A female executive has been named IT Leader of the Year by the Singapore Computer Society (SCS), the first time the title has gone to a woman.

Ms Tan Yen Yen, Oracle’s senior vice-president of applications for the Asia-Pacific, received the award at the society’s annual gala dinner yesterday, in recognition of her contributions as chairman of the Singapore Infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF).

The 45-year-old said: “I’m quite excited to win this award. It’s a very big honour and a pleasant surprise, since I didn’t put myself up for nomination.”

Her name has often been associated with the word “first”. In 2008, she became the SiTF’s first woman chairman; she was re-appointed chairman for an unprecedented third term in September. In that capacity, she has actively promoted the use of technology among the association’s 400 member companies.

The SCS award recognises her efforts in establishing a global cloud computing research facility here. The prize is also in recognition of her previous role as vice-president and managing director of Hewlett-Packard (HP) Singapore.

Ms Tan, who has been in the IT industry since graduating with a computer science degree from the National University of Singapore in 1987, joined HP in 1993. She went from being a public-sector accounts manager to managing director of HP Singapore in 2005.

An avid triathlete, she loves the IT industry for its dynamism. “Technology touches every part of our lives. It’s close to our hearts, and makes a difference to everybody,” she said.

The SCS also handed out three other awards last night.

Former chief of National Computer Systems and current Singapore Institute of Management Global Education chief executive Lee Kwok Cheong, 56, was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Mr Douglas Gan, 28, founder and chief executive of ShowNearby, was named Young Professional of the Year.

ShowNearby offers a smartphone application that locates services such as clinics or restaurants near its user’s position.

iPhone application developer Vishnu Prem, 18, won the IT Youth award for his passion for information technology.