



P E O P L E | S U C C E S S | L I F E S T Y L E

BUSINESS TODAY

SPECIAL FOCUS ON SME AND MSME

Ready, Set, Grow with
Maybank Business Banking Solutions

Powering SME
FORWARD



maxisbusiness



THE AGENDA TO STRENGTHEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONTINUES: MEDAC



Among the information provided by MEDAC through Agencies such as TEKUN and SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp.) is the disclosure of the latest programs and funding provided.



Efforts and initiatives to provide exposure and strengthen the entrepreneurial agenda among prospective entrepreneurs and existing entrepreneurs are continued with the Malaysian Entrepreneur and Family Cooperatives Program (PUKKM) in Tanjung Piai by the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development (MEDAC). The leisurely program that lasted for a day was also accompanied by a Dialogue Session with YB Tan Sri Noh Haji Omar, Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives.



According to YB Tan Sri Noh Haji Omar, "This Dialogue Session with YB Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives is an initiative and commitment of MEDAC to obtain information on issues and suggestions for improvement to strengthen the development of local entrepreneurs as well as provide information on programs offered by MEDAC and Agencies to entrepreneurs."

Among the information provided by MEDAC through Agencies such as TEKUN and SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp.) is the disclosure of the latest programs and funding

provided. TEKUN has provided disclosure on the Informal and Micro Financing Scheme (SPIM) around the Tanjung Piai area. SPIM is a scheme that offers financing at an empty profit rate of percent (0%) with a moratorium for 12 months with priority given to informal and micro sector traders. While SME Corp. has provided disclosure on the SME Emergency Fund 2.0 (SMEEF 2.0) which offers financing funds up to a maximum of RM100,000 to assist SMEs affected by natural disasters including floods, storms, droughts, coastal erosion and landslides.

MAYBANK2U BIZ: SUPPORTING YOUR BUSINESS'S GROWTH AND EXPANSION THROUGH THICK AND THIN

As businesses grow, they face different challenges and find different pathways to growth along the way. Underlying it all, however, is finance – solid financial backing, steady and stable cash flow, and state-of-the-art financial technology. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), in particular, have very specific needs when it comes to financial matters.

According to Maybank, the largest financial services group in Malaysia, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt across the Malaysian economic landscape, especially by SMEs.

Based on past experience with its business clients over the years, Maybank noted that SMEs were more in need of financial support than ever. Business owners were pressed for time as they strove to make better and faster business decisions in order to stay afloat during the crisis, leading to greater fatigue and loss of concentration.

Talent management – especially in terms of migrant labour, as well as those with expertise related to the ICT field – became a critical challenge, as many foreigners returned to their countries due to the pandemic.

Even day-to-day operational tasks became burdensome as SMEs struggled to keep pace with the drudgery of record-keeping and of staying on top of

other backend processes such as procurement, payroll, supply chain and logistics, and so on.

In response to SMEs' needs, Maybank made an effort to simplify its business-oriented products and offerings, placing them under the single, unified branding of Maybank Business Solutions. This integrated, comprehensive solution set provides ready-made solutions, set up for businesses to grow, all of which are available using the dedicated Maybank Business Solutions platforms.

SME customers stand to benefit substantially from adopting Maybank Business Solutions, which feature a holistic suite of products and services designed to meet all the various needs of SMEs right from the get-go. For instance, the bank promises that SMEs can apply online and choose the most suitable banking account, as recommended by Maybank, from a range of 6 different business account options in less than 10 minutes, regardless of when or where the process was started, cutting down the amount of time needed.



The products and services themselves were designed to be 'mobile-first', with most functions and capabilities being accessible from the Maybank2uBiz mobile app specifically designed for SMEs, or through a Web browser, in a safe, secure, and efficient manner.

Day-to-day financial operations such as invoicing/billing and payments can be carried out using the mobile apps (or via a Web browser) on the go. This means that business owners do not have to carve time out of an already-busy schedule to do these functions, instead being able to do this during 'dead time' such as during their commutes to and from the office.

Maybank is cognisant of the financial hardships that many SMEs faced pursuant to the pandemic. SMEs looking for financial support in order to tide themselves over during these tumultuous times (or who are planning to grow and expand their businesses) will be encouraged to note that Maybank Business Solutions has got SMEs covered on that front too.

By applying online through the Maybank2uBiz website, businesses looking for financing can gain access to a maximum of RM250k worth of funds, with a repayment term of up

to 60 months. The application takes all of 5 minutes, while the approval happens within 10 minutes, and disbursement of the funds only takes 1 minute. SMEs can also apply for trade financing in the forms of trust receipts, invoice financing, and foreign exchange contracts.

Maybank Business Solutions has also taken note of the increasing digitalisation trend towards electronic commerce and cashless in-store payments, and has made it significantly easier for SMEs who are unfamiliar with these technologies to adopt them in a painless, hassle-free manner.

Through the Sama-Sama Lokal (SSL) and Maybank QRPayBiz initiatives, SMEs are able to support online business from order-taking through to payment and delivery, as well as cashless payment in their physical establishments, without needing to invest in costly infrastructure or recurring subscription fees. Hence, empowering them to grow their business more conveniently.

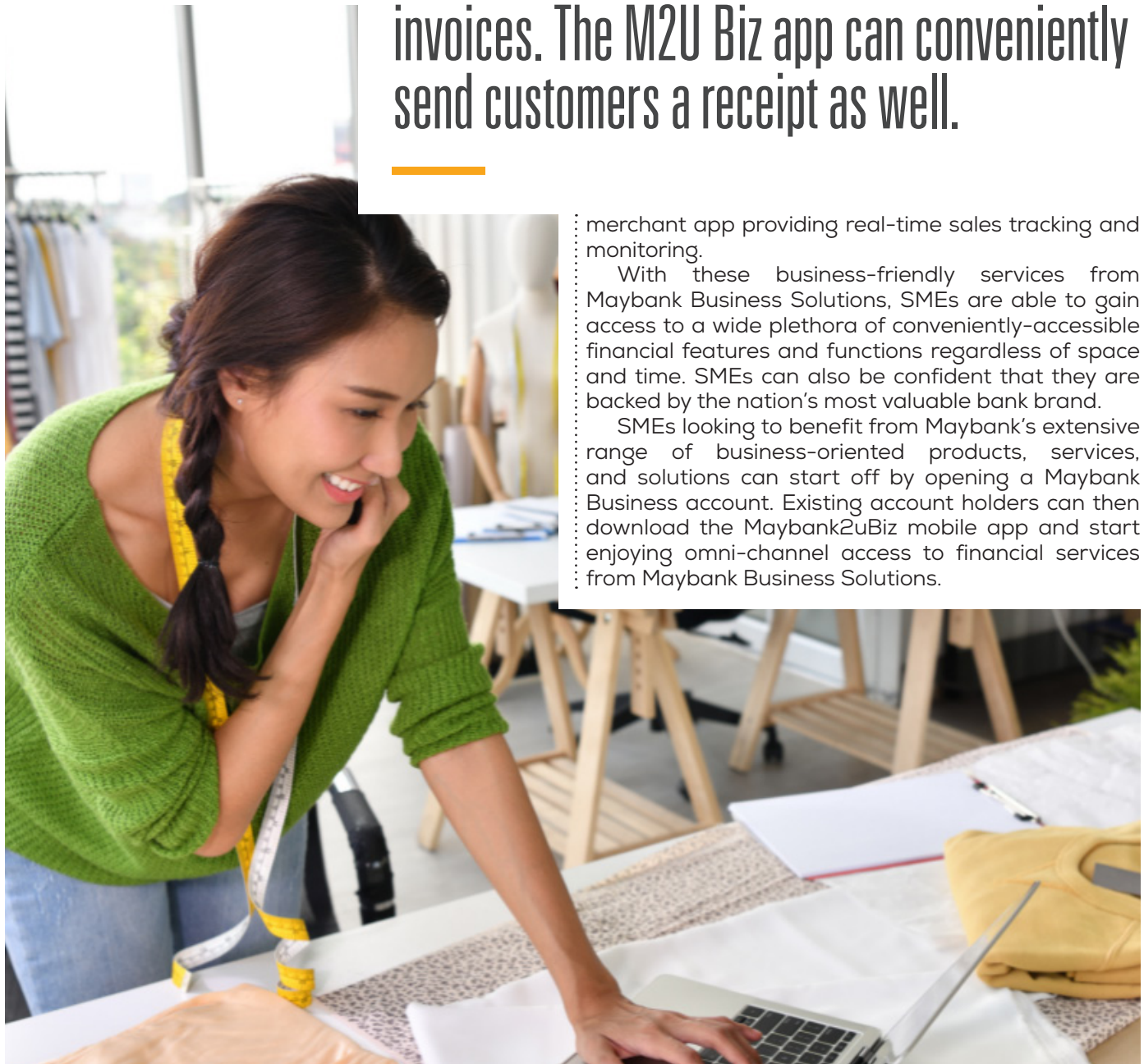
SSL is a 0% commission online sales platform that promises to boost business online, providing local sellers with access to over 12 million

potential customers nationwide. SSL is accessible via the MAE app and on the Maybank2u website, while Maybank and its delivery partners offer free delivery service for up to 10km in selected locations.

Maybank QRPayBiz, meanwhile, enables brick-and-mortar shops to accept cashless/contactless payments via a static or a dynamic QR code (which is DuitNow QR-compatible, for customers who prefer using other e-wallet platforms) that customers can scan using their mobile phones, with the



When the invoice is sent, the app allows users to monitor the status of invoices, mark them and give them the option to remind the customers to fulfil these invoices. The M2U Biz app can conveniently send customers a receipt as well.



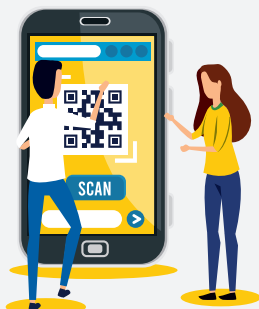
merchant app providing real-time sales tracking and monitoring.

With these business-friendly services from Maybank Business Solutions, SMEs are able to gain access to a wide plethora of conveniently-accessible financial features and functions regardless of space and time. SMEs can also be confident that they are backed by the nation's most valuable bank brand.

SMEs looking to benefit from Maybank's extensive range of business-oriented products, services, and solutions can start off by opening a Maybank Business account. Existing account holders can then download the Maybank2uBiz mobile app and start enjoying omni-channel access to financial services from Maybank Business Solutions.

START YOUR SME BANKING JOURNEY WITH MAYBANK IN 4 SIMPLE STEPS

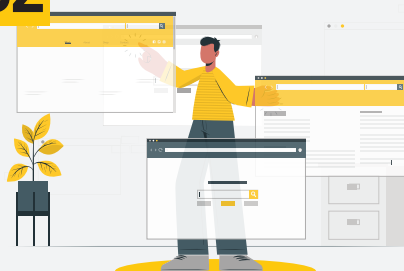
01



Scan the QR code or click [HERE](#) to get a Maybank account recommendation for your business



02



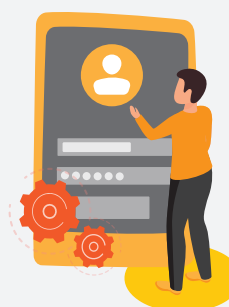
Select a business current account based on the recommendation and apply online.

03



Visit your designated Maybank branch with the required documents and relevant parties to complete the verification process.

04



Select your business banking service of choice, manage your business on the go.

EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS CAPABILITIES WITH OUR HOLISTIC SUITE OF SERVICES

Maybank QRPayBiz - Cashless payment for your business.



Commercial Credit Card - Cash rebates and 0% instalment plans.



SME Digital Financing - Up to RM250,000. Approved in minutes, not days.



Overseas Funds Transfer - Discounted service fees with our seamless overseas transfers.



Sama-sama Lokal - Bring your business online with zero commission fees.



SME CORP READY TO PROPEL THE SME SECTOR FURTHER

Define SME Corp. Malaysia's role in spearheading the sector in the country

i) Among the six (6) main functions of the agency are:

- One-stop collection and reference centre for SME information and advisory services;
- Coordination of SME development programmes;
- SME economic assessment;
- SME accreditation;
- Business development and support programmes; and
- Access to domestic and international markets

The past 2 years have been challenging, what are the recovery processes in place to get SMEs back on their feet?

Since March 2020, a total RM196 billion has been allocated to assist MSMEs in weathering the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The measures have been and are being implemented through ten (10) comprehensive economic packages namely PRIHATIN, PRIHATIN SME, PENJANA, Kita PRIHATIN, Budget 2021, PERMAI, PEMERKASA, PEMERKASA PLUS, PEMULIH and Budget 2022. These stimulus packages have been instrumental in addressing critical pandemic-related issues faced by MSMEs, mainly in the area of financing, cashflow, job retention, human capital development and technology & digitalisation adoption.

i) This is evidenced by the fact that a total of RM49.9 billion has been allocated specifically for the MSMEs, being the highest allocation ever as compared to previous budgets announced (Budget 2021: RM38.7 billion). Out of this, the largest amount has been allocated for access to financing, amounting RM20.4 billion, to ensure that MSMEs remain resilient and are able to grow their businesses, as the country moves into the period of economic recovery.

According to studies, 34% of SMEs in Malaysia have witnessed a drop in revenue of more than 20% during the pandemic, how do you see these businesses regaining lost revenues?

To survive in the post-pandemic world, there are three areas that MSMEs can adopt to navigate under the new normal, namely sustainability, digitalisation & innovation as well as inclusiveness. Second, businesses must continue to leverage on innovation and digitalisation to push forward recovery agenda. Third, inclusiveness. As is

often the case with crises, COVID-19 has put the spotlight on those who are economically disadvantaged – those at the base of the pyramid. Making economies more inclusive starts with decent jobs and social protection for all. MSMEs, which contribute significantly to jobs creation and income generation is vital in providing employment to disadvantaged groups.

Key challenges faced by the SMEs during the pandemic are worsened liquidity, lack of suitable talents, and difficulties in adopting technological solutions. How can you help the SMEs to address these issues?

i) In navigating the business to the new norm and thriving in post-pandemic reality, MSMEs should make further business enhancement which may include embedding new digital technologies in their business model to raise productivity and efficiency; improving human resource skills and capabilities; and strengthening their cash flow position. The unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 too has highlighted the importance of putting in place effective contingency plans to ensure business continuity for any given catastrophe or shocks that may occur in the future.

ii) In addition, Budget 2022 is seen as clearly supportive of MSMEs and sets the right tone for their recovery, which is crucial as most MSMEs who are on a recovery mode are cash-strapped to procure raw materials and to re-hire workers. The measures outlined in the Budget are clearly meant to stimulate the economy, enhance the wellbeing and growth of diverse stakeholders, and drive long-term sustainable development reforms.



There is still a lack of exposure to support available assistance for SMEs, and many are clueless about the financial assistance provided for them, how can this be sorted out moving forward?

i) MSMEs that require further information on the financial assistance available are encouraged to use the MyAssist MSME portal (<https://myassist-msme.gov.my/en/>) to grow their businesses. The portal, which is an initiative under PENJANA launched by YAB Prime Minister on 30 Jun 2021 during the National SME Week, provides an online stage for MSMEs to seek business advisory and information, guidance and digital marketing opportunities. Led by KUSKOP and managed by SME Corp. Malaysia, the platform will assist MSMEs to solve their business-related problems and issues in the new norm.

ii) MeetMe is an advisory platform which enables entrepreneurs to engage with business counsellors from SME Corp. Malaysia to seek advice on a whole spectrum of business issues ranging from business planning to financial management, marketing, financing, exporting, supply chain management, leadership, labour management, operations, stock management, certification, technology applications, Industry 4.0 branding, packaging, intellectual property rights and legal matters.

iii) Virtual business matching Platform named MatchMe, which is one of the key components under MyAssist MSME, has provided SMEs with an opportunity for greater market access during the pandemic. By participating in MatchMe, MSMEs would be able to leverage on its integrated online supply chain platform which provide opportunities for product promotion and marketing in local and international markets.

iv) The technology support platform is where researchers, innovators, start-ups and high-tech entrepreneurs can obtain assistance to accelerate product development from the research to commercialisation stage via the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS) under the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC). Assistance comes in the form of Capacity – building programmes, Facilitation of market access and procurement, Facilitation of funding, Facilitation of testbed and test environment, Facilitation and review of laws and regulations as well as Multi-industry adoption.

v) The financial platform provides information on financing and relief measures available under the PRIHATIN and PENJANA economic stimulus packages to help SMEs affected by COVID-19 as well as imSME, Malaysia's first financing and loan referral platform.

What would you want to tell SME business owners about SME Corp and what should they do in preparation for IR4.0?

i) In addition, SME Corp. Malaysia aligns SMEs to IR4.0 through different approaches. Apart from collaboration with public and private companies such as Huawei to look



into digitalization among SMEs, SME Corp. is also providing incentives related to IR4.0 in the form of financial and non-financial assistance.

ii) Business Accelerator Programme (BAP), an integrated assistance programme aimed to enhance the capabilities of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through business advisory services and financial support. Under this programme, SMEs will be supported via capability building initiatives including financing assistance to transform their business operation to Industry 4.0 especially in manufacturing sector.

iii) Under SME Digitalisation Programme – Oracle NetSuite provides global financial functionality and is designed for modern business, enabling customers to streamline their mission-critical business processes. Oracle NetSuite provides #1 Cloud Business

Software, Built-In Flexibility, Business Intelligence for Free and For All, A Highly Scalable System for Growth, Commerce Ready ERP and Design for a Modern Company. Under this Programme, SME Corp. Malaysia has approved 7 companies with total allocation of RM1.4 million.

iv) SMEs also are encouraged to embark on industry 4.0 programme through Industry4WRD initiative implemented by Ministry of International Trade & Industry (MITI). This initiative will support digital transformation of the manufacturing sector and its related services by facilitating companies to be smarter, more systematic and resilient, to embrace Industry 4.0. Industry4WRD also aims to pave the way for enhanced productivity, job creation and high-skilled talent pool in the manufacturing sector, and ultimately contribute to the economic prosperity and societal well-being.

CELCOM BUSINESS: EMPOWERING SMES THROUGH DIGITALISATION

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent government reactions – including lockdowns – has changed the way businesses and brands interact with their customers.

With in-store transactions and in-person meetups having become more restricted during the pandemic, businesses needed to move online in order to continue operating. Even after movement restrictions have been relaxed as the world moved on to the endemic phase of COVID-19, consumers have adapted to the more digital world.

Such tools and technology include high-speed Internet; marketing tools such as social media and/or online store platforms; and live feeds where customers can transact, interact online, and get goods and services delivered directly to their doorsteps in a shorter time frame.

When it comes to the back end, digitalisation is even more important to increase efficiency and optimise costs; for instance, by using accessible cloud solutions and services to help businesses with cybersecurity, manage workflow, access data,

and consolidate key applications for business advantages and continuity.

All these technologies work best when enabled by always-on connectivity. In today's global environment, many SMEs are not tied to the typical office settings, nor are their markets limited to specific locations and countries. Smaller enterprises might even use mobile connectivity services for just about every aspect of their business; e.g. to access cloud services for payroll/financial management or data storage, engage customers through telephony and online communication facilities, or update their online storefront and social media pages. When customer engagement happens online across the workforce and in real-time, such as sales personnel updating new prospects and closing deals, it is important to have stable Internet connectivity to support business communications and get up-to-date news from employees.





Celcom Business's wide range of products and services empower SMEs to digitally transform and optimise their business operations with simplicity, flexibility, and affordability.

Afizulazha Abdullah,
Chief Operations Officer (Technology)
& Chief Enterprise Business Officer
Celcom Axiata Berhad



For SMEs with hybrid business models and models reliant on physical facilities, having ultra-fast, secure, and reliable connectivity is a key business success factor. Be it Internet connectivity or data connectivity between their headquarters, branches, warehouses etc., modern SMEs need to exchange real-time data (e.g. production, inventory, logistics, sales, after sales) amongst their employees, business partners, and customers.

This is where Celcom Business is the trusted partner for businesses of all sizes— by bringing together the best in networks, technologies, and world-class solutions partners, so that they can stay ahead in today's ever-changing world. The company aims to help SMEs 'connect the digital dots' and leverage digital technologies to leapfrog into the digital ecosystem.

Being one of the nation's most reliable mobile telecommunication companies, it is no surprise that Celcom offers high speed mobile and Internet connectivity as well as other ICT solutions.

As a trusted partner, Celcom Business helps to accelerate businesses through digital transformation, secure their critical

systems, and most importantly, keep their businesses running smoothly and efficiently with robust and reliable connectivity, so that they can focus on what's important to their businesses.

Aiming to help businesses keep growing and adapting to market challenges, Celcom Business offers a comprehensive range of business solutions and services covering connectivity, cloud, productivity, marketing, payment, and smart solutions to help SMEs enhance their businesses' capabilities.

"Celcom Business is here to help make the journey together with you; to fulfil your needs and the needs of your customers. We aim to simplify the digital transformation process for SMEs, so that you can easily understand how digital transformation can have a positive impact on your business, and then implement it smoothly. Regardless of what sector your business is in, Celcom Business aims to help your business grow bigger and better by increasing your efficiency with our tailor-made solutions," Celcom Axiata Berhad Chief Operations Officer (Technology) & Chief Enterprise Business Officer, Afizulazha Abdullah said.



Helping SME businesses transform and lay a digitally strong foundation for future growth together entails more than technological tools



Celcom Business's wide range of products and services empower SMEs to digitally transform and optimise their business operations with simplicity, flexibility, and affordability. Celcom Business Suite™, for instance, offers multiple digital solutions for SMEs such as cloud-based electronic point-of-sale (POS) systems, electronic payment and digital marketing solutions, as well as additional productivity tools such as tablet computers and Microsoft

Office 365 subscriptions. This comprehensive end-to-end suite of solutions is tailored to simplify the digitalisation of smaller-scale businesses.

Helping SME businesses transform and lay a digitally strong foundation for future growth together entails more than technological tools, Afizulazha noted.

Digital transformation can be a daunting thought for many SMEs, both in terms of cost and in terms





of complexity. SMEs need solutions that help improve business efficiency and productivity with ease and simplicity, as well as cost-effective plans and offers to rapidly transform and optimise business operations.

Celcom Business has partnered with the Ministry of Finance to help more business owners adopt digitalisation and accelerate the growth of their businesses via PENJANA financing. Through this partnership, SMEs can enjoy 30% discounts or savings of up to RM3000 for business solutions subscriptions with Celcom Business Suite™.


For larger enterprises, Afizulazha pointed out that Celcom Business also offers best-in-class mobile and internet connectivity, marketing and productivity solutions, cloud services, cybersecurity, and other network-connectivity solutions such as virtual private networking (VPN) and managed software-defined networking in a wide area network (SD-WAN) services. All Celcom Business digital and connectivity services are provided with high standard SLAs – a commitment to excellence, and to its customers' business continuity.

SMEs looking to embark on their digitalisation journey with Celcom Business can visit the Celcom outlets or connect directly with the Celcom Business Channel Managers.


For more information on Celcom Business, please visit business.celcom.com.my.

Digitalise your business and save **30%** with PENJANA*



*Terms and conditions apply.



YOUR BUSINESS STARTS HERE. SCAN NOW.

Your SME, Micro and Cooperative Expert



Scan QR code for more info



MATRADE EMPOWERS MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM-ENTERPRISE THROUGH MTC-MSME BENCHMARKING PROGRAMME

MATRADE continues to drive the adoption of sustainability among Malaysian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), towards reinforcing their global competitiveness as export champions.

The benchmarking element on sustainability has provided value-added elements to existing customised exporters development programme, via exclusive coaching sessions by the graduates of Mid-Tier Companies Development Programme (MTCDP).

Senior Director of Transformation & Digital Trade Division of MATRADE, Khairul Annuar Abdul Halim said, "Sustainability has become an important agenda to elevate Malaysian exporters to tap into the global supply chain and strengthen their footprints internationally.

Based on the feedback received on the previous sessions conducted, this interactive programme serves as sharing knowledge platform between Mid-Tier companies (MTC) with MSMEs.

This programme encourages for closer relations between MSMEs and MTCs, besides being able to build working linkages and subsequently joining MTCs' global supply chain in efforts to strengthen MSMEs' global footprints."

The benchmarking programme aims to guide the MSMEs on understanding major global trends and identifying critical elements of sustainability to be adopted and implemented. This value-added





MATRADE will continue our efforts to future-proof Malaysian exporters under the Sustainability Action Values for Exporters (SAVE) initiative, which was introduced in 2019

feature on exporters development is a journey to groom more export champions in the near future and increase the global competitiveness among the Malaysian exporters.

The rising demand on sustainability urges the Malaysian exporters to take control and be responsive on this matter as it will increase the impact on corporate reputation. Adoption of sustainable good practises and standard will become necessity in the near future. This has been addressed through National Trade Blueprint (NTBp) on pursuing sustainability and innovation. Several strategic recommendations that include establishment of sustainable manufacturing centre to nurture sustainable practises among Malaysian exporters and stakeholders, addressing forced labour issues while encouraging sustainability certification to promote long-term social sustainability and instillation of the concept of sustainability across the Government agencies to support the exporters in embracing the adoption of sustainability elements

into their businesses.

"MATRADE will continue our efforts to future-proof Malaysian exporters under the Sustainability Action Values for Exporters (SAVE) initiative, which was introduced in 2019," he added. SAVE is a dedicated initiative to drive more exporters to embrace sustainability policies and practices in their businesses and operations, particularly to equip the companies or markets that have embedded the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) into their principles. MATRADE has also established strategic partnerships with reputable organisations such as UN Global Compact, CIMB and Malaysia Green Technology Corporation (MGTC).

In line with the 12th Malaysia Plan, MATRADE will strive to create more export champions, supporting the ongoing efforts by the Government in regenerating Malaysian economy, driving the growth of new sectors while striking the balance to ensure the socio-economic inclusiveness and sustainability.



penjana
Pelan Jangka Semasa Ekonomi Negara



BSN

MDEC

**Digitalise your business
and save 30% with PENJANA***

*Terms and conditions apply.



MAXIS HELPS SMES TO EMBRACE AND EXTEND THEIR DIGITALISATION INITIATIVES

The pandemic has sparked a big shift in consumer behaviour, particularly in digital adoption. We have seen the rise of hybrid working and the gig economy. eCommerce has grown exponentially, as consumers leapfrog to the convenience of online services – from product enquiry, research and buying decision. All businesses should be ready to deliver an omni-channel experience, especially now as there is an increase in preference for trusted brands amongst consumers.

Kevin Lee, Head of SME Segment at Maxis notes that SMEs need to embrace digitalisation and cloud initiatives in the wake of COVID-19. "It is critical for SMEs to have a digital-first mindset and establish long-term priorities that prepares them for the future, rather than just grinding through the present.

Despite this need, many SMEs still hesitate to embark on the digitalisation journey for a variety of reasons. "Having worked with SMEs for many years, we understand their resistance towards digitalisation as it may seem intimidating or complex.

“

Many digital solutions have moved to the cloud, allowing businesses to start at a very low cost, where they can weigh the benefits before deciding to scale

They may not be aware of the support that they can leverage, or they may lack the key capabilities to embark on digital transformation.

"That is why it is important for SMEs to seek collaboration and innovative people-private-public partnerships that can propel their digital transformation to the next level. With the flexibility of pay-per-use solutions based on their specific needs, digital adoption no longer needs to be costly, and in the long run, presents even more cost efficiencies. Many digital solutions have moved to

the cloud, allowing businesses to start at a very low cost, where they can weigh the benefits before deciding to scale."

Wan Ahmad Kamal Bin Wan Halim, Head of Corporate Segment at Maxis agrees, saying that this represented the most opportune time for SMEs to go digital. "Technology enables them to continue being productive whether at home or on the go, improve customer centricity and competitiveness, as well as expand to new markets. Companies must rethink their digital transformation strategies to stay ahead in this highly-competitive environment."

Lee highlights the fact that as a one-stop provider, Maxis offers a myriad of converged solutions, bundled with reliable and seamless connectivity, and fully-managed services with high SLA uptime and availability, making it easy and convenient for SMEs who are looking into digitalisation to meet the full spectrum of their business needs, all with the convenience of one billing system.

"It is important SMEs look for the right partner that can guide them every step of the way, ensuring that the transformation is done in a frictionless and worry-free manner.



Rangkaian

UsahaWIRA

Be the **right partner** for every opportunity by helping SMEs be **all-ways connected** with the right resources to solve today's business challenges **better, easier, and faster.**

It is about helping them leverage insights and data that will empower them to always be ahead in an evolving business landscape."

Wan Kamal adds that as a key fixed infrastructure provider, Maxis builds fibre networks for enterprises, and offers a wide range of business connectivity solutions for a truly converged experience. "With this, we can unlock even more possibilities for digital solutions, supported by a great connectivity experience.

Meanwhile, the next-generation, MEF 3.0-certified Maxis Programmable Network is a programmable software-defined network that meets the needs of enterprise fixed voice and data requirements. The Programmable Network enables businesses to reliably scale capacity demand in order to meet the demands of fast-changing IT environments, while operating at consistently high performance.

Maxis aims to be the No. 1 ICT solutions provider for SMEs, enterprises, and government. "We have the capabilities to be a strong digital partner by delivering new technologies, models and mindsets through our converged offerings," Lee says.

As a Technology Solutions Provider for MDEC's SME Digitalisation Grant, Maxis is enabling SMEs who apply for the Grant through them to choose from the widest range of connectivity and digital solutions, including digital marketing, electronic Point-of-Sale, remote working, and eCommerce. SMEs will benefit from a single touchpoint, with a complete digital onboarding experience. To-date, Maxis has helped more than 24,000 SMEs to digitalise through the Grant.



Kevin Lee
Head of SME Segment, Maxis



"Meanwhile, through programme like our SPARK series and UsahaWIRA programme, as well as Digital Readiness Index self-assessment tool, we are also creating more awareness for businesses to understand how digitalisation can benefit them. Additionally, we have been able to develop more digital solutions that accelerate the benefits of technology adoption for businesses, for example, the SME-in-a-Box solution in partnership with AmBank, which is a one-stop solution for all finance and technology needs," said Lee.

Wan Kamal highlights the fact that Maxis's efforts to support SMEs extend beyond products and services. As a community outreach for greater digital inclusion, Maxis's eKelas Usahawan programme which is targeted for women particularly from the B40 communities, empowers entrepreneurs to build a stronger digital presence.

The programme comprises a series of free webinar workshops, with a practical and hands-on approach to equip entrepreneurs through modules including tips and basic skills on marketing, digital photography, copywriting, and planning for marketing and advertising campaigns via online and social media platforms.

"Since launching the programme a year ago, we have successfully trained more than 1,000 entrepreneurs, and we aim to train even more this year through webinars and partnerships with NGOs and government agencies," said Wan Kamal.

Interested participants who are either existing or aspiring entrepreneurs are highly encouraged to register for free at <https://www.maxis.com.my/en/about-maxis/corporate-responsibility/>.

Wan Kamal adds that Maxis is



Wan Ahmad Kamal Bin Wan Halim
Head of Corporate Segment, Maxis

well-positioned to help Malaysia and Malaysian businesses achieve the nation's ambitions of ushering in a new age of connectivity and driving a future of a connected society.

"As a strong home-grown Malaysian brand for over 25 years, we have made substantial investments in our network, people, innovation and communities, striving to bring the best technologies to all Malaysians to enable them Always Be Ahead.

"We are committed to help support the country's digital agenda, as embodied in initiatives like Jalanan Digital Negara (JENDELA) and Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDIGITAL), by expanding our mobile and fibre coverage and footprint and playing an important role in the uptake of 5G.

"The success of these initiatives will require strong collaboration with multiple stakeholders to build an effective digital ecosystem. As Malaysia's leading converged solutions company, Maxis is capable of meeting the full spectrum of business needs with connectivity and digital solutions," said Wan Kamal.

INSKEN (Institut Keusahawanan Negara)

FOCUSES ON ELEVATING ON INFORMAL AND MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH CAPACITY-BUILDING

An agency under the auspices of the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (KUSKOP) that offers entrepreneurial capacity building initiatives through training and guidance programmes.

The agency organises programmes that are based on the needs and demands of the industry by collaborating with industry practitioners, professionals and government agencies to strengthen the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem. This is indeed taking its tagline of "Empowering Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow" seriously by walking the talk of empowering the local entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is a long journey and needs proper planning and strategy, based on INSKEN's experiences in grooming entrepreneurs, they address the needs to fill up the gaps of lack of experience and expertise in managing their businesses.

INSKEN chooses to extend the helping hand and support to informal and micro-entrepreneurs. The rationale behind this support is this group contributed nearly about 1.5 million to the overall entrepreneurs' population and is often neglected because they are not even registered with any agencies like the Company Commission of Malaysia or local authorities.

Most of the time they are focusing on the operational and procedural in making sure the business is still running. Generally informal business is the most popular survival livelihood strategy and often it is without proper planning and preparation for the rough time. Realising this issue INSKEN took



the efforts to tackle this problem by introducing one of the basic yet crucial topics for the informal – Urus Tunai Bisnes. This topic focuses on the financial record and daily transactions. On top of this, INSKEN also guides them in the fundamentals of business management and administration.

After the pandemic hits, the numbers of entrepreneurs who collapsed and went bust were staggering. Unfortunately, the informal and micro-entrepreneurs were severely affected and struggling to revive. Due to informality and unregulated businesses, this group is often left behind with proper support and initiative. The agency strongly believes in the importance of capacity building. Hence for this year's direction, INSKEN is focusing to explore the niche programme by producing a market improvement programme that enables them to scale up.

The initiatives and approaches to reach out to the target participants rolled out by INSKEN has an open-door policy and through strategic collaboration within agencies, ministries and other corporate companies. Most of the agency's target participants are derived but are not limited to Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM), TEKUN Nasional and public.

While INSKEN does offer programmes for informal and microentrepreneurs, the agency has emphasized that the programmes are not limited to this group of entrepreneurs as INSKEN's programmes are open to SME too, although it is right to claim that the priority is always for informal and micro-entrepreneurs. People often have the misconception that all entrepreneurs are of the same breed and need the same dose of grooming or support. In reality, they are not the same due to differences in education level, exposure and experience to the entrepreneurship journey and hence, the understanding they have on the world and business landscape.

There is a comprehensive programme designed in preparing entrepreneurs to scale up – for those who are ready, registered



with Company Commission of Malaysia or local authorities. and have experience for at least 2 years. INSKEN covers the whole entrepreneurship ecosystem including elevating and scaling up existing entrepreneurs through coaching programmes like INSKEN Bumiputera Business Coaching (IBBC) and Online Onboarding Coaching Programme (E-Board).

In fact, INSKEN is preparing for the International Family Business Summit, a one-day event focusing to provide interesting and innovative ideas. Participants of this event can expect insightful discussions as well as knowledge and experience-sharing sessions by prominent families in business. Tentatively, this event is going to be held in October 2022. Most of INSKEN's programmes are result-oriented or outcome-oriented with well-documented reports of sales. INSKEN also emphasized the importance of having entrepreneurial knowledge in expanding business and not

merely confining in a comfort zone to support their daily life. It should be stressed that the growth of their business is good for their development as well as for prodding the competitiveness of this nation.

It is no exaggeration to say that INSKEN envisions those informal and micro-entrepreneurs would be benefitted from the grooming and development of INSKEN initiatives. – as MSME is the main contributor of the nation GDP. For the agency, this group of entrepreneurs does businesses are not merely for survival or livelihood. In fact, it is of the agency's interest to encourage them to grow and expand because their growth will positively contribute to the nation's coffers and act as a society's stabiliser as these businesses may employ more workers and the wealth effects get cascading down to other parts of the society. In return, the multiplier effects of wealth and income benefit the whole society.

BANK RAKYAT RAMPING UP INNOVATIVE EFFORTS TO DRIVE MSME RECOVERY

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are considered as the engine for economic growth all over the world including Malaysia. While MSMEs play a crucial role in developing the economy and in creating employment, financial institutions play an indispensable role in providing financial assistance and various support to fulfil the varied needs of enterprises.

The role that Bank Rakyat plays as the country's largest Development Financial Institution (DFI) and the second largest Islamic bank has never been more critical than in the past year as continued disruption to economic activities took a heavy toll on MSME businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (DKN 2030), set out by the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (KUSKOP), Bank Rakyat has been focusing on implementing outlined remedial actions and ramping up innovative efforts to help as many businesses as possible to transition into the phase of recovery.

In line with its digital transformation agenda, Bank Rakyat has launched Quick Response to Entrepreneurs (QR2E), a virtual banking platform for MSMEs and cooperatives specifically designed to assist entrepreneurs by providing comprehensive, fast, and simple digital financial advisory services as part of its Banker to Entrepreneur (B2E) initiative. B2E is a new mind-set that enables bankers to understand matters from the entrepreneur's point of view.





To further boost B40 and asnaf entrepreneurs, the Bank has launched the RAKYATpreneur program in 2021 to help the entrepreneurs by equipping them with skills and knowledge needed to expand their business.



Bank Rakyat has also laid-out a long-term plan to diversify its financing portfolio in a bid to grow and become more sustainable in the long run. The Bank has developed products specifically for MSMEs that provide various benefits, such as Micro Financing-i for entrepreneurs who need funds and financing to expand and improve their business as well as Business Financing-i and Term Financing-i for companies and cooperatives.

To further boost B40 and asnaf entrepreneurs, the Bank has launched the RAKYATpreneur program in 2021 to help the entrepreneurs by equipping them with skills and knowledge needed to expand their business.

Also, to groom new entrepreneurs at university level, UNIPreneur was launched involving 100 asnaf students from 10 universities with the objective to foster entrepreneurship and innovation among the university community by implementing various training programmes as well as providing seed funding.

As part of the Bank's aspirations in focusing on total entrepreneurial landscape, these programs will be continued in the third quarter of this year with the involvement of more participants given the successful implementation of the initiatives in the previous year.



SME'S RECOVERY CRUCIAL FOR MALAYSIA'S GDP

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) form an integral part of the Malaysian economy as they contribute 38% or more than RM500bil to our gross domestic product (GDP).

There were altogether 1,226,494 MSMEs in 2021 which accounts for 97.4% of overall establishments in Malaysia.

The pandemic that besieged the country in 2020 did not exactly leave the SME industry unscathed. Some had problems with cash flow while others could not afford to maintain their workforce. About 37,000 SMEs were unable to weather the storm and had to close.

To ensure that SMEs survive and remain sustainable, the government through various initiatives with efforts further intensified in Budget 2022

For starters, a total of RM14.2bil was made available to SMEs such as through Bank Negara's special fund, especially the Targeted Relief and Recovery Facility (TRRF), which has been increased by RM2bil.





Another initiative of the government is to set aside RM20billion for wage subsidies and this effort is also continued through Budget 2022 for specific sectors to help employers retain their workers and keep their businesses afloat.

have started the journey but SMEs have had a steep learning curve in the last two years due to the pandemic to learn what digital transformation is all about and quickly integrate that into their operations.

A notable concern among some owners of the need to bring in a new set of tech-savvy staff and if technological investments will erode the dwindling reserves of the SMEs Digitalisation should not be seen as a cost but rather an investment that gives it a headstart into the virtual world as it is about having excellent connectivity.

Towards spearheading SME's journey at different stages of its journey are many organisations, a notable among them Principal Financial Group which takes a holistic approach understands its short-term and long term goals and subsequently structures a solution for them

It customises the product for SMEs and prepares the businesses for listing 5 to 7 years down the road and more importantly prepares them for ESG. It is of paramount importance that these SMEs start thinking of ESG as the scrutiny of Malaysian companies' environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices is expected to be more intense in the future.

The TRRF offers a loan size of up to RM500,000 at a rate of up to 3.5% per annum, for a duration of up to seven years including a moratorium period of at least six months.

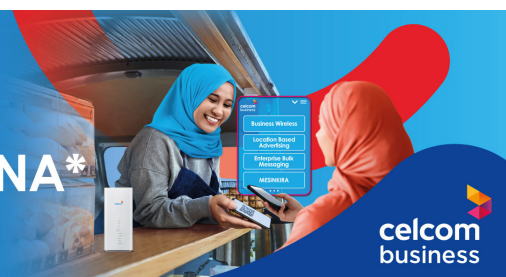
Another initiative of the government is to set aside RM20billion for wage subsidies and this effort is also continued through Budget 2022 for specific sectors to help employers retain their workers and keep their businesses afloat. SMEs are expected to be the main beneficiaries of this allocation.

The next phase for the SME journey would be the digital transformation is the next step forward for businesses, this push has certainly been expedited due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Large enterprises



**Digitalise your business
and save 30% with PENJANA***

*Terms and conditions apply.



**celcom
business**

SPURRING THE RECOVERY OF SMEs POST PANDEMIC: iStore iSend

An interview with Co-Founders and Chief Executive Officer, Joe Khoo and Chief New Initiatives Officer, Tommy Yong of iStore iSend

Your view on the current SME ecosystem in Malaysia?

As SMEs represent about 97.3 per cent of registered businesses and 65 per cent of total employment in Malaysia, the growth of SMEs is critical to Malaysia's economic growth and is the backbone of our nation's economic progress.

During the pandemic, the commitment to drive SME development is already visible through the government's facilitative role in creating a more conducive environment for businesses to thrive, which include targeted financial support. Given these circumstances, the SME ecosystem in Malaysia has significantly and tremendously grown, compared to how it was a few years before the pandemic. On top of that, SMEs have received a platform that could have extensively aided the SME ecosystem, specifically in terms of promoting and empowering entrepreneurial activities. Hence, we have achieved a great deal thus far for our SME ecosystem that has contributed to the growth of Malaysia's economy.

What is your role as an e-commerce company in ensuring your business survivability?

Before we reached the sweet spot that we are currently at in the market, e-fulfilment and e-commerce were not as prevalent and prolific in the region as today.

As e-fulfilment was a totally foreign and strange concept back then and it required a lot of effort from iStore iSend to educate the public as well as the target market on what e-fulfilment really is and how essential your product offerings are to the e-Commerce growth.

Ever since our inception, our goal is to provide all-round reliable logistical services. That is how we come out with the idea to help online businesses thrive, especially those who are just starting out and we are glad that we have the expertise to do that.

Due to this, as an unconventional logistics company, our business has evolved beyond logistics management to e-commerce management, and we also have some products in tech i.e. back-end assistance, channel management for companies that are just venturing into e-commerce, online store setup, onboarding of brands to online e-marketplaces, official online store management, growth and marketing campaigns management, listing and even customer services.

Meanwhile, we too adopt our proprietary system, ODin to automate customers' e-commerce operations. The system mainly comprises an order management system, a warehouse management system, and a transportation management system. We also provide online merchants with consultation services.



Can you share your experiences and thoughts from observing how the logistics industry has transformed in Malaysia since when you first started the company?

iStore iSend started as a warehousing business in 2009 when the e-commerce wasn't in high demand, where we modelled after Amazon. We had our first breakthrough in 2016 when we onboarded our first enterprise clients, L'Oréal and Levis. That was the start of a torrent of referrals from other prominent firms in the fashion, wellness, and beauty industries, to the household goods sector.

We started fundraising in 2020. Prior to this, we were self-funded for about 10 years. We also founded the company in a place where we truly want to help online businesses thrive, especially those who are just starting out and we are glad that we have the expertise to do that.

Now that we have platforms like Shopee and Lazada, as the adoption of e-commerce caught on, more businesses started growing in both volume of products and sales, and they were not able to cope with the growing number of sales orders. More SKUs in place could only mean a higher margin of error – let it be shipping out the wrong product or having a return of the product due to a wrong size. It has allowed our business to evolve beyond logistics management to e-commerce management. This has allowed us to also have some products in tech. We provide back-end assistance, and also support when online merchants are just venturing into e-commerce and require help in setting up the e-commerce division.

The evolution of e-commerce has also broken the ground for a promising future for the industry. This has not only aided the transition towards digitalisation, but also increased consistent product demands and unlocked doors for more e-commerce providers to eye for regional expansion, emerge, capture and penetrate other markets.

How has the demand for e-commerce changed things in recent years, especially during the pandemic? How has the COVID-19 pandemic triggered the nature of the e-commerce business?

To compare with pre-pandemic days, the Covid-19 pandemic has definitely transformed the business ecosystem. Retailers who depend solely on daily sales were very much in the dark on when they will be allowed to re-open for business during the lockdown. In such foggy and uncertain times, many business owners were coerced to digitalise their businesses in order to ensure

the businesses are still able to operate in restrictive times. The emergence of more adopters has accounted for the noticeable spike in e-commerce vendors on online marketplaces.

How these businesses manage their systems and operations plays such an important and huge role in determining the success of the business. This is also where it comes in handy – when we understand the trend, we can benefit from that and optimise the tools and services that further empower your business, both in terms of strategy and how you can leverage your strategy.

On a positive note, the evolution has also transformed the e-commerce sectors and shaped the way consumers connect with brands or vice versa. This transformation has also opened up business opportunities for retailers and has sped up the pace of the industry's growth. This is because consumers now have access to a range of tools that help them gauge prices, find alternatives, locate stores and receive coupons.

As the industry evolves, the influence that tech-savvy shoppers have in the e-commerce sector is also growing stronger and faster. Consequently, this has also shaped how consumers connect with brands and the demand within the e-commerce sector for the past few years.

The government has stated before that it wants Malaysia to become an e-fulfillment hub for the region. Do you think that is possible? Why or why not? What needs to be done?

We feel that it is possible for our country to become an e-fulfillment hub in the region. Simply because the government have set up numerous initiatives in terms of educating

SMEs on the transformation or how the e-commerce industry works as many are not aware of what to do.

We feel that this would help educate SMEs to understand the distinctions in online business. However, there needs to be an investment into it; it's not just a simple matter of launching a website. This is something that many SMEs cannot afford, along with the uncertainty of whether they will even succeed in the first place.

On the same note, in order to further unlock Malaysia's potential as an e-fulfillment hub, we also need to reach out to SMEs that are currently in the e-Commerce area to grow their operations and unlock additional growth in the global marketplace.

Many Malaysian SMEs, for example, are perplexed with export shipment details and are unable to get low shipping rates seeing as they are new to global e-commerce. Hence, this would necessitate a more in-depth understanding of the challenges they faced and the solution to overcome them. Similarly, we also need to provide comprehensive guidance to businesses who are new to e-commerce on how to set up their businesses online with digital marketing techniques such as coordinating pilot programmes to help these potential businesses thrive.

As the industry is much more complex now since it has turned competitive, creating a space like this where upcoming entrepreneurs are able to understand e-commerce business better is not only a good measure, but it could also lead towards the creation of the next successful venture in Malaysia.

5G READY

penjana
Pilot Jalan Semesta Ekonomi Negara

BSN **MDEC**

**Digitalise your business
and save 30% with PENJANA ***

celcom business

*Terms and conditions apply.

TOP ENTREPRENEURS BY INSKEN IN 2021



	NAME	PROGRAM	TOTAL OF SALE INCREASE	INDUSTRY
1	Liey Azim (Angah)w	E-Board	4467.25%	Pembuatan (Pertukangan) Syarikat: Dr Kayu Network
2	Jasmin Aksan	E-Board	1594.51%	Pembuatan (Bungkusan Hadiah dan Acara Majlis) Syarikat: Eppibox Sdn. Bhd.
3	Hjh Norain Binti Hj Abu Bakar	E-Board	737.96%	Perkhidmatan (Perunding Pewarisan Harta Islam) Syarikat: Kausar Global Sdn. Bhd.
4	Aznil Putra bin Ahmad Rapael	E-Board	233.03%	Perkhidmatan (Produk Makanan dan Kesihatan) Syarikat: Ashabul Kahfi Niaga
5	Azeman bin Samuin	E-Board	752.00%	Perkhidmatan (Makanan dan Minuman) Madu Kelulut & Pusat Agro Pelancongan
6	Farahatul Awanis binti Abdul Ghani	IBBC Bakeri	777%	Bakeri Syarikat: Syatiul Syugar Enterprise
7	Fairuz bin Musa	IBBC Cafe Restoran	213%	Kafe Restoran Syarikat: MHI Teguh Enterprise
8	Azhar Bin Mat Desa	IBBC Bakeri	179%	Bakeri Syarikat: Perniagaan Darwisyah @ Pau Azhar
9	Hana Suhaila binti Abu Bakar	IBBC Mix Industry	156%	Produk & Pembuatan Syarikat: HSRich Global Sdn Bhd
10	Azizah Ibrahim	IBBC Postnatal Care	199%	Postnatal Care Syarikat: Wawa Spa
11	Elsie Amigo @ Nur Farhana Abdullah	IBT Market Intelligent, IBT Google Tools, IBT Videography	133%	F&B Syarikat: Elfa Wealth Legacy Sdn Bhd
12	Fauziah binti Abdul Rani	IBT Product Development	200%	Makanan dan Minuman Syarikat: Ziebina Innovative Sdn Bhd

With the right investment partner,
financial security is possible

Serving
2,000,000+*
investors in Southeast Asia

.....

Over
142 years
of global experience
in investment

.....

Innovative
ideas and real-life
solutions

We are Principal

Our customers have always been and will always be at the centre of everything that we do. We offer a wide variety of solutions to help people and companies in building, protecting and advancing their financial well-being. We are a joint venture between Principal Financial Group and CIMB Group. Our headquarters is in Malaysia with a footprint across Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore.

Shariah-compliant and conventional solutions for you:
Unit trust | Retirement | Corporate Mandates

Learn more at www.principal.com.my

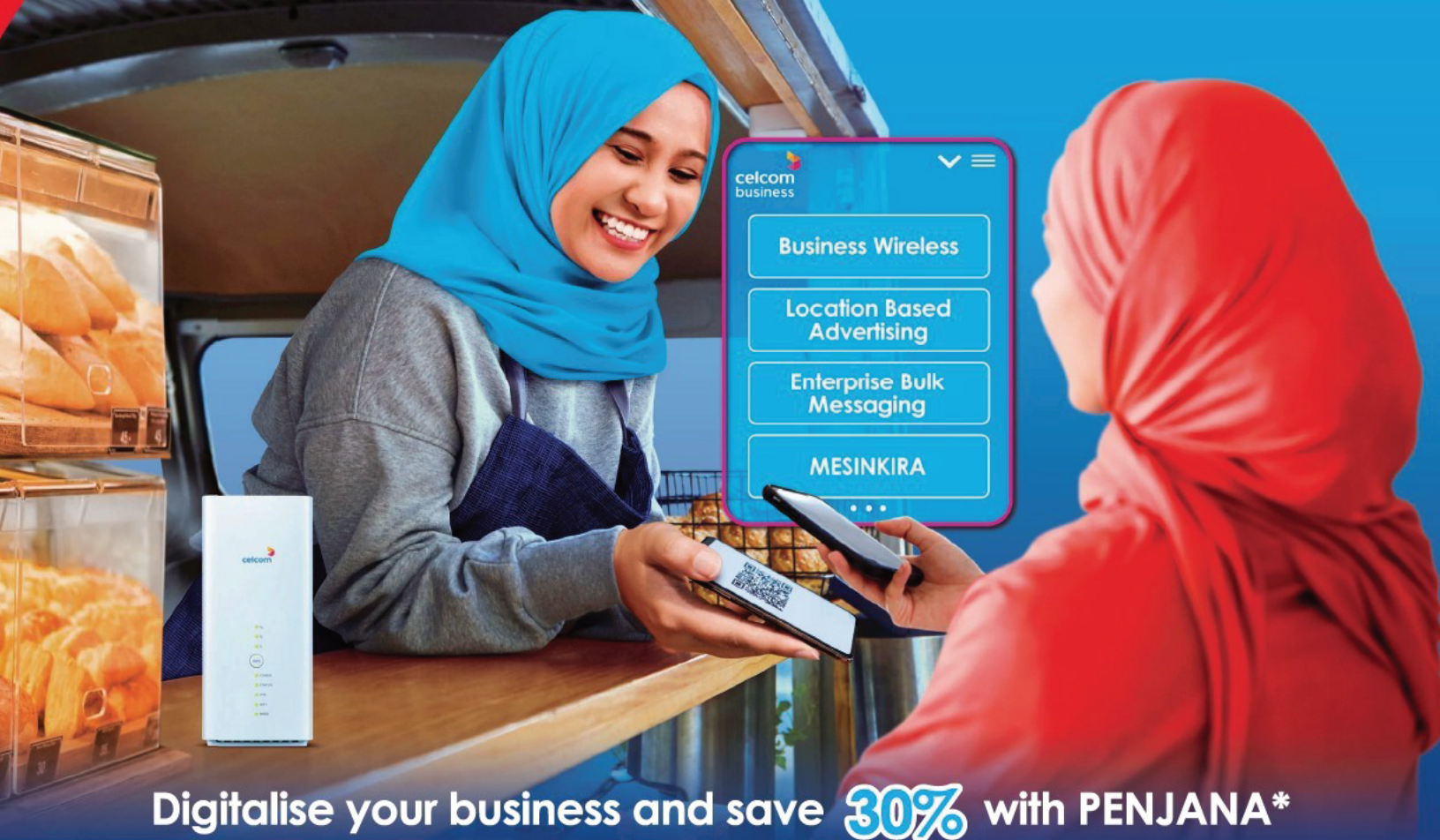
Principal, Principal and symbol design and Principal Financial Group are trademarks and service marks of Principal Financial Services, Inc., a member of the Principal Financial Group. ©2019 Principal Financial Services, Inc.

* As of June 2022

Disclaimer: We recommend that investors read and understand the contents of the funds' prospectus and PHS available on the Principal website which have been duly registered with the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC). Registration of these documents does not amount to nor indicate that the SC has recommended or endorsed the product or service. There are risks, fees and charges involved in investing in the funds. We suggest that you should understand the risk involved, make your own risk assessment, and seek professional advice, where necessary. This material has not been reviewed by the SC. The past performance of a fund should not be taken as indicative of its future performance.

Celcom Business

Make your business more efficient and productive



Digitalise your business and save **30%** with PENJANA*



Get connected to fast internet anytime, anywhere
Business Wireless



Promote new offers to customers instantly through bulk SMS
Enterprise Bulk Messaging



Reach out to new customers in your vicinity
Location Based Advertising



Receive digital payments easily
MESINKIRA



Scan here to visit our website

Visit business.celcom.com.my for more info on our offers and FREE devices.