

SME WEEKLY NEWS

(19 October 2020 – 23 October 2020)

| Countries | Highlights |
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| <p>MALAYSIA</p> <p>SMEs to receive grants for going digital</p> | <p>In assisting SMEs embrace the advent of the IR 4.0, the government is providing grants when these companies invest in the digitalisation of their daily operations. Through the Finance Ministry, the government is collaborating with BSN, SME Bank and MDEC to manage these grants. An amount of RM500 million has been allocated towards this endeavour. Depending on how much an SME spends, it has the potential to receive a grant that matches its spending up to a cap of RM5,000. For example, if SMEs were to invest RM3,000 in digitalisation, it is entitled to receive a grant amounting to RM3,000, making a total of RM6,000. An SME that spends RM10,000 would receive RM5,000 as that amount is the limit, which effectively tops up the total to RM15,000. To be eligible for the grant, the SME must operate for at least a year, 60% owned by Malaysians and registered under the relevant laws of the country. Another criteria states that the company's annual turnover should hit a minimum of RM100,000 for a year, or the SME has annual turnover of RM50,000 with two years of operation or more.</p> <p><i>(Source: The Star, 19 October 2020)</i></p> |
| <p>SINGAPORE</p> <p>Over half of SMEs in Singapore blame digitalisation delay on coronavirus</p> | <p>While many SMEs have strategies in place to go digital, the take-up rate has been slow, with firms blaming Covid-19 for causing delays in their digitalisation plan. The SME Digital Transformation Study involved a poll of 400 SME owners and key IT decision-makers here from March to June 2020, involving respondents from 15 industries, representing professional & business services, manufacturing, healthcare, construction and energy. The study seeks to unveil the state of local SMEs' digital transformation and shed light on some of the gaps towards digitalisation, against the backdrop of economic disruption and volatility caused by the global pandemic. The survey indicated that 83% of SMEs in Singapore have digital transformation strategies in place, but despite higher adoption rates, only two in five SMEs perceived their efforts to be successful. More than half the firms (54%) blamed the Covid-19 outbreak for slowing their digital transformation plans, but about an equal proportion (56%) said it was too expensive to digitalise. They also cited lack of digital skills and low awareness of government initiatives to support firms in their digital transformation journeys.</p> <p><i>(Source: The Straits Times, 21 October 2020)</i></p> |
| <p>VIETNAM</p> <p>SMEs in Vietnam, Indonesia embracing e-learning to train workers</p> | <p>Countries like Indonesia and Vietnam have just recently announced that SMEs and workers affected by Covid-19 will embark on training via e-learning to improve their digital capabilities. In Indonesia, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology revealed it's working with Indonesian E-commerce Association (IdEA) to kick off online classes for 2,500 SMEs, starting October until 12 Dec 2020. The classes will cover digital skills including digital branding, soft skill development and business financing, offered to participating SMEs to help upgrade their skills. About 9.4 million Indonesian smaller businesses have migrated operations online, which is not too far from the government's target of having 10 million SMEs go digital by the end of 2020. Meanwhile, in Vietnam, series of short training courses is being introduced in eight cities and provinces across the country, with the aim of helping at least 1,000 workers who have been impacted by the pandemic. A collaboration between the German development agency, Vietnam's General Directorate of Vocational Training and the local departments of Labour Invalids and Social Affairs, these courses will run for two months until year end. Workers heavily affected by the pandemic such as tourism and hospitality can opt for these e-learning programs which will focus on reskilling participants in more sustainable industry fields, including mechanics, industrial electrics and electronics, plumbing, wastewater treatment, and automotive.</p> <p><i>(Source: Tech Wire Asia, 21 October 2020)</i></p> |