

## **Media Release**

### **ISES organises global conference to discuss the future of service**

**Singapore, 23 July 2014 (Wednesday)** – The Institute of Service Excellence at the Singapore Management University (ISES) has organised the 4th ISES Global Conference on Service Excellence to foster a deeper understanding of the trends and influences shaping the growth and development of service.

Mr Lim Swee Say, Minister, Prime Minister’s Office, graced the Conference as Guest-of-Honour, and delivered the Opening Keynote Address. SMU Provost & Deputy President, Professor Rajendra Srivastava, SingTel Consumer Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Yuen Kuan Moon, and the Chief Executives of the GEMS Up movement agencies, were among the dignitaries present at the Conference, which attracted about 300 business leaders, industry practitioners, policymakers, researchers and academics from across Asia.

Themed *The Future of Service*, the Conference will identify new service trends, share concerns and experiences in customer satisfaction, anticipate the expectations of customers amidst the evolving technology landscape, assess the impact on businesses, and evaluate the skill sets of today’s service practitioners.

In his speech, Minister Lim Swee Say said that the four driving forces that would help organisations gear up for the future of service are Competitive Benchmarking, Customer-centric Culture, Corporate Leadership, and Better Customers.

Said Minister Lim, “Anticipating the future of service and embracing new technologies is even more relevant with the tight manpower situation in Singapore. With the innovative use of technology and business process re-engineering, it is possible to improve service productivity and customer satisfaction with a lean workforce.”

“At the same time, customers also have a role to play. They can be co-producers of a better service experience,” he added.

SMU’s Professor Rajendra Srivastava said, “Changing consumer behaviour and rising customer expectations have continuously transformed the service landscape. Technology has not only created more opportunities for businesses, but more challenges as well.”

“Therefore, it is our hope that initiatives like this Conference will help our industry learn about future practices on service innovation and spawn the next big business idea,” Professor Srivastava remarked.

The Conference drew a stellar line-up of academic and industry experts for the three plenary sessions on Day 1 and the four concurrent Master Classes on Day 2.

The plenary sessions consist of keynote speeches and panel discussions focusing on specific topics: *What Can We Learn About the Future From the Past & Present?*; *The Future of Retail*; and *The Future of Hospitality*. Each session will feature viewpoints from both the academia and industry, citing relevant examples from around the world, thus providing participants with broad perspectives on theoretical concepts and practical management issues. The speakers include scholars and corporate leaders from University of Maryland, USA; Arison School of Business, Israel; Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India; State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA; PayPal; SingTel; 77<sup>th</sup> Street; Patina Hotels & Resorts; Oliver Wyman; Sky on 57; and NEC Asia Pacific.

The full-day Master Classes, designed for C-suite executives, will offer in-depth learning into specific areas of service innovation: Essential Analytics for Service; Managing Service Productivity; Customer Management in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; and Boosting Productivity in the Service Industry.

ISES Director, Ms Caroline Lim, in summing up the conference programme, said, “The two-day Conference was designed specifically to dovetail two crucial aspects in levelling up service standards: to instil in industry leadership a sense of urgency in the fast evolving service landscape, and to build the resources and capabilities that will support businesses in the service economy of the future.”

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### **About the Institute of Service Excellence at SMU (ISES)**

The Institute of Service Excellence at the Singapore Management University (ISES) is the cornerstone of an initiative to raise Singapore's service standards and promote a culture of service excellence. Working in close collaboration with government agencies and business leaders, ISES champions service excellence through an integrated approach that encompasses benchmarking and analysis, research and thought leadership, and industry engagement.

### **About Singapore Management University**

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. It is known for its interactive and technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to over 8,300 undergraduate and postgraduate students, SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law and School of Social Sciences, offering a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in various disciplines.

With an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance, SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India as well as with partners in the business community and public sector through its research institutes and centres. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with the business and wider community. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)

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