

**Message from Hong Kong Brand Development Council Chairman
Mr Simon Wong, BBS, JP**

The world today is undergoing unprecedented, epochal changes. With revolutionary technologies advancing in leaps and bounds, the New Economy is growing at full speed. While new industrial ecologies and new ideas are rapidly evolving, they have engineered “paradigm shifts” in business modalities and people’s ways of living. This is an era of opportunities and vitality, of changes and challenges.

Hong Kong industries have always been famed for their versatility, flexibility and progressiveness. They are quick to adapt to and ride on the trends, while having a deep understanding of the importance of a solid foundation. Many Hong Kong enterprises see this vibrant new era as a golden opportunity to “make the brand”; they make new investments in brand development, introduce new strategies, or tap into new markets and fields to explore new “blue oceans” for their business. They respond to the changing environment and its volatility through brand-building; and leverage on brand strategies to seize the high ground of future development and hone exceptional “brand competitiveness”, unveiling a dynamic “New Era of Brands” for Hong Kong.

The development of Hong Kong brands has been thriving with incredible diversity and momentum in recent years. The industry has constantly innovated the modus operandi of brand development and management, which has set off new trends like channel diversification into multiple fields, digitalisation of operation, and localisation of brand image.

As for brand marketing, many Hong Kong enterprises are pressing ahead with the expansion of sales networks into different regions, particularly with a view to extending the influence of “Hong Kong brands” across Mainland China and even embarking on the One Belt One Road countries. Meanwhile, they are actively increasing their business presence on e-commerce platforms and mobile networks. By developing cross-field, omni-channel distribution frameworks, engaging consumers with comprehensive touch points, and matching them with the “right” products, personalised services and effective marketing, these enterprises have set out to create unique brand experience and deliver values for customers. In terms of brand operation, more and more Hong Kong companies are adopting cutting-edge technology and sophisticated management. Through revamping work flows, streamlining the operation, and utilising new media, big data and smart technology, they have achieved integration of different components including online and offline, frontline and back office, customer service interface and support system, so as to promote the digital transformation of business and the enterprises per se.

As for brand culture, “Hong Kong elements” have become for many local companies a “selling point” of their marketing strategies and a “highlight” of brands’ sentimental values. These companies not only aptly incorporate the City’s landmark of Victoria Harbour, its customs and culture, as well as original ideas of local designers into the products, services and brand images; but also instill the “Under the Lion Rock” sentiment and “Hong Kong Spirit” into the philosophy of brand development, weaving them into company culture and daily operation. With the stimulus from the initiative of “Reindustrialisation of Hong Kong”, a growing number of manufacturers engaged in traditional industries are actively planning to expand scale of business in Hong Kong and speed up technological upgrading; and it is even encouraging to note that a new generation of emerging “brand entrepreneurs” have become enthusiastic advocates for “Smart Manufacturing” in Hong Kong. “Made in Hong Kong” is shining new and brilliant lights, as it strengthens the foundation of “Hong Kong Brands” and provides tremendous momentum for the “re-launch” of local manufacturing industry.

Jointly organised by the Hong Kong Brand Development Council and the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong, the “Brand Awards” are the pioneers in brand accreditation with long history, and they have always been regarded as an important “leading indicator” and “parade ground” for the latest development of Hong Kong brands. Thanks to the efforts of the industries and the support from the community, the 2017 Brand Awards has been a remarkable success as always. The 44 new laureates are role models for the industries, representing the latest trends and highest standards of Hong Kong brand development. Among the winners, there are century-old household names who have witnessed the City’s changes along with our citizens, industry pioneers who have received accolades overseas and made Hong Kong proud, trendsetters riding the wave of New Economy, as well as up-and-coming stars that have burst onto the scene with boundless creativity and innovative spirit.

Like the some 360 predecessors over the past years, this year’s winners are outstanding builders and staunch guardians of “Hong Kong Brands”, the “true heroes” who foster the new era of Hong Kong brands. They have added new meaning to the “Hong Kong Spirit”; their success stories especially the incessant endeavour to create value have encapsulated the message of “branding to win”, offering encouragement and inspirations for countless companies that are striding forward through challenging times.

I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate and applaud winners of the 2017 Brand Awards. On behalf of the organisers, I would like to thank Financial Secretary the Honourable Paul Chan, officiating guest of the Awards Presentation Ceremony. I also wish to extend my gratitude to the government departments and the various parties which have offered tremendous support to the Awards. They include

Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Mr Philip Yung, Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Dr Bernard Chan, Director-General of Trade and Industry Ms Salina Yan, and Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Miss Erica Ng; Judging Panelists; the Official Honorary Auditor-cum-Event Sponsor KPMG; and the Trophy Sponsor Lukfook Jewellery; media that have assisted in promoting the Awards; and other organisations and individuals who have participated in and supported today's event.

Lastly, let us offer our heartfelt congratulations again to the winners!