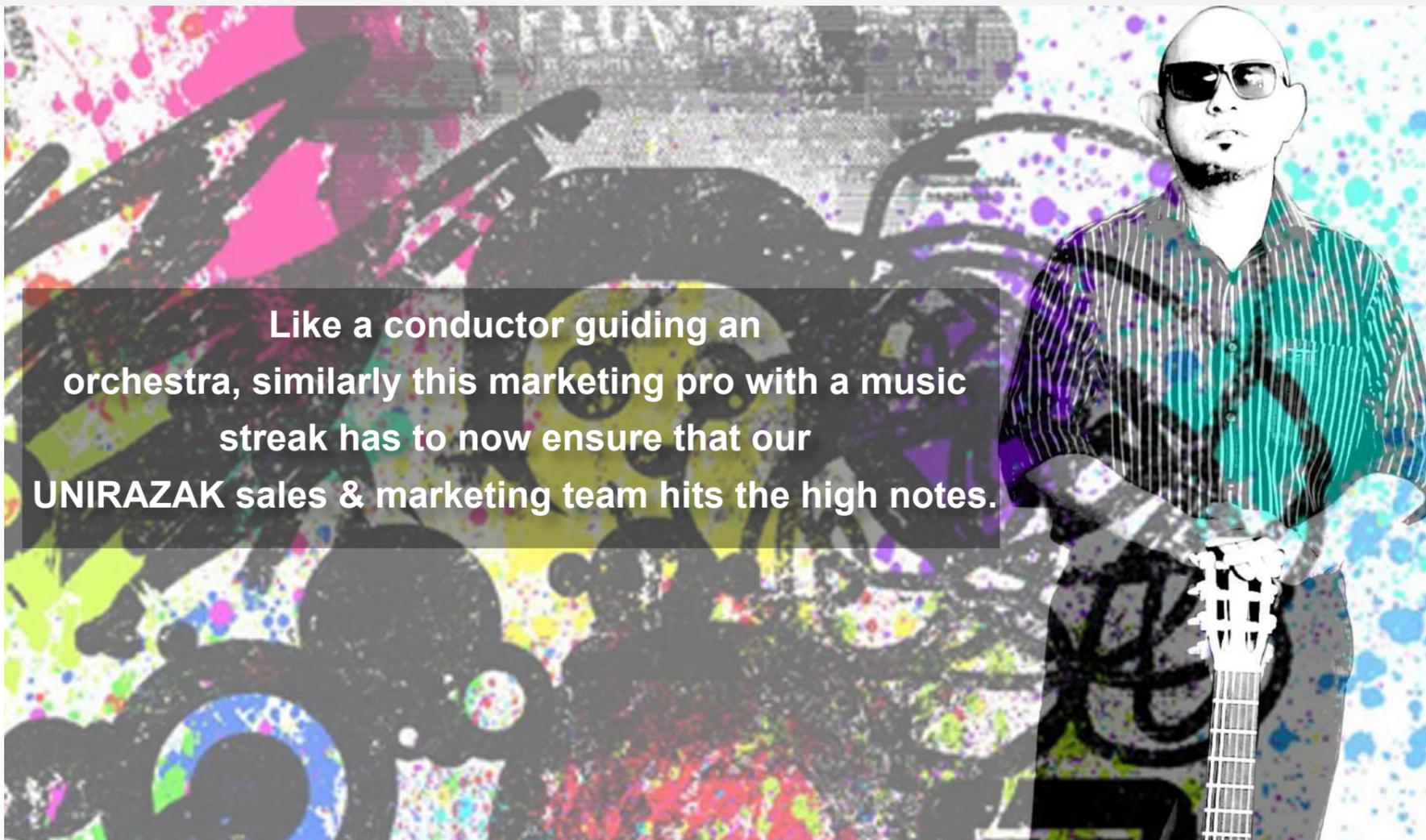


The Marketing Maestro



Like a conductor guiding an orchestra, similarly this marketing pro with a music streak has to now ensure that our UNIRAZAK sales & marketing team hits the high notes.

Azreen looked a little flustered when we found him at the sales call centre. Understandably, as it was Friday and his team were in the thick of action, handling a flurry of calls before the business week ends. Ever the professional, he still managed a smile upon seeing us.

A recent addition to the UNIRAZAK family, Mohamed Azreen Mohd Akram, 45, joined the university in January this year as our Sales & Marketing Manager. He comes with nearly 20 years of experience in sales and marketing across such diverse sectors: telecommunications, banking & finance, IT and medical supplies. Some of the corporations he's worked with over the years include Maybank, Maxis and EDS (Hewlett Packard) and Selangor Agriculture Development Corp. Now at UNIRAZAK, Azreen finds himself in the challenging local private education sector.

When asked how he finds the highly competitive sector, Azreen is optimistic, "One shouldn't be daunted. Instead, look at market challenges and always find ways to translate them into sales figures."



" Look at market challenges and always find ways to translate them into sales figures "

Citing examples from his past experience, Azreen believes that even in markets perceived to be saturated there will always be gaps where opportunities can be found. "We have to be creative in marketing, find different ways and strategies to sell," he said.

Raised in Taiping and Kuala Lumpur, Azreen holds a BBA from University of Wales, Newport. Prior to that he had completed his Diploma in Psychology and Advance Diploma in Business. The son of prominent legal academician Prof. Dato Seri Dr. Hj. Mohd Akram, it is perhaps ironic that despite many years spent building his career in other fields, he eventually landed in the same education sector as his academic father, albeit on the business side of it.

Azreen is philosophical too about the entire business, "You got to have 'soul' when doing sales. You got to love it, and not be negative about the challenges. If you dwell on the negative, you'll never close (deals)."

We can certainly expect such soulful approach from Azreen, he is after all, a passionate musician in the other life he leads outside of the office. Modest about his music, it doesn't take much probing on the internet to discover Azreen is quite a luminary in the underground music scene! (Hint: Subculture.) "I would count The Ramones and The Clash as early influence on my music," said Azreen who is lead guitarist and vocals for his band.

The proud father of 2 daughters, Najwa Mazween (11) and Elysha Mazween (14), Azreen admits that he doesn't play as much music as before. Saturday night gigs have been replaced with dinner outings with his wife and children.

As for his outlook on the marketing of education, he said, "Education is a long-term product. Our customers will be with us for a few years, so we have to ensure the quality of our education is high and beyond reproach."