

# Press Release



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## Marina Bay Sands raises the bar with in-house reality-TV show

*10-episode Service Challenge trains and inspires staff through fun and innovative approach*



**Singapore (12 December 2012)** – Marina Bay Sands has set a new benchmark with its first ever reality TV styled training tool, ***The Service Challenge***. Entirely conceptualised and produced in-house, the 10-episode programme was designed as a coaching device to educate team members about different service roles and standard operating procedures in the massive integrated resort.

Since its internal screening in February 2012, the captivating series has created much excitement and buzz among Marina Bay Sands team members. Supported by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the challenge incorporates competency-based learning elements and uses Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) as a benchmark for its training criteria.

“With a workforce of over 9,400 team members, Marina Bay Sands constantly strives to develop unique and measurable ways of teaching, training and engaging our people. By utilizing our in-house visual media team and TMTV internal screens, we are able to capture the interest of our team members and share important information in a very creative way. ***The Service Challenge*** has proven to be an effective tool. It engages our team members to learn through a fun and interactive approach; and our results show that the information presented is retained at a higher rate than when more traditional classroom methods are used. This series also allows team members to better appreciate the diversity, value and importance of every role here at Marina Bay Sands – all of which are integral in having an expansive property like ours function at its best. In a sense, the success of this series signals a new and exciting start for the future of our training initiatives,” said Mr. George Tanasijevich, President and Chief Executive Officer of Marina Bay Sands.

Involving 70 team members in auditions, and over 2,200 hours in production, **The Service Challenge** highlights a different service role in each episode, in areas such as valet, housekeeping, butler, security and concierge.

Three contestants undertake a challenge, or a job role that they had never performed before, in each episode. Their journey to success involves a one-day crash course, before getting their mettle tested and judged through a series of challenges. In true reality TV fashion, the final episode involved a property-wide voting exercise – about 4,000 Team Members cast their vote for their favourite contestants in a week-long exercise in September 2012. The three finalists who received the top votes then went on to compete in a final episode to be crowned as Marina Bay Sands' first champion of **The Service Challenge**. The winner will be announced in Marina Bay Sands' Annual Dinner & Dance on 20 December 2012.

The passion for service was demonstrated by Yasmin Zakaria, a contestant of the "Sampan Challenge"<sup>1</sup>. Yasmin, Captain of In-room Dining and Private Bar, went the extra mile to assist a 'guest'<sup>2</sup> when his mobile phone fell into the water during the ride. Her commitment to meet her guest's need was rewarded with a win in the challenge. Yasmin shared her key take-away from her experience, "An outstanding sampan team member has to be friendly to all guests – whether kids or elderly and we have to think on our feet, keep calm and know what and when to do the right thing. If you are calm, you are in a better position to reassure the guests that everything is all right."



Yasmin, Laurissa and another contestant being briefed on their roles



Yasmin and colleague using a net to scoop the phone out

"Training is often understood as providing information. But beyond information, it is also about motivation and empowerment, which are two key ingredients for any effective training tool. The concept of a reality-TV style training video was a perfect fit for our purpose as it is entertaining yet encourages cognitive learning. A lot of work was put in to producing this first-of-its-kind service training video, **The Service Challenge**," said Mr Daniel Yong, Director of Global Media team, whose Visual Media team was responsible for the entire conceptualisation, scripting, filming and production of the series.

<sup>1</sup> The Sampan at Marina Bay Sands offers our guests relaxing ride down the Canal, allowing guests to get up close and personal with the Rain Oculus. Contestants of this challenge have to ensure that guests are safe throughout the ride.

<sup>2</sup> A mystery guest who is part of the challenges during filming

Inculcating a service culture that is second to none, Marina Bay Sands has adopted unique ways to train its team members. It is a WSQ in-house Approved Training Organisation since 2009 and has given more than 30,000 WSQ certificates to its trained team members to date. Last year, its HR Learning & Development team collaborated closely with training experts to conduct a total of 1,322 courses, an 89 per cent increase from the number of courses in 2010. In 2011 alone, more than 2 million hours of training have been invested for its team members.

**Fast Facts on *The Service Challenge*:**

- 70 team members across different departments were auditioned for ***The Service Challenge***.
- More than 2,200 hours were contributed in the overall production of the reality-TV series.
- Nearly 4,000 Team Members, 45 per cent of Marina Bay Sands' full-time workforce, voted for their favourite contestants.
- A 31 per cent increase in Facebook members in its internal Magnificent Social Network group – where online voting was conducted – is seen. It is a testament to how ***The Service Challenge*** has achieved its aim of cultivating a closer bond among its employees.
- Most interesting episode to film: *Sampan Challenge*. The water element added some complexity to filming. It is the only episode in the series with three female contestants competing in a service role that is usually dominated by males.

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**About Marina Bay Sands Pte Ltd**

Marina Bay Sands is the leading business, leisure and entertainment destination in Asia. It features large and flexible convention and exhibition facilities, 2,560 hotel rooms and suites, the rooftop Sands SkyPark, the best shopping mall in Asia, world-class celebrity chef restaurants and an outdoor event plaza. Its two theatres showcase a range of leading entertainment performances including world-renowned Broadway shows. Completing the line-up of attractions is ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands which plays host to permanent and marquee exhibitions. For more information, please visit [www.marinabaysands.com](http://www.marinabaysands.com).

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