

Wee Chuan Peng Dennis of Dennis Wee Realty Pte Ltd

Before going into the real estate industry, Dennis was a highly paid offshore surveyor but he was retrenched in the recession of 1986. With no educational qualifications (he was a Secondary 2 dropout) and no other employable experience, he had nowhere to go. While his expenses were piling up, a friend invited him to join his real estate company. With no other options he started from nothing again and went into selling real estate. He began learning from the bottom and in a short period of time became one of the top performers in the industry. When it came to the time to set up his own business, it was natural to choose the real estate industry.

Ow Soon Pooh of 1A CRISPY PUFFS PTE. LTD.

When he was young, Mr. Ow did not have much of a childhood dream. It was only until Secondary 1 or 2 that he had the inclination to go into the food industry. Mr. Ow was from a poor family and the earnings from his parents' noodles stall were not enough to support the whole family. So he decided to drop out from school in Secondary 2 and went to sell noodles. He went on to find a job at a seafood restaurant. In 1977 when he started working with them, the restaurant's earnings increased from \$60 to \$80 and eventually to \$8,000 a month. Curry Puffs was something that Mr. Ow enjoys eating. But at that point of time, most of the curry puffs were traditional and there was nothing that really stood out. So he decided that if he could make something that is unique, a curry puff that retains its crispness even after 8 hours, it would be a hot seller. He went ahead with this idea and is now reaping the rewards.

Kenny Toh Sheng Liang of Gone Fishing

Kenny Toh is a man who dares to live his dreams. He transformed his dreams and passions into reality. He started Gone Fishing with savings from his previous job. He invested some as start up capital; set aside some to cushion the cash flow while the business is taking shape, and kept some for contingency plans.

In Junior College, while flying with the Singapore Youth Flying Club, he had once aspired to be an air-force pilot; he later changed his mind to being an architect. However, he ended up with a double degree in computing and business instead. He started his first career as a management consultant, advising businesses on how to change to be more successful. Over the seven years in consulting, he often felt that there ought to be something more meaningful and fulfilling for him to do,

other than solving business problems and helping businesses grow. He also felt that the ultimate form of security is the ability to stand on one's own feet, and not to depend on anyone. The turning point came during a one-month vacation, when he got some clarity on what was truly important to him at that point in his life. Firstly, it was to spend more time with his family. Secondly, it was the desire to spend his time and energy meaningfully on something that he was deeply passionate about. Starting Gone Fishing was a means to do both.

Caleb Chan Poh Leng of Edu21 Consultants

Education has always been a passion for Caleb. His desire is to see people improve the quality of their lives, to see people transform into a better person. He is an IT software engineer by training. It was a very practical job but he found it boring. He had always wanted a job that is more people oriented. Therefore he joined a company that provided training for schools. Through this job he built up his experience in creating and conducting training programs. He found out that it was interesting and something that he enjoyed doing. Working for three to five years, he realized that he could actually start out on his own and it is time to try out something more challenging. This was how the idea of opening his business was borne.

Wee Kien Meng of Magicians Network (Singapore)

Mr. Wee had always wanted to be a magician since he was a very young child so he is really passionate about his work. It was a seamless transition for him to become a magician. He also likes children and can relate well with kids and hence choosing to focus on kids was another natural choice since he is confident that he will be able to do his job well. Personally he started this business by doing magic, but has since expanded his team into different areas of entertainment like face painting, balloon sculpturing, games and much more. He has been practicing as a magician since his university days. When he graduated, he was confident that he had enough shows to support himself.

Justina Lee Siow Wei of DeCharacter Image Pte Ltd

Since her secondary school days, Ms. Justina Lee had always wanted to become a make-up artist and eventually own a makeover studio. When she was in Secondary 3, she started thinking about her future career plans and goals. Since she had always had the passion for makeup, she took up a course during that same year so that she could work full time as a

makeup artist upon completion of her O Levels. Fortunately, the makeup school allowed her to take on a job as a part-time sales representative, where she was able to learn free makeup skills should she meet her personal sales quota, which she did. Sometime back in 1995 to 2000, numerous makeover studios were popping up as it was the trend then, and some were closing down after only 1- 2 years of operation. She grabbed the opportunity and has gone on to pursue her childhood dream.

Seow Chin Kok David of Locust Pte Ltd

David Seow is the Managing Director of Locust Pte Ltd, a leading supplier of inspirational products in Singapore. Since young, he knew deep within himself that one day he would become a businessman. It was as if he had this calling. As a primary school kid, because of his consistently top grades in art-based subjects, he was chosen by his school to compete in a national arts competition. Though he didn't win the top prize, his love for arts grew stronger over the years. Finally one fine day after he turned 30, he figured that he had gained enough business experience in the corporate world and the time was ripe. He took the plunge and has never looked back since.

Cecilia Lim CMuee of Mu_ee

Ms Cecilia is the proud owner of the Mu_ee outlets in Singapore. There is tremendous energy and passion hidden in this petite frame. Behind her successes are years of hard work. Despite challenges, Cecilia strongly held on to her dreams and visions.

After venturing to an overseas university with a major in ceramics and clay, she started making her own accessories and selling them at the Clarke Quay flea market. Shortly after, some NUS students approached her at the flea market and asked her if she was interested to sell her products at the NUS bazaar. This was a major stepping-stone for her. It really boosted her confidence and showed her that this business model can work.

Tan Hock Guan of the Mind Cafe Pte Ltd

The idea for The Mind Cafe came about some time in early 2004. What started off as a chance encounter with the National Monopoly Competition turned into a successful business venture. The Mind Cafe is the brainchild of Mr. Alvin Tan Hock Guan. Mr. Tan worked in the

development field where he used to move from one construction site to another and handled teams of people to get them together to work on building construction projects. He was in a senior management position as a civil engineer where he worked in his previous company for 9 years after graduating from NTU.

Felix Yeo of Skateline Pte.Ltd.

It takes willingness to work hard on your passion and an adventurous spirit to make a living out of your hobby. Passion, creativity, innovation, and vision, are keys to a sustainable business. Felix did not intend to be his own boss or even to start his own business. His current job remains his calling and vocation. When he started Skateline, it was just a way to express himself through his hobby. He did not dream that it would grow to be earning him 5 times more than his regular job. Mr. Yeo prefers to keep this business as a hobby more than a business, that way his passion never dies.

Diane Tonge Chin Fen of Jitterbugs Swingapore wholly owned by Wanna Dance

Dancing is not just art. It is a lifestyle and about young people coming together to have fun. That is what Diane provides at Jitterbugs – happy, sexy, passionate, and cool. She gave up a credible banking career to pursue something that at that point of time was not seen as a wise decision. She believes that if she had not taken the opportunity, she would have regretted it.

Starting Jitterbugs she envisioned it to be this really fun, happy, cool and exciting place to be in. In fact, it's much more than that. It's a lifestyle. It's about people coming together to hang out. They have had students who have been with them ever since they started and they still hang out with them. It's about creating those kinds of bonds that ensure a deeper sense of purpose in their everyday work.

Wee Eng Guan of Inspiration Design Pte Ltd

Wee Eng Guan is a resilient person who started out working at Shatec and started to realize his calling as an entrepreneur when people started praising him for his work. At that time, he was one of the best students at Shatec. He worked very hard and was involved in commercial projects like exhibitions and banquets. It was something very different from what he had been taught in school, he was exposed to a lot of hands-on and problem solving situations. He had acquired a lot of experience and

therefore he thought that the time was ripe for him to venture into the design business. Capitalizing on his talent, he started inspiration design, which has become a huge success. Inspiration started as a partnership. Mr. Tay, the principal started the school in Ang Mo Kio.

Arvind Agarwalla of Fact Software International Pte Ltd

Mr. Arvind Agarwalla is an entrepreneur of true business caliber coupled with a sincere integrity, which makes him a people's champion and an inspiring entrepreneur with a never-say-die attitude. He has achieved admirable business success and at the same time, he holds true vision and foresight. He was a science student all through school and was always interested in how things worked and how to make things better. He had moved from India to the US mid-way through his 9th grade and completed the 10th grade there as well. He ended up doing commerce in college. Since a tender age, he had always wanted to be an Applied Research Scientist with Bell Labs, New York. But The Almighty had different plans. While he was studying in college, he took over a petrol station, which he ran for 4 years. But he felt there was no challenge left at the end of the day. So while on vacation in Hong Kong in 1984, he purchased an Apple computer. It was through the use of that computer and the employment of a programmer that enabled him to develop an invoicing program for the petrol station. Then he went on to do some odd jobs for companies, earning very little money. When he could not find an accounting software for the petrol station a few months later, he spotted an opportunity. By 1987, he had decided that even though he had no formal training in computers, this is what he really wanted to do. He knew it would be a lot of hard work, but he found the software industry very exciting and stimulating. It was then that he decided that he was going to develop packaged (shrink wrapped) accounting software, and sell to the entire world.

Alvin Giam of Pilates bodyworks

After he experienced the healing power of Pilates, it became his newfound passion. Eager to share with others the wonders and beauty of Pilates, Alvin Giam established the first Pilates studio (Pilates Bodyworks) in Singapore and the whole of Asia.

During a tae-kwon do tournament in his university days, he sustained serious injuries on his lower back and hip, but today he is totally pain-free without any medical intervention. He healed himself with Pilates. When he

first discovered Pilates in 1988 he loved it and he knew it was right for his body so he studied more about it. The more he dwelled on it the more he fell in love with it. He went to America and spent many years there learning everything about Pilates. He came back to Singapore and set up his studio.

Tony Seow of PURPLE SAGE PTE. LTD.

While many skeptics thought it was impossible to do this business, this Entrepreneur persevered, holding fast to his beliefs and strong passion. Today, he is a member of the Entrepreneur Organization. After working for SingTel as a Global Account Manager for 3 years, he realized that it was time for him to move on, as he has always had a passion in the food and beverage industry. Since he was from the hospitality industry in America, it seemed like a natural choice to go back to the service line. During that time, this was the best and easiest business to start out because high quality food and service was everyone's main concern. Thus, he started Purple Sage together with a few partners.

Rashmi Gogna of Pure Earth Pte Ltd

When Rashmi Gogna came to Singapore 5 years ago she was full of dreams and ambitions for the future. Today her fashion label Pure Earth retails at two popular outlets and has over 1500 satisfied customers and is well on track to being a brand for the discerning customer, especially women who are confident in their individuality.

When she moved to Singapore five years ago, she was keen to enter the textile industry. She had 15 years prior experience in the region and wanted to put that knowledge to good use. At the same time she wanted to balance her work and home life. Singapore was that fertile ground where the idea of having her own business took root.

Woon Tek Seng of Killiney Kopitiam

Treating his staff as family and having a never say die attitude coupled with determination are the essential secrets of the success of Mr. Woon's business.

After working in the banking industry for 25 years, he retired and invested in property. At that time, in 1992, he bought shop no. 67, along Killiney Road. It was a local Hainanese Cafe and at that time there were only two such coffee shops in Singapore. In 1992, he took this shop and he felt the



need to develop the Hainanese cuisine further. He embarked on this venture to expand it, capitalizing on the fact that there was not much competition in this segment.

Wong Foo Wah Sean Christopher of IG's Heaven

As young as he may be, Christopher is willing to take up risks to fight for his dreams while others told him it was impossible. During the SARS crisis, he went into debt and was facing bankruptcy, however because of his strong will and fighting spirit; he did not give up but persevered on. In the end, he managed to climb out of his dire situation and began rebuilding his business. Despite the crisis, he did not allow circumstances to stop him nor change the beliefs he always had. Instead he took it as a learning opportunity and continued his pursuit for financial freedom. After graduating from the National University of Singapore, he perceived a market potential for lifestyle products. Then, there were hardly any lifestyle stores in Singapore, while such trends were already evident in the European and Australian markets, he and his partners decided to import these unique products to have them launched in Singapore. The public received the store concept very well and within the first three years into operation, more IG's Heaven stores were set up in various prime locations here.

Sim Sin Sin of Secret Recipe Cafe Pte Ltd

An accountant by training, Mr. Sim pursued a professional career with Ernst and Young (then known as Arthur Young). After 5 years with the professional firm, he moved on to a career with American Express to have a taste of the corporate world. He was working in the finance department for five years. In 1995 he started his own consulting company and practiced as a CPA. In 2002 due to the economic down turn, his accounting and consulting business was going downhill. He was given the opportunity to join his cousin in Secret Recipe. At that time, Secret Recipe was only three years old and only had two outlets (Holland Grove and Forum). With his consulting background, he managed to help his cousin to expand the business to better utilize the capacity in their factories. Now, three and a half years after he joined the business, they have grown to ten outlets in Singapore and they see an opportunity to grow to around 15-18 outlets.

Dilys Yong Mee Hiong of HQ Link Pte Ltd

After graduating from university in 1980, Dilys joined the Ministry of Defense for 3 years. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) then recruited her to be the Organizing Secretary of the Industry committee. She was put in-charge to plan for the Trade and Industry Fair (a general trade fair) to be held in July 1985. She spent about 18 months on this project, during which she gained a lot of experience, and developed a strong passion for this industry. After the completion of this show, SCCCI did not plan to do another exhibition, and she was tasked to do other work such as heading the China Desk. In 1986, she was invited to join an exhibition organizing company where she organized a famous IT show called Singapore Informatics. In 1987, with experience of organizing two major exhibitions, she embarked on her first joint venture exhibition company with some of the Industry committee members. As someone who enjoys challenges, she finds it fulfilling to work in the exhibition industry because it is fast-paced, deadline-driven, requires comprehensive planning, good sales skills and show management skills.

Samuelina Wan of Moms in Mind

It all started out from home: With a 5 year old, a 2-1/2 year old, and a newborn baby. Business became an extension of her family life. Amidst her daily routines, she would dream up designs, liaise with suppliers & manufacturers, pack goods, maintain her website, handle accounts, and even send out deliveries. Her newborn, Timmy was a constant "business partner" as she was breastfeeding; going with her everywhere as she went for meetings and deliveries. Often, there were times when she would even have her older boy sleeping in the sling while carrying the baby and packages in my arms during trips to the post office and on buying trips. She eventually needed more space for storage, so rented a small office and the rest as they say is history.

Teo Bee Bee of Mum's Kitchen Catering Services

Ms Lydia Teo is the owner of Mum's Kitchen, an established food-catering company dedicated to good food quality, excellent service and stylish presentation. She started her business in Joo Chiat. Her mother loves cooking and is a good cook. When she was younger, friends and relatives who tasted her mum's food used to say that they should set up their own restaurant. In 1996, her mother decided to set up a restaurant with her late father. She supported the idea, gave up her job and started Mum's Kitchen together with my other siblings.

Siew Yok Yee of The Art of Seduction

The Art Of Seduction - Bikini Club is the second business started by Miss Iris Siew while she was still studying in Singapore Management University. To her, that was the best time to start a business as she can put the essence of Management theories and principles into practical use. Most importantly, by giving her very best and learning as much as she can, she feels that she will be able to live with no regrets.

She started the business when she was in her final year in Singapore Management University, thus she had to juggle between her business, studies, projects and an internship. To start a business from scratch, she really needed a lot of time. She needed to talk to her customers to know what they really need, she had to do competitors' analysis to examine the extent of the customers' satisfaction, identify my market niche and tailor my operation to cater to the niche market. Nine years ago she bought her first bikini that looked so terrible on her that she never wore it out of the house. Hence, she had the vision of getting her customers to buy bikinis that really suit them and enhance their assets so that they will be confident in wearing bikinis instead of one-piece swimwear.

Wong Sek Fong of Rieme Hair and Beauty Training Centre Pte Ltd

Serene Wong is the managing director of Rieme Hair & Beauty Training Centre, a successful school situated in the heart of Chinatown. Her rise from a poor kampong girl to a businesswoman with the capability to care for her children single-handedly is incredibly impressive. She got married in her early twenties and was extremely poor. Without the proper educational qualifications and not knowing the English language, it seemed that a course in hairdressing was the perfect choice. This job allows her to balance between work and family, which is to her the perfect match.

Carolyn Teo of KINETIC INTERACTIVE PTE LTD

A young entrepreneur's dream of building a small company that is big in the world, one that is recognised by all its peers in the world. One, which is purely Singaporean.

Carolyn is a risk-taker who is not afraid of challenges; an original thinker and innovator who does not follow societal norms blindly. She holds a strong philosophy, believes in herself and possesses the spirit of making a difference to those working around her. She takes pride in doing good work and she believes that with her vision, level of enthusiasm and passion

for her work, she can redefine boundaries in the creative and advertising arena for Singapore and scale Kinetic to greater heights. She was from the corporate sector and wanted to do something that would be more fulfilling. At 26, she was working in reputable companies and MNCs and decided to try something new. It was a dream to be working in a place where she has the passion for. She strongly believes that if you have no drive, the best business plans won't save a business. Currently, Kinetic Interactive is the top interactive company in Singapore and Asia; Kinetic Singapore, as a whole is the only Agency in Singapore to have been on the Creative Circle Awards top 5 listing for our 6th year running. In the international arena, Kinetic did Singapore proud by being the highest awarded Agency in Asia in the New York One Show Awards, winning one Gold and two Silvers.

Andrew Kwan of Globamatrix Holdings Pte Ltd

Andrew was raised in a kampong. But along with the prosperity of his family's business, he was lifted from poverty. His parent's ability to move on in life even without formal education was an inspiration. It taught him that if one has the will, perseverance, good ideas and by the grace of God, one can transform the way they live and provide a brighter future for the family. He completed his degree at 20 years of age, and then enlisted for National Service which included a 2 year stint in the air force. Being a RSAF officer at that point in time and as a pilot in training, he got very good allowances. Thankfully, by the time he completed his National Service, he had a little bit of savings.

With that small amount of money, Andrew went into a partnership with Col (NS) Wee back in the early 90s and started the window film business first. It was not a mainstream industry and they felt that it was better for them to be a big fish in a small pond than to be a small fish in a large pond. In 2001, he and his partner branched into the food business.

Celene Lim of Asia PR Werkz Pte Ltd

As the company's founder and managing director, Ms Celene Lim has successfully built Asia PR.Comz into a recognised boutique Technology PR Consultancy in Asia, which clinched the honours of winning the IPRS PRISM's "Best Technology PR" award in 2002. In 2005, Asia PR.Comz was rebranded as Asia PR Werkz to offer the full suite of Public Relations. A true entrepreneur, Celene also founded the Healthcare and Wellness Corporation which invests in medical facilities, Nursing Homes, hospitals, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) clinics and Wellness Centres. She is

currently spearheading the Penthouse Aesthetiques Centre and Healthcare & Wellness Clinic at the Penthouse@Paragon.

Prior to setting up her own business, she spent more than ten years at IBM Singapore and was involved from sales and marketing, branding, advertising and promotions to launching of new products. Her last job in IBM was in brand management, where she picked up the interest and skills in advertising, promotions, communications and public relations. She left IBM after the birth of her third child; she was then headhunted to manage the regional marketing for a US software company, and was given a portfolio to manage marketing, channel management, business alliances, and public relations for the entire Asia Pacific region, spanning nine countries. In 1996, at the prime age of 34, after her three kids started school, she decided that the time was ripe to venture out on her own. This was when she took that big giant step of stepping out of the comforts of all the corporate trappings and decided to start her own company - hence the birth of Asia PR.Comz.

Dorcas Teo of Nordic Flow Control Pte Ltd

From struggling to cope with the financial burden that came with the loss of her father while still in school, to jointly-owning a \$15 million company, Ms. Dorcas Teo is a young entrepreneur who has come a long way. She is inspired by the teachings in the Bible and strives to do her best in all that her everyday work. Her late father was in the electronic appliance trading business and used to own a shop. From a young age, she would often go to the shop to help out and it was her dad who trained her in sales. Even though they were small businesses, both her dad and grandparents were entrepreneurs in their own way and this probably rubbed off on her.

She used to work for a multi-national company (MNC) in a similar industry. The experience there caused her to question, 'If Europeans are able to do it, can a local company do it too?' At that time, there was no local company in this business and she was motivated by the challenge to be the very first successful local company in this industry.

David Tay of Venture Creations

When he first enrolled in NUS, David told myself that he was not going to let his university education be just an educational journey. He was determined to make the most out of his time in NUS. He joined a lot of activities and expanded his social network. Soon after, he started his first company with a few friends, doing what he enjoys- creative designing.

He says that passion for his business is the sole motivation that keeps him going while having to juggle with social life, academic demands and his very own business.

Lim Der Shing of JOBSFACTORY PTE. LTD

Mr Lim Der Shing is one of the founders of JobsFactory. JobsFactory provides innovative and effective career channels for students and professionals to help them make better career choices. He started out as a fresh graduate with his wife and partner, Shao Ning, and has run the company for 6 years now.

It really began during his varsity years in the University of Michigan in America. It was a real eye-opener for him during 1996-1999, when it was the Dot-com boom. Many of his contemporaries were embarking on their own start-ups, and that really influenced him. He was on a scholarship from Sembcorp Industries and returned to work for them upon graduation. He never felt part of the corporate world. Finally after his stint at Sembcorp, he decided to do an internet business focused on job portals.

Syed Ibrahim B. Haja Mohideen of One Heart Beat Percussions

Mr. Syed Ibrahim has been a very passionate musician and it is commendable how he has made his career and living in arts and how he has brought the community together with conviction and courage through his art. In his own words, he quotes, "I can call myself the man who never stopped his 'heartbeat' since his first pair of drumsticks at the age of 10".

He started playing for rock bands and developed a keen interest in music. He saw what music could do to people. It brings everyone together. At the same time, he had a passion for sharing percussion music making and a desire to bring his work to a higher level. He also wanted to make people realize that working in the arts can be a professional career.

Saumil Nanavati of Sydus Pte Ltd

This is a man lead by passion, motivated by challenges and gratified by the good things he can give back to society. Mr. Saumil Nanavati looks at himself and his team as creator of the world's firsts, the leading force of the revolution in mobile and telecom industries and the people who can influence the world.

His childhood dreams were basically two things, either being an air force pilot or being a cricket player. But later he felt these two things were not really

realistic as he was more of an avid technology gadget freak. So he decided to pursue a course in engineering and economics. Before he joined university, he realized two things about himself. First, he loves technology, and how technology can positively impact human beings. That was a paradoxical issue. Second, he loves music. He was so passionate about music that he could have listened to music almost 24 hours a day. So when the idea about mobile music came to mind, it really excited him to see how mobile technology could change the world of music and human consumption.

SAXONE WOON of Immortal The Design Station PTE LTD

Saxone read design at the University of Oregon and went on to complete a double degree in psychology of perception and design. His interest grew vastly from his education in due process thus when the opportunity came he took it and founded Immortal with his partner Stanley Tan. Immortal started in 1990.

His dreams as child were mainly based on what he was exposed to (especially television or movies) but he only realized his potential after he had gone through the education phase of his life. He had never thought that he would some day strike it out on his own until he realized that he wanted to be in control of his destiny.

Rovin Wong of COVER LOOKS HOLDINGS PTE. LTD

Yesterday's kampung boy became a top hairstylist and created today's CoverLooks. When he was a hairstylist, he sold makeover and hairstyling packages to his customers and was able to raise \$25,000 within three months. He started with three staff and 200 square feet at Wisma Atria. Since then, CoverLooks has progressed from leaps and bounds to become one of Singapore's top names in styling and makeovers.

Mr. Wong's childhood dream was to be a businessman. Although he did not know anything about business as a child, he knew he wanted to be boss some day. He was Chinese educated and it was by no means easy to find a job during those days. When he turned 21, after completing national service, he became a small-time contractor. While there are those without skills or ideas, those that possess them either don't have the drive, vision or courage to utilize them. Ultimately, it is about setting one's foot down in the right trade and industry.



Sebastian J MUTHU of CORNUCOPIAE

Sebastian is the owner of Cornucopiae, a business which prides itself in offering essentials to inspire new tastes. With 15 years of experience in the food and beverage industry, the once upon a time Asian correspondent for the World of Food Ingredients believes that food has always and shall always play an important role in society. Being the proud owner of a girth requiring high maintenance, it may have seemed to be an obvious path. He strives to achieve a childhood desire to be able to provide food to those in want of such. He knew that he had to work in partnership with brands that had the right clout. He wanted a range of products, the finest possible to serve better the celebration of food and its role in society. It was so very essential to work with these names in order to achieve the best value, the best product to arrive at an end where profits are not churned into bigger advertising campaigns and the unchecked power of multinational corporations. This is his philosophy. "It is the first of all problems for a man to find out what kind of work he is to do in the universe". He is a man who ensures high quality in the things that he does. A man of vision who would go all out to get the vision realized.

Darren Ho Kum Wei of Virtual Pro Shop

Mr. Darren Ho comes across as an inspirational entrepreneur, who has through hard work and sheer determination, overcome numerous challenges to startup three ventures. Committed to his passion, Mr. Ho's enthusiasm and eagerness to learn more about the ropes and the whole works of a business has fuelled his passion to keep him striving to take his businesses to greater heights. Strangely enough, his childhood dream was always to be a doctor or engineer. However, when he turned 17 in Junior College, he realized that he needed to do something different from what he had initially set his mind to do. Hence, he began looking for opportunities to strike out on my own instead of working for someone else. This was how Virtual Pro Shop was born.

BanY.J of Stikfas Pte. Ltd

To take that first step as an entrepreneur, Mr. Ban had to sell a major portion of his own toy collection in order to fund the production.

Stikfas is a unique story. A home brand built by customer demand overseas. It is unique in the sense that unlike most other businesses that strive on the local market first before venturing overseas, they harness global networks to tap on the world market. Since young he had always had interests in four major forms of entertainment: comics, electronic

games, animation and toys. Toys had always been a major passion for him and he had explored everything from collection to retail to design. It was a natural progression that led him on the path to create something original. Having progressed well in his first job in design, he boldly made the decision that he wanted to pursue my own business, to fulfill his dreams. While his projects and businesses took various forms (mostly in the creative industry), his target towards his four main interests (comics, games, animation, toys) never changed.

Tan Lay Thiam of SmartLab Education Centre Pte Ltd

Mr. Tony Tan was the brain behind the setting up of SmartLab Education Centre back in 1999. Today, it is a successful education centre with 7 branches island wide, focusing in Math and Science.

He was blessed to have earned a government scholarship and went on to read Engineering in Cambridge University UK. Before he embarked on this venture, he was working in the civil service for about 9 years. One of the key reasons for starting this business was that he felt that there should be more young people stepping out on their own to develop enterprises that can venture beyond Singapore. Singapore needs more home-grown companies like Creative Technology. Local companies can move into sectors where government-linked companies have not ventured. The second reason is more personal. He enjoys risk and adventure. Running and managing a business is very much like fighting a real "battle", where a casualty means loss of resources and time, and victory means greater monetary reward and seeing your company growing. Managing business risks also allows him to grow, and learn a lot more about himself, which he would otherwise not have learnt if he had continued in the civil service.

Tan Tze Heng of 323 Communications

Go-movie-date, the brainchild of Mr. Mathew and Mr. Wilson, is a very unique concept, catering to the less than satisfying dating scene in Singapore. Like all other business start-ups, it faced challenges before finally being what it is today. Yet, not resting on their laurels, they hope to go regional, then global, in the near future.

As a child, Matthew wanted to be a Cartoonist and Wilson a Scientist. In a way, they have had this "endless ideas in our mind" since young. They both started working for others for a few years, Matthew as an Art Director in an advertising agency and Wilson as a Sales Manger in a big company. They felt they could do

much more if they will to strike it on their own, as they know they have the drive and determination to break through.

Ang Kian You, Jason of Akyweb.com Pte Ltd

I.T. has always been an interest, hobby and passion for Mr. Ang. The purpose for him starting this business is for his personal career achievement. He believes that if someone always thinks about monetary benefits, he or she will not be successful. In running a business one has to take it as a lesson in self-satisfaction, self-achievement, self-motivation and self-discipline which will give a person the determination to move forward in bad times as well in good times. Akyweb.com Pte Ltd was incorporated in 1992. The Online solutions Services came into the place in 1999. In fact, in 1999 it was the dot.com collapse; however he was able to find opportunity amidst the economic crisis. From his education and experience working in an accounting and law firm, he married the Chinese way of doing business with western management expertise. Hence their business has never expanded and remained small in size, that is why Chinese businessmen believe that wealth cannot be passed through three generations.

Lim Terence of DTM Communications Pte Ltd

Terence Lim is owner of graphic design company DTM Communications; with aspirations to become a brand name in his industry through his beliefs in patience, positive-thinking and self-reflection. In pursuit of perfection, Terence hopes to achieve his goals, which are motivated by his son and be true to good business practices and responsibility towards his clients. From a tender age, he had always dreamt of becoming an artist. Whether it is sculptures or paintings, he wants to be involved in the design process from the beginning. It is his nature to want to create things, dismantle things and make things better. Ever since he started working about 12 years ago. He feels that one cannot be truly happy working for another. The credit always goes to someone else. This was when he decided to be the boss of himself.