Innovation was the key theme that marked the 20th year of the annual Marketing Awards for Excellence.

Companies submitted 35 entries for the 2012 MAX Awards, compared with 20 entries submitted the first year.

The MAX Awards began in 1992 when Atlanta Business Chronicle publisher Ed Baker and Georgia State University's J. Mack Robinson College of Business' Ken Bernhardt developed a program to recognize excellence in advertising and marketing.

The winners and finalists identified unsatisfied consumer needs and found ways to meet those needs, often by using new technology, he said.

Presented by the Robinson College of Business' Department of Marketing and Atlanta Business Chronicle, the 2012 award recipients were scheduled to be announced at a breakfast on Friday, Feb. 24, at the Georgia Aquarium.

While recognizing outstanding advertising and marketing efforts, the awards also support an Outstanding Minority Marketing Student Scholarship Fund at Georgia State.

"The list of companies shows that innovation is alive and well in Georgia, in both business-to-business and business-to-consumer companies, and in both products and services," Bernhardt said. "They truly represent the best of the best."