

DINGGO WINS “MOST INNOVATIVE STARTUP” PRIZE IN NTU’S IDEASINC CHALLENGE

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- Recent SMU graduates clinched one of top prizes in local entrepreneurial competition
- Technology startup beat over 200 teams this year and bagged S\$10,000 cash prize
- Mobile app solutions continue to revolutionise F&B and entertainment business

[Featured Photo: (left to right) For winning the “Most Innovative Startup” in NTU’s IdeasInc Business Challenge, DingGo’s three founders : CEO Jeff Chin Pak Chuen, COO Wallace Ang Ding Cong, and CTO Hayden Leow Si Wee, received S\$10,000 in cash prize from Dr. Hooi Den Huan, Director of Nanyang Technopreneurship Centre. All three entrepreneurs recently graduated from SMU – Jeff and Wallace with the Master of Science in Innovation, and Hayden with the Bachelor of Science in Information Systems. The team is currently being incubated by the Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) in SMU, and has also received early investment from MediaCorp.]

Technology enterprise DingGo founded by recent SMU graduates emerged as “Most Innovative Startup” in NTU’s IdeasInc Challenge this year, beating over 200 teams that entered the local entrepreneurial business competition. DingGo bagged S\$10,000 in cash prize at the final competition on 18 October at

the Red Dot Museum, along with two other winning teams for the “Most Tech-driven Startup” and “Most Socially Responsible Startup”.

IdeasInc is a start-up accelerator programme that is open to every youth in Singapore, striving to promote and develop an entrepreneurial environment to cultivate home-grown entrepreneurs and enterprises.

Over the competition span of nine months, DingGo was selected from over 200 startups to the Top 40 based on a business executive summary submission, then to the Top 15 eventually after going through entrepreneurship-focused workshops. At the finals on the Demo Day, the team pitched to a panel of judges and investors.

DingGo offers a mobile application with an innovative service to notify users of nearby deals on food, beverage and entertainment. As a proximity flash offer platform, its business proposition is to allow merchants to spontaneously reach out to users nearby with good deals, while helping F&B and retail outlets fill up last-minute spaces and improve sales revenue.

In the soft launch and pilot trial stage currently, the enterprise has been running a socially green initiative with support of the SMU community. It alerts SMU students, staff and faculty on remaining but still fresh buffet spreads and beverages on campus, before the good food expires and gets cleared away. To date, DingGo is proud that more than 120kg of food wastage has been avoided within SMU through this initiative, with the excellent support of SMU students, staff, and faculty, and hope to reach out to even more of SMU’s overall population to help on this social cause.

So far, DingGo has already approached several eateries near the campus, such as Nicole’s Cafe, Subway, Wing Zone, Sheng Kee Dessert, Shang Pin Hot Pot, 7Kickstarter Cafe, Soup Spoon, Tea Party, Ice Cold Beer, Molly Roffeys, Bao Today, and I’m Kim Korean BBQ, many of which have agreed to come on board. In a few weeks, once the mobile app is available on both the Android and iOS platforms, DingGo users will always be the first to know of great last-minute flash offers from these eateries.

DingGo is seeking more investors and users of its mobile application, as it aspires to become the ‘LastMinute.com’ of Asia, connecting ‘instant customers’ with ‘last-minute seats and deals’. It is designed to solve one of the biggest problems faced by restaurants in modern cities today – having empty tables and seats during peak meal hours – while helping busy city people with highly dynamic schedules who can ill-afford to plan daily meals, to still be able to enjoy last-minute, great-value meal offers.

In March, DingGo won third place in the Asia Venture Challenge (AVC) 2015, an Asia-wide business plan competition fostering entrepreneurial spirit, held in Bangkok, Thailand. Following that, the start-up was selected for incubation by SMU’s Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and MediaCorp’s The Mediapreneur incubator programme for innovative business ventures.

SMU Professor of Organisational Behaviour & Human Resources (Education) and Academic Director of SMU's Master of Science in Innovation (MI) programme Thomas Menkhoff said, "I am very proud of DingGo's success. The team is very entrepreneurial and has outstanding management skills, which are instrumental in securing more merchants and users. It is remarkable how fast DingGo took off after graduation. They have an interesting business model, and I am confident that their go-to-market and growth journey will be exciting and full of interesting lessons."

DingGo CEO Jeff said, "SMU has given the team a good foundation and preparation to embrace the real world, and continues to provide great guidance and support to the team through the incubation programme in IIE as it "goes to market" in the implementation stage of the business. Combining our knowledge in innovation and technology and applying them to a business venture, we have worked extremely hard to gear ourselves towards launching the mobile application. And we truly believe that DingGo will create value to both consumers and businesses alike."

For more info about DingGo, please visit <http://www.dinggo.co/>