

## Press Release

### **The Business of Art**

25 November 2005

**Balancing business with art to innovate the design industry is possible, and profitable, too. Just ask Mark Phooi – the Group Founder and CEO of First Media Group of Companies (FM), which recently won an e50.startup award for its entrepreneurial and innovative approach to the traditional design business.**

Sometimes, all that's needed to make headway in the creative business is a head for business.

Design-trained Mark Phooi is a prime example. While he was trained as a hands-on designer at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), his head was always geared towards making a business out of his passion.

As such, he sought to strengthen his fledgling design business from the onset, focusing on increasing the value of design to the most important person around.

The client.

The end result is First Media – an integration of various design businesses into one single unit, offering people a one-stop Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) service.

It worked. First Media is today Singapore's largest local IMC service provider, and a winner of the prestigious e50.startup award.

Mark acknowledges how this win is a strong motivation for him to take his success to another level.



"I'm proud to say that First Media is an example of innovation and entrepreneurship in the design industry. We have managed to win a business award usually awarded to engineering and manufacturing companies, proving that creative communications companies can excel too.

"We hope to continue building on our accomplishments and groom more young entrepreneurs in the creative field. This award shows that anybody can truly be an entrepreneur as long as he is determined to succeed."

Indeed, while not everybody can be a successful entrepreneur, Mark proves anybody can strive to be one, and succeed. Even a designer. You just need to have your head in the right place.

Perhaps to prove that point, First Media has recently established a partnership with local private design institutions – Inspiration Design School and Coleman Creative Design School – to set up a new design school. It will offer students comprehensive design studies from diploma to masters degree level, through which students will not only be introduced to the design profession, but also to design as a sustainable career path.

"The school will be oriented very strongly towards industry-based learning methodologies, which we will deliver through our FM studios. Selected students will also be introduced to design management competencies to empower them towards starting a successful design business."

## About First Media Pte Ltd

A strategic turnkey communications group, FM offers integrated marketing communications (IMC) services and houses over 20 studios both locally and regionally, with overall staff strength standing at more than 150 currently. Each studio specialises in specific disciplines and collectively, FM has the capabilities to execute a one-stop seamless range of media campaigns.

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