SINGAPORE, 8 June, 2009 - Republic Polytechnic (RP), the tertiary institution that approaches learning with a difference, today hosted the Network and Security Investigation (NSI) Competition 2009 to enable secondary school students to hone their skills at solving IT crimes and securing wireless network systems.

The NSI, an IT security competition organised by RP’s School of Information and Communications Technology (SIT) at its Sports Complex, is a unique competition. More than 90 students from 19 secondary schools, grouped into teams of three, pit their wits and technical skills to investigate different IT crime scenarios and offer solutions to secure wireless network systems. NSI is part of the National Infocomm Competition 2009 (NIC) under the Secondary School circuits organized by the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) to help boost greater awareness and use of IT at the national level.

“The aim of the competition is to help and inspire youths to acquire the necessary skills to address a global trend of increasing cyber-related crimes. The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)* estimated that in 2008 alone 275,284 cases of IT-related crimes were committed, resulting in a loss to individuals and organisations of US$265 million in the United States. In Singapore, the KPMG** fraud survey report in 2008 had indicated an alarming rise in computer-related frauds. The number of fraud occurrences that involving the use of IT had ascended to 59 percent, as compared to 19 percent in 2004,” said Mr. Mervin Beng, SIT Director.

“The reality is that cyber threats will continue to evolve and there is still a lot of room for improvement. They will continue to afflict users as our work and life become increasingly infocomm-enabled. However with the collaboration of the public-private-people sectors, we can better protect ourselves against such threats,” said Mr. Leong Keng Thai, Deputy Chief Executive & Director-General (Telecoms & Post), IDA.

According to IDA’s 2008 Annual Infocomm Usage by Enterprise Survey, nine out of 10 enterprises indicated their confidence in Singapore as a trusted environment to conduct business in cyberspace. There has been a significant improvement in the adoption of infocomm security measures by enterprises. For example, the adoption of virus checking and protection software has risen by 8%, while the adoption of anti-spyware and firewall protection has both increased by 9%.

The rise in IT usage has led to greater potential risks of cyber criminals exploiting vulnerabilities in computers to cause harm and create mischief. IT security will continue to play an important role in creating a secure environment to minimise such cyber threats. In anticipation of such trends, RP’s SIT has offered IT security specialization track for its students since 2002. It consists of modules that focus on the concepts and techniques in digital forensics, and also to address issues and techniques in protecting digital information sources, added Mr. Beng.

NSI participants take on the role of cyber crime investigators assigned to solve a hypothetical crime involving shady drugs deals by athletes. Besides a high level of action and intellectual challenges, including scouring the polytechnic’s campus to find clues, hunting for rogue devices and gathering evidence, participants will race against time to complete the evidence gathering and conduct digital forensic investigations to solve the case.

As part of the preparation for the competition, the 30 teams were required to build a long range antenna (“cantenna”) from scratch. This “cantenna” was used during the competition, together with a wireless sniffing utility to locate the rogue access points that have been planted by the criminals to infiltrate the network. To prepare participants for the competition, RP and Cisco Systems had jointly conducted a full-day workshop on digital forensics and wireless networking in May 2009.

The NSI competition is RP’s contribution towards IDA’s effort in promoting infocomm to the younger generation. IDA collaborates with the industry and academia to ensure a continuous pipeline of infocomm security talent exists to meet market needs. For example, IDA offers the National Infocomm Scholarship for Infocomm Security to top students who wish to specialise in this field.

Cisco Systems sponsored some of the main prizes and conducted a workshop to support the NSI Competition 2009. Besides Cisco Systems, RP’s initiative in promoting IT security in such an innovative manner has received warm industry backing in the form of participation and sponsorships from Symantec Singapore, Logicube and AKL Technology.
The winners of the NSI Competition 2009 are:

- 1st prize       Hwa Chong Institute (High School) - Team 1
- 2nd prize      Raffles Institution - Team 2
- 3rd prize       Yishun Town Secondary - Team 2

For more information, please visit the NSI website at [http://nsi.sit.rp.sg/](http://nsi.sit.rp.sg/) and for media queries, please contact:

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About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to adopt the Problem-Based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic has six schools and one centre offering thirty diploma courses in Information & Communications Technology, Engineering, Applied Science, Technology for the Arts, Sports, Health & Leisure, Events and Hospitality, Innovation and Enterprise, and Culture and Communication. Republic Polytechnic is committed to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial learning in an environment that develops problem-solving process skills and a life-long learning attitude. Its holistic, broad-based curriculum, covering culture, enterprise development and cognitive processes, prepares students for an active and meaningful role in society. Republic Polytechnic strives for excellence by achieving various national and international accreditations, including People Developer Standards, ISO9001, ISO14001, OHSAS 18001, Singapore Quality Class, Singapore Innovation Class, and the Singapore Health Awards (Gold). For more information, visit [http://www.rp.sg](http://www.rp.sg).

About the National Infocomm Competition

The National Infocomm Competition (NIC) is a year-long infocomm competition held annually that allows students to hone their skills and showcase their talent in infocomm. Supported by MOE, the NIC is organised by IDA and the following organisations including National Technological University, National University of Singapore, Singapore Institute of Management, Singapore Management University, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, ITE, Information Technology Standards Committee, Singapore Computer Society and Science Centre Singapore. The industry partners include Adobe, Microsoft and Sun Microsystems. For more information, please visit [www.infocommtalent.sg](http://www.infocommtalent.sg).