SMU team bags L’Oreal Brandstorm 2006 top prize

IN A closely contested fight that was more like a battle between the marketing juggernauts of huge corporations than a student competition, a team of undergraduates from the Singapore Management University (SMU) won the top prize at the L’Oreal Brandstorm 2006 marketing competition yesterday.

“La Difference”, composed of an all-girl team of three fresh-faced undergraduates, will represent Singapore at the international finals in Paris next month.

The second prize, too, was bagged by an SMU team – “Vi- olette” – followed by “Eu- charis” from Nanyang Technological University (NTU), which came in third.

The latter also bagged the “Most Outstanding Presenter (Team) award while the “Most Outstanding Presenter (Individual) award went to Chen Qimin of the National University of Singapore’s “Vers l’Ex- cellence”.

Altogether, eight teams took part in the local finals, which were held at the Four Seasons hotel presided over by a panel of judges, which included well-known figures from the media industry as well as associate professor of marketing at INSEAD, Ms Jill Klein.

The teams were assessed on their integrated communications strategy developed for the Lancome Body Care product range. Judging criteria included creativity, originality, cohesion with Lancome brand values, presentation skills and team spirit.

The slick presentation of the winning team was impressive – a fact further reinforced by an impromptu consumer survey among the audience that it conducted to drive home its marketing strategy.

In addition to the educational value of the competition, contestants got a real taste of the industry as they come into direct contact with managers from L’Oreal and get to see how they work.

It also creates a career path for the students. Since the contest was introduced here in 2002, 12 students have been recruited into the company.

In the process, the L’Oreal award has become one of the most sought-after student marketing contests.