

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award
Recognises 11 Outstanding Talents for their Creative ICT Solutions

Immigration Department, The Government of the HKSAR “When Technology meets Quality Service: Next Generation Smart Identity Card System” won Gold Award in Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise Stream

28 October 2020, Hong Kong – The Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award presentation ceremony was successfully held today, with 11 outstanding winners being recognised for developing innovative and cost-effective solutions that serve the needs of private and public enterprises. “When Technology meets Quality Service: Next Generation Smart Identity Card System”, developed by Immigration Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, has won “Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) Gold Award”. The Grand Award of this award category will be announced in November, 2020.

This marks the 14 consecutive years since Hong Kong Computer Society (HKCS) has been appointed by OGCIO as the Leading Organisation of the ‘Smart Business Award’. As the Leading Organiser of this award category, HKCS has played a pivotal role in appraising award entrants for their ability to deploy information technologies for day-to-day ‘smart’ business application.

Dr. Ted Suen MH, President of the HKCS expresses his hearty congratulations to all winners. “On behalf of HKCS, I would like to congratulate those award winners for their hard-earned success. They must undergo strict assessment, judgment and inspection, and outperform many other standing creative products. I believe those winners of this year will continue to make substantial contribution to the ICT industry development in the future.”

The Smart Business Award category with three different streams: Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise, Big Data and Open Data Applications and Solution for SME. There are 11 winners being selected.

There are two Gold Award winners of “Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise). “When Technology meets Quality Service: Next Generation Smart Identity Card System” developed by Immigration Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, one of the Gold Award winners, was introduced in November 2018. The system has been making good use of information technology at every point of contact with residents, from appointment booking, registration to collection, so that residents can enjoy a quality public services. Residents only need to take a few simple steps to make appointments and fill application forms in advance through the newly launched mobile application. In addition, residents can easily and efficiently complete the Hong Kong Identity Card (HKIC) replacement process by using the Registration Kiosks and the Self-service Collection Kiosks. To cater to the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities residing in residential care homes (RCHs) and spare them the trouble of visiting our replacement centres for HKIC replacement, the Immigration Department has also developed a secure and reliable mobile registration system so that they can enjoy the one-stop services at their RCHs.

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Judging Panel appreciated that this 2nd generation Smart Identity Card system is an important infrastructure service supporting identity management functions for all the residents in Hong Kong, in addition to providing great convenience in border crossing with high level of security and efficiency. By design, this new ID card system can support other public services where the identities of the residents require electronic verification. Comparing with the first generation Smart Identity Card, the new 2nd generation cards support contactless reading. This feature further reduces the time required for going through the self-serve gates at border control points.

List of winners for “Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award”

Entry	Organisation	Award
Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) Award		
When Technology meets Quality Service : Next Generation Smart Identity Card System	Immigration Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Gold Award
InfoTalk-Speaker: Multilingual Text-to-Speech	InfoTalk Corporation Ltd.	Gold Award
Multifunctional Robot	Airport Authority Hong Kong / Teksbotics (Hong Kong) Ltd.	Silver Award
Virtual-Reality based Lift Maintenance Simulator (VR-LMS)	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) / The Lift & Escalator Contractors Association (LECA) / Vocational Training Council (VTC)	Certificate of Merit
Negawatt BuildingOS – Make Your Building Smart Together	Negawatt Utility Ltd.	Certificate of Merit
Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Big Data and Open Data Applications) Award		
Neuron Smart Building Digital Platform - Empowering Building Sustainability and Wellbeing through AI & Digital Technology	Arup	Gold Award
TradeMonday, an AI Powered Retail Experimental Platform – The Power of Retail Big Data Intelligence for Instant Business Strategy Simulation	TradeMonday Ltd.	Silver Award
Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for SME) Award		
e+Pay	eft Payments (Asia) Ltd.	Gold Award
EVI Garten (Website/I.O.S/ Android)	EVI Services Ltd.	Silver Award
PA Pay Solutions	Payment Asia Services Ltd.	Bronze Award
GrowthSpot	Zero to One Greater China Ltd.	Certificate of Merit

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The other Gold Award of Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) was won by “InfoTalk-Speaker: Multilingual Text-to-Speech” of InfoTalk Corporation Ltd. Powered by artificial intelligence, machine learning, speech science, and Cantonese phonetics and linguistics, the solution reached a tipping point making computers and robots sound human.

InfoTalk-Speaker is available in multiple languages, including Cantonese, Putonghua, and English. Thanks to AI and machine learning, words that can be spoken in different ways are spoken with the correct pronunciation for the context. It knows special Cantonese characters not found in most dictionaries. It speaks Cantonese and Putonghua with tonal precision that only native speakers of the languages can do. It articulates English with prosodic patterns that make it sound like a native human speaker. It is ideal for a variety of voice and language solutions, such as voicebots, virtual assistants, talking robots, e-books, intelligent IVR systems, public announcements and so on.

The Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Big Data and Open Data Applications) Gold Award went to “Neuron Smart Building Digital Platform - Empowering Building Sustainability and Wellbeing through AI & Digital Technology” of Arup. Integrating Arup’s domain expertise in the building industry with a digital mindset and the power of artificial intelligence (AI), Arup developed Neuron, a first ever platform in Hong Kong integrated ‘ BIM (Building Information Modelling), Internet of Things (IoT) and Big Data Analytics, for smart buildings that empowers data-driven energy management and serves as the ‘ digital brain’ for buildings to consolidate and connect data from disparate devices to provide customised insight and machine-learning models for energy monitoring and optimisation.

The winner of Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for SME) Gold Award was eft Payments (Asia) Ltd. It’s “e+Pay” integrated payment service accepts the most electronic payment platforms in Hong Kong with a network that includes all major credit cards, Octopus, QR-Code payments and so on in just one terminal, representing a real breakthrough in retail technology. e+Pay also provides value-added services such as Electronic Receipt Management (ERM) and Discount Offer Management as well as e+Coupon, a dynamic coupon platform providing an integrated membership, promotion and communications channel that helps merchants create coupon-based marketing campaigns and increase revenue.

Dr. Gabriel Leung, Chairperson of the Organising Committee of HKICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award said, “The Hong Kong ICT Awards has been running for over ten years, backed by enthusiastic support from the government, industry associations, professional bodies and the academia. It is wonderful to see the award going from strength to strength over the years, as can be witnessed from the high caliber of entries we have received this year, even though we have faced some difficulties under the COVID-19 pandemic.”

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Mrs. Carrie Yau, GBS, JP, Executive Director of Vocational Training Council as well as the Chairperson of the Judging Panel of HKICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award said, “We are extremely pleased to see such strong participation in the Awards this year, especially in the Smart Business Award category. Finally, 11 winners were selected based on their success in meeting five judging criteria, including creativity, functionality, market potential, impact and quality.”

Winners in this year’s Hong Kong ICT Awards will undergo further assessment by HKCS for nomination into the Asia Pacific Information and Communication Technology Alliances (APICTA) Awards, and represent Hong Kong in competing against other Asian economies.

As the host of this acclaimed award for over a decade, Dr. Ted Suen, MH believes that the HKICT Awards play an important role in encouraging local ICT innovations that enhance business efficiency and productivity, ultimately boosting the city’s competitiveness.

However, Dr. Ted Suen, MH emphasises that achieving these objectives will require the continued collaborative efforts of industry, academia and government. “Looking ahead, I believe that our joint efforts will continue to be crucial for encouraging participation on a territory-wide level, and to provide more opportunities for Hong Kong ICT talents to showcase their prowess on the international stage.”

For the product summaries of Gold Award winners, please refer to the accompanying Appendix.

About “Hong Kong ICT Awards: Smart Business Award”

The Hong Kong ICT Awards were established in 2006 with the collaborative efforts of the industry, academia and Government. Steered by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), and organised by Hong Kong ICT industry associations and professional bodies, the Awards aims at building a locally espoused and internationally acclaimed brand of ICT awards.

The “Hong Kong ICT Awards: Smart Business Award” (formerly known as “IT Excellence Awards”) was first established in 1998 by Hong Kong Computer Society, and has become a well-recognised award in Hong Kong. This annual event has become a great platform for encouraging the use of ICT, to stimulate innovation and competitiveness in the ICT industry and to raise public awareness of ICT application development.

For more details about the Award, please visit <http://www.hkcs.org.hk/ictawards>

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About the Hong Kong Computer Society (HKCS)

Founded in 1970, the Hong Kong Computer Society (HKCS) is a recognised non-profit professional organisation focused on developing Hong Kong's Information Technology (IT) profession and industry. Their members come from a broad spectrum of Hong Kong's IT community, from corporations to like-minded individuals, all coming together to raise the profile and standards of the IT profession and industry. As a well-established IT professional body, the Society is committed to professional and industry development as well as community services to ensure the IT sector continues to make a positive impact on peoples' lives with three main goals, namely, 1) talent cultivation and professional development, 2) industry development and collaboration, and 3) the effective use of IT in our community.

For more details, please visit <http://www.hkcs.org.hk>.

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Appendix:
Product Summaries of “Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business Award”
Gold Award Winners

Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) Gold Award

Immigration Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
When Technology meets Quality Service : Next Generation Smart Identity Card System

The Hong Kong Identity Card (HKIC), as an essential proof of identity of all Hong Kong Residents, is inseparable from our everyday lives. To continue issuing highly secure new smart HKICs and carry out the four-year Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise, the Immigration Department (ImmD) introduced in November 2018 the Next Generation Smart Identity Card System, which makes good use of information technology at every point of contact with residents, from appointment booking, registration to collection of HKICs, so that residents can enjoy our quality public services. For instance, residents only need to take a few simple steps to make appointments and fill application forms in advance through the newly launched mobile application. In addition, residents can easily and efficiently complete the HKIC replacement process by using the Self-service Registration Kiosks and the Self-service Collection Kiosks. To cater to the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities residing in residential care homes (RCHs) and spare them the trouble of visiting our replacement centres for HKIC replacement, the ImmD has also developed a secure and reliable mobile registration system so that they can enjoy our one-stop services at their RCHs.

Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) Gold Award

InfoTalk Corporation Ltd.

InfoTalk-Speaker: Multilingual Text-to-Speech

InfoTalk-Speaker 10.0 is the result of 20+ years of R&D in Hong Kong. Released in 2020, it leapfrogs text-to-speech technology forward to a new frontier, enabling computers, robots, and any automated systems to speak in a natural human-like voice. It speaks languages interchangeably in the very same voice, much like Hong Kong people mixing Cantonese and English words as they speak. Powered by artificial intelligence, machine learning, speech science, and Cantonese phonetics and linguistics, InfoTalk-Speaker 10.0 obsoletes all text-to-speech products that sound mechanic and monotonic. After decades of R&D, it finally reaches a tipping point making computers and robots sound human. Its naturalness gives a new horizon to uncharted waters of applications.

InfoTalk-Speaker is available in multiple languages, including Cantonese, Putonghua, and English. Thanks to AI and machine learning, words that can be spoken in different ways are spoken with the correct pronunciation for the context. It knows special Cantonese characters not found in most dictionaries. It speaks Cantonese and Putonghua with tonal precision that only native speakers of the languages can do. It articulates English with prosodic patterns that make it sound like a native human speaker. More languages will be released soon.

Leading organisations use InfoTalk-Speaker for mission-critical applications. It is ideal for a variety of voice and language solutions, such as AI chatbots, voicebots, virtual assistants, virtual receptionists, virtual kiosks, talking robots, e-books, intelligent IVR systems, and public announcements in a wide range of industries, including telecommunications, finance, banking, transportation, betting, entertainment, government, real estate, logistics, utilities, travel, and tourism.

InfoTalk-Speaker is one of the core products in the award-winning InfoTalk-RSVP family: (1) InfoTalk-Recognizer for speech-to-text; (2) InfoTalk-Speaker for text-to-speech; (3) InfoTalk-Vbrowser for intelligent IVR; and (4) InfoTalk-Processor for natural language processing. Depending on the application, InfoTalk-Speaker can be deployed with or without other InfoTalk-RSVP products.

**Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Big Data and Open Data Applications)
Gold Award**

Arup

Neuron Smart Building Digital Platform - Empowering Building Sustainability and Wellbeing through AI & Digital Technology

Arup's Neuron Smart Building Digital Platform aims to overcome constraints brought by existing building automation and energy management systems, which focus mainly on monitoring system health and providing alarm capabilities. Integrating Arup's domain expertise in the building industry with a digital mindset and the power of artificial intelligence (AI), we developed Neuron, an integrated 'BIM (Building Information Modelling) + Internet of Things (IoT) + Big Data Analytics' platform for smart buildings that empowers data-driven energy management and serves as the 'digital brain' for buildings to consolidate and connect data from disparate devices to provide customised insight and machine-learning models for energy monitoring and optimisation.

With no similar product or technology ever launched or available in the current market, this cloud-based centralised management console can fully integrate with the existing Building Management System as well as various data sources generated from the building, enabling prompt and adaptive response to dynamic environment, helping users to effectively reinforce productivity of building facility, reduce operation cost and achieve sustainable development.

Neuron is a total solution taking the concept of smart buildings to a new level and changing the way buildings are designed, constructed, managed, operated and maintained. This spearheading innovation does not only help buildings achieve energy savings, but also create a better indoor environment that focuses on the health and wellbeing of the occupants.

Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020: Smart Business (Solution for SME) Gold Award

eft Payments (Asia) Ltd.

e+Pay

eft Payments (Asia) Ltd (eftPay) is a leading electronic payment services provider in Hong Kong positioned right at the forefront of the e-payment industry and with unique insights into how to design ideal payment solutions. With years of experience in the industry, eftPay clearly understands what merchants need to succeed and the headaches they face as they go about their business each day. “e+Pay” is the result of these insights, taking eftPay’s core integrated payment service and expanding on it with a sophisticated back-end system that boasts multiple value-added features and allows for the future development of innovative new offerings.

Our core integrated payment service accepts the most electronic payment platforms in Hong Kong with a network that includes all major credit cards, Octopus, QR-Code payments, etc. We continue to add new components including overseas wallets to strengthen our network and open up more opportunities for consumers and merchants. All of this is provided in just one terminal, representing a real breakthrough in retail technology.

A comprehensive back-end system augments our core payment service. The back-end features such value-added services as Electronic Receipt Management (ERM) and Discount Offer Management, providing a convenient portal for merchants to monitor and control their business performance while reducing their manpower burden.

e+Pay also expands beyond the traditional scope of e-payment services offering paradigm - breaking products such as e+Coupon, a dynamic coupon platform providing an integrated membership, promotion and communications channel that helps merchants create coupon-based marketing campaigns and increase revenue.

“e+Pay” is, in short, a solution that offers fast, reliable, stable and convenient transactions and brings an increasing number of benefits to the e-payment ecosystem. By providing more options to retailers and customers, e+Pay creates more win-win opportunities in the retail ecosystem.

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