to start



their own businesses, eLong will provide investment support." He believes that in today's Internet era, it's not very difficult for a person to access funding if he has a strong idea. He believes companies are badly in need of talented people, not the other way round. This is why he is convinced that if eLong invests in employees' projects, it can help them reach their full potential and, in the long run, the company will benefit from employees' success.

He has also made a personal effort to help employees at the grassroots level. As a successful business executive, Xie is eager to extend as much help to others as he can. Soon after joining eLong, he and other senior executives set aside 5-10% of their annual salary to cover the cost of providing professional training to outstanding employees from the company's lower levels. Over the last 6 years, 500 employees have benefited from the programme. Xie promises, "We will keep sponsoring excellent employees, and let them grow together with the company." It also helps that eLong's largest shareholder, Expedia, recently decided to award 10% of its

shares – worth tens of millions of US dollars – to eLong's senior executives. Xie has high expectations for eLong employees and tremendous confidence in eLong.com.

His confidence appears warranted. In 2013, eLong announced the creation of a USD\$100 million fund, which will provide financial support for innovations made – both from in and outside the company – in the services it provides on mobile devices. Xie explains the thinking behind such a large fund, "The marketing of eLong's online reservation service mainly depends on the search engines of major portal websites. We achieved enormous success in online reservation service, but we cannot repeat it on mobile devices in the same way. To do marketing on mobile devices, innovation is very important. That is why we established the fund. We hope that it will encourage internal innovations from our employees and also attract valuable external innovations."

### Relaxing with CEIBS alumni

There is no doubt that Xie

is dedicated to his professional life and making a contribution to eLong's future development. But he also finds time to unwind. When he's not on the job, he's travelling with family and friends or exercising outdoors. "We are all like Sisyphus in Greek mythology. He rolls the same boulder up a hill

every day. We also follow our daily routine most of the time. But travel can help us break the routine, put down the boulder, leave the hill and go elsewhere to enjoy different scenery," he explains.

He is among the co-founders of CEIBS Parent Child Club. Others include CEO of Mangocity.com Huang Zhiwen (EMBA 2006) and COO of Qunar.com Denise Peng (EMBA 2011). The club's slogan is "To Achieve Career and Family Balance, Travel with CEIBS Alumni". The founders' goal was to create a platform for CEIBS alumni to interact with each other during leisurely trips, enjoy time with family members and appreciate the beauty of nature. The club has rapidly gained popularity. In March 2013, only about 20 people went on a hike to the Ancient Hui Hang Caravan Trail. In July, almost 300 CEIBS alumni and family members went on a cruise together. During these trips, alumni have ample time to rest and rejuvenate while strengthening personal and professional relationships. Who knows what next big deal Xie will think up on their next outing...