

# Entrepreneurs

ISSUE 44

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JUL | AUG 2012

A PUBLICATION BY ASME

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\$6.90 (+GST)

MICA (P)039/05/2010  
ISSN NO. 1793-0286



## YUSARN AUDREY

At Yusarn Audrey, we have been at the forefront of intellectual property because we see and manage IP as a strategic business tool, and not just a legal right. We educate and empower our clients to protect, manage and commercialise their valuable intellectual property worldwide.

As a result of our work, our clients have changed the way they look at IP. No longer just an expense, they now see IP as an asset and an investment for the future of their organisations.

That is what we live for in Yusarn Audrey, and what makes us excited and passionate about our work.

### IGNITING POSSIBILITIES.



**B**usiness is competitive. To stand out from their competitors, companies invest a lot of resources to innovate and try to carve out a niche for themselves in the marketplace. Unfortunately, once developed and introduced in the market, these innovative ideas, technological advances and successful brands are often “borrowed” by other firms for their own use. What can companies do to protect their innovations and ultimately their businesses?

Seeing the need for businesses to protect their intellectual property (IP) assets in order for them to survive and grow, Mr Chiew Yu Sarn and Ms Audrey Yap established Yusarn Audrey, a boutique intellectual property law firm with a focus on all aspects of IP, in particular its use as a strategic business tool. Being entrepreneurs themselves, Yu Sarn and Audrey both intimately understand the challenges faced by fellow entrepreneurs, allowing them to better assess, evaluate and then implement a suitable and effective IP programme for their clients.

Yu Sarn has broad qualifications in this field; he is an Advocate & Solicitor of

the Supreme Court of Singapore and is enrolled as a Solicitor of England and Wales. He is also a Certified Licensing Professional (CLP), a US-based designation with members worldwide which recognises his expertise not just in IP law, but also in the business of commercializing IP. Yu Sarn's practice is broadly in the area of IP and corporate and commercial law, especially in the commercialization of IP, including franchising, licensing, research collaborations, joint ventures and IP-related private equity transactions, to name a few types of transactions he advises on. Using his wealth of experience and innovative methods, Yu Sarn recently advised a multinational telecommunications company in a joint venture with a global payments company involving the licensing of valuable technology and IP.

When asked about the importance of Singapore companies securing their own intellectual property and the need to protect vital elements of the business, like superior technology and trademarks, Yu Sarn replied, “Superior technology won't stay ‘superior’ for long if everyone can copy it. You won't be able to distinguish

your products and services from others by your brand name or logo if others can imitate it and get a free ride on your reputation and goodwill while damaging your brand.”

As part of the firm's philosophy, professionals at Yusarn Audrey work in integrated teams, bringing together IP and corporate lawyers as well as patent agents to work towards a common goal - to bring value to a client's IP assets. It is this unique combination of disciplines - legal, technical and strategic - working seamlessly together that enables Yusarn Audrey to deliver a complete and operative IP programme. “We can't do this without our unique mix of professional expertise and strategic focus,” Yu Sarn says, as he talks about the firm's strengths.

Speaking of how the firm has assembled its team, “People come to us in different ways. Some of our long-standing employees have come through introductions by their friends who were already in the firm. Others responded to an advertisement. But once you are with us, we take care to develop you and bring you into our culture and way of doing

# No Law or Ordinance is Mightier than Understanding

Being entrepreneurs themselves, founders of boutique law firm Yusarn Audrey understand the challenges of building and sustaining a business  
By James Tan



things,” explains Yu Sarn. “Every year, we have a firm retreat, and we always start by inducting new staff into our foundational values. But more than that, we must act according to our values and beliefs every day, especially the leaders of the firm, starting from the partners. A core value we share and practice is that we care about people, be they our clients or our staff. You cannot expect people to care about your business if you don’t care about them.”

He continued, “If I could clone my partners, I would! Since that is not possible, the next best thing is to develop the next generation of leaders, so that they can carry on after I am gone. That is of course, if we continue to make our firm relevant to the needs of our clients, to be ahead of them so we can lead them to a better place, so that there is a reason for Yusarn Audrey to exist.”

Audrey, Yu Sarn’s comrade in the business, echoes his sentiments: “The family of ‘Yusarn Audrey’ - my partners, associates and staff at Yusarn Audrey are among the most amazing people I know.”

“Hardworking, smart and always willing to go the extra mile, they share the common values of the firm of building and protecting the dreams of our clients. We have a championship team for which I feel very blessed,” she added.

With a career in law spanning more than two decades, Audrey’s experience in this field is nothing short of stellar. As a Registered Patent Agent in Singapore as well as an enrolled Solicitor of England and Wales, Audrey’s area of practice is rooted in intellectual property management - from trademark advice to filing patent applications to franchising and copyright advice. As due recognition for her contributions to the field of IP, Audrey is the only practicing lawyer in Singapore to be listed in 2012’s IAM 300 World’s Leading IP Strategists - which was just announced last month - for the fourth year running.

Although local companies have excellent IP assets, many lie dormant and unused because the companies do not know how to make use of them. In the end, these potentially profitable business elements

never get translated into revenue, nor is the true value of those IP assets ever fully realised. Not content with using the traditional approach of looking at IP from just a purely legal perspective, Audrey approaches the subject matter from a holistic standpoint, helping companies - and even governments - to effectively use IP as an economic tool for growth.

“It is an incredible feeling to see my clients succeed in their endeavours, whether to grow in a sustainable way or to soar beyond the shores of Singapore and make their mark as regional and global companies,” Audrey maintains, “It gives me great pride to know I have in some way contributed to that by developing strategies for them that don’t just pay lip service to IP, but really work because they are tailored to what the client needs.”

With the valuable lessons learned from being entrepreneurs themselves coupled with a holistic view of intellectual property, Yu Sarn and Audrey fully comprehend the arduous entrepreneurial journey, allowing them to truly ignite possibilities.