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News Release

The Institute of Service Excellence celebrates 10 years of fostering service excellence

Singapore, 9 November 2017 (Thursday) – The Institute of Service Excellence (ISE) at Singapore Management University (SMU) today celebrated its 10th anniversary with an industry dinner at the S.E.A Aquarium at Resorts World Sentosa, Singapore. More than 150 guests comprising leaders, partners and stakeholders from service sector companies, government agencies, industry associations, academia, undergraduates and the media were present.

ISE was jointly founded in 2007 by Singapore Management University and the then Workforce Development Agency (now Workforce Singapore) with the mission to raise service levels and build a culture of service excellence in Singapore through applied research and thought leadership, industry engagement, as well as benchmarking and comparative analysis.

The Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore (CSISG) has been a core focus of ISE. Administered and published by ISE on a quarterly basis since 2007, the Index is a landmark study that computes customer satisfaction scores at the national, sector, sub-sector, and company level. As an independent Index, it serves as a rigorous, objective and comprehensive measure of Singapore's service levels. For companies that are measured on the CSISG, the Index provides an indication of their service level performance over time and insights into the attributes that drive customer satisfaction.

In her Welcome Address at the industry dinner, SMU Provost Professor Lily Kong announced that ISE, in collaboration with SMU Academy, will be launching the SMU Advanced Certificate in Service Excellence and Innovation. The Advanced Certificate will benefit from the unique SMU instructional approach, featuring a combination of faculty and practitioner teaching.

“As an academic partner to the industry, SMU will continue to support the development of relevant and insightful research, case studies, and professional development programmes to help the industry address current challenges and enhance the competitive advantage of service sector companies. We look forward to building on the foundation of partnership with everyone present here today for the benefit of the Singapore service sector,” said Prof Kong.

Ms Neeta Lachmandas, Executive Director of ISE, added “The service industry has evolved significantly over the past 10 years. It is imperative that the Institute continues to work in tandem with the industry and academia to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the service sector, and to advance peer-to-peer learning through conversations, case studies and the sharing of best practices.”

The industry dinner marked the culmination of a series of initiatives under the theme of 'Excellence Explored' launched by ISE to commemorate its 10th anniversary.

From 1 June to 30 September 2017, an Undergraduate Essay Competition targeted at matriculated students from all Singapore-based universities was held. Essay topics covered the role of technology, talent, and service culture. Over 40 submissions from National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU), Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), and Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) were received and judged by a panel comprising faculty members of SMU and the management team of ISE. Winners were presented with their prizes at the industry dinner.

To mark the progress of the CSISG and recognise companies that have performed consistently well on the Index over the last 10 years, the inaugural 'CSISG Awards' for seven economic sectors were presented to top performing companies at the industry dinner. The winning companies were DFS (Retail), Singtel (Info-Communications), Changi Airport Group (Transport), Starbucks (Food & Beverage), Ritz Carlton (Tourism), DBS (Finance & Insurance) and Raffles Hospital (Healthcare).

The winners were determined by comparing the average CSISG score for each measured company within each of the sectors since its inception to 2016. Each measured company must have topped their respective sector for at least two consecutive times, have a minimum of five years of measurement on the CSISG, and be currently measured on the Index.

As part of its 10th Anniversary celebrations, ISE also launched a new magazine featuring stories of how small creative businesses in Singapore have found their unique value propositions, applied creativity to grow their customer base, and navigated challenges to gain a foothold in the Singapore service landscape. It is hoped that the venture will offer a glimpse into the service philosophies and operational considerations of leaders and entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Singapore service sector.

About the Institute of Service Excellence (ISE) at Singapore Management University

The Institute of Service Excellence was jointly set up by Singapore Management University and the then Singapore Workforce Development Agency in July 2007 to elevate service levels and promote a culture of service excellence in Singapore. Working in close collaboration with government agencies and business leaders, ISE champions service excellence through an integrated approach that encompasses benchmarking and analysis, research and thought leadership, as well as industry engagement.

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