

# **Superbrands to be recognized in Sri Lanka**

Superbrands, the UK based independent authority on branding, which promotes the discipline of branding and pays tribute to exceptional brands all over the world, recently commenced operations in Sri Lanka. The Superbrands organization is the only organization that acts as an independent arbiter on branding. Since 1994, the company has been publishing a prestigious series of books, which identify and pay tribute to the strongest brands in the world. Although the concept began in the UK, it has now spread to over 50 countries. Ruchi Gunewardene, CEO, Superbrands Lanka, said that the objective of Superbrands is to recognize brands that have been successful in Sri Lanka by virtue of the strong emotional link they have built with their customers. The brands are selected through a process, which involves independent and voluntary panels of experts, known as the 'Brand Council; comprising entrepreneurs, PR, advertising, market researchers and managers from major brand focused companies.

These experts bring in their knowledge of the local market and branding and are the foundation of the organization and its authority. The Brand Council for Sri Lanka headed by Eardley Perera is in the process of being set up. The council will identify and evaluate both global and local brands active in Sri Lanka, which they believe qualify for Superbrands status. "We plan to launch the inaugural edition of Superbrands in Sri Lanka in November 2006 with about 100 brands featured in the edition;" said Sharmila Cassim, Director Marketing, Superbrands Lanka. A list of all the brands that are available in Sri Lanka will be made and then they will be short-listed to include only brands that have a business presence here and those that have a marketing program here. The list will be a mix of local and international brands. The program will only recognize consumer products and services in this phase, while corporate and business-to-business brands will be considered as a separate program.

Cassim added that by making the learnings from Sri Lanka Superbrands more widely known amongst businesses, they hope that it would be a catalyst to bring about greater brand excellence in the country. Superbrands Lanka is a subsidiary of the branding and consultancy firm, STING Consultants.