



Haier

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THINKERS50 CHINA LAUNCHED IN QINGDAO

Groundbreaking new partnership to explore leadership and management innovation in China and beyond.

QINGDAO, CHINA. [Thinkers50](#), the global platform for management thinking, today announces a groundbreaking new partnership with the world's leading white goods manufacturer, [Haier](#). The new Thinkers50 IdeasLab China will be based at Haier's headquarters in Qingdao, China.

The development of Haier is an eye-catching corporate story by any standards. It was in 1984 that Zhang Ruimin took over as Director of the Qingdao Refrigerator Factory. The small collectively-owned factory was losing money. Others had tried to turn the venture around and failed. Money had to be borrowed to pay wages and products often had to be repaired before leaving the factory.

Since then, Zhang Ruimin and Haier have cut an impressive swathe through business orthodoxy. Their experiments and innovations in management are unique in their scale. Today, Haier has 73,000 employees and annual revenues of over \$30.3 billion.

"Despite all the trumpeting of change programs and the like, large organizations tend not to change the way they operate to any significant extent. Change is often decorative tweaking rather than a radical overhaul," observes Thinkers50's Des Dearlove. "That Haier has managed to maintain business growth and ground breaking organizational innovation over a sustained period is unusual and owes a great deal to the leadership of the company. It has succeeded in well-established markets against strong competition. The fact that it is a Chinese company adds piquancy to an already powerful story."

Haier's chairman and CEO [Zhang Ruimin received the Thinkers50 Ideas into Practice Award in 2015](#), when he also debuted on the [Thinkers50 ranking](#) at #38.

It is planned that the Thinkers50 IdeasLab China will play host to events and publish research. "The Thinkers50 is a global ranking and, as such, needs to understand and reflect the best thinking and best practice coming from some of the highly innovative Chinese global organizations such as Haier," says Stuart Crainer, Thinkers50 co-founder. "We hope that our base at Haier will allow us to learn more about its own extraordinary innovations in management but also the Chinese approach to management and leadership in the twenty-first century."

The announcement of this new Chinese venture follows on from the launch earlier this year of [Thinkers50 Europe](#) based in Odense, Denmark. It is hoped that a global network of Thinkers50 hubs will be able to share the latest ideas on management, leadership and much more.

Thinkers Welcome Thinkers50 China

Some of the leading business thinkers in the world have commented on the launch of Thinkers50 China:

"Haier's story is a remarkable one. Its leadership and management are similarly unique. The combination with the Thinkers50's proven ability to identify trends and distil emerging ideas to their accessible essence is sure to be a powerful one."

-- [Don Tapscott](#), CEO, The Tapscott Group Inc.; Fellow, Martin Prosperity Institute; and co-author, *Blockchain Revolution: How The Technology Behind Bitcoin Is Changing Money, Business And The World*

"China's economic rise since 1980 remains an unparalleled development in world history. It is inevitable that the coming years will also see the emergence of cutting-edge ideas from China regarding how to lead and manage innovative enterprises. Given these trends, the Thinkers50 initiative to launch Thinkers50 China is very timely. I anticipate that it will also elicit high interest from the global community."

-- [Anil K. Gupta](#), Michael Dingman Chair in Strategy, Globalization & Entrepreneurship, The University of Maryland, co-author, *Getting China and India Right* and *The Silk Road Rediscovered*

"The launch of Thinkers50 China represents timely recognition that valuable management ideas are not confined to Western advanced markets but also abound in dynamic emerging markets. Through this initiative, Thinkers50 continues to demonstrate its unparalleled prowess at scanning the world of management thinking for cutting-edge ideas. I commend Thinker50's collaboration with Haier, a global Chinese corporation that has distinguished itself through bold management innovations, and wish this initiative great success."

-- [Shameen Prashantham](#), Associate Professor of International Business & Strategy China Europe International Business School (CEIBS)

About Thinkers50

Created by Stuart Crainer and Des Dearlove in 2001, Thinkers50 scans, ranks and shares the very best in management ideas. Its definitive global ranking of management thinkers is published every two years. The 2015 winner was Professor Michael Porter of Harvard Business School. Previous winners include Clayton Christensen (2011 and 2013); CK Prahalad (2009 and 2007); Michael Porter (2005) and Peter Drucker (2001 and 2003). The Thinkers50 Awards have been described, by the *Financial Times*, as "the Oscars of management thinking".

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Des Dearlove and Stuart Crainer will be in Qingdao and available for interviews on November 10 and 11, 2016.

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