

Straits Times among top 10 brands in S'pore

THE Straits Times has been named as one of Singapore's top 10 favourite brands, alongside other household names such as StarHub, NTUC FairPrice and SingTel.

The list, based on an Internet survey commissioned by independent brand arbiter Superbrands, polled 1,500 consumers here between the ages of 18 and 55.

The survey - run in January and February and conducted in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong by research firm Nielsen - asked consumers to identify their favourite brands across 93 categories. Brand-name responses were unprompted and more than 500 favourite brands were identified in each economy.

The result: Toothpaste brand Colgate and Internet search engine Google took the top two spots in Singapore, followed by home-grown cable TV and telecommunications service provider StarHub.

Local cooperative supermarket chain FairPrice came in fourth. This was followed by telco SingTel in sixth place and The Straits Times in eighth.

"It is interesting to note the relative positions of brands that compete within the same category such as Google versus Yahoo, and StarHub versus SingTel," said the chief executive of Superbrands Singapore, Mr Mark Pointer.

He added: "The survey was conducted just over a month ago and hence represents a very current finger on the pulse of Singapore consumers and their

predisposition towards brands and brand choice."

More Singaporeans seem to be opting to go local compared to other nationalities: Here, four local brands clinched top 10 placings. In Hong Kong, however, only two local brands were placed - convenience store chain Circle K and television network TVB. In Malaysia, only bread maker Gardenia made the cut.

The results do not come as a surprise, said Singapore Polytechnic School of Business lecturer Sarah Lim, who pointed out that the brands in the list enjoy market dominance here.

"Over time, items like The Straits Times have become a lifestyle product," she said. "They are ubiquitous, and the name of these brands is the first thing that comes to mind."

Apart from making the top 10 list, two brands - FairPrice and The Straits Times - also dominated their categories by receiving more than double the number of votes from consumers than their

next nearest competitor.

This is the first time the annual survey has been conducted in Singapore.

"We think the results will help encourage brands and focus people's attention on what consumers are currently thinking about brands," said Mr Pointer.

"Given the current economic situation, it is important that companies continue to focus their brands to retain customer loyalty."

Favourites at home

1. Colgate
2. Google
3. StarHub
4. NTUC FairPrice
5. Sony
6. SingTel
7. Yahoo
8. The Straits Times
9. 7-Eleven
10. Nippon Paint

■ local brand

ENJOYING MARKET DOMINANCE

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