

MESSAGE from Tan Sri Halim Ali Chairman, Multimedia Development Corporation

THIS IS SUCH A PIVOTAL MOMENT for the Multimedia Super Corridor. We have completed Phase One of our initiatives, and are moving effectively ahead with the implementation of Phase Two. It is an honour for me to join the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) at this juncture where many important developments and changes are taking place. I have had the pleasure of attending several International Advisory Panel (IAP) meetings in the past, and this year, I am exceptionally proud to be back in the discussions as host of the event. As the Chairman of MDC, it gives me great pleasure to welcome all Panel members and participants to the Seventh IAP 2003.

To us at the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC), the importance of ICT and all that it entails, the physical infrastructure, the intellectual development as well as the nurturing of talent to innovate and utilise inventions or processes in the private and public sectors, can never diminish. Indeed, if anything, the urgency to develop and employ ICT is as vital now than before as we push forward to become a well-informed and a knowledge-based society.

The Malaysian Government has long realised that mere words or utterances are not enough; rather, substance and sustained effort are fundamental. The MSC, launched in August 1996, was formed to help provide the substance that will propel us into the global multimedia climate. The MDC was concurrently conceived to sustain the efforts in leading the development and in managing the MSC, with the ultimate goal of realising 2020 vision.

The International Advisory Panel, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was set up to provide advice and direction to Malaysia's ICT efforts. The first meeting was held in 1997 at Stanford University, and over the years, the MSC has benefited immensely from the contributions of the panel members.

At the 6th IAP meeting held in September 2002, the chairman introduced five new attendees to the meeting: Dr Edwin J. Feulner, the President of The Heritage Foundation; Mr Ragnar Back, Executive Vice President, Ericsson Group & President of Ericsson Asia Pacific; Mr Craig Mundie, the Chief Technology Officer at Microsoft; Mr Dennis Roberson, Executive Vice-President and Chief Technology Officer, Motorola; and Mr Sunlin Chou, Senior Vice-President, Technology and Manufacturing Group at Intel Corporation.

It is indeed encouraging that, every year, we see an ever-increasing number of ICT global leaders and attendees at our IAP meetings. To us, this is a genuine indication of their acknowledgement of MSC enterprise's relevance towards the development of the globalised ICT. We gratefully welcome the seriousness and importance they place on MSC initiatives, and we pledge to continue working together towards becoming a fully integrated and knowledge rich society.

Dr Mahathir, during the launch of the new Ericsson building in Cyberjaya recently, praised the MSC for its accomplishment in creating a technology hub which has attracted many international and world class companies to set up their businesses here. This is also a positive reflection of the companies' support and confidence towards the farsighted goals of the MSC.

The IAP meets again for the seventh time in Cyberjaya in the first week of September. The IAP Panel members have repeatedly complimented MSC's excellent ICT infrastructure, and are confident that this is a significant advantage to leverage upon in establishing MSC as an IT hub. The MSC has benefited tremendously from the IAP meetings. As the IAP Chairman, Dr. Mahathir noted that the IAP meetings have brought a lot of new ideas, and suggestions made have been useful for the continuing progress of the MSC; and to them, we extend our greatest appreciation.

The MSC has moved onto the Second Phase; hence, there are bound to be new issues which are unique to the nature of this development. We believe that the advice and deliberations produced by the Panel members during their discussions will be relevant and constructive to the progress of the Second Phase of the MSC initiatives.

It is my hope that we will all mutually benefit from this enriching event, bringing us closer to our mutual vision in shaping a greater Information Age.





INTERVIEW | Chief Secretary to the Government

e-GOVERNMENT

CHANGING THE CIVIL SERVICE MINDSET TO SERVE

CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES

A **FORMIDABLE** wind of change is sweeping through the Government structure that will eventually result in a new paradigm of how the Government machinery operates.

Not only will the wind of change sweep away the traditional ways of how the Government delivers services to its citizens but the changes will also improve efficiency and increase the productivity to the extent that the Malaysian government machinery becomes the “test-bed” for a radical, innovative concept never seen of or heard before.

At the centre of this revolutionary change in the mindset of civil servants is its professional and progressive head, Tan Sri Samsudin Osman, the Chief Secretary to the Government.

As the change master who is spearheading the move in pushing the civil service into the new technology and knowledge-based 21st Century, Tan Sri Samsudin is making waves not by merely introducing technological catchwords among the one million civil servants but also making sure Information and Communication Technology (ICT) becomes an integral part of the government machinery.

“No, I would not call it a new way of doing things in the civil service,” he told MSC.comm. “I would call it a new

initiative because we have not gone ICT in all the departments. There are some operations that still have to be on paper.”

“For example, in the Land Office, we need to upgrade and improve the operations, re-engineer the Land Office and provide a system which could integrate revenue collection, as well as land administration and management”.

“By and by, there will be other initiatives that would need to be undertaken by other departments that are not yet using ICT.”

As late as 10 years ago, no one had ever heard of the term “electronic government” or “e-Government”. Today, “e-Government” is on the lips of every civil servant.

What is e-Government? In essence, e-Government is the extensive use of ICT in the operations of the government machinery, so that the citizens of the country will be served better and more efficiently, at a much lower cost of operating those services and at higher level of productivity.

Government services to the citizens have always been criticised as being inefficient, slow and full of red tape. With e-Government, that mindset will be a thing of the past.

“e-Government is launched to reinvent the operations of the Government, both internally and in terms of the delivery of the services to the people,” Tan Sri Samsudin said.

“It seeks to improve convenience, accessibility, information flow and processes within the Government with a view to achieve speed and quality of policy development and implementation, co-ordination and enforcement.”

TAN SRI SAMSUDIN OSMAN



You must also get the agencies to accept these projects as well as get the heads of departments to be comfortable and conversant with these developments

Serving the People Better

Indeed, e-Government sets a new benchmark in the levels of co-operation between the Government, businesses and the citizens, who shall work together for the greater benefit of the country and all Malaysians.

The vision also focuses on an effective and efficient system that delivers services to the citizens in a way that the Government becomes more responsive as well as responding quicker to the changing needs of the citizens.

It is significant that e-Government is one of the Flagship Applications of the Multimedia Super Corridor, (MSC) and that Malaysian government agencies are the users of the e-Government flagship. The expenditures on e-Government for the period of 2001-03 would amount to RM380.01 million.

"Few countries in the world have done what we have done to date with e-Government," remarked Tan Sri Samsudin. "We are still in the process of consolidating our efforts; in fact we are at the stage of rolling out the flagship projects throughout the whole Government organisation".

Human Resource Management Information System, HRMIS

"When we first undertook the e-Government initiative, like the other Flagship Application projects, we carried it out on a pilot basis," he said. "The most interesting, most massive and most extensive project, is the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS)."

The HRMIS project, one of the seven pilot projects under the e-Government initiative, aims

to digitise all available data and information on government personnel to enable the various agencies and departments to respond quicker to the changing political, economic and social environment.

The other six projects under the e-Government initiative are project monitoring system, generic office environment (GOE), e-Services, e-Procurement, e-Syariah, and electronic labour exchange (ELX).

The HRMIS is a massive job, but at the end of the day the effort is worth the while. As Tan Sri Samsudin puts it, "There is always a learning curve in the sense that you need to train people each time you implement a project and, of course, getting them committed.

"You must also get the agencies to accept these projects as well as getting the heads of departments to be comfortable and conversant with these developments".

"We were the first to carry out such a venture. No government in the world has undertaken a HRMIS project that covers so many agencies".

"In carrying out the project, we found that there are really no suitable solutions that you can buy off the shelf. We can say it is a leading-edge solution that we are creating with our HRMIS. Thus, there will be challenges when you implement leading-edge solutions".

"For instance, in many of these projects, we were the first to carry them out and our vendors have never done such projects before, on such a massive scale."

The HRMIS project initially involves 10 government



agencies. Following successful trials, the HRMIS will be rolled out to all government agencies.

e-Syariah

Another e-Government project that has impressed Tan Sri Samsudin is e-Syariah.

Launched in April 2002, e-Syariah leverages upon ICT to upgrade the quality of services of the syariah courts.

This will eventually enhance the Islamic Justice Department's effectiveness and efficiency through the use of ICT to improve the productivity of the management of the 102 Syariah Courts nationwide. The project is expected to be completed in three years' time.

"What impressed me most was that when you talked to the Syariah Court judges, they were so excited about the project." said Tan Sri Samsuddin.

"The judges are now able to work at their computers, and produce judgments electronically, get easy access to past cases for reference at the touch of a button, and have all the information that they need for a particular case quicker than before. That is what I would call modernisation."

Under the e-Syariah project, it is possible to have the following applications:

- A court case management system;
- A Syarie lawyer registration system;
- e-Syariah portal; and
- A library management system.

Multipurpose Smart Card

Another even more impressive e-Government project that Tan Sri Samsudin feels proud of, again in view of his significant role in it, is the introduction of the multipurpose smart card, which will soon be rolled out throughout the country, following successful testing.

"I always tell my officers that the smart card could have been impossible if we had not computerised our databases, or that we had not digitised all the data and records, such as the names of people, their IC numbers, fingerprints, etc."

"Since we have digitised all the data and records, we are also able to include in the smart cards our

driving licences, passport information and what have you."

Many people have forgotten that it was just less than 10 years ago that it took them a long time to apply for an IC, driving licence or passport, or to get a replacement, not considering the hassle of doing it manually.

"Today, all these can be done in days, not weeks or months. Even better, like the driving theory test, where you can do it online at one of the e-services centres and you can even get your results immediately."

"Why we are introducing ICT in the government machinery is to enable the government agencies and departments to provide more efficient and speedier services to the public, as well as providing the convenience."

Electronic Labour Exchange (ELX)

Another significant e-Government project is the electronic labour exchange (ELX), which aims at improving the mobilisation of the nation's human resources, and to ensure that manpower utilisation is optimised through the systematic matching of job seekers to job vacancies.

The ELX has three primary applications, namely:

- A job clearing system (JCS) that encompasses the registration of job seekers and employers, job matching and the generation of the profile of candidates for prospective employment, scheduling of interview and job placement.
- A labour market database (LMD) that maps and



consolidates the labour market data from various internal and external sources.

- An office productivity system (OPS) which has the capability for e-mailing, scheduling, collaboration and document management in addition to the handling of complaints from workers and employers.

The Government of Tomorrow

Even though it is still a long journey to have the complete civil service operating under an ICT environment, Tan Sri Samsudin feels proud of the progress made so far. "What we have done so far is the kind of achievement that has in a sense contributed substantially to a mindset change".

"Civil servants are like everyone else who benefit from changes from the use of ICT. The ability to produce products and deliver the services at a much faster pace than before does create an incentive for the civil servants to move on to other things because they have seen the success of what they have done."

How does Tan Sri Samsudin see the Government organisation to be in five or 10 years from now when all the ICT projects are finally rolled out?

"Well, who would have expected the Government to be that more efficient, and that the Government's services delivery system improved to such a tremendous extent?"

"And perhaps, we will see the day when all Government agencies and officers are able to communicate and discuss official matters with each other electronically rather than physically. Hopefully, there will also be cost savings in Government operations of its facilities and processes.

"Eventually we will see a new paradigm in the way the Government operates. That is essentially the intention of e-Government. Even now we are slowly changing the way Government operates, and how the Government provides its services by giving its citizens more alternatives".

"For example, previously when you wanted to pay a bill, you go to the post office or you post a cheque with the bill. Now some departments provide online payment facilities as an alternative means of paying."

Tan Sri Samsudin said that Malaysia should be able to remain as one of the leaders in developing e-Government

initiatives if the civil service ensures:

- All required information by citizens and businesses are made available on the Internet;
- The highest impact on-line and phone-based services are given priority;
- All main and support departments are fully geared to deliver online services;
- Forming of new laws, policy measures and governance structures to drive implementation of the above; and
- Adoption of shared services to leverage on economies of scale and innovation.

Tan Sri Samsudin said "In order to develop world-class services, the civil service should also aim to be world-class".

He added: "To achieve this, the civil service must raise standards, break down old departmental barriers and work in unison to serve customers. For flagships, the main customers should be citizens and businesses".

"We must ensure that we provide an innovative environment so that our local companies can create new products for the export market. We need to take a close look at our capability and organise ourselves to meet continuously rising expectations of our customers and spearhead Malaysia's endeavour to become a knowledge-based economy and society".



MSC Flagship Centre

"The world views the MSC flagships as a barometer for our competitiveness in our quest to reach developed nation status and become a sophisticated country that the global community will deal with."

"Our success or failure is representative of the country's capability to innovate. It also reflects how relevant we are to the global community."

Tan Sri Samsudin added that Flagship Applications would help create the digital infrastructure to compete and spawn products and services for export.

"We are now starting to see the fruits of our efforts with exports of major technologies to nations in ASEAN and OIC countries. One example is the smart card, where because of the initial innovation Malaysia is seen as the leader in this area of technology".

"It is imperative that our flagships continue to be nurtured to ensure that new technologies will be developed and exported." ●



FEATURE | tracking the msc progress

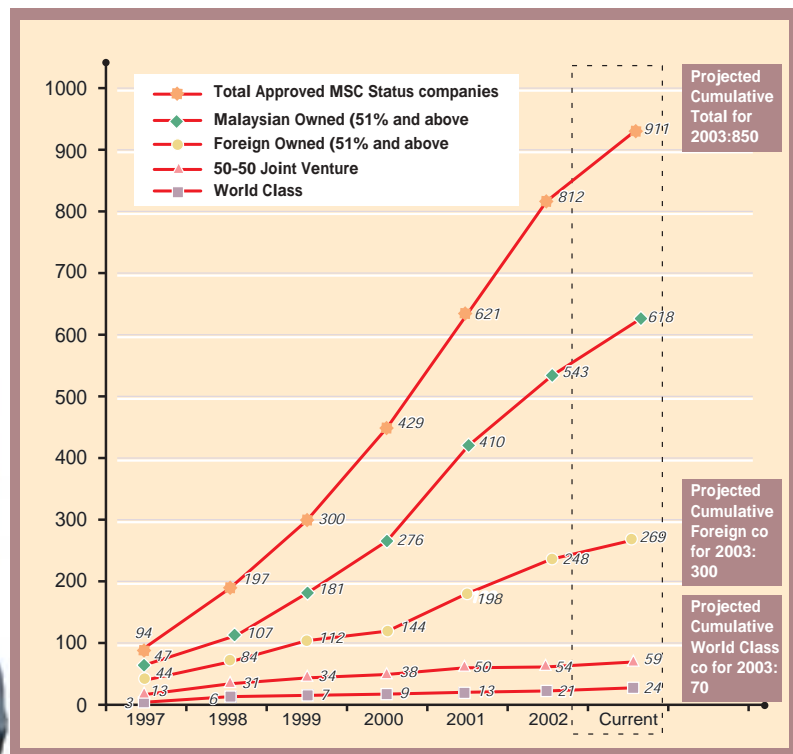
ALL SET IN PLACE, NOW FOR THE NEXT PHASE



SINCE the day the Multimedia Super Corridor was launched on Aug 2, 1996, it has been recognised that good infrastructure alone is not enough to propel Malaysia to become a developed nation by 2020.

The ambitious undertaking means that Malaysia must now embark on a journey to transform the nation's present production-based economy to that of a knowledge-based economy (k-economy).

MSC STATUS COMPANIES AS AT AUGUST 10TH, 2003



DATUK DR. MOHAMED ARIF NUN

Seven years have passed and it's time to look back at Phase One. The state of transition is most encouraging.

"It has been a very exciting first step and we are delighted that all our targets in Phase One have been met and some, looking at export figures, even exceeded all expectations," said MSD's chief executive officer, Datuk Dr Mohamed Arif Nun.

"Having a highly advanced physical and telecommunications infrastructure has made our companies more attractive, and there is a strong emergence of R&D products."

"Our relationships with world-class companies have helped establish leads in strategic IT planning and the development of flagship projects."

"Having said that, we should not be resting on our laurels because the next phase gets even tougher."

Phase Two is about enhancing the MSC by turning it into an effective test-bed for R&D as a developer of intellectual property.

The MGS grant scheme is being enhanced specifically and tailored to attract foreign companies to undertake technological development. So far two overseas corporations are in the midst of processing their applications.

"There's also a cluster of companies in Cyberjaya to design integrated microchips, which is significant because of its high added value. Using home grown design would also complement the flagship applications," said Dr Arif.

It does not make sense for us to buy products from abroad and spend our resources to maintain and upgrade these products, as ownership still remains with the foreign party

"Spearheaded by the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia, the concerted effort is to urge broadband companies to boost content creation and creative multimedia industry as the synergy in application and broadband gives added value to local services."

Comprehending the real meaning of K-economy, K-industry and K-society is vital to make Vision 2020 a reality.

For more rapid growth, these efforts should be undertaken by companies with strong background as it is clear that the intellectual capital of Malaysia will focus around MSC companies.

The development of a strong infrastructure is a pre-requisite for any ICT or multimedia initiatives to remain competitive. With regards to this, it is important to build capacity and capability to provide superior services.

However, to succeed, it inevitably boils down to the greatest challenge of all - changing the Malaysian mindset.

For a start, the people must be better aware of the path the Government has embarked on in pursuit of a future of innovation for sustainability.

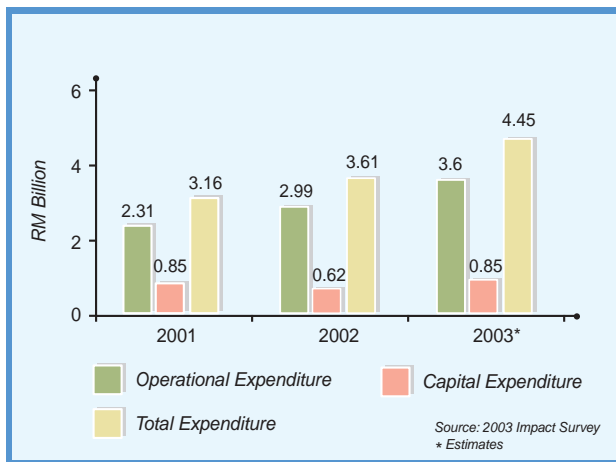
Malaysians must begin to exploit the opportunities offered by ICT and the multimedia revolution, at the very least to enhance the quality of life and effectiveness of their businesses, as by itself, the Government is incapable of completing the journey to make Malaysia a knowledge-based economy and society.

"On the ground, it is becoming more apparent that we need to be serious and focus on achieving transparency and good corporate governance. This can only be possible with leaders of high moral values at all levels of administration," said Dr Arif.

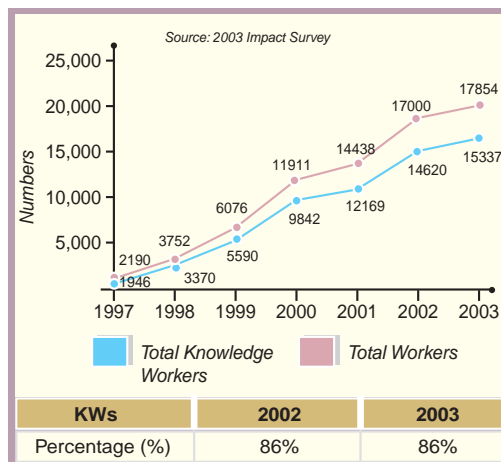
"Vision 2020 has urged the nation to become developed, which is a matter of



TOTAL EXPENDITURE IN THE MSC



EMPLOYMENT CREATED IN THE MSC



quadrupling our GDP. However, any advanced society must also be built on strong moral and psychological values.”

Malaysians must also re-align their thinking and be creators and developers of technologies as opposed to being users, mere “heavers of wood and carriers of water”.

“It does not make sense for us to buy products from abroad and spend our resources to maintain and upgrade these products, as ownership still remains with the foreign party,” he said.

“Malaysians need to increase intellectual capacity, for without it we will revert to the paradigm of the 70s and 80s. We must take charge of own progress of achieving a knowledge-based economy, if not others will take charge.”

Impact survey

The numbers speak for themselves, notably the export figures which have risen from RM670 million in 2002 to RM1.04 billion in 2003 (based on 528 companies).

In the pipeline are a variety of important patents, which reflect the increased expenditure on research and development in 2003 totalling RM542 million, doubling the amount from that of last year.

Companies under the MSC are rapidly developing into what is termed as K-based economies, with 86% of its workforce made up of K-workers.

“R&D allocation should be 10% of total expenditure and coupled with positive export sales, these are attributes of a good K-based company,” said Dr Arif.

“There’s great challenge in bringing the rest of the country to emulate these exemplary achievements, which is why we need to push various programmes to identify and spawn companies, especially SMEs, to get connected to the National

Incubator Network (NIN).”

Incubators established under NIN are meant to attract technopreneurs who can have access to the benefits of MSC’s initiatives.

The main source for R&D should come from individuals, companies and research by both government and private institutes of higher learning.

“Despite the dot.com crash, the principle of leveraging the Internet is still as valid as before. E-commerce is steadily increasing,” said Dr Arif.

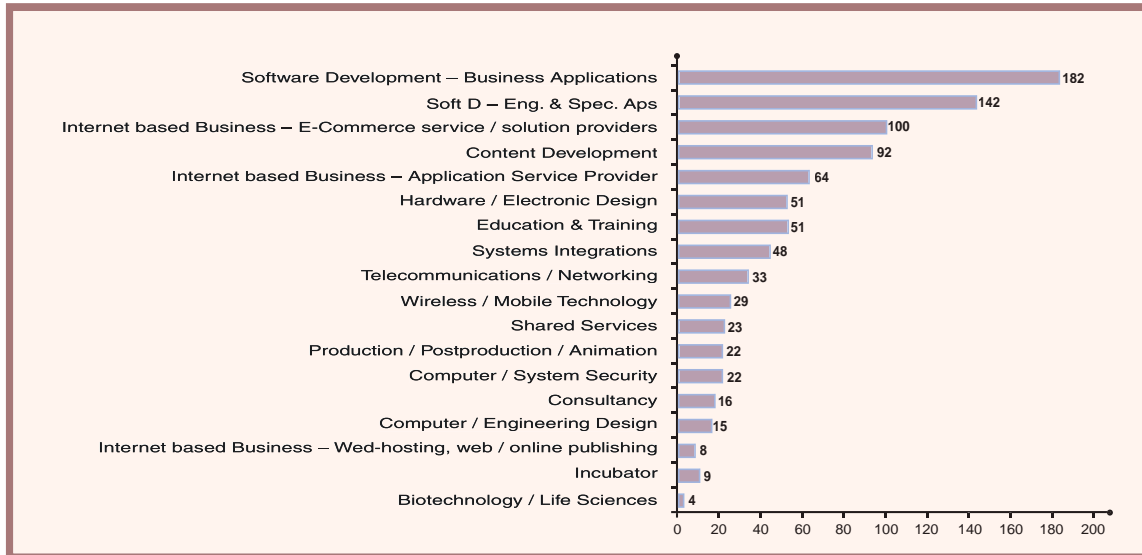
“In Malaysia, surveys by the Economic Planning Unit to understand the capacity of our industries have identified various growth sectors, among them, tourism, agriculture and manufacturing.”

“As we live in a global community, it is only logical that these industries be brought up to speed. Here is where the MSC companies can help.”

“Realistically, it is not enough to create and develop ICT per se because we already have a thriving manufacturing centre, especially in the semi-conductor sector.”

In the pipeline are a variety of important patents, which reflect the increased expenditure on research and development in 2003 totalling RM542 million, almost double the amount from that of last year.

APPROVED 911 MSC COMPANIES BY SECTORS AS OF AUGUST 10TH, 2003



“As such, we should instead exploit ways on how to make these industries more productive... applying the K to the P, so to speak.”

“For advanced manufacturing, we could, for example, introduce the use of robotics. Malaysia has always been a trading nation, so why not use ICT to better compete?”

International marketing in a K-economy would require K-individuals. While the quality of graduates can be improved, there is also a requirement for graduates to be trained in specialised areas to make them relevant to the industry.

“Critically, soft skills need to be improved. These include the ability to speak English, and being articulate in putting forth your case. Of concern presently is the workers’ lack of understanding of the need to become pro-active and self-starters.”

Flagships

“An outstanding feature that differentiates the MSC from other technological projects around the world is the development of flagship applications,” Dr Arif said.

These are electronic government (E-Government), the multi-purpose card, smart schools and telehealth, which are called developmental flagships where else there are another three which are termed environmental flagships and they are R&D cluster, e-business and the technopreneurs development flagship.

These flagship applications make MSC comprehensive and unique in the world, also serving as a model benchmark for other developing countries.

The flagships have many success stories, like the multi-purpose smart card project where five million Mykads have been issued to date. About 17 million Mykad are expected to be in use by 2007.

As it is, Malaysia is the first country to intensely use the smart card technology on a national scale.

“It’s only logical that these products and services be exported contributing significantly to Malaysia’s GDP,” said Dr Arif.

“The challenge is to market these products and provide consultancy services to governments by sharing our experience in building the MSC and developing our own ICT.

“MDC has been mandated to make the MSC happen, and I’m honoured to be involved in the MSC project to steer Malaysia into the K-economy.” ●

An outstanding feature that differentiates the MSC from other technological projects around the world is the development of flagship applications



LIST | Attendees for 7th IAP Meeting (as of 30th August 2003)

IAP MEMBERS

1. **Mr Bob Bishop**
Chairman & CEO
Silicon Graphics Inc.
2. **Prof William F. Miller**
Herbert Hoover Professor of Public
And Private Management, Emeritus
Professor of Computer Science,
Stanford University
3. **Dr Terry Cutler**
Managing Director
Cutler & Company
4. **Mr Ragnar Back**
Executive Vice President
Ericsson Group
5. **Mr N.R. Narayana Murthy**
Chairman of the Board
Infosys Technologies Ltd
6. **Ir Anton Hendrik Schaaf**
Member of the Group Executive
Board
Siemens Information and
Communication Networks
7. **Dr Edwin J. Feulner**
President
The Heritage Foundation
8. **Mr B. Ramalinga Raju**
Chairman
Satyam Computer Services Ltd
9. **Dr John Gage**
Chief Researcher and Director of
Science
Sun Microsystems Inc.
10. **Dato' Dr. Stan Shih**
Chairman, Chief Executive Officer
& Co-Founder
Acer Incorporated
11. **Dato' Dr Tadahiro Sekimoto**
Chairman
Institute for International
Socio-Economic Studies Japan
12. **Professor Derek Williams**
Executive Vice President
(Asia Pacific Division)
Oracle Corporation
13. **Mr Dennis A. Roberson**
Vice Provost for New Initiatives
Illinois Institute of Technology
14. **Ambassador Diana Lady Dougan**
Chairman
Cyber Century Forum
15. **Mr Robert Madge**
President
IDtrack
16. **Mr Masanobu Suzuki**
President
NTT Communications Corporation
17. **Professor Sir Alec Broers**
Vice Chancellor
University of Cambridge
8. **Dr Kazuo Murano**
Corporate Senior Vice President
Fujitsu Limited
9. **Mr Mike Carr**
Director of Research & Venturing
BT Exact Technologies
10. **Mr Jay Davis**
President Asia and Japan
Electronic Data Systems (HK)
Limited
11. **Dr Sunlin Chou**
Senior Vice President,
Managing Director
Manufacturing Group
Intel Corporation
13. **Mr Mikko Heikkonen**
Senior Vice President
Nokia Networks
14. **Mr Peter Moore**
Chief Technology Officer
Asia Pacific & Greater China
Microsoft
15. **Mr Ooi-Wong Wai Kin**
Vice President, Information
Technology & Customer Experience
for Dell Asia Pacific, Japan

IAP REPRESENTATIVES

1. **Mr Stephen McGuckin**
Global Chief Information Officer
DHL System Limited
2. **Mr Siyen Ma**
Head of Bloomberg
Technologies and Operations
for Asia Pacific Region
Bloomberg L.P.
3. **Mr Ron Spithill**
Executive Vice President, Alcatel
President, Alcatel Asia Pacific
4. **Mr Martin Geh**
President
Integrated Network Solutions
Lucent Technologies Asia Pacific
5. **Mr Alan S.L. Cheung**
Vice President
Peking University Founder Group
Corporation
6. **Mr Satish Khatu**
General Manager
IBM ASEAN/South Asia
7. **Mr Eugene Delaney**
Executive Vice President, Motorola
Inc and President, Global Relations
& Resources Organization (GRRO)

OBSERVER

1. **Mr Ken Sheffer**
Director - Hong Kong Office &
Counsellor to the President
The Heritage Foundation



FEATURE | Business of the future



MSC MOVES FORWARD WITH SHARED SERVICES

Phase One of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) involving the creation of a broad cluster of foreign and indigenous companies is now nearing completion. Advancing onward to Phase Two, Multimedia Development Corporation Sdn Bhd (MDC) aims to provide a platform for its companies to become globally competitive, better export oriented and well-recognised through a unique MSC branding. One key initiative for this way forward is through expanding the area of shared services.

“In order to effectively serve global needs, we must create a niche.”

THE NICHE that Mr Narayanan Kanan, Senior Vice President, MDC, was addressing is in the area of shared services, which is one of the first knowledge-based clusters in the MSC that is now globally competitive. This is highlighted through the cluster's rapid export-oriented growth and the high profitability of companies that are engaged in this line of service.

The move for shared services

There are massive opportunities in shared services. For the past several years, companies globally have adopted the

concept of shared services as a means of reducing operational costs, while at the same time, allowing them to focus on the core of their businesses and improving the quality of their internal services. The need for shared services is particularly high in the areas of ICT, human resources, supply-chain management and logistics.

Shared services is especially relevant to the MSC because its demand stems from the need for companies which specialise in service innovation and emphasise investments in increased business productivity. These are typical of the characteristics of the companies that are operating within the MSC; making them the perfect organisations to offer shared services.

The MSC based companies involved in shared services normally deal in high value services, and utilise the expertise of high level management and technical staff. At the moment, there is already an investment of RM1 billion by existing shared services providers within the MSC. HSBC Data Processing Centre functions as the Group Service Centre for the HSBC Group, providing shared processing services to its members in USA, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. Standard Chartered offers a global back office banking transaction processing hub for the Standard Chartered Bank Group in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Malaysia.

The MSC as a partner for shared services

The MSC provides a unique high value low cost proposition for global companies investing in shared services activities. In promoting the growth of the industry here, MSC furnishes comprehensive incentives and facilities to meet all the requirements needed by the shared service industry.

Infrastructure is already in place, reinforced by a finely structured high-tech environment in the tranquil of Malaysia's fibre-optic wired environment. Mr Kanan reasoned, "MSC is providing the future for shared services companies. We are providing them with the perfect environment: with telecommunications, electricity, water, competitive rental rates and a good available supply of knowledge workers."

The MSC receives strong backing from the politically stable Malaysian government, a staunch proponent and advocate of ICT enterprises and initiatives. Companies can further benefit from the strong regional and global links that the MSC has built over the years; representing opportunities for these companies to profit from the already established networking and embark on business expansion. In addition, the customised incentives and financing offered by the MSC are added values to help propel the growth of businesses.

Mr. Kanan added that to effectively serve global needs, "we must also create a niche for ourselves, such as we go to India for IT services, while the Philippines is popular for business process outsourcing".

"Our high value-low cost, multicultural environment, gives the MSC a unique advantage. Having said that, challenges remain."

"In meeting these challenges, there is a need to change how we do things in order to ensure our survival. The path set before us will work as the whole country is increasingly getting behind it".

Global marketing and brand development

To galvanise the growth of the shared services industry, the MDC will undertake programmes and conduct international



NARAYANAN KANAN

DEFINITION OF SHARED SERVICES

A model where common services of one or more companies or government agencies are provided under a single, shared organisation which may either be insourced or outsourced.

This model allows customers to leverage on economies of scale, access to a wider skill base, clearly benchmarked costs, responsibilities, and promote continual innovation for core and non-core business activities.

Outsourcing: Results-oriented shared service partnership with an external service provider. Examples include Contract Manufacturing, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and IT Outsourcing (ITO)

High-Value Services: Activities involved in business innovation, including the management and implementation of its global processes. These processes are dynamic, involving business transformation and integration. Competencies used are executive, management, professional and technical skills. Examples include large-scale project management, international marketing, product design/development, supply chain and customer relationship management.

There is a huge potential in developing talents and industry capacity covering a wider and richer range of competencies, particularly in project management, regional and global marketing, and product development.

campaigns to promote the lucrative potential of conducting this business in the MSC. In the financial sector, the target markets include USA, Europe and Australasia. For the product and manufacturing sectors, the MSC will look on to Japan and Korea which have a solid foundation in the area of cohesive supply chain and logistics management.

Within the MSC, there is a multitude of opportunity for customer relationship management and regional technical support. Already, the MSC has a pool of 923 MSC-Status companies which shared service based companies can form strategic partnerships with. These companies include international names like EDS, IBM, CSC, Satyam, Infosys and Accenture.

Industry and Talent Development

Within 5 years, the industry will create a critical mass of shared service jobs within the MSC, which is especially geared

to be principally globally competitive and export-oriented. This will ensure that the industry remain relevant and competitive, weathering the changes in the global marketplace.

There is a huge potential in developing talents and industry capacity covering a wider and richer range of competencies, particularly in project management, regional and global marketing, and product development. Internship programmes within the MSC, and the proliferation of ICT based universities based within Cyberjaya will ensure that new graduates emerge qualified with the skills required by the industry. There will also be continual benchmarking of industry and employee productivity as a measure of capacity building.

The target activities of shared services involve business management and innovation; as such, creating a significant opportunity for companies and universities to conduct R&D and create world-class solutions. To further support the industry and its companies, the MDC will initiate industry-outreach partnership projects with industry players.

Today, indigenous MSC-Status companies such as Scicom, Ship 'n' Track and Scope are providing shared services on a regional and global basis to companies such as Nokia, NEC and Standard Chartered Bank.

Increasing Cost and Risk Arbitrage

Malaysia is categorised as amongst the most effective and cost-effective location for the shared services business. There is an abundance of trained local opportunities arising from the country's widespread economic development, and strong institutional and infrastructural support afforded by the government.

Standard Chartered

Standard Chartered Bank (SCB)

- Scope International (M) Sdn Bhd
 - A global back-office banking transaction processing hub for the SCB Group in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Malaysia.
- 400+ staff currently; to grow to 600 by end-2003.
- A global IT support & call centre hub for the SCB Group in North East Asia & South East Asia regions.

IBM

IBM Regional Contact Centre

- Provides technical and administrative support to IBM's regional operations.
- Area of coverage includes South-East Asia, China, Taiwan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand
- To employ over 500 staff over next 3 years.

Since we started, we have helped create 4,500 new jobs. Based on this figure, we can predict there will be some 60,000 new jobs in this sector by 2008.

NARAYANAN KANAN

From the financial perspective, the MDC has established firm links with financial institutions such as the Malaysia Debt Venture Bhd (MDV) which shared services companies can form partnerships with. MDV offers favourable terms to the technology industry; thereby, significantly lowering their costs.

Improving Infrastructure and Incentives

The MSC is committed to furnishing continuous support to ensure there is efficient infrastructural capacity for MSC-status companies. To further sustain and drive the growth and critical mass of the shared services industry, the MDC will work with key government agencies for further improvements such as a more competitive tax regime, more rapid and convenient immigration clearance through a smart card based visa system, improve personal data protection laws, and an efficient logistics and transportation system within the MSC.

The Future

The ultimate mission of the MSC in developing the industry is to develop the companies into major suppliers of high value shared services to the global market. Critical mass of high value jobs will be created, a substantial export oriented industry will be established, giving rise to knowledge transfer of world class corporate governance, innovative processes and capability, and technology development to local SMEs and knowledge workers.

Mr. Kanan said that a key objective of this cluster is to create high-value jobs. "Since we started, we have helped create 4,500 new jobs," he said with some pride. "Based on this figure, we can predict there will be some 60,000 new jobs in this sector by 2008".

By the end of 2008, the MSC brand will be strengthened, and a significant global brand presence will be established. ●



HSBC Data Processing Centre

- A Group Service Centre for HSBC Group.
- Provides shared processing services to members of HSBC Group in US, Europe, Middle East & Asia-Pacific regions.
- 2002-2003 ~ rented premise (77,000 sq. ft.)
- 2004 onward ~ own building (170,000 sq. ft.)
- To employ over 2,000 staff over next three years.



DHL Asia Pacific Information Center

- A Data Centre for its Asia Pacific operations and training. Also, a network hub servicing 75 countries
- Development and enhancement of DHL specific application software
- Currently employs 350 knowledge workers in Cyberjaya.
- Owns a 99,000 sq ft building



Shell IT International

- A regional IT centre providing the Shell Group of companies with SAP implementation services, systems integration and back office services.
- One of three global IT delivery hubs under the 'follow-the-sun' concept.
- Current 650 staff, to grow to 800 by end-2003.



FEATURE | Research and Development



*"Progress lies not in enhancing what is,
but in advancing toward what will be."*

- Kahlil Gibran

MSC SET TO BOOST R&D CULTURE AS IT MOVES INTO NEXT PHASE

R&D activities undertaken in Malaysia are still considered low and mainly public sector driven. Malaysia's gross expenditure on R&D reached RM1, 671.5 million in 2000 up 48% from that of 1998. Based on the data available in The Second National Science & Technology, Policy & Plan of Action, the Malaysian R&D expenditure was at 0.5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a figure that compared unfavourably with other developed countries.

In sustaining the competitiveness of domestic industries in the long run, it is crucial that the environment for R&D be strengthened and further improved especially among the private sectors. Collaborative efforts also need to be increased between public research institutions and private sector for effective development, dissemination and commercialisation of R&D.

The government on its part will continue to provide a range of financial and fiscal incentives to encourage greater industry involvement in R&D and other technology development activities. These include, among others, the Industry R&D Grant Scheme (IGS); the Multimedia Super Corridor R&D Grant Scheme (MGS); the Demonstrator Applications Grant Scheme (DAGS); the Technology Acquisition Fund (TAF); the Industrial Technology Assistance Fund (ITAF); and the Commercialisation of Research and Development Fund (CRDF).

Total MSC R&D Grant Scheme allocated is RM165 million, and according to MSC's Impact Survey 2003, R&D expenditures by MSC status companies in 2003 is expected to reach RM542 million. This indicates that Malaysians are slowly becoming aware of the importance of R&D as a vital component to guarantee long-term

The primary focus of STAR is six-fold – wireless mobility, advanced software development, advanced micro-electronics, design technology, bio-informatics, and nanotechnology, which includes macro-electrical mechanical devices.

sustainability. The figure is expected to reach RM657 million by the end of next year.

A STAR in the making

The Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) recently set up a special programme that is called the Strategic Trust Area Research (STAR). This programme is designed to put Malaysia on a comprehensive R&D framework that will take the country's emerging technologies to the next level.

"The primary focus of STAR in six areas — wireless mobility, advanced software development, advanced micro-electronics, design technology, bio-informatics, and nanotechnology, which includes micro-electrical mechanical devices," said Dr Muhammad Ghazie Ismail, Senior Vice-President of Corporate Investments and International Affairs at the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC).

"For a start, we will only be stressing on wireless mobility, advanced software development, advanced micro-electronics and nanotechnology," he said, adding: "We are looking at multinational companies for support, as each technology to be developed should have its own anchor company."

In practice, the plan is to combine the expertise of local and foreign companies to drive the STAR programme forward. For example, in micro-electronics cluster of IC design houses, there are currently four clusters in the MSC that will be linked to a semi conductor foundry to ensure good chip design. STAR plans to help establish 15 to 20 design houses within the next 20 years, by year 2020.

"The aim is to attract and retain as many technology leaders as possible to help create an R&D community in Malaysia. Malaysia wants its own new breed of entrepreneurs with their own distinctive niches.

"We are building our bank of intellectual properties; hopefully we will be able to compete at international levels within the next seven years."

Back to basics

But what does the country need to do before it can compete with the best in R&D within the region and globally?

"We must review the education system to focus on science and technology," said Dr Ghazie. "We must inculcate creativity among students, and churn out more relevant knowledge workers."

Indeed, tackling the challenges in the education system is a monumental task, but tackle them we must, for without a significant number of quality and qualified graduates, we won't have the critical mass to increase R&D capabilities and competency.

The process most likely starts with teachers having to learn new skills and upgrade their own intellectual capacity for today's educational challenges. Students of IT and computer science should be given the opportunity for practical training internships and mentoring programmes, such as those offered by MDC for companies in the MSC.

Universities and institutes of higher education would ideally be suited to promote and nurture Malaysia's culture in R&D," said Dr Ghazie.

"Like Stanford and Berkeley — two of California's prestigious universities — that are located in the heart of Silicon Valley, we hope Malaysia's Multimedia University and Uniten



DR MUHAMMAD GHAZIE ISMAIL

will someday match or even surpass such foreign universities.”

“When lecturers back developmental products, this will serve as a catalyst for increased innovation over time.”

The next step

Under Phase Two, the MSC will focus on the enhancement of existing R&D components that will turn the MSC into a centre for innovation within seven years.

“The next stage will represent the shift in industrial development between Malaysia and the region, as when low-cost sources from outside Malaysia will enable our nation to move up the value chain to attract new investments,” Dr Ghazie explained.

“Our competitive index is between 26 and 29, but not beyond, which is low in terms of innovation as compared to the Top Five nations such as Finland.

“Due to the lack of emphasis on R&D where expenditures on R&D are low in relation to the country’s GDP, the number of Malaysian researchers per 1,000 people is also equally very low. For now, the whole nation must think how to be innovative, and to stretch what little R&D grants that are available as far as possible.”

Currently, 43 MSC Status companies are being funded with a commitment of RM92.82 million under the MGS Grant Scheme. With 570 research personnel employed in Cyberjaya, the focus of today’s projects is mainly on business application software, games, edutainment, development tools, wireless applications and biometrics. To expand the scope of research, the MSC aims to rope in large foreign as well as local companies to help make R&D a trend of the future in Malaysia.

“The idea is to entice key foreign and local technological players to establish research centres in the MSC, where we are able to help them through Malaysian Government Securities funding,” said Dr Ghazie.

A prime example of this partnership is Motorola Multimedia, a company which was granted MSC status three years ago, and have been accredited with the highest level in R&D.

The bottom line

The end result, however, is to be able to compete in the global marketplace. This would largely depend on Malaysia’s ability to innovate, and this would be gleaned from the number of patents filed.

There were 197 patents filed last year, and an expected 151 patents for 2003. The forecast for 2004 is 288 patents.

“Actually, we are in the midst of developing a huge bank of intellectual properties numbering more than 200 patents.”

Ongoing R&D Activities in the MSC

Compaq: Technological hub to showcase innovations, establishing an R&D centre and entrepreneurial development programme and the ASEAN enterprise solution centre.

Xybase: Development of new multimedia-based software and R&D centre for Total Airport Management System (TAMS).

Alcatel Network: Regional competency and service center for Asia-Pacific and setting up R&D center with Multimedia University.

STS Offshore: Global R&D centre and Global training centre undertaking R&D in four areas namely Internet-based application, client server application, offshore services and new technology research.

MYOB: Focusing on the provision of management and accounting solutions and services for SMEs by having a regional headquarters, regional R&D centre and also a regional customer support centre in the MSC.

CMG Information: Development of a regional R&D centre for development of solutions and applications for call centre and data centre managements.

Huawei: Provision of Huawei regional technical support services and R&D centres for the clients of Huawei Group within the Asia-Pacific region.

Scandent Group: Set up software development lab, R&D centre for CAD/CAM/CAE for 2D and 3D drawing electronics, high-end training for UNIX, CISCO and IBM, bio-informatics research as well as ASP service for data center operations.

Bluestar Infotech: Development of R&D centre focusing on researching, developing and providing software applications for banking and financial sector.

Korvac (M) Sdn Bhd: Development of Korvac payment network, wireless applications for point of sales transactions, establishment of R&D centre for Asian region, technical support center for the region as well as related consultancy services based on developed products and services.

Fujitsu (M): Systems integrator, network out-sourcing centre, and software R&D center.

PDS Technology: Regional research and development centre for Internet and multimedia products

commented Dr Ghazie.

While it is imperative that Malaysia needs to cultivate the R & D culture, not just because of meeting the objectives of the MSC, but also a long-term sustainable practice that will eventually contribute substantially to economic development.

“We must also have incentives to attract R & D intensive-type of companies,” stressed Dr Ghazie.

“Malaysia also needs advice on the implementation processes from industry players and CEOs of companies to become successful,” he added. ●



FEATURE | Cyberlaw



YOU ARE PROTECTED

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL assets lies at the heart of any effort to drive knowledge creation and spur innovation. With Malaysia's firm resolve to strive towards a knowledge-based society, it is also imperative that challenges posed by technological developments are efficiently and effectively addressed.

The role of a legal and regulatory framework in this regard is especially crucial, in order for the MSC to be the conducive environment as a test bed for information, communications and multimedia technologies.

Accordingly, Malaysia has made a commitment to 'become a regional leader in Intellectual Property Protection and Cyberlaws'. This commitment forms part of the Government's 10-point Bill of Guarantees for the Multimedia

Super Corridor (MSC).

Malaysia already has an established intellectual property framework before the MSC was set up, with protection for copyright; and systems for registration of inventions, brandings and names and designs. Internationally, Malaysia participates as a member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO); and as signatory to the Paris Convention, Berne Convention and the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

Further, the enactment of the Optical Discs Act 2000 represents one of the major initiatives taken to give enforcement agencies the bite to combat optical media piracy of music, films and software, leading to Malaysia being removed from the USTR Special 301 'Priority Watch List'.

Prior to that, five Cyberlaws have been passed, with a view to steer the initial development of the MSC. These laws aim to, among others things, address the issues posed by convergence of technologies, promote creation of online content, enable e-transactions and tackle with computer-related criminal activities.

These are the Digital Signature Act 1977, Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, Copyright (Amendment) Act 1997, Computer Crimes Act 1997 and Telemedicine Act 1997, making Malaysia one of the first countries to enact a comprehensive set of Cyberlaws. It is worthy to note that the national policy objectives for the communications and multimedia industry of the country are also expressly spelt out in one of the laws, illustrating in no uncertain terms, the desire to position Malaysia as a global centre and hub for the communications and multimedia industry.

Currently, two new laws are being considered in this regard, namely, the Electronic Transactions Bill and the Electronic Government Activities Bill.



Notwithstanding the initial framework, the Government realises that existing laws, which are essentially designed for the physical environment and paper-based transactions, may impede e-transactions; hence, hamper a smooth transition of the country to a truly IT and multimedia environment. Provisions of some of the existing laws may, for example, extend to the online environment when it was never intended to; or prohibit the "e" way of undertaking a particular activity that is prescribed under a particular statute.

Accordingly, steps have been taken to examine the statutes of the country and assess the extent of measures required to be taken to harmonise existing laws with Cyberlaws and challenges of the e-environment. Currently, two new laws are being considered in this regard, namely, the Electronic Transactions Bill and the Electronic Government Activities Bill.

The objective of the Electronic Transactions Bill is to facilitate the use of electronic means to spur e-commerce, by

promoting consistency with countries that have adopted the principal provisions of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on Electronic Commerce. It does not in any way alter existing legal positions whether under common law, the law of Contract or any substantive laws.

The Electronic Government Activities Bill, on the other hand, is intended to be the single statute to enable and facilitate the smooth implementation of the e-Government Flagship; without having to resort to piece meal amendments of the various laws. Detailed provisions of the law are currently being considered.

In addition, the Government is looking into a law for the Protection of Personal Data to promote a secure electronic environment in line with MSC objectives. The law will aim to safeguard privacy and promoting confidence of the consumers on the one hand; while not unduly stifling exchange of information and conduct of business on the other.

Whilst an earlier version of the law has been drafted and released to members of the industry and public for comments, further review is being undertaken in light of feedback received and recent global developments.

The role of an enabling and conducive legal framework cannot be understated in the development and success of the MSC, especially when the MSC is designed as a test bed and to be

an integrated and conducive environment to drive the country towards the Information Age.

While the initial legal framework has been established and the initiative for harmonisation of laws has begun, there remains a need to constantly review and address firstly, the challenges posed by rapid changes in the technological front; and secondly, the needs and issues faced by the MSC community. Beyond the legislative framework, there will be a need to constantly examine and fine tune other regulatory aspects to ensure that the MSC remains competitive.

The territorial effect of the law does not, however, fit in nicely with the concept and nature of cyberspace which transcends beyond geographical limits. Hence, it is vital that concerted efforts are also taken, through various regional and international fora, so as to effectively and efficiently tackle cyberspace issues, that will no doubt continually (and innovatively) test the limits of the law. ●



FEATURE | Technopreneur Development

CROSSING THE BORDER

With a view of turning Malaysia into a highly-advanced K-driven society, the MSC is exploring beyond the physical borders of Cyberjaya in search of people with good ideas — an initiative brought upon by the government's Technopreneur Development Flagship (TDF) which was launched in November 2001.



ITS AIM IS TO FURTHER ENHANCE the MSC's efforts to develop Malaysian SMEs in the ICT and other strategic high technology industries, with the Ministry of Energy, Communications and Multimedia as the lead agency driving it. The Multimedia Development Corporation acts as the implementing agency for the flagship. The objective is to spawn and nurture a critical mass of ICT start-ups, besides facilitating the growth of existing ICT SMEs into world-class companies.

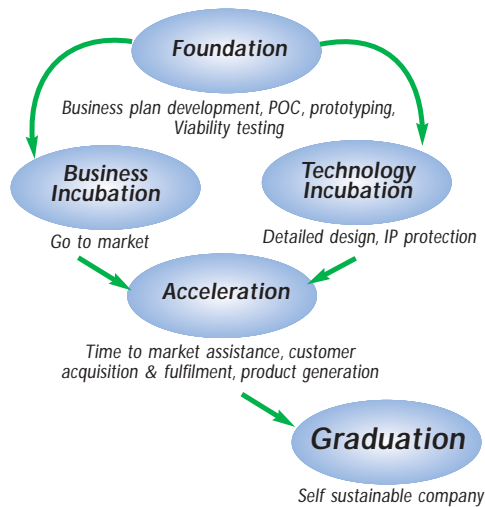
"For the next phase, we are concerned with interacting with State governments and preparing them for Phase Two of the MSC project. So far we have approached Penang, Perak, Pahang, Johor and Sarawak who have been very responsive," said Dr Abu Talib Bachik, Vice President, MDC.

"The idea is to generate sustainable incubators throughout the country as there is no point in rolling-out the MSC if there are no entrepreneurs in the respective states. There are 15 incubators nationwide which are involved in ICT, out of which nine have been awarded MSC status by the end of 2003."

"We want every state to have at least one incubator, and ideally, these must be located close to universities and institutions of higher learning."

Then there is the acceleration programme, to be implemented via the MSC Central Accelerator and the National Incubator Network Association (NINA), which aims to graduate a pool of competitive high-value companies through four different stages: foundation, incubation, acceleration and graduation.

LOGICAL MODEL FOR THE ACCELERATION PROGRAMME



Honing the talents

Incubators under NINA enjoy consultation and guidance benefits, and if necessary, appointed mentors from TDF's Innovation Centre. The key purpose of NIN is to improve the state of business incubation in Malaysia, share industry best practices among members and provide the framework and infrastructure to transform incubators into accelerators.

"Respective states must realise the need to coordinate and be involved in ICT, which means that they must source for technopreneurs to fulfil the business side of ICT," said Dr Abu Talib.

"There are many creative people all over Malaysia, especially students, where their ideas can be made into marketable business plans. The trick is to get access to these ideas to create prototypes, and then

match them up with investors and venture capitalists."

For instance, the Java Technopreneur Development Programme — an alliance between MDC-Sun Microsystems-MMU which is also part of TDF's Business & Technology Innovation Centre (BATIC), is a compatible one-stop centre to provide services for java technology.

For better market access, incubators are linked to industry players and corporations. It's about big companies assisting the smaller companies to break into the international market, which is often very costly if they are to do it on their own.

"There is no sense in having a good product but not being able to sell it; marketing skills are just as important in a k-

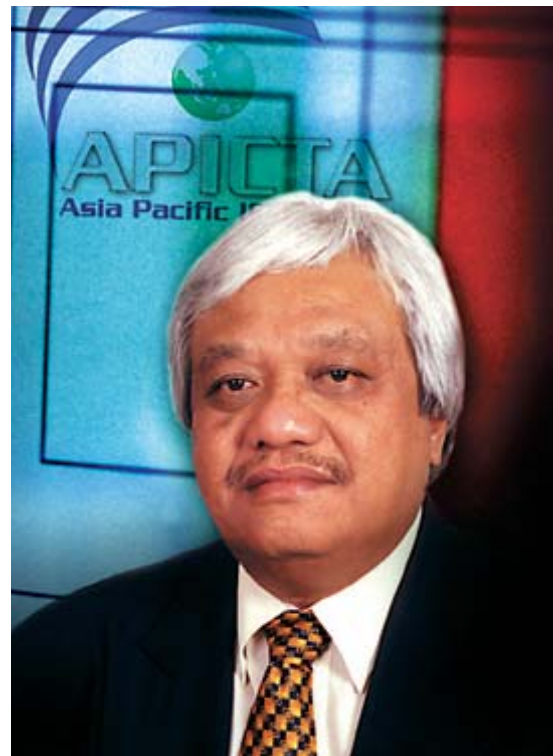
based economy," he said. Market access is divided into strategic partnerships and international representatives; by way of guiding and supporting ICT SMEs to identify foreign leads, partners or counterparts through joint ventures, joint product development and project collaborations.

Training to enhance individual marketing skills to equip Malaysians with better understanding of the international business culture will help enhance the performance of SMEs while sourcing for business and funds; vital essentials in luring huge multi-national companies and governments.

Joining forces

The Malaysian Venture Capital Association (MVCA) helps to channel funds through programmes, allowing good incubators to network for business gains while building the confidence of venture capitalists. "We want our incubators to grow together with their funders. Incubators must serve as guides to future technology, business and market. These are three core elements good incubators should have as we don't want to become landlords."

In addition, the flagship has also identified the need to facilitate a more robust early-stage funding climate with the introduction of new pre-seed funding schemes, namely the



DR ABU TALIB BACHIK

National Unipreneur Development Fund (NUDF) and the National Incubation Development Fund (NIDF).

“In sourcing for ideas however, as not many people understand technology, we hope to connect with various organisations which award youngsters for creativity and ingenuity; like HSBC’s Young IT Entrepreneur Awards programme.”

Sustaining and expanding

“There’s a need to grow more SMEs and to maintain the present SMEs into good sustainable companies to have the numbers and quality in the next 5 years because the odds of success is very slight.”

“Out of say 600 business plans, only about 15 or so are worthwhile to be further enhanced, and out of which only about six or seven are expected to be successful.”

“We must remember that there will be no ICT industry if there are no businesses. The challenge is to get more

incubators and more ICT companies to become the nucleus for businesses and ICT.”

“In our expansion programme, we realise that there are many creative and keen technopreneurs in East Malaysia. For that matter, Labuan is already an off-shore financial centre - many ICT businesses can also be developed around the financial sector”

“Penang, Perak, the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and MARA are among the people whom we have briefed. MARA plans to put more emphasis on ICT and we will work with them to create awareness at the various platforms in the states”

“Our vision is to make the whole country one big super corridor. All these are merely enablers because the real thing is business, including local industries like manufacturing sector, farmers, retailers, car dealers and the like, which effect every aspect of the community.

“To make it happen, the various industries must embrace ICT,” said Dr Abu. ●

Technopreneur development is not just the responsibility of the Government. CHRIS CHAN, the honorary secretary of the Technopreneur Association of Malaysia, or Team as they are called, talks of the initiatives they have taken to boost the development of technopreneurs and how the private sector is benefiting from the Government’s and MDC’s efforts:



BRINGING TOGETHER TALENT AND FUNDING

THE CRADLE INVESTMENT Programme (CIP) is an important initiative from the Malaysia Venture Capital Management Bhd (Mavcap) in which Team, along with its sister association, the New Entrepreneurs Forum, plays a key role in defining and formulating the goals and objectives of this RM100 million programme.

“Our contribution and ongoing commitment to this programme will enable technopreneurs as well as would-be technopreneurs have access to funds via CIP to develop viable technology ideas that have commercial potential.

Moreover, as a Community Partner in CIP, we will be encouraging technopreneurs to actively participate in what we believe is a truly unique and one-of-a-kind programme,” says Chris Chan.

The second major initiative Team has undertaken to boost the development of Technopreneurs is the “Excite The Entrepreneur (E2)” programme, a joint education initiative with Mavcap.

The E2 programme aims at providing awareness and promoting entrepreneurship amongst

local university and college students. E2 also aims to change the mindset of tertiary students and encourage them to consider pursuing an alternative career in entrepreneurship or technopreneurship.

In any economy, entrepreneurship is the lifeblood of a nation’s economic health. The E2 programme will serve as an important catalyst in growing the pool of local technopreneurs in Malaysia.

Team is confident of driving this message to Malaysian students, all of whom have the potential of being tomorrow’s technopreneurs and creators of new technology ideas.

“Our third major initiative is our year-long programme of focused seminars and dialogue sessions with technopreneurs.

The sharing of information and knowledge is absolutely vital to the growth and development of technopreneurs, whether it is on the subject of the latest Intellectual Property issues or in the area of Technology Contracts.”

Team prides itself in keeping the technopreneur community fully updated on all

aspects of their operating environment.

Team is constantly engaged in dialogue with the Government on a variety of issues. Through such dialogue, we are confident of creating an environment and an infrastructure that is capable of producing Malaysian Technopreneurs of world-class quality.

Team is also happy with Government’s dedication towards the ongoing development of the MSC.

The provision of financial grants for R&D, commercialisation and export marketing and its range of ICT-friendly policies and strategies are all geared towards its stated aim of producing a K-Economy in Malaysia.

In terms of ICT, this means that private sector companies, whether they are in banking, manufacturing or logistics, will stand to gain very significant productivity and efficiency gains because they will be able to acquire locally developed ICT solutions at the lowest possible cost.

By adopting local ICT solutions and services, Malaysian companies will be able to maintain their competitive edge in the global economy. ●



CREATING WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINMENT CENTRES

“IN MANY A MALAYSIAN HOME the child knows the names of his favourite cartoon characters well before he knows the names of his grandparents.” This is not the lament of Kamil Othman, Vice-President of Corporate Affairs, Marketing and Creative Multimedia at the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC).

It is merely a statement of fact. A fact that holds true in the vast majority of countries in the world who depend on Hollywood and the other entertainment, educational and information centres that are mainly located in the West for their “edutainment”.

This basically is what content - whether in the form of movies, TV, print and electronic media - is all about, and the importance of content in the increasingly technological world can never be more stressed upon more. Content available to you at the click of a remote control in your sitting room over television, radio and the very borderless Internet. And content that can shape your thinking or influence your way of doing things. Cultural imperialism at work, very subtle and very effective. Hollywood has reigned for a long time in the content domain and now Bollywood (Bombay) and Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan and its anime films give a cross-culture offering.

For the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), the agenda to develop the content industry is two fold: to develop a world class fully integrated self-contained start-to-end Creative Multimedia Cluster in the MSC; and to create an infrastructure in the MSC that supplies creative content to



the world’s information, communication and entertainment industries.

Since the MSC was launched in 1996 content has always been recognized as a driving force behind Information, Communications and Technology. It reflects the importance of content creation that is needed and can straddle a whole range of applications, whether for entertainment or education or information.

Today, there are already more than a hundred companies in the MSC already engaged in developing content, broadcasting, post-production and animation, as well as in education and training for the industry. The trend is rising and by the end of this year it is expected that more content developers and creative multimedia companies will be granted MSC-status.

However, attracting creative companies to have MSC-Status is only half the story.

The MSC has always been looking at ways in which a sustainable creative industry can be achieved. The Creative Multimedia Unit at Multimedia Development Corporation

(MDC) was set up in 1998 to oversee the development of the content creation within the MSC mandate.

“This involves addressing the issues that have an impact on the development of the Creative Multimedia industry.” says Kamil. “They encompass studying the impact of policies and legislation, both existing and in the pipeline, on the industry’s development. The results of the studies have been used for many rationalization exercises, for example, developing incentives; establishment of the Film Commission; marketing Malaysia’s talent, facilities and services to the world; nurturing local talents; etc.”

The MSC focus in this area therefore is in recognition of the content industry providing increasingly crucial inputs into the service and education sectors in general and to assist the growth and diversification of creative applications in the new knowledge economy. In the field of Education, for example, it is envisaged that with the trend towards learning through experiential means, any development in this area is bound to reap economic benefits for those involved in coming up with innovative ways of learning.

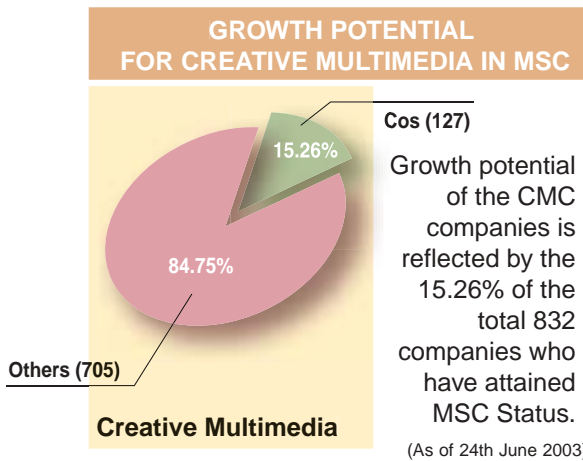
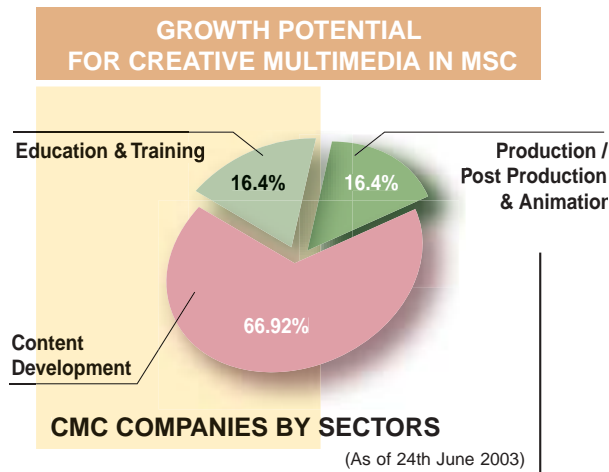
The very same technology that produces special effects and animation for entertainment can also be utilized to great effect in diversified fields such as the production of content for educational purposes, manufacturing, design, telehealth and other applications that straddle across a range of platforms such as the Web, DVD (Digital Versatile Disc) and WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) Technologies. Elements of education, research, enterprise and industry can be, and will be, integrated in a single industry that centers around creativity.

For many countries, the content industry has already become the basis for a new economy. In the UK for example, the content and creative industries have a collective turnover of close to 60 billion pound per annum. Can Malaysia emulate this?

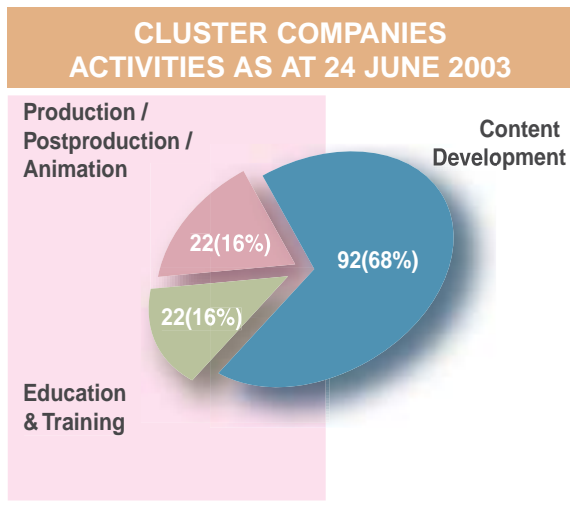
For many it is still early days but the MDC has already identified the key structural problems that affect the potential of the industry. These will include skills and network development programmes as well as “interventionist” policies that will ensure creative businesses generate ideas for traditional industries and bring a competitive edge to the information society. Market access, funding and incentives must also be addressed before the industry can take off on its own.

While the push for content development will be continuing, the next step

is developing the soft skills and marketing. Kamil says that there are over a million TV stations outside of North America and the export potential is enormous, with earnings running into the billions. And that is just for TV content



TECHNOLOGY FOCUS	
Content Development & Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Films & TV Virtual Reality
Post-Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games Sound
Animation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web-based Products Advertising
Distribution & Broadcasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Commerce
Training & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terrestrial Satellite IP Based/Web Casting Billboard CBT Business Support Distance



alone, notwithstanding the positioning for Malaysian made content on the Internet and its other applications.

The setting up of the Multimedia University in Cyberjaya and the MSC status given to local Institutions of Higher Learning is seen as one of the catalyst for the development of local content that can attain world class standards. In a crowded information and content marketplace, what will distinguish one from the other will be the standards of professionalism and the "packaging". Hence, the need to address not just the end products, but also the skills that go into producing them.

This will lead to the development of Malaysian education and entertainment, develop a database of information, and the ability to put across the Malaysian point of view. In short, to tell the Malaysian story or the Malaysian perspective to the world, and to offer to the world Malaysian skills, services and facilities.

The Malaysian story can be told through the millions of websites that can be set up by talented Malaysians. Or through documentaries that reflect local culture or subjects of scientific or historical interest. Now, in the internet world, all countries have a chance to give their point of view, have their say.

Content is not just information and point of view. The cultural element is an important segment of content. The Malaysian content can be that of Sang Kancil, Bujang Senang; of ancient Malacca when it was at the crossroads of commerce and trade well before the brutal colonisers came; of Cheng Ho and his incredible armada and journey; the Japanese occupation and post war development of the Malaysian people.

There are more stories to tell. The idea is to tell the Malaysian story and tell it competently and in style. The effort starts with education in schools where how to tell the story and perform the arts are encouraged. This has to be continued in public and private universities and colleges.

The MDC helps co-ordinate the effort, set apart the impediments, offer solutions, and work benchmarking. "We have to educate our society, start them from young. We cannot ban or hide issues anymore in this borderless world of the internet.

Censorship no longer works the way it used to. Self-censorship is the only viable option and for this to be achieved a re-think of the way education is conducted is necessary. This will be a big challenge but one that has to be met head on", says Kamil.

With the wider definition of content that now includes "new media" and its link with cultural and heritage aspects, the content industry will be the mechanism through which more and more linkages between creativity, technology and cultural assets will be defined. In many countries, new media is already encompassing a whole range of content intended for broad applications and activities including museums, performing arts, Films & TV, dance, drama, art and fashion. It is all about integrating technology with creativity so that the opportunities to give and share information, tell stories, to do business, to preserve cultural heritage, etc, are fully exploited.

As it has been often said, we do not want to be mere consumers of technology. We must also contribute to it. If we don't do it right, our future generations will pay a heavy price. ●



KAMIL OTHMAN



SUCCESS STORY : IFCA

Software solutions help Yong land Mesdaq listing

If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again. This is what 44-year-old Yong Keang Chuen or Ken Yong did and today his IFCA Group of Companies (IFCA) has a user licence base of more than 14,300 worldwide.

Armed with a Masters degree in Computer Science from University of Manitoba, Canada, Yong started as an IT Consultant with Arthur Andersen before starting his own software business in 1987.

His capital was his time and commitment. His willingness to work seven days a week paid off, and after 16 years he has globalised the company or brand that he has created – IFCA.

Today, IFCA is listed on the Mesdaq Market of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.

While working with Arthur Andersen, Yong realised that package software is the way of the future. Package software was uncommon then but Yong knew that to custom make a software solution from zero was time consuming and difficult, not to mention the high cost that is involved.

He was aware that on many occasions, the customers themselves were unable to give a comprehensive or workable specification as the basis or foundation for the software that is to be written.

Yong felt that it would be much easier if there was a ready made package software for customers to purchase and customise it to the needs of their organisation.

He scouted around for the right industry to implement his idea. The answer was obvious – property. The property industry was cash rich, there was an advantage – there were no major players providing software solution in this particular vertical market.

Unlike other countries, Malaysia's property sales has a progressive payment billing schedule which gives rise to a lot of administrative and a need for more careful cash flow management.

To complicate matters even more, there are other factors like bank loans, government loans, Employee Provident Fund withdrawals, interest on late payment, and the list goes on.



The first version of the software was a major disappointment. Yong had accepted a job to computerise the sales administration of a prominent property developer and eagerly wrote the first version of the software in the shortest time possible.

The software fell short in terms of functionality and practicability. His mistake was that he did not seek the views of an important group of people – the end users.

Yong went back to the owner of the company and convinced him that the entire solution would have to be re-written, this time with the inputs from the end users themselves.

The housing company was more than satisfied, and as for Yong and IFCA, they were up and running.

Today, IFCA's product focuses primarily on five main industry – property development and management, construction and engineering, hospitality, finance and leasing and also the manufacturing and distribution industry.

The product range is a natural extension of IFCA's core product – property development and management.

Upon having a successful property development and management software solution in the market, Yong realised that the customers usually venture into construction and development of hotels, resorts and golf clubs as well.

Leveraging on the existing pool of satisfied customers that he had in the property industry, he quickly moved into these related industries and sure enough, the response was more than encouraging.

The finance and leasing, and the manufacturing and distribution softwares, are products that IFCA rolled out as a response to its customers' needs. The finance and leasing software originated from a request from developing nations where their property developers very often undertake the financing of the sale of properties.

The manufacturing and distribution software was developed for customers who prefer to use IFCA suite of products as a total enterprise solution for their organisation.

By the mid-90s IFCA snatched had the lion's share of the market and before long it ventured abroad, Singapore being the first.

Today, IFCA has set offices in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, and is providing its software and services to 12 countries across four continents.

IFCA no longer sells its software directly overseas. The overseas revenue is generated via its appointed 14 business partners, who now conduct the marketing abroad. Income from this area came to about RM4.2 million – an 18-fold increase from 1998. ●

COMPANY BACKGROUND

IFCA CONSULTING GROUP was established in 1987 and over the years as an IBM Business Partner and HP Solution Partner, the Group has grown to become one of the leading integrated software developers in Asia.

In February 1998, the Group's research & development company, IFCA MSC Berhad, was granted MSC-Multimedia Super Corridor status by the Malaysian Government as a participant and contributor to the IT industry.

As the very first Microsoft Independent Software Vendor (ISV) Partner in Malaysia and a Microsoft Certified Partner (MCP), the Group is fully committed to innovations, integrating converging new technologies in communications and multimedia into its business solutions while continuously enhancing its business applications to increase efficiency and customer satisfaction.

International Software Solutions

The Group deliver globally competitive business applications with the functionality and expertise to address local needs while remaining its focus on industry-specific software development.

By incorporating cutting-edge technologies, each product offers a focused combination of technological expertise and industry know-how. The Group has grown to become one of the leading software specialists in Windows platforms.

Business Solutions to Support

Over the years, the Group has developed and provided business locally and internationally, gained the reputation of being the most industry-specific, fully integrated, comprehensive and functional business to the following sectors:

- Property Development

- Property Management
- Construction, Engineering and Project Management
- Golf, Social & Country Clubs
- Hotel and Resort
- Finance & Leasing
- CRM
- Manufacturing & Distribution

Local Implementation... Worldwide Internet Support Centre

In the industry it serves, the Group has an unparalleled ability to support its customers through its Worldwide Internet Support Centre.

The Group has representative offices in Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Hong Kong, China, Australia, Brunei, Papua New Guinea and South Africa.

With more than 200 professionals and a sizeable research & development division, the Group helps business keep pace with technological advances and continues to search for optimum solutions in developing highly advanced and specialised software solutions which can be customised to clients' current and future needs.

Local Presence, Global Reach & Vision

While aiming to have our presence globally, the company remains as a very focused company in software development.

Today, the Group has more than 600 established customers in the region. With MSC strong commitment to R&D, the company is confident of continuing growth and taking its proven software solutions to the global market.

The Group has grown from a small software developing company to a reputable software organisation. The vision of the Group is to become a recognised global IT solutions provider.



SUCCESS STORY : REDtone

Malaysian Wizard going to UK, Australia and Indonesia

IT'S a wizard of a product from Redtone Telecommunications Sdn Bhd, an MSC-Status company that is pioneering a new era in business communications.

"With increased modes of communication channels – from voice to fax, e-mail and short messaging – you simply have to manage your business communications to ensure that it works effectively for you," said CEO Yong Kok Leong.

The answer is the Wizard, an integration of different communication modes, voice, fax, e-mail and short messaging, through various communication devices, computer, telephone and facsimile.

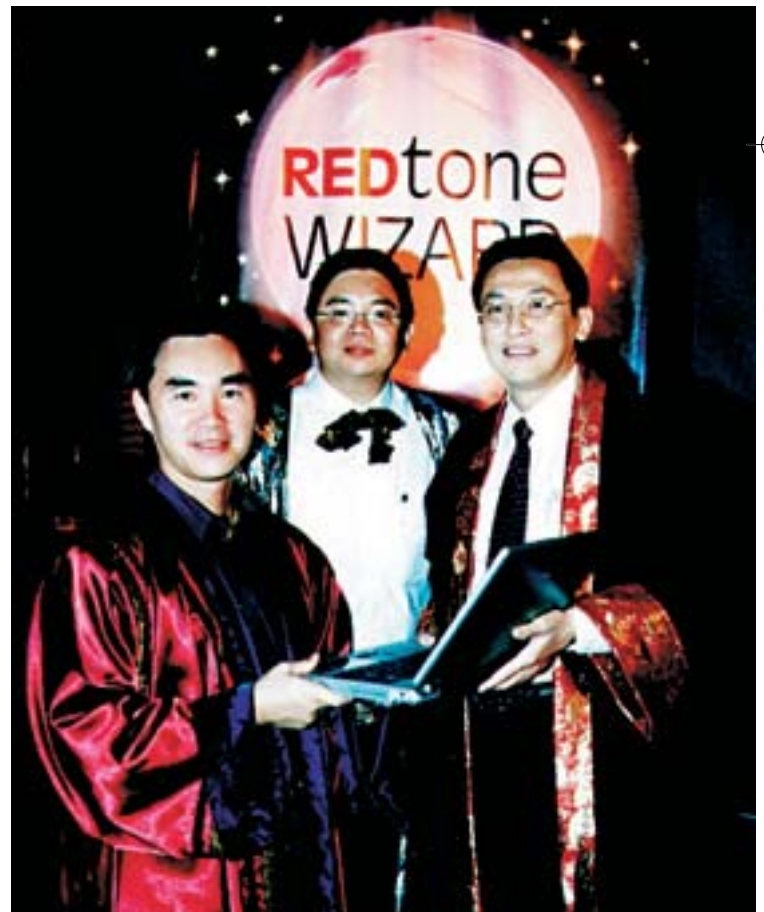
"The Wizard was created as a solution for senior executives and their assistants to ensure that they do not miss any business opportunities, especially in today's global business environment. It helps them save money and enjoy total mobility."

Commenting on the impact of Wizard he said, "We are optimistic that this new product will further strengthen the company's revenue and its leading position in the industry. Sales are anticipated to be encouraging through the positive customer feedback to date."

The Wizard will also be available in international markets, penetrating into Indonesia, Australia and United Kingdom by the end of 2003.

Formerly known as VMS Technology, Redtone is the leading alternative telecommunications company that provides discounted long distance call services in Malaysia offering a wide range of business communication solutions.

Redtone was the first company to receive the



WIZARD... Helping to keep you connected.

development grant from Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) under the Multimedia Super Corridor Grant Scheme (MGS).

The company is the largest provider of computer-telephony integration products in the region. Armed with an Application Service Provider (ASP) License, Redtone is the No 1 Computer Telephony Company in Malaysia.

Headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, the company, which has offices in Hong Kong, China and over 400 resellers across 20 countries, has to date, received RM6.7 million in grants for its R&D efforts. Today the new project seeks to further advance its technological innovations.

The product comprises of multiple servers, each located in different locations, working together as a single

different sectors – financial institutions, government departments and agencies, hotels, multinationals and public-listed companies.

It offers attractive discounts for international (IDD), outstation (STD) and outstation mobile calls (mobile).

Redtone's network capacity is the largest in Malaysia for an ASP with a capacity in excess of 60 E1 (each E1 can support 30 voice channels/ports), delivering superior telecom grade voice quality.

It supplies various routing equipment and techniques to ensure optimal call connection and billing.

The company has an extensive nationwide coverage in Peninsular and East Malaysia. ●

"The Wizard was created as a solution for senior executives and their assistants to ensure that they do not miss any business opportunities, especially in today's global business environment. It helps them save money and enjoy total mobility."

communication system for the entire enterprise and its branch offices.

Staff within the enterprise, no matter which branch they belong to, will be able to experience seamless communication with each other as if they are located in the same building.

For example, calls from one branch office may be transferred to another effortlessly. In addition, any staff of the enterprise may be reachable with a single phone number wherever he may be – outside the office, at another branch office, or at home.

The company, which has been in operations since 1996, has gained market recognition for their quality and award winning innovations.

Redtone has an exhaustive track record of customers from

INDUSTRY AWARDS THAT REDTONE HAS WON

- Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, 2002
- Asia Pacific Technology Fast 500 Enterprise 50 award, 2000 and 2002
- Asia Pacific ICT awards (APICTA), 2001 – Best of Communication Applications
- Asia Pacific MSC IT And Telecommunications Award, (APMITTA)
- Best of the Best Prime Minister's Award 1999
- Best of the Industrial Commercial Products 1999
- Best of Value-added Communications Technologies, Merit Award, 2000
- The Best of Teleconnect CT Expo 98, New York
- PIKOM-Computimes IT Award, 1997

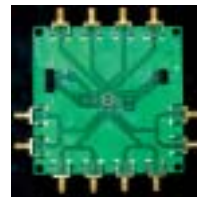




SUCCESS STORY : SIRES LABS

SIRESLABS

World's first from a young Malaysian company



Sires microchip

It was another first for Malaysia when Sires Labs, an analog and mixed-signal design company based in Malaysia, announced that it had developed the world's first single-chip 3.125 Gbps transceiver for the optical communications market.

The SRL-3101N is a high performance, low noise, low jitter and highly integrated single-channel transceiver for use in short reach and very short reach (VSR) CWDM optical communications applications.

Target applications include XAUI PMD, OC-192 VSR parallel optic, Infiniband 4X parallel optic and SONET/SDH systems.

The exciting young Malaysian company, which is headquartered in Cyberjaya, emerged the winner in the APTICA 2003 Awards under the R&D category, beating 17 other entries

Sires Labs is the only analog IC design company in the country which focuses on multi-gigahertz range products. It has been identified by the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology as one of the top five SME technology companies.

"Our target markets include the telecommunications, consumer electronics, signal processing, automotive, defence, aerospace and medical industries," said Vyasa Kandasamy, the CEO and co-founder of Sires Labs.



VYASA KANDASAMY
CEO and co-founder of Sires Labs

The company's exhibits at the 2002 European Conference on Optical Communications (ECOC-Denmark) and the 8th Annual International IC-China Conference & Exhibition (IIC-China) 2003 had attracted much interest from Infineon, Thales Group France, Huawei and Intel.

Sires Labs has tie-ups with foreign associates through its branch offices in Ireland and the UK to help in its R&D programme and marketing in Europe.

"We are now looking into setting up a presence in China and US," said Kandasamy.

The company established in April 2000, is certainly going places. ●



FARRAH AZLIN ALIAS
CAD engineer with Sires Labs



SUCCESS STORY : APIIT



A Shield to help keep smut at bay

FIRST, it was the ScreenShield and now it's the FileShield. These are Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology's (APIIT) efforts at combating pornography on the Internet.

Combating pornography was one of the issues raised at the sixth International Advisory Panel meeting last year. The earlier ScreenShield only checks those images actually being displayed on the screen.

It does not scan the hard disk to see if pornography is residing on the hard disk or monitor incoming files that are not displayed on the screen.

FileShield is designed to fill this gap. It is a product evolution of the ScreenShield, jointly developed by APIIT and Guardware Ltd, UK. ScreenShield uses one technique only, i.e. skin tone detection, to detect pornographic content and it registers a False Acceptance Rate (FAR) of 15% for non-human images and a 40% False Rejection Rate (FRR) for pornographic images.

In FileShield, APIIT is aiming at achieving a FAR and FRR of 10% for images containing skin tones.

APIIT was established to offer a complete portfolio of IT education and training programmes, consulting services and research & development activities in IT.

Initiated by the Government and in collaboration with the IT industry in Malaysia, supported by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, approved by the Ministry of Education and funded by the Sapura Group, the formation of APIIT is a milestone in the development of IT higher education in the region.

APIIT offers a complete suite of high quality courses in information technology ranging from focused PC appreciation

APIIT is the first institute of its kind in Malaysia to be certified for compliance with ISO Quality standards, and to be accorded the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) company status by the Multimedia Development Corporation

and Specialised IT programmes to Diploma, Bachelor's degrees and postgraduate Master's degrees.

APIIT's courses are recognised by various universities in UK and Australia. APIIT also undertakes research & development projects in conjunction with local and overseas partners.

APIIT is the first institute of its kind in Malaysia to be certified for compliance with ISO Quality standards, and to be accorded the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) company status by the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC).

The company has also been appointed as an authorised training centre by several of the world's leading IT vendors such as SUN, Microsoft, SAP, and Novell.

In keeping with APIIT's vision to be a regional institute of IT excellence, APIIT continues to expand overseas, for example, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India. ●



SUCCESS STORY : GAMEBRAINS



Coming up with games for PlayStation, GameCube

WHAT connection do Buffy The Vampire Slayer, The Mummy Returns and Backyard Baseball have with GameBrains, a young Malaysian company staffed by young talent?

Well, these are some of the games developed by the company was awarded an MSC status in 1999.

"We are licensed game developers for PlayStation 2 and GameCube and are the only such licensed company in South-East Asia," explained Ms Jean Tan, the financial officer of GameBrains.

"We have grown steadily from a four-person start-up in 1998 into a 26-person interactive entertainment software company recognised for our creativity and technology."

The company has shipped nine games over the past four years, which are being sold worldwide by top publishers.

With a RM3.2 million funding under the MSC Grant Scheme, the company undertook an R&D project on a multi-platform game engine that runs on the PlayStation 2 and GameCube in 2000.

This project included the development of a full-feature game engine with all the required base functionality of a game



engine implemented so that it may be reused to create more games capable of working on multiple platforms.

Additionally, during the development certain proprietary or off-the-shelf tools, techniques, technologies and methodologies were developed in order to complete the project.

The R&D for the grant was completed in May 2003, and the company is now looking into further expansion and development.

During the R&D process, there were significant transfers of knowledge through collaboration with international business partners like Sony and Nintendo.

This provided the company with the technology, skills and equipment to not only sustain, but also grow and become a dominant competitor in the

global game development industry while creating Intellectual Property (IP) with residual value.

"We will continue to improve and maintain the game engine while currently working on our first original game for the PlayStation 2 and GameCube with a PC version used for internal development."

This highly original interactive action game is targeted at young gamers worldwide and includes numerous advanced features such as online and offline multiplayer support, comprehensive support for multiple languages within a single game session, advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and packaged with tools that let players design their own worlds.

In order to bring its products to the global marketplace, fuel its growth and take full advantage of the opportunities that the Malaysian Government provides, the company partnered with Malaysian Venture Capital Management Berhad (MAVCAP) in late 2002.

Ms Tan explained, "Together we will be able to become a market-leading interactive entertainment developer in the near future."

The company is planning to commercialise its current product in development by next year."

"We will be partnering with publishers who will partake in the marketing, manufacturing, testing, packaging and distribution to retailers worldwide, who in turn sell it to end consumers."

"Our current game is intended for distribution throughout North America, Europe and Japan. With the support of

"Our current game is intended for distribution throughout North America, Europe and Japan. With the support of multiple languages we hope to bring it to a much wider markets such as South America, Korea and China."

multiple languages we hope to bring it to a much wider markets such as South America, Korea and China."

The company has benefited greatly from the Government's IT policy, the MSC, the MGS grant scheme and MAVCAP support.

"It has allowed many of us to follow our dreams to create intellectual property ranging from the highly creative to the highly technical, while helping to establish an entire industry that didn't exist before."

"We are creating new and challenging job opportunities for Malaysians."

"It is truly difficult to comprehend that this could have taken place anywhere else but Malaysia."

And how do they see themselves five years down the road?

"GameBrains will continue to invest heavily in research and development to keep ahead technically using profits from the commercialisation of the successful projects."

"We will also continue to create and develop games that will eventually be 'branded'.

"Our products are global in appeal, and as such, we hope to be able to create games and intellectual properties that will become famous.

"This will further strengthen the image of GameBrains, the MSC and Malaysia internationally." ●





COMMUNITY LIVING IN CYBERJAYA



*RESORT LIVING ...
Cyberia clubhouse*

It's not just about smart and healthy living in Cyberjaya - an extensively wired community situated in a futuristic environment surrounded by finely sculptured landscaping works of art.

A place for community living and working, Cyberjaya is created for networking and informal exchange to help spark some bright ideas.

With a growing number of business presence, the highly-accessible intelligent city is the nucleus of the Multimedia Super Corridor - connected by a 50km highway that runs from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

Divided into the enterprise, commercial and residential zones, Cyberjaya - envisioned as a garden city with an eco-friendly environment - is expected to be home to about 250,000 by 2020 when Malaysia, driven by a knowledge-based economy, becomes a developed country.



HARE AND TORTOISE RUN ...

INTEGRATING *Play and* WORK



Amidst beautiful gardens and well-designed buildings, there are plenty of opportunities for MSC's techies to mingle with their fellow e-dwellers through various coordinated fun activities.

To kick off the New Year, the Multimedia Development Corporation organised the inaugural Hare and Tortoise (HAT) Run in April.

An overwhelming 300 entries from the Cyberjaya community signed up for the five-kilometre race, which was divided into four categories — Men's and Women's Platinum and Open events.

The race, which began and ended at the MSC Headquarters, attracted participants from FSBM, HSBC, MDC, Shell IT International and Telekom Malaysia.

MDC CEO Datuk Dr Mohamed Arif Nun said the event, besides being fun and exciting, also serves as an avenue for networking and strengthening of the ICT community within Cyberjaya.



*MSC GOLF TOURNAMENT ...
Tan Sri Halim giving away the prizes*

Then it was time for the highly-anticipated Tenants' Night - a special party for the tenants of the Petronas Twin Towers which was hosted at the Nikko Hotel on March 28.

The night was a splendid success as sporting tenants put up entertaining performances - from movie sketches to the main highlight of award presentations.

A golf tournament teed-off at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club in July and it was aimed at enhancing relationships between government agencies, the MDC, MSC-status companies and the ICT sector.

Among the honoured guests who played in the tournament were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Minister of Energy, Communication and Multimedia Datuk Amar Leo Moggie.

Of interest, Cyberjaya was also inducted into the SCIN alliance in March - an organisation governed by authorities and corporations that oversees Smart Community projects.

A Dutch government initiative, SCIN was set up in response to communities needing to discover new ways of using ICT for economic, social and cultural development.

The recognition is indeed a step forward for Cyberjaya to emerge as a major player in the global ICT and multimedia sectors.

As the first Asian intelligent cyber city, Cyberjaya was elected to represent the Asian region in SCIN, which reaffirms the MSC's standing as a leading regional hub and provider of world class ICT infrastructure.



COMMUNITY LIVING IN CYBERJAYA



INTEGRATING *Play and* WORK



CITY COMMAND CENTRE ...
Ensuring security of Cyberjaya & its residents

Part of the world class set up is the City Command Centre (CCC) which is the nucleus of the administration and operations of the city. It is housed at the award winning CCC building.

Online information, bus arrival information, traffic management and integrated voice, fax and e-mail systems are just some of the facilities that the CCC provides. Cyberjaya residents will only need to know one contact point for all their needs, the CCC.

The number of MSC-status companies and world-class companies locating in Cyberjaya is growing and this means the number of people living within the city is also rising.

At the moment, there are about 14,000 people working, studying and living in Cyberjaya.

Designed to be a fully integrated city, the Multimedia Super Corridor is continuously putting in place the entire necessary infrastructure to ensure that the population's needs and demands are met.

The Cyberia clubhouse, for instance, offers facilities for the residents who want some rest and relaxation at the end of the day. The clubhouse is located in the heart of Cyberia SmartHomes, and is close to the majority of important business centres.

Built like a five-star resort, soothed by the calm and comforting ambience, the clubhouse is just the venue to rest the weary feet and take a delightful dip in the pool.

A sprawling and inviting pool spreads out to the edge of the landscape, and it is lined aesthetically with lily ponds and exotic tropical plants.

Right by the pool, and within a comfortable distance from supervising parents, lies the water playground for the children. Here, youngsters can dive into a little water slide that curves down straight into a wading pool.

For those who prefer to surf and yet remain dry, there is a wireless broadband facility provided at the club.

The more energetic can pump iron and adrenaline in the clubhouse's fully equipped gymnasium. Alternatively, they can choose to play badminton in the Community Hall.

There is also the Sauna and the Steam Room for those who are more inclined to perspire. There is plenty of literature in the Reading Room for all who wish to unwind in the company of books.

Food and drinks can be ordered from the eatery, or you can try your hand at the barbecue stations.

The MSC is always cognisant of the fact that as we embrace the Information Age and become more knowledge based, we must ensure all aspects of life are considered, covering both 'work and play'. ●