

MEETING OUR ALUMNI:

Interview with Alumnus

ELSON HO

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SIT Archives:	Hi Elson, please introduce yourself.
Elson Ho:	I graduated from Singapore Poly with a diploma in Business Information and Technology before taking my undergraduate studies in SIT in Information Security.
SIT Archives:	Why did you choose to study in SIT?
Elson Ho:	<p>While I was serving NS, I was wondering where I should continue with my studies.... Then I saw in the news that there was a fifth university in Singapore. SIT...</p> <p>I went to check out the programmes offered in SIT. Then I read about the IWSP. That caught my eye, and I think I read that it was for one year. I knew that I needed to have more depth to what I learned in Poly. So with IWSP, I was able to get more hands-on and practical opportunities.</p>
SIT Archives:	With SIT being so new then, was it a concern?
Elson Ho:	<p>No, it was not a concern for me.</p> <p>All my classes were here in Dover. And since it was the first cohort, there were about 70-80 of us. We bonded naturally and became close. And yea, we interacted closely with our professors as well.</p> <p>Also, there weren't many students and we could easily find empty classrooms to use for our studies.</p> <p>Our professors were also very generous with their time. They would discuss with us after class about our projects.... Or about concepts that were taught in class that we didn't quite understand.</p> <p>There was a professor that we were very close with. She was from Vietnam, and when my friends and I went there for holiday, we looked for her. We had dinner together and it was a very good feeling.</p> <p>I am grateful for her because she would take time to answer all our questions, even after lessons. We would find an empty classroom so that she could explain to us properly. She also answered our emails about our lessons whenever we needed clarification.</p>
SIT Archives:	How was studying in SIT different from studying in the Poly?
Elson Ho:	Definitely, the pace was faster in SIT, and the teaching was more in-depth. My diploma was more general, so I find studying in SIT was more demanding.
SIT Archives:	How was your IWSP experience?
Elson Ho:	<p>I thought ok lah, it is a one-year internship, just go through it. But I was wrong... it was really, really more than that. What I was assigned to work on in the company was something that would be assigned to a full-time staff. So, my IWSP was a valuable experience.</p> <p>There is also another factor... The small projects that I worked on were real world challenges; they were part of the work the company was doing. The company was LDR Pte Ltd*.</p> <p>I was offered a full-time position, but I didn't take it. I wanted to try working for a large company rather than an SME. But I appreciate the offer as it showed I did well during IWSP.</p>
	<div>* LDR Pte Ltd is an award-winning tech company that specialises in immersive experiences, AR/VR solutions for education, tourism, training, technology and healthcare industries. Elson was assigned to work on a tourism project that allowed visitors to visit places virtually.</div>
SIT Archives:	How different was it working on school projects versus working on the projects during your IWSP?
Elson Ho:	<p>Very different because school projects' timeline as compared to real world projects, were sort of controlled by us, students, and last at most, one trimester.</p> <p>But for the IWSP projects, we were dependent on clients' demands, and we had to work around it. Unlike school projects, we could devise our own solutions or even adjust final outcomes, but for real-world type of projects, we could not do that. Sometimes the project might demand beyond what we learnt in school, and this was where I could pick up more skills from the company.</p>
SIT Archives:	I noticed you won a number of awards while you were in school. Can you tell me more about them?
Elson Ho:	<p>I wish to jump back to your first question as to why I chose to study in SIT.</p> <p>Before I started my studies in Poly, I was affected by the stereotyping about computer-related programmes. It was just about building computers, hardware. That was why I took a joint diploma in Business and IT. Halfway through my studies, I realised that IT was more than building a computer. There was computer programming that required coding. It was then I came to know my passion. So after I received my diploma, I wanted to go further. That was why I chose to do my studies in ICT.</p> <p>Besides, I don't think I studied hard enough for my diploma because when I took the modules in SIT, I regretted not paying attention to my classes in Poly. I was then determined to study as hard as I could for my undergraduate programme rather than regretting again.</p> <p>Fortunately for me, the degree programme in SIT was very hands-on and practical. If it was more on theory, frankly I don't think I would do well. Besides, the professors were very approachable and caring towards the students to make sure we understood the lessons.</p> <p>Besides, the cohort was very close to each other, possibly because we were quite a small batch. It helped that we were able to work well together.</p> <p>That was why I was able to get the awards* and did well for my studies^.</p>
	<div>* Elson won the following: CSIT Book Prize in secured software development, Microsoft Book Prize in information management, CSIT Outstanding Student Award in ICT (software engineering).</div> <div>^ Elson graduated with Highest Distinction on 5 February 2018.</div>