



PHOTO: YEN MING JIIN

## RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

**F**OR any business owner, disruption is inevitable. As technology advances, changes will impact companies even faster and harder; so adapting must become the name of the game for those who want to stay ahead.

Resistance or denial will do more harm than good so transformation – digital or otherwise – has become key to the success of companies, new and old.

Just ask Samuel Yik, founder of award-winning home-grown Chinese restaurant chain Dian Xiao Er. The restaurant is famous for its herbal roasted duck, and Mr Yik was initially sceptical of automating the cooking process with machines because he thought the end product might not be as tasty or authentic.

But once he overcame that hurdle and tried it for himself, he found that it not only boosted productivity but also lessened manpower issues and helped his business grow. Today, Dian Xiao Er's signature herbal roasted duck is enjoyed not only in Singapore but also as far away as China where the company has expanded.

Besides winning over the taste buds of local foodies and food critics, Dian Xiao Er's success has also been recognised by the business community as evident by the Enterprise 50, Spirit of Enterprise, Singapore Prestige Brand awards and more that it has chalked up over the years.

Dian Xiao Er's recipe for success is our cover story for this issue; and like Mr Yik, You Tiao Man's Audrey Chew is also finding new ways to advance her family's food business. From just her father selling the Chinese dough fritters out of a hawker stall in Toa Payoh, the company has now been remodelled and expanded to supply to restaurants, hotels and food courts.

Innovation has become a key ingredient in the business as it introduces new products such as charcoal and wholegrain *you tiao*. Up next is *you tiao* chips, which Ms Chew hopes will disrupt the snack market. Find out more about this gutsy ex-corporate executive's foray into F&B in our Budding Entrepreneurs section.

Enjoy the issue!

**Dylan Tan**  
EDITOR

# theSME magazine

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