

Connect

Jul-Aug 2009

SPECIAL NEWS

SMA DIALOGUE WITH MOM

FEATURE

MANUFACTURERS' SENTIMENTS
SURVEY FINDINGS
FOR Q3 2009

FOCUS

THE BIGGER RICEBOWL

Managing Manpower



Dear Members

As famous war strategist Sun Tzu once quoted, "Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look on them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death."

In today's society, the competitive business world is akin to fighting a battle. Economies of the world around seemed to have taken a roller-coaster ride, full of ups and downs; capable of making the people go hysterical as it soared this moment, and despair as it dived the next.

Unfortunately, the truth hurts as the manufacturing sector took on the hardest blow in most economic downturns, resulting in heavy casualties. Be it a restructuring or relocation exercise, they would inevitably cause redundancy in job positions, thus leading to the dreadful retrenchments. This also meant a potential loss of the most prized possession of a company, the manpower.

As a matter of fact, neither organization nor plans, or even theories of management, can accomplish anything. Endeavours succeed or fail because of the people involved. Hence, the crux of a company's ability to cruise through an economic turmoil lies in its strategic human resources (HR) management – managing excess manpower in bad times and retaining productive workers in good times.

In this issue, we shall discuss about the role of strategic HR management and the long-term benefits it entails in our focus story, The Bigger Ricebowl (page 14 & 15). Notwithstanding that, our timely dialogue-sharing session with Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister of Manpower, will also help enlighten some of the compelling issues that our manufacturing members encounter (page 8).

In order for the manufacturing industry to prosper in Singapore, SMA must continue to tap on our good tripartite relationships with the government partners and manufacturers to promote continual training and upgrading of our workers' skills and knowledge. As the manufacturing trends evolve and competition stiffens in both the local and global markets, we must continuously improve on our capabilities and productivity and move up the value chain.

Yours sincerely
Evelyn Tan (Ms)
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IRAS announces scope for tax audits in 2009

Indland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) recently announced that it will focus on electronics, wholesale traders, small and medium manufacturers, motor traders and marine fuel traders for its goods and services tax (GST) audit for 2009. It is believed that SME manufacturers sometimes wrongly zero-rate goods delivered locally, which is only limited to exported goods.

Other common general pitfalls include not registering eligible businesses for GST and not showing GST-inclusive prices. IRAS has reduced penalties under its voluntary disclosure programme to encourage tax payers who have made mistakes in their reporting to come forward and seek clarifications on policies with their officers.

Two national CET campuses to be ready in 2010

Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) will develop two Continuing Education and Training (CET) campuses to provide adult training and learning. Located at Paya Lebar Central and Jurong Lake District, the two national institutions will be ready by 2013; serving as a one-stop training and career coaching centre for employees and employers.

Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Manpower, underlined the importance for workers to re-skill as the economy evolves. He added that the two campuses will cater to the growing training needs from the working population and will continue to collaborate with WDA, National Trade Union Congress' Employment and Employability Institute (E2i), Singapore National Employers' Federation, public and private CET providers, industry associations such as Singapore Manufacturers' Federation, and employers to deliver integrated and effective skills upgrading for both workers and employers.

PM Lee's National Day Rally

PM Lee has mentioned that labour situation has stabilized. However, he said that as companies restructure and move upstream, some jobs will become obsolete as a result. In fact, these jobs are likely to go to other countries with lower costs. Hence, companies are encouraged to continue to upgrade their local operations and create new jobs.

PM Lee also mentioned that Singapore's economic assessment has shown that the Resilience Package introduced in January has proven to be effective and before end of the year, the government will review and decide on plans for the next year.

Singapore is said to be an attractive country to MNCs. As these MNCs see Asia as the key growth engine for the world, Singapore well-regarded to be the base for their Asian businesses. EDB has also been engaging and encouraging these companies to inject their high-end manufacturing operations into Singapore so as to better service the region.

Asia's strong fundamentals remain

Asia has experienced a dramatic slowdown but Asia's fundamentals are strong, said Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Deputy chairman and Executive Director, Government of Singapore Investment Corporation, at the recent Economic Society of Singapore Annual Dinner 2009. He said that as the global economy stabilises and recovers, the positive growth will be more skewed towards the emerging countries.

As countries with large populations like China and India, continue to grow, Asia's economic growth model will be re-oriented from depending largely on exports to one of a balanced model that is equally dependent on domestic consumption as with export growth. However, risks exist and they include the possibility of policy failure in the developed economies and a retreat to isolationism or protectionism. ■

SMA Dialogue with Minister for Manpower, Mr Gan Kim Yong



(From left) Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President, SMA; Minister for Manpower, Mr Gan Kim Yong; Mr Renny Yeo, President, SMA; Mr John Kong, Honorary Secretary, SMA

SMA held a dialogue session on 20 August 2009 with Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Manpower, representatives from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

Chaired by Mr Renny Yeo, SMA President, and attended by Council Members, the session was a useful platform to exchange feedback and gain insights related to manpower concerns, explore ways to overcome challenging issues, as well as garner support from the Government on SMA's host of initiatives to help the local manufacturing community.

Some of the key concerns from the manufacturers include upgrading programmes to meet future training needs, foreign employment issues, and the Jobs Credit scheme.

Q1 Has the Resilience Package, which was implemented by the Government in early 2009, helped companies tide over the recent economic crisis? In particular, has the Jobs Credit scheme helped employers save jobs? Will the Government extend the Jobs Credit scheme for another year?

MOM: Feedback about the various measures in managing the downturn has been positive. In a recent survey

conducted by MOM, seven in 10 companies with plans to lay off employees reported that they would postpone the plan or reduce the number of affected workers after the announcement of the Jobs Credit scheme, Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience as well as other measures recommended in the Tripartite Guidelines on Managing Excess Manpower.

The Government is currently reviewing the Resilience Package, including the Jobs Credit scheme, and will announce the outcome at the end of the year. The Government will monitor the situation closely and take in feedback to finetune the assistance programmes where necessary.

Q2 What are the implications arising from the recent revision in S Pass guidelines?

MOM: Singapore needs to develop a globally competitive workforce that is better skilled, more resilient and more productive to remain economically competitive and prepare for the economic upturn. For the local workforce, the Government has and will continue to provide them with Continuing Education and Training (CET) training. While we encourage employers to constantly upgrade our workers' skills so as to move up the value chain, we must also ensure that the quality of our foreign labour force is constantly reviewed and upgraded to match our skills requirements. Hence, we recently raised the quality requirement for

foreign workers who enter Singapore, particularly for the S Pass as well as for the skilled workers.

One way to improve the quality of foreign workers is to continue to tighten the requirement in terms of quality - their qualifications, their working experience as well as the types of jobs they are working in. Thus, over the last few years, we have gradually tightened that requirement. And we will continue to do so to ensure the quality of our workforce will improve over time.

Q3 Moving forward, the economic landscape will continue to evolve and along with it, job requirements will also change. How does MOM ensure that the workers' skills and knowledge are constantly kept relevant, and to ensure job opportunities for the workers?

MOM: In today's rapidly changing business and employment landscape, skills and qualifications lose relevance very quickly no matter how useful they were when we first leave school. Hence, we must build up a comprehensive CET system to help our workers upgrade their skills continuously so that Singapore can continue to grow and our workers can continue to have good jobs.

CET is a national priority and underpins Singapore's economic competitiveness and workers' employability. The Government has recently announced the establishment of two new national CET centres to equip workers with the relevant skills for new industries and evolving jobs. This is the worker's best assurance to staying employed and advancing in their careers. - CONNECT ■

Editor's note: The questions and answers have been edited for ease of understanding.

SMA and ASME Pledge Commitment Towards Nation's Defence



More than 180 NSmen recited the SAF pledge during the ceremony, led by the Pledge Leader, Major (MAJ) (NS) Danny Lien.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Mr Teo Chee Hean with SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony organizers, Mr Lim Meng Wee, Exco Member, SMA (left), and Mr VS Kumar, ASME (right).



Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President, SMA, presenting his keynote address

1 July 2009 – Jointly organised by SMA and the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME), this year's SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony for the CBD/South District, saw a total of more than 180 NSmen and 500 participants from 91 organisations converging at the Singapore Conference Hall to reaffirm their loyalty to the nation and commitment to the defence of Singapore.

Guest-of-Honour, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Mr Teo Chee Hean, said: "Today's security challenges are complex and transnational, and the NSmen

undertake an expanded spectrum of operations at home and abroad. In defending the homeland and protecting key installations, SAF lays down a safe and secure foundation for our nation to prosper."

Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President of SMA, said, "SMA is especially proud to be given the opportunity to co-organise this year's ceremony. Not only has it provided us with a platform to acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by all NSmen, it also demonstrates our commitment towards being a good corporate citizen." – CONNECT ■

Preparing Businesses for H1N1 Pandemic Spread

2 1 July 2009 – In view of the rising threats posed by the prevalent H1N1 pandemic crisis, SMA organised a H1N1 awareness talk titled "Boosting Business Immunity against Pandemic Spread". Over 40 companies participated in the talk, including general managers and HR managers.

Featuring presentations from professionals from various fields, participants gained a better understanding on the nature and complications of the H1N1 virus, ways to boost physical immunity against the flu, and most importantly, how to prepare for business continuity.

The speakers are Dr Chong Phui-Nah, Director for Primary Care Academy; Ms Jasmine Ang, Sales Leader from Beacon Pharmaceuticals; Mr Yap Pao-Jiu, Head of Service Excellence, SPRING and Mr Lim Poh Leng, Senior Manager of Human Resource, Makino Asia.

This talk was jointly organised by SMA and EDC@SMA, supported by Membership & Corporate Communications, spoke on the importance of business continuity planning to companies. – CONNECT ■



Ms Annabelle Tan, Exco Member and Chairman of Membership & Corporate Communications, spoke on the importance of business continuity planning to companies.



Dr Chong Phui-Nah, Director for Primary Care Academy

SMA Leads Foray into Uzbekistan

7 July 09 - SMA partnered with Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan (CCIU) to establish the basis for closer business collaborations and economic cooperation among business communities in Singapore and Uzbekistan - one of the more economically developed countries in Central Asia with attractive business prospects.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing ceremony was witnessed by Guest-of-Honour, His Excellency Mr Shavkat Tulyaganov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, Investment and Trade, Republic of Uzbekistan.

Mr Hans-Dieter Bott, Vice President and Chairman of Trade and Investment Function Committee, SMA, said: "SMA actively encourages Singapore-based manufacturers to explore expansion plans in the emerging Uzbekistan market. The MOU will also facilitate the exchange of knowledge and assistance between Singapore and Uzbekistan companies in their pursuit for long-term sustainable development."

Following the SMA-CCIU MOU, SMA's member, Beacons Pharmaceuticals - Singapore's largest home-grown pharmaceuticals company - also signed a separate MOU with Uzbekistan's leading association for 70 pharmaceutical manufacturing companies and institutions, Uzpharmsanoat. The association is currently implementing the programme for modernisation of technical and technological re-equipment of enterprises of the pharmaceutical industry, designed until 2011.

Commented Mr Joseph Lam, Managing Director, Beacons Pharmaceuticals, "Beacons is delighted to partner Uzpharmsanoat



MOU signing by Mr Alisher Shaykhov, Chairman of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (left), and Mr Hans-Dieter Bott, Vice President and Chairman of Trade and Investment Function Committee, SMA.



MOU signing by Mr Bakhodir Yunosov, Chairman of "Uzpharmsanoat" State Joint Stock Company (left, seated) and Mr Joseph Lam (right, seated), Managing Director of Beacons Pharmaceuticals, witnessed by SMA Council members and representatives from SMA and Beacons Pharmaceuticals.

to explore business and investment opportunities in Uzbekistan. We look forward to forge a sustainable bilateral business success through Uzpharmsanoat's strength and Beacons' entrepreneurship." - CONNECT ■

Tour & BBQ Networking @ APB

The SMA Networking Nite is organised regularly as a platform for members to network and meet new business contacts. On 14 July 2009, SMA organised a Tour & BBQ Networking for its members at Asia Pacific Breweries.

Sponsored by Autodesk Asia Pte Ltd, this event provided SMA members with updates on the digital communication among the key groups including conceptual design, engineering, manufacturing and the end-customer. Effective digital communication channels can lead to improved efficiency and productivity while reducing the need and cost to build multiple physical prototypes.

After the informative seminar, members were invited into the brewery and were fascinated with the manufacturing process of the all-time favourite beer, Tiger



A good turnout of more than 50 participants.



A participant enjoying his Tiger beer in a different way!

beer. They also enjoyed their evening at the Tiger Tavern packed with karaoke singing, games and lucky draws as well as networking with other members.

Corporate sponsors who are interested in hosting the SMA Networking sessions may contact Ms Lyn Soon at 6826 3037 or email lynsoon@smaderation.org.sg for further information. - CONNECT ■



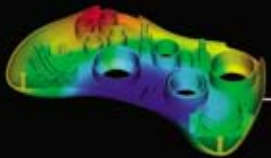
Council members and guests chilling out at the Tiger Tavern.



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Guest of Honour, Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Minister of State & Industry and Manpower (sixth from left) witnessed the signing ceremony. He is accompanied by signatories and representatives from SMA, Restaurant Association of Singapore, Food Innovation and Resource Centre and Sealed Air and SPRING Singapore.

Two MOUs Signed To Boost Local Food Industry



Guest of Honour, Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Minister of State & Industry and Manpower, sampling a new beverage product.

21 July 2009 – In conjunction with the inaugural Asia Food Technology, Innovation and Safety Forum 2009 held at the Biopolis, two separate MOUs were signed between SMA and Restaurant Association of Singapore (RAS); and between Food Innovation & Resource Centre (FIRC) and US-based food packaging company, Sealed Air.

The ceremony was witnessed by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Minister of State, Ministry of Trade & Industry and Manpower, and Mr Ted Tan, Deputy Chief Executive of SPRING Singapore.

In collaboration with RAS, SMA seeks to foster closer partnerships between local F&B manufacturers and food establishments with the creation of enhanced taste and appearance in food manufacturing, product innovation and exploring overseas ventures.

Mr Sunny Koh, Chairman of F&B Industry Group, SMA, shared, “With the MOU, SMA takes the initiative to work very closely with key partners to facilitate the exchange of information and seek valuable partnerships. This helps in the establishment of a conducive platform; enabling manufacturers to find common grounds for collaborations in local and overseas markets.”

On the other hand, FIRC and Sealed Air will facilitate the access to integrated solutions, from development of product concepts to production of prototypes. Also FIRC will serve as an incubator for new packaging concepts by leveraging on Sealed Air’s proprietary packaging technology.

The two-day event on F&B developments and technologies featured over 20 speakers and panellists and attracted more than 300 participants. – CONNECT ■

Singapore Packaging Star Awards 2009

The Packaging Council of Singapore recently held its 11th Singapore Packaging Star Awards as part of its continued efforts to champion innovation and sustainability in packaging. Despite a modest number of entries this year, the council saw some outstanding entries from the three main commercial categories. They are namely, Sales and Display, Transportation and Logistics, and Sustainable Packaging Design. In all, 22 packaging products were selected as winners.

Evaluating a total of 40 entries was a panel of three judges who considered criteria such as creativity, graphic appeal, product protection, display attractiveness, functionality

and convenience, and environmental friendliness. Among these winners, the Council will further select Best Entry winners from each category. The results will be announced during the awards presentation next year.

Jointly organised by SMa and PCS, this year's competition also marked the inaugural efforts to include industry players as judges for the assessment and evaluation of the entries. In conjunction with the secretariat's efforts to promote "green packaging" among manufacturers, PCS also invited Mr Sylvain Richer de Forges, Industry Projects Manager, Singapore Environment Council, to present on the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme. – CONNECT ■



Mr Albert Lim, Chairman of Packaging Council of Singapore, announcing the award winners at the Singapore Packaging Star Awards 2009.



Mr Sylvain Richer de Forges, Industry Projects Manager, Singapore Environment Council, presented on the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme.

Tasty Singapore Fair

1 3 August 2009 – SMa partnered with homegrown supermarket chain, NTUC FairPrice to launch the Tasty Singapore Fair. Supported by IE Singapore,

the two-week fair which runs from 13 to 26 August showcased a wide variety of 30 homegrown local products that represent Singapore's rich multi-cultural heritage. These products included a wide range of authentic Singapore ready-to-cook sauces and pre-mixes, canned drinks, instant beverages, assortment of nuts, seasoning, frozen food and noodle products.

Under the Tasty Singapore brand name, these local brands had previously travelled to customers from diverse countries and culture. This year, Tasty Singapore aims to bring these local brands back on home grounds to tap on the growing local F&B market.

Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President of SMa, commented, "This collaboration will certainly strengthen our food manufacturers' capabilities and marketability to provide competitive products to both local and global markets, especially when they 'hunt in a pack' under the Tasty Singapore branding in overseas markets."

"The Tasty Singapore brand epitomises the distinctiveness and personality of Singapore food, which is the ultimate reflection of the quality, reliability, consistency and creativity that are incorporated into our food production methods," said Mr Sunny Koh, Chairman of Food & Beverage Industry Group, SMa. – CONNECT ■



From left: Tng Ah Yam, Director of Integrated Purchasing, NTUC FairPrice; Mr Seah Kian Peng, Managing Director, Group Business, NTUC FairPrice; Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President, SMa; Mr Sunny Koh, Chairman of Food & Beverage Industry Group, SMa; Mr Tan Soon Kim, Deputy Director, Business Services & Lifestyle Division, IE Singapore.



Mr Seah Kian Peng (left), Managing Director, Group Business, NTUC FairPrice and on his left, Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President, SMa, at one of the sampling stations.

The *Bigger* Rice

This global economic downturn has been a rough ride, especially for manufacturers who, face business cycles of various scales and levels – macroeconomic, industry, market, product-life and even entrepreneurial. Manufacturing has always been negatively perceived as the industry that goes on a crazy hiring-and-firing-spree alongside with ups and downs in the economy. This has seriously dampened the general confidence in manufacturing, and stereotyped the industry as unstable, low-rewards and unsustainable. This causes repercussions even after the economy recovers, and the vicious cycle will continue to haunt the labour and machinery-intensive manufacturing industry.

Manufacturers thus will need to look deeper into the integration of human resource (HR) management, with their organisational strategic thrusts and goals - Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). It includes the management of manpower across the board, holding functional, operational, supervisory or even strategic roles in the company.

SHRM needs to grow its importance

HR is often viewed as a support function that commands attention only at the start of different phases in an organisation's development. This is usually the case for SMEs, which are mostly in phases of maximizing profits through product development. Many are not aware or convinced of the investment in HR and the long-term benefits it brings. If SHRM is effectively implemented, the company can progress and realise its optimal potential. At the same time, it also serves to defend the company's resources and competitiveness in good and bad times.

One example is Makino Asia, a global machinery manufacturer with more than 400 employees in the Singapore headquarters. Mr Lim Poh Leng, section manager for Human Resource at Makino Asia, said the company continued with its hiring plans and employed 10 R&D engineers since January this year, despite the economic downturn. The hiring plans were necessary and aligned with the company's long-term business goals of developing an international R&D centre for precision

engineering. He added: "Through strengthening of R&D capabilities, we can drive our competitiveness with new and better models, and new production lines. And this is good for our business in the long run."

Leading by Values

"It all begins with the company," said Ms Trina Neo, Managing Director of Talent Marché International, a strategic HR consultancy firm. Ms Neo shared on what leadership entails. "Every company has a set of core values, vision and mission and it all begins by having a team of strong leaders who can execute excellence, embrace company's core values and keeps the workforce engaged."

Makino Asia has developed its own company culture, 'The Makino Way', where the management works closely with HR team to inculcate the employees with the mantle of 'Quality first'. The company has since, prepared and equipped employees with conducive environment, constant learning and training. Its employees are valued as assets; contributing to many of its accomplishments in quality standards.

Employers must exercise fair employment practices during the good times, and especially so during tough times where the possibilities of retrenchments come close. Employees must be treated as internal stakeholders with accordance of due respect, dignity and transparency. Indeed, the management philosophy is being put to a test.

Empowerment

Today's manufacturing requires employees to value add to their organisation. Hence, employers will need to 'empower' them and develop their new capabilities through training and development. With better skills and education qualifications, and knowledge about the manufacturing chain or the markets and industry, the company's overall performance will improve and also set new benchmarks for best practices. This is one strategy to highlight the company's emphasis on a stable and protected workforce and compete for talents.

Bowl

By Gillian Lim



Another reason is to optimise productivity as manufacturers shift from the old paradigm of entrepreneurship. Lecturer at HRM unit, National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School, Dr Winston Lee shared that, "As organisations' hierarchies continue to restructure and re-engineer to become leaner and mobile, many companies are moving onto a globalised context. Employees today, need to be equipped with a mental model and mindset that allows them to be versatile, creative, innovative and easily integrate-able in this age of rapid technological changes and globalisation."

The Storm

The manufacturing industry, especially for products with a long production chain, is among other sectors, the first to feel the signs of a declining economy. Despite the industry's volatility, many manufacturers still bear hopes of better visibility. Before long, they had to quickly dispense 'excess' manpower pursuant to poor utilisation rates of the machineries and facilities.

Bigger companies with global operations may resort to streamlining and relocating operations, resulting in mass retrenchment exercises. This is bad news not only for employees but also for the company at large. Mr Renny Yeo, President of the Singapore Manufacturers' Federation, said: "Retrenchment is an expensive long-term exercise because once the economy picks up again, the company would have lost relevant skill sets and productive workers."

Workforce planning may also be affected by disasters or pandemic spread such as H1N1 or SARS. In 2003, SARS caught the Asian manufacturers by surprise and degenerated consumer confidence and export growth. Handset manufacturers in China, Taiwan, South Korea were badly hit by the SARS pandemic as production plants were closed on suspicions of SARS infections among employees. Prospective orders were lost as customers chose to divert orders to countries that were not affected by SARS. The lesson learnt is that business continuity planning and a well-managed workforce hold great significance to the survival of a company amid crises.

The Shelter

HR can use corporate and socially responsible ways to cut costs and manage excess manpower. The government has introduced schemes and programmes to help ease business owners' stress during periods of falling sales. These include the Jobs Credit's cash grant and the Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR).

Under SPUR, companies send their employees for up-Skilling or re-Skilling courses; to help them convert to new jobs or take on new roles in the company. This strengthens the company's capabilities to prepare for the upturn, while sustaining the morale of the workforce.

Companies with the flexible wage systems in place can also make use of variable components in the wage structure, to reduce wage costs. This includes wage freeze or wage cut.

Shorter work schedule, temporary layoff and redeployment may also be implemented. Employees, for instance, can take up to 50 per cent of annual leave entitlements, or paid at least 50 per cent on days they are not required to work. Shorter work week of up to three days in a week for a maximum three-month duration may also be implemented.

Other alternative work arrangements include part-time employment, job-sharing and flexible work schedule, in consultation with unions and employees concerned.

Conclusion

There are no unbreakable rice bowls when it comes to the harsh reality - a company's dollars and cents. However, companies must regard the workforce as an invaluable resource and take extra care to assess their HR needs. Breaking many a worker's rice bowl may end up costing the company the bigger rice bowl - its market competitiveness on account of the competence and capacity to perform when the economy recovers.

Think about the bigger rice bowl. - CONNECT ■

Ask EDC@SMa

Our EDC@SMa team provides tips and advice to frequently asked queries on various government schemes and funding.



Question: What is Business Continuity Planning and why should my company have a BCP?
Answer: Business continuity planning (BCP) refers to the advanced planning of logistical programmes to help the organisation response, recover and resume critical business functions after interruptions as a result of natural disasters, and other emergencies.

A business continuity plan is a set of work plan, guidelines, framework, templates and tools designed to help your company better manage scenarios that may threaten the operations and company's performance.

Today's business environment is full of risks and volatilities. In order to stay in competition as well as to recover after potential disruptions, companies must build a structure of resilience. Through BCP, the management gains insight pertaining to the organisation's strengths and weaknesses. This is also a tool that may help companies in strategising or decision-making process.

Question: What are the areas covered in BCP?
Answer: BCP measures and evaluates the possible impact to the businesses, which may be quantified in monetary or qualified in reputation stakes. BCP also includes recovery objectives, capabilities and requirements; and risk analysis of the internal and external environment. More importantly, it reviews and plans for resource provisioning and allocation.

Question: How long will it take to complete a BCP?
Answer: The amount of time taken to complete a BCP depends on the scale, complexity of the business or organisation, as well as the cooperation and commitment of your employees in devoting time to assist in the development of BCP. The average time taken is six months to one year. ■

Enquiries

For more information, please contact our EDC@SMa team at Tel: +65 6826 3020 or Email: edc@smafederation.org.sg

EDC@SMa was established in May 2005 as a subsidiary of SMa and an *EnterpriseOne* initiative of SPRING Singapore. At EDC@SMa, we assist local enterprises in developing their business competencies and the adopting of best practices to enhance their competitiveness in domestic and global markets.



To achieve this, **EDC@SMa** offers services through our five main thrusts:

- **Understanding Business Concerns:** Identify issues and advise through tapping on government assistance schemes.
- **Government Assistance Schemes Updates:** Provide regular updates on changes to the various government assistance schemes or new schemes.
- **Financing Schemes:** Diagnose, advise companies on their financial health and guide them on loan applications.
- **Informative Seminars:** Offer informative and useful information to help local enterprises increase their competitive advantage.
- **Facilitated Consultancy:** A pool of well-qualified and experienced professionals from multi-disciplines will be assisting the companies on the projects.

Some of the government assistance schemes* include areas in:

Branding – To enhance competitiveness in domestic and global markets through holistic branding programme for corporate and/or product/s. Also involve intellectual property protection.

Quality Management Systems - To gain international recognition on quality standards.

IT systems – To create or improve on existing Information Technology systems.

Strengthen Management Capabilities – To develop a clear road map using business excellence framework and to identify business gaps for improvement & growth.

Technology Innovation – To harness technology for work process/ product improvement.

Training – To provide advisory services on employees' skills upgrading and capability development training programmes.

Work Life Balance – To create work life harmony for employees so as to achieve better productivity and satisfaction at work.

Workplace Health & Sports – To initiate and sustain workplace health programmes to promote healthier lifestyles for employees and to improve bottom-line for companies.

Workplace Safety – To help enterprises develop good risk management capabilities and to identify, reduce/control hazards in compliance with the Workplace Safety & Health Act.

* Funding programmes are provided by government agencies like SPRING Singapore, IE Singapore, Ministry of Manpower, Singapore Workforce Development Agency and Health Promotion Board. Applications are subjected to approval of criterion from the relevant government agencies.

Please contact [EDC@SMa](mailto:edc@smafederation.org.sg) to arrange for a meeting or for more information.

EDC@SMa 2 Bukit Merah Central #03-00 SPRING Singapore Building Singapore 159835

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Website: www.edc.org.sg

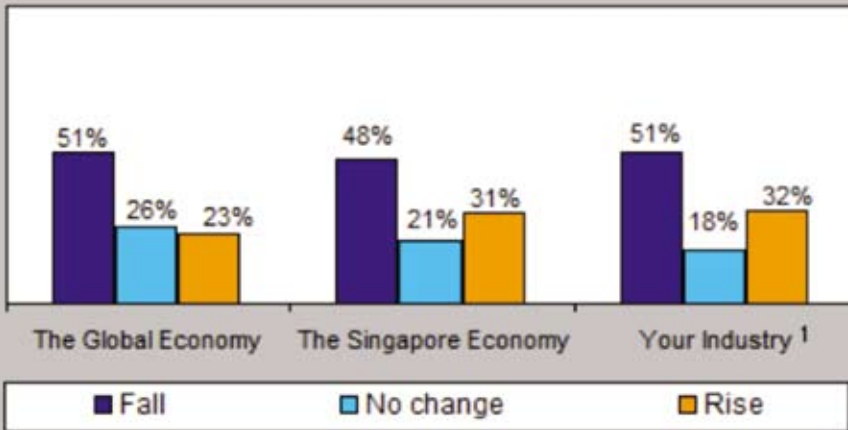
Manufacturers' Sentiments Survey Findings for Q3 2009

SMA seeks to gather domestic manufacturers' sentiments on the outlook on key areas that will impact the overall performance of their companies.

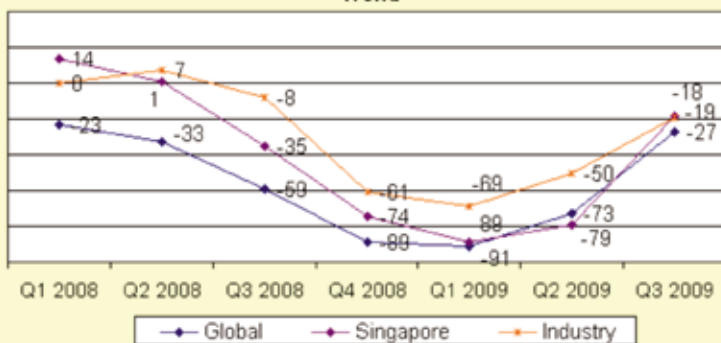
Executive Summary

1. Sentiments on the macro economy and the various company key performance indexes for Q3 continued to improve for the second quarter, despite a pessimistic general outlook.
2. Sentiments on Total Operating Cost took a dip in Q3, after three consecutive quarters of improvement, as majority expected an increase in the cost of utilities, freight & transport and raw materials.
3. The top 3 key concerns for Q3 are Price Competition, Uncertainty in Economic Environment and High Costs of Operations.

Economic Outlook Q3 2009



Economic Outlook Trend

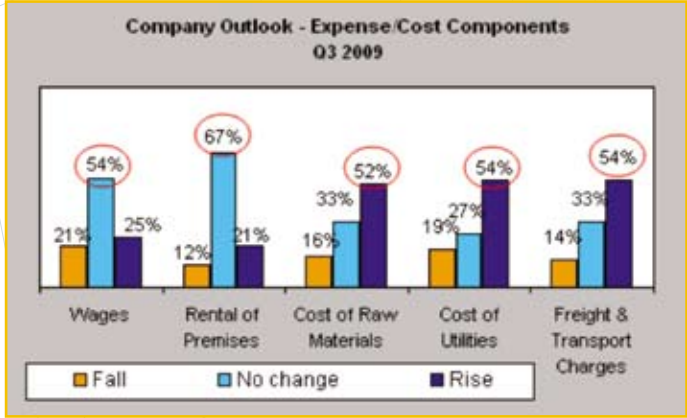


Sentiments were observed to have picked up from Q2. General economic outlook for Q3 improved significantly, though generally, sentiments still remained pessimistic.

Sentiments on Net Profit and Total Sales (both Export Sales and Domestic Sales) continued to improve in Q3. However, the overall sentiments remained negative – slightly more respondents felt that it will fall than rise.

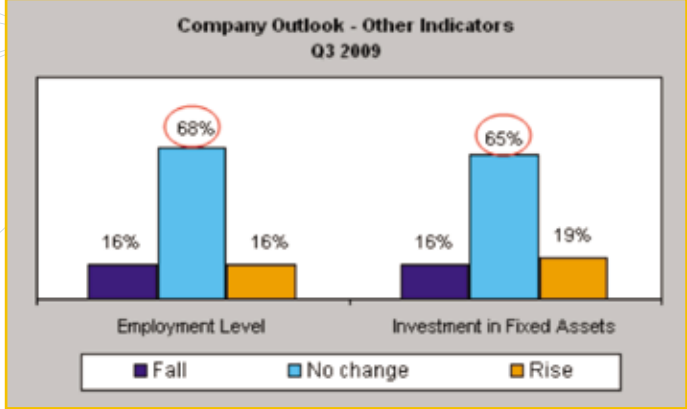


Among the various cost components, majority expected an increase in cost of utilities (54%), freight & transport (54%) and raw materials (52%). Contrary to that, 67% of the respondents expected rental to remain unchanged and 54% on wages.

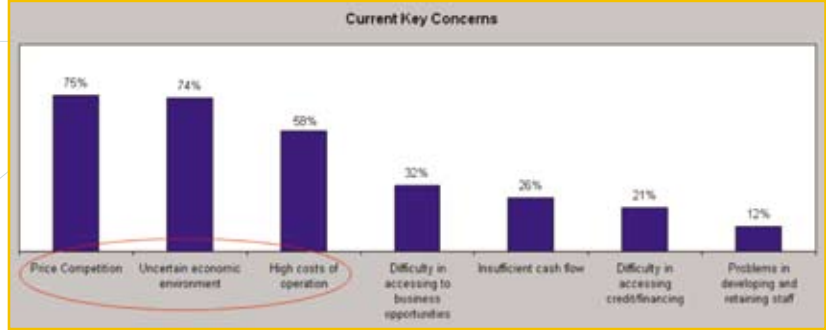


Majority (68%) indicated they have no plans to employ or retrench in Q3. Almost half (47%) was planning for or to continue with headcount / hire freeze in Q3.

65%, however, indicated no plans to change their investment level in fixed assets.



The key concerns did not differ much from the results in Q2. The top 3 key concerns remained as Price Competition, Uncertainty in Economic Environment and High Costs of Operations.



This survey is reported by Serene On, Research Analyst for SMA. Survey was conducted in July 2009 via email, telephone and face-to-face interviews. A total of 95 respondents were interviewed. – CONNECT ■



Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR) is a programme which brings together the full range of skills upgrading programmes delivered by the SPUR training providers with funding support that companies and workers can tap on during the current economic downturn.

SPUR offers employers **lower course fees** and **higher Absentee Payroll Subsidies** (capped at \$10/hr) when they send their staff for training.



Certificate in Generic Manufacturing Skills (Logistics) SMa Member: \$224.70 Non SMa Member: \$246.10	Apply Teamwork in the Workplace
	Apply 5S Techniques
	Apply Quality System
	Perform Stock Control and Housekeeping Operations
	Perform Warehouse Operations

Certificate in Generic Manufacturing Skills (Precision) SMa Member: \$224.70 Non SMa Member: \$246.10	Apply Teamwork in the Workplace
	Apply 5S Techniques
	Apply Quality System
	Use Hand Tools
	Operate Basic Measuring Devices

For enquiries, please contact Sharon Liang at 6826 3049; sharonliang@smafederation.org.sg

Certified Operations Specialist (COS) SMa Member & Non SMa Member: \$196.88	Apply Teamwork in the Workplace
	Apply 5S Techniques
	Apply Quality System
	Apply WSH Policy

For enquiries, please contact Rayson Lee at 6826 3086; raysonlee@smafederation.org.sg

Certified Operations Professional (COP) SMa Member & Non SMa Member: \$363.80	Supervise Team at work
	Supervise Work Improvement Process
	Supervise Quality Procedures
	Supervise WSH Practices

For enquiries, please contact Teo Wei Jiin at 6826 3044; weijiin@smafederation.org.sg

* All fees are inclusive of GST & after subsidy. Kindly contact us for the latest updates on new programmes and dates.
 ** The programme information above is accurate at the time of printing. SMa-CCL reserves the right to alter any of the information provided above at any time without prior notice.
 # Subsidies are only available for Singaporeans and PRs

SMA - Centre for Corporate Learning

Upcoming Programmes

SEPTEMBER 2009

9 Sep 09	Negotiation Skills Best Practice
11 Sep 09	Supervisory Management Skills (Mandarin)
16 Sep 09	Selling It Right!
16 Sep 09	People Skills for Managing Effective Customer Service
16 – 17 Sep 09	Six Sigma Methodology and Tools training
22 – 23 Sep 09	5S Journey
28 Sep 09	Effective Office Administrative Skills
28 – 29 Sep 09	Workshop On Understanding Letter of Credit Best Practices and International Trade
28 – 29 Sep 09	8 Discipline Problem Solving

OCTOBER 2009

5 – 6 Oct 09	Fundamentals of Purchasing Skills for New Buyers and Purchasers
07 Oct 09	Successful Sales Management
07 Oct 09	Six Sigma for Managers, Executives and Champions
19 – 20 Oct 09	Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points & Food Safety (HACCP)
19 – 20 Oct 09	Understanding the Law and Practices of Cargo Insurance & International Trade
23 Oct 09	Understanding The Bill of Lading
22 – 23 Oct 09	Failure Mode and Effect Analysis (FMEA)
26 – 27 Oct 09	Import/Export Documentation and Shipping Procedures
29 Oct 09	Powerful Presentation Skills
29 – 30 Oct 09	Lean Manufacturing Principles and Implementation
29 – 30 Oct 09	7 QC Tools and QCC

NOVEMBER 2009

2 Nov 09	Selling It Right!
2 – 3 Nov 09	Warehouse and Storage Management
5 – 6 Nov 09	Strategic Inventory Management, Planning and Control
6 Nov 09	People Skills for Managing Effective Customer Service
9 Nov 09	Effective Uses and Applications of INCOTERMS in International Trade
11 Nov 09	Stress and Wellness Management
12 – 13 Nov 09	Six Sigma Methodology and Tools training
13 Nov 09	Negotiation Skills Best Practice
16 – 17 Nov 09	Supervisory Management Skills
17 Nov 09	Six Sigma for Managers, Executives and Champions
17 – 18 Nov 09	Practical Manufacturing Productivity and Cost Improvement
20 Nov 09	Adapting to Change at Work
24 – 25 Nov 09	Statistical Process Control and Process Capability for Manufacturing
25 – 26 Nov 09	Value Stream Mapping
29 Nov 09	Cost Reduction Techniques for Effective Purchasing
30 Nov – 1 Dec 09	Workshop On Understanding Letter of Credit Best Practices and International Trade

DECEMBER 2009

1 – 2 Dec 09	7 QC Tools and QCC
9 Dec 09	Understanding Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
14 – 15 Dec 09	How To Negotiate with Vendors and Suppliers
17 – 18 Dec 09	Six Sigma

SMA members are eligible to utilise SMA Complimentary Cash Voucher for the courses and seminars.

SMA Centre for Corporate Learning

General Email:	cclemail@smafederation.org.sg
General Fax:	6826 3021
Seminars :	Ms Leong Mun Yin DID: 6826 3056 munyin@smafederation.org.sg Ms Nina Sianturi DID: 6826 3071 nina@smafederation.org.sg Mr Rayson Lee DID: 6826 3086 raysonlee@smafederation.org.sg
In-House Training :	Please email your queries to cclemail@smafederation.org.sg



A Start-up's Onward March

DP Information shares findings on the changing needs, challenges and strategies adopted by local start-ups in 2008 and their business expectations for 2009.

Despite the global economic conditions of late, more than half (53%) of the start-ups surveyed in the DP Info-ACE STEPS Survey 2009 have voiced their confidence in turning in or retaining their profit positions in 2009. In fact, the survey findings show that only slightly more than half (57%) of the start-ups were pessimistic about their outlook for 2009.

As a trade-oriented country, Singapore bears a great impact from the global recession. By the end 2008, 77% of the start-ups surveyed already faced sales-related issues. Of these, 9 in 10 respondents reported a slowdown in sales, while another 10% had customers cancelling their orders. Critically, an alarming 53% of start-ups experienced sales reductions of over 20%. To counter declining sales, start-ups have placed customer acquisition (49%), competitive pricing (23%) and branding (22%) as their top 3 priorities.

Key Challenges

Start-ups can tap on technology to give them the competitive edge in customer acquisitions. The use of technology can help to reduce costs and create value in the process in securing new customers. For example, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is developed through the combination of basic relationship concept and modern technology. Businesses practicing CRM can acquire new customers through referrals, instead of using approaches such as the mass media and advertising. Additionally, CRM programme can be enhanced through the adoption of other IT tools such as data warehousing and data mining to allow for greater understanding of customer requirements. Despite the advantages, only 4% of start-ups surveyed are using CRM systems.

Price competitiveness is more often a challenge for start-ups than more established enterprises. Unlike the latter which enjoys economies of scale, start-ups are likely to incur high start-up costs in the initial years. Thus, to remain price competitive, start-ups need to constantly review its suppliers and source for alternatives to minimize their costs.

If pricing is the only differentiation, it will be harder to build a successful brand. To be competitive, start-ups need to seek alternative strategies, such as branding. Branding has often taken a backseat for traditional start-ups, who very often, are not convinced that a successful brand builds consumer loyalty and generates long-term financial returns. However, it is promising to note that 22% of the respondents now have branding as their third priority for 2009.

Besides declining sales, start-ups are challenged by rising costs. This is not surprising considering inflation rose by 6.5% for the whole of 2008, up from 2.1% in 2007. Seven in 10 start-ups surveyed saw increased operating expenses in the last year. Of these, 79% reported more than 10% increase in their expenses. Rental, material and manpower costs, which constitute a substantial portion of start-ups' operating expenditure are the 3 cost components likely to impact their profitability within next two years.

Options and Strategies

The economic downturn has placed enormous pressure on businesses to keep their operating expenses down. Whilst the recession is a good time for businesses to review their cost structure, businesses should consider carefully before cutting on expenditure in 'soft' areas such as marketing and technology. 6% of the start-ups



already have plans to reduce their expenses on technology so as to cut costs. This is of great concern as start-ups should see technology as a form of investment that yield good returns, in areas like improved efficiency, greater productivity and enhanced customer servicing capabilities.

The management of cash flow, albeit critical, is even more so in difficult times. Yet, 73% of start-ups with financing issues are plagued by insufficient cash flow. In managing cash flow, it is vital that businesses re-evaluate their expenses periodically. They may want to give special consideration to customers who pay early and in full to encourage early and prompt payment to generate more cash.

Besides cash flow problem, 22% of the start-ups are having difficulties obtaining new loans. With an uncertain and unpredictable market, it is becoming increasingly difficult to forecast sales and cash flow. As such, banks are now more cautious in approving new loans, even if you have a good track record. Hence, there is a need for start-ups to be open to non-debt funding options such as government financing schemes, venture capital, business angels and other forms of equity financing.

Given the constraints presented by a small domestic market, start-ups should consider venturing overseas for more opportunities. The survey findings revealed that 57% of start-ups with overseas operations are hit by slower sales; this is in contrast with the higher 72% with no overseas operation. In terms of financial performance, respondents who have ventured overseas are also more likely to register higher revenue and profit. As a validation of the potentials offered by overseas markets, three in five of the respondents with overseas revenue have turned profitable within the first year of operation, compared to 45% who have yet to venture abroad.

The global recession has hit all sectors, dampening business sentiments within the business community. More than half of the respondents (57%) expressed their economic pessimism for 2009. However, all is not lost. Entrepreneurs should see the downturn as an opportunity to review the structure of their business and introduce changes that were previously considered too difficult or painful to consider. Besides concentrating on the immediate challenges, start-ups should also take the opportunity to re-visit their growth plans and strategies for the next few years. – CONNECT ■

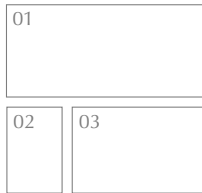
This article is contributed by the survey body of the Start-Up Enterprise Survey of Singapore (STEPS), DP Information Group.

Event: Workshop by Ministry of Manpower on 2009/2010 National Wage Council (NWC) Guidelines, Revised Managing Excess Manpower Guidelines and SPUR Programme

Date: 9 July 2009

Venue: SMA @ SPRING Singapore Building

01. Government representatives (from left): Mr Clarence Tan, Senior Manager, Manufacturing and Construction Division, WDA; Mr Lau Weng Hong, Deputy Director of Labour Relations, Ministry of Manpower (MOM).
02. Workshop participant seeking clarifications with the panellists.
03. The event attracted a good turnout of over 30 participants.



Event: SPUR Outreach Programme

Date: 10 July 2009

Venue: SMA @ SPRING Singapore Building

01. (from left) Mr Clarence Tan, Senior Manager, Manufacturing and Construction Division, WDA; Ms Norhayati Bte MD BAKI, Manager of Manufacturing and Construction Division, WDA; Mr Wong Choon Kin, Council Member and General Manager of Spot Management Services Pte Ltd; Mr Suri Bin Abu, CCL Associate Trainer; Mr Allan Ang, CCL Associate Trainer.
02. Ms Sharon Liang, Training coordinator, CCL (first from left); Mr Wong Choon Kin (fifth from left), Council Member; Mr Suri Bin Abu (far right), CCL Associate Trainer, with WSQ graduates.
03. Mr Gwee Seng Kwong, Secretary General, SMA presenting a token of appreciation to Ms Jessica Methodius, Assistant Director of Manufacturing & Construction Division of WDA.

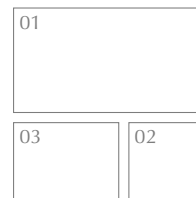


Event: CosmoBeauté Asia 2009

Date: 13 - 16 July 2009

Venue: Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

01. The Singapore Pavilion, one of the two country pavilions in the fair.
02. SMA member: EMZ Chemical, skin care products manufacturer.
03. SMA member: Yena Trading, supplier of beauty, spa, medical and fitness products and equipment.



Event: Dialogue session with Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA)

Date: 14 July 2009

Venue: SMA @ SPRING Singapore Building

- 01. A total of 28 participants from government agencies, industry partners, associations and chambers of commerce attended the dialogue session.
- 02. Government representatives from AVA sharing on the new requirements and international concerns in the F&B manufacturing industry.
- 03. Council Members from SMA and food manufacturers.

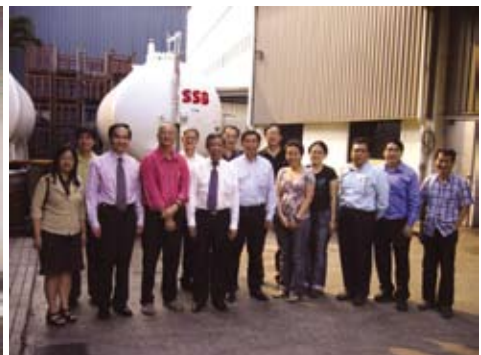
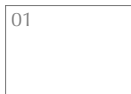


Event: Factory tour around SSB Cryogenic Equipment Pte Ltd

Date: 31 July 2009

Venue: SSB Cryogenic Equipment Pte Ltd @ Tuas

- 01. Mr. Simon Li (far right), Chairman of SMA Oil & Gas and Related Industries, welcoming the participants during the visit to SSB Cryogenic Equipment Pte Ltd.
- 02. Participants listening intently to Mr. Hendrie Lee (far right), GM of SSB Cryogenic Equipment Pte Ltd as he explained the functions of some of the equipments.
- 03. The tour group of 14 participants posing for a photo shot after the visit.



We want your feedback!

We are continuously working to improve CONNECT to better suit your needs. Please let us know your feedback and suggestions. Kindly email to hq@smafederation.org.sg with your subject title "CONNECT Feedback". Thank you.

Welcome
New SMA Members!

May/June 2009

- Lewe Engineering Pte Ltd
- Yuan Sang Pte Ltd
- ECS Computers (Asia) Pte Ltd
- Explorer Solutions Pte Ltd
- CCM Pharmaceuticals (S) Pte Ltd
- EMI Engineering Pte Ltd
- Canon Singapore Pte Ltd
- Electronic Synergies (S) Pte Ltd
- JTB Pte Ltd
- Cisco Systems (USA) Pte Ltd

Calendar

28 Aug 2009	Industry talk on Good Design, Good Business
30 – 31 Aug 2009	Singapore Business Mission to Tamil Nadu, India
1 Sep 2009	Food Export Conference 2009: Food Export to ASEAN- Market Trends and Regulatory
3 Sep 2009	Long-term Success with Today's Transportation Management Challenges
4 Sep 2009	Masterclass in Banking Innovation & Business Opportunities in Indo China
4 – 6 Sep 2009	Aesthetics Asia 2009
11 Sep 2009	Wealth Preservation in Turbulent Times
16 – 18 Sep 2009	Medical Fair Thailand 2009
16 – 18 Sep 2009	Industrial Automation Vietnam / PIA Vietnam 2009
17 – 19 Sep 2009	Expo Comm India 2009
23 – 26 Sep 2009	PACK PRINT INTERNATIONAL 2009
28 – 30 Sep 2009	PROPAK India 2009
8 – 10 Oct 2009	Metalex Vietnam 2009

For more information on events, please visit our homepage: www.smafederation.org.sg

Latest Exclusive Benefits for Members

1. Caliper Singapore:

- Complimentary in-house talks (approx. 60mins per topic) conducted by Caliper Singapore on the following topics:
 - How to Hire and Retain the Right People?
 - How to Build High Performance Teams?
- Entitlement to two trial Caliper Profile assessments (for the purposes of recruitment and/or employee development) at S\$500 per assessment. Valid through 2009.

To access the above membership benefits, please contact **Gladys Han** at 6779 5333 or gladys-han@caliper.com.sg. For more information on Caliper services, please visit www.caliper.com.sg.

2. Thomson Medical Centre:

- 10% discount off Health Screening Packages at Thomson Lifestyle Centre
- 15% discount off additional Diagnostic Imaging Screening / Blood Test when taken with health screening package
- 15% discount off Aesthetic Services / Treatments at Thomson Aesthetics Centre

3. Greendot Media :

- Be involved in National Day Parade by advertising in Coupon Booklet, special rates online.

Please contact **Ms See Shir Li** at 6222 1961 or shirli@greendotmedia.com.sg for more information.

4. Manulife Financial Singapore

- Exclusive offering of products and services to SMA members at preferential rates. Visit www.manulife.com.sg for more information.

5. Alila Hotels:

- Special privilege rates for SMA members. Visit www.alilahotels.com.

Visit www.smafederation.org.sg for the full range of benefits. For more queries, please contact **Ms Marilyn Tan**, Assistant Manager of Membership at DID: +65 6826 3054 or Email: marilyntan@smafederation.org.sg