

Designed to succeed

Interior design firm Image Creative Design stays competitive through digitalisation

From left: Director of Image Creative Design Mr Roger Tan, with co-founders and brothers Elson and Randy. They believe in doing right by their customers and are exploring opportunities overseas for growth. Photo: Image Creative Design



By Christina Ching

IN AN industry that has recently seen numerous cases of renovation scams by new start-ups and unaccredited companies, 22-year-old interior design (ID) firm Image Creative Design has still managed to be recognised for its good work.

In fact, the company has received a slew of accreditations and certifications — thanks to more than two decades' worth of experience and credibility in the commercial and residential sectors.

These awards include Superbrands, the Singapore Prestige Brand Award and SME 1000, as well as other accolades.

Its director Roger Tan, 57, who started the company in 1995 with two of his brothers, says: "We believe in staying rooted to our brand values and building Image Creative on solid foundations in order to focus on doing what is

right and good for our clients.

"My brothers and I are committed to the business and we aim to stay for the long run."

Passion in design

Image Creative focuses on coming up with interior designs that reflect one's lifestyle and preferred aesthetics — be it traditional, modern or eclectic. In fact, the company's mantra is to "transform ideas into reality".

With their combined effort, the brothers managed to grow the company to the present staff count of more than 100 designers, sales consultants and project managers.

Locally, the company operates in an acquired 8,000 sq ft office that doubles up as a showroom for its latest innovative concepts. It also services regional clients on a project basis.

"Our passion for design

motivates us. We pride ourselves on being able to provide bespoke designs for our clients by going the extra mile to understand each and every one of them — and in doing so, creating designs that truly echo their style," says Mr Tan.

Welcoming challenges

Despite the company's success, Mr Tan stresses that it is important to keep improving to stay relevant and competitive in the future.

Image Creative also takes pains with its brand-building initiatives, and makes it a point to strengthen its marketing efforts, especially in the digital arena.

It has recently engaged an external branding consultant to do a brand audit and work on its marketing strategies.

Mr Tan says: "Digitalisation is a game changer and requires a paradigm shift. Newer ID brands are excelling through the use of digital

marketing and social media."

He highlights that clients today are increasingly discerning due to information that is readily accessible on the Internet and social media.

Unlike the past where interior designers had greater input and influence over the design of the house, most clients these days have a stronger idea of what they want and prefer to play a more active role in the design process, observes Mr Tan.

The company keeps up with the times and overcomes these challenges with software upgrades.

These include using 3D-rendering design software that produces more realistic views in a shorter time span, as well as digital portfolios and integrated digital marketing plans.

The company keeps abreast of the latest design trends and technologies,

while ensuring clients' satisfaction through quality workmanship, excellent service and timely delivery.

"To gain a competitive edge, it is vital to outdo ourselves and be the best version of ourselves. If complacency takes over, our competitors will take over," stresses Mr Tan.

Image Creative is looking to establish a stronger foothold in regional markets by setting up local offices in Malaysia, Thailand and China. This will enable it to service its clients better and explore new market opportunities.

"Regional work will also expose our staff to more ideas and improve their knowledge, which will be useful for their professional development.

"Moving forward, we want to prepare and equip the team to achieve our long-term goal of having an initial public offering when the time is right," adds Mr Tan.