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Students from Nanyang Business School triumph yet again

Students from NTU's Nanyang Business School (NBS) have done Singapore proud by winning two recent international business case competitions.

An NBS team of four students won all three rounds of the Undergraduate National Case Competition (UNCC) held in Canada to emerge champions among 17 competing universities from North America, Europe, and Asia.

Another NBS team comprising five students also came out tops at the Singapore HR Challenge, a competition organized by Singapore Human Resource Institute (SHRI).

These triumphs came hot on the heels of another win in October last year where another NBS team of undergraduates beat international teams comprising MBA students in the International Business Strategy Challenge (IBSC) held in India.

"Through NBS' innovative teaching methods, NBS students are encouraged to tackle business cases as an integral component of their training," said Assoc Prof Christina Soh, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Business, NBS (南洋理工大学商学院副院长 (本科工商管理) 苏慧玲副教授). "Our students have proven their competence by applying the tools they acquired from their lessons in solving real-life issues in business. These recent competitions also demonstrated the students' initiative, tenacity, ingenuity and teamwork – attributes that we want to inculcate in our students as they are pivotal success factors in business. We are delighted with their victories but more importantly, we are proud of the way they have performed and carried themselves throughout these competitions."

Undergraduate National Case Competition (UNCC)

UNCC is organized by John Molson School of Business (JMSB), Concordia University, one of Canada's leading business schools. This competition aims to aid the development of tomorrow's business leaders by challenging students to come up with the most intuitive and practical solutions to real world business problems.

Held from 23-27 January 2008 in Montreal, Canada, a total of 17 teams from North America, Europe and Asia analyzed business cases for a period of three hours and then presented their recommendations to a panel of judges selected from industry.

Schools were separated into groups: in which teams presented two cases over a period of two days. The top five schools advanced to the final round, where they analyzed and presented one more case to a panel of judges that included a top manager from the growing firm that was the subject of the case.

NBS' team of Daryl Neo, Quek Hong Soon, Zhang Peifei and Pham Phuong Dung was victorious in every one of the three grueling rounds and emerged as overall champions.

"We were pleased with this win because we came up against a number of universities who are perennial powerhouses in business case competitions," said team leader Daryl Neo, a second-year banking and finance student. "Royal Roads were the winners last year, and Queen's University won the year before. Both these Canadian schools were favorites to win again this year. We were also familiar with the strengths of University of South Carolina, who was one of the finalists in NBS' own Asian Business Case Competition 2007 held in October last year. Babson College is one of the premier private colleges in the United States while University of Washington is one of the most experienced case competition schools."

Daryl Neo attributed the team's success to its unique and innovative presentation style, which the members have been practicing with Prof Arthur Lee Gilbert and Dr Edwin Tan over the past few months. Team member, Pham Phuong Dung added: "Our team's winning formula is logic and passion. When analyzing the case, we were able to pick up on the root problems and issues in the case and relate them to real life problems and to companies. That formed the logic in our arguments. Our team dynamics was great as there was teamwork and we brought out the best in each other. As we truly believed in our proposed strategy, we were able to present our case with passion which helped to engage the judges and audience."

Daryl Neo felt that NBS featured a large part in their win: "Our win shows that NBS students are well equipped to hold their own against international schools in such competitions. We want to thank NBS for providing us with the necessary training and funding, without which this triumph would not have been possible."

Singapore HR Challenge 2008

The inaugural competition featured six teams – NBS, National University of Singapore, three from Singapore Management University and Hartford University – in the Grand Final, which was held on 2 February 2008.

The team from NBS, who called themselves *HRAce*, comprised Tan Min Dan, Choo Chen Ling, Jane Chen, Phang Riyang and Wendy Seah.

The participants were required to conduct a case study on people management and suggest alternatives and new ideas to enhance existing practices relating to the theme "New Workforce, New Workplace."

HRAce put forward their HR model – the Organizational Responsiveness Framework -- which proposed the right emphasis on customizing HR practices to ensure organizational responsiveness to the changing demands of the environment and not merely prescribing actions. The team's presentation was structured, well-paced and sophisticated and was done within the allocated time of 10 minutes. They managed to impress the judges by giving their all in the competition and this won them the competition.

“The greatest challenge that we faced was to decide and to agree on our unique selling point (USP). We wanted to deliver a single, consistent, yet important message across to the judges,” said Tan Min Dan, a third year business student in Human Resource Consultancy (HRC) and Marketing. “Once the USP had been decided, we were able to align our strategy and delivery style which differentiated us from other teams.”

Another team member, Choo Chen Ling pointed out that the learning experience gained at NBS was critical in the team’s triumph: “The HRC specialization allows us to put the consultancy skills we have gained to excellent use in this competition. The NBS curriculum emphasizes the importance of excelling in both content and delivery, and we are grateful for the training, guidance and encouragement the professors and staff at NBS gave us throughout the competition.”

Mrs Molly Yeo, Executive Director and Head of Human Resources of ABN AMRO Bank N.V., and one of the 12 judges at the competition, gave the team the best endorsement when she suggested that as the Workforce Development Agency and SHRI are designing a competency framework, the NBS team should propose their organization readiness framework to them instead.

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About Nanyang Technological University

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is a research-intensive university ranked among the top 25 technological universities in the world. The Yunnan Garden campus, NTU’s main campus, is located in the south-western part of Singapore. The NTU@one-north campus, home to educational and alumni clubhouse facilities, is located near Singapore’s biomedical research hub, Biopolis; and the new infocomm and media hub, Fusionopolis.

NTU has four colleges, namely:

- The College of Engineering, with six schools focused on technology and innovation and a research output among the top four in the world
- The College of Science, which offers Singapore’s only direct-honours bachelor’s degree programmes in the biological, and physical and mathematical sciences
- The Nanyang Business School (the College of Business), the first and only Singapore business school to be ranked in the top 50 of the Financial Times Global MBA 2008 rankings
- The College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, home to Singapore’s first professional art school offering degree courses in art, design and interactive digital media; the Humanities and Social Science School; and the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, a top journalism and media school in Asia

The S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, one of two autonomous institutes of NTU, is a world authority on strategic studies and terrorism. NTU is also home to the internationally-acclaimed National Institute of Education, Singapore’s only teacher-training institute.

As Singapore’s main science and technology university, NTU makes significant contributions to the nation’s renewed drive for research and innovation spearheaded by the

Singapore National Research Foundation (NRF). NTU's strengths in biomedical sciences, environmental and water technologies, and interactive and digital media mirror the NRF's research focus.

NTU has a strong and broad international reach covering academic and research partnerships with top institutions in the US, Europe and Asia, such as MIT, Stanford University, Cornell University, Caltech, University of Washington, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Carnegie Mellon University; Cambridge University, Imperial College and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology; and Peking University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Waseda University, and Indian Institute of Technology.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About Nanyang Business School

The Nanyang Business School (NBS) is a leading business school committed to educating tomorrow's strategic leaders with cutting-edge academically rigorous curricula which are relevant to business practice.

One of Asia's largest business schools, NBS offers a comprehensive array of undergraduate and graduate programmes in accountancy and business. Drawing on a 50-year heritage of educating the region's business leaders, NBS provides an outstanding learning environment with state-of-the-art facilities and world-class research centres.

NBS is the only Singapore business school, and the third in Asia, to have both the EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and AACSB (Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditations. It is also one of only five business schools outside of the United States to be accredited with the AACSB in Accounting. These are the most widely recognized European and American quality assurance standards relating to the provision of world class accounting and business education. For four consecutive years from 2004 to 2007, the Economist Intelligence Unit has ranked the degrees conferred by NBS amongst the top 100 of the World's Best MBAs. In January 2008, the Financial Times ranked our MBA programme to be first in Singapore and top 50 in the world.

To leverage the strengths of world-class institutions, NBS has established many strategic partnerships and collaborations with leading business schools such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Carnegie Mellon University, Cornell University, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Waseda University and the Shanghai Jiaotong University.

For more information: www.nbs.ntu.edu.sg