



MATRADE Digital Trade Platform

PROVIDES BOOST FOR LOCAL SMES

IN THIS NEW POST-PANDEMIC ECONOMY, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are presented with a massive undertaking that encompasses both opportunities and challenges. In the light of the more open borders, businesses and individuals can now extend their reach beyond local shores and tap into globalised and borderless marketplaces; but, SMEs that fail to embrace e-commerce will lose out.

The need to adapt quickly to the demands of the business world has become one of the biggest challenges for local SMEs, says Chuang Boon Hua, business development director of Fusionex, adding that many have fallen behind and are unable to realise their full potential. "Another challenge that Malaysian SMEs face is that they are finding it difficult to expand their business to reach the global stage. They are also having trouble knowing where to find genuine global buyers, what global markets to tap into and what the export procedures are," Chuang says.

Enter Malaysia External Trade Development Corp's (MATRADE) Digital Trade Platform (MDTP), designed to support Malaysian SMEs in their bid to tap into a single channel or medium to showcase their offerings, engage with potential buyers and secure potential business opportunities through B2B and B2C marketplaces. MDTP also provides an integrated payment gateway, so SMEs do not have to acquire their own to transact on the platform.

MDTP's main objectives are to guide and support the import-export industry through the implementation and execution of effective e-commerce strategies, to monitor, measure and manage export revenue and sales activities, to deploy a trade facilitation-ready MDTP to accelerate exports and to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered data analytics so that businesses have a 360° view of their entire business operation.

The platform uses Fusionex's GIANT dashboard, which is an AI-powered big data analytics engine and dashboards, allowing MATRADE to easily measure export revenue from their initiatives and activities. Using the insights obtained, they can make effective data-driven decisions on their next course of action and know the best strategies to employ. Malaysian SMEs can also gauge their sales activities through GIANT's big data dashboards.

There is also a trade facilitation programme to guide SMEs and enable them to expand their reach onto the global stage. There are five stages in the programme:

- 1. Onboarding:** easy registration process to onboard Malaysian SMEs onto the platform;
- 2. Business assessment:** Conduct business assessment to understand the service level of Malaysian SMEs;
- 3. Training and certification:** Provide training that better prepares Malaysian SMEs for global trade and offer certification programmes to build confidence in Malaysian SMEs;
- 4. Financial assistance and grant applications:** Once onboarded and certified by MDTP, Malaysian SMEs may apply for financial assistance via MDTP; and
- 5. Export development support:** After receiving financial support from the MDTP Grant Programme, MATRADE and Fusionex will guide the SMEs through a series of business matching programmes and/or business engagement activities to ensure they are able to carry out global trade.

Through MDTP, SMEs do not need to engage with a multitude of different digital solutions, as everything they need will be in one place. "MDTP is a one-stop business centre that caters to the needs of new Malaysian businesses. It provides them with all the business support, networking, global trade opportunities and information they need," says Chuang. "Besides that, MDTP will be conducting a series of workshops, training sessions, seminars and conferences to guide SMEs in familiarising themselves with the platform as well as provide technical know-how to accelerate their digitalisation journey."

Technology is an important catalyst in creating a sustainable trade ecosystem for future economic growth. With Fusionex as its technology partner, the platform provides a holistic solution that supports MATRADE's mission of promoting Malaysian enterprises to the world, so SMEs can showcase their offerings, engage with customers and carry out seamless transactions.

"MATRADE and Fusionex created a series of guidance programmes to support Malaysian SMEs to kick-start their global trade activity, including access to business assessment, training and certification, financial assistance, cross-border e-commerce platform and virtual engagement tools," says Chuang.

"Disruptive technologies are revolutionising the industry and society. Not only does it help SMEs scale their capabilities, but it also enables Malaysian exporters to enhance their digital export skillsets, thus ensuring that they remain resilient, competitive and able to overcome any challenge that comes their way."

Catalysing the import-export markets

MDTP's interactive trade platform serves international buyers, Malaysian exporters and SMEs. As it is backed by MATRADE, this solution comprises the MATRADE Virtual Engagement Platform and MATRADE Marketplace, a marketplace aggregator and connection to the Fusionex Digital Trade Hub.

MDTP strives to support Malaysian SMEs and propel the country's export activities by using state-of-the-art technologies to help businesses scale and cope with global trade demands. It will also help the industry address export challenges faced



MDTP features at a glance

MATRADE Virtual Engagement Platform: Focusing on business engagement

- Provides a central hub of companies for any type of business-related trade;
- Allows Malaysian SMEs to showcase their offerings;
- Provides a platform for business matching, pitching sessions, webinars and virtual conferences;
- Matches the right buyers to the right sellers via artificial intelligence (AI)-powered business matching; and
- Provides a platform for MATRADE members to host B2B activities, organise cross-border business matching events, meet overseas buyers and showcase local offerings.

MATRADE Marketplace

- A central hub for SMEs to offer their goods and services;
- To implement a fully functioning marketplace for all companies that join the platform; and
- A marketplace that caters to B2B and B2C segments.

Marketplace Aggregator

- Access to a marketplace aggregator that connects local players with various overseas marketplaces;
- Links Malaysian SMEs to the global market; and
- Gives SMEs the opportunity to offer their products to international buyers without repeating the onboarding process.

Fusionex Digital Trade Hub

- Smart Trade Facilitation;
- MDTP connects and interfaces with Fusionex Digital Trade Hub to simplify global trade; and
- Helps SMEs overcome complex exporting procedures.

by Malaysian SMEs by providing a place to find genuine global buyers, recognise which global marketplaces to enter and gain specific knowledge on export procedures, so they can successfully expand their business onto the global stage.

In a joint collaboration with SME Malaysia, the SME Business Facilitation Hub (SBFH) was launched on Oct 31 to channel SME Malaysia members to the MDTP. SBFH is a platform for SMEs to digitalise their products, marketing materials and inventory in a single centralised platform.

SME Malaysia's members can connect and interface with MDTP via SBFH to capitalise on export opportunities presented by MATRADE. Interested SME Malaysia members can apply for MATRADE incentives such as grants (that is, MATRADE's eTrade Programme 2.0 and Market Development Grant), export training programmes and global trade fairs.

Through the MATRADE-Fusionex collaboration, MATRADE aims to onboard more than 30,000 Malaysian SMEs onto MDTP with a five-year milestone. Other plans include:

- Offering global buyers more than 500,000 types of local goods;
- Attracting more than 150,000 international buyers;
- Facilitating local SMEs' global trade activity and promoting Malaysia-made offerings globally;
- Ensuring Malaysian SMEs tap into the right channels to expand their business locally and globally; and
- Reducing the nation's reliance on imports.

Individuals and businesses interested in gaining access to the platform may visit <https://matradedtp.v-circle.com> to find out more.