IT Leader of the Year
Ms Tan Yen Yen, 45

Ms Tan amazes friends, colleagues and business partners. A mother of four, she is a woman of many faces – a proud architect of Asia Pacific at software giant Oracle and one who works from the plane seat 46 per cent of the time as she shuttle between different countries.

She is the industryulator extraordinaire of the Singapore IT Federation (SiTF) and an ardent triathlete who cycles all over the world.

To an exiled question on how to balance a hectic work schedule and triathlons activities, she said the trick is to involve people who mattered in her daily life. So the children, for example, also taking part in cycling and triathlons events, where mother and kids can bond. "I can never have six hours of sleep to be able to function well," she said.

Ms Tan has been going against the norm in her 20 years in the IT industry. She was the first female managing director of Oracle Asia Pacific. She was also the first female chairwoman of SiTF.

In an interview last week, she said that there is no short cut to success – one just has to work very hard.

"It’s a demanding and fast-paced industry. But because we’re all women, our emotions are more sensitive. The work is more than 80 per cent of a woman's life. You need a strong heart to be in this business."

Four of tech's best

They were honoured by the Singapore Computer Society last week. GRAHAM DIX speaks to the quartet.

IT Youth
Mr Vishnu Raja, 28

National University of Singapore

Mr Vishnu has a deep passion for computers and programming.

The passion started when he was 12, when he picked up a book from the library on C++ programming. It spurred him to begin writing programs. Years later, he was placed in a position in Infosys’ Bangalore branch – a place regarded by some developers – he landed his first programming job.

“I developed mobile apps for people and worked as an intern with Chalkboard, a Singapore startup during a location-based mobile ad network,” said Mr Vishnu, who finished his studies in the NUS School of Computing Science. He was a key member of the NUS Infocomm Club, which was to change the world.

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