

# SME WEEKLY NEWS

(24 August 2020 – 28 August 2020)

Countries	Highlights
<p><b>MALAYSIA</b></p> <p><b>Visa launches 'Where You Shop Matters' campaign to help SMEs go digital</b></p>	<p>Visa, the world leader in digital payment, launched 'Where You Shop Matters', an initiative that encourages consumers to support their local business, while helping SMEs to go digital amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The initiative is aligned with the Malaysian government's "Buy Malaysian Products Campaign" that was launched last month and Cuti-Cuti Malaysia campaign to encourage domestic travel. This initiative is a part of Visa's broader small business strategy and follows commitments the company has made to support 10 million small and micro business in Asia Pacific. The company's focus is to help these small businesses embark on the digitalisation journey to start and grow their online presence, and offer SMEs an e-commerce toolkit, together with Visa commercial offers to help them start, manage and grow their online storefronts. Based on the recent Visa study, almost half of Malaysians intend to shop online more often. The data shows 83% of Malaysians believe it is important for small businesses to have an online presence. As part of the 'Where You Shop Matters' initiative, Visa has partnered with several e-commerce enablers such as BigCommerce, EasyStore, SiteGiant and StoreHub to encourage and help SMEs begin their journey to kick start their businesses online.</p> <p><i>(Source: Bernama, 28 August 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>MALAYSIA</b></p> <p><b>Digital payment system taking hold in Malaysia, survey shows</b></p>	<p>Over 75% of Malaysian businesses embraced at least one fintech or service over the past 12 months, according to global accounting organisation, CPA Australia. Mobile payments and digital wallets were the most widely adopted fintech products in Malaysia in the past 12 months with 63% of businesses surveyed indicating usage, with CPA Australia noting that the trend is likely to continue over the next 12 months. Overall, fintech adoption in Malaysia was driven by the need to increase business efficiency, with 56.3% identifying this as an important benefit, 40.4% used fintech to adapt to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic; and 34.4% saw it as a way of reducing costs. However, CPA Australia noted that 1 in 4 businesses surveyed did not expect to use fintech in the next 12 months, with majority of these being businesses with 50 or fewer employees. Stating that small business may not have good understanding of the benefits off fintech for their firms, more needs to be done to improve small business understanding. Among the survey respondents' main concerns were cybersecurity and data privacy, with CPA Australia stating that such concerns need to be addressed if fintech is to see greater adoption.</p> <p><i>(Source: Free Malaysia Today, 24 August 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>SINGAPORE</b></p> <p><b>Alibaba Cloud backs Singapore SMEs during COVID-19 struggles</b></p>	<p>As a result of Covid-19 Circuit Break measures, Alibaba Cloud noted a growing demand for cloud technologies, particularly with SMEs in Singapore. More than 50% surge in demand reflects the pressing need for businesses to embrace technologies for continued operation, when Singapore's general mobility came to a standstill during lockdown. Since January 2020, Alibaba Cloud has partnered with various companies, including SMEs from industries such as technology, digital infrastructure, delivery, online education, F&amp;B, hospitality and real estate, to expedite their digitalisation capabilities and migrate their offline businesses rapidly to an online platform. The deployment solutions meant companies can start running their operations on cloud in under 48 hours, drastically increasing their business resilience throughout the pandemic. In order to help retailers to reach customers online and go digital quickly in a cost-effective manner, Alibaba Cloud partnered with SCash to implement cloud computing solutions for a range of heartland businesses. To date, more than 170 heartland enterprises have signed up for the Alibaba Cloud-SCash initiative for rapid digital transformation.</p> <p><i>(Source: Data Centre News, 26 August 2020)</i></p>

<p><b>PHILIPPINES</b></p> <p><b>More lending seen for micro entrepreneurs, SMEs with BPI-Philguarantee partnership</b></p>	<p>Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and its microfinance arm, BPI Direct Banko, Inc. foresee more lending to micro-entrepreneurs and SMEs, after the two signed a partnership deal with Philippine Guarantee Corp. (Philguarantee). Under the agreement, government-owned Philguarantee, who offers credit guarantee programs, will grant BPI a combined guarantee of 6.5 billion pesos for new and additional loans to micro entrepreneurs and SMEs who need assistance amid the pandemic. Philguarantee will cover 50% of the new loans under this program to be used as working capital by eligible MSMEs. The bank cited that they would like to help the microentrepreneurs get back on their feet and restart their businesses by providing easy and affordable credit, as well as provide financial advice to the microentrepreneurs as part of their mandate for financial inclusion. Of the 6.5 billion pesos guarantee given by Philguarantee, BPI Business Banking, which caters to SMEs, will have an allocation of 5 billion pesos. The rest will be allocated to Banko.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Sun Star, 25 August 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>MYANMAR</b></p> <p><b>Mastercard announces deepening commitment to Myanmar</b></p>	<p>Mastercard announced that it is deepening its commitment to Myanmar by establishing a local office in Yangon, aiming to support the advancement of the country's digital payments ecosystem and build futuristic and inclusive cashless society. Mastercard has been working for nearly a decade, with government and key stakeholders in Myanmar, to digitalize its payments environment, achieving a number of critical firsts and milestones, including that of being the first international payments network to issue a license to a local bank (Co-Operative Bank Limited), paving the way for Mastercard cards to be issued and accepted in the country. Furthermore, Mastercard has reduced the month-long national SME registration process to one day by launching the MSME Webportal, an e-government web portal, in partnership with CB Bank and the Myanmar government. The company stated that it issued Myanmar's first credit card designed exclusively for women, MAB Lady's, in partnership with Myanmar Apex Bank. Another partnership with Yoma Bank ensured the digitalization and tailoring of products and solutions for the bank's customers, including SMEs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: IBS Intelligence, 25 August 2020)</i></p>