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Japan

By Kaede Seville

## **'SISOMO: THE FUTURE ON SCREEN'**

### **"We are entering the Screen Age."**

It's an interesting scene on the early train from Connecticut or New Jersey to Grand Central or Pennsylvania Station, because it clearly reveals a new aspect of society and social conditions. In America, the commuter train is a basic service, and everyone gets to ride.

So here we see one commuter working with a PC on his lap. Another watching the news on her Blackberry. Another enjoying a movie on a portable DVD. Another watching a TV program downloaded to an iPod. And yet another reading an e-book. Just in this short time on the train, we are using many kinds of new tools.

Now, more and more people in Madison Avenue are talking about a new book written by Kevin Roberts, CEO Worldwide Saatchi & Saatchi, announcing the coming of the Screen Age. It's a fact – even when the commuters arrive at the station, they are watching the big digital information board in Grand Central, and the colorful digital CM and Video Screen a few blocks away on Times Square.

Roberts explained: "We are surrounded by many screens – not only computers, PDA, DVD, games, but also huge video screens on the walls of buildings, and instore digital displays in supermarkets. We're receiving information from the screen, we're enjoying entertainment from the screen, and sometimes we're interacting with the screen. We're now entering the Screen Age. And its biggest and most influential factor is what I call SISOMO.

SISOMO is a montage of the first two letters of the words Sight, Sound, and Motion. And we need these three elements when we use media to communicate a marketing message", he said.

"That's because 80% of the human mind's decisions are governed by emotion, gut feeling or hunches, memory (including the subconscious), gossip, excitement – the feeling of that time. That is to say, the human being is an animal of emotion. And SISOMO stimulates and awakens the emotions", Roberts said.

In this book, he writes about the concept that sight, sound, and motion are the most useful elements in communications which move people's minds. "Human beings love shapes and colours that create excitement. People are stimulated by music and action," he said. "In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are now respecting the 'right brain'. With so much information overload, our analytical abilities have been left gasping for breath, and we have re-evaluated the worth of creativity and inspirational and emotional content. Fine – let's call it SISOMO brain!"

The book explains the meaning of SISOMO and its influence on society with stimulating pictures and illustrations. There are many stimulating words too – but most readers pay more attention to visual imagery first. As Roberts put it, "When we are excited by seeing a very nice movie or picture, we're stimulated - we want to see it again. This is one of the most important messages of the book."

And Kevin Roberts' own life is no less colourful and dynamic than his book. As CEO Worldwide of Saatchi & Saatchi, one of the world's biggest advertising companies (part of the Publicis Group), he is also one of the stars of the advertising world in the USA. In 2004 he wrote the book "Lovemarks – the future beyond brands", which became a best-seller translated in 14 countries.

But his background was not easy. Born in 1949 as the son of a labourer from Lancaster in the North of England, the family's economic struggles meant that he had no academic education, and he started work at the age of 17. However, with his natural gifts and a good mind, Roberts quickly became a success.

Starting as Assistant Brand Manager at Mary Quant, the famous iconic fashion brand in the UK, he later moved on to international executive positions at Gillette, Procter & Gamble, and Pepsi. It was as President and CEO of Pepsi in Canada in 1987 that he became famous for taking a machine gun and shooting up a Coca-Cola vending machine on stage, to end a keynote speech. It was his way of showing his staff and trade partners that it takes fire, passion, and energy to win and reach Number One.

In 1997, Roberts moved from the retail world to the advertising world when he joined Saatchi & Saatchi, overseeing an international team of over 7,000 creative people in 82 countries. "I thought it would be very interesting to work with many kinds of businesses and brands and make ads for them", he explained. For a long time, he has felt that business depends too much on figures and reason. "We have to believe in emotions, hunch

and inspiration”, he said. “Every communication should be based on it.” This is the thinking revealed in his book SISOMO.

Our emotions are also awakened by the use of word play in the book. For example, even a new vocabulary is created around it; “Sisomover” (people moved by SISOMO in the world); “Sisomoment” (the instant of enjoying SISOMO); “Sisomojo” (SISOMO’s magic charm).

As Roberts explained, “21<sup>st</sup> century marketing has moved from ‘permission marketing’ to ‘attraction marketing’. Now, it’s ‘And And’. For example, education and entertainment, Madison and Vine (meaning Advertising and Hollywood), and so on.”

There are many ideas and concepts here that are very interesting for the reader. And this book is full of meaning, because the writer is an advertising world person. SISOMO is a cool book!

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A graduate of Aoyama Gakuin University, Kaede worked in the Creative Section of Dentsu in Japan until 1968, before moving to New York. As a journalist and reporter, his work includes ‘The Selling of America’, ‘Usual American’, and the translation of ‘The State of American Advertising’. He is now President of Kaede Media.

Panel with book photo:

Book Title: SISOMO: The Future on Screen  
Author: Kevin Roberts  
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Big screen photo caption: Enjoy the soccer game – on a huge video screen or a small mobile phone. Of course, in the living room, many people can enjoy the game at the same time. (From the book, SISOMO.)

Times Square photo caption: Times Square – centre of the Screen Age. Technological advances have brought us many kinds of new screens.  
Photograph: Ceola Fagel

Kevin Roberts photo caption: In his office at Saatchi & Saatchi, CEO Worldwide Kevin Roberts said ‘SISOMO’ is a very important book for him.