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ixFintech

The Future of Options Trading

Irene Wong,
Founder & CEO

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we share the
same vision of
giving back to
society**

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ixFintech

The Future of Options Trading

Luck is an elusive yet cherished ingredient that can potentially transform the trajectory of one's life. Irene Wong is one of those few successful entrepreneurs who gladly acknowledge the role of luck in her success having experienced some serendipitous strokes of good fortune.

The year was 2009 Irene was working at the Hong Kong Stock Exchange as the Sr. VP, Global Market, like all disruptors and trailblazers, she had something unique on her mind that could break new ground in finance and investments, the opportunities and possibilities rolled like a moth to a flame right before her eyes, and the journey commenced. The financial tsunami swept through the global economy; many Hong Kong retail investors without having a clear understanding bought structured products linked to US asset-backed securities. Irene saw at close quarters that these investors were also a long way from grasping the true risks in structured products called accumulators amongst other factors. What many didn't comprehend at the time is that the derivative market was and still is more than six times bigger than the stock market and probably has another 10 times less in terms of pro-retail grade analytic tools and research. Considering the lack of derivatives in the investor education market, Irene viewed that investor education and third-party advisory can tap the derivative market deeper and unlock the potential to challenge the status of the American options and derivatives market.

There was something altruistic about her mission to democratize this knowledge and design a platform that can change the industry narrative and improve the situation. The time was ripe to lay the groundwork for ixFintech—an Investech company aimed at developing a game-changing platform that would transform the traditional financial market practices with different digital investment platforms.

“I am lucky to have met my boss who allowed me to pursue my mission to create a stock option mobile app with a podcast option for imparting education and dealing with the US SEC on regulatory issues. We conducted seminars and classes for over 10,000 fund managers, brokers, and retails within three years,” says Irene. Luck might have set Irene’s career in motion, it certainly hasn’t dictated it. Irene believes in “paying forward.” “Life is short, and I want to use my time meaningfully to give back to the society that granted me so many opportunities,” she adds. Sure, she’s being modest, as it takes way more than sheer luck to transform traditional financial market practices and navigate the issues in this realm.

Having served as the head of Hang Seng Index and Senior Investment Professional at three global hedge funds including Eton Park, Irene drew on these experiences to create a niche in assisting brokers and fund institutions in the highly competitive market. She currently uses her influential voice, financial education, and vision to navigate her clients through the fintech application on investment.

Our mission is to promote the power of derivatives in wealth management via proper use of derivatives, which can protect investors and turn them into a winner in a world full of structured products

ixFintech’s genesis was a natural progression to fuel her resolve to change the current practice of a pure trading system to user experience with education, learning risk management and trading. Today, at the helm as the founder and CEO of ixFintech, Irene leads her team to solve some of the deep pain-points in finance and investment. Unlike traditional platforms, ixFintech’s offers novel consulting as well as conservation and educational services for new alternative investment products. The company is currently taking four mentors at different period of the year from the University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Cyberport to help investors learn more about investment.

ixFintech has recently bagged the ETNet Fintech Award (Wealth Investment & Management) 2018, for being the Outstanding Options Information Mobile Application. Irene’s rich expertise, combined with the novel concept behind ixFintech stands to reason that the company is bringing best-in-class products and solutions to cater to finance and investment needs. The company takes pride in its knowledge and commitment to promote financial literacy and bring a whole new experience to individuals and institutional investors.

A New Horizon in Finance—ixOption

Irene realizes that many professionals, managers, executives, and businessmen in Asia can make better investment decisions if imparted with knowledge about structured products and options trading. To that end, ixOption, the company’s first platform launched in 2018, has been developed to enhance retail investors’ knowhow on derivatives, options learning, risk management, and portfolio management. ixOption helps the professionals to identify and understand market content and enables them to make educated decisions. “We chose options as there are only a handful of people in Hong Kong focusing on securities. Our mission is to promote the power of derivatives in wealth management via proper use of derivatives, which can protect investors and turn them into a winner in a world full of structured products. Followed by this, we want to be the leader and best-in-class of AI Algos and funds,” says Irene.

The user-friendly and intuitive ixOption app equips the users with the information to quickly gauge the market performance and get a quick feel of the market from a top-down approach. With an underlying design reflecting a trader’s perspective, the app’s search engines allow access to in-depth information on charts, top 20s, futures and cash spread, significant constituent stocks, Forex and commodities, and more. The highly-customizable app delivers a new experience by personalizing the menu bar pertaining to financial instruments.

One of the most distinctive features of ixOption is its Option calculator. It helps users to calculate the theoretical price of the Option and displays some of the more important Option price factors, which influence the premium and facilitate Option learning. By comparing a stock’s historical volatility and its implied volatility, it enables users to judge whether the Option is overpriced or not. ixOption’s covered call tool extends an easy and intuitive way to access contract size information to let new Option learners know the market convention in the Options market.

For the professionals who have the money, the investments have to be treated with utmost care and they tend to look at the many ways to protect their downside. Derivatives are the tools for hedging risk. However, Irene believes that without the right use of tools and information, the investment will become a lot riskier. “The information you see in the Bloomberg terminal is vast and difficult to comprehend for a new investor,” Irene says. “For experienced traders, we have a step by step process to look at the order of information before making a decision. The UX of our application is designed to embed daily routine from a trader perspective and we only provide information that helps investors to make better decisions. We present the covered call tools in a way that helps you to analyze the

covered call strategy in an extremely easy and intuitive way. Our options calculator displays some of the more important option price factors, which influence the premium, and facilitate option learning.”

Another project of ixFintech is the HK Algo, which is also a test and certification system, useful to brokers and financial institutions for algo landing assessment in terms of cash flow preparation. The algo test and certification platform have been designed to answer numerous questions such as how good are the trading algos? Are they compliant with the exchange rules? “HK Algo creates reports that can be used to make such strategic decisions,” adds Irene.

In the process of running her own start-up, Irene befriended other founders, only to discover the pain of operating a startup with limited resources and time. It was increasingly difficult for such startups to acquire money for marketing and find investors and at this juncture, the idea of launching ixCircle was born—a platform to match startup and investors, and to provide legal advice on their documents and more. The startup funding matching platform, ixCircle quickly matches startups with investors at a low cost.

The uniqueness of ixFintech stems from its approach to improving financial literacy. ixFintech’s ixAcadmia—a live classroom and streaming platform—takes away the education work from brokers so that they can focus on dealing. The education platform connects to ixOption to deliver courses in relation to derivatives—from basics to applications.

Behind Every Success is a Great Team

Governed by a mission to promote financial literacy of Options and related derivatives to the public, ixFintech is an epitome of success as a result of its effective teamwork. The company onboards candidates, including university interns, with passion, kindness, skill set, quick learning ability, good communication skills, and potential. Monday mornings are dedicated to a weekly meeting wherein, after considerable deliberation, performance is assessed based on deliverables and ideas transform into action. “As a team, we share the same vision of giving back to society. We aim to build trust and have a holistic view rather than micro-manage. We have earned a reputation for honoring and keeping our words to clients and business partners,” adds Irene. As an accomplished and seasoned professional in the hedge fund industry specialized in Asia equities, Irene advocates providing new experiences and quality solutions in finance and investment. With the breadth of her experience coalescing well with her unique leadership style,

Irene plays a vital role in ixFintech’s ascension to success. A table tennis enthusiast, Irene accredits the grit and determination she puts into the game for bagging a job at Morgan Stanley. “I am strict about my time table. One thing that I learned from sports is discipline, and also the sportsmanship, making me fearless toward failure and helping me recover quickly to move on.



A Testimony to Excellence

ixOption and its Option calculator, implied volatility (IV) calculator, the easy click on historical volatility, and the comparison between the Option price and IV graphs, and more have proved to be immensely beneficial for retail users. The user experience in its entirety is intuitive and straightforward and only presents what users need rather than an unproductive heap of information. “We invest substantial time to design the UX so that a user can get a grasp of what is happening in the market by just a few clicks and develop their top-down market checking discipline before trading stock or option. We have been approached by many to evangelize trading platforms and risk management presentations,” reveals Irene. The team at ixFintech is focused on getting more people to use the platform. Irene believes, “It is important to make the platform helpful for the industry first. A perfect platform without users is a waste to our team effort and the world.”

ixFintech’s component ixAsia launched the ixCrypto Index in Dec 2018—the first non-traditional index created by the team. The company is currently working with a financial institution that wanted to design and create other non-traditional indexes for a specific purpose.

“With a first-of-its-kind model, ixFintech’s mission is to reinforce Hong Kong’s leadership as a global financial center, by facilitating institutions and professional individuals with integrated investment and transaction experience and taking a neutral and independent third-party stance,” states Irene. Going forward, ixFintech will not only develop in-house research projects and platforms on other investment instruments such as securities and bonds but will also work with listed companies to enhance their value with unique fintech solutions. **CM**

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Top 10 Trading Solution Providers in APAC - 2019

Capital markets are rapidly expanding with state-of-the-art technologies, not just to solve challenges but also accelerate innovation. Trading platforms have become powerful tools for brokers and traders in the current dynamic marketplace. As millennials make up an increasingly large percentage of the investor market, online trading remains hot and accounts for a higher share of industry revenue. In an industry where every second in an e-trade transaction can cost a trader thousands of dollars, latency during operations can never be excused. While hardware and network inherently exhibit a certain amount of latency, it is the job of the developer to ensure that the platform is not the source of undue delay.

To add more to the efficiency of the traders and brokers, developers are also working on mobile-based fast, high-resolution e-trading software. Such software powered by the cloud technology has been paramount in the advancement of time series database integration and the introduction of parallel streaming, providing users with a holistic view of diverse activities anywhere, anytime. These solutions also incorporate highly sophisticated security features fitting for

a financial service. Having pioneered machine-to-machine communications technology, the industry is taking also tapping into the potential of the Internet of Things (IoT) to enhance its offerings.

Driving these mobility and IoT efforts, data also plays a critical role in modern trading platforms. Investors and traders rely on big data tools to gather and process a huge amount of information for effective and intelligent market prediction. To make these tools much more useful and efficient, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) capabilities are being incorporated into the trading platforms.

With numerous solution providers in the trading solutions arena, it has become a difficult task for the organizations to choose the best vendor offering comprehensive trading solutions. To help CIOs and CFOs find the right trading solution provider that aligns well with their requirements, a team of astute CEOs, CIOs, VCs, and analysts along with the Capital Markets CIO Outlook's editorial board has evaluated the best organizations in the trading solutions arena.

We present to you Capital Markets CIO Outlook's "Top 10 Trading Solution Providers in APAC - 2019."



Company:
ixFintech

Description:
An Investech company that has developed a game-changing platform to transform the traditional financial market practices into different digital investment platforms

Key Person:
Irene Wong
Founder & CEO

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ixfintech.com