

From: Web In Travel [newswit@webintravel.com]
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To: ig@illkagobius.com
Subject: Media Release: Tough Love turns to Sweet Love as WIT wins Trade Conference of the Year



Tough Love turns to Sweet Love as WIT wins Trade Conference of the Year

29 OCTOBER 2010 - Singapore – Tough love turned into sweet love for Web In Travel last night when it won the Trade Conference of the Year in the Singapore Experience Awards 2010 held last night in Singapore.

It beat two other finalists, CommunicAsia and International Maritime Week, in the category. WIT won for its 2009 conference, held last October, which had the theme of “Tough Love” to reflect the tough times the travel and tourism industry was undergoing after the global financial meltdown. It acted as a call to arms and became a rallying point for travel leaders to inspire and motivate each other to make it through the tough times and to bounce back, stronger.

The theme was embedded in all aspects of the event, from the branding on stage to the programming, as well as conference materials including a book called “Tough Love: Lessons of 2009” which contained a collection of essay contributions from speakers.

Run by the Singapore Tourism Board, the Singapore Experience Awards are judged by local and international professionals in the tourism, hospitality and travel industries and are a true reflection of peer opinion.

WIT is an annual conference for leaders and professionals engaged in the business of travel marketing, distribution and technology in Asia Pacific. WIT was launched in 2005 and since 2008, the WIT Conference has been held in partnership with ITB Asia. Some 400 people attended the 2009 conference, representing more than 20 countries.

From the first conference in 2005, Web In Travel has developed into a multi-media platform to deliver quality content to its target community. Today, it is a media brand that has daily news updates, a weekly e-newsletter, videos, social networks that engage its community and mini-events such as WIT*e – Inspiration & Mentoring for students and young talent and the WITovation Entrepreneur Bootcamp, the first of which was held on October 18 this year.

Content is what differentiates Web In Travel from other travel conferences. From the outset, WIT has set out to deliver a programme that would deliver high quality content, encourage maximum audience interactivity and stimulate creative thinking and robust discussions.

WIT's Editor and Producer, Yeoh Siew Hoon, said, "Doing this year after year in a segment that is changing so rapidly is a challenge because you've got to ensure the content remains relevant and timely even if you plan it months ahead. So what we do is take a collaborative approach and develop the content from ground up, engaging with our speakers, sponsors and customers constantly to ensure the content is in line with current trends and meets their needs. It also means constant changes to the programming, often up to the day of the event itself."

WIT won Most Innovative Marketing Initiative in the same awards in 2008.

"It takes teamwork to make anything happen and I am lucky to be surrounded by hardworking, passionate people who believed in WIT from the outset," said Yeoh. "I am also thankful to loyal supporters and customers who have been unstinting in their support of WIT over the years."

WIT attracts probably the most diverse gathering of professionals in this space, from students and interns to CEOs of leading global companies. In 2009, the youngest delegate in 2009 was 15. Yeoh says, "It's good to start them young and get them interested in travel and tourism as a possible, exciting career."

WIT also promotes constant engagement with its community through a website, a weekly newsletter and social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

In 2009, WIT introduced WIT*e – Inspiration & Mentoring, a quarterly event aimed at bringing together members of the industry with students so as to build tomorrow's tourism leaders. WIT*e has been local to Singapore, but in September 2010 the first WIT*e event was conducted in Thailand.

Technology developed for the conference, a customized Twitter feed, WITcast, is now being adopted by other regional conferences and is gaining favour in the Philippines for example.

Since 2008, WIT has also run a Start-Up Pitch competition, taking it further in 2010, when the WITovation Entrepreneur Bootcamp was introduced. Five groups of entrepreneurs pitched their ideas on October 18 to a panel of mentors. The top 3 finalists pitched their ideas at the WIT Conference to a panel of investors and a local company, Eco Travel, won "mentoring" time with a selected panel of industry experts.

WIT will take these initiatives further into the region over the next few years, growing its community and spreading the message of the WIT Conference further.

[IMAGE OF YEOH SIEW HOON COLLECTING THE AWARD](#)

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Media contact:
Illka Gobius
+65 9105 8268
pr@illkagobius.com

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