

# 48 SMEs scoop awards for brand building

LOCAL companies that have invested time and effort in branding were rewarded for their efforts at the Singapore Prestige Brand Award (SPBA) yesterday.

The award, jointly organised by the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (Asme) and Chinese newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao*, recognised 48 firms for planning and execution of branding strategies.

The winners come from a diverse mix of industry sectors such as logistics, food and beverage, real estate, education and medical. A record 135 submissions were received this year, Asme and *Lianhe Zaobao* said in a statement.

There were five award categories – Promising Brands, Established Brands, Heritage Brands, CitiBusiness Regional Brands and Special Merit. The Special Merit category is launched for the first time this year for government and non-profit organi-



sations that have been established for at least three years.

Companies that won the promising brand award include academic enrichment centre The Learning Lab; BreadTalk, for its Toast Box brand; and organic and natural health products firm The Sukha House.

Tung Lok restaurants, Crystal Jade Culinary Concepts Holding, printer Xpress Holdings and gas

firm UGS were among those awarded for being established brands. Crystal Jade Culinary was also one of five firms to take home the CitiBusiness Regional Brand prize.

The Singapore Children's Society and Singapore Kindness Movement were among winners of the Special Merit award, while Thomson Medical Centre and tableware and kitchenware company Sia Huat

were among six to be recognised as heritage brands.

SPBA's 2009 organising committee chairman Chan Chong Beng said: "It is heartening that SMEs persevere with their brand building initiatives against the backdrop of a tough recession. Brands that remain active, winning mindshare in a downturn, are poised for success when the upturn occurs – and that could be just around the corner."

**Standing tall:**  
*From left: Thomas Tan, managing director of UGS; Cheng Wei Chen, executive chairman of Thomson Medical; Ip Yiu Tung, chairman/CEO of Crystal Jade Culinary Concepts; and Poh Eng Seng, CEO of Xpress*

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