

Sauce firm gets help for online push to spice up business

It will launch a website thanks to an initiative by Nanyang Poly to help SMEs go digital

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Home-grown chilli sauce company Sim Soon Heng Cooking (SSH) is going back to its roots, by going online.

The founders of the business began 40 years ago by knocking on doors to hand-deliver homemade chilli sauce to customers.

The small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) now wants to again reach out to individual consumers, digitally this time.

A collaboration with eight third-year Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) students has led to the company's first website, through

which it will retail its products.

Managing director David Sim, 49, has grown his humble family business into a full-fledged enterprise that manufactures seven types of traditional sauces, and distributes them to restaurants, school canteens and hawker stalls.

To keep pace with a rapidly changing market, he approached the polytechnic's Customer Experience and Analytics Centre (CEAC) to explore new methods to attract customers.

The students created the SSH website, which will launch next month, plus Instagram and Facebook pages, as part of a six-month ongoing collaboration with SSH.

The CEAC, an initiative by NYP's School of Business Management, aims to help SMEs digitise their businesses through online strategies while giving students hands-on industry skills.

This year, about 300 NYP students will be assigned to the centre.

The centre, which will officially open on Monday, will include data analytics to better help companies appeal to a broader market.

SSH is the first company to collaborate with the CEAC but the centre is also working with three other clients. For instance, students will create engaging infographics targeted at millennials for the Skool of Happiness, which provides personal development programmes.

CEAC manager Evon Lew, who is in her mid-40s, said: "We feel that working with SMEs like SSH prepares students for projects that involve digital engagement."

SSH's website will feature an e-catalogue and recipes that incorporate the company's sauces.

After its launch, the students will analyse customer behaviour and run the company's social media accounts.

Business management student Fakhruy Shakirin Azahar, 23, who described his involvement in the project as a valuable experience, said: "I hope the website will help SSH reach out to a wider audience so they can move to a B2C (business to consumer) situation and be known to the masses."

Mr Sim is optimistic about his company's first foray online and he hopes to explore the possibility of exporting his sauces to businesses abroad.

"NYP's help is so important in helping us to keep up. The website will allow us to cut cost with online orders, showcase our products and attract new consumers," he said.

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