REWARDING BPOs

Accenture, Sitel are big winners at recent ICT Awards

ACCENTURE walked away as the country's business-process outsourcing (BPO) Employer of the Year at the recent International Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Awards-Manila.

Organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CanCham) in partnership with Business Processing Association of the Philippines, the International ICT Awards recognizes outstanding performance and contributions by organizations and individuals within the ICT community in the Philippines and Asia-Pacific region. The affair was attended by over 400 senior-level executives and professionals.

"This is our own way of recognizing outstanding companies and individuals, who have played a strong role for the Philippines' feat of attaining its status as the premier destination of choice among the world's global companies," 2008 International ICT Awards chairman Richard Mills told the BusinessMirror in an interview. "We're very glad this [the International ICT Awards] had happened the way we expected it to be, a great success."

The awards are open to local- and foreign-owned firms based in the Philippines actively providing BPO services to offshore client organizations.

Eight winners were cited for their outstanding performance in advancing the country's image globally.

Apart from Accenture, other winners included Sitel Philippines Corp., which bagged the BPO Company of the Year; and ICT Marketing Services, which was named Fastest-Growing BPO Company of the Year.

Netsuite (Philippines) Inc. and Pointwest Technologies Corp. bagged the Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year, foreign-owned and locally owned, respectively.

Best New BPO Locator of the Year went to Logica (Philippines) Inc., while Hinduja TMT Ltd. Philippines was cited as the Most Innovative BPO Company of the Year.

Mitch Locsin, executive director of Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPA/P), was named ICT Individual Contributor of the Year, for his involvement in leading, promoting, facilitating or assisting companies in the BPO sector.

Accenture's success

The winning companies were judged on their growth for 2007; the number of new people they hired; the kind of work they did; the kind of management process they implemented; and their participation in sustainable corporate social responsibility programs.

"We attribute the success of the Accenture delivery centers in the Philippines to the talented work force that comprises our organization," Beth Lui, country managing director of Accenture in the Philippines, said in a statement.

"Our employees— about 15,000 in the Philippines—are Accenture's greatest asset. We relentlessly strive to help our people grow and hone their talents by providing them with continuous training and development programs, and by promoting an inclusive culture that respects their cultures, beliefs, skills and personal achievements."

With eight facilities in Manila and Cebu, Accenture provides capabilities from systems integration to infrastructure and applications outsourcing, and data and voice BPO. In fiscal year 2007, the company invested $776 million in training its global work force. This included organizational, professional development and projects-based training.

Accenture also has an array of employee clubs and organizations that address the diverse interests of their employees.

"The primary success factors for Accenture's selection as BPO Company Employer of the Year are our high employee engagement rate, which measures employees' overall satisfaction in company practices; our competitive benefits and compensation package; the work our professionals do; opportunities for advancement; employee quality of life; and our lower-than-average attrition rate," said Ramona Velasco, an Accenture senior executive and the company's human resources lead, in the Philippines in the same statement.

Accenture Working Moms Organization, for example, helps working mothers achieve work-life balance through projects like a day-care center, nursing rooms, workshops on family and parenting, while Friends, Lesbians and Gays enlightens employees about gender issues. Additionally, through the Accenture Caring for Tomorrow program, the company encourages corporate citizenship among employees by giving them the opportunity to participate in local community initiatives, such as environment cleanup activities, literacy programs for less-fortunate children and livelihood projects.

Accenture also supports and provides amenities for special interest clubs in languages, sports, the arts and health and wellness, among others.

Helps grow business

Victory at the International ICT Awards makes a good business sense, according to Mills, who is also the chairman of Chalre Associates.

"For the fact that they were adjudged by independent judges as the big winners of each category, that means they're not just telling themselves how great they are. They have the industry telling them how well they've done in the last years," he said. "It's good not only to building a strong team for their companies, but also helps their businesses get new clients abroad."

The International ICT Awards was created shortly after CanCham established an ICT committee in the Philippines in early 2005.

Leveraging of the popularity of the ICT Leaders Forum—a regular monthly event of the committee—with support of the BPA/P and interest from all organizations in the ICT sector, the first edition of the International ICT Awards was held in 2007, and now has become an annual event.

Currently on its second year, the 2008 International ICT Awards has continued to push branding of the Philippines as the world's BPO destination of choice for multinational companies and promote the BPO opportunities to Filipino talents.

Looking forward to sustain the country's status as the premier destination of choice among the world's global companies, CanCham executive director Sean Georget stressed that the International ICT Awards "is here to support the success of the industry and I look at the brighter future for the Philippines and the Filipino people and further growth in the BPO sector." ***Roderick L. Abad***

CHANGING FACE OF BPOs

These days, it's not just call centers

THE country's business-process outsourcing (BPO) industry is estimated to be growing at a rate of 40 percent annually—with employment generation getting close to about 300,000 from almost zero five years or so ago.

And along with this growth, the profile of BPO works has also been changing.

Richard Mills, 2008 International ICT Awards chairman, noted that while the local BPO sector has been lorded over by US companies, newer multinationals are now coming in from other countries like Australia, Singapore, Canada, the United Kingdom and other European nations.

He added there is also an obvious change in the subsectors comprising the business-outsourcing industry, which was initially dominated by IT and call centers.

"New entrants are engaged in higher value of work like accounting, human resource, engineering, map making, media design, procurement, insurance claims, mortgage processing and legal related works, among others," Mills said.

"The breadth of Filipinos' skills in these areas with high value type of work has made the Philippines become the premier destination for BPO in the world, eclipsing even India."

Mills attributed this success to "excellent English communication skills of the Filipinos, their worldly outlook to understand foreign cultures and strong customer service mindset."

"Filipinos are doing their works [BPO-related] not just in world-class standards, but better than the world's standard," he said. ***Roderick L. Abad***

CANADIAN Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CanCham) executive director Sean Georget (right) poses with Cathy Ileto (left) of Business Processing Association of the Philippines and Grace Ventosa (middle) of CanCham during the 2008 International ICT Awards Gala Night in Renaissance Hotel, Makati City.

RICHARD MILLS, chairman of 2008 International ICT Awards and Chalre Associates, says his piece prior to the announcement of this year's winners of the International ICT Awards.

JAMES DANTOW (right), general manager and vice president of WWW Support Netsuite (Philippines) Inc., receives the trophy for Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Foreign Owned award from David Swales (left), senior vice president-business banking of HSBC.

POINTWEST Technologies Corp. president Maria Cristina Coronel (right) gets the Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Locally Owned trophy from EMEA of Touchstar director Fred Stacey (left).

PLDT Rededicates Future Strategy at 2nd Annual International ICT Awards

THE 2nd Annual International ICT Awards recognized organizations and individuals who contributed the most to put the Philippines and Filipinos at the top of mind of global business leaders. PLDT SVP and Customer Sales and Marketing Group head, Eric R. Alberto, said that these achievements "captured the attention of world-renowned organizations which have showered us with praises and accolades in 2007" and also reaffirmed PLDT's shared vision with the industry of "10 by 10 by 10 Road map," namely, achieving 10 percent of world market share through $10 billion in two years, or by 2010. PLDT's targeted CAPEX of over P25 billion for 2008 includes the upgrade of its fixed-line network into Next-Generation (NGN) technology, a new cable system and a landing station for unsurpassed bandwidth quite relevant to BPOs, broadened wireless coverage and wireless-broadband capabilities, and growing PLDT's ICT businesses with enhanced abilities to deliver managed services, content and solutions over and above current access platforms.

Shown in photo above are the winners of the International ICT Awards for 2008: Mitch Locsin of BPA/P for ICT Contributor of the Year-Private Sector; Dan Reyes of Sitel for BPO Company of the Year; Marie Lee Rodriguez of Logica (Philippines) Inc. for Best New BPO Locator of the Year; Maria Cristina Coronel of Pointwest Technologies for Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Locally Owned; John Langford of ICT Marketing Services for Fastest-Growing BPO Company of the Year; Beth Lui of Accenture for BPO Employer of the Year; Vida Arciaga of Hinduja TMT Ltd. for Most Innovative PO Company of the Year; James Dantow of WWW Support Netsuite for Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Foreign Owned; and PLDT SVP and Customer Sales and Marketing Group head, Eric Alberto.

LOGICA (Philippines) Inc. country director Neil Elias (left) holds the trophy for Best New BPO Locator of the Year award as Berma Santiago (right), director-property/facilities of Colliers Philippines, looks on.

PLDT Customer Sales & Marketing Group senior vice president and head Eric Alberto (left) hands over the BPO Company of the Year trophy to Sitel Philippines Corp. president Dan Reyes (right).

ACCENTURE Inc. country managing director Beth G. Lui (right) is all smiles while holding the trophy of BPO Employer of the Year award from Globe's enterprise industry head Rain Reyes (left).

NORTEL Philippines managing director Antonio Pio de Roda (left) presents the Fastest-Growing BPO Company of the Year trophy to John Langford (right), executive vice president for Philippine operation of ICT Marketing Services.

MITCH LOCSIN of Logica Philippines (right) holds the trophy for winning the ICT Individual Contributor of the Year Award. With him is Oscar Sanez (left), chief executive officer of Business Processing Association of the Philippines.

VIDA ARCIAGA (left), human resources head of Hinduja TMT Ltd. Philippines, shakes hand while receiving the trophy for Most Innovative Company of the Year category from Gerry Clark (left), regional head of TPI for South East Asia.

AWARDS HISTORY

IN EARLY 2005, THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (CCCP) ESTABLISHED AN ICT (INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY) COMMITTEE, WHICH CREATED A REGULAR MONTHLY EVENT, THE ICT LEADERS FORUM, WHICH IS AIMED AT BRINGING TOGETHER SENIOR DECISION-MAKERS IN THE ICT SECTOR TO LISTEN TO INDUSTRY LEADERS AND TO PROVIDE PARTICIPANTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NETWORKING AND DISCUSSION.

THE MONTHLY MEETING HAS BECOME AN IMPORTANT EVENT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, ATTRACTING WELL OVER 100 KEY INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS FROM THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. IT HAS ALSO RECEIVED STRONG MEDIA COVERAGE PROVIDED BY LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS.

LEVERAGING OF THE SUCCESS OF THIS EVENT WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE BUSINESS PROCESSING ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND INTEREST FROM ALL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ICT SECTOR, THE CCCP ORGANIZED THE INTERNATIONAL ICT AWARDS NIGHT 2007.

SIMILAR TO THE ICT LEADERS FORUM, IT SUCCESSFULLY ATTRACTED OVER 350 GUESTS AND WAS ARGUABLY THE HIGHLIGHT EVENT FEATURING THE ICT SECTOR FOR THE YEAR.

THE INTERNATIONAL ICT AWARDS, WHICH HAS BECOME AN ANNUAL EVENT, FORCEFULLY PROMOTES:

- BRANDING THE PHILIPPINES AS THE WORLD'S BPO DESTINATION OF CHOICE FOR MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES;
- PROMOTING THE BPO OPPORTUNITY TO FILIPINOS AND WHY THEY NEED TO PREPARE THEMSELVES AND THEIR COUNTRY FOR WHAT MIGHT BE THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY THEY WILL SEE IN THEIR ENTIRE CAREERS.

AND THE WINNERS ARE

SITEL PHILIPPINES CORP.
BPO Company of the Year

ACCENTURE INC.
BPO Employer of the Year

MITCH LOCSIN
Logica Philippines
ICT Individual Contributor of the Year

ICT MARKETING SERVICES INC.
Fastest-Growing BPO Company of the Year

HINDUJA TMT LTD. PHILIPPINES
Most Innovative Company of the Year

POINTWEST TECHNOLOGIES CORP.
Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Local Owned

NETSUITE PHILIPPINES, INC.
Best Midsized BPO Company of the Year-Foreign Owned

LOGICA (PHILIPPINES) INC.
Best New BPO Locator of the Year