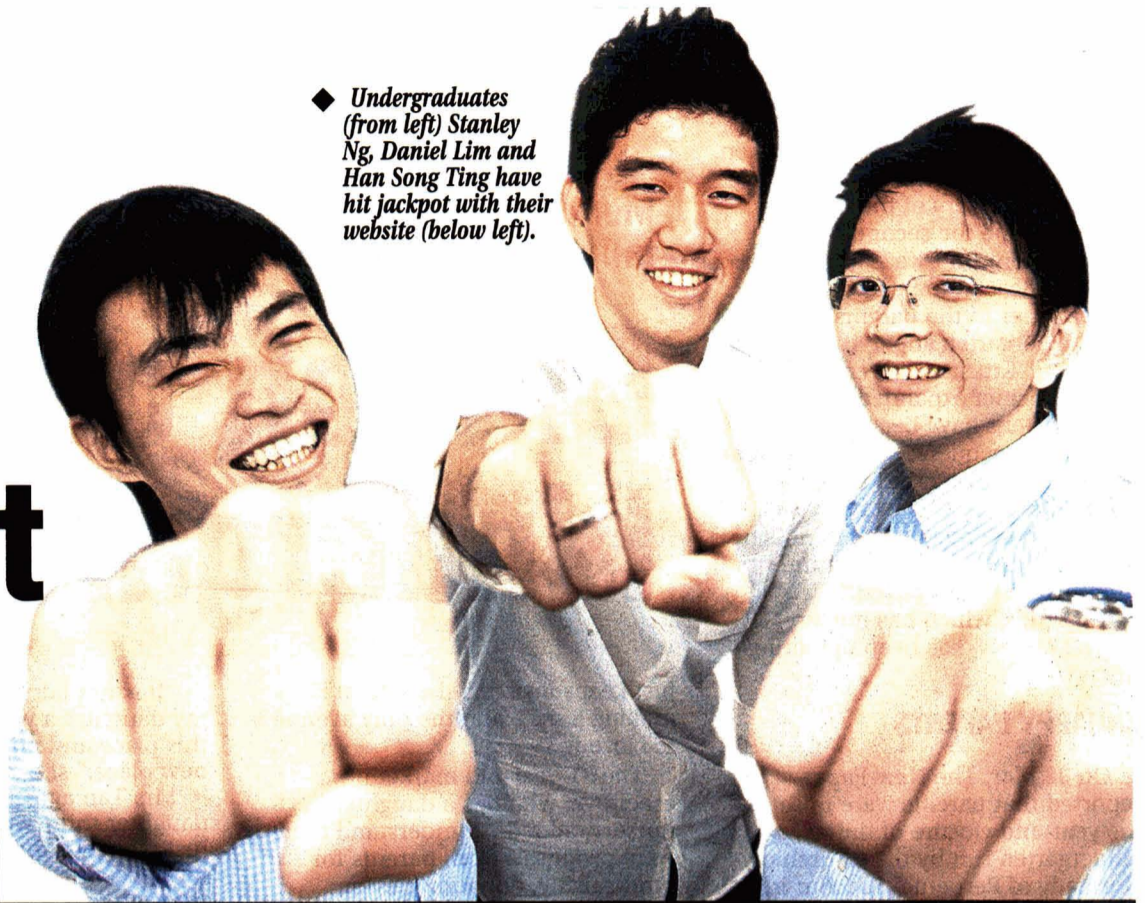
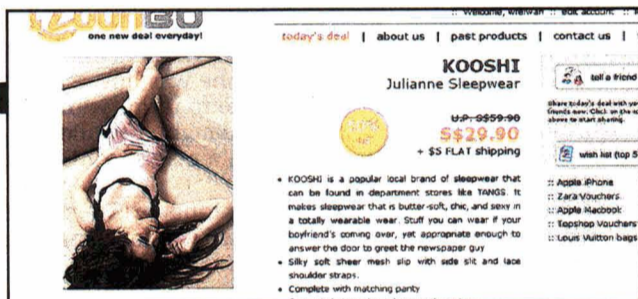


# Undergrads sell what women want

Trio offers a discount of different products at website, efforts paying off



◆ Undergraduates (from left) Stanley Ng, Daniel Lim and Han Song Ting have hit jackpot with their website (below left).

Picture: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

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**W**HAT do women want? Like most men, these three undergraduates ponder this question.

But for Mr Daniel Lim, Mr Stanley Ng and Mr Han Song Ting, all 24, this age-old mystery is directly relevant to their new online business.

In March, the trio launched Zuunbo.com, a shopping website targeting female shoppers.

**The site's concept is novel – a different product is sold every day at a discount, but in limited quantity.**

At midnight every day, a new product is listed for sale for 24 hours, or until it is sold out.

Said Mr Ng, a final-year student at Singapore Management University (SMU): "We realised that women generally shop more than men, so we decided to focus on selling items which appeal to women."

Items sold include pink iPod nanos, Zara gift cards and beauty products.

Users have to register as members of the site before they can start shopping. Registration is free.

Since it was launched in March, about 850 people have signed up as members, and the site has generated about \$6,000 in revenue. It attracts about 500 unique visitors a day.

Mr Lim, also a final-year SMU student, said they hope to break even in three months.

He and Mr Han, an undergraduate at the National University of Singapore, became interested in entrepreneurship under the influence of their fathers.

Mr Lim's father runs a computer hardware business, while Mr Han's father runs a construction company.

The pair, who met in the army, started a small business in 2005 selling gift items and T-shirts.

In December 2006, they began discussing the idea of selling one product a day. Mr Ng, whom Mr Lim met in a leadership course at SMU, came on board to take charge of marketing the website.

They invested \$5,000 of their own, and secured \$15,000 in funding from the Entrepreneurial Talent Development Fund, jointly awarded by Spring Singapore and SMU Business Innovation Generator (SMU BIG).

In May last year, they started seeking merchants whose items they could sell on their site at discounted prices.

Said Mr Ng: "It was basically a lot of cold-calling, and explaining how our business works."

They also began approaching merchants based on feedback they received from the site's users, and from their girlfriends.

Mr Lim's girlfriend, Miss Jillian Quek, 24, a civil servant, said she suggested they sell discounted vouchers for shops like Zara and Topshop, which are personal favourites with her.

**She said: "I told him these would definitely be popular with females – and sure enough, they were all sold out."**

Mr Lim said, however, that they keep the guys in mind, too.

"Every Thursday, we offer a product for sale for them," he said. These are mainly electronic goods.

Their website has been picked up by several bloggers, and was featured by youth entrepreneurship website Entrepreneurship 27 Singapore.

Blogger Jonathan Kong said he liked that Zuunbo.com has done away with RSS feeds, e-mail notifications and private messaging.

This, he said, would make users anticipate new products listed for sale.

Mr Lim said the team has looked to the US-based Woot.com which also lists a new product for sale every day.

And though the team says they have met their fair share of naysayers – even friends – Mr Ng said they will not stop believing in their idea.

He said: "It's those who don't understand the nature of online business who tend to be most harsh."

"When we have doubts, we look to each other for encouragement."