



KM Excellence Awards 2008

PRESS RELEASE AND BRIEFING KIT – EMBARGOED UNTIL 9 OCTOBER

Organisations in Singapore are beginning to demonstrate the business benefits of implementing knowledge management, says iKMS President Patrick Lambe of the inaugural KM Excellence Awards ceremony to be held 9 October 2009.

iKMS is delighted to announce that on 9 October 2008 it will be awarding five “KM Excellence” awards for the positive business impact of the knowledge management efforts to the host organisation, based on the evaluation of an international panel of experts. The awards will be presented by Mr Chan Yeng Kit, Permanent Secretary of MICA at the 5th iKMS KM Singapore Conference on 9 October 2008 at Orchard Hotel Singapore.

The award winners are:

- **Defence Science and Technology Agency – Silver Award** for clear business impact in parts of the organisation – this initiative has successfully integrated knowledge management and knowledge sharing efforts with the core capabilities of the organisation, the competency development of its staff, and provided a strong supporting infrastructure.
- **Singapore Police Force, Police Technology Department – Silver Award** for clear business impact in parts of the organisation – this initiative is an exemplary case of strong commitment to changing the knowledge sharing culture of a workgroup to achieve strong business benefits.
- **Urban Redevelopment Authority – Silver Award** for clear business impact in parts of the organisation – this initiative is highlighted as a strong example of a mature KM initiative with strong, consistent management support over several years, where KM efforts have been brought together under a common framework and roadmap, and aligned with the core business of the organisation.
- **National Library Board, National Library – Bronze Award** for the beginnings of a positive impact in a part of the organisation – this initiative to establish a knowledge sharing platform to help reference librarians improve their service excellence in addressing customer reference enquiries is a good example of a collaborative platform allied with culture change and innovations in work processes, to achieve improvements in customer service.
- **Yokogawa Electric International – Merit Award** for promise of a strong business impact – this initiative to foster the sharing of technical and engineering knowledge across a global group of companies with a history of independence shows great promise of reaping business rewards for the company itself as well as their customers.

iKMS President Patrick Lambe said “We had an excellent response to the first year’s awards process, and I am delighted with the results. They show that organisations in Singapore are not



only committed to improving their capabilities and performance through better information and knowledge management, but they are beginning to show results as well.

I am especially pleased with the willingness of a good number of organisations to step forward and share their lessons learned through the awards process. The public sector took a clear lead in stepping forward this year, and I hope that more private sector organisations will make submissions next year.

And I think it is impressive that all of our award winners this year demonstrated the ability to link their technology initiatives closely with their culture and process initiatives. This is not always true of knowledge management programmes, and our award winners provide excellent examples of good practice in this regard.”

About iKMS

The Information and Knowledge Management Society is a non-profit, membership based professional organisation founded in Singapore in 2001 to promote knowledge sharing and good practice in knowledge and information management.

About the Awards Ceremony

The KM Excellence Awards will be announced at the KM Singapore Conference, Orchard Hotel 9th October. The citations for the winners will be read out, and the awards will be presented by Mr Chan Yeng Kit, Permanent Secretary of MICA. The timing is as follows:

7.45am	Conference Registration & Refreshments
8.30am	Conference Opening
8.40am	Opening Keynote Address by The Honourable Chan Yeng Kit - Permanent Secretary MICA
9.25am	The KM Excellence Awards Ceremony Announcement and Citations by iKMS President Patrick Lambe Presentation of Awards by Mr Chan Yeng Kit
9.55am	Launch of the iKMS KM Competency Framework
10.00am	Networking Coffee Break and opportunity to speak to award winners

Press Contact

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Background to the KM Excellence Awards 2008

The KM Excellence Awards were inaugurated on behalf of iKMS in 2007 by Ms Lim Soo Hoon, Permanent Secretary of the Public Service Division and Chairman of the National Library Board, Singapore. The first awards will be announced at iKMS's KM Singapore Conference on 9 October 2008, and the award presentations will be made by Mr Chan Yeng Kit, Permanent Secretary of MICA.

Participating organisations were evaluated by an international panel of experts representing different areas of KM practice and expertise.

The 2007-8 evaluators were:

- **Graham Durant-Law**, Director, Knowledge Matters, Australia
- **Clive Flashman**, former Head, National Reporting and Learning System, NHS UK
- **Les Hales**, President, Hong Kong Knowledge Management Society
- **Kan Siew Ning**, Past President of iKMS and editor of iKMS' annual review *Knowledge Management: Singapore Perspectives*
- **Patrick Lee**, former CKO Singapore Sports Council
- **Thomas Menkhoff**, Practice Associate Professor, Singapore Management University
- **Kate Muir**, Founding Convenor of the actKM Awards and Lecturer in Information and Knowledge Management at the University of Canberra
- **Shalini Reilly**, Manager, Knowledge & Stakeholder Information, Sustainability Victoria
- **Waltraut Ritter**, Advisor to the Board, Hong Kong Knowledge Management Society, and co-founder of iKMS
- **Kim Sbarcea**, Chair of the Australian KM Standards Committee
- **Tony Sheehan**, Learning Services Director, Ashridge Business School, UK, former Group Knowledge Manager, Arup
- **Professor Eric Tsui**, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Board Member Hong Kong Knowledge Management Society
- **Nancy White**, Founder, Full Circle Associates USA, and thoughtleader in communities and collaboration
- **Ron Young**, Chief Executive Knowledge Associates and former Chairman of the BSI and CEN KM Standards Committees, UK

Purpose of the Awards

The KM Excellence Awards are intended to surface examples of good knowledge management practice within Singapore, in any type of organization:

- for the learning benefit of the professional KM community
- to promote knowledge exchange among organizations that are already on a KM journey
- to build the confidence of organizations that are considering a KM journey



"Good knowledge management practice" means any KM effort that results in helpful learning in how to implement KM effectively, and that delivers some kind of tangible value to its implementing organization. Such examples can come from organization-wide KM or from smaller KM projects within a part of the organization.

The ikMS KM Excellence Awards are much more about professional peer evaluation, dialogue and feedback, not so much about benchmarking to a prescribed standard. They do not measure or compare your progress with other organizations in your industry or field, nationally or internationally. They are intended simply to make good KM practice visible and to support the collective learning of the KM community in Singapore by finding and highlighting useful examples of positive KM impact.

The process is that participating organisations submit an application to ikMS according to a prescribed format, giving the background and purpose of their KM programmes, and any business benefits and lessons learned that they have achieved. The panel evaluates the submissions, discusses them, and sends back detailed sets of clarification questions to get a clearer understanding of the KM efforts. The panel shortlists the applications and seeks consensus on their award recommendations. In some cases where consensus is difficult to achieve, a site visit may be held to give further clarification. The panel also gives feedback in the form of a citation.

The award winners are invited to share their cases at ikMS' annual conference KM Singapore.

Types of Award

Applications are evaluated in two categories: whether they are making innovative and productive use of **Technology and Infrastructure** to support knowledge and information management; and whether they are successfully introducing change in **Culture and Processes** to support knowledge and information management goals.

There are four main levels of award:

Bronze – where a KM initiative is judged to be starting to make some positive impact

Silver – where a KM initiative is judged to be having real business impact in parts of the organisation, but this impact is not yet pervasive across the organisation

Gold – where a KM initiative is judged to have pervasive, positive business impact in all parts of the organisation

Platinum – where an organisation has closely aligned its efforts in both Technology and Culture categories, and is judged to merit a Gold in both.

Organisations that cannot yet demonstrate clear business impact but show great promise in the view of the evaluation panel, may be awarded a **Merit Award**.



KM Excellence Awards 2008

Yokogawa Electric International - Merit

The Yokogawa Achievement

Yokogawa operates in 33 countries through a family of 85 companies with almost 20,000 staff. Its main business areas are: Industrial Automation, Test & Measurement and Others (Optical, Life-science, Marine). Traditionally a hardware provider, Yokogawa is completing its transformation from to a solution provider with the ability to propose to its customers a comprehensive range of solutions.

Yokogawa had traditionally had a hub and spokes model for knowledge management, with engineering standards and tools being created centrally and distributed in hard copy to the affiliates, and with engineers from Japan being posted to other Yokogawa offices, and engineers from affiliates being posted to Japan to undergo training and development. With increasing speed of competition, growth and change, this became difficult to maintain, and affiliates and regions began to develop their own local knowledge silos. At the same time, Yokogawa recognized the importance of protection from knowledge loss caused by the frequent movement of skilled engineers and project managers.

In 2002-3 Yokogawa agreed that the hub and spoke model based on people-to-people contact and paper documentation needed to change to a network of peers using technology, face to face meetings, and digital content. New processes needed to be put in place to ensure that vital learning and knowledge was captured during and after projects, and made available quickly. An information and knowledge culture based on local working issues needed to change to one that recognizes the importance of regional and global sharing of important learning from projects. KM pilots were started within Engineering in the Singapore office in 2003.

Strengths of the Yokogawa Submission

The panel appreciated the open sharing of KM lessons learned in this submission, and the challenges that had been dealt with in trying to get a sharing infrastructure, processes and culture into place across a federalist corporate culture, where the Singapore office could only influence but not dictate. There has clearly been significant progress in establishing a global sharing platform in the Global Engineering Standard system, and the panel appreciated the close links to the business goals of the company.

It was also clear that the face to face elements of knowledge sharing across companies, countries and regions were recognized, with face to face community of practice meetings taking place to complement technology-mediated sharing. There was a strong focus on the importance of measurement and business impact with the use of the Balanced Scorecard. With the newly established infrastructure and processes, and the evident commitment in the KM team at Yokogawa to promoting business-focused learning and knowledge reuse, the panel felt that this initiative holds excellent promise and deserves strong encouragement.



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National Library Board - Bronze

The NLB Achievement

NLB manages the National Library of Singapore (NLS) as well as a network of over fifty public and institutional libraries with a membership of over two million people. One of NLS' core functions is to provide reference and advisory services for researchers, government officials, industry players, businessmen, students and the general public. The reference librarian provides answers to queries, suggests search strategies and guides library customers to relevant and useful resources. Library customers may also email or SMS their enquiries to the National Library's remote Enquiry Service called Reference Point.

Librarians have previously worked alone on reference enquiries. It was often cumbersome to engage the subject matter experts in a timely way, and to track discussions and consolidate the relevant information from different parties before packaging the final response to the customer.

The collaborative platform called Network of Specialists (NOS) was developed to enable fellow librarians to collaborate with each other to answer difficult enquiries in a timely and efficient way. The extensive knowledge residing with the subject-expert librarians could then be effectively shared and re-used. Multiple librarians and experts can work simultaneously on a single enquiry via a web interface in real time.

Strengths of the NLB Submission

The evaluation panel liked the way that a relatively simple technology was deployed for strong business results, and that it involved and leveraged the existing online specialist communities such as the Arts Subject Community, Business Subject Community and the Singapore/Southeast Asia Subject Community. They appreciated the collaborative effort of the reference librarians to create a system that tapped their collective knowledge and enabled them to provide a more comprehensive and efficient service to library patrons. There was evidence from the public that the quality of responses from the NLB has improved.

The evaluation panel commended the way that the initiative has had strong management championship, not just through encouragement, but also in active role modeling, participation and recognition of outstanding contributions. The value of face-to-face change communications on an individual level to get buy-in and participation was also recognized.

Looking Forward

The NOS team has already started to think about leveraging the collective knowledge base that is being created, for example packaging frequent enquiries for self-service use. The evaluation panel also encourages NLB to think about how the new collaborative practices that have been introduced among librarians can be extended and developed further.



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Urban Redevelopment Authority - Silver

The URA Achievement

As Singapore's national planning authority, URA relies heavily on good knowledge and information management to capture, process and use vast amounts of planning related information originating from multiple sources with different data types and varying contextual depths, catering to a number of internal and external customers and audiences.

URA has run a series of ad hoc KM initiatives since 2002, and decided in 2005 to integrate these under a single framework and roadmap, aligned to the business strategy. The KM strategy has two main elements: to facilitate strategic decision-making and to support daily business execution.

Strengths of the URA Submission

URA has clear leadership support for KM and strong governance structure. They have a steering committee for KM with representatives from the various business units, headed by the Deputy CEO. There is clearly a comprehensive plan and vision for making KM an integral part of the organisational culture, focusing not just on technology but also on people and process.

The evaluation panel appreciated the focus on KM activists and their role in bridging the plans and the actual practice. The use of "learning days", institutionalization of after action reviews and fostering of informal networks between urban planning and networks complements the "harder" business focused initiatives. There is also a clear determination to get a few initiatives done properly and successfully to achieve business results, in a way that shows a good understanding of the operational needs of staff, and a commitment to supporting them.

For example, the work on the intranet has ensured that critical content is available and that there is a clear-cut content management process to govern the timely uploading of content. A mark of its effectiveness is its daily use by URA officers. URA has worked on intelligent document profiling in the document management system to assist staff in assigning metadata to documents, including suggested file references, with a quality checking mechanism built in.

Looking Forward

The evaluation panel felt that this was a mature initiative with an extremely strong foundation for producing extensive business impact to URA. They encourage URA to maintain the balance between people, process and technology they have sustained so far. They felt there was some room to provide more integration between the different IT systems and applications, and encouraged URA in their next steps to explore the collaboration potential of Web 2.0 tools.



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Defence Science & Technology Agency - Silver

The DSTA Achievement

DSTA's mission is to harness science and technology to provide leading edge technological solutions for the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), enhancing Singapore's defence capabilities. It employs engineers and scientists who manage complex defence science and technology programmes and conduct R&D, in many multi-disciplinary domains.

DSTA has been a pioneer in KM implementation since its foundation in 2000, recognizing that it is a knowledge-powered enterprise. It was an early adopter of collaboration platforms to encourage sharing, and of expertise directories to enable networking and discovery of relevant knowledge. It has invested seriously in its KM infrastructure and governance. In its latest phase of KM development, which started in 2006, DSTA has focused on deploying KM to support its core organisational capabilities, and the competencies of its people.

DSTA has established eight capability communities (CCs) grouped by technical disciplines and competencies, each headed up by a member of senior management. All staff members belong to a CC, and they have an actively-used community portal and knowledge-sharing hub to support them. CCs also generate more focused communities of practice covering sub-domains of their discipline.

Strengths of the DSTA Submission

One of the major strengths of this submission was the way that KM is structured and focused explicitly to support the organisation's core business and way of working. It is a mature programme weaving together the strategy, business goals, working processes and technology support in a very effective way. The evaluation panel appreciated the recognition that cross fertilization between the different discipline-based communities is also necessary to prevent knowledge silos building up, and is catered for, through cross-functional project sharing and "horizontal" communities crossing different disciplines.

The sophisticated use of technology was very evident, but the attention to good governance and clear enabling processes was also important, as well as the culture change supported by training, awareness-raising and the "Four KM Habits" campaign. There was very clear management support, evidence of strong user ownership and a recognition that constant support is needed to maintain the voluntary sharing activity.

Looking Forward

The panel thought that there was potential for developing a cadre of community facilitators to further enhance horizontal knowledge sharing and cascading of knowledge sharing skills across the communities. They suggested that DSTA could also think about how to develop techniques to evaluate the business impact of their KM efforts.



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Singapore Police Force - Silver

The SPF Achievement

The mission of the Singapore Police Force (SPF) is to uphold the law, maintain order and keep the peace in Singapore. The Police Technology Department (PTD) has a staff of 250, comprising uniformed police officers, national servicemen, civilian technical and administrative staff, as well as contract technical staff. Its mission is to provide necessary technological solutions and services, and human expertise to enhance SPF's operational efficiency and effectiveness. It oversees the acquisition, development, implementation, maintenance, control, deployment, and operation of all ICT systems and equipment used for policing duties.

In 2005 PTD recognized that there were opportunities to use KM to address two key performance challenges: (a) turnover of staff on resignation or job reassignment can result in the loss of tacit knowledge, especially from technical experts and experienced project managers; (b) project management mistakes needed to be captured as lessons learned and shared to avoid repetition of the same mistakes. A conscious effort was made to improve the learning and knowledge sharing culture and practices within the department through a wide variety of activities.

Strengths of the SPF Submission

The panel felt overall that it was a very comprehensive submission which embraced motivation of people, technology solutions, e-learning and face to face activities. It showed a real passion for KM and a real drive to make a difference in the SPF. The panel were particularly impressed by the energy and commitment displayed by the KM team within PTD, evidenced in the wide range of activities and the thoughtful way in which they were conceptualised and implemented. The initiatives and the supporting technology tools deployed were clearly rooted in the culture of the organisation and designed to address important business needs.

There was evidence that the staff of the Department had appreciated the usefulness of the KM efforts and there was an impressive effort to make them engaging, memorable and enjoyable. This is a people-focused effort, with technology tools playing a supporting role. The move into knowledge packaging and elearning development is also a very people-focused move.

Looking Forward

While there is evidence that the climate of sharing and particularly sharing of project learning has markedly improved in PTD, the panel thought that there was room for more structured measurement and evaluation of the business impact of the KM efforts, as well as the improvement of knowhow in the department. PTD has been considering more structured approaches such as a knowledge audit to identify critical knowledge gaps and address them, and this may help in this direction.