



## SUPERBRANDS 2013

THE STRAITS TIMES  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2013 C9

# Shades of innovation

Superbrand Dulux wants to brighten people's lives with its brilliant colours

by douglas chew

DULUX aims to colour your world, and has been recognised as a Superbrand for the second year running.

"Building on our reputation as the industry leader that anticipates, understands and shapes colour trends with quality product offering, we intend to continue to build awareness about the effects and benefits of using colour, with both home owners and professionals," says Mr Jeremy Paul Rowe (right), managing director of AkzoNobel Paints (Asia Pacific).

Dulux is a brand from AkzoNobel, a global leader in paints and coatings, and a major producer of specialty chemicals. The company recently launched a new brand identity that "symbolises modernity, dynamism and joy, and the ability to transform and renew people's lives."

Innovation is another crucial element in sustaining Dulux's brand appeal. AkzoNobel's research and development (R&D) processes have created breakthrough products such as the Dulux Weathershield exterior wall paint with Keep Cool technology and Dulux Light and Space interior wall paint. The former's heat reflective technology helps create a cooler interior, with energy savings of up to 15 per cent each year, while the latter's light-reflective Lumitec technology enables it to reflect light twice as much compared to regular emulsion paints.

Its R&D efforts are not just limited to paints and chemicals. ColourFutures is a result of research and insight by the AkzoNobel Global Aesthetic Centre to determine the key colour trends for the following year. These trends are then translated into colour palettes and images to inspire the consumer.

AkzoNobel continues to invest in its business in Singapore, setting up the AkzoNobel House at Changi Business Park last year, to function as a centralised hub supporting the company's growth strategies across Asia. It houses the Global Decorative Paints Exterior Wall Expertise Centre, which screens new technologies, support formulation cost optimisation and develops new products for local and global markets.

The importance of sustainability and serving the community is on the company's agenda. "We believe brands play a big role in the community we live



PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

and work in. This is why we have, and will continue to bring to the market, eco-certified products with an improved sustainability performance across our Dulux range. We consistently seek to transform the grey spaces of the less fortunate with colour," says Mr Rowe.

Having now been a trusted name in Singapore for over 30 years, the Dulux brand maintains its prominence in the global decorative paint industry. Pleased to have won the Superbrands award for the second time, Mr Rowe says: "Everyone deserves to have a little colour in their lives and Dulux can help to make the whole world more colourful."

"Decoration is about making a positive change, a renewal, in our lives. The Superbrands accolade is an affirmation of our dedication to consumers and our professional partners in the decoration journey and renewal of their living space."

## All in the name

Successful Singapore companies leverage on their Superbrands status through a multi-tiered promotional platform

AS THE world's largest brand promotional platform operating in more than 80 countries around the world, Superbrands provides a Mark of Excellence and recognition that an established consumer brand has established the finest reputation in its field.

At the same time, it acknowledges the significant emotional and tangible benefits that the brand provides its customers, giving them the confidence that they are making the right brand choice.

Superbrands employs a comprehensive selection process – by invitation only – which involves an independent research among Singaporean consumers aged 18 to 55 years on their favourite brand across 106 different consumer product and service categories. Participating brands that achieve the Superbrands status are entitled to use the Superbrands logo on their marketing and communication collaterals.

The research conducted by BDR Asia showed that 74 per cent of Singaporean consumers believe that the brands displaying the Superbrands logo provides them with assurances on brand quality and reputation.

In addition, 80 per cent of those surveyed are likely to consider making purchases from the brands endorsed by Superbrands.

Mr Mark Pointer, chief executive officer, Superbrands Singapore, says: "The research shows that the Superbrands logo does a lot to build brand equity in terms of the reputation of the brand and it also helps brands stand out from other brands in the same category."

"When consumers see the logo associated with a brand, it helps to reassure them that they are making the right brand choice and it reinforces the perception that the brand is of high quality and one that they can trust."



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\* For promotion to be valid, paint job by Dulux-authorized painting contractor must be completed within the promotional period (28 August to 31 October 2013). Painting dates are subject to availability on a first-come-first-served basis.

\* Valid for the 1st 100 Dulux Premier Painting Package sign-ups with appointed Dulux-authorized painting contractor and painting job completed within the promotional period (28 August to 31 October 2013). No date extension will be allowed. First-come-first-served basis, one per customer.

Terms and conditions apply for all painting packages and services. All information is correct at the time of printing. AkzoNobel Paint (S) Pte Ltd reserves the right to withdraw and/or amend the terms and conditions of the promotions without prior notice.

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# Sweet taste of success

SIS maintains the high quality of its products and launches something new every year

by suresh nair

CUSTOMER support and employee dedication rank as the two pillars of the business at Sugar Industry of Singapore (SIS). SIS has attained the Superbrands status for the third time, reaffirming the global acceptance to the brand and product quality.

Mr Robert Day (bottom right), managing director, Asia (ED&F Man Asia), says: "We are very proud of that. At the same time, we can't simply be satisfied with this result. We continue to strive for even better results in the future. This is our commitment to customers and employees."

He notes that in two key areas of the business (packing/retail and blending), SIS is awarded an "A" Grade, placing the company within the top echelon of Singapore Food Manufacturers, which is among the highest of worldwide country standards.

"In addition, we have obtained various certifications for our business' processes, such as ISO 22000, ISO 9001, Singapore Halal Certification and Kosher Certification. These are extremely important as they motivate employees to achieve the highest standard and they provide our customers with unbiased confirmation that our brand is what we claim to be," he adds.

## Quality criteria

According to Mr Day, delivering on brand promise comes down to three quality criteria: to maintain the highest quality standards, provide customers with the experience they have come to know and love from SIS, and innovate to bring in new products that customers want.

"It goes without saying that we can only do this by having dedicated employees and partners. We are very fortunate to work with first-class class distributors and retail channels, and everyone plays a part in building the SIS brand," he says.

"Every business faces challenges and SIS is no exception. The great thing about our story is we've always found a way to adapt and overcome any challenges, which is why SIS has been the largest supplier of sugar to Singapore since it was founded in 1965."

SIS launches one or two new products every year, with the most recent being the "SIS Demerara Sugar", which is popular for baking specialty desserts in the home and as a sweetener for coffee.

"We buy our Demerara from the

highest-quality producer in the world in Mauritius, and our size and volume in Singapore allow us to minimise transportation and costs," he says.

By pricing the product lower than its competitors, SIS passes on the benefit from its business model to customers.

Being recognised as a Superbrand is a "symptom of our sales success rather than a cause of it, and we feel very privileged to be recognised for what we do", he adds.

"At the same time, however, getting that recognition does add value to our overall brand; so from that perspective, I suppose it does translate into better sales. We are focused on providing great products for our customers and the rest takes care of itself."

"It is worth pointing out that the strength of the SIS brand through award recognition and overall high-quality consistency has allowed SIS to become one of the largest brands of sugar in the Middle East."

"Part of that success is propelled by the great reputation Singapore has around the world and customers' comfort knowing that

Singapore produces safe and high-quality products. At SIS, we're very pleased to be adding value to customers around the world such that Singaporeans can be proud of."



PHOTO: CHONG LIANG



PHOTO: RAY KHOO

## Thinking out of the box

A solid brand strategy and strong identity have contributed to Nubox's staying power

by hazel tan

BEFORE Nubox opened its first Apple Authorised Reseller outlet at Sim Lim Square in 2008, Singaporeans bought Apple products mainly in the central shopping district.

Today, for consumers' convenience, there are seven Nubox outlets in heartland malls. Two more Nubox stores will open in City Square Mall and Bedok Mall.

"Many Apple Premium Resellers have limited their stores to the central shopping districts. Nubox's strategy is to bring the Apple experience closer to the suburbs and closer to home," says Ms Evelyn Chua (above), chief marketing officer, Newstead Technologies. Nubox, an Apple Premium Reseller, is an arm of Newstead Technologies, a consumer electronics retailer in Singapore with over 45 retail stores.

In five years, Nubox has captured 35 per cent of the total Apple Premium Reseller space in Singapore, with 11 Apple Premium Reseller stores, offering a wide range of Apple products and accessories. For the second time, Nubox has been awarded Consumer Superbrands status. It won its first Superbrands award in 2011.

"We are elated to have won Consumer Superbrands 2013. The Superbrands title underscores Nubox's continued success," says Ms Chua. "It is a testament of our continued efforts to bring in the latest innovations from Apple, and spread the experiences, passion and love for all things Mac and Apple to consumers. Winning the award puts forth the message that Nubox is here for our consumers and it is here to stay."

## Brand identity

As an Apple reseller, the level of product differentiation

is lower and branding plays a critical part for consumers to determine which reseller to buy from, says Ms Chua.

Nubox's target group includes consumers who switch from other operating software platforms to Apple. To this end, Nubox is well-equipped, as many Nuboxers (as Nubox staff are known) are themselves "switchers", and are able to relate to the concerns and interests of customers considering the conversion to Mac, she adds.

Nubox's service proposition includes an after-sales service and a channel for customers to field questions and give feedback. The stores also organise training sessions for customers to ensure they get the most out of their Apple products.

## Bonding through music

Nubox keeps its fans engaged through social media, providing them with the latest updates on Apple products, activities and promotions. For example, it recently celebrated its fifth anniversary with a five-week long Happy 5 campaign, offering more than \$15,000 in give-aways for customers, weekly lucky draws and more.

Using concerts as a branding initiative has also proven to be successful. Last year, Nubox collaborated with Universal Music Group to present British chart-topper Pixie Lott's private showcase and Britain's top boy band The Wanted's debut concert in Singapore. It ran a series of contests to give away concert tickets and exclusive meet-and-greet passes.

"These concerts are a great way to engage and reward Nubox fans. It also helps to seed younger customers and strengthens the connection between their favourite artist and their favourite Apple Premium Reseller, Nubox," says Ms Chua.

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# Winning trust

Superbrand Akira stays ahead as a local brand by making good products with better features

by tan bah bah

AKIRA has been honoured as a Superbrand for the eighth year running, and it positions the company for the next stage of its development as a maker of reliable consumer electronics products.

"We have moved Akira to the next level of positioning, focusing on the quality of the product and improving the lifestyle of the consumer by bringing higher or more product features, or both, to the mass markets at an affordable price," says Mr Tay Kia Lai, general manager of Akira Corporation, which attained the Superbrands status for the first time in 2006.

The Singapore-based company manufactures television sets, DVD players, washing machines, kitchen appliances, air-conditioners and lights, among other consumer products. It has about 4,000 models in the market.

## Local, but super

Akira started off by focusing on affordability and product range to penetrate local and global markets. It now wants to push the brand positioning up a notch by leveraging on Singapore itself as a brand – The Singapore Brand, Quality Assured.

"Singapore is an internationally reputed country of high-standard products and services and it makes sense to leverage on that," says Mr Tay.

"We are pleased to be one of the recipients of the award, realising that the majority of consumers

chose Akira to be one of the Superbrands in Singapore."

In fact, Akira is the only consumer electronic products company to be named a Superbrand. But it has not been an entirely easy road to the current well-deserved recognition.

Mr Tay says: "A generic perception of the consumer towards an affordable price product was that of lower quality level."

## Winning formula

Akira overcame this challenge by emphasising, through its communication channels, the quality assurance and value for money of its products, followed by a promising experience with them.

The company also worked hard to earn the trust of consumers far beyond a business-customer relationship. Akira is a keen and committed partner in many important community projects, such as being a sponsor of the National Day Parade for 11 years and a main supporter of Swift Athletics track and field events since 2004.

What others can learn from Akira's experience is to be clear and consistent about what their brand positioning is, and their benefits for the consumers. Delivering promises is a must.

Moreover, building up the confidence will lead to acceptance, recognition and trust in the company and its products and services. It also helps the company to establish long-term relationship with customers.

The Akira business strategy (brand positioning) is paying off as Akira has seen significant increases in sales every year, says Mr Tay, who prefers to keep his sales figures under wraps.



PHOTO: RAY KHOO

# Creating the future



PHOTO: SAMSUNG

Emphasis on good consumer experience and product innovation make Samsung a top brand

by narendra aggarwal

BESIDES being voted by Singaporeans as one of their favourite brands in several categories, Samsung has also been recognised as a Superbrand in the categories for "Singapore's favourite TV" and "Singapore's favourite mobile phone".

"We are delighted that consumers feel greater affinity for our brand and it is our commitment to continue to captivate consumers by accelerating discoveries and possibilities for all. These triumphs drive us to innovate further to chart consumer trends while ensuring that we remain relevant for consumers," says Ms Irene Ng, vice-president for marketing at Samsung Asia.

Moving forward, the company will continue to fulfil its corporate philosophy as well as the vision: "Inspire the World, Create the Future" by bringing new and meaningful innovations to the global marketplace.

## Newer and better

Samsung has achieved success in building up the brand to be a Superbrand, as it places a relentless focus on consumer experience and product innovation in everything it does.

"Our world-class technology capabilities enable us to bring a wide array of new and meaningful innovations to market quickly, and this helps us to achieve success. With our vision of 'Inspire the World, Create the Future,' we are constantly pushing the limits in design and innovation to create the ultimate consumer experience," says Ms Ng.

Most recently, Samsung introduced advanced and intuitive Smart Interaction features for Samsung Smart TVs. Samsung's Motion Control and Voice Control allow consumers to use everyday language and gestures to quickly and easily access and navigate content.

With the Samsung Evolution Kit, consumers can update their Smart TV software and hardware for immedi-

ate access to the latest Smart Hub and other Smart features, and even upgrade the processing speeds of their Samsung Smart TVs.

Its flagship smartphones, Galaxy S III and its two predecessors Galaxy S and Galaxy S II have surpassed 100 million in total units sold as at Jan 13, 2013, indicating that Samsung smartphones have become the preferred device for global users. In addition, 10 million units of the much anticipated Galaxy S4 with LTE were sold within the first month of its launch.

## Innovate to meet customers' needs

There were many challenges along the way in building up Samsung as a Superbrand, as well as a lot of learning in the process for the company.

"In this fast-moving industry, we are committed to trying new things and taking bold risks, in order to provide value and enhance the lives of customers," says Ms Ng.

"Our consumer research findings are on the cutting edge of evolving consumer needs and behaviours. We know our consumers, and we apply our insights in the smartest way by designing our products to reflect and meet the needs of consumers and their changing lives."

For example, recent research shed new light on consumer eating and buying habits, as well as the need for capacity to store food, handle big laundry loads and customise options for storage and cooking.

In response, Samsung introduced flexible features such as the Coolselect Zone Drawer and a two-step foldable shelf so that fridge space can instantly be created to make room for large items.

Building up Samsung as a Superbrand has translated into better sales. After all, effective branding gives it the competitive edge that sustains its business in the long term.

Now that Samsung is a brand that consumers are familiar with, it aspires to be a brand consumers can resonate with.

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# Emotional connection

SingTel constantly adds new services to enrich the lives of its customers, reports **Suresh Nair**



TWO years ago, multiple-award winning SingTel introduced a new vision of its brand: "Amazing things happen when you dream big".

The result was a shift in consumer perceptions of SingTel as a company that aims to delight and inspire its customers through innovative services, says Mr Johan Buse (left), SingTel's vice-president of consumer marketing.

He adds: "Our goal is to demonstrate the role of SingTel and our services in our customers' lives and to endear them to our brand by building an emotional connection."

For instance, the initiative to bring Chef Gordon Ramsay to Singapore for the recent SingTel Hawker Heroes Challenge seeks to celebrate Singapore's rich culinary heritage and put favourite hawkers in the global spotlight.

"The three-day event thrilled many lovers of local cuisine by giving them the chance to not only meet Chef Ramsay in person, but to try his interpretation of our favourite hawker dishes. This, in turn, helped to fulfil our brand promise of turning ordinary moments into something amazing for our customers," says Mr Buse.

## Delivering good experiences

SingTel was the first in Singapore to launch commercial 4G services offering 4G speeds that

are twice as fast as conventional 4G services, as well as offer dual-band street-level coverage nationwide.

"This dual-band capability doubles the data-handling capacity of the network, allowing customers to enjoy a superior multi-media experience during peak periods for applications such as video and music streaming, web surfing, file downloads and online games," says Mr Buse.

"Concurrently, we have upgraded our 3G networks to provide speeds of up to 42Mbps - double the speed of conventional 3G services. All 3G and 4G customers get to enjoy the boost in speed at no additional charge."

The pursuit of excellent customer service is a key area of focus for SingTel, he emphasises. "We seek to improve the way we serve our customers in all areas of our business from sales to support and issues management. We listen to our customers and welcome their honest and candid feedback in our ongoing efforts to enhance our services."

Mr Buse notes that social media has become an important part of SingTel's communications strategy and helps to cultivate a closer relationship with customers through personal interactions. So the company is using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as effective channels to reach out to its customers to assist them with queries and service requests.

With the shift in consumer preferences and marketing trends moving towards digital, SingTel is transforming from a provider of traditional telecommunications services to a multi-media solutions provider, he adds.

"To move beyond our traditional core carriage services, our aim is to build relevant and targeted services for our customers. This requires a total strategy in terms of network performance, handsets, price plans, content and customer experience," he says.

PHOTO: SINGTEL

# nubox

mad about mac

**Congratulations to Nubox for being awarded the 2013 Superbrands Status**



Nubox, an arm of Newstead Technologies, is Singapore's largest Apple Premium Reseller with 11 stores islandwide and counting. It offers a full suite of Macs, iPads, iPods, and iPhones together with a wide range of premium accessories to complement and complete the Apple experience.

Nubox attributes its success to its staff - the Nuboxers who are dedicated to share their experiences, passion and love for Mac, and all things Apple; and thanks its customers and partners for their relentless support. Nubox will continue to be the forerunner to bring in the latest innovations from Apple and create an immersive lifestyle experience for customers.

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# Household names

The spotlight is on four outstanding brands for their vision and drive to be the consumers' choice



## Tressed for success

From its founding years through to the present, Yun Nam Hair Care has developed a reputation for innovation, creativity, and dedication to meet changing consumer demands.



PHOTOS: YUN NAM

Yun Nam augments its primary brand elements of reliability, effectiveness and personable service with ongoing research and development, marketing and training for its hair care professionals. Branding campaigns are also an important part of marketing communications, and help facilitate the promotion of greater brand recall.

The company aims to be the leader in the international world of personal grooming and lead market trends in hair and scalp care.

**Fast fact:** Yun Nam Hair Care is the first professional hair care facility in Singapore to use 100 per cent natural herbs in its hair care formulas.



## 'Rice' to the challenge

Royal Umbrella Fragrant Rice is synonymous with top quality rice — a staple food among Singaporeans. As the sole distributor of Royal Umbrella in Singapore, Top-seller is committed to delivering excellent products to every household. This has become a standing brand promise that consumers rely upon and enjoy.



Through its extensive marketing and promotional efforts, Topseller strives to constantly educate its customers about the characteristics and quality of Royal Umbrella Fragrant Rice. It has become a favourite for all ages and these proactive initiatives have helped further nurture and develop the brand's value.

**Fast fact:** Royal Umbrella fragrant rice is a premium quality product that undergoes an intensive cleaning cycle and only needs to be washed once before cooking.



PHOTOS: ROYAL UMBRELLA



## Smooth operator

Through the years, consumers have come to recognise Pilot and its reputation for producing trusted, top quality writing instruments. The marketplace has benefited from the company's commitment of superior production, quality-driven innovations, as well as its continuous creativity.

**Fast fact:** The first retractable, cap-less fountain pen in the world was produced by Pilot.



PHOTOS: PILOT



## Smart learning

Kumon's long term vision is that people around the world will have the opportunity to learn with the Kumon Method, and that each individual will initiate self-learning enthusiastically and make efforts towards realising one's goals.

The Kumon brand is a set of values and attributes that reflects the belief resonating through the Kumon Group. Kumon aims to foster sound, capable people and thus contribute to the global community by discovering the potential of each individual and developing his ability fully.

**Fast fact:** In Singapore, the youngest person who completed the Kumon Mathematics programme, which comprises materials up to pre-university level, is seven years old.



PHOTOS: KUMON

Source: Superbrands — An insight into many of Singapore's strongest brands (Volume VI)

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# Top of the trade

This year's winners share what it takes to be recognised for their branding excellence



PHOTO: JEAN YIP GROUP

Mr Mervin Wee (left), managing director, Jean Yip Group

By holding firm to our core values for the past 30 years — Trust, Value and Friendliness — Jean Yip Group has embraced the trust from consumers and continues to strive relentlessly to deliver the best service using the latest state-of-the-art technology and superior products to exceed customers' satisfaction. We are motivated by our customers' satisfaction which has brought us to where we are today.

"Our core value is to provide quality health products at affordable prices with excellent service. In order to maintain the quality and consistency of our products, we always aim to achieve vertical integration for our core products. This means that the company is involved from the start in cultivation down to processing and manufacturing of our core products such as our bottled bird's nest. With the brand recognition, customers can be more confident when they purchase products from us."

Mr James Too, general manager, Hockhua Tonic (right)



PHOTO: HOCKHUA TONIC

"As the trusted communications service provider for more than 150 years, we have gone beyond physical postal communications to offer secure digital communications solutions as well as e-commerce logistics solutions. Even as we grow our new business areas, we remain committed to delivering reliable service to help our customers meet their lifestyle needs with ease and at their convenience. We will continue to innovate, stay relevant and be future ready to meet changing needs."

Mr Loh Choo Beng, executive vice-president (retail and financial services), SingPost



PHOTO: SINGPOST

# AKIRA

## Singapore Brand, Quality Assured

Quality, Value for Money and Widest Range

**2013 Superbrands Singapore's Choice**

Thanking all our customers for making us Superbrands

Thanking all our trade partners nationwide for supporting us to become Superbrands

GIANT Hypermart, NTUC Fairprice Extra, Challenger, Mustafa and other authorised dealers nationwide

At Crystal Jade, we make it our goal to offer exceptional food quality, and excellent customer service in a congenial ambience. Through this dedication, our restaurants have become a favourite among food lovers throughout the world. We'd like to think we are part of many Singaporeans' fond memories such as family occasions, business lunches and gatherings with friends. Crystal Jade has been, and I hope will continue to be, part of many more Singaporeans' lives."

Mr Ye Yiu Tung (above), chairman and chief executive officer, Crystal Jade Culinary Concepts Holding



PHOTO: CRYSTAL JADE



PHOTO: OCEAN HEALTH

Ocean Health was started with the vision of developing affordable high quality products to improve the quality of life and self-esteem of customers. Besides quality and trust being the company's key values, I believe that products that are good enough for me and my family are also good enough for my customers. That's the standard I have set right from the start. With this recognition, we look forward to be able to touch the lives of more people who want to achieve better quality of life through better health."

Ms Christina Lim (above), president and chief executive officer, Ocean Health

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### SINGAPORE'S SUPERBRANDS



## Doing Our Best, Lighting Up Lives

### Wellness for life, Generations of Joy.

All 52 Hockhua outlets islandwide are ready to serve your every health need.

[www.hockhuatonic.com](http://www.hockhuatonic.com)

Once again, we have been voted Singapore's choice in Superbrands 2013! A very big "thank you" goes out to you, our loyal customers, for your continued support and patronage. We could not have done it without you. Because of your faith in us, we are motivated to always do our best and to strive for more.

From a humble business in 1986, there are now more than 50 outlets in Singapore bearing the Hockhua trademark. Much of our success comes from our consumers' awareness that the human body requires many nutrients in order to function properly.

We need nutrients to grow, to keep warm, to fight diseases, to repair and to replenish. Not all essential nutrients or vitamins can be derived from the food we eat everyday. The required intake has to come from other sources such as herbs, tonics, Chinese medicine and other health food. To make it easy and affordable for everyone to enjoy the benefits of good health, Hockhua Tonic has been researching and producing quality products for the last two decades.

Obtaining and sustaining good health has never been so easy. After all, it's the Hockhua way to ensure that health and happiness will always light up your life.

**福華補品 · HOCKHUA TONIC**

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