

{ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT }

From Crunching Numbers to Breaking News

Richard Lui, MBA '01, Drops Anchor at HLN



Richard Lui, MBA '01, on the HLN set in Atlanta, Ga.

Ask cable news anchor **Richard Lui**, MBA '01, what he brings from his Ross experience to his journalism career, and he'll provide a most succinct answer: "Everything."

Lui works for HLN (formerly CNN Headline News), where he anchors *Morning Express with Robin Meade*. He took his chair at the network's desk in 2005 and has anchored live coverage ranging from the Virginia Tech shootings to the Mumbai train terrorist bombings. Reporting and anchoring such intense stories requires Lui to synthesize and contextualize multiple perspectives into one cohesive package. He daily falls back on the analytical training he picked up in business school, all while under the strict pressure of a deadline and the harsh glare of the studio lights.

"When I'm approaching a story, I look at it the way I would look at a business problem," says Lui. "As a consultant you have to look at a problem from many different angles. That's exactly what I do with a story, instantly."

Lui honed that skill during a 15-year business career prior to HLN. He put his MBA to work throughout the world at such companies as Mrs. Fields and Blink Mobile as well as startups like QED Environmental Systems, Mercer Management Consulting, and Lazarus Data Recovery.

But Lui has long had a love for journalism. His first job as an anchor, producer, reporter, and writer was for public radio station KALX-FM in Berkeley, Calif., prior to business school. At KALX he covered Dianne Feinstein's (D-Calif.) first run for the U.S.

Senate and the 1992 riots in Los Angeles after police officers were acquitted in the beating of Rodney King.

In 2003, Lui was working for a startup in Singapore when he was offered a position as an anchor and producer at Channel NewsAsia. He couldn't resist the opportunity to return to his reporter's roots even though it meant taking a huge pay cut.

"I've always loved Tom Brokaw," Lui says. "I thought, 'If there's any time to get back into journalism, it's now.' I knew if I didn't do it then, it wasn't going to happen. So I went for it."

At HLN Lui says his most challenging stories are those that involve dynamic and multifaceted issues, like events in the Middle East. His strategy is to be as informed as possible and maximize the resources available at his bureau's international desk.

"The responsibility is quite large, but if you understand the complexity of what's happening in the Middle East on an ongoing basis, you can quickly give context to it," says Lui. "As a person talking through the TV, I don't get any response from the viewer. I have to instinctively know when to give detail and when to give the big picture."

This connection with the client — or audience — is another skill he first picked up in business school and later perfected in his consulting career. "I can never communicate how Ross can change you," says the anchor. "Journalism was doable for me because I had the confidence, skills, and philosophical thinking that Ross gave me." ✦ —Leah Sipher-Mann