



## Time for Rebranding

by K. Choo Kok Beng, FASe

I have been visiting IEM branches all over the country to hear you out. Apart from listening to members and educating them on opportunities within IEM, I believe that now is the time for engineers to take the stage.

To refresh IEM is to refresh ourselves as individuals first and foremost, because IEM is made up of "US" – the engineers.

We need to brand ourselves more effectively. Engineers are usually regarded as quiet professionals with technical qualifications who set the stage while the "actors" get all the publicity. But it shouldn't be like that. The public should be aware that we are the ones responsible for making the stage so sturdy that the show can go on. Actions speak louder than words, so I have already taken measures to implement the branding concept.

### NEW NAME-CARD DESIGN

For a start, I have redesigned the IEM name-card and made significant changes to ensure our members will be more visible. One major change is that name-cards will now no longer be exclusive to council and exco members only.

I'm encouraging all IEM members to follow the same design to brand themselves. The design changes include a more colourful layout, details of qualifications as well as clear indications of the international bodies that IEM is affiliated to.

Few people know that IEM is ISO-certified and a member of esteemed and prestigious bodies. I hope to change this through the redesigned name-cards.

We must tell people what we are good at and that we are the prime movers in nation building. We are the secretariat of regional bodies such as ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations (AFEO). For a small country like ours to be secretariat of a regional body like AFEO is an achievement.

We are also a member of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) and the Commonwealth Engineers' Council (CEC). All this will help people realise that we are a high-profiled professional body globally.

By listing all IEM's affiliations on the name-card, I hope our members will be able to network with other engineers, regionally and internationally.

### NATIONAL ADVERTISEMENT

One move that I spearheaded recently was the placing of a full page advertisement in a national newspaper to congratulate the winners of the 13th General Election. Surely national branding can't go bigger than this!

There was so much positive feedback from this. People commented that we were wise to do this. We were the only professional body in Malaysia to do so. For us to be able to serve the community effectively, we must make friends with the political masters.

### SPEEDIER MEMBERSHIP APPROVAL

With all these efforts to refresh and rebrand IEM, we expect a surge in membership applications. For non-corporate membership, the processing time for approval used to be one month but I have successfully shortened it to just one day!

The next step is to lessen the time taken to process corporate memberships. The six-month waiting period is far too long and can be a deterrent for those planning to sign up. With a bit of planning, we should be able to reduce the processing time for corporate membership as well.

We all go after branded goods because they are of the highest quality, they impress us and they last longer. Similarly, there's no reason why we should not brand ourselves as the best when we have every right and every qualification.

The branding call begins right here – with you, so let's get going. ■