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Rohde & Schwarz Announces Engineering Case Study Competition 2009

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Secure communications expert Rohde & Schwarz will be holding its 2nd Engineering Case Study Competition in its Asian Headquarters in Singapore on May 18 and 20, 2009, where 50 students from the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will test their know-how in optimizing a radio communications system for Air Traffic Control (ATC).

The event is an extension of a competition that Rohde & Schwarz successfully organizes throughout Germany, now on its sixth year. The winning teams from NUS and NTU will be awarded with a trip to the Rohde & Schwarz headquarters in Munich, Germany, wherein they will compete against their university counterparts from 14 German universities in the finals on June 25 and 26, 2009.

The case study competition offers students in engineering programs, including electrical engineering, telecommunications engineering, applied computer science and communications engineering, an opportunity to expand their technical and practical knowledge. The participants have to examine a technical problem taken from a practical application and devise a solution.

This competition is unique as it challenges the participants to develop solutions in a single event, not in a longer-term project. Thus, emphasis is placed on the ability to make the right decisions in a narrow timeframe and take action quickly. The participants, consisting of three four-member teams selected by each of the two universities, will be taking part in the competition (NTU on May 18 and NUS on May 20).

“Ready for take-off! The future of air traffic control is in your hands”

With the theme “Ready for take-off! The future of air traffic control is in your hands,” the 2009 case study competition clearly expresses how much responsibility the often dull theory implies in practice: In the exercise scenario, the students will assume the role of a radio system designer. They will have to expand an existing ATC system without reducing its technical capabilities. This involves analyzing the system characteristics on the basis of known parameters, developing a proposal for expanding the system and optimizing the characteristics of the radio equipment included in the system—while taking into account the cost efficiency of the proposed solution.

“The competition helps students to assess, beyond pure technical expertise, their opportunities in professional life. It will focus on engineering design and creative thinking. It also brings to awareness on how engineering can contribute to our everyday lives,” explains Carolin Michalski, Head of Human Resources Marketing at Rohde & Schwarz. “In addition, the event improves know-how transfer and the network between the company and the universities, and it aligns with our effort in promoting the significance of engineering and engineering profession in society.”

Lim Boon Huat, Managing Director for Rohde & Schwarz Systems and Communications Asia, emphasizes that “the engineering profession is critically needed to boost Singapore’s long term economic development.”

The jury will consist of top Rohde & Schwarz engineers, representatives of the faculties at NUS and NTU, and

the Head of Air Traffic Control Planning, CAAS, Changi Airport. This combination ensures that technology experts, the academic community as well as the end user perspectives are represented.

Jury members include:

- Lim Boon Huat, Managing Director, Rohde & Schwarz Singapore
- Goh Soo Kiat, Head of Air Traffic Control Planning, CAAS, Changi Airport
- Prof. Lian Yong, Associate Professor, NUS
- Prof. Peter Chong, Assistant Professor, NTU
- Michael Behrendt, Director, Secure Communications for Air Force and ATC, Rohde & Schwarz
- Jens Kuehne, Head of R&D, Signal Analysis, Rohde & Schwarz
- Lee Say Hai, Director Engineering, Rohde & Schwarz Singapore
- Carolin Michalski, Head of Human Resources Marketing, Rohde & Schwarz

"As evident from last year competition and its success, the students from both universities displayed lots of enthusiasm, attention to detail and good analytical skills. The prospect of their participation in the finals in Germany is exciting for Rohde & Schwarz. Of course, we will also judge the 'soft skills' part of the team. Maybe, we will see some of our future engineers here," comments Lim.

He adds: "Rohde & Schwarz is committed to place Singapore as the hub for its presence in Asia and this competition provides us a platform to promote engineering in Singapore. This is part of our wide involvement with the academia which also includes awards for engineering in Temasek and Nanyang Polytechnic, ITE and our sponsorship of the wireless Test & Measurement Lab in Nanyang Polytechnic."

"This engineering competition provides our Engineering students with an excellent platform to be exposed to industry-based case studies and showcase their creativity in problem-solving scenarios. I believe the five NTU teams will benefit greatly from this competition. They will be able to leverage the networking opportunities and learn from the distinguished Rohde & Schwarz leadership team," notes Professor Pan Tso-Chien, NTU's Dean for College of Engineering.

"Air traffic control is right at the heart of aviation industry. It has been and will continue to play an ever-increasingly important role in a rapidly expanding market, in particular in the Asia-Pacific region. Many advanced technologies are used in air traffic control. The Rohde & Schwarz Engineering Competition provides an excellent platform for engineering students to understand how these technologies are used to solve real-world problems and turn their creative and innovative ideas into real applications," says Professor Lawrence Wong Wai Choong, Head of Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, NUS. "I am extremely pleased that this year's competition is well-received by our students and it has attracted a much larger number of participants compared to last year. I am confident that the friendships and collaborations fostered through this annual event will not only lead to new ideas and innovations but also have profound impact on the choice of career paths of the participants after graduation. We are grateful for the continued strong support from Rohde & Schwarz and look forward to further developing our partnership with Rohde & Schwarz in future."

Lim also mentions that Rohde & Schwarz is looking forward to helping graduates to find an employment by providing young graduates in getting working experience via an on-the-job placement scheme. The competition provides the opportunity to identify suitable final graduates for this program.

For more information on the competition, please visit www.engineering-competition.com.

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