

Young Canberra Entrepreneur Scoops Runner-Up Prize at Global Student Entrepreneur Awards Regional Finals

Michael Lieu, 21 year old owner and operator of DriveSmart GPS Hire Australia, was announced as overall runner-up at the recent Australian Regional Finals of the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (GSEA) held at RMIT University. Hosted by Ernst and Young in conjunction with title sponsor Mercedes Benz Financial as well as the Entrepreneur's Organisation, the awards recognise the achievement and entrepreneurial innovation of young people from across the globe who are concurrently undertaking an undergraduate degree as well as pursuing their own business endeavours.

DriveSmart, an Australian first, was culmination of extensive market research and the realisation of a problem facing many travellers. By providing traveller, both local and overseas, with up-to-date in-car GPS navigation technology, DriveSmart offers travellers convenience and reassurance without being burdened by hardcopy maps or the costs of owning a GPS, allowing them to exploring Australia unhindered.

"DriveSmart evolved as an idea in 2006 after finding myself needing an in-car GPS navigation unit for a weekend trip to Sydney – it just wouldn't make sense to buy one for just one trip. The hassle of using paper maps and finding directions would always turn a weekend away into a real nightmare," Michael said.

"My business instincts know that this was an opportunity that deserved consideration. So naturally, this became a business idea, and after months of research and planning, I was determined to begin and succeed."

Michael adds that the business is relatively self-sufficient, managing to break even financially after just seven months after commencement of operations.

However, he concedes that money was not a primary consideration.

"It's not about the money. The business's innovative nature and success has opened doors for me personally, allowing me the opportunity to meet successful businesspeople, helping me continue to mature as an individual as well as develop my business."

The recognition of DriveSmart at such a prestigious event is a reflection of the dedication and faith of Michael to his business model and a validation of his decision to place emphasis of customer service; a factor often overlooked by bigger competitors who have recently begun to adopt DriveSmart's model.

Michael is also the owner and principle operator of Atom8 Solutions, a Canberra-based IT consultancy firm. He is also currently employed by TransACT Communications and is undertaking a combined Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Information Technology at the Australian National University.

The GSEA is overseen by the Entrepreneurs' Organisation, an organisation dedicated to encouraging, educating and assisting entrepreneurs around the world. Entries are judged by a panel comprised of successful global entrepreneurs and are awarded based on business innovation, business management and social impact.

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Links

DriveSmart GPS Hire Australia

Global Student Entrepreneur Awards

Entrepreneurs' Organisation

www.gps-hire.com.au

www.gsea.org

www.eonetwork.org

