

Honouring deserving companies

The 11th edition of the Star Outstanding Business Awards programme concluded at its spectacular Gala Night finale, unveiling the contributions of Malaysia's top non-listed companies of the year.



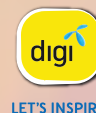
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Lauding excellence in business

SOBA 2020 celebrates the spirit of innovation and perseverance

THE nation’s leading SMEs prove their mettle as they achieve another milestone to be proud of: recognition as a Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) winner.

In addition to taking home the signature SOBA trophies, winning at the SOBA 2020 Gala Night also marks their entry into the ranks of successful SOBA alumni, some of which have grown by leaps and bounds since their respective wins.

Since its inception in 2010, SOBA has shone the spotlight on more than 300 deserving local non-listed companies that have demonstrated business excellence in their respective industries. Among the number includes organisations that have listed on Bursa Malaysia, such as MyNews Holdings Bhd, Serba Dinamik Bhd and Securemetric Bhd.

For SOBA 2020, emerging as the best of the best within the local non-listed business community were the Malaysian Senheng of the Year award winners, namely Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd for the above RM25mil annual turnover tier and Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd for the up to RM25mil annual turnover tier.

Serving as inspiration

Senheng swept away the competition as it secured a total of 10 awards under the tier it was competing in, including platinum for Best in Marketing, Best Brand, Best Employer, Best Innovation, Best Use of Technology and Best in Retail, Best in Customer Service, as well as silver for Best Green Initiative.

Further, its group chairman Lim Kim Heng also won the Par Excellence Achievement under the Male Entrepreneur of the Year category (above RM25mil annual turnover).

It is not the first time the homegrown electronics retail chain has participated in SOBA, as it previously won seven awards under the same tier in SOBA 2018.

“It’s not really a big surprise. We were expecting this result. Firstly, we have transformed to be fully digitalised.

“Secondly, we embarked on new business solutions and new retail, which is very different from the old retail. That gave us the confidence coming into SOBA this year.

“Besides introducing the new business solutions, we were also very innovative and many other factors, in terms of using technology,” said Lim.

On advice to SMEs, which account for the bulk of Malaysia’s employment, Lim stressed that smaller businesses that have yet to embrace technology must take their first steps towards digital transformation.

He cited Senheng’s experience over the last 30 years as case in point, as the company has transformed six times since its inception to reach the heights of success it now enjoys.

He added, “We transformed from very traditional retail in one shop to more than 100 shops today. We have embarked on new seamless retail solutions. That makes our business model very different and we hope to inspire other companies to also transform. They must get out of their comfort zone and embark on digital transformation.”

Giving back to society

Separately, Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd won five awards in the up to RM25mil annual turnover tier. Aside from the Malaysian Business of the Year, it was awarded gold for Best Brand and Best Use of Technology, as well as silver for Best in Customer Service.



Its founder and director Dr Chong Tze Sheng – who previously won the Par Excellence Achievement award under the Young Entrepreneur of the Year category (up to RM25mil turnover) during SOBA 2019 – emerged as the winner of the Meritorious Achievement award under the Male Entrepreneur of the Year category (up to RM25mil annual turnover) for SOBA 2020.

“This is our second time participating in SOBA. We contested in four categories and we won in all four, and we’re also lucky to be awarded the Malaysian Business of the Year for the up to RM25mil tier.

“We are very happy and the whole team is feeling very motivated (because of the) recognition of our company,” said Dr Chong, relaying his thanks to his team in contributing to the company’s growth.

Noting that as an entrepreneur and as a company in the healthcare sector, both him and eponymous clinic has to work hard to not only gain profit, but also contribute and give back to society.

He further said that for Klinik Dr Chong, the barometer should be measured based on how many patients the clinic has helped and how many customers it has served, instead of just focusing on the numbers and figures of the revenue it generates.

On the clinic’s future plans, he said, “We hope can expand to more points in Malaysia and hopefully expand overseas one day.”

Transforming with the times

Gracing the Gala Night were International Trade and Industry (Miti) Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, alongside Star Media Group Bhd (SMG) director Datuk Dr Mohd Aminuddin Mohd Rouse, group chief executive officer Alex Yeow, chief content officer Esther Ng and chief business officer Lydia Wang.

Held on March 17 at One World Hotel, Petaling Jaya, the prestigious night was also attended by Digi chief business officer Eugene Teh, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd group chief executive and managing director Datuk Michael Tio, RHB Bank Bhd group business and transaction banking head Jeffrey Ng, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) CEO Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz, as well as Credit Guarantee Corp Malaysia Bhd (CGC) president and CEO Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak.

Marking the end of the 2020 awards programme, the Gala Night saw the local business community rise to the occasion to honour the entrepreneurial spirit in support of business excellence – effectively heralding the year to come and firmly closing the door on 2020.

SOBA 2020 is organised by SMG with Digi, PKT Logistics Group and RHB as main sponsors, CGC as co-sponsor and Matrade as official trade promotion partner.

It is endorsed by Miti, supported by Bursa Malaysia and audited by BDO with dimsum, 988 and Suria as official media partners.

SOBA 2020 WINNERS		
TOP OF THE CLASS AWARDS (Above RM25mil turnover)		
Category	Type of Awards	Companies
Best in Marketing	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Julie's Manufacturing Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Apple Vacations Sdn Bhd
Best Brand	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Julie's Manufacturing Sdn Bhd
	Silver	redONE Network Sdn Bhd
Best in CSR	Platinum	TFP Retail Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Veritas Architects Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Linaco Manufacturing (M) Sdn Bhd
Best Green Initiative	Platinum	SKVE Holdings Sdn Bhd
	Gold	SJ Varied Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
Best Employer	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Julie's Manufacturing Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Empire Sushi Group Sdn Bhd
Best Innovation	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	PKSJ Fertilizers Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Empire Sushi Group Sdn Bhd
Best Use of Technology	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Sea Gamer Mall Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Fire Fighter Industry Sdn Bhd
Best in Retail	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	TFP Retail Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Empire Sushi Group Sdn Bhd
Best in Customer Service	Platinum	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Sea Gamer Mall Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Vista Laser Eye Center Sdn Bhd
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS (Above RM25mil turnover)		
Male Entrepreneur of the Year		
Par Excellence Achievement	Lim Kim Heng, Group Chairman, Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd	
Outstanding Achievement	Tan Sri Datuk Seri Gan Yu Chai, Director, Platinum Victory Holdings Sdn Bhd	
Meritorious Achievement	Saw Teck Hui, Managing Director, UMMI Surgical Sdn Bhd	
Female Entrepreneur of the Year		
Par Excellence Achievement	Lee Ling Ling, Managing Director, Medi-Life (M) Sdn Bhd	
Outstanding Achievement	Phang Sher Ren, Founder, Star Glory Asia (M) Sdn Bhd	
Meritorious Achievement	Michelle Hah Mei Kian, Executive Director, Fire Fighter Industry Sdn Bhd	
Young Entrepreneur of the Year		
Outstanding Achievement	Nicole Lim Xui Jhi, Chief Executive Officer, Empire Sushi Group Sdn Bhd	
Malaysian Business of the Year	Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd	
TOP OF THE CLASS AWARDS (Up to RM25mil turnover)		
Category	Type of Awards	Companies
Best in Marketing	Platinum	Big Onion Food Caterer Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Senz Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd
	Silver	My Art International Holding Sdn Bhd
Best Brand	Platinum	Dragon Taste Seafood Wholesale & Retail Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Doremi Services & Rental Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	Big Onion Food Caterer Sdn Bhd
Best in CSR	Platinum	Wellous Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Property Hub Sdn Bhd
	Silver	M Summit Global Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	Encomas Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	WYNKIDS Education Group
Best Green Initiative	Platinum	Health4U Solutions Sdn Bhd
	Gold	HZ Green Pulp Sdn Bhd
	Silver	MM Century Sdn Bhd
Best Employer	Platinum	Solid Horizon Sdn Bhd
	Gold	FR Freight Services Sdn Bhd
	Silver	WYNKIDS Education Group
Best Innovation	Platinum	KYY Empire Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Innov8tif Solutions Sdn Bhd
	Silver	RPD Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	DF Automation & Robotics Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	Robopreneur Sdn Bhd
Best Use of Technology	Platinum	Inaris Asia Pacific Sdn Bhd
	Gold	In-Source Options Sdn Bhd
	Silver	GPRO Global Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd
	Meritorious Achievement	Genesis IVF & Women's Specialist Centre
Best in Retail	Platinum	Oasis Swiss Sdn Bhd
	Gold	More Design Group Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Illegear Sdn Bhd
Best in Customer Service	Platinum	Ezzybucks Sdn Bhd
	Gold	Illegear Sdn Bhd
	Silver	Senz Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd
Best in Customer Service	Silver	Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd
	OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS (Up to RM25mil turnover)	
Male Entrepreneur of the Year		
Par Excellence Achievement	Raymond Tea Chin Keong, Managing Director, Dragon Taste Seafood Wholesale & Retail Sdn Bhd	
Outstanding Achievement	Lim Kok Yong, Founder & CEO, KYY Empire Sdn Bhd	
Meritorious Achievement	James Yeoh, Managing Director, Solid Horizon Sdn Bhd	
Female Entrepreneur of the Year	Dr Chong Tze Sheng, Director, Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd	
	Ernest Yuen Lup Boon, Managing Director, Genesis Spectrum Sdn Bhd	
	Genesis Spectrum Sdn Bhd	
Young Entrepreneur of the Year		
Par Excellence Achievement	Lim Ee Huang, Managing Director / Chief Executive Officer, DOREMi Services & Rental Sdn Bhd	
Outstanding Achievement	Leong Hong Yin, Founder & Managing Director, Senz Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd	
Meritorious Achievement	Leong Mei Ling, Managing Director, Swissen Trading & Transport Sdn Bhd	
Malaysian Business of the Year	Ng Mooi Chin, Founder & Chief of Imagination Officer, Above Creative Events (M) Sdn Bhd	
	Datuk Dr Inderjit Kaur A/P Gurbakhes Singh, Managing Director, Inder Aesthetics Sdn Bhd	
	Inder Aesthetics Sdn Bhd	
Young Entrepreneur of the Year		
Par Excellence Achievement	Yong Sin Yee, Managing Director, Morane Global Sdn Bhd	
Outstanding Achievement	Chin Jiun How, Managing Director, Illegear Sdn Bhd	
Meritorious Achievement	Dr Darren Gouk, Chief Executive Officer, My Aone Learning Sdn Bhd	
Malaysian Business of the Year	Frank Wong, Managing Director, More Design Group Sdn Bhd	
	Poshyanganapathy Manikam, Managing Director, KM Vet Pharm Sdn Bhd	
	KM Vet Pharm Sdn Bhd	
RISING STAR		
Category	Companies	
Grand Winner	A1 Globe Sdn Bhd	
Special Mention	Alias Innovation Sdn Bhd	
	E Health Sdn Bhd	
	MYS Ultron Sdn Bhd	
	The Olive Tree Natural Skincare Sdn Bhd	
	Vanzo Asia Sdn Bhd	



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Digitalisation saves the day for restaurant

SINCE the Covid-19 pandemic hit and the movement control order was implemented more than a year ago in March 2020 (MCO 1.0), small and medium enterprise (SME) associations have called attention to the high number of smaller businesses shuttering their doors for good.

Official figures from a Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives report corroborates such findings, noting that over 30,000 SMEs have folded since MCO 1.0, with among the most affected industries being the service industry, particularly for food and beverage (F&B), as well as hospitality and tourism.

During the MCO period, dining out – one of Malaysia's most popular and beloved social activities – was halted for weeks at a stretch, burdening food establishments scattered across the nation as their income took a stern beating.

With overhead costs still looming over their heads and cash reserves running thin, many SMEs found it was necessary to pivot or perish, choosing to roll out delivery to make ends meet and generate some income.

Easier said than done though.

Venturing into the delivery space came with its share of problems as SMEs embarked on their digital transformation journeys, because some kind of platform or system was needed to do so.

This also rang true for traditional F&B businesses that had previously relied on walk-in customers, many of which lack basic connec-

Digi Business helps Penang-based Hong La Jiao go digital



Chong said going digital saved his business during the movement control order period.



It was digitalisation that helped the brand, which has three restaurants in Penang and another in Kuala Lumpur, maintain business continuity.



Hong La Jiao is a steamboat restaurant based in Penang, which simplified and streamlined its business operations by leveraging digital tools and solutions provided by Digi Business.

tivity on their premises, let alone an online menu or ordering system, with some even lacking an online or social media presence.

And even when the business decided to offer delivery, it was faced with the dilemma of how to best connect with its customers to inform them that it remained open for business – as Chong Kien Aun, the owner of Penang-based steamboat restaurant Hong La Jiao, discovered.

With three restaurants in Penang and another in Kuala Lumpur, he knew it was crucial to

maintain business continuity through offering delivery.

"We knew that delivery was the way to go. However, we also knew that a stable and reliable Internet connection was important – how else to receive orders and fulfil the deliveries? We also needed to let our customers know that we were still in business," he said.

For assistance, he turned to Digi Business and its range of comprehensive solutions, which were coupled with value-packed connectivity plans.

In no time, Chong found one that

suited his needs and budget.

He shared, "It was easier than I thought. Digitalisation sounded intimidating, but with the help of Xan, the Digi Business Manager, we switched our business model and the results have been very encouraging."

Among the technologies that Chong leveraged to transform and sustain his business include a digital solution called AVANA to create an online store and d'SMS to

digitally broadcast SMS in bulk, instantly connecting every customer through mobile marketing.

At the same time, he also opted for a Go Digi Mobile Postpaid and WiFi plan to strengthen the connectivity in his shop, which he said has made all the difference.

As a result, Chong saw a 50% increase in sales for Hong La Jiao, with the added benefit of doubling employee efficiency and customer satisfaction.

"Digi Business also made it very easy to make the Penjana SME grant claim. I merely provided the relevant paperwork and the rest was taken care of. The grant money, combined with the savings from Digi, was a big help."

"Taking the business to the digital level was the best thing I could have done, especially during these trying times."

"I would encourage all SMEs to consider digitalising – charting your company's growth is so much easier," he remarked.

Digi Business helps simplify and streamline business operations by enabling businesses to leverage digital tools and solutions, so that SME owners and entrepreneurs can manage their day-to-day routines with greater convenience and ease.

■ For businesses looking to make the shift, upskill or digitalise like Hong La Jiao, contact Digi Business at 016-299 8888 and ask to speak with one of the many friendly Business Managers to find out more.

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Lowering financing barriers

CGC continues innovating imSME to meet MSME needs



THE first online micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) financing referral platform in the country, imSME, has certainly made great strides since its launch in February 2018. Mooted by Bank Negara Malaysia and powered by Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC), the digital platform furthers CGC's aim to help SMEs obtain financing from financial institutions.

In line with its name, which represents 'I am MSME', it targets not only established SMEs, but also micro businesses and aspiring business owners currently looking for the right financing products from financiers.

Today, imSME's financing partners include 26 financial institutions, 10 peer-to-peer financing operators, three equity crowdfunding operators, three agencies and three capacity building agencies.

As at March 31 this year, its cumulative achievements include 38,000 registrations, RM369mil financing approved and RM273mil financing disbursed.

For its innovative approach in providing a comprehensive digital financing referral platform for SMEs, imSME has won three awards in recent years, namely the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) Outstanding SME Development Project (Merit) in February 2019, the Karlsruhe Sustainable Finance Awards' Best Innovation in Financial Services (Merit) in July 2019 and most recently, the Asset Triple A Awards' Best Digital Banking Solution in August 2020.

Moreover, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, imSME was entrusted as one of the channels for MSMEs to apply for the Special Relief Facility (SRF).

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, imSME was entrusted as one of the channels for MSMEs to apply for the Special Relief Facility (SRF). Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin on Apr 6, 2020 made an announcement informing MSMEs that they have the option to apply for financing through imSME for the SRF and

Micro Credit Prihatin initiatives under the Prihatin economic stimulus package.

On imSME, MSMEs can apply for financing referrals by following the four simple steps below:

- > Step 1: Key in financing requirement(s)
- > Step 2: Share business details to match with the right financing product available
- > Step 3: Register or log in
- > Step 4: Compare and choose the best-suited financing product(s). The chosen financier will contact the applicant within two working days

Aside from offering financing referrals, the portal also provides financial advisory services for MSMEs. A Financial Advisory Team (FA Team) was established by CGC to conduct in-depth reviews and diagnosis to identify gaps and improve financial literacy among MSMEs, which will in turn boost their chances of obtaining financing from financiers.

The FA Team supports unsuccessful applicants via imSME by providing the possibilities of these MSMEs finding matching product(s) offered by financial institutions in their next loan/financing application. In addition, these applicants are also guided to alternative financing sources such as peer-to-peer and equity crowdfunding financing.

To ensure imSME stays relevant and effective in catering to MSME needs, the technology behind this platform is continuously improved. New features are constantly introduced to enhance the efficiency of imSME through digitalisation and automation, resulting in improved customer experience.

■ Interested MSMEs may visit www.imsme.com.my/portal/en/. There are more than 60 financing products available to meet their business needs.

Transforming logistics with education

PenPostGrad offers industry-driven courses to future-proof talents

IF there's one thing that the past year living under the shadow of Covid-19 has proven, it's the indispensably essential role that logistics plays in our daily lives, whether it's delivering the vegetables we eat to the medical devices like three-ply surgical face masks and sanitisers we use daily.

With the majority of individuals and workers urged to stay home through the various movement control orders that started in March last year, the dependence on reliable logistics partners and couriers has never been higher.

The irony, of course, is that the logistics industry has traditionally been perceived as "grunt work", especially when it comes to activities related to warehousing and transport – dirty, dangerous and demeaning.

The fact of the matter is, this state of affairs has changed drastically over the past two decades in tandem with considerable improvements in technology, operating procedures and safety standards.

While most who entered logistics were early school-leavers that climbed up the pecking order in the past, there are numerous educational institutions today that offer diplomas and degrees in logistics – most recently, even a Master's programme – with the tremendous rise of recognition and requirements for qualified and skilled logisticians.

Some organisations even demand that a logistician acquires tertiary qualification before being given a promotion to a managerial position.

"People now realise the importance of logistics as more people are taking up logistics as a job. From food deliveries to haulage to last mile deliveries, logisticians are present at every point of the supply chain.

"The focus is now towards inbound as opposed to outbound in the past and the need for skilled logisticians to manage the local supply chain has grown exponentially," said PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd group chief executive and

managing director Datuk Dr Michael Tio.

Eye on the future

As the advent and application of smart computers and machinery becomes more prevalent in the logistics industry – alongside the increasingly complex and intertwined global supply chain – so too does the need to have skilled individuals armed with the knowledge to properly manage such technological innovations.

The only way to do so is continuously learning and keeping ahead of the curve, which will not only help individuals keep up with the



Working professionals can tap into part-time study opportunities to upskill themselves and obtain globally recognised qualifications locally, said Prof Pashby.

latest trends and modus operandi, but also forecast and develop systems and strategies that may future-proof the company's supply chain.

This, in turn, will prove invaluable in preparing the company for the next global recession or pandemic in the years to come.

Taking the lead to help the logistics industry transform in line with the fourth industrial revolution (IR4.0) and beyond is PenPostGrad.

Part of the Peninsula Higher Education Group, PenPostGrad is wholly owned by the strategically diversified PKT Logistics Group and is one of the few higher education institutions offering a Masters in International Logistics and Supply Chain Management by the University of Plymouth.

The programme, taught by lecturers who are themselves experienced logistics experts, is in partnership with the University of Plymouth, United Kingdom. Its first intake will commence in May 2021.

Based in a historic maritime city and ranked among the top 3% of universities in the world in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021, the University of Plymouth has a history that traces back to 1862 with a core strength in maritime and logistics education.

Catered towards working adults wishing to upskill and future-proof themselves for career development by pursuing academic and operational excellence in logistics, the programme is structured on a part-time study basis on weekends.

This is because PenPostGrad takes into account that most of the students enrolled might be full-time working professionals with young families.

Real-world applications

The University of Plymouth Masters in International Logistics and Supply Chain Management offered by PenPostGrad differs from other equivalent courses in the market owing to its unique modules, which are based on real-world trends and scenarios pertinent to both current and future industry challenges and requirements.

Students will be exposed to the latest standards in international trade requirements, as well as the financial aspects needed to run an agile organisation that can seamlessly cater to a globalised supply chain.

As part of in-depth course assessments, students will discover the



Tio believes that as the logistics industry increasingly embraces new technology in line with IR4.0, its talents must be properly equipped to handle such innovations.

fundamental importance of suitable research and modelling methods to conduct effective analysis into relevant logistics and supply chain case studies, in order to develop an appropriate proposal.

This will enable participants to forecast trends, identify areas of potential risk, prepare for contingencies and align business strategies with organisational goals.

Moreover, among the key modules incorporated into the programme are comprehensive studies on technologies aligned with IR4.0 such as blockchain technology, automation, artificial intelligence and robotics among others.

The course structure for the Masters in International Logistics and Supply Chain Management programme taught at The Ship Campus in Batu Kawan Penang or The Lighthouse in Shah Alam, is as follows:

> Year One (Teaching)

There are six taught modules, averaging 35 to 40 hours face-to-face teaching per module, spread over three teaching periods of 17 weeks each.

Modules include international logistics management; international trade, procurement, logistics and shipping; international supply chain systems; logistics, supply chains, systems and methods; maritime finance and business modelling, as well as research skills and economics for international supply chains.

Assessment is based on coursework, group work and presentations, with no examinations.

> Year Two (Research project or business case study)

Students will spend six months or more, working with a supervisor, on an approved topic to produce a dissertation, alongside occasional weekend workshops.

Affordable quality education

While having a prior diploma or degree in logistics management would be beneficial to those seeking to undertake this programme, Peninsula Higher Education Group president Prof Ian Pashby stressed that it is not mandatory for enrolment, as acceptance in the programme takes into consideration the working experience and academic qualifications of prospective students.

That said, the course can still be completed in as little as one and a half years, with tuition fees costing less than 40% of the UK-based equivalent.

"PenPostGrad establishes a direct link between the university – like the University of Plymouth – and students, offering the same course content and assessment methods as the offering university, but at a more affordable price," he said.

Furthermore, depending on individual circumstances, a monetary assistance scheme may also be applicable for those who might be experiencing financial difficulties.

The first intake of the programme, which is claimable from the Human Resources Development Fund, will commence in May 2021. Students who enrol in the May 2021 cohort may also be eligible for a pioneer scholarship of RM5,000.

■ Scan the QR code to find out more and register today to be a part of the future of logistics.



Logistics companies such as PKT Logistics Group are seeking logisticians with tertiary qualifications in order to elevate the professionalism of the industry.



Meeting customer needs digitally

RHB enhances capability of mobile app to ease digital banking for SMEs

THE Covid-19 pandemic has rapidly shifted the needle for technology adoption, accelerating the digital transformation journey for businesses for survival and sustainability.

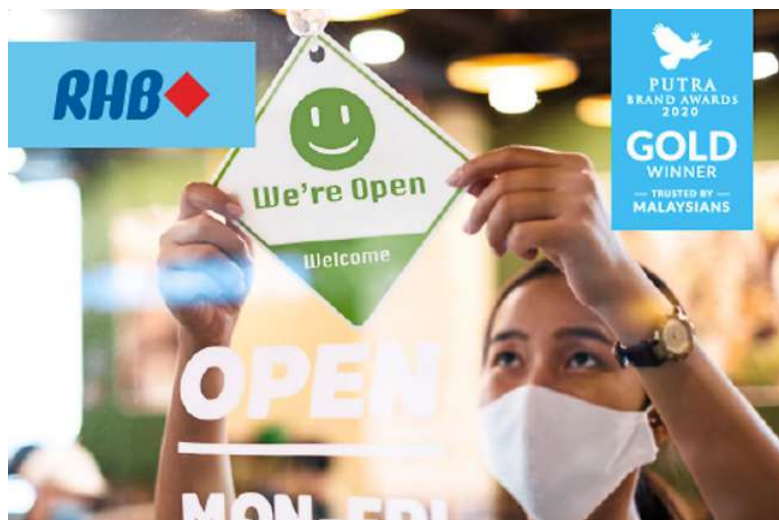
Eager to recoup the devastating losses of the previous year, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are leveraging technology – such as digital and mobile – to tap into new opportunities.

This new paradigm shift also heralds disruption in the way that SME partners and facilitators in the ecosystem, such as financial institutions, support the development and growth of these companies – especially in a time when SMEs are seeking solutions for growth.

To do so, businesses require access to working capital. While financing has been a persistent challenge for most SMEs, the pandemic and its subsequent movement control orders have worsened matters by exhausting their cash reserves.

Taking swift action to help SMEs address the issue back in August 2020, RHB Banking Group established an innovative head start in the mobile space with the launch of the RHB Financing (SME) Mobile App, with the aim of financing at least RM500 in support of small businesses in 2021.

Coinciding with the reopening economy and the shift in customer preference to mobile, its aim is to lower barriers – including Covid-19-specific limitations of physical



RHB will introduce new tech capabilities to stay ahead of the curve in the SME digital lending space in Malaysia and the region.

distancing and movement restrictions among others – and enhance easy and quick access to capital through the mobile platform.

While the app reflects the same financing terms provided in the SME Online Financing programme, it adds a new dimension of digitalisation by automating the customer onboarding process and effectively removing the need for SME owners to physically visit a bank branch to submit their applications.

Empowering business owners with more control over their finances, the app enables remote financial application submissions and gives customers

the convenience to directly access their application status in real-time on their mobile devices on-the-go on a safe and efficient platform.

Through the portal, customers are able to apply for financing online and submit supporting documents digitally, all within their fingertips and in just 10 minutes. The simplified process would require SMEs to submit only two documents, namely a digital copy of the applicant's directors' MyKad and bank statements for the previous six months.

Touted as the first "customer self-initiated" SME financing mobile app in Malaysia and South-

East Asia, the RHB Financing (SME) Mobile App is powered by artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data capabilities to better fit customer financing requirements. It is also outfitted with facial recognition features and real-time application processing capabilities to provide an additional layer of security and convenience.

A complement to RHB's SME Online Financing web portal launched in July 2018, as part of its SME Digital Transformation initiative, the RHB Financing (SME) Mobile App is the latest addition to the wider RHB SME Ecosystem that offers end-to-end financial services, as well as innovative and versatile financing solutions for SMEs.

More importantly, however, the app reflects RHB's commitment in continuously enhancing its range of digital products and services, as well as the importance it places on customer feedback.

This traces back to the SME Online Financing, the first digital

lending portal in Malaysia exclusively targeting SME businesses to provide financing amount of up to RM1mil, for tenures between six and 84 months, without any collateral required.

Even now, RHB is not stopping to rest on its laurels, as it seeks to stay ahead of the curve by introducing further enhancements to make it easier for SMEs to conduct their transactions with the bank.

The ongoing initiative is in line with the bank's belief that every business deserves progress, which is why its aim – ensuring SME businesses have easy access to working capital, while at the same time empowering them to maintain more control over their finance and banking matters – becomes paramount in any digital banking development that the bank undertakes.

■ Transform your banking with the RHB Financing (SME) Mobile App. Download and apply today.

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Boosting healthcare exports

Matrade helps build global resilience for exporters

WHILE the far-reaching impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has proven devastating to the world, it also demonstrated the value of Malaysian healthcare players.

Malaysia supplies 60% of the world market's medical gloves and 80% for catheters. The top four glove producers are Hartalega, Top Glove, Supermax and Kossan Rubber.

Stepping up to the plate to help combat Covid-19, these industry leaders ramped up their production capacities by increasing domestic investment to increase exports to meet the higher global demand for healthcare products. As a result, the industry has grown by 24.9% to reach RM29.9bil in medical devices export to major export markets such as the United States, Germany, Japan, Singapore and Belgium.

With an estimated 1.9 billion Muslim population worldwide, Malaysia is well positioned to leverage its inherent strength to become a medical tourism hub for halal healthcare, namely the high growth medical devices sector outlined in the Eleventh and Twelfth Malaysia Plan, as well as medical tourism and products such as halal medical consumables and pharmaceuticals.

Catering to the growing demand for halal medical products, the Malaysian Government has approved the Malaysian standard for Halal Medical Device for the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia or the respective state Islamic religious councils to certify such products.

Moreover, the pandemic also catalysed healthcare trends and facilitated the adoption of digital health technologies, adding value to the country's position as a medical tourism hub.

As the main secretariat for the Export Coordination Council Working Committee chaired by the Ministry of International Trade, the Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) spearheads the coordination of export promotion programmes by ministries and agencies to optimise the impact of such initiatives, in



Matrade spearheads the coordination of Malaysia's export promotion programmes.

order to ensure the global success of Malaysian companies.

Committed to building the global resilience of Malaysian exporters, particularly in the post Covid-19 recovery period, Matrade continues to work closely with the Ministry of Health, the Malaysian Rubber Council, the Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia, the Malaysia Medical Device Manufacturers Association and the Association of Malaysia Medical Industries.

As such, under its Export Promotion Programme 2021, Matrade has outlined over 300 activities focusing on the creation of export champions in high-value sectors, by utilising digital platforms, ensuring inclusiveness, tapping into current market trends and forging strategic collaborations.

Among the export promotion programmes and initiatives Matrade has lined up include:

- > Virtual International Sourcing Programme (INSP), in conjunction with Malaysia International Halal Showcase (Apr 1 to Sept 1)
- > Arab Health Expo, Dubai (June 21 to 24)
- > INSP, in conjunction with Asia Pandemic Congress, Kuala Lumpur (Aug 16 to 18)
- > Expo 2020 Dubai (Oct 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022)

■ Apply for Matrade's 2021 Export Promotion Programmes at bit.ly/MatradeExportPromotion

A fresh take on Julie's Biscuits

Creative short film *Operation Maybe* drives its rebranding initiative

FOR almost 35 years, Julie – the blonde-haired girl in a blue shirt and red coveralls who portrayed a conservative young lady – has dutifully served as the ambassadorial icon for renowned biscuit brand Julie's Biscuits.

As many would know, Julie's Biscuits is a household name of confectioneries known for its delectable biscuit treats. Some of its classic treats include Julie's Love Letters wafer rolls and Julie's Peanut Butter Sandwich biscuits.

A trusted brand since its inception, Julie's Biscuits has recently rebranded with a brand new Julie.

Shedding her old style by sporting a new hairdo and outfit, the young Julie has a renewed zest for life, as she smiles, gazing breezily yet confidently into the future. There is a certain freshness, conviction and even humour in the new Julie.

But behind all this certainty, there is more than meets the eye. What better way to tell the insider's story of this rebranding journey than through film? The brand does just that with an 18-minute comedic heist short film called *Operation Maybe*.

'Maybe' rebranding

Perhaps because all rebranding journeys are "operation maybes", they are enormous soul-searching, nerve-wrecking experiences that are anything but certain: Questions like "if it ain't broken, why fix it?" to the anxious dilemmas of



choosing from the myriad brand identity reinventions punctuate the entire rebranding exercise.

As a rebrand is such a monumental undertaking for any company and its customers, each decision surrounding it is weighed so heavily that the exercise is often filled with hesitation and worse, anxiety.

Operation Maybe, however, is a brand movie that assures us that amidst uncertainty and apprehension, the reward at the end of a seemingly uncertain rebranding journey will be confidence and certainty.

The film tells the story of an over-the-hill marketing head, Raju, whose creative spirit and energy has dried up because of the tedium of his work routine. For 35 years, Raju has played it safe and toed the company line as a good soldier who never realises his full potential.

Unlikely hero Raju, like Julie's, is in need of a rebrand. Now in the winter of his life, he feels like time is running out. To make matters worse, most of his creative ideas are met by his chief executive officer Cindy Tang's frosty and curt reply of "maybe".

Cindy's "maybes", however, reveal her own existential crisis: she doesn't know how to take Julie's into the future and hides behind



Julie's Biscuits breathes new life into its brand with a creative rebranding initiative driven by *Operation Maybe*.

her assured, but tentative, retorts.

In many ways, *Operation Maybe* is about how Raju throws Cindy a lifeline and revitalises her second generation leadership.

As Raju presents the new Julie's logo to Cindy, he is once again greeted by her rejection and storms out of the meeting, ready to throw in the towel – only to be persuaded by his young, ditzy intern Ezra to stay the course and have faith in his creative ideas.

Ezra tells Raju that Cindy needs to see Raju's rebranding ideas expressed in real life to fully appreciate them. Encouraged by his words, Raju, his sidekick Chee and Ezra quickly assemble a crew of oddball social misfits from all

corners of the company to conduct a heist of the company's old logo.

The amateur heisters' main objective is to replace the old logo with the new version in all areas of the office, culminating with a logo change at the main entrance, but as can be expected, the heist was riddled with close calls, miscommunication and minor accidents.

To top it off, it was only when they finally mounted the new logo at the main entrance that they realised that Ezra made a Photoshop error, resulting in Julie's head to be tilted up. They then escape the "crime" scene in disappointment, thinking that their grand plan had gone up in flames.

The next morning, Raju packs up his desk, ready to face the consequences of the daring failed stunt he pulled. He goes to Cindy to confess his crime only to be faced with her surprised admiration.

Energised by the rebranded Julie's, Cindy assures Raju that Julie is "looking exactly where she needs to", thanking Raju for lifting a load off her shoulders.

As the film draws to an end, Raju reminds us that we should always fight for what we believe in and look to hope and aspiration, even as we get older or are downtrodden.

Be bold, be a brand

The film not only embodies the brand values – youthfulness, optimism and self-confidence – that Julie's Biscuits aspires to, it also demonstrates the bold steps the heritage brand took to revamp itself.

Kevin Joseph, the associate creative director for GOVT Singapore, the creative agency behind *Operation Maybe*, succinctly captures the transformational thinking.

He said, "To see a heritage brand like Julie's Biscuits embrace evolution like this is inspiring. When you've been at something for so long, it's easy to get stuck in the status quo."

Like the heist in *Operation Maybe*, Julie's Biscuits rebrand is a broad and deeply collaborative commitment requiring all hands on deck. To ensure the success of the rebrand, it engaged the best cross-functional teams, with creative agencies like Superunion and GOVT Singapore amongst its many working partners.

It is an approach that has proven successful.

Garnering over 800,000 views on YouTube for *Operation Maybe* in just over three months and receiving rave viewer reviews is no mean feat indeed.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the stellar all-Malaysian crew under the astute film direction of Lobak Loon and spectacular talents of Indi Nadarajah, Bella Rahim, Amanda Ang, Fabian Loo, Nabilah Hamid, Goh Kee Kuang and Phraveen Arikiah.

As Julie's Biscuits continues in 2021 to complete its rebranding journey, it reminds everyone to always take a chance in life, stay hopeful and be bold.

■ Catch the amazing *Operation Maybe* at www.julies.com.my.



The 18-minute comedic heist short film tells the story of over-the-hill marketing head Raju and his oddball social misfit colleagues, who hatch a bold heist to replace the existing logo with a new one.



Operation Maybe not only embodies the brand values that Julie's Biscuits aspires to, but also demonstrates the bold steps that the heritage brand took to revamp itself.



At the top row are Star Media Group Bhd group chief executive officer Alex Yeow (third from left), director Datuk Dr Mohd Aminuddin Mohd Rouse (fifth from left) and International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali (sixth from left), together with SMG senior management members and SOBA sponsors, join SOBA 2020 award winners in celebrating their achievements at the conclusion of the SOBA 2020 Gala Night in Petaling Jaya.



For Female Entrepreneur of the Year (above RM25mil turnover), Medi-Life (M) Sdn Bhd managing director Christine Lee (second from left) was awarded the Par Excellence Achievement by Mohd Mustafa (right), with the awards for Outstanding Achievement going to Star Glory Asia (M) Sdn Bhd founder Phang Sher Ren (left) and Meritorious Achievement to Fire Fighter Industry Sdn Bhd executive director Michelle Hah.



Matrade's Mohd Mustafa (right) applauds the success of the winners for Male Entrepreneur of the Year (above RM25mil turnover), including (from left) Platinum Victory Holdings Sdn Bhd director Tan Sri Gan Yu Chai (Outstanding Achievement), Senheng Electric (KL) Sdn Bhd group chairman Lim Kim Heng (Par Excellence Achievement) and UMMI Surgical Sdn Bhd MD Saw Teck Hui (Meritorious Achievement).



During the awards night, guests were treated to a variety of Carlsberg products, including Somersby Cider and beers from Carlsberg, Asahi and Kronenbourg 1664 Blanc.

Moment of triumph

Photo: FAIHAN GHANI, IZZRAFIQ ALIAS, KAMARUL ARIFFIN and SAMUEL ONG/The Star

The Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA), in its 11th edition, cast off the dark days of Covid-19 with a triumphant Gala Night at One World Hotel in Petaling Jaya. The peak of the awards programme celebrated the nation's best performing non-listed companies of 2020, granting them the honour of joining the ranks of SOBA's alumni of elites.



(from left) Best Green Initiative (above RM25mil turnover) Silver winner Senheng training department head Lim Yau Young, Platinum winner SKVE Holdings Sdn Bhd chief operating officer Teoh Jui Min, Gold winner SJ Varied Sdn Bhd project director Asawindran Kumaran and Matrade's Mohd Mustafa.



Matrade's Mohd Mustafa (right) with the winners for Best Use of Technology (above RM25mil turnover) including (from left) Fire Fighter Industry chief innovation officer Brian Soo (Silver), Senheng new retail technology head Raymond Tan (Platinum) and Sea Gamer Mall Sdn Bhd CEO Tommy Chieng (Gold), each holding aloft their respective trophies.



Yeow (fifth from left) with Best Brand (up to RM25mil turnover) winners, (from left) Wellous Sdn Bhd CEO Racheal Tan (Meritorious Achievement), Big Onion Food Caterer Sdn Bhd chief operating officer Louise Chay (Meritorious Achievement), Doremi Services and Rental Sdn Bhd MD Lim Ee Huang (Silver), Klinik Dr Chong Sdn Bhd founder Dr Chong Tze Sheng (Gold), Dragon Taste Seafood Wholesale and Retail Sdn Bhd CEO and director Raymond Tea (Platinum) and Property Hub Sdn Bhd executive director Benjamin Tee (Meritorious Achievement).



Yeow (fourth from left) represents SMG in thanking (from left) CGC's Leong, Matrade's Mohd Mustafa, RHB's Ng, Digi's Tan and PKT Logistics Group's Tio for their organisations' sponsorship and support of SOBA 2020.



RHB Banking Group chief marketing officer Abdul Sani Abdul Murad (second from left) and business and transaction banking head Jeffrey Ng (third from left) and the team pose with finger hearts in support of SOBA 2020.



Digi sales, corporate and SME head Tan Yee Meng (second from left) takes a group shot with the team at its booth on the awards night.



PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd chief executive and managing director Datuk Michael Tio (centre) and the team pose with Tio's signature thumbs up gesture.



Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC) chief corporate officer Rahim Raduan (fourth from left) and chief business officer Leong Weng Choong (sixth from left) attended the awards night with his team in recognition of local companies.

Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) CEO Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz (second from left) with the team at the Matrade booth during the SOBA 2020 Gala Night.



Senheng's Lim (centre) strikes a victory pose after winning one of the most coveted SOBA awards, the Malaysian Business of the Year award (above RM25mil turnover).



(from left) Best in CSR (above RM25mil turnover) Silver winner Linaco Manufacturing (M) Sdn Bhd group ED Joe Ling, Gold winner Veritas Architects Sdn Bhd senior associate architect Alif Arif Iskandar A Wahab and Matrade's Mohd Mustafa.



SMG's Yeow (second from left) is flanked by Best Brand (above RM25mil turnover) Silver winner RedONE Network Sdn Bhd chief sales officer Ben Teh (left) and Platinum winner Senheng marketing head June Tai.

(from left) Best Employer (up to RM25mil turnover) Silver winner KYY Empire Sdn Bhd executive chairman K.Y. Lim, Platinum winner FR Freight Services Sdn Bhd MD Ryan Lei, SMG's Yeow and Gold winner Wynkids Education Group CEO Elwin Goh.



Matrade's Mohd Mustafa (right) with (from left) Best Innovation (above RM25mil turnover) Silver winner Empire Sushi's Lim, Platinum winner Senheng chief operating officer Cheong Jun Tong and Gold winner PKSJ Fertilizers Sdn Bhd MD Law Chen Ann.

REDONE Network Sdn Bhd (redONE), Malaysia's leading mobile virtual network operator with over 1.2 million postpaid subscribers, is known for its affordable services and mobile plans that start from as low as RM8 per month.

Riding on a premier mobile network operator's wide 4G LTE infrastructure, redONE subscribers can expect to enjoy seamless data connectivity and uninterrupted voice calls throughout Malaysia at budget-friendly prices.

Winner of multiple awards and accolades for its practices and values, redONE currently operates in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. It has ambitious plans to expand into other parts of Asean in the near future.

Catering to the demand of the market, redONE offers both post-paid and prepaid mobile services, where its core revenue derives from the postpaid segment. Even though all redONE mobile plans are priced affordably, it remains generous with its product offering.

The three Amazing plans, which start from as low as RM8 a month and offers up to 60GB of data, are designed for the different segments of the market.

The recently introduced Hybrid50U plan, designed for heavy data users, comes with unlimited data and calls for only RM50 a month and still remains among the lowest price in the market. At the same time, redONE continues innovating to keep up with the competition.

Evolving in the digital landscape, the company has launched various mobile applications, a self-registration process and eSIM technology with the aim of bringing a greater

Delivering connectivity to all

redONE continues innovating to keep up with the competition



redONE always has a place for all individuals, be it consumer, entrepreneur, or those looking to earn more income.

user experience to its customers.

While it is a customer-centric company, redONE has always recognised the importance of its sales partners.

The company now has over 100 premier shops and more than

2,500 retail partners throughout Malaysia. These redONE outlets not only build up its local brand presence, but also provide instant service access for the community.

In addition, redONE seized the opportunity to use the premier

shops as training centres for its sales advisors. Here, they are skilfully trained by officially appointed redONE trainers on how to become a telcopreneur who generates personal income with life-long incentives. To date, redONE

redONE
back to basics

has a network of 4,000 active sales advisors around the country.

Apart from the commercial aspect, redONE is a strong advocate for sports. It is a supporter of the local sports scene with sponsorship in badminton, squash and football, including Terengganu FC, a team currently in the Malaysia Super League and PDRM FC, a team in the Premier League.

While quickly becoming a prominent brand in the industry, redONE has also been giving back to society by doing its fair share of corporate social responsibility work.

These include initiatives to help the less fortunate by bringing gifts and joy to the children at orphanages around the country, raising money to improve the learning environment of primary schools across all states, as well as bringing relief and other necessities to flood victims in the East Coast.

No matter if you are a consumer, an entrepreneur or an individual seeking to earn more income, there is always a place for you with redONE.

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ABOUT US

Medi-Life (M) Sdn. Bhd. is a leading distributor of advanced medical devices and services; providing high quality, state-of-the-art medical innovations to healthcare centers throughout Malaysia.

WHEN QUALITY HEALTHCARE MATTERS

We are committed in making a positive difference in the lives of patients and caretakers; by delivering a safer, more efficient and effective care.

OUR VISION

To be the leading distributor of advanced medical products and services

OUR MISSION

WORLD-CLASS BRANDS

Improve our agency lines to offer cutting edge solutions to meet growing customer needs

CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

Invest in ongoing training to enhance healthcare standards

CONSISTENT SERVICE

Inspire trust in our customers with excellence and high quality service



STAR OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARDS (SOBA) 2020
PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT
 (Above RM25 Million Turnover)
"FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR"

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Driven to excel

Medi-Life founder's passion continues to drive business success

AN industry-leading distributor of medical equipment and devices in Malaysia, Medi-Life (M) Sdn Bhd is spearheaded by visionary entrepreneur and inspirational leader Christine Lee Ling Ling.

Thanks to Lee's guidance, Medi-Life has become a natural go-to name for high-quality, state-of-the-art products, specialising in medical equipment for operating theatres and surgical kits.

The company is currently the exclusive distributor and rental solutions provider for some of the world's top brands in medical apparatuses and technologies.

Built on a strong foundation of corporate cultures, Medi-Life remains fully committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards as it grows, embracing diversity while upholding three simple yet fundamental business philosophies: humanity, compassion and sincerity.

Aiming to satisfy every customer need with the best support, the company prioritises its customers by adopting their viewpoint to ensure its service takes a humanistic approach. By empathising with the challenges customers face, it seeks to be part of remedial solutions in the ultimate goal of helping patients in their recovery.

In line with its vision to become the leading distributor of advanced medical products and services, Medi-Life and the team behind it have tackled every hardship with



The management team behind Medi-Life, an industry-leading distributor of medical equipment and devices in Malaysia.

positivity and staunch determination to distinguish itself from competitors.

It does so by advocating the highest standards of value-added services and consistency, in order to emphasise its sincerity in doing business and its appreciation towards being trusted as a long-term business partner.

Medi-Life commits to shared success, working together to succeed every mission and taking accountability for the sustainable success for its employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers and communities, in a collective effort

to be 100% dedicated to the healthcare industry.

At the helm of the company is Lee, who started her career as a product specialist after returning from her studies in Australia.

With her family background and upbringing, it was given that she would choose the opportunity that would bring her a greater breadth and depth of knowledge and experience, which is why she favoured a local company over a multinational fast moving consumer goods company.

Leveraging her eight solid years of experience in the surgical

supplies industry, she established Medi-Life with three former colleagues.

Throughout it all, she overcame the challenge of having to juggle between her young family and a flourishing business, leading the company's growth from only four employees to a team of over 70 people, with four branches in Shah Alam, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak.

Currently, the company has exclusive distributorship for 27 agency lines in the country and is eyeing the further expansion of its distribution network across the region.



Along the way, Lee was awarded the Asia Pacific Entrepreneur Awards Outstanding Entrepreneur in the Medical Supplies Industry in 2018, while Medi-Life clinched BrandLaureate's SME Best Brands Award 2017/18 in Healthcare Solutions under her leadership.

Most recently, Lee won the Par Excellence Achievement award for the Female Entrepreneur of the Year category (above RM25mil turnover) in SOBA 2020.

Further down the road, Medi-Life has plans to establish a stronger foothold in turnkey projects for both government and private hospitals. The company is also looking to penetrate into new segments beyond the surgical market, namely the peri-operative segment, in 2021.

Bringing fire safety to the masses

Fire Fighter Industry advocates fire safety awareness

EVERY 24 minutes, a fire breaks out in Malaysia, according to the latest statistics reported by the Fire and Rescue Department (Bomba). An average of RM5bil is lost annually to fire, with 4,000 car fires breaking out yearly.

Established in 1974, Fire Fighter Industry Sdn Bhd celebrates its 47th anniversary this year, making it the oldest fire safety company in Malaysia.

The company was founded by Jeffrey Soo and Michelle Hah, when they realised that there was no easy way to acquire and service fire extinguishers, in order to comply with Bomba requirements.

Since then, the company has expanded to become the country's No.1 one-stop centre for fire safety, providing end-to-end services that range from supply and service of fire extinguishers to design, installation and maintenance of full-fledged fire protection systems.

Even with more than four decades of experience under its belt, Fire Fighter Industry was nevertheless impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought about a new normal in the business landscape.

It also sparked the need for rapid change within the fire safety company, as it started to double down on its digital journey to accelerate technology adoption and adapt to the new way of doing business.

Under the first movement control order (MCO) in March 2020, Malaysians were largely forced to stay at home to reduce the spread of Covid-19, with many turning to cooking at home as a necessity.



Jeffrey (second from left), Brian (centre) and Hah (fourth from left) with the Fire Fighter Industry team at the SOBA 2020 Gala Night. — SAMUEL ONG/The Star

While this increased the risk of fires breaking out in residences, everyday Malaysians are largely not equipped with basic fire safety knowledge and equipment in their homes.

In response, Fire Fighter Industry took the initiative to advocate fire safety and boost public awareness. This in turn led to thousands of Malaysian homes being protected by its fire extinguishers that were primarily sold

on its website, even during the MCO, making it easier for end users to acquire their first fire safety product.

On top of this, to reach a wider audience, Fire Fighter Industry has collaborated with trusted brands such as Sepang International Circuit and Lim Tayar to further expose fire safety to the public. The company is also the Official Fire Safety Partner for the Sepang International Circuit, ensuring that



The team behind Fire Fighter Industry in a commemorative group photo taken before the Covid-19 pandemic last year.



Fire Fighter Industry is a market leader in the manufacturing, installation and maintenance of a full range of fire protection systems and their ancillary equipment.

motorsport enthusiasts remain protected both on and off the track.

Apart from these collaborations with vehicle-focused brands, Fire Fighter Industry has also had long-standing partnerships with EcoWorld and LBS to ensure that residential homes in Malaysia are properly protected from fire.

In recognition of its digital initiatives, Fire Fighter Industry was awarded with the Silver award for Best Use of Technology (for the above RM25mil turnover tier) in SOBA 2020.

Meanwhile, its co-founder Hah

was recognised for Meritorious Achievement under the Female Entrepreneur of the Year category in the long-running business awards programme, under the same tier.

Serving as proof that it has charted the right course for its future, the recent SOBA 2020 wins will spur Fire Fighter Industry to focus on leveraging technology further, in order to better protect the nation and its people from fires.

■ Visit www.firefighter.com.my for more information.



Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham (third from left) with BookDoc founder Datuk Chevy Beh (fourth from left) at the signing of a memorandum of understanding to leverage BookDoc's platform in a joint effort to combat Covid-19 in April 2020.



Beh (left) and national squash player Low Wee Wern hold up smartphones displaying the BookDoc app, following a September 2020 press conference to announce free tele-consultation in the Covid-19 and mental health category for Penangites until December the same year, as part of its commitment to support the authorities and frontliners in defending the nation against the pandemic. — ZHAFFARAN NASIB/The Star

Transforming healthcare through tech

BookDoc provides end-to-end holistic digital healthcare solution

MULTI-AWARD winning digital healthcare platform BookDoc, developed by Health4U Solutions Sdn Bhd, has done it again with its award win in SOBA 2020, the latest in the line of accolades it has won both domestically and internationally.

Taking home the Meritorious Achievement award for Best in CSR under the tier for companies with turnover of up to RM25mil, BookDoc is the only company in Malaysia and healthtech company in Asia to be listed in the CNBC Upstart 100 List 2019.

Since its establishment in 2015, BookDoc has won multiple awards and accolades, including winning the recent Healthcare Fintech Alliance (HFA) Innovation Challenge Asia, a competition jointly organised by Pfizer, Alibaba and Fintech Academy to recognise and reward outstanding health technology companies in Asia; and recently being entered into the *Malaysia Book of Records* for the largest participation in its BookDoc Merdeka (Independence Day) Virtual Run.

It also won the Asean Business Awards 2019 (Thailand) and 2020 (Vietnam) and continued its winning streak at the Frost and Sullivan awards for four consecutive years.

Selected as one of the 50 success stories for Digitisation in Asean, BookDoc has been featured on major news portals such as Forbes, Fortune, Bloomberg, Bain Research Report and Newsweek.

And for good reason, too.

BookDoc, which offers its users an end-to-end, comprehensive solution to healthcare at their fingertips, boasts a user base of almost one million users and over 40,000 licensed healthcare providers from various countries listed on its platform, including doctors from major hospitals, clinic groups and chains.

Holistic digital healthcare

BookDoc has been endorsed by several ministries including the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports on various matters, while it also has a long-running partnership with the Social Security Organisation on the Activ@Work initiative to encourage fitness among government servants and employees.



BookDoc's Beh (fourth from left) with Mosti Minister Khairy Jamaluddin (centre), secretary-general Datuk Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir (second from left) and deputy secretary-general Dr Mohd Nor Azman Hassan (left) during a 2020 meeting in support of healthcare innovation.

In addition, it has operational presences in 20 cities and five countries including Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Thailand.

With a holistic approach to digital healthcare, BookDoc aims to improve general health and wellness in society by capitalising on technology to improve accessibility and deliver health, economic and social benefits to its users.

Its digital health ecosystem offers seven main features:

> Search and Book

A one-stop booking platform with healthcare professionals. As a technology enabler for online booking, BookDoc ensures that all doctors listed on its platform are licensed and qualified to practise.

The platform itself integrates seamlessly with navigation (Google Map and Waze), land transport (Uber and Grab), accommodation (Agoda and Airbnb), as well as recommended restaurants and attractions (TripAdvisor) and air transport (Malindo).

> Activ

BookDoc's rewards programme to promote a healthy lifestyle, Activ rewards users based on their step count, which can be integrated with most wearable devices, such as those from Garmin and Apple.

Based on their monthly step

counts, users can redeem rewards and discounts at over 5,200 offline and online redemption touchpoints from BookDoc's rewards partners, with major names including Giant, Beiersdorf (Nivea) and Petron.

More recently, BookDoc also welcomed a number of new rewards partners, including Under Armour, Lazada, Kenny Rogers Roasters, Li-Ning, Himalaya Wellness and Focus Point.

> Marketplace

An e-commerce platform with over 5,000 products and services, including Covid-19 polymerase chain reaction lab tests, health screening, dental, vaccination,

optical and gym memberships among others.

> Tele-Consult

This feature brings healthcare to users' fingertips to allow them to consult a doctor anytime and anywhere via chat or video call, especially for second opinions and on mental health.

Users with sensitive medical issues, who are concerned about privacy, also have the option to chat anonymously.

> Health Coaching

Users can reach out to BookDoc's in-house team of nutritionists and dietitians to seek nutritional and weight management advice.

> Employee Benefits

A seamless, automated and cashless platform for employers to administer their employee benefits.

> News/Events

Through this feature, users can access the latest medical and health information, as well as events such as health talks, marathons and forums in their area.

Towards health and wellness

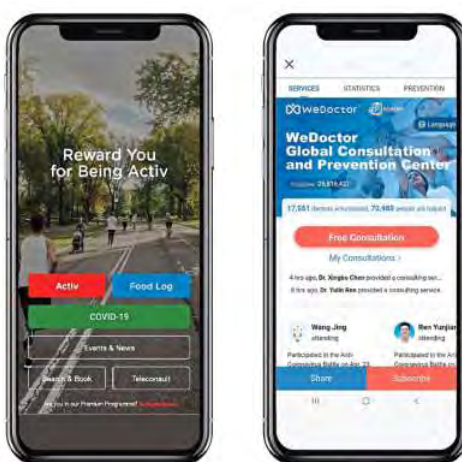
In its mission to transform healthcare with digital technologies, BookDoc often collaborates with non-governmental organisations and academic institutions, as well as with many local government ministries and agencies.

During the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020, as a company involved in the healthcare industry, BookDoc took swift action by partnering with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to offer its Covid-19 digital mobile platform, including:

- > Free virtual health advisories to the public
- > Uberisation of ordering Covid-19 screening tests
- > Access to the latest Covid-19 updates and news;
- > Webinars with medical experts from MOH, including live sessions where viewers can interact with the speakers, as well as recordings of previous sessions.
- > An online appointment system for over 600 government health clinics (Klinik Kesihatan) and virtual clinic services (especially for follow-up cases) to enable teleconsultations, where in-person consultations are not required, to avoid crowding and for physical distancing purposes.

Apart from playing its role to help combat Covid-19, BookDoc has continued pushing forward in advocating for public health and wellness, recently collaborating again with the MOH and other strategic partners including Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer and Universiti Malaya to introduce its mQuit service to encourage Malaysian smokers to quit smoking and help them connect with various facilities and healthcare professionals.

■ The BookDoc App can be downloaded from the Google Play Store, Apple App Store and Huawei Play Store. It is also accessible online at www.bookdoc.com



BookDoc is a multi-award-winning digital healthcare platform that offers users an end-to-end, comprehensive solution for healthcare at their fingertips.

Seeking global opportunities for growth

A1 Globe sets its sights on securing partnerships and distributorships worldwide

HAILING from Seremban, Negri Sembilan, A1 Globe Sdn Bhd has come a long way since its early days as Titi Glove Sdn Bhd, a rubber glove manufacturer in Muar, Johor.

A1 Globe marketing director Terence Lim Soon Hee, a graduate from the Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia, began his venture into the rubber glove business by managing Titi Glove in 2007 and its subsequent capacity expansion to another factory by the name of A1 Glove Sdn Bhd in Nilai, Negri Sembilan, two years later.

It was 2018 when Lim and his wife Sook Chin took the initiative to restructure the company as A1 Globe with its unique business strategy and model, which has steered the company well thus far.

Today, A1 Globe is a manufacturer, distributor, supplier and marketer for powdered and powder free latex examination gloves and powder free nitrile examination gloves, as well as upstream natural latex concentrate of 60% dry rubber content (DRC) and synthetic nitrile to glove manufacturers.

Exporting to more than 25 countries, the company's largest export markets include China, India, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates.

Recently, A1 Globe won big as the Grand Winner under the Rising Star category for SOBA 2020, which recognises promising small and medium enterprises with the



A1 Globe manufactures, distributes and markets latex and nitrile examination gloves, as well as natural latex concentrate of 60% DRC for both the local and international markets.

potential to become future industry leaders.

With its business model revolving around sub-manufacturing and leasing glove production machines with the help of partners, which enables the bulk of its focus and responsibility to be placed on vital aspects such as sales and marketing, production, quality control, as well as packing and shipping.

The company's promise to customers is to provide them with the most competitive prices for consistent quality products, packaging solutions and logistics support worldwide.

At the same time, A1 Globe also actively gives back to the community via its corporate social responsibility initiatives, such as the recent donation of three-ply masks and gloves as well as cash aid to an old folks' home on its

home ground.

Committed to delivering premium and consistent quality to its customers, A1 Globe's products are in compliance with:

- > ISO 13485
- > CE Mark
- > United States Food and Drug Administration
- > European Standard EN 455, EN 374 and EN 388
- > ASTM D3578
- > Food grade overall migration test

The husband and wife team's future plans for A1 Globe, as reflected in its name, is to secure more business partnerships or joint ventures and welcome more distributors from countries around the world.

This is in order to create synergistic business opportunities for the benefit and growth of



Terence Lim (left) and his wife Sook Chin took the helm to strategise and implement a unique business model for the company.

all parties.

With that in mind, however, Lim stressed that it is important to stay true to the company's core values and beliefs.

He said, "The biggest opportunities exist everywhere around the world. We are fully committed to do our part well and perform to

meet customer expectations for win-win situations, which can help build long term business partnerships and establish customer loyalty.

"We must also think creatively and do business in a way that's flexible and agile to respond to changes in the market."

Reaching new heights

Senz champions continuous product research and innovation

FUNCTIONAL and stylish kitchen appliances specialist Senz Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd (Senz) adds more feathers to its cap with its three award wins for SOBA 2020, the crowning glory of the Malaysian brand's journey thus far – with the promise of more innovation to come.

Topping the achievement of receiving a Certificate of Merit in SOBA 2019, Senz competed once again to emerge as the victorious winner of the SOBA 2020 Gold awards for Best in Marketing and Best in Customer Service categories, under the tier for companies with turnover of up to RM25mil.

Moreover, the company had further cause for celebration when its founder and managing director Leong Hong Yin clinched the Outstanding Achievement award for the Female Entrepreneur of the Year category under the same tier.

Established in November 2009, Senz started off by selling electric stoves to end users through exhibitions, roadshows and its own showrooms.

But it was June 2012 that marked the turning point for the company, with the decision to venture into the wholesale industry sparking its exponential growth over a short span of five years.

Today, its business has grown by leaps and bounds, establishing Senz as a strong brand with products that cater to the modern lifestyle, which not only excel in function and technology, but also stylish aesthetic and competitive pricing.



Senz has rapidly expanded its business and operations over the years, with its product range now boasting over 30 unique and innovative products, which are made available through more than 150 authorised dealers across Malaysia.

Its product range, which boasts over 30 unique and innovative kitchen appliances – such as electric stoves and cookers, cooker hoods, built-in electric ovens and gas stoves among others – is made available through more than 150 authorised dealers, to ensure easy accessibility for its customers in both Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia.

The company explores different marketing strategies, dabbling in both traditional and online media to effectively reach out to its customers.

Amongst the mainstream platforms it is active on include radio stations such as 988 FM and MY FM, and television channels such as 8TV and Astro.

For its digital footprint in marketing and promotional efforts, Senz has its own website and Google business page, alongside establishing a social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Tik Tok, as well as utilising content marketing websites.

Throughout it all, however, the foundation that underpins the



Leong won the Outstanding Achievement award under the Female Entrepreneur of the Year category for the up to RM25mil turnover tier in SOBA 2020. — IZZRAFIQ ALIAS/The Star

brand's growth lies in its determination to swim against the tide to boldly make its own mark in the industry.

It does so by undertaking continuous research and innovation to constantly create new products that can enrich the culinary experience of its customers and elevate the aesthetics of their kitchens.

When it first began, for instance, it chose to market angled design cooker hoods instead of taking the conventional route of producing chimney design cooker hoods. Furthermore, its electric cookers and fully digital built-in electric ovens come equipped with German technology.

Recently, the brand introduced its latest IntelClean series, a cooker hood that comes with an auto-cleaning function that enables

the appliance to clean itself thoroughly at the press of a button.

Senz also introduced the country's first Tri-Ringz Gas Hob to the market.

Transcending the simple functionality of traditional gas cookers, the kitchen appliance offers three cooking zones in one burner and four unique fire modes.

Another recent launch is its Futex Ceran heat-resistant ceramic glass for its electric cooker series, which can withstand heat of up to 700°C and features a combination matte and gloss surface.

With a vision of becoming the No.1 functional yet stylish kitchen appliances brand, Senz is making significant inroads in helping more Malaysians transform their ordinary kitchens into efficient, stylish and environmentally friendly cooking spaces.

ROUGHLY a decade ago, it was the norm for the majority of businesses – from highly specialised industries such as aviation, automotive and electronic manufacturers to industries with general cleaning needs like food processing – to perform all their wiping and cleaning duties using cotton rags.

Typically originating from questionable sources, there was no way to guarantee the hygiene and safety of such rags, which may contain and transfer harmful substances such as lead and cadmium, as well as hazardous chemicals and viruses, onto the surfaces they come into contact with.

On top of that, these rags were highly inefficient when it came to serving their intended purpose: wiping and soaking up liquids.

It was then that RPD Sdn Bhd saw the need to create a superior quality material for cleaning, which could be hygienic, safe and sustainable yet affordable for all businesses.

As such, it pioneered a proprietary process called AquaKnitify™ that enabled the innovation of an advanced wiping material using technologically advanced fibre as a base.

It resulted in the creation of Greenwipes®, an extremely durable, hygienic, absorbent and lightweight wiping material.

Its versatility was remarkable and has since been seamlessly incorporated into cleaning and wiping jobs across countless industries.

This includes aviation, automotive, electrical and electronic, manufacturing, food processing, food and beverage, as well as healthcare.

Priced significantly cheaper than all other wiping alternatives



RPD is the pioneer of proprietary process AquaKnitify™, which enabled the creation of Greenwipes®, a durable, hygienic, absorbent and lightweight wiping material.



TRADITIONAL RAGS



MODERN RAGS

Traditional cotton rags used for cleaning may contain and transfer harmful substances, hazardous chemicals and viruses onto the surfaces they come into contact with.

A revolution in cleaning

RPD supports industries with a better wiping solution

RPD
An Innovative Company

Today, RPD's Greenwipes® serve thousands of clients of all sizes, ranging from small and medium enterprises to Fortune 500 companies across a variety of industries.

Combating surface transmissions

At the height of the Covid-19 pandemic last year, the country went into a panic buying frenzy to purchase disinfectants, leading to a scarce supply of quality disinfectants.

This was when RPD, ahead of the curve in wiping solutions, became an indispensable partner to the healthcare sector with its Greenwipes® disinfecting range, GShield™.

Tested by leading independent testing laboratory SGS, all products under the Greenwipes® GShield™ range are certified effective against 99.99% of all bacteria and viruses, notably including the novel coronavirus Covid-19.

Many businesses still mistakenly believe that hand sanitising alone in a workplace setting is sufficient to stop the transmission of the highly contagious virus.

The fact, however, is that pathogens are able to survive and remain infectious on surfaces for anywhere between a few hours and a few months.

This means that an individual might catch a disease simply by touching a contaminated surface, long after the infected individual

has left the area.

To address such risks is the GShield™ disinfecting range, which focuses on eliminating surface-to-hand transmissions that are equally, if not more, risky.

With GShield™, employees can safely return to their workplaces with peace of mind, while companies will be able to continue operating smoothly to minimise losses from business disruptions.

It is the ideal solution for disinfecting meeting rooms, computers, work desks and public spaces with high human traffic like office buildings, malls, retail spaces, schools and universities.

■ To find out more, log on to greenwipes.com.my and myrpd.com

Turning parenthood dreams into reality

Genesis IVF combines expertise and technology to help couples conceive



FOR many couples, welcoming a child into their lives is the genesis in their journey of parenthood and a way they can leave behind a legacy of love.

Like how genesis marks the beginning of a new world, Genesis IVF & Women's Specialist Centre (Genesis IVF) is ready to be part of every couple's new world, complete with the child of their dreams.

Established in June 2017, Genesis IVF is strategically located in the historical United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage City, George Town, Penang, within the newly developed luxurious shopping hub, Gurney Paragon Mall.

A one-stop centre of excellence that offers personalised high-quality fertility treatments and care to deliver every couple's dream to conceive, Genesis IVF was co-founded by Dr Ng Peng Wah, the entrepreneur responsible for driving the centre's rapid growth into a leading IVF centre in the medical tourism industry.

Access to leading tech

Coupled with exclusive access to the latest technologies under the

umbrella of the Alpha IVF Group – alongside other ancillary services to provide patients with advanced fertility care – the centre is equipped with a complete list of treatments that caters to the various needs of couples.

Genesis IVF provides a comprehensive list of fertility treatments, including in-vitro fertilisation (IVF), intra-uterine insemination, intracytoplasmic sperm injection and cryo-freezing to gynaecology check-ups and laparoscopic surgery, to name a few.

Among the proven technologies it has include pre-implantation genetic diagnosis/pre-implantation genetic screening with Ion Torrent next-generation sequencing, embryo freezing with Cryotec® with 100% post-thaw survival for embryo/blastocyst.

Based on the technologies available at its centre, it comes as no surprise that Genesis IVF emerged with a Silver award win under the Best Use of Technology category for the up to RM25mil turnover tier in SOBA 2020.

At the same time, its contemporary facilities are complete with outpatient clinics, embryology and andrology laboratories, operating theatre, daycare beds and en suite



rooms with a panoramic sea view.

Placing its valued patients as the utmost priority, the centre also understands the personal needs of modern-day couples.

As such, Genesis IVF has an exquisite patient lounge with a coffee station and a cosy working area to help patients feel at ease during their time at the centre.

Dedicated, committed team

Genesis IVF's centre is backed by a dedicated and committed team of fertility specialists and allied health professionals, spearheaded and led

by its co-founder Dr Ng.

Dr Ng, a renowned and familiar name in the region's IVF industry, has over 28 years of experience under his belt. With his accumulated talents and experiences over the years, he has numerous successes to his name.

Dr Ng's areas of specialty include PGS and PGD, as this increases the success rate for pregnancy, as well as reduces the chance of chromosomal abnormalities.

Besides having an experienced team of fertility specialists, the centre is also supported by a team of talented and experienced

embryologists and fertility nurses to provide unsurpassed patient care.

Working together towards the same aim – to serve and realise each and every couple's dream of parenthood – Genesis IVF's team has helped thousands of parents in the region to successfully conceive and deliver healthy babies, throughout their years of experience.

■ To learn more about how Genesis IVF can help deliver your dreams, start your journey at www.genesisivf.com.my

Genesis IVF is a one-stop centre of excellence that offers personalised high-quality fertility treatments and care to deliver every couple's dream to conceive.

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