



2020 theme: **Partnerships: great alone, better together.**

Retail is a creative industry.... by necessity. For anyone to survive in an age where there is more competition than ever before, creative solutions need to be found.

We find ourselves responsible for building our categories as much as our own businesses in order to flourish, or even survive. And that introduces our theme for this year's iMedia Online Retail Summit. Partnerships: Great alone, better together.

Partnerships come in many different forms. Pooling knowledge and experience to great effect. Sometimes they're a perfect fit like Red Bull teaming up with GoPro or BMW and Louis Vuitton.

Other times they can come from unexpected places. For instance your competition. And when you think about enemies turning into frenemies; sharing knowledge, helping each other overcome the difficulties that they've both experienced, then it makes sense. Indeed, relationships are being redefined. What was competition is now support. What was attack is now alliance. The partnership between eBay and Myer launching the world's first VR shop together is a prime example.

Then there's the ecosystem of brands, agencies and solution providers. In their partnership they find the answers that unlock bigger business. OMO and J. Walter Thomson's 'smartpeg' idea is another great example of adding value to consumers through creative thinking. If you haven't seen it, peggy' bluetooth's the perfect weather conditions to your phone to tell you when to do your washing.

And whether we choose to collaborate, partner in a more formal (and financial sense), or acquire, it's the pooled resources that are unlocking new territories.

And then there's Online Retail Summit. It's always been the perfect environment to seek out partners. The ultimate networking opportunity. Understanding pain points, finding solutions, working out where budgets are being spent, or indeed need to be spent.

But it's up to each of us to find our way in this new world in co-opetition. What's going to work. What's not. Minimising the risks and mistakes along the way and in the end breaking through.