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SINGAPORE PRESTIGE BRAND AWARDS

Rock school hits all the right brand notes

Academy among 49 organisations lauded for their branding initiatives

By ESTHER TEO

A MUSIC school that favours teenage pop sensation Justin Bieber over Bach and Beethoven is one of 49 organisations to win a gong at the Singapore Prestige Brand Awards (SPBA) yesterday.

The Academy of Rock, with more than 1,000 students as young as four and as old as 65, is an alternative music school with a loyal, diverse following.

It teaches rock and pop music the fun way by focusing on songs by Bieber, Maroon 5 and a host of other popular artists.

Founder Priscila Teo, 43, who started the school with her hus-

band in 2007, said that it represents a "new form of music education" as opposed to the more serious traditional music lessons some students might dread.

"Previously, it was rare to find a school that taught pop and rock songs... But here, we even have families attending lessons together, so it allows parents to appreciate and enjoy the music as well," she added.

Ms Teo said she trademarked the school's name immediately as she believed in the importance of branding - to give customers and franchisees confidence.

All its outlets also have the same colour theme so that the



Music school Academy of Rock, which teaches pop and rock music, has more than 1,000 students aged from four to 65. The school maintains a uniform colour theme across its outlets to stay recognisable. PHOTO: ACADEMY OF ROCK

school is easily recognisable.

The SPBA accolade reflected the school's success in branding.

The school picked up an award in the category of Promising Brands, given to organisations in operation for between three and eight years.

Established Brands are for those between six and 30 years old, Heritage Brands for those over 30, and Regional Brands for organisations formed for at least three years with a presence in at

least five foreign markets. Government agencies and non-profits fall under the Special Merit section.

Other organisations that won the award this year under various categories include Huber's Butchery, FotoHub, Jumbo Seafood, OrangeTee, Ng Ah Sio Bak Kut Teh and the TungLok Group.

The awards, now in their 11th year, are jointly organised by the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (Asme) and Chinese

newspaper Lianhe Zaobao.

They honour firms that have developed and effectively managed their branding initiatives.

Ms Audrey Yap, chairman of the SPBA 2012 organising committee, said 19 of the winners this year are previous award recipients.

While brands used to be hampered by geographical boundaries and tended to be very local, globalisation, the Internet and other technological advances have al-

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FAMILY FRIENDLY
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lowed brand awareness to expand exponentially, she said.

TungLok Group's executive chairman Andrew Tjioe, 53, whose firm has won an SPBA twice before and won again under the Regional Brands category this year, said clinching an SPBA is an important achievement.

It indicates that the firm is reliable, forward-looking and has a strong brand, he said. Also, linking his new restaurant concepts with the strong reputation of TungLok Group gives customers confidence and establishes the new brand faster, he added.

Mr Tjioe said he plans to submit the firm for the Heritage Brands category in two years when the firm turns 30.

The most popular brand winner in each of the four categories will be decided by popular vote and announced at the award presentation ceremony next month, Asme said.

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