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MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore Retailers Association Intensifies Focus on Innovation and Internationalisation

Singapore, 6 November 2024 – The Singapore Retailers Association (SRA) said today that the 5-year Roadmap that was developed in collaboration with the industry will continue to guide the industry to move forward. Experiential retail concepts to foster experimentation of new ideas and the expansion beyond local shores digitally and physically will serve as the foundation in realizing the long-term goal of globalising Singapore retail brands.

The flagship trade body emphasised this message at its **SRA Retail Awards 2024**, which recognised organisations and individuals across 11 categories. (See [*Annex A*](#) for winners). The **Workforce Transformation Award** by Workforce Singapore (WSG) was also presented during the evening to BHG (Singapore) Pte Ltd for the SME category, and NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Ltd for the non-SME category. Both companies have embarked on workforce transformation and reskilled the most workers in the respective categories through WSG's Career Conversion Programme (CCP), as well as embarked on skills upgrading supported by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG). The award recognises companies that have taken bold steps towards transforming their workforce and investing in human capital development through job redesign and reskilling of their workforce, which include participating in the CCP administered by SRA. (Please see [*Annex B*](#) for details of the Workforce Transformation Award recipients.)

The annual Gala event – now in its 23rd year – was graced by Guest-of-Honour **Mr Alvin Tan, Minister of State for Ministry of Trade and Industry**.

MOS Tan also witnessed the signing of the **Memorandum of Understanding** between Nanyang Polytechnic and SRA for the **Retail Internship Programme**. As part of the recommendations under the Alliance for Action (AfA) on Widening Access to Talent (which involves the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) and in consultation with the various industry players), the programme aims to bridge the gap between education and industry, providing students with hands-on experience, insights and useful networks in the retail industry. (Please see [*Annex C*](#) for details of the Retail Internship Programme.)

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About the SRA Retail Awards

Launched by the Singapore Retailers Association (SRA) in 2000, the SRA Retail Awards promote and celebrate innovation, creativity and excellence in the retail industry. In our 23rd edition, the 11 Award Categories are designed to spotlight retailers' passion, resilience, innovation, and collaborative spirit.

About Singapore Retailers Association (SRA)

Singapore Retailers Association (SRA) was founded in 1977, originally as the Singapore Retail Merchants Association by 10 leading retailers. It is a non-profit, independent/non-governmental retail trade body in Singapore, funded entirely by the private sector. Led by 18 Council Members from leading companies and SMEs, SRA's vision is to be the respected and collective voice of the retail industry and advance the interests of the retail industry via insights, education and strategic collaborations. SRA organise a wide range of year-round programmes ranging from industry events and conferences, market insights sharing sessions, training and masterclasses, local learning journeys and overseas study missions as well as professional guidance and mentorship for retailers brand growth and business development.

Our membership of almost 600 members reflects the diversity and vibrance of Singapore's retail industry – Fashion Apparel/& Accessories, Furniture and Furnishings, Electrical & Electronics, Watch & Accessories, Beauty & Wellness, Telecommunications, Specialty and Food Retail, Department Stores and Supermarket/Convenience Stores. Collectively, they employ more than 80,000 workers, own or resell more than 4,500 brands, own more than 14,000 local stores, and account for more than \$30 billion in operating receipts annually.

SRA is committed to further its cause and advance the initiatives under the Retail ITM 2025 and the SRA Roadmap 2025 for the Retail Industry working in close partnership with retail stakeholders, government agencies and trade associations to foster innovation, promote globalisation and drive business growth.

WINNERS OF THE SRA RETAIL AWARDS 2024

Award Categories – Organisation Level

1. BEST EXPERIENTIAL RETAIL STORE

L’Oreal Singapore Pte Ltd

L’Oréal stands out as the best experiential retail store by seamlessly blending innovative beauty solutions with an immersive shopping experience. The store's design captivates visitors with its modern aesthetic and interactive displays, allowing customers to engage with products in meaningful ways.

L’Oréal's commitment to personalization is evident through customized product recommendations and beauty consultations, enhancing the overall shopping experience. The integration of technology, such as virtual try-ons and augmented reality features, allows customers to experiment with different looks, making the experience not only enjoyable but also educational.

2. BEST RETAIL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE INITIATIVE

Orchard Turn Development Pte Ltd (ION Orchard)

ION Orchard sets a benchmark in retail customer experience with its enchanting festive themes, exemplified by the recent “Whimsical Enthrallment” Christmas celebration. The mall captivates visitors with stunning decorations, including a 21-meter-tall Holiday tree adorned with over 900 Louis Vuitton ornaments. This initiative transforms shopping into a delightful adventure, enhanced by immersive experiences like animated films that engage shoppers and create lasting memories.

In addition to its visual appeal, ION Orchard prioritizes community engagement and sustainability, partnering with local initiatives to promote inclusivity, such as providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to showcase their craftsmanship.

3. BEST RETAIL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

FairPrice Group Pte Ltd

FairPrice is recognized as the Best Retail Sustainability Initiative for its innovative Community Fridge project, which addresses food waste while promoting sustainability in Singapore. This initiative provides a platform for rescuing surplus and blemished produce, making it available to the community at affordable prices. By encouraging consumers to purchase rescued food, FairPrice not only helps prevent significant

amounts of food from being wasted but also raises awareness about the importance of reducing food waste.

Additionally, FairPrice actively engages the community through educational campaigns and workshops, fostering a culture of sustainability and responsibility among consumers.

4. BEST EFFORTS IN CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

UOL Group Limited

UOL Malls has established itself as a frontrunner in corporate social responsibility (CSR) through a comprehensive array of initiatives aimed at enhancing community engagement and promoting sustainability. With programs like "UOL Gives Back," the malls actively support local charities and welfare organizations, providing platforms for shoppers and tenants to contribute positively to the community. Initiatives such as the "Change for Charity" campaign encourage spontaneous acts of kindness by allowing customers to donate their loyalty points, raising significant funds to support those in need.

Moreover, UOL Malls demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability through its "Green Movement with U" campaign, which promotes environmentally responsible behaviours among shoppers and retailers. This initiative has successfully increased the number of green retailers and fostered awareness about sustainable practices, while events like the Charity Marketplace bring together various social enterprises to support fundraising efforts.

5. RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Singapore Telecommunications Ltd (Singtel)

Singtel has been awarded Retailer of the Year due to its exceptional performance and innovative strategies in the telecommunications sector. The company has demonstrated a strong commitment to enhancing customer experience through personalized services, cutting-edge technology, and a diverse range of products that cater to the evolving needs of consumers. Singtel's focus on digital transformation has allowed it to streamline operations and improve customer engagement across various platforms.

Additionally, Singtel's initiatives in sustainability and corporate social responsibility have set it apart as a leader in the industry. By actively promoting eco-friendly practices and engaging in community-oriented programs, Singtel has strengthened its brand reputation and customer loyalty.

Award Categories – Individual Level

1. RETAIL EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

Name: Mr Ng Yan Shen

Designation: Retail Planning Manager

Company: Singapore Telecommunications Ltd (Singtel)

Ng Yan Shen is honoured as the Retail Executive of the Year due to his exceptional leadership and innovative contributions to the retail landscape at Singtel. Under his guidance, Yan Shen has successfully transformed retail spaces into immersive customer experiences, leveraging strategic partnerships and cutting-edge design. His vision encompasses not only enhancing customer satisfaction but also integrating sustainability practices into operations, exemplified by the BCA Green Mark Platinum certification achieved for the Singtel Shop at 313@somerset.

His commitment to mentorship and team development has fostered a collaborative environment where creativity thrives, empowering his team of retail brand executives and interns.

2. RETAIL MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Name: Mr Marappah Gounder S/O Saminathan

Designation: Operations Manager

Company: Cold Storage Singapore (1983) Pte Ltd

Marappah Gounder S/O Saminathan wins the Retail Manager of the Year award due to his exceptional leadership and strategic vision in the retail sector. His deep passion for retail drives him to understand customer behaviour and enhance the shopping experience continually. Marappah's focus on connecting with both customers and team members has enabled him to create a nurturing environment that helps individuals reach their full potential.

Under his management at Giant, part of DFI, he has implemented comprehensive strategies centered around customer service, product quality, operational efficiency, and sustainability. His initiatives include personalized shopping experiences, optimizing store layouts, and ensuring the freshness of produce through improved cold chain processes.

3. RETAIL LEADER OF THE YEAR

Name: Mr Christian Honegger

Designation: Chief Executive Officer

Company: TC Acoustic

Christian Honegger, CEO of TC Acoustic, has been recognized as Retail Leader of the Year for his transformative leadership and innovative approach in the retail audio industry. Under his guidance, TC Acoustic has evolved into a dynamic lifestyle technology distributor and retailer, representing esteemed brands such as Sonos, Bowers & Wilkins, and Klipsch.

Honegger's commitment to a people-first philosophy has cultivated a positive workplace culture, earning TC Acoustic the #1 Best Workplace in Singapore in 2023.

His strategic vision includes pioneering immersive retail experiences, exemplified by the opening of the first Sonos flagship store in Southeast Asia at Orchard Road's Wheelock Place.

Additionally, Honegger emphasizes sustainability and social responsibility, leading initiatives that prioritize environmental consciousness and community engagement. His holistic approach to leadership has not only propelled TC Acoustic's growth but also set a benchmark for excellence in the retail industry.

Award Categories – Public Voting

1. BEST EFFORTS IN CENTRE MANAGEMENT (SHOPPING MALL)

Winner: Causeway Point by Frasers

2. BEST EFFORTS IN ADVERTISING & PROMOTIONS (SHOPPING MALL)

Winner: Raffles City Shopping Centre

3. MY FAVOURITE SHOPPING MALL

Winner: Jewel Changi Airport

These awards pay tribute to the shopping centres that score the highest average ratings relative to the number of votes casted by their tenants who are SRA members and also through a social media competition.

BACKGROUND AND WINNERS OF WORKFORCE SINGAPORE'S

WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION AWARD 2024

The Workforce Transformation Award is an award to honour companies dedicated to workforce transformation through job redesign and employee training. The award winner for SME category is **BHG (Singapore) Pte Ltd**, with **NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Ltd** being the award winner for non-SME category.

BHG (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Workforce Transformation Efforts

Since 2020, BHG has embarked on digital transformation to rejuvenate the company's competitiveness to attract new talents into the retail sector. Besides refreshing their systems to have mobile point-of-sale and self-checkout terminals, BHG redesigned their in-store layout to enhance customer experience.

In 2023, BHG job redesigned employees from front-of-house and back-of-house functions. Retail Ambassador's role was transformed to use mobile POS tablet for inventory management and keep up-to-date with social media promotions. Store Managers were transformed to Omni-Channel Managers to implement offline-to-online activities and analyse operational performance of products. Merchandising Manager's role enlarged to drive e-commerce campaigns and omni-channel activities across various retail functions.

NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Ltd

Workforce Transformation Efforts

In 2024, NTUC FairPrice redesigned their cashier role to ensure that their Retail Ambassadors are reskilled to stay relevant while the company is undergoing its long-term business transformation journey. Retail Ambassadors underwent reskilling to automate manual tasks, enabling them to focus on age-restricted purchases and loss prevention. They are cross-trained and upskilled in digital tools to enhance operations and develop emerging skills. The Retail Ambassadors' newly acquired skillsets were aligned with job-specific and industry-specific growth skills including Product Advisory, Customer Feedback, Relationship Management and Automated Inventory Control through the use of Personal Digital Assistance devices.

DETAILS OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

BETWEEN NYP AND SRA FOR THE RETAIL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

As part of the recommendations under the Alliance for Action (AfA) on Widening Access to Talent (which involves MOM, SNEF and in consultation with the various industry players such as Decathlon, Sheng Shiong Supermarket, Commune and Mothercare), a traineeship programme will be introduced from 2025 onwards. NYP will be the first Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) to be part of this effort.

The key features of the programme is as below:

- 6-month pilot structured traineeship with mentoring and coaching for learners as part of their final-year internship programme.
- Participating companies will also offer a fully paid inclusive overseas learning trips to all learners under this traineeship programme.
- Fireside chats with the Retail industry C-suites for learners to network with senior industry stakeholders to better understand the industry outlook and opportunities.
- NYP can offer workplace mentoring and coaching courses for the participating companies through their National Centre of Excellence for Workplace Learning (NACE).
- In the long run, NYP will explore a “work-study” approach recognising retail work as part of their curriculum (i.e. 3 weekdays plus 1 weekend of retail operations and 1 weekday study).