

**EMBARGOED UNTIL MCI COS 2022**

## **MEDIA FACTSHEET**

### **Continued support for SME Digitalisation**

1. Since before the COVID-19 pandemic, IMDA has been helping SMEs digitalise and participate in the Digital Economy. The SMEs Go Digital programme<sup>1</sup> was launched in April 2017 to make going digital simple for SMEs as well as support SMEs at various stages of their digitalisation growth.
2. IMDA's efforts gathered pace during the COVID-19 pandemic, when digitalisation became even more critical for firms to survive. Recognising this, many firms tapped on IMDA's COVID-19 measures, such as the Digital Resilience Bonus and Advanced Digital Solutions, to gain a head-start in the Digital Economy. To date, **more than 80,000 SMEs** have leveraged these solutions and services under the SMEs Go Digital programme since 2017, of which about a quarter came onboard in 2021 alone.
3. Moving forward, IMDA will continue to strengthen support for SME digitalisation, to drive digitalisation at scale, help SMEs leverage advanced and integrated digital solutions and enable them to internationalise through digital platforms.

### **Mapping it out in refreshed Industry Digital Plans**

4. Sector-specific Industry Digital Plans (IDPs)<sup>2</sup> have been central to the SMEs Go Digital programme since its launch in 2017. IDPs provide SMEs with a step-by-step guide to identify suitable digital solutions and corresponding training programmes to equip employees with the right skillsets at each stage of their digitalisation journeys. The IDPs serve as a common reference for SMEs and are aligned with the Industry Transformation Maps (ITMs) for each sector.
5. To date, **20 IDPs** have been launched for the following sectors – Environmental Services, Food Services, Logistics (including Air Transport), Media, Retail, Security, Wholesale Trade, Sea Transport (Bunkering, Harbour Craft and Ship

---

<sup>1</sup> For more information, please refer to [www.imda.gov.sg/programme-listing/smes-go-digital](http://www.imda.gov.sg/programme-listing/smes-go-digital)

<sup>2</sup> For more information, please refer to [www.imda.gov.sg/idp](http://www.imda.gov.sg/idp)

Agency), Accountancy, Hotel, Construction and Facilities Management, Training and Adult Education, Land Transport, Early Childhood, Food Manufacturing, Marine and Offshore Engineering, Energy and Chemical (Process Construction and Maintenance), as well as Precision Engineering (covering Aerospace and Electronics) sector.

6. As IMDA continues to support SMEs in their digitalisation efforts, IDPs also need to be refreshed so that they remain relevant to the needs of SMEs in the various sectors today. The next generation of IDPs will guide SMEs to take advantage of:

- Advanced technology solutions to support their needs;
- Better business decisions through data analytics;
- Connecting businesses across value chains, to help them scale rapidly; and
- Data protection and cybersecurity tools to safeguard their businesses.

7. We will launch a new IDP for the legal sector and refresh existing IDPs, such as for the food services and retail sectors. All IDPs are expected to be refreshed by 2026.

### **Chief Technology Officer-as-a-Service (CTO-as-a-Service) – Scaling access to digital solutions and consultancy**

8. IMDA's Chief Technology Officer-as-a-Service (CTO-as-a-Service) gives SMEs the confidence and convenience to go digital as SMEs can readily self-assess their digital readiness and needs at any time and from anywhere as well as have quick access to market-proven, cost-effective solutions supported by reliable vendors.

9. Since December 2021, selected early SME users across various sectors from construction, food services, food manufacturing, logistics, marine & offshore engineering to professional services, retail, security, and wholesale trade have been using CTO-as-a-Service to support their digitalisation journeys. The service is now open to all SMEs.

10. This one-stop platform allows SMEs to:

- Perform a self-assessment of their digital readiness levels and identify their digitalisation needs and gaps;
- Discover and learn from other SMEs that have successfully implemented digitalisation projects to raise their digital readiness levels;
- Receive immediate recommendations based on their business needs and profile, on relevant subsidised digital solutions that they can adopt; and

- Easily compare more than 450 digital solutions, by their functions and subscription fees. These digital solutions cover sector-specific needs across various sectors and common business support functions, thereby helping businesses to streamline operations to improve efficiency, enhance business sales revenue and safeguard business resiliency.

11. IMDA recognises that SMEs' digital readiness levels vary, and many SMEs do not have the resources for dedicated in-house expertise to implement digitalisation projects. For these SMEs, CTO-as-a-Service further connects them to a pool of digital consultants. Upon SMEs' request for digital consultancy services through CTO-as-a-Service, the digital consultants will work with SMEs to:

- Seek a deeper understanding of their business needs and priorities;
- Tailor digital solutions and training roadmap for their business;
- Incorporate essential cybersecurity risks, basic data usage and protection requirements into their digital roadmaps; and
- Provide project management services to help SMEs see through the implementation of their digitalisation projects.

### **Advanced Digital Solutions (ADS) – Leveraging advanced and integrated digital solutions**

12. ADS<sup>3</sup> was announced in March 2020 as part of the Resilience Budget to help enterprises deepen their digital capabilities, strengthen business continuity, and build longer term resilience. ADS supports the adoption of advanced technologies (e.g., AI, Robotics, Blockchain and Internet of Things) and integrated solutions (e.g., B2B solutions that integrate inventory management, e-invoicing, and e-payments) that address common enterprise-level challenges at scale. To date, there are at least 30 solutions, ranging from paperless trade, robotics operations, integrated value chains and aggregated data, that SMEs can consider for support under ADS.

13. IMDA will continue to provide more support for SMEs looking to adopt more advanced and integrated digital solutions, with an emphasis on AI-enabled and cloud-based integrated solutions. For example, there will be solutions such as AI-driven Digital Assistants to enable facilities management companies with multiple work sites

---

<sup>3</sup> For more information, please refer to [www.imda.gov.sg/advanceddigitalsolutions](http://www.imda.gov.sg/advanceddigitalsolutions)

to manage facilities remotely and reduce business costs. Retail SMEs can look forward to using integrated solutions available on cloud platforms, pulling together e-commerce, point-of-sale (POS) and customer relationship management (CRM) solutions to achieve more targeted customer engagement.

### **Grow Digital – Internationalising through digital platforms**

14. Grow Digital<sup>4</sup> was launched in June 2020 to help SMEs participate in Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) e-commerce platforms to sell internationally without a need for physical presence overseas.

These platforms, pre-approved by IMDA and ESG, are selected for their strong networks with complementary business service providers (e.g. logistics and financing), good track record and experience in operating in multiple overseas markets. Through these platforms, SMEs can benefit from:

- Smart matching to connect SME suppliers with potential overseas clients;
- Optimised listings on overseas e-marketplaces;
- Prompt access to financing offers facilitated via the platforms;
- Cross-border e-payment facilities that alleviate currency risks;
- Strong partners network such as with logistics companies to facilitate last-mile delivery; and
- Training and support to build competency for cross-border e-commerce.

15. Since its launch, more than **2,500 enterprises** have connected to 13 cross-border digital platforms supported under Grow Digital and have gained access to international markets in 10 countries.

16. IMDA will continue to expand Grow Digital and bring on board a broader suite of e-commerce platforms that have a wider reach. These will enable SMEs to access overseas markets more easily, reaching out to more potential buyers and fuelling SMEs' business growth.

---

<sup>4</sup> For more information, please refer to [www.imda.gov.sg/GrowDigital](http://www.imda.gov.sg/GrowDigital)

**For media clarifications, please contact:**

Bridget Chang (Ms)  
Manager, Communications and Marketing, IMDA  
DID: (65) 6202 4492  
Email: [bridget\\_chang@imda.gov.sg](mailto:bridget_chang@imda.gov.sg)

Chloe Choong (Ms)  
Assistant Director, Communications and Marketing, IMDA  
DID: (65) 6211 0527  
Email: [chloe\\_choong@imda.gov.sg](mailto:chloe_choong@imda.gov.sg)