

**We build  
Brands that  
Do better**



rdb.agency  
media@rdb.agency

May 2021  
For immediate release

## **RDB WELCOMES MOST SOUGHT AFTER INDUSTRY SPECIALIST FOR ASIA PACIFIC AS ITS NEWEST STRATEGIC DIRECTOR, RICKY SANTILLAN**

*"The only limits are the ones you set for yourself. Dream big."*

True to form, Ricky has managed to go beyond his limits and stretched his legs as far as they could take him in the Advertising & Marketing industry. Six countries, over ten years and countless pitches later, Ricky is sharper than ever and his hunger for more has led him back to the Philippines, where the magical journey began, back home and now with a new agency to call home - Robin des Bois (RDB).

*"I had heard of RDB and was excited to be called in to be a part of the team. Knowing that with this opportunity I would take a key role in active sustainability for brands, I did not hesitate and immediately said 'yes!'" -Rick Santillan, RDB APAC Strategic Director*

RDB Asia Pacific was in hot pursuit of a strategic head, after having recently launched regional operations, who knew both the landscape and the industry in-and-out. With the backdrop of a global pandemic and a region on edge, it was important to find not only a strong sage with knowledge to impart and contribute to a young and dynamic team of creatives but, likewise, have the calming wisdom that's been tested by time.

Ricky's rich experience and know-how represents a steady sail. Having lived and worked across the Asia Pacific Region, Ricky has had the opportunity to build brands with the biggest local and international companies in various Asian markets. Having seen his fair share of strong winds, from Asia's financial crises to its digital adolescence, he's billowed through great challenges but managed to propel countless ships across perilous waters.

Starting out as a copywriter in Lintas Manila, he was able to find his calling in Advertising and Marketing as he was made to handle the agency's Unilever and Ovaltine clients among others. It was working with these major accounts that Ricky was sent to Shanghai, China to save the Ovaltine account from going into an agency pitch. That was when Ricky was bitten by the bug to explore further out into the other markets of the region.

He secured a role in one of the biggest networks at the time, Bates 141, as they needed to manage the Coca-Cola account in Indonesia. There he was able to lead teams to work on other blue-chip clients like

**We build  
Brands that  
Do better**



**rdb.agency  
media@rdb.agency**

P&G, Wendy's, HSBC, Toyota, Heineken, BAT and Shell. For HSBC he led the creative team that worked on the HSBC campaign to preserve the reefs of Sulawesi. As the Asian Meltdown hit in 1998, Ricky played a crucial role in ensuring projects kept going in the Jakarta office.

Later, Ricky was assigned to the Myanmar office to lead the creative team and handle Bates 141's big clients of BAT, Unilever, Dumex, United Pharma, and Myanmar Brewery Limited. With Myanmar Brewery Limited he developed the iconic campaign that launched Myanmar Beer and made it the number one beer in the country. Due to his success in raising the level of the creative department, Ricky represented the agency in the Cannes Advertising Festival of 2000. He was the first ever official Cannes Advertising Festival representative of the country.

Promoted to a role that entailed handling multiple countries at the same time, Ricky was then assigned to handle regional work across Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam. This allowed him to work with additional clients in MobiTel, Caltex, Ford as well as various NGOs like PSI to work on campaigns that centered around folk marketing to reduce the spread of HIV which was ravaging Cambodia.

With his second trip to the Cannes Advertising Festival in 2003 representing 141 Cambodia, Ricky discovered the world of Digital Advertising and Marketing. This is when he knew he had to branch out into that nascent field. So, Ricky founded Dual Action Blender in Manila in 2005 and secured major business from the likes of Johnson & Johnson, Nestle, HSBC, and more. This he did by pitching against major multinationals for the accounts. This led to Ricky leading the team that won the James Burke Award for Marketing Excellence within the Johnson & Johnson global network. Dual Action Blender also worked on UNICEF campaigns against domestic violence and created materials for DKT to help promote planned parenthood which was a taboo subject in the country.

With Dual Action Blender he forged a joint venture partnership with ZenithOptimedia which was then one of the largest media agencies in the Philippine Market. This allowed him to learn more about Digital Advertising, Marketing and Content. It also paved the way for one of his biggest pitch wins. In 2013, going against top global agencies in the region, Ricky led the team that secured the Telenor account in Myanmar. It was an opportunity where he was able to prove that digital efficiency outweighs spending as he led the team that grew Telenor's Social Media presence to make it number one against a better funded Ooredoo.

This allowed Ricky to open the Dual Action Blender Yangon office where he secured more clients like Unilever, United Pharma as well as big local companies. Introducing the company to the Myanmar market, he worked out a deal with NGOs like OXFAM UK and Action Contre La Faim to allow them to use the company services to help people with their various WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) projects in the country, including those earmarked for the Rohingya IDP camps.

Armed with his digital experience Ricky returned to the Philippines where he worked on the client side for JTI Philippines and Rubicon Crossings to allow them to come up with solid digital strategies.

He was also contracted by BBDO for their pitch to secure the regional Facebook account which focused on the Myanmar market. He was able to help the BBDO team win the account by providing insight into the market.

**We build  
Brands that  
Do better**



**rdb.agency  
media@rdb.agency**

With a strong belief in training and educating the next generation of marketers and advertisers, Ricky has served as a Senior Lecturer for the Heriot-Watt University - Edinburgh Business School MBA Programme marketing module of the Strategy First University in Yangon, an E-Marketing Resource Speaker for the Ateneo de Manila Professional School and a faculty member of the Marketing Department of the De La Salle University in Manila.

**Related RDB Blog Articles:**

**RDB Launches Asia Pacific hub in Manila**

<https://rdb.agency/leading-a-business-through-crisis/>

**First Global Virtual Event on Sustainability hosted by RDB Asia Pacific**

<https://rdb.agency/first-global-virtual-event-on-sustainability-hosted-by-rdb-asia-pacific/>

**We build  
Brands that  
Do better**



**rdb.agency  
media@rdb.agency**

## **ALL ABOUT ROBIN DES BOIS**

### **RDB APAC**

RDB APAC is not only an extension of the agency's operations in the Asia Pacific, but a mix of RDB's global knowledge of European and North American best practices with Filipino talent, insights and expertise. As a boutique agency with a *glocal* approach, RDB offers a wide range of services from Sustainability Communications, Purpose, Branding, Marketing, Social Media Management, Content, Storytelling to Influencer Marketing and Events to those who wish to position themselves as impact-drivers, not only in the Philippines but the entire region.

### **RDB**

RDB | Robin des Bois is a global boutique agency based in Vienna, London, San Francisco and Manila, building brands that do better through Impact, Purpose & Shared Value Projects and Communication.

RDB supports its clients, from Fortune 500 companies (eBay, Western Union) through international and national NGOs (Global Citizen, Eden Reforestation Projects) to public institutions (UNIDO, UNWomen, British Council) in identifying their purpose, bringing it to life through meaningful communication internally and externally to drive growth and impact. A Communications and Marketing agency with expertise in impact-driven brands, RDB has maintained a steady growth by attracting accounts like the Basis Brenner Tunnel in Italy and Austria for intercultural communication and organisational development, Globe Telecom in the Philippines as an Agency of Record for Sustainability, Lagerhaus in Austria to define a new concept for cooperatives in the 21st century, as well expand in the US.

### **Mario Alonzo-Debout**

Mario is a self-taught creative director, entrepreneur and founder & CEO of RDB. Founded in 2013, with the aim of creating sustainability and awareness in the advertising industry.

Over the past three years, Mario Alonzo-Debout has expanded his holding, The Major Oak's portfolio, to include a sustainability consulting company called Allmende, a design studio specializing in sustainable materials with MDB, and investments in companies such as markta, Polarstern and Reach Mobile.

Today Mario Alonzo-Debout is a recognized global expert in UN Sustainable Development Goals, purpose, digital brand architecture and communication as well as social entrepreneurship with guest lectures and seminars at the Vienna Advertising Academy, *die Graphische*, School of Media and the ImpactHub Vienna.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mario-alonzo-debout-812b5592/>

### **Günter Taus**

Günter is the CEO of RDB Asia Pacific and Spartan Race Philippines; he brought the Spartan Race franchise into the Philippines. He also runs LERAC Services Inc., a maintenance and engineering

**We build  
Brands that  
Do better**



**rdb.agency  
media@rdb.agency**

solutions company.

With more than 30 years of experience in business development, electronics, construction and waste management systems, holding consultancy and management roles, he is responsible for the overall profitability of past and present companies he has been involved with.

#### **Gerard Rabara**

Gerard currently serves multiple senior functions within the agency and the holding it belongs to - The Major Oak, namely Chief Communications Officer and Chief of Staff to the Chairman and CEO. In 2018 Gerard spearheaded the groundwork for the APAC expansion and is also currently a Managing Partner of RDB Asia Pacific.

He traded in his initial career in art and design for communications, and in 2017 joined RDB. Having lived in three continents, Gerard considers himself a global citizen, but a son of Manila first and foremost.

#### **Jerianne Ejercito**

Jerianne is a Managing Partner of RDB Asia Pacific. She has a wealth of experience in brand marketing and advertising from her work with Filipino giant San Miguel Corporation to co-founding VIVA API, a joint venture with VIVA Communications Inc. She was also an active consultant for Media Pro and HAVAS Group for many years and was instrumental in the acquisition of many landmark projects like the 2019 Southeast Asian Games.

She is also majorly involved in a number of charitable causes for several Institutions. She was one of the 2019 LO Presidents of the Junior Chamber International in the Philippines, together with 123 countries around the world, sharing her expertise with young leaders driving impact in their communities.

#### **Contact Information**

##### **RDB Asia Pacific**

Visit us: <http://rdb.agency>

Follow us: @rdb.agency

[ejercito@rdb.agency](mailto:ejercito@rdb.agency)

Jerianne Ejercito, Managing Partner, RDB APAC

For Media inquiries:

[media@rdb.agency](mailto:media@rdb.agency)

[rabara@rdb.agency](mailto:rabara@rdb.agency)

Gerard Rabara, Chief Communications Officer