

## **MEDIA FACTSHEET (29 FEB 08)**

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### **PROMOTING INFOCOMM ADOPTION AMONG SMEs**

Infocomm@SME is an IDA programme launched in June 2007 that aims to help SMEs see more value in infocomm and embrace it. There are three initiatives under Infocomm@SME:

**1. Infocomm\_Usage@SME** aims to help SMEs adopt basic infocomm knowledge and technologies needs such as entry-level PC, laptops, printers, internet connectivity and basic web development. This will provide SMEs with the basic skills and capabilities to begin their infocomm adoption journey.

#### SME Domain-name Reservation (SDR)

As of Dec 2007, new businesses have the option to choose and reserve their preferred domain name for free as they register their entity with ACRA. These businesses have up to three months to activate their preferred domain name.

In the past, businesses had to pay between S\$39 to S\$84 to the Registrars to register their domain name. Starting from end 2007, SMEs without a domain name (be it new or existing) can enjoy promotional discounts of up to S\$30 on their **first** domain name registration for the first year.

#### SME Infocomm Package (SIP)

SIP offers entry-level hardware and software, broadband connectivity, domain name and useful enterprise applications to benefit SMEs who have little or no infocomm adoption. These infocomm packages are bundled with one-stop helpdesk and advisory, which are usually not offered to SMEs at large. The objective is to simplify our SMEs' experience in the adoption of infocomm so that they, like the larger enterprises, can make full use of the benefits that infocomm can bring to their businesses.

IDA organised a Call-For-Collaboration (CFC) on 7th November 2007 which generated interest from more than 100 companies. The CFC closed on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2008 with proposals received from 31 consortia.

From May 2008, SMEs can enjoy different basic infocomm packages aimed at equipping them with entry-level hardware. Prices for these infocomm packages would cost as little as S\$800 for basic components like a PC, including its software, such as operating system and anti-virus and the development for five web pages for S\$50 or less. To incentivise early adopters of infocomm in their businesses, IDA will co-fund the first 5,000 SMEs when they take up these packages.

## SME Infocomm Resource Centre (SIRC)

The SME Infocomm Resource Centre (SIRC) is a centre where SMEs can go to seek help on how to leverage commonly used applications such as e-mail, Skype, anti-spyware and anti-virus for their businesses. SMEs can also pilot innovative solutions before embarking on full-scale implementation.

Singapore Polytechnic (SP) is the first SIRC set up to assist SMEs in adopting new infocomm technologies by acting as a centre of excellence to disseminate know-how, and providing technical resources to help jump-start innovation. The services offered are listed below. The advisory services are provided at a cost of as low as S\$5 per service and this consultancy services are provided at a fee charged based on per man-day rate.

<u>Advisory services</u>	<u>Consulting services</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstration centre for commonly used software such as security, email, internet telephony and others such as mobile, multimedia, and games</li><li>• Workshops and Technology updates/ seminars</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feasibility study</li><li>• Technical evaluation</li><li>• Proof-of-concept prototype</li><li>• Development &amp; deployment services</li></ul>

The Centre's Areas of Focus include:

- Security (inclusive of information security, wireless security, etc);
- Free and Open source software (use of open source productivity tools, web applications on PHP/LAMP, open source CMS such as Joomla and Mambo, Linux OS);
- Web 2.0 applications;
- Mobile applications (applications on mobile phones and PDAs); and
- Content development (eg. re-usable 3D models, media templates, flash animations)

**2. Infocomm\_for\_Growth@SME** encourages SMEs in the same industry to leverage infocomm for business transformation. SMEs in a sector may have similar needs and such a sectoral initiative can help the smaller players “level-up”, raising the competitiveness of the whole sector. IDA encourages SMEs to either form a group among themselves or go through their respective chambers or trade associations to work with IDA to jump-start such initiatives. From these initiatives, best practices can also be developed which other SMEs in similar sectors can learn from.

**3. Infocomm\_Innovation@SME** aims to help promising SMEs transform their businesses through innovative infocomm solutions. The intention is to showcase them as role models for the others.

### Technology Innovation Funds

IDA and SPRING have set aside S\$5 million from the Technology Innovation Programme (TIP) to help SMEs grow their businesses through funding innovative use of infocomm technologies. TIP provides assistance to SMEs who adopt infocomm to give themselves advantage over the others and even expand their business into the global market. These grants serve to defray part of SMEs' costs (eg. manpower, equipment, professional fees etc) incurred in taking up the more challenging technology projects. These funds can be used to support the Infocomm\_for\_Growth and Infocomm\_Innovation@SME initiatives.

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