MDIS scores gold at Reader’s Digest Trusted Brands Awards 2011

SINGAPORE — There are companies and more companies, but only a select few can claim to be trusted brands.

In an industry that saw the third-highest number of complaints two years ago with the Consumers Association of Singapore, the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS), which provides lifelong learning, can stand tall — being among seven tertiary institutions in Singapore that recently received a Gold Award at the Reader’s Digest Trusted Brands Awards 2011 at the St Regis Hotel.

This recognition comes on the back of achieving its four-year EduTrust Certification from the Council of Private Education only a few months earlier.

The other winning tertiary institutions include the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, UniSIM, Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

The Reader’s Digest Trusted Brands Awards based its selection on a survey of 8,000 consumers in eight Asian markets, of which 1,000 respondents were from Singapore.

They were queried on the following key attributes: Trustworthiness and credibility, quality, value, understanding of customer needs, innovation and corporate social responsibility.

“We were pleasantly surprised that we received such a strong endorsement from consumers around the region,” says Dr R Theyvendran, secretary-general of MDIS, Singapore’s oldest not-for-profit professional institute.

Dr Theyvendran stresses that MDIS, founded in 1956, has always been driven by quality. “We have processes in place, which we continuously review to ensure that the institute always delivers on quality.”

For example, MDIS has put in place a methodology and a programme for its lecturers, to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of lectures.

The institute, which now has a yearly intake of 5,000 to 6,000 students, has also evolved over the years, in tandem with the different phases and manpower needs of the Singapore economy.

It started off with courses on supervisory management and then moved to prepare students for business management roles.

As the service industry grew in importance, courses in mass communication were added to its slate. Currently, the institute offers courses ranging from IT, life sciences, travel to tourism.

These courses are offered in collaboration with established and recognised universities from Australia, France, Britain and the US.

To cater to the global market and ensure that its students have experience studying and living in different cultures, MDIS has opened up a campus in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan in Central Asia. It will also open a campus in Malaysia in 2013, followed by another in India two years later.

“Being a Trusted Brand, MDIS also provides facilities such as students’ hostel accommodation, internship opportunities and career guidance,” says Ms Tan Gek Khim, senior director at MDIS, adding that the institute advocates corporate social responsibility.

MDIS spends half a million dollars each year providing scholarships and awards to needy students.

Mr Sim Yee Tat, who received first class honours in Bachelor of Science International Tourism and Hospitality Management from MDIS-University of Sunderland, describes his course as very knowledge-driven, yet practical. “It equips us with industry relevant skills and enables us to deliver high professional standards,” says Mr Sim, who now works in a hotel.

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