

Pick of the crop

Homegrown brands are among the Asian companies with multi-country links recognised in this year's Business Superbrands award

by ahmad osman

ARA ASSET MANAGEMENT Prudent management for investors

Integrity and teamwork are the brand values highlighted by ARA Asset Management in its role as a leading Asian real estate fund management company.

Integrity is vital for the company with established corporate and risk management systems to manage investors' money and assets prudently.

Teamwork is emphasised because the diversity of the staff comprising 18 nationalities spanning 13 Asia-Pacific cities is a key factor for the company's success.

Its business model will enable ARA to continue to achieve strong growth as the preferred partner for investors.

The company serves as a bridge between international institutional funds and real estate investment opportunities in the booming Asian economies.

ARA believes that a successful corporation is founded not solely on profit, but also on the positive role it can play in the community.

The company strives to integrate social considerations into business decisions. The commitment to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes is demonstrated through ARA's targeted community, arts, education and environment initiatives.



LEEDEN

Aiming high

The Leeden group wants to be Asia's foremost welding, gas and safety integration specialist with market leadership in the marine and oil and gas industries.

It has formalised commitments to stakeholders while it continues to work diligently to build the reputation to attract and nurture employees.

It is committed to generate consistent profits for shareholders and be a great workplace for the staff.

Reliability, dependability, higher productivity and cost reduction are components of the commitment to customers.

To its principals, Leeden wants to be a partner of choice providing a geographical reach advantage, value-added marketing and intellectual value.

tionships with customers and builds mutual trust to generate new business successes.

SINGAPORE POST

Moving beyond mail

Quality, good affordable service and efficiency are the hallmarks of Singapore Post (SingPost), which handles over 2.8 million mail items every day.

It has the strong brand and extensive distribution network to innovate and grow its mail, digital services, logistics, retail and e-commerce businesses here and overseas.

Quality and reliability of the brand are based on customers' present and future needs and careful tracking of consumer and business trends.

The aim is to seek new solutions that will add value to lifecycle needs and business demands.

Integrated marketing communications strengthen the SingPost brand identity.

A sponsored television sitcom featuring a local courier company making near impossible deliveries enhanced the Speed-post brand.

SingPost appointed a popular local artiste as its stamp ambassador. A tech-savvy radio personality who loves online shopping became the vPOST ambassador.

The appointments are part of the efforts to reach out to younger customers.

A third campaign rewarded customers with the chance to win a car through transactions in any of SingPost's tri-channel retail network.

A Facebook fan page was launched alongside the campaign to reach out to the online community.

SL GROUP

Winning customers' respect

SL Global earned the respect of customers because of its reputation as a quality preferred apparel supply chain provider with in-depth knowledge of the apparel business.

Amid rising competition, the company, with 13 manufacturing firms in seven countries, continues to innovate through new manufacturing capabilities.

It is expanding product ranges by offering new design and development ideas.

Operations in Vietnam, Cambodia and Bangladesh drive cost-effective solutions with greater value for the clientele.

A culture of collaboration within the company reinforces a customer-centric



mindset that is a strong platform for continued global growth.

The highly valued staff is vital for the on-going success of SL Global. It nurtures a team culture to motivate and encourage a can-do attitude.

Despite the challenging economic environment, SL Global's strong financial position allows the company to seek out mergers and acquisitions opportunities that will create greater value for shareholders.

THE BUSINESS TIMES

Reaching out with financial news

The Business Times is Singapore's trusted newspaper with succinctly written news stories, timely market information, thoughtful analyses and commentaries for readers in the business, financial and professional services communities.

Popular Executive Lifestyle pages help to define the paper as a well-rounded product for top decision makers with a special position in the local media industry because of its understanding of Singapore's economic, business and corporate issues.

Journalists in the paper popularly known as BT are regular winners of top awards for their articles contributing to the most comprehensive coverage of business and finance in this country.

BT also reaches out to more readers through special features, promotions and improvements to the quality of its content, accuracy, timeliness and presentation.

The weekend edition, for example, was revamped from a broadsheet to a compact paper to support the mobility and changing lifestyles of the readers.

The Editor of BT, Mr Alvin Tay, says it achieved the primary goal to be the paper of choice of Singapore's business and financial community.

Average daily circulation rose from some 7,000 copies to about 34,000 copies since BT was set up on Oct 1, 1976.

Mr Tay says the recognition accorded to BT by Singapore Business Superbrands would not be possible without the support of the paper's readers and advertisers.

"I thank them for staying with us through thick and thin," he adds.

UGS

Energy solution partner

UGS sets the benchmark for business excellence in Singapore's commercial liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) industry.

The company, with a string of local and international awards, is more than a big player supplying commercial LPG to the food and beverage and industrial sectors.

Its services include the installation of equipment, piping and piping maintenance and consultation to ensure that pipes do not affect renovations of customers' shops.

It recommends contractors with good workmanship, sells complementary products such as stoves and cooker hoods, and goes the extra mile to provide clean up services after piping installation and regular maintenance to keep gas cabinets looking new.

The forward thinking company has an accident-free record and no down time for customers' gas supply.

It is constantly striving to provide efficient cost-effective and innovative energy solutions for customers.

UGS staff are driven by its values to cultivate work-life balance, learning, positive work attitude, honesty, integrity and celebrate community diversity.



INITIAL HYGIENE

Raising standards

Initial Hygiene leads the local delivery of professional hygiene solutions to hotels, malls, recreation centres, country clubs, offices, food establishments and manufacturers.

The company's brand highlights its expertise as "experts in the essentials". Customers with these essentials can focus on efforts to build thriving businesses.

Initial's brand is promoted through digital platforms and various corporate social responsibility programmes.

These programmes include an initiative in partnership with the Restroom Association of Singapore to cultivate acceptable washroom etiquette and habits.

Initial conducted hands washing activities in schools and also introduced environmentally friendly solutions and innovations.

Employees are guided by the company's core values of service, relationships and team work. They keep their promises, support colleagues and communicate pro-actively to deliver quality assurance and develop strong bonds and long-term partnerships with customers.

Initial's overall goal is to raise hygiene standards around the region through the expertise of its global network, research and development resources and hygienists.



NCS

Making IT happen

NCS has the commitment, responsiveness and flexibility to create business value through innovative information technology (IT) solutions and services.

There are over 8,000 staff in the company which is a wholly owned subsidiary of SingTel group.

It has, together with SingTel, a presence in 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the United States.

Over the past 30 years, it implemented some 3,000 large-scale mission critical multi-platform projects for various Asia-Pacific and Middle East government ministries and agencies.

This wide-ranging public sector experience is the platform for the company's diversification into other key Asia-Pacific industries and markets.

Its leading position is reflected in the NCS "making IT happen" tagline marking the company's experience, knowledge and dedication of the staff.

Green for growth and dark grey for establishment in the NCS logo reflects its ability to develop past experience and success for growth in the challenging future.

The company provides reliable and innovative services. It establishes long-term rela-

2012 Business Superbrands



Warming lives for generations

City Gas' award-winning customer-friendly ways are key to its longevity

by mike lee

CITY Gas has come a long way since its beginnings in 1861 as a humble producer of gas to light up street lamps in Singapore.

As time passed, gas for cooking and water heating purposes overtook lighting. The state-of-the-art \$240 million gas plant at Senoko was a significant milestone in 1998, with the plant taking over operations of the historical Kallang Gasworks.

Today, City Gas's 660,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers enjoy safe and reliable gas supply for various cooking, heating and drying needs.

Given its long history, its tagline Warming Lives for Generations is apt as it has been associated with affordability and service too.

Says Mr Ng Yong Hwee, chief executive officer and president of City Gas: "With more than 150 years in business, consumers have already associated these brand values to City Gas as they know that the company is committed to safe, reliable production and supply of gas."

City Gas's consecutive win at the Business Superbrands this year reaffirms its outstanding reputation.

The company takes a two-pronged approach to branding – internally and externally, says Mr Ng.

Internally, it starts with the employee, who would be first exposed to the company's warm image and culture through the recruitment advertisement, and continue to experience it right up till retirement or leaving the company. Mr Ng says: "A happy employee, a happy customer!"



Mr Ng (third from left) with (from left) Mr Don Chia, Ms Yazrinah Jalani and Ms Abrie Choong. PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

Likewise, business partners such as term contractors are treated as part of the family. They are also trained to deliver the City Gas experience, wearing the company uniform when servicing customers.

City Gas appeals to customers and the general public through their five senses, with channels varied from advertising mediums like newspaper, radio, train and bus, to road shows and events.

It has partnered The Esplanade and the Housing Board to reach out to executives and professionals, and homeowners respectively.

Partnering Shin Min Daily News, National Environmental Agency and Health Promotion Board in the City Hawker Food Hunt, hawker food is promoted and this in turn, netted City Gas exposure as a supplier of piped gas.

Over the last four to five years, City Gas has also been successfully positioning itself as a green company.

First launching the tagline Go Green, Go City Gas at a technical conference five years ago, it has continued to educate stakeholders throughout the supply chain on the eco benefits of using gas.

Customers can look forward to savings on utility bills with City Gas's range of eco-friendly products be it the water heater, clothes dryer or barbecue stove.

Says Mr Ng: "I am extremely heartened for City Gas to once again be awarded the Business Superbrands 2012."

"City Gas has been producing and supplying gas to Singapore for more than 150 years. Throughout our rich history, City Gas remains committed to deliver safe and reliable gas supply for various cooking, heating and drying needs."

"On behalf of City Gas, we would like to thank our employees, our partners and our customers for their years of faith and support for the company."

Powered for growth

Superb quality, performance and reliability propel PowerPlus to the top of its industry

FROM wheel loaders to bulldozers, excavators to rocktrenchers, fuel tankers to hydraulic trucks and crawler cranes – manufacturer and supplier PowerPlus' comprehensive range of heavy equipment and construction machineries has gained a strong reputation among its customers worldwide.

It was an order from the United States Army that gave the brand its big break in 2005. Catching the eye of potential customers in the Middle East, orders started coming in, followed by word-of-mouth customers from South America, Africa, South Asia and elsewhere.

The company's roots go back to 1973 as used equipment trader Worldwide Techno-Equipment. In

1993, founder Derrick Ong was invited to visit Chengdu by Chinese leaders to set up a machinery manufacturing plant, though the plan was shelved as the environment was not advanced enough to produce machines of international standards.

Nine years later, he revisited China and found ready availability of renowned component and parts makers. With the help of his son Marcus, they came up with PowerPlus, infusing a Western image into their newly incorporated company.

The initial years were tough as there were misconceptions about China-made products, says Mr Marcus Ong, who is PowerPlus Group's managing director. "A lot of time and effort was spent establishing

the brand and finding good business partners overseas," he recalls.

Today, the PowerPlus brand embodies superb quality, performance and reliability.

"To have an edge over our competitors and to differentiate our products from the other equipment manufacturers, we aim to exceed our customer's expectations by not only delivering better quality, but also superior finishing and enhanced design of our products," says Mr Ong. "We also strongly emphasise on our timely deliveries and excellent customer service."

Continually reaching out to international prospects, the company participates in trade shows, takes up advertising in magazines and

newspapers; marketing collaterals include miniature models, besides catalogues and posters. It even has its own YouTube channel showcasing product videos.

PowerPlus has also racked up various accolades such as the Singapore Prestige Brand Award and Enterprise 50 Award. This year, it has won the Business Superbrands Award again, following its debut on the inaugural 2010 edition.

But the company is not resting on its laurels. Besides strengthening its position in existing markets, PowerPlus aims to further its growth in untapped markets such as the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan and others.



Mr Ong says PowerPlus will continue to prioritise branding as part of its marketing strategy. PHOTO: POWERPLUS

When its expansion plans dubbed Project BRAVO are completed in 2015, PowerPlus plants will be located in Brazil, China, India, Japan, Nigeria, USA and Uzbekistan.

Says Mr Ong: "Being conferred a Business Superbrand from a reputable marketing organisation is definitely a strong endorsement to our organisation and a powerful boost to our global branding."

"For a company involved in international trade and having its operations in several countries, it is a testimony that the brand and organisation can deliver international standards of product value and service. We will continue to prioritise branding as part of our marketing strategy and keep delivering on our promises to our customers." – Mike Lee

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For more information on **UGS**, please call us at **6382 6663** or visit our website at **www.ugs.com.sg**.

Communications powerhouse

SingTel is top among homegrown companies well-known for excellent branding efforts

by mike lee

COMMUNICATIONS group SingTel has made the list of Business Superbrands again this year, after winning an award in the previous — and inaugural — edition in 2010.

It is ranked fifth overall this year, making it the most respected homegrown brand in this survey of leading business brands in Singapore, which also sees the participation of international Business-to-Business (B2B) brands.

The Business Superbrands award reinforces SingTel's proven capabilities in delivering products and solutions to our customers across the region to help them increase productivity enhance agility and improve profitability.

— Mr Bill Chang, Group Enterprise chief executive officer, SingTel

Participation in the exclusive Business Superbrands programme is strictly by invitation only and limited to a selected number of qualifying brands. Only brands that achieve outstanding reputations in their field of operations will be considered for membership.

SingTel services both corporate and consumer markets. Among the B2B products and services SingTel provides are infrastructure, managed services, cloud computing and application services.

One example is the myBusiness portal, which aims to empower SMEs (small and medium enterprises) to harness emerging technological trends and to create



SingTel aims to be the "one-stop ICT provider of choice in the Asia-Pacific region" for SMEs, corporations and government customers. PHOTOS: FILE



market in delivering a one-stop, end-to-end ICT delivery capability in the region.

Its numerous industry awards attest to its market leadership. Awards it has won this year alone include: Computerworld Hong Kong Awards for IT Outsourcing and Managed Services; Telecom Asia Awards for Best Asian Telecom Carrier & Best Regional Mobile Group; Frost & Sullivan Asia Pacific ICT Awards for

deeper interactions to help SMEs succeed in the market place. It is currently the largest all-in-one online SME community in Singapore, with 500,000 visits per month.

Says Mr Bill Chang (above), SingTel's Group Enterprise chief executive officer: "SingTel's core values reflect our common aspiration to foster a performance-based culture that is open and innovative, and that promotes mutual trust and engagement. These are also the same brand values that represent the company to our customers."

Customer focus, challenger spirit, teamwork, personal excellence and integrity are the company's core values.

For branding in the B2B sphere, SingTel's vision is "to be the one-stop ICT provider of choice in the Asia Pacific region for our SME, corporations and government customers with innovative, cost effective solutions to help power our customers' growth," says Mr Chang.

SingTel leads the Asia Pacific information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure space, including Internet Protocol Virtual Private Network (IP VPN); it also leads in the International Leased Circuit, Ethernet VPN (e-VPN) and Ethernet-line (E-Line)

Telecom Cloud Service Provider of the Year; Network World Asia Information Management Awards for Best Security-as-a-Service; Seatrade Asia Awards for Technical Innovation; and Asian Conference Awards for Best Large Scale Event (iLuminate 2010 & Accelerate 2010).

The company's history dates back to 1879 when Singapore became one of the first cities in Asia to have a telephone service. In 1955, SingTel became a statutory board called the Singapore Telephone Board, which held exclusive rights to operate telephone services within Singapore.

A merger with the Telecommunications Authority of Singapore made international telephony services available.

SingTel was corporatised in 1992 and issued its initial public offering a year later. Today, it stands as the largest company by market capitalisation listed on the Singapore Exchange.

Says Mr Chang: "The Business Superbrands award reinforces SingTel's proven capabilities in delivering products and solutions to our customers across the region to help them increase productivity, enhance agility and improve profitability."



"Do not go where the path may lead; instead go where there is no path and leave a trail."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Melvin Tan
Managing Director

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 **SingTel**

Targeting the right markets

Cyclect's wide range of services for various industries provides a unique value proposition to clients

by ahmad osman

HOMEGROWN Cyclect group of companies was established in September 1943 by its founder, the late Mr Tan Ai Meng, during the Japanese occupation of Singapore.

A repairer of ship equipment, he set up a small corner shop in Bencoolen Street with six engineers to repair household electrical appliances. From 1952, he also began to provide marine repairs.

The group is now in six core businesses — engineering and construction, technical services, system integration, energy solutions, product distribution and facility management.

It has a current workforce of more than 500 staff and close to \$100 million in total revenue derived mainly from marine, infrastructure and energy customers in Singapore, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Japan, India and Greece.

Prominent customers include Maersk, the United States Navy, Keppel and Sembawang shipyards, SingTel F1 Singapore Grand Prix, Marina Bay Sands, Shell, Universal Studios Singapore and Tuas Power.

Cyclect was among the pioneers in the early years of Singapore's development and growth as a marine industry hub.

Investments in people and equipment built the technical expertise and reputation for Cyclect to export its services.

During the 1980s, it expanded into mechanical and electrical projects for land based industries.

In 2004, Cyclect and the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) won the Prime Minister's Office TEC Innovator Award, for Cyclect's role in the research and development of SCDF's innovative mobile ammonia scrubber project.

A year later, Cyclect clinched its second TEC Innovator Award for its role in developing a mobile detection and alarm system to increase the effectiveness of sweep-

ers of foreign objects debris at runways in airports.

In 2008, Cyclect secured a five-year contract that includes electrical installation and roustabout works for the SingTel F1 Singapore Grand Prix night race.

The following year, it was awarded a contract to do electrical and mechanical works for several rides in Universal Studios Singapore.

Cyclect won the Enterprise 50 award in 2009 and 2010. It netted the 2012 Green Technology and Singapore Business Superbrands awards.

Mr Tan Ai Meng's sons, Mr Tan Sin Poh and Mr Peter Tan are now Cyclect's chairman and executive chairman respectively. The group managing director, Mr Melvin Tan, director Marcus Tan and business development manager Tan Ee Wei are the grandsons of the founder.

"Our key strength is our wide range of services for various industries," says Mr Tan Ee Wei.

"This ensures that we are not stuck when there is a downturn in one of the industries.

"We have good management with good teams and we have the management with good foresight to target the right markets.

"We have strong networking skills and we can provide services to different industries. Few companies can offer a similar value proposition."

The Business Superbrands award, he adds, helps the Cyclect group to "stand out from the crowd" and promote its brand in expansions overseas.



Cyclect has a workforce of more than 500 staff and close to \$100 million in total revenue. PHOTO: CYCLECT



Seraya Energy gives clients customised and competitive utilities solutions, says Mr Lim. PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

Energy saver

Seraya Energy's efficient service helps customers to cut costs

by douglas chew

LEADING energy retailer Seraya Energy has clinched the Business Superbrands accolade for the second time.

Taking the opportunity to benchmark itself against other top brands, Mr Lim Sam San, 40, Seraya Energy's retail vice-president, considers the award a testament of its efforts to build quality and distinction in its brand.

"It is an opportunity for Seraya Energy to communicate our value proposition to our customers and to other companies who may be unaware that they have a choice to manage their energy cost by purchasing electricity directly from private energy retailers like Seraya Energy," he says.

Singapore companies with a minimum electricity consumption of more than 10,000KWh per month are able to choose their preferred energy retailer.

The deregulated market allows commercial and industrial consumers to switch to private electricity retailers to enjoy greater customisation, competitive pricing, value-added services and incentives.

It is easy and risk-free to switch, says Mr Lim. "Switching electricity service providers is a simple and seamless process to the end-consumer as it only involves a change in the service contract. There is no disruption to the physical supply."

Set up during the electricity market liberalisation in 2001 as the retail arm of integrated energy company YTL PowerSeraya, Seraya Energy decided to focus on

creating more value for its customers by helping them manage energy costs through innovation and customised energy products.

Aiming to elevate the quality of service in the energy industry, it also wants to deliver the most competitive power solutions to its customers, and give them a "new and positive experience" in purchasing electricity in the deregulated market. Seraya Energy today offers multi-utilities in the form of electricity, steam and water, and bundled services such as energy audits and green mark environmental certifications.

Creating a strong brand and portraying a consistent image through its people and its actions, the company has retained its position as market leader.

"Our people represent our brand; our customers are our best ambassadors," says Mr Lim. "Our customers benefit from having the assurance that they will enjoy quality services, sound advice and good value packages when they come to Seraya Energy."

Now in its 12th year of deregulation, the electricity retail market has seen customers' needs and expectations of electricity purchases evolve. Seraya Energy sees the deregulated market as an opportunity to add value to the customer.

"One important value add that Seraya Energy offers would be to translate the complexities and uncertainties related to volatile fuel costs to a level which is understood by the customer, followed by a customised and competitive utilities solution," he adds.

"As one of the key players in the energy industry, Seraya Energy is equipped with the knowledge and experience to help our customers manage their energy costs and achieve better operational efficiency."

Powerpac International congratulates **Powerplus Group Pte Ltd**
for being awarded Business Superbrands 2012



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Superbrands Singapore CEO Mark Pointer (seated, eighth from right) and representatives of the 28 companies named as this year's Business Superbrands. PHOTOS: RAY KHOO



Quality assurance

Some 86 per cent of the people who make decisions for their companies are aware of the value of brands with the Business Superbrands logo.

This percentage in the BDRC Asia survey in April this year is an increase of 18 per cent from the Superbrands perception survey in 2008.

Some 97 per cent of the business decision makers aware of Business Superbrands in April believe the quality of these brands is assured.

Go to www.superbrands.com/sg for more information.

Branded for success

Companies achieve Superbrands status for providing good services and products to their corporate clients

by ahmad osman

TWENTY-eight companies including homegrown ones have achieved the exclusive Singapore Business Superbrands status.

Their marketing and communications collaterals will have the Business Superbrands logo to highlight their achievement to current and potential customers, the media, employees, key stakeholders and investors.

Participation in the Singapore Business Superbrands programme is by invitation only for brands with excellent reputations for consistently delivering high quality products and services in their fields.

They also have significant shares of their markets; recent innovations, products and services; local or international awards for quality or achievements; and corporate social responsibility in business activities.

This year's recipients are the successful brands of companies established here for at least five years with financial stability in the last two years.

The stringent participation and selection criteria are listed in the new second edition of the book on Business Superbrands in Singapore.



The Business Times editor Alvin Tay (left) receiving the Business Superbrands certificate from Mr Pointer.

These brands were identified through a survey by a market research consultancy, BDRC Asia, in April this year or evaluations by an independent panel of branding experts.

The survey across 23 different business to business categories polled the opinions of over 500 key business decision makers or influencers who evaluate, purchase or use business services or suppliers.

The 2012 recipients use branding to help them to develop business relationships built on trust and maintain their reputations.

These companies offer competitive emotional and tangible advantages that "customers want, recognise and are confident about investing in", says Mr Mark Pointer, chief executive officer of Super-

brands Singapore.

"In today's highly competitive and sophisticated marketing environment, no company can afford to take branding lightly," he notes in his foreword in the book.

"Branding is one of the most crucial platforms for competition and companies can no longer compete via the basic platform of price alone.

"A Business Superbrand has established the finest reputation in its field."

The book, with compelling stories of case studies, will help people to have a wider insight of branding and greater appreciation of the selected companies and their brands.

It is a tribute to the people responsible for helping to build strong and enduring brands, Mr Pointer says.

The Superbrands organisation operates in more than 80 countries across five continents. It promotes the discipline of branding and recognises exceptional local and international brands.



City Gas is honoured to be awarded Business Superbrands 2012 for the second consecutive time.



City Gas is one of the oldest corporations in Singapore, having just celebrated its 150th anniversary last year. We began with lighting up the streets of Singapore in 1861, and have never stopped since.

Today, we are known as City Gas and we are a wholly-owned subsidiary of City Spring Infrastructure Trust, which is listed on the Main Board of the Singapore Exchange.

Our corporation longevity is attributable to our focus in delivering good customer service, and continually retaining and building trust with our client. Our team constantly engages business partners on the clean and green benefits of town gas.

At City Gas, we value each relationship established. We always deliver with a strong sense of respect, integrity, commitment and excellence in every aspect of our business.

City Gas will continue warming hearts in the city and warming lives for generations to come.

www.citygas.com.sg

