

DIGITAL REPUTATION CONSULTATION

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MEI MEI HU: CEO & CO-FOUNDER OF VAXXINITY

FORMERLY UNITED NEUROSCIENCE INC.

Executive Summary

Company Overview



Founded in 2014 and headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, Vaxxinity, formerly United Neuroscience Inc., is a pharmaceutical company that specializes in vaccine development. The company was founded by Mei Mei Hu and her mother, Chang Yi Wang. Vaxxinity has less than 50 employees and operates additional offices in Dallas, Texas, Hauppauge, New York, and Zhubei City, Taiwan.

Vaxxinity designs and develops targeted immunotherapeutics using its tested proprietary technologies, resulting in over 3 billion doses being given to date. The company's primary focus is developing a cure for Alzheimer's, with a goal of cutting cases by 50% by 2050. To accomplish this, Vaxxinity is working toward developing a preventative vaccine, rather than focusing on post-diagnosis treatment.

The company focuses on brain therapy, particularly endobody vaccines that treat and prevent neurological disorders. Endobody vaccines target abnormal proteins, also called aberrant protein structures, that develop within brain cells either as a result of or ultimately causing neurological disorders such as Parkinson's, Huntington's, Alzheimer's, and Multiple Sclerosis. It is unknown whether these aberrant protein structures are the cause or just one of the effects; however, they are present in neurological diseases. The scientific knowledge that these proteins exist allow companies, specifically Vaxxinity, to develop therapeutic treatments for the associated disorders.

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“CHANG YI IS VERY PARTICULAR AND EXACTING –
WHICH IS PART OF HER GENIUS.” -MEI MEI HU

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PICTURED: MEI MEI HU, LEFT, AND CHANG YI WANG, RIGHT.

CEO & Founding History

Mei Mei Hu, 36, is the CEO and cofounder of Vaxxinity. Hu's background is different from other leaders in the pharmaceutical industry. She studied economics at the University of Pennsylvania and law at Harvard University before pursuing a career in business consulting with McKinsey. While her mother, Chang Yi, is a scientist and biotech entrepreneur, Hu grew up avoiding the sciences.



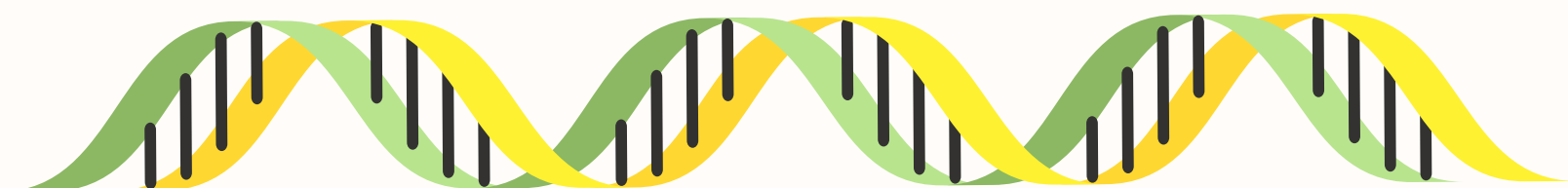
Hu believes that vaccines could be as effective in the prevention of chronic diseases as they are with infectious diseases, a relatively revolutionary thought within the pharmaceutical industry, perhaps as a result of her “outsider” status and background in different disciplines. Her thought is that instead of using the vaccine to build antibodies - attacking external agents the way that vaccines we are familiar with function - endobody vaccines could target internal threats.

This is an important concept because typically, when the immune system attacks an internal element of the human body, it is the result of an autoimmune disease. However, Hu's company is working to produce a vaccine that would allow the body to produce antibodies that can fight an internal factor. Specifically, misfolded proteins that gather in the brain and produce plaque that can damage neurons, resulting in neurological disorders. Vaxxinity refers to these antibodies as endobodies because of the way they target an internal threat.

Hu's mother developed an immunocastration vaccine for swine that served as a base for developing a vaccine that could target internal proteins, showing that her familial ties to science came into play in her career shift to pharmaceuticals. Despite the fact that Hu had formerly sworn she would never work with her mother, Chang Yi's double PhD and history as the co-founder of United Biomedical - another pharmaceutical development company - proved useful. When United Biomedical ran into legal trouble in 2010, Hu assisted her mother with her business consulting services.

Hu uncovered that United Biomedical needed to be segmented because the company was working in a wide range of pharmaceutical development disciplines including generic drugs, monoclonal antibodies, HIV blood tests, and foot-and-mouth disease vaccines. Hu left McKinsey to assist her mother with the restructuring of United Biomedical, spinning off United Neuroscience, now Vaxxinity, the vaccine branch of the company.

After approaching experts in the field, Hu discovered that Chang Yi's work on an Alzheimer's vaccine was the most promising new product and urged her mother to focus on that. Not long after, Chang Yi asked Hu to be the CEO of the company now known as Vaxxinity.





**Digital
Strategy &
Analysis**

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors

Strengths

- Hu has a unique branding position as a successful young female pharmaceutical CEO and co-founder with zero pharma background.
- She has multi-industry experience as an investor, consultant, and leader.
- Her unique background combines economics, law, and now pharmaceuticals. This helps her to understand not only the science behind the work, but how to run a business that's sustainable.
- Hu's personality attributes are unmatched. She's funny, personable, and outgoing. She's a type of CEO that you rarely come across, especially in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Hu works with her family at a company backed by passion. She has a deep connection to this company.

Weaknesses

- Hu exhibits a lack of personal investment in her online reputation with a lack of digital presence over her many years of professional experience.
- This introduces a key question: Does she care about her digital presence? Hypothetically, she doesn't see the need for it. She puts her work first and doesn't see how her digital presence can help that cause.
- The current brand Vaxxinity is hidden by United Neuroscience name in online searches, despite the company being rebranded on its website.

SWOT Analysis

External Factors

Opportunities

- Hu holds a vast amount of knowledge, inspiration, and value, all of which is ready to be shared.
- Hu hasn't shied away from interviews in the past, which indicates that she's open to sharing. She has the potential to spread the word about Vaxxinity in a way that many would find interesting.
- Ongoing clinical trials for a COVID-19 vaccine could make the companies she's involved with more visible and relevant to the public, increasing Vaxxinity's digital reputation.
- Many people are turning to online resources during COVID-19. Hu and her mother could provide helpful information regarding the logistics of vaccine creation. With Hu's potential for social media success, this could be an opportunity to launch her presence.

Threats

- Other trail-blazing young entrepreneurs with strong digital roots may have an advantage in terms of visibility and publicity.
- Other companies capitalizing on their public presence to put their names in the spotlight with COVID-19 trials likely are gaining more media attention in the current climate.
- There are other Alzheimer's research organizations, meaning there is competition in the industry.
- Those who attempt to combat or "debunk" research and development of vaccines could misinform a portion of the population.

Brand Voice Overview

Even though Mei Mei Hu lacks a personal online presence, she has laid the stepping stones to her digital voice through her digital shadows. Media interviews have given a glimpse into Hu's personality and highlight one of her greatest strengths as a business leader: her amiability and friendly charm.

Hu carries herself as a modest trailblazer both verbally and physically; she embraces open conversation, champions the overall research that promotes a better world without boasting her organization's value, and doesn't shy away from personal questions, conflict, or tension. It's essential for Hu to transfer these attributes into her digital voice in the way she communicates online. To do this, we recommend that Hu uses a conversational tone and embraces her personable qualities to engage her audience in the most authentic way possible.

Hu is the CEO and co-founder of United Neuroscience, a pharmaceutical business with the mission to develop a preventive vaccine for Alzheimer's disease. The topic is dense, research-heavy and technical in nature. While she will heavily utilize her digital presence to champion the work at United Neuroscience, we encourage Hu to expand her audience reach to include industries outside of biotech and pharma.

With this expanded network, Hu's digital voice has the opportunity to shine. Hu is most notably known for her non-pharma background as a pharmaceutical CEO, and she can use this annotation to her advantage by communicating on a human-to-human level with her broad audience. Hu's digital voice, including her tone, manner and word choices, should be known for taking big concepts and making them digestible.

Her voice will need to be understandable, conversational and relatable. As evident in her media interviews, Hu stands out with her ability to convey complex bio research in a comprehensive manner. Hu will need to transfer this tone to her digital voice, so her audience feels like they are learning the topic from a friend, rather than a pharma CEO.

Hu conveys an Advocate brand energy, as it is evident that she serves as a motivational spokesperson for causes that she is passionate about. She uses this energy to teach and inspire others through her own dedication to the cause's purpose.

For Hu's digital voice, it is important that this sense of passion is communicated to her audience. We recommend that Hu always speak in first person so the audience feels like they are forming a personal connection with her and thus the ability to inspire and motivate will appear seamless.

Hu's digital presence is an opportunity for her to further advocate for causes that are dear to her heart, so we recommend that Hu's word choices and overall tone show personality, embrace passion, and encourage conversation and action.

Strategic Recommendations

1.) Invest time and resources into structuring an authentic digital reputation alongside Vaxxinity's online presence

Part 1

Because Hu lacks any strong digital footprint, there is an opportunity to structure her digital reputation from the beginning. First, Hu will need to perform a self-audit on both her online and offline personal brand. We would recommend that Hu evaluate the type of content and storyline that currently surrounds her online, as well as how she is perceived in the industry and among her peers. This information will give her a base understanding of where her personal brand currently lies. Hu should then structure how she would like to be perceived and determine her brand personality, tone, and energy. These insights will lead her to decide aspects of her digital reputation, like her online bios, types of content she creates, and platforms she engages with. Finally, Hu can make the decision on how she would like to leverage her digital presence - how can her online reputation support her personal objectives, career goals, and employment opportunities? From here, we would support Hu in selecting the proper social platforms and creating her personalized profiles.

Why?

Hu is in the middle of arguably the most important years of her career. At this crossroads, she has the chance to leverage her experience and capitalize on her optimistic future to position herself as an iconic multi-industry leader. While Hu is a respected leader to her peers, her lack of digital presence has the potential to hurt her overall reputation. In the age of digital, organizations and industry professionals gravitate toward the internet to learn, hire, and inspire. Whether it be a speaking engagement opportunity, a partnership potential, or a new employment opportunity, Hu is easy to look past online because she simply doesn't exist. By building her digital reputation in line with her authentic personality, Hu can expand the potential of her personal brand to build more meaningful relationships and further advocate for the causes she believes in.

Part 2

Especially as an active founder and leader of a global organization, Hu is often closely associated with the reputation of Vaxxinity. As one of the organization's leaders, Hu's digital reputation partially relies on the success of the Vaxxinity reputation. We recommend that Hu encourages Vaxxinity to invest in building its online reputation. This would start by completing the company website and building a beginner's social media strategy. Similar to Hu, the company's digital presence is a ground-up effort that allows the organization to first evaluate the brand's current perception in the industry and structure a brand image that fits with the company's values. Since Vaxxinity is starting from the beginning, it's important to craft a personality and tone that reflects the authenticity of the brand; elements to include in the launch of Vaxxinity's digital presence are:

- About us section on website - leadership, mission & vision, company background
- Full social media profiles - about us, profile photo, company name, supporting content, link to website

Why?

As a co-founder and CEO, Hu will inevitably be associated with the organizations she leads. Leaders and the companies they represent often go hand-in-hand, meaning that the digital reputation of both the leader and the organization are crucial to the individual's overall brand perception. An organization's strong digital presence creates a sense of credibility, respect, and authority for the company's leadership. On the other hand, an organization that has a negative digital reputation - or a lack of online presence in general - harms the leadership's credibility and authority because it represents an overall lack of effort in community building and consumer's ease of access to the organization. Hu's close association with Vaxxinity is currently harming her digital reputation because there is no tangible digital footprint for the organization. Vaxxinity's online presence and strong digital reputation will reflect positively onto Hu's digital brand and further both parties' opportunities to grow their reputations online and offline.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs to measure the successful creation of Hu's digital reputation are:

- Portfolio creation within 3 months (including bio and introduction), new content uploads every month to the online portfolio
- Two social media profiles created with full completion (name, photo, title bio, work experience, portfolio link)
- Creation of database with previous interviews and speaking engagements to use as future content curation
- Creation of a content and engagement strategy, showing that Hu is moving into the next steps of her digital reputation

2.) Prioritize growing her network and building a meaningful community in the industry

Part 1

With Hu's new digital presence, the next crucial step in building her online reputation is to grow her network. As Hu begins to share content and connect with others in the industry, a growing community of connections and followers will help her create a mutually beneficial network for her and her connections. Since Hu has spent many years as a trailblazing leader in multiple industries, she should first transform her offline connections into an online network by personally connecting with those she is already familiar with. Next, we recommend that Hu explores her digital platforms and begins engaging with content and people that inspire her. She can do this by joining Twitter chats, participating in LinkedIn groups and exploring online conversations that she can either add value to or gain value from. With meaningful conversations, Hu will be sure that she's forming a network that is truly meaningful to her. These connections should be interested in the value Hu provides and they should present Hu with the opportunity to add value to her digital reputation and overall personal brand.

Why?

In Hu's position as an executive leader, meaningful connections throughout the industry are crucial to establishing and maintaining a strong personal brand. Leadership positions require a balanced reputation between a successful track record of experience and an abundant network of powerful connections. While Hu most likely has built a meaningful network offline, her lack of digital presence eliminates the possibility to have a strong online network. Just as the success of the organization she represents is important to her personal brand, her network of meaningful connections is detrimental to furthering her potential online. By Hu building a meaningful community online, she has the opportunity to expand her personal and professional opportunities now and in the future - expanding her learning possibilities, creating new partnerships, future employment ventures, and advocacy expansion for causes. Also, Hu's meaningful community will support her mission to create an authentic and credible digital reputation.

KPIs

KPIs to measure the network growth for Hu are:

- 500 connections on LinkedIn after 6 months of profile creation
- 5% month-over-month engagement rate increase on Hu's posted content (specifically shares and comments)
- Meaningful connections and conversations with like-minded industry professionals
- Increase in message requests, interview inquiries, speaking opportunities

3.) Implement a content creation and curation strategy

Part 1

With Hu's new digital presence and growing network, arguably the most important aspect of her online reputation will be content. As a leader, Hu is often looked to for inspiration, insights and knowledge. As we have seen through Hu's digital shadows of interviews, she doesn't shy away from the opportunity to advocate for causes that she cares deeply about.

We recommend that Hu leverages her online presence to continue this sharing of information through:

- Content creation in the form of articles, interviews, and videos that:
 - Communicate her professional values and industry insights
 - Motivate and inspire like-minded individuals
 - Give a glimpse into her authentic self
- Content curation of articles, interviews and news that relate to her personal brand and allow her to add value to her network

Why?

To stay relevant in a competitive industry, Hu will need to actively maintain and protect her digital reputation. Because of her lack of a digital footprint to date, Hu should focus on creating and curating new content actively to grow her reputation and credibility. A content strategy is crucial for Hu because it will not only build her authority, but it will give her network a better look into her personality and values. As we have seen in video interviews, Hu's warm presence and friendly nature are some of her greatest strengths as a leader. In an online world where the right personality is difficult to emulate, Hu can shine as the leader that professionals prefer to turn to for advice, inspiration, and insights. With the right content strategy, Hu will increase her likeability among the community and further solidify her added value to the industry.

KPIs

KPIs that will measure the impact of Hu's content strategy are:

- New content uploaded to online portfolio one to two times per month
- Content curation posted to social platforms once per week
- Increase in interviews requests and speaking engagements
- Increase in post shares and comments

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