Law firm Drew & Napier’s comes up with YouTube video to show lawyers’ lighter side

By Andrew Yeo

We’re having fun:
YouTube screen captures of the Drew & Napier’s clip which comes with karaoke-style lyrics.

We’re human too:
Mr Adrian Tan, a director at Drew & Napier’s, said that lawyers also need to relax.

M Ake copies of the video and you will be castrated.

sentenced to death, fined up to $1 million, caned and sued for defamation.

No, it’s not one of the latest amendments to the Penal Code.

It’s Singapore law firm Drew & Napier’s way of showing students that work in a law firm can be fun – that even though they could earn big bucks by suing the pants off people, they also have a sense of humour.

Really.

The video, called All The Law Things, is a spoof of Blink 182’s hit All The Small Things.

And it has been put on video-sharing website YouTube, listed under the “comedy” category. It’s not something you normally associate with one of Singapore’s top law firms.

Done by the firm’s first-year associates, it was shown to freshmen law students at Singapore Management University (SMU) in August.

Mr Adrian Tan, 41, a director at Drew & Napier, said the university had just started its law school when its dean, Professor Michael Furmston, invited some law firms to put up presentations for students, to get them comfortable with the idea of learning law.

Mr Tan said two other firms put up live band performances.

About 20 of Drew & Napier’s first-year associates, who are in their 20s, went with something else: “They decided on an MTV-style video as it’s more their generation,” he said.

“The was guerilla filming. They filmed at night after office hours and even got the librarian, driver and tea lady involved. They took two days to film it in a burst of creative energy.”

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

And it appears to be a hit on YouTube with comments from Netizens like “fantastic“, “brilliant“, “hilarious” and “cute” being heaped on the three-minute production.

The director of the video, first-year associate Tan Jijin, 25, said it was the first time she had operated a video camera. That was why it shook so often, she said.

Calling it a team effort, Ms Tan, who handles general litigation cases, said the common perception of lawyers was that they were straight-laced and serious.

She said: “Mention lawyers and people go ‘argh’. But we have a different side, a human side to us. We are also fun-loving and while we work hard, we play hard too. We really have to laugh at ourselves sometimes.”

On Friday, The New York Times reported that law firms in the US were putting videos on YouTube to reach out to the Internet generation and to come across as being youthful and hip.

One US firm, Choate Hall & Stewart LLP, said on its website that it made its video in a “whimsical and engaging way that young attorneys can relate to”,

Co-managing partners William Gelnaw and John Nadas said: “Law firms don’t typically come to mind when people think of creative, out-of-the-box websites and marketing.

“We wanted to break that mould.”

Mr Tan added that having a sense of humour was important in their line of work because of the high-stress levels.

He said: “Lawyers deal with difficult problems every day and need to relax if they get a chance. We really have to be less stuffy and take ourselves less seriously.”

One final question: What would happen if The New Paper on Sunday were to use images from their video for this report?

Mr Tan replied: “You have permission to use the images and you will not be castrated for doing it.”

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