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USM WINS INAUGURAL NESTLE'S NESCAFE HUB UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME



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PENANG, December 2015 - After a three-month long competition, team Coffeebenders from the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) prevailed among other public and private universities in the inaugural Nestle's Nescafe Hub University Programme 2015 (NHUP15).

In their final presentation held at the Nestle's Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, the team led by the School of Management's Goh Zhen Teong and Chin Lai Yen presented their business plan's agenda and highlighted their achievements.

Team Coffeebenders also include Khong Kok Shen, Willian Leong, Ang Tau Ping, Chin Lai Yen, Ng Yi Xiang, Farra Nur Fathin, and Mabel James, the only member from the School of Communication. The team managed to win the hearts of the judges through the brilliant execution of what they had proposed during the preliminary phase of this competition, though the panel of judges had a tough time deciding the winner as all the teams were very competitive throughout the competition.

The Planning Manager of Nestle Products (M) Sdn Bhd, Vela Sanmugam said, the winning team could have just made it through by a very small margin.

"In the end, Team Coffeebenders managed to impress the judges through a cohesive and strong team spirit and the members executed all the business activities according to their proposed plan; the team also embarked on a contingency plan during the 'haze crisis' when the campus was shut down," he added.

He explained, although USM did not surpass UUM in terms of the total number of cups sold, it could have outperformed its rivals in all other components of the competition.

NHUP15 is a competition which requires teams to brainstorm for ideas and put together a proper business plan and execute them.

Organised by Nestle (M) Berhad, the competition aims to promote and nurture entrepreneurial mindset among the undergraduates by giving them opportunity to experience running a “real” business and it also assists in building the necessary traits as they go through a transitional phase from campus into a work environment.

In the initial screening process, Nestle went through all the submitted proposals and shortlisted ten teams based on the merit of the proposal, and the shortlisted teams were then required to pitch their ideas to the senior management of Nestle including the Nescafe’s brand team.

Following the presentation by all the ten teams, Nestle identified the top three teams to proceed to the next stage - Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

In the third phase, the three finalists were briefed and trained on the standard operating procedures of running a Nescafe Hub and the team also needed to execute their advertising and promotional activities as detailed in their business plan; team members rotated their roles in taking orders from the consumers, preparing their selection of coffees, and then collecting cash payment for the purchases.

The Coffeebenders proposed several basic programmes that were effective in reaching out to their target markets and the team had fully utilised the social media network to promote their campaign by using Facebook page, JOM Start. Nescafe was constantly updated so that the potential consumers knew exactly what promotions were running.

In addition, the daily “hashtag challenges” was also incorporated and consumers had to tag the hashtag of the day and the lucky winners were then chosen based on the number of likes received.

To further create the excitement, the team also implemented a “gesture challenge” where the patrons to the Hub were given free Nescafe when they participated in the activity.

Other promotional tools used by the team included “gift cards”, outdoor advertisement such as pillar posters strategically placed around the campus to build the awareness of the Nescafe Hub.

To add to the excitement, Nestle’s Executive Director, Mr Sheriff Hani unexpectedly announced an additional RM5,000 cash rewards to the initial prize money of RM5,000 for the Champions.

The RM10,000 along with a year worth of Nestle products and the all-important internship programme at Nestle made this such a unique competition.



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