



## Local IT leaders lauded at awards

By Roland Lim - 26 March 2007  
The Business Times

THE eleventh IT Leader Awards, awarded last Friday by Singapore Computer Society (SCS), saw local IT luminaries honoured for their contributions to the infocomm industry.

SCS, which is a leading infocomm industry body with over 23,000 members, awarded the Person of the Year award to Stephen Lim, chief executive of SQL View, a local IT firm that specialises in information management. [Added by Limsoon: Mr. Lim is an ICAAS life member.]

Mr Lim is a familiar face in the local IT industry as he served as the vice chairman of another local infocomm body, the Singapore Infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF), from 2002 to 2004, and was its chairman from 2004 to 2006. At a press conference held last week to introduce the award winners, Mr Lim paid tribute to another award winner, citing him as a mentor.

This was IT veteran William Liu, a director of government-linked IT investment holding firm Green Dot Capital Pte Ltd, who was adjudged this year's Hall of Fame winner for his leadership roles in the local IT industry. Mr Liu has some 37 years of industry experience, having held senior management roles in reservations software firm Abacus and International Computers Ltd (ICL). [Added Limsoon: Mr. Liu is an ICAAS life member.]

The Young Professional of the Year award was won by 29-year-old Tan Min Liang, chief executive of Razer, a US gaming peripherals maker. The former lawyer, now based in San Diego, used to specialise in technology and intellectual property rights issues. He traded in his legal career last year to help grow Razer into a multi-million dollar cult gaming brand.

Ex-NTUC chief executive Tan Kin Lian won the Friend of IT Award in recognition for his role in helping promote the use of IT in NTUC, as well as in the community. Mr Tan is now an active blogger, and sees some 400 visitors to his blog where he writes on investment and insurance. Ong Kok Choong, co-founder of ByteSquare Technology and a graduate of the National University of Singapore (NUS) since last year, along with Sangar s/o Annadorai, a graduate of Ngee Ann Polytechnic and currently a full-time national serviceman, both won the IT Youth award.

Mr Ong's company focuses on advanced mobile communications and surveillance systems. The young entrepreneur also serves as an adviser to other startups from NUS. Mr Sangar has a strong interest in Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technologies and has worked on a project which uses RFID to identify returning guests, which is expected to be deployed with a hotel later this year. Not surprisingly, he intends to read computer science after he finishes his National Service.

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## IT LEADER AWARDS

# Finding Strength in Numbers

The Singapore Computer Society's Person of the Year in its IT awards drew support from local firms – and thrived, as THAM YUEN-C reports.

Mr. Stephen Lim now helps to promote the infocomm and technology products and services of Singapore companies overseas.

Something makes Mr. Stephen Lim, winner of Person of the Year at this year's Singapore Computer Society (SCS) IT Leader Awards, feel guilty.

It is his reason for joining the Singapore Infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF).

"I joined for a self-serving purpose," he said.

Then, the systems engineer has just left a cushy job at Hewlett-Packard to strike out on his own.

But after starting his own company, Netband Technology, with \$50,000 that he had borrowed from his mother, he found the going tough.

That was when Mr. Lim realized that joining an organization like SiTF could help.

"It allowed me to swim in a pack with the other local companies and make a louder noise," he said.

The 25-year IT industry veteran explained that although small companies are more nimble, they lose out when they venture into the bigger markets overseas.

But that first step started him down the road to becoming a champion for local IT firms, something which earned him the moniker of "Mr. SME" (Small Medium Enterprise) in IT circles here.

"It might have started out as self-serving, but it served the community as well," he said.

And give he did. After joining the SiTF, Mr. Lim helped to set up the Singapore Enterprise Chapter of the federation, which promotes the infocomm and technology products and services of Singapore companies overseas.

And even though the entrepreneur had gone on to set up two more companies – SQL View, a software company that provides knowledge and record management solutions, and NetAssist, an IT training company – he continued with the task as chairman of the SiTF.

It was a post he held from 2004 until last year. Now, the chief executive and managing director of SQL View builds local IT brands as a co-chair of the Infocomm Singapore Brand Management committee.

"We need to band together in areas we are good at to take on bigger projects," he said.

Mr. Lim was among five others who received the SCS IT Leader awards from 10 days ago.

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“Successful IT professionals – should spread the gospel about the industry to bring back the glamour and buzz.” – Mr. William Liu, Hall of Fame