



Standard Chartered and Dun & Bradstreet unveil Singapore's top 100 small businesses

*Almost 5 in 10 Singaporean companies doubled net profit in the last financial year;
about 9 in 10 Singaporean companies in the listing achieved higher net profit*

23 May 2008 – Standard Chartered and Dun & Bradstreet (Singapore) (D&B) today announced the ranking of Singapore's top 100 Small Businesses. The Bank has called this ranking the Standard Chartered – D&B Top 100 SME Awards. The SMEs were ranked according to their Return on Equity (ROE) based on 2006 audited financial statements filed with the Registry of Companies or from the D&B database.

The top five companies in order of merit were SUPERWORLD ELECTRONICS (S) PTE LTD, ONE NORTH BRIDGE PTE LTD, TAI-TECH ADVANCED ELECTRONICS (S) PTE LTD, MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY SOUTH EAST ASIA (SINGAPORE) PTE LTD and YUAN LI SHIPPING (SINGAPORE) PTE LTD. The gala dinner award ceremony for the top five winners was held at Ritz Carlton Millennia this evening, where Guests of Honour, Mr Sunny Verghese, Chairman, IE Singapore and Ms Jessica Tan, Deputy Chairman, Government Parliamentary Committee, Finance and Trade & Industry, presented the awards.

The Standard Chartered – D&B Top 100 SME Awards is an independent and objective ranking based on the profitability ratio calculated from audited financial statements. The ranking aims to recognise companies that have achieved the highest Return On Equity (ROE). ROE is one of the most important profitability metrics, and it also highlights the overall efficiency of the company's management in utilising the funds invested by its investors and shareholders.

As ROE is an indicator of a company's good profitability and potential growth, the ranking is significant as it is a precursor of a company's future success.

The ranking is also designed as a reference point of credentials for companies doing business with each other. The Bank believes that the ranking will also help SMEs who are venturing overseas for the first time to establish and present a credible and credit-worthy business to their transnational business and financial partners.

Statistics show that trade volumes among ASEAN countries has achieved close to 9% growth on average from 2003 and 2007 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 5 – 10 % in the next 5 years.

In addition to Singapore's ranking of its top 100 small businesses, the Bank will also rank small businesses in three other South East Asian countries – Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.

Ajay Kanwal, Head of Consumer Banking, Standard Chartered Bank, Singapore said, "SMEs are the lifeblood of any economy. It is a natural progression for any SME to aspire to go transnational. Standard Chartered provides the regional expertise and partnership to help SMEs navigate these uncharted waters.

William Lim, Executive Director, Dun & Bradstreet (S) Pte Ltd said, "The Standard Chartered – D&B Top 100 SMEs Award names homegrown Singapore SMEs that have distinguished themselves with their good profitability record. For instance, 9 out of 10 companies in the listing achieved higher net profit compared to the last financial year, while 5 out of 10 doubled their net profit. Their efficiency in generating the highest return on each dollar invested by their shareholders and investors serve as excellent practical models for the SME community in Singapore to emulate."

The ranking was independently prepared by D&B, based on audited financial data. The qualification criteria for the SMEs were:

- SMEs had to be registered with a local registry as separate legal entity (*excluding branches of foreign companies*)

- Subsidiaries were ranked as a separate legal entity from its parent company
- Sales/turnover between S\$10 million to S\$40 million
- Have a total equity of more than S\$1 million
- Positive reserves
- Profit for two consecutive years
- Three full years of operation
- Have fixed assets less than S\$15 million
- At least 30% local equity

D&B Singapore Pte Ltd (www.dnb.com.sg)

D&B Singapore Pte Ltd is Singapore's leading source of business information and insight, enabling companies to Decide with Confidence®. It is a joint venture between Infocredit Holdings Pte Ltd, an established provider of worldwide business information and the first in Singapore in 1997 to be awarded the ISO 9002 certificate for its quality international credit reporting services, and D&B headquartered in New Jersey that is the world's leading provider of global business information, tools and insight for 165 years. D&B Singapore also harnesses technological enhancement and industry expertise through a partnership with Baycorp Advantage Ltd. Its clientele base spreads across a diverse mix of organisations including foreign and local MNCs and SMEs. Besides D&B Singapore, the Infocredit Holdings group of companies also comprises D&B Malaysia and Credit Bureau Singapore, a joint venture with the Association of Banks in Singapore.

Standard Chartered in Singapore is part of an international banking group with an extensive network of over 1,700 branches (including subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures) in more than 70 countries in the Asia Pacific Region, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the United Kingdom and the Americas.

Standard Chartered has a history of nearly 150 years in Singapore, opening its first branch here in 1859. In October 1999, it was among the first international banks to receive a Qualifying Full Bank (QFB) license, an endorsement of the Group's long-standing commitment to its businesses in the country.

It serves both Consumer and Wholesale Banking customers. Consumer Banking provides credit cards, personal loans, mortgages, deposit taking and wealth management services to individuals and small to medium sized enterprises. Wholesale Banking provides corporate and institutional clients with services in trade finance, cash management, lending, securities services, foreign exchange, debt capital markets and corporate finance.

The Bank employs about 4,700 people in Singapore and has a network of 18 branches and 30 ATMs. Standard Chartered is the only international bank to offer NETS service, giving customers access to EFTPOS at over 17,000 outlets islandwide.

Standard Chartered's global Consumer Banking and Wholesale Banking businesses are managed out of Singapore, as is its global Technology & Operations function and the Standard Chartered Private Bank.