

First Campus branches out as school

By Arun Sudhaman

Holding company First Media has revealed plans to turn its First Campus education and consulting arm into a fully-fledged school, providing vocational training for junior advertising and design professionals.

Slated to open in June 2006, First Campus currently partners with tertiary institutions such as Ngee Ann Polytechnic and LaSalle-SIA College of Arts, running courses that focus on the area of 'design management'.

According to First Media founder and group chief executive officer Mark Phooi, the standalone school will take this concept even further, in an effort to combine design and creative skills with practical business education.

"I think Singapore lacks that kind of managerial skill as far as design is concerned," explained Phooi. "They must be able to know the business sense. That will help create a better design that



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First Campus...combining practical skills

not just appeals to emotions, but can improve buying behaviour."

Phooi added that the First Campus school will be staffed by First Media's current roster of managers and partners, drawn from its group companies, which include Lancer Design, FireFly Studio, Matchbox Design and

Pepper Inc. The school will target fresh graduates with around one year of work experience.

"We're not issuing a degree or diploma," said Phooi. "(We see ourselves) as a vocational institute to supplement core learnings."

Phooi also noted that while profitability is not a goal, First Media will be looking to groom exceptional students to join its own network.

"We are hoping to narrow it down to a few people that we can support through our 'angel fund' process," he confirmed. "When we started this business, we knew that to grow we have to share information and knowledge."

In addition to design, the school will cover all aspects of integrated marketing communications. Phooi also said the eventual goal would be to expand the system throughout Asia. First Media is currently represented in the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.