

# Star Special

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SOBA 2023

## Market leaders rise to the occasion

SOBA submissions impress judges again with participants showing sharp acumen



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# Strengthening SMEs by helping raise quality

SOBA 2023 concludes the year with stronger submissions, greater networking ties

AS 2023 saw another successful offering of the 14th Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) from organisers, Star Media Group (SMG).

Launched on May 26 last year, the event was themed “Shaping new possibilities” and pays tribute to all the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that have been at the forefront of the Malaysian economy.

The theme encourages these stalwart businesses to continue reinventing themselves in order to keep ahead of the competition and market trends. To constantly remain plugged into the pulse of consumers within and without the nation.

The SOBA 2023 itself recognises and honours these enterprising businesses that, in their effort to grow and strengthen their position in their respective industries, managed to make an indelible mark in their progress.

In his speech former SMG chief executive officer Alex Yeow said that local enterprises play a vital role in the local economy, and the pandemic as well as current economic climate have shown how adaptive they are to changes, continuously innovating and constantly breaking barriers to success.

“It is more important now than ever to recognise the resilience, innovation and determination that SMEs have shown,” said Yeow.

## Connecting for success

Adding to the list of events lined up for 2023 is the SOBA Connect where past SOBA winners impart their success journey and experiences with SOBA Biz Club members.

The first event kicked off on June 28 featuring SOBA Malaysian Business of the Year (MBoY) award winners Secret Recipe Cakes and Cafe Sdn Bhd managing director Patrick Sim (MBoY 2022) and Ikonik Eye Specialist Centre Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Addaem Chandran (MBoY 2018), moderated by Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCIM) treasurer Datuk Koong Lin Loong.

The second event was held on Aug 24 with MBoY 2021 winner for RM25mil and above Alpro Alliance Sdn Bhd, represented by Alpro Foundation CEO Ostwin Paw and SOBA 2011 Entrepreneur of the Year silver award winner myNews Holdings Berhad founder and group CEO Dang Tai Luk, moderated by the Malaysia Entrepreneurs’ Development Association (PUMM) national vice president



(From left) SMG chief business officer Lydia Wang, Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) chief business officer Sean Tan, CelcomDigi Berhad chief enterprise business officer Afizulazha Abdullah, former SMG group CEO Alex Yeow, Matrade strategic planning division senior director Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman, RHB Bank SME banking head Yip How Nang, PKT Logistics Group group chief executive and managing director Datuk Seri Michael Tio and SMG group chief content officer Esther Ng at the launch of SOBA 2023 at Cybertorium, Menara Star, Petaling Jaya.



Guests enjoying the chance to network at the SOBA 2023 Prestige, Feb 27, 2024. — Photos by GLENN GUAN, YAP CHEE HONG, LOW LAY PHON and SAMUEL ONG/The Star

Datuk Teh Tai Yong.

## Informative empowerment

SOBA also held its LAB (Learn. Aspire. Build.) series of educational seminars that sought to provide valuable business insights to SMEs participants on upcoming business trends and available opportunities from participating partners.

The first was held on July 27 at Menara Star, Petaling Jaya and conducted in Bahasa Melayu while the second was conducted in Mandarin and Cantonese at the Iconic Hotel in Bukit Mertajam, Penang on Sept 21.

SOBA also hosted its first CEO Power Talk, which featured prominent leaders of successful SMEs in a knowledge-sharing session on how they expanded

their businesses.

Held on Oct 23 at Menara Star, Petaling Jaya, the occasion also presented a great opportunity to those attending the get-together to network, exchange ideas and gather business opportunities.

To make the session educational, two separate discussions were held that featured ZCOVA Sdn Bhd managing director and founder Low Ziwei, KIP Real Estate Investment (REIT) Trust Management Sdn Bhd CEO Valerie Ong Pui Shan, Acestar Sdn Bhd group CEO Natalie Sit and Majestic Emerald Sdn Bhd director Cheri Leong, moderated by StarBiz deputy news editor Doreenn Leong.

## Judging excellence

When deliberating the entries

for the SOBA awards, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) strategic planning division senior director Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman remarked that this year’s submissions were stronger in terms of participants more forthcoming in presenting their ESG credentials.

“There is a lot of passion from business owners, to be innovative in their products, to increase efficiency in production, but they also try not only to achieve a balance in profitability but also to ensure that their business and product services are sustainable environmentally,” he said.

While Branding Association of Malaysia president Datin Winnie Loo said joining an award like SOBA helps SMEs, especially

those in the below RM25mil tier.

PUMM’s Datuk Teh said Malaysian companies have grown much during the post-Covid days, the results of which were shown as a quality increase in 2022 and 2023.

“Companies that have withstood Covid-19 did so because of the resilience of their business model and have bounced back even stronger, even when compared to their pre-Covid performance,” he added.

Malaysia Retail Chain Association vice-president Datuk Vincent Choo said: “Taking part in SOBA will give companies an added advantage because the award is recognised in Malaysia so many companies aspire to have a SOBA award to add credibility to their company profile.”

Datuk Koong of ACCIM said, “It is beyond the bottomline, you must see what their vision is, their commitments, their attitude, and especially their commitment to the product and the business, as well as the people who are working as a team in the company.”

## Evening of prestige

This year’s SOBA Prestige event, which is a socialising event that pays tribute to its past award winners all the way back to the first awards ceremony held in 2010.

Held at Colony Space KLCC, the event was graced by CGC chief business officer Sean Tan; Matrade deputy CEO Abu Bakar Yusuf; CelcomDigi Bhd head of central (Direct) Lee Chee Yuen and SME Planning and Channel Development head Tony Tan Wee Beng; RHB Bank Bhd SME Business Development head Kelvin Chin Wen Jye, Regional Business Development head Jessie Tan Swan Mun and SME Banking head Yip How Nang; as well as venue host Colony Space Asia Sdn Bhd, represented by Brand and Partnerships head Justin Lim.

SOBA 2023 is organised by Star Media Group with CelcomDigi Bhd, Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd and RHB Bank Bhd as main sponsors, and Matrade as the official trade promotion partner.

Supported by Bursa Malaysia, SOBA is audited by BDO, while radio station 988 and Suria are official media partners.

To learn more about SOBA, call SMG Events (017-231 1789) or go to [www.soba.com.my](http://www.soba.com.my)



Ikonik Eye Specialist Centre Sdn Bhd CEO Addaem Chandran sharing his experience with Datuk Koong at the SOBA Connect at Cybertorium, Menara Star.



SOBA 2023 final round judging: (from left) Datin Winnie Loo, Datuk Koong, Raja Badrulnizam, Datuk Vincent Choo and Datuk Teh, with BDO executive director Mok Chew Yin standing at back.



ZCOVA Sdn Bhd managing director and founder Low Ziwei (middle) and KIP Real Estate Investment (REIT) Trust Management Sdn Bhd CEO Valerie Ong Pui Shan (right) share their knowledge with moderator StarBiz deputy news editor Doreenn Leong (left) at the SOBA CEO PowerTalk.

# The leader in retail technology solution



## Xilnex

Web Bytes Sdn Bhd empowers retailers with innovative technology solutions

**“Web Bytes provides an end-to-end ecosystem of retail tech solutions designed to simplify operations and drive business growth.”**

ESTABLISHED in 2007, Web Bytes Sdn Bhd has been at the forefront of innovation, crafting dynamic and feature-rich retail solutions to empower businesses.

Its mission is simple: to provide clients with tailor-made, reliable and forward-thinking digital solutions that drive growth, efficiency and success.

With a skilful team of founders and software engineers, the company brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the table, efficient at addressing customer pain points with its software platforms and infrastructures.

Having collaborated with numerous multinational corporations, the Web Bytes team has developed its expertise in developing cutting-edge SaaS platforms and business solutions.

From cutting-edge technology like Xilnex Omnichannel (Point-of-Sales) POS System to the Lightweight version of iPad POS and Android Mobile POS that cater for small and medium-sized enterprises and chain-store enterprise merchants internationally.

Web Bytes provides an end-to-end ecosystem of retail tech solutions designed to simplify operations and drive business growth.

The lineup includes Xilnex LiveOrder, Xilnex Loyalty App and Xilnex Voucher Network to enhance customer engagement.

With these solutions, Xilnex develops robust and scalable software that suits

the retail and food and beverage (F&B) business needs, empowering the business to expand to more markets.

Recognising the importance of data analytics in customer retention and growth, Xilnex introduces Xilnex Insights, a cutting-edge solution.

It provides valuable insights such as customer segmentation, identifying key customers and assessing churn risk.

This enables merchants to better understand customer behaviour and run more effective marketing campaigns for increased profitability.

Additionally, Xilnex has created a unique feature known as the CX Builder, aimed at streamlining the customer journey through automated processes.

With preset automation settings, this technology is designed to mimic human behaviour, automatically rewarding vouchers or credits upon task completion.

Thus, it helps them coordinate accord-



Xilnex's complete solutions are suited to retail and F&B business needs, empowering them to expand to more markets.

ingly for everyone to receive sufficient help and support to complete their task, enabling the stronger ones to help those in need.

Web Bytes is committed to continuous improvement tailored to the needs of businesses.

On top of its strong market presence in Malaysia, Web Bytes' Xilnex solution has made its mark in various Asean countries, including Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore.

In addition, it has established registered regional offices in Cambodia and Vietnam to better serve the needs of

its local customers.

With a global presence of over 5,000 customers and 30,000 installations worldwide, its reach continues to grow, revolutionising businesses on a global scale.

Web Bytes Sdn Bhd does not just provide solutions; it is paving the way for a brighter F&B and retail future.

It is committed to empowering the F&B and retail sectors, embracing change and seeing challenges as opportunities.

With a forward-thinking vision, the team believes in endless possibilities and strives to turn obstacles into avenues for growth.

# Standing resilient in healthcare approach

**SUNWAY**  
MEDICAL CENTRE®  
Penang

SUNWAY Medical Centre Penang (SMCP) stands as the latest addition to the Sunway Healthcare Group's subsidiary, having officially begun its operations on Nov 11, 2022.

Positioned as a prominent tertiary hospital in the Northern Region, SMCP has rapidly established itself as a comprehensive tertiary care facility, offering an extensive array of 50 medical specialties.

Supported by a team of highly skilled specialists and leveraging the latest advancements in healthcare technology, the centre is committed to delivering top-tier medical services to the public.

Serving as the Northern hub of Sunway Healthcare, the hospital further strengthens the group's commitment to providing quality healthcare services across the region.

SMCP consistently pursues cutting-edge technology to enhance its healthcare services. Recently, the hospital marked a milestone by celebrating 50 successful robotic cases. This achievement underscores the hospital's commitment to advancing patient care through innovative medical techniques.

Recognising the significance of a holistic approach in patient care, the hospital has taken a bold step to go beyond medical treatments.

This was demonstrated through the recent launch of a patient support group that aims to fill the void and ensure that the local community benefits from a comprehensive support system by addressing the broader spectrum of well-being.



By extending support beyond medical interventions, the hospital endeavours to accompany patients through every aspect of their recovery journey, fostering a sense of solidarity and empowerment within the community.

Moreover, the deployment of a stroke protocol at SMCP, aligned with global standards set by the ANGELS Initiative, aims to optimise the outcome during the critical "golden hour" period.

Concurrently, efforts to enhance emergency response include the implementation of the STEMI network and ambulanc-

es to incorporate 5G-enabled technology, transforming them into advanced Heart Attack Ambulances.

This enables real-time transmission of ECG reports to the emergency department, ensuring preparedness for immediate patient care.

The hospital also serves as a centralised hub offering not only medical services but also a seamless treatment experience.

Conveniently situated in the vibrant area of Seberang Jaya, it is surrounded by the Sunway Hotel, Sunway Mall and many eateries.

This location ensures that companions accompanying patients for treatment can feel at ease with various amenities readily available.

Moreover, SMCP goes a step further by providing complimentary shuttle services for international patients, facilitating transportation to and from the airport and enabling them to explore nearby attractions with ease.

SMCP strives to establish a personal touch with patients throughout their journey to foster a memorable recovery experience.

Serving as the Northern hub of Sunway Healthcare, SMCP further strengthens the group's commitment to providing quality healthcare services across the region.



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Located in the bustling Melaka airport centre, 123 Live Mall operates from the integrated commercial centre.



The team behind 123 Live Mall's success. The mall attracts, recruits and retains professional hosts with expertise, passion and eloquence.

# Creating positive energy for success

ESTABLISHED in March 2018, 123 Live Mall Malaysia Sdn Bhd is a Malaysian trading company that pioneered innovative online marketing through the "live streaming" model, seamlessly extending to offline operations and various marketing channels.

Its primary focus is on the management of crystal minerals, Feng Shui boutique items and high-end accessories.

Over 180 varieties of high-quality crystal minerals, pearls, including imported fossils, and a diverse range of Feng Shui ornaments were carefully selected to craft a collection of high-end and premium jewellery.

Located in the bustling Melaka airport centre, 123 Live Mall operates from the integrated commercial centre, Wisma 123 Live Mall, consisting of five interconnected buildings.

Within the boutique storefront, the mall features a one-of-a-kind natural crystal mineral energy experience room, energy water experience and an opulent open Buddhist hall – unique elements not found elsewhere in Malaysia.

It also possesses a private warehouse covering 20,000sq ft (1,858sq m).

Furthermore, with two independent branches currently operational in Cambodia and ongoing development, it aims to expand its presence to other countries in the future.

123 Live Mall is dedicated to continuous innovation in product development technology and craftsmanship, consistently upgrading its infrastructure and management levels.

Leveraging years of accumulated management experience and

a robust brand operation, it leads the industry with advanced business concepts, management models, outstanding quality and a comprehensive service system.

Its achievements span both domestic and international online and offline business markets, catering to the diverse needs of consumers from entry-level to high-end.

It has also received certifications from major business awards in Malaysia.

Since 2022, it has invested in expanding its business to include wellness products and beauty care.

Successfully creating its own brand series, 123 Live Mall obtained halal and SGS official certifications for its products, along with trademark registrations.

This signifies its transformation into a modern commercial group that integrates "Feng Shui, crystals, e-commerce, beauty care and wellness," achieving new milestones and heights in the Malaysian live streaming industry.

Within just a year, it not only achieved a successful transition in audience engagement and diversified into various fields but also gained high recognition from the general consumer audience.

The unique brands and diverse products of 123 Live Mall Malaysia Sdn Bhd reflect the taste and foresight of its core team.

It was committed to conveying positive energy, promoting holistic health, and embracing the aesthetic ideals of a new era.

Through exquisite products



123 Live Mall focuses on the management of crystal minerals, Feng Shui boutique items and high-end accessories.

and high-quality services, it simplifies the ordering process across different channels and pioneer diverse marketing strategies.

Its long-term vision and goal are to provide a wide range of members with quality products at competitive prices.

## Vision and mission

123 Live Mall is committed to providing the most professional and highest quality services to a wide customer base, creating a new experience for online and offline shopping.

It delved deep into the realm of crystals, then expanded its vision to include beauty and wellness products.

Since 2024, the mall has strove to attract, recruit and retain professional hosts with expertise, passion and eloquence.

Through specialised training that covers areas such as crystals, jewellery, beauty and wellness, it aims to convey correct knowledge and principles to all customers and fortunate individuals.

123 Live Mall consistently upholds the five standards of "Pursue Excellence," "Innovate Breakthroughs," "Enhance

Services," "Create Value" and "Lead Industry Benchmarks."

It pays attention to every detail and seeks excellence in quality.

In the days to come, the mall will continuously enhance headquarters equipment and professional departments, including mail quality, transportation processes, team quality and the selection of all provided and production chain qualities.

Additionally, 123 Live Mall will invest in developing various internal software and hardware, focusing on improving service efficiency. It prioritises customer satisfaction, committing to providing the safest, most reliable and top-notch services.

In the coming years, it will expand the business scope, covering various regions in Malaysia and extending to overseas markets like Vietnam and Cambodia, becoming a leader in the fields of online live streaming and e-commerce.

## Strong core values

The motto "customers are our endless pursuit and treasure" embodies the reputation of 123 Live Mall.

It approaches all customers

and employees' families with a heart of tolerance, friendliness and trust.

Simultaneously, it is open to listening to market and consumer opinions, appreciating, filtering and adopting others' viewpoints, and respecting consumers' feelings. It strives for maximum affirmation in after-sales service.

123 Live Mall respects product intellectual property and personalisation, pursuing action guided by performance and goals.

It embraces change at all times and is eager to try new things, while respecting traditional cultural customs.

The company focuses on team performance over individual performance, and it takes responsibility for its behaviour and network corporate culture.

Its core values are

- > quality: to lead in standards and strive for perfection
- > integrity: being honest, doing the right thing
- > service: diligently respect, provide a quality experience
- > community: to unite passion, to build dreams together
- > innovation: to spark innovation and to continuously exceed expectations.

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# Legacy of quality

VitaHealth reflects on 77 years of trusted supplements

VITAHEALTH has emerged as a trailblazer in the field of healthcare since its establishment in 1947 as a retail pharmacy. Evolving significantly over the decades, the company embarked on a transformative path in 1973 with the introduction of its line of dietary supplements.

This pivotal moment marked the beginning of VitaHealth's journey towards becoming a leading healthcare establishment, with a strong presence across Malaysia, Singapore, China, Vietnam, Brunei, Thailand and Indonesia.

As a subsidiary of Vita Life Sciences, a distinguished Australian-owned healthcare company listed on the Australian Securities Exchange, VitaHealth is dedicated to delivering quality health supplements.

The team of devoted health experts proactively anticipates emerging market trends and develops new products to meet the ever-evolving health needs of modern lifestyles.

"VitaHealth firmly believes that supplements are not limited to the elderly or individuals with health issues," stated Vita Life Sciences country head Dr K.S. Beh.

"We champion the idea that true quality of life encompasses more than just physical well-being, it also includes mental and



emotional wellness.

"Our commitment lies in promoting healthier, happier lives.

"This philosophy resonates deeply with our tagline: Healthy Life, Happy Vibes."

The brand has inducted national badminton player Pearly Tan as its brand ambassador.

Tan embodies the company's core values, further strengthening its commitment to fostering a healthy and joyful lifestyle for all.

In 2014, VitaHealth unveiled the nation's inaugural turmeric supplement, marking a significant milestone in its dedication to promoting the manifold benefits of this remarkable spice.

In 2021, VitaHealth took a pioneering leap forward by launching a groundbreaking mental wellness series.

It continued this innovative trajectory by introducing a range of nutritional drinks called VLIFE in 2023 tailored for the dynamic lifestyles of busy young adults.

VitaHealth prioritises maintaining the highest standards of quality by adhering to strict manufacturing practices and comply-

ing with stringent regulatory standards, ensuring that customers receive products they can trust.

Furthermore, VitaHealth products undergo thorough testing and certification to guarantee Halal certification and absence of substances prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

The commitment of the company extends beyond the pills. We uphold a belief in giving back to the community by weaving health and happiness into their community outreach efforts.

Whether through financial contributions, volunteer efforts or collaborations with charitable organisations, it remains committed to nurturing well-being and spreading joy within the communities it serves.

It further demonstrates its commitment to community health by offering complimentary health tests and consultations to help individuals make informed health choices.

Its team of health experts provides personalised recommendations tailored to address each



Beh: 'Our commitment lies in promoting healthier, happier lives.'

customer's specific needs and objectives.

"As we celebrate our 77th anniversary and propel forward, our vision is to stand at the forefront of pioneering health and wellness solutions, nurturing health awareness and empowering individuals to lead fulfilling lives," added Beh.

"We aspire to be more than just a supplement provider; we

aim to be a trusted partner in our customers' journey towards optimal health and happiness, both their physical and mental wellness.

"By consistently embracing innovation and staying true to our core values, we see VitaHealth as a beacon of wellness, shaping a brighter and healthier future for generations to come."

## Shaping the future with drone training, certification

DRONE Academy Asia is not just a mere training provider – it aims to ignite passion, fosters innovation and empowers professionals to soar to new heights.

Since 2018, Drone Academy Asia has been committed to harnessing the potential of drone technology.

Its track record of training the most remote pilots in Malaysia showcases our dedication to the drone industry.

"Drone Academy Asia is more than an educational institution; it's a gateway to realising aspirations and shaping futures," says director and accountable manager Erin Hoo.

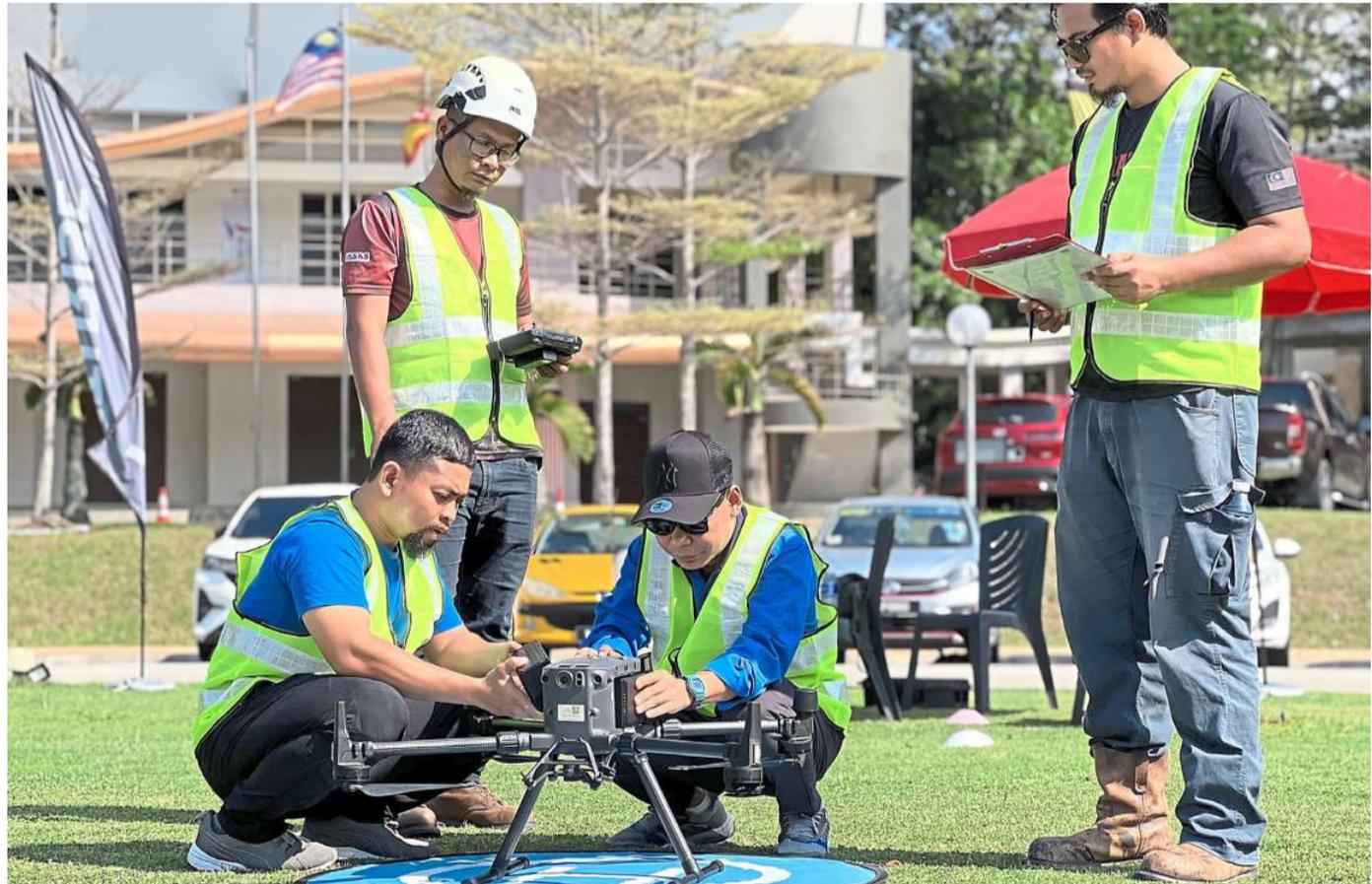
"We're dedicated to empowering our trainees to embrace their capabilities fully. Our comprehensive training programmes and cutting-edge technology solutions are more than just tools – they are pathways to success in an ever-evolving world."

Hoo's return to Malaysia to lead Drone Academy Asia shows a commitment to contributing to the nation's growth.

Hoo's leadership ensures that the academy remains focused on its mission to empower individuals and professionals to thrive in the drone industry.

From optimising plantation management to conducting complex infrastructure inspections and exploring renewable energy frontiers, drones have become indispensable tools.

As industries embrace drone technology, the academy leads the charge, guiding and equip-



From optimising plantation management to conducting complex infrastructure inspections and exploring renewable energy frontiers, drones have become indispensable tools.

ping professionals to harness its full potential.

Looking ahead, it is committed to expanding its reach and impact, catering to industry professionals' evolving needs and challenges.

Through strategic collaboration with leading organisations and experts, it is fostering a culture of

knowledge sharing, spurring innovation and nurturing talent.

Together, through joint initiatives and co-innovation projects, it will unlock new possibilities for growth, efficiency, and sustainability.

The academy's efforts align with the government's initiatives to cultivate industry profession-

als, providing them with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the digital era.

By empowering professionals in the drone industry, the government recognises the importance of fostering a skilled workforce that can drive innovation and contribute to our nation.

Join Drone Academy Asia on

this exciting journey as it redefines the future of drone technology and training.

Welcome to the future of drone technology – welcome to Drone Academy Asia.

**For more information on drone technology or training needs, visit [www.drone-asia.com](http://www.drone-asia.com)**

# Realising 'care for life', for all



**KPJ DAMANSARA**  
SPECIALIST HOSPITAL

## Setting new standards in patient care and operational excellence

KPJ DAMANSARA Specialist Hospital thrives on a foundation of excellence, innovation and compassion.

Its growth is anchored in a patient-first approach, embracing cutting-edge medical technologies, nurturing the staff's development and engaging with its community.

It aims to set regional benchmarks in healthcare by delivering personalised, high-quality care, pioneering medical breakthroughs and extending compassion beyond its walls.

The achievements, such as the adoption of advanced medical procedures and impactful community programmes, exemplify its commitment to "Care for Life".

These efforts underscore the hospital's mission to not only meet but exceed the evolving healthcare needs of its patients and community, ensuring the hospital stays at the forefront of medical excellence.

### Overcoming the odds

The hospital circumvented two major challenges in the past year, including bridging the digital literacy gap among its staff and addressing a nurse staffing shortage.

In response, it initiated comprehensive digital training programmes, equipping its team with the skills to leverage healthcare technologies effectively.

This enhanced efficiency and patient care quality by enabling staff to adeptly manage electronic medical records and



telemedicine services.

To combat the nurse shortage, the hospital launched targeted recruitment drives, offered competitive incentives and fostered a supportive work environment that emphasises work-life balance and professional growth.

These efforts not only filled its staffing gaps but also reinforced its commitment to delivering exceptional healthcare services, ensuring the team remains well equipped and motivated to face the evolving demands of healthcare.

### Forecasting success

Coming into 2024, KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital anticipates a landscape of both opportunities and challenges, shaped by economic recovery, technological advancements, regulatory changes and evolving consumer preferences.

Its recent inclusion as a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network via the strategic collaboration between KPJ Healthcare Bhd and Mayo Clinic, a globally renowned institution known for its excellence in healthcare, research and education, is a testament to its commitment to excellence and innovation, offering the hospital unparalleled access to global medical expertise and resources.

This collaboration sees KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital and Damansara Specialist Hospital 2 as the first and only Mayo Clinic Care Network members in Malaysia, a significant step towards progress in medical research, innovation and patient care in Malaysia.

Its clinicians and medical experts will now have access to Mayo Clinic's clinical tools and services, while the collaboration aligns with the hospital's objective to posi-

tion itself as the preferred choice for international patients seeking treatment abroad, particularly in this region.

Malaysia is celebrated for its tourism appeal, which includes the country's world-class healthcare facilities and services.

Optimistic for its prospects in 2024, the hospital will be focusing on patient-centred care, innovation, adaptability and resilience as it is well equipped to navigate the dynamic environment.

Its strategic initiatives, including expanding its services and investing in its staff, position the hospital to enhance its healthcare delivery and meet the changing needs of the patients and community. With these efforts, the hospital is poised not just to fare well but to thrive, setting new standards in patient care and operational excellence.

### Future plans

KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital is committed to reaching new heights by focusing on personalised patient care, operational excellence and becoming a leading medical tourism hub.

The approach includes actively soliciting and incorporating patient feedback to continuously improve its services. It invests in regular training for staff, ensuring they provide healthcare experiences that foster trust and compassion.

It is also enhancing its facilities and services to strengthen its position as a premier destination for medical tourism, with targeted marketing strategies to attract international patients.



**BUSINESS THAT DEFINES US, CULTURE THAT BINDS US**

**WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD** is a company founded with a goal to transform the F&B landscape through leading a shift in taste and consumer preferences in Malaysia and beyond.



We aim to introduce different culture through food and beverages, while providing delicious food and beverages to everyone.

We pride ourselves in offering our customers a cultural food experience that they would always remember, from the renowned and nutritious Spanish natural frozen yogurt **Ilaollao**, to our very own casual fine-dining restaurant **TBC**, to the original Thai tea – **ChaTraMue**, and our own coconut shake specialty store, **Shae.co**.



# Celebrating love in conjugal glory

Creating the ultimate venue for weddings began with a dream

THE Boathouse emerges as a beacon of hope. Nestled in the heart of Ampang Jaya, this venue is the brainchild of founders who once dreamed of making weddings not just memorable but deeply personal.

Built in 2021 amid trying times, the venue stands as a testament to their vision, offering couples the chance to celebrate their love in a setting that is both unique and heartfelt.

But the Boathouse is no ordinary wedding venue, as it boasts two distinct halls, each with its own story and ambiance: the Dome and the Glasshouse.

These spaces are inspired by the founders' own love story and their encounters that led them to create a place where love is celebrated in its most beautiful form.

The Glasshouse, in particular, is a marvel that captures the essence of a profound love story the founders encountered during a visit to England.

They were touched by the warmth and hospitality of an elderly couple living in a quaint wooden house. Through conversations filled with tales of love, companionship and lifelong

devotion, the founders were inspired to create the Glasshouse.

It's a concept that embodies the warmth, welcome and everlasting love. With its transparent walls, this hall invites the natural

The Glasshouse invites the natural beauty of its surroundings inside, creating a serene and magical setting for couples to exchange vows.

beauty of its surroundings inside, creating a serene and magical setting for couples to exchange vows.

While the Dome redefines event hosting in Malaysia, merging architectural elegance with avant-garde technology.

Born from the founders' inspiration during a voyage to the Arab world, this venue transforms gatherings into unforgettable experiences with its state-of-the-art projection mapping.

This innovative feature morphs the hall into any imaginable setting, from mystical forests to starlit skies, captivating guests upon entry.

Strategic lighting enhances this immersive environment, creating intimate ambiances that complement the vivid projections.

The Dome's unique design also optimises acoustics, ensuring



BOATHOUSE

crystal-clear sound that enriches every event, from speeches to musical performances.

Beyond traditional celebrations, the Dome is poised to host a diverse array of events, including product launches, corporate dinners and vibrant parties.

The founders' journey to bring the blessing of love back to Malaysia was not without its challenges.

Yet despite hurdles of the Covid-19 pandemic and lock-



The Boathouse melds the enchanting Glasshouse (left, attached to main building) with the innovative Dome (right), creating a unique venue for memorable events.

downs, their determination never wavered. They believed in the power of love and the importance of starting a marriage with blessings and dreams.

The Boathouse represents a symbol of their commitment to offering Malaysian couples a place where dreams are realised and love is celebrated in its purest form.

For those dreaming of a wedding that breaks away from the norm, seeking a celebration that is both simple and deeply meaningful, it presents a perfect choice.

It's a decision to begin their journey together in a place that has been touched by the magic of a love story that spanned nearly

six decades, a place where their own love story can flourish and grow, blessed by the very essence of the Boathouse's creation.

The Boathouse melds the enchanting Glasshouse with the innovative Dome, creating a unique venue for memorable events.

Inspired by love and technological marvels, it offers immersive experiences through advanced projection mapping and natural beauty.

Ideal for both intimate and grand occasions, the venue stands as a testament to the fusion of tradition and innovation, making every gathering unforgettable.



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The introduction of these business plans is CelcomDigi's continuous efforts to accelerate the digitalisation of more Malaysian businesses.



# All-in-one business postpaid plans

Providing affordable access to digital solutions with uncapped high-speed Internet, equal data for all lines, and free data roaming from RM80/month

CELCOMDIGI Berhad (CelcomDigi) unveiled a suite of its all-in-one Business Postpaid plans, tailored specifically to meet the dynamic needs of modern businesses on Feb 23.

Available now, the new range of business plans are supercharged with affordable options for digital solutions.

The introduction of digital solutions as part of CelcomDigi Business plans and is integral to CelcomDigi's continuous efforts to accelerate the digitalisation of more Malaysian businesses, helping them to save cost, increase productivity and prepare for growth in a digital economy.

## Choices suitable for businesses, big or small

There are four CelcomDigi Business plans that businesses can choose from, all of which come with uncapped 5G speed, high data quotas and unlimited calls allowing business owners to have uninterrupted connectivity and ample bandwidth to manage their day-to-day operations.

Businesses that subscribe to the Business Postpaid 138 plan and above will also enjoy free data roaming.

Depending on the plan chosen, businesses will have the option to include up to six supplementary lines, starting from RM48/month, which comes with uncapped high-speed 5G Internet and equal data quota as the principal line.

Businesses can choose from a wide range of digital solutions such as alHR, Mobile Security by Cisco Umbrella, Mobile Device

Management (MDM) along with productivity tools such as Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace to complement any of the postpaid plans chosen.

alHR allows businesses to simply automate daily HR tasks such as leave, entitlements, claims and many more with a full-service HR super app.

This helps to increase the company's HR department's efficiency using cloud access, which offers real time, instant administration of employee management in any place at any time.

Mobile Security by Cisco Umbrella provides non-intrusive protection against cyber threats for all mobile products, promising ease in management of the app.

Businesses can expect a worry-free experience as hardware or software maintenance of the service is managed by the Cisco team.

The suit will ensure malware is blocked without latency from all sides, ensuring system-wide protection so long as the broadband or fixed connection is still linked to CelcomDigi's network.

Businesses are also assured that with MDM, they have enter-

Business Postpaid 80 120GB RM80 per month	Business Postpaid 108 150GB RM108 per month	Business Postpaid 138 180GB RM138 per month	Business Postpaid 168 800GB RM168 per month
<b>What's included:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncapped 5G Speed</li> <li>Unlimited Calls</li> <li>FREE 1,500 SMS</li> <li>FREE 5G Devices</li> <li>FREE roaming up to 3 selected countries</li> <li>Roaming cases available</li> </ul>	<b>What's included:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncapped 5G Speed</li> <li>Unlimited Calls</li> <li>FREE 1,500 SMS</li> <li>FREE 5G Devices</li> <li>FREE roaming up to 3 selected countries</li> <li>Add on up to 2K supplementary lines</li> </ul>	<b>What's included:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncapped 5G Speed</li> <li>Unlimited Calls</li> <li>FREE 1,500 SMS</li> <li>FREE 5G Devices</li> <li>FREE roaming up to 17 selected countries</li> <li>Add on up to 4K supplementary lines</li> </ul>	<b>What's included:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncapped 5G Speed</li> <li>Unlimited Calls</li> <li>FREE 1,500 SMS</li> <li>FREE 5G Devices</li> <li>FREE roaming up to 22 selected countries</li> <li>Add on up to 4K supplementary lines</li> </ul>
Add on our affordable digital solutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>alHR</b>: Simplify and automate daily HR tasks with a full-service HR super app.</li> <li><b>Mobile Security</b>: Define your data, devices, network and software from cyber attacks.</li> <li><b>Mobile Device Management</b>: Manage &amp; secure all your mobile devices for work and control.</li> <li><b>Productivity Tools</b>: Work better together with collaborative tools such as Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace.</li> </ul>			

prise management of mobile devices for administration purposes, control and increased security.

Sensitive data on devices will remain confidential and safe, while remote IT support will help save businesses money and time.

Company-specific apps can also be updated remotely, which ensures business continues to run smoothly without any disruptions.

## Focus on productivity

The plan also includes productivity tools such as Microsoft 365

for applications such as long-time, popularly used MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

These provide a convenient all-in-one cloud-based application that includes cloud storage and document sharing via OneDrive.

It also enhances productivity and facilitates collaborations and remote-working.

While Google Workspace consists of tools and collaborative applications such as Gmail, Sheets, Doc, Slides and more.

These cloud-based real-time collaborative integrated commu-

nications tools offer scalability, security and compliance.

It also features cross-platform accessibility and cost-effectiveness making it a versatile and efficient solution for businesses looking to enhance productivity and collaboration.

## Trusted business partner

As Malaysia's largest mobile network operator with more than 20.6 million users on its network, CelcomDigi was established on Dec 1, 2022 from the merger of Celcom and Digi.

The company aims to serve the growing digital needs of its customers by leveraging its newly combined widest network footprint, distribution touchpoints, innovative range of digital products and services and superior customer experience, powered by passionate CDzens.

The company has clearly defined ambitions to advance the nation, inspire Malaysian society, and be a leader in inclusion and ESG practices.

**For more information on CelcomDigi Business Plans, visit <https://business.celcomdigi.com>**

# Becoming a leading industry brand

MK Curtain co-founder Datin Wira Moon transforms company into a model of success in the home curtain industry



IN 2005, Datin Wira Moon Sze Fui and Datuk Wira Calvin Khiu officially started their business, marking the beginning of a challenging journey.

Working tirelessly 365 days a year, cherishing every customer that walked through their doors, they personally measured and installed curtains.

At the same time, they took turns caring for their ill grandmother at home. With time, hard work and a bit of luck, they earned their first pot of gold.

Fuelled by youthful vigour and maximising their time, while others worked eight hours, they worked 12 hours a day.

Their never-giving-up spirit coupled with their hard work lasted for five years.

## Overcoming challenges

In 2009, due to insufficient knowledge and improper management, their business faced two critical bottlenecks, almost leading to bankruptcy twice.

Determined, they pursued further knowledge, took out loans, mortgaged their invested properties and spent RM1,000,000 travelling the world to learn. Under their leadership, 60 core members started to reform.

Three years later in 2014, a successful turnaround occurred as they successfully received a Malaysian Record for becoming a leading industry brand in Malaysia, and forever changed the younger generation's perception about the curtain business.

The couple proved that from their actions, "Even if you were born in the 80s or 90s, from a humble background, you can achieve success starting from nothing."

In 2017, MK Curtain transitioned to a franchising model, reducing the capital needed to open a branch from RM1,000,000 to a mere RM320,000.

They established a compact yet beautiful 1,500sq ft (139.4sq m) branch that includes decoration, setup and inventory.

A central management system was established to resolve all branches' tailoring, installation and inventory issues, achieving the lowest possible manpower costs, launching with a new business model focusing on light assets, light capital and zero risks.

## Resolute expansion

Resilient and adaptable Moon, amid the significant challenges of the movement control order in 2021, firmly opened 50 new stores, pushing MK Curtain to new heights.



The MK Curtain team recently celebrated their 19th anniversary dinner.



Moon (left) and Khiu turned their fledgling curtain business into an industry model today.

The company won the second Malaysian Record for being the "Largest curtain chain" in Malaysia.

She adopted an internal entrepreneurship model allowing the young team to become partner franchisees, reaching a total of 60 branches by 2023.

In 2023, under Moon's leadership, the company experienced an exciting year as it achieved impressive results through hard work.

In 2024, the company has even more confidence in the market.

With the right profit-sharing model, management approach, Moon believes she will continue to lead the company to greater success, with the aim of going public in three years time.

## Taking a sustainable approach

Moreover, Moon adheres to the spirit of "taking from and giving back to the society".

She established a non-profit elderly home in Nilai, named Zhen Ai Care Home (Pertubuhan Kebajikan Zhen Ai), providing free care for the destitute elderly.

Besides daily care, she personally leads her team to accompany the elderly during festive gatherings.

Moon's biggest dream in life is to have her team members believe they can become their own bosses, owning their curtain shops and leading better lives.

MK Curtain aims to reach 100 branches and establish the world's largest curtain showroom.



Moon adopted an internal entrepreneurship model allowing the young team to become partner franchisees.

Its vision is "Leading the industry trend, becoming the leader of curtain brands in South-East Asia" and its mission is "Creating a happy home life for customers with love and heart".

For the team, it aims for "internal entrepreneurship, with team members becoming partners",

while for customers, it aims to "provide top service and quality".

For suppliers, the company will "offer support and gratitude to create a win-win-win situation" and for the society, to provide "long-term contributions in charity, schools, children care and social care".

# Leading the fight against payment scams

RHB Bank DuitNow QR Sound Box presents secure, verifiable way to confirm DuitNow transfers

IN a move to create greater awareness of and combat financial fraud, the RHB Banking Group (RHB), in collaboration with Payments Network Malaysia (PayNet), launched its new RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box aimed at enhancing and strengthening payment security for consumers and merchants.

The RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box is an electronic scam prevention tool that supports static and dynamic QR codes, which seamlessly integrates into a merchant's point-of-sale system.

## More secured transactions

The cutting-edge sound box provides a secure and verifiable method for both consumers and merchants to confirm the legitimacy of DuitNow transfers made via QR code.

Upon successfully receiving the DuitNow transfer, the sound box generates an auditory alert and a visual display, providing real-time reassurance that the intended merchant has received the correct payment amount.

The introduction of the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box addresses critical payment security issues, a concern that has grown significantly with the increasing reliance on cashless transactions.

Although QR codes add value to businesses by easing financial transactions, the bank acknowledges the security risks involved.

These include fake QR codes that deceive consumers into transferring their money to a scammer's bank account, or dishonest customers who use a fake payment receipt to trick merchants into believing that payment has been made.

## Scam prevention

The sound box serves as an innovative scam prevention tool that benefits merchants and consumers as it simultaneously addresses concerns from both parties through a sound and visual alert.

As the first bank to introduce the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box, this move reflects the on-going commitment to protecting merchants and consumers from fraudsters who exploit the convenience of cashless payments.

## Progressive deployment

In its initial phase, the group will deploy the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in sub-urban locations as part of its joint effort with PayNet to drive financial inclusion.

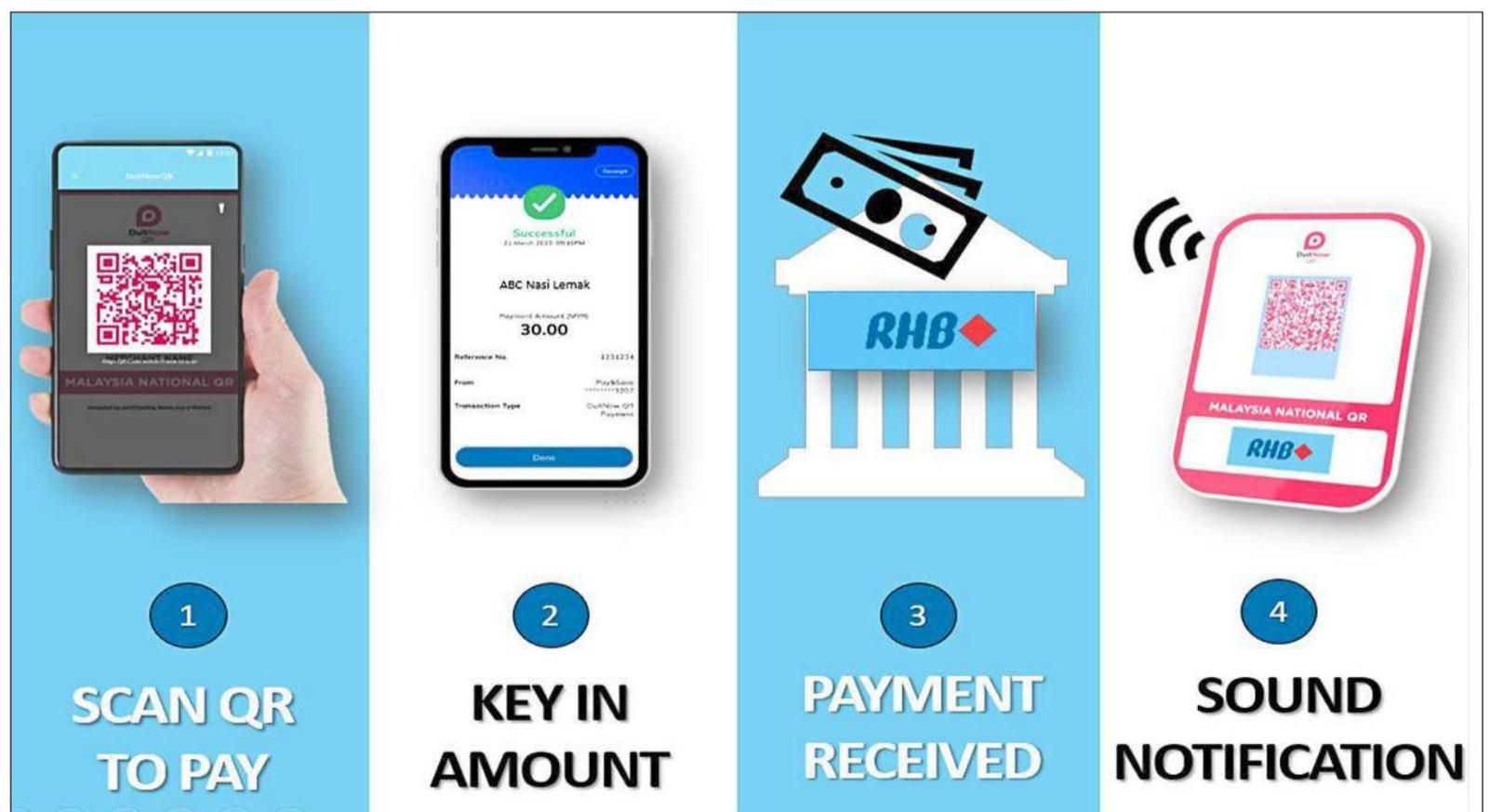
Subsequently, the group will roll out this solution to businesses with high financial transaction volume, including food and beverage outlets, grocery stores, night markets and various retailers.

The benefits of the sound box will allow more businesses in Malaysia to adopt cashless payments and ultimately pave the way for greater digitalisation.

As small businesses are more vulnerable to the impact of payment fraud, using the sound box



The cutting-edge sound box provides a secure and verifiable method for both consumers and merchants to confirm the legitimacy of DuitNow transfers made via QR code.



How the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box works.

will provide them with peace of mind regarding QR code transactions.

This initiative supports PayNet's directive in building a more inclusive financial ecosystem, as well as RHB's aspiration of empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro entrepreneurs.

## Empowering MSME growth

PayNet chief commercial officer Gary Yeoh said, "Our partnership with RHB underscores PayNet's commitment in empowering MSME growth to thrive in Malaysia's digital economy.

"The RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box is a result of innovative technology adoption, which helps to

strengthen security in payment digitalisation and encourages businesses to go cashless.

"This initiative will enable businesses and users to enjoy the benefits of payment digitalisation without compromising security, reliability and ethical standards.

"This is consistent with Malaysia's Digital Economy

Blueprint to create a digital environment that is trusted, secure and ethical."



For more on the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box, scan the QR code.

# Empowering women through fashion

Making a positive impact in women's lives and the world around them

HEGIRA (pronounced Hay-Jee-Ra) humbly entered the hijab market back in 2019 with the intention of bringing in innovative and stylish hijabs for women through an e-commerce platform alone.

While the brand launch was small, it has a great mission to simplify women's lives. Today, Hegira aims to serve beyond merely the hijab, but to also cater to all aspects of women's multifaceted needs.

As a subsidiary of the well known Siti Khadijah, Hegira takes inspiration from the greatness of the word *hijrah*, paying homage to the significant historical event in Islam when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) migrated from Mecca to Medina.

*Hijrah* is about positive transformation, and there are always opportunities to be better every day.

The brand's unique, flexible and practical hijab designs strive to empower women to express their individuality, embrace modesty and elevate their self-worth.

"We are passionate about empowering women and simplifying their lives," said Hegira founder and chief executive officer Suri Daman.

"Our mission is to ignite women's transformative journeys towards a better life. We recognise their pivotal roles in the success of families, communities and nations."



Hegira's commitment to innovation has propelled it to the forefront of hijab development and design.

Its unique strength lies in its innovative approach to design, offering diverse hijab designs that cater to women's many needs.

It has spent great effort in its research and development and is passionate about understanding women's pain points and solving them.

In addition to its mission-driven approach, Hegira is also committed to contribute towards the local economy by hiring all Malaysians in its production facility in Negri Sembilan.

About 92% of Hegira's workforce are women.

"We have women of all ages in our manufacturing facility, sewing and creating each piece of hijab with care."



Hegira currently has retail outlets at IOI City Mall Putrajaya (new wing), Aeon Shah Alam, Sogo Kuala Lumpur, Aeon Kota Baru, Kelantan and Bandar Baru UDA, Johor Baru.

"They are single mothers, wives and daughters who aim to elevate the economic status of their families through their work."

"We are serious about empowering women, and we start from the inside. This is how we walk the talk," said Suri.

"We began our brand right before Covid-19, and when the pandemic came, the uncertainties – just like any other business – were gruelling."

"Being dynamic and agile allowed us to continue and focus on sales during those years, and not only we managed to survive, we actually grew our team during those years with zero layoffs."

"We started small with laser sharp objectives of building loyal customers. The road has not been easy especially in a market where competition is fierce."

"Nevertheless, we stuck to our goals, and sharpened our business processes to continue to

grow sustainably."

Despite the challenges, Hegira achieved steady growth, demonstrated by three-digit growths every year.

This growth is a testament to the company's commitment to providing women with innovative, high-quality lifestyle products that enhance their lives.

With the tagline "Change your destiny", Hegira will be opening five more outlets in 2024, bringing the total number of stores up to 10.

This expansion reflects Hegira's commitment to reaching more women and empowering them through fashion.

Hegira currently has retail outlets at IOI City Mall Putrajaya (new wing), Aeon Shah Alam, Sogo Kuala Lumpur, Aeon Kota Baru, Kelantan and Bandar Baru UDA, Johor Baru.

"Moving forward, we plan to make Hegira more accessible to our customers by opening more physical retail locations across Malaysia," said Suri.

"We aim to follow the footsteps of our sister brand Siti Khadijah, which has over 50 outlets locally as well as in Indonesia and Singapore."

**For more information about Hegira and its products, visit [www.hegira-hijab.com](http://www.hegira-hijab.com)**

## Eyeing international expansion

THE Malaysia International Halal Showcase, or Mihas, in short, is poised for international expansion, acknowledging the importance and urgency of extending its influence beyond domestic borders.

This inaugural effort called Mihas @ Dubai will kick off with the event being held within the Middle East Organic and Natural Product Expo in Dubai from Nov 18 to 20 this year, aiming to achieve sales totalling RM1bil.

The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) chief executive officer Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz said that this strategic initiative acknowledges the potential for growth and emphasises the importance of establishing Mihas as a globally renowned event.

"The internationalisation of Mihas is an initiative to take the brand to greater heights as well as to attracting a diverse array of participants and buyers particularly from West Asian, South Asian and African markets to the flagship event in Mitec, Kuala Lumpur."

"With an ambitious target of RM1bil in sales during the event, we demonstrate our commitment to significant revenue generation and market penetration."

"By establishing Mihas as a globally recognised event, we seek to position Malaysia as a leading player in the international halal industry," he said.

"By choosing Dubai, we aim to capitalise on its strategic location, vibrant business landscape and growing interest in halal products to maximise the impact and success of Mihas internationally," said Mohd Mustafa.

The internationalisation of Mihas is anticipated to bring numerous advantages.

This includes establishing Malaysia as a global hub for halal trade, aligning with the current policies and strategies on trade such as the National Trade Blueprint



Mohd Mustafa: 'The internationalisation of Mihas is an initiative to take the brand to greater heights.'

(NTBp), the Halal Industry Master Plan (HIMP 2030), as well as the New Industry Master Plan (NIMP 2030).

Aside from that, the initiative is expected to create new opportunities for Malaysian companies, especially micro, small and medium enterprises to expand their overseas markets by participating in the overseas edition of Mihas.

Additionally, it will further boost Mihas' reputation as the platform of choice for sourcing of halal products and services by the international business community as well as a strategic platform to increase international exhibitors and potential buyers' participation at the showcase held Kuala Lumpur.

For the Dubai edition, the CEO said that Matrade aims to engage 200 exhibitors, comprising export-ready companies including Bumiputera enterprises, as well as relevant ministries and agencies such as MITI, Kuskop, Teraju, HDC, Jakim and SMEBank.

"Among sectors that would be promoted are food processing, pharmaceuticals, beauty and cosmetics, as well as health products. We are also considering other sectors including services," he added.

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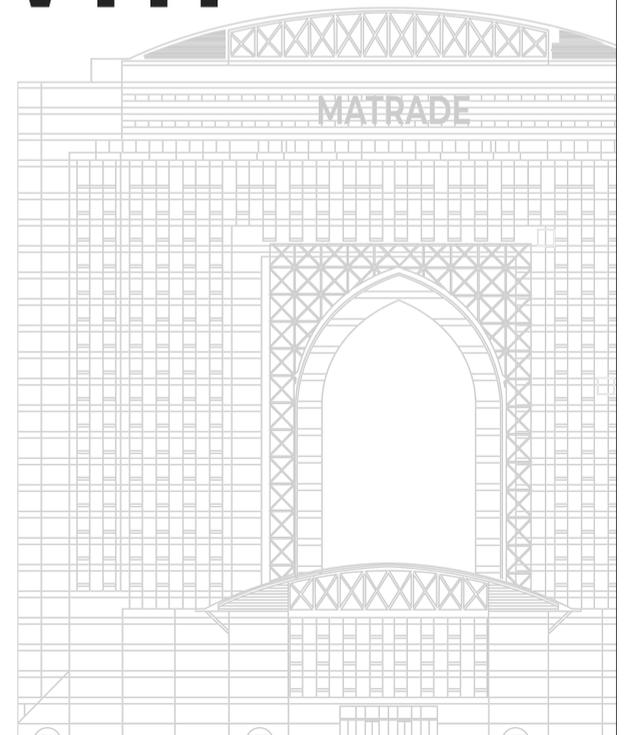
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