

Connect

Jul-Aug 2008

SPECIAL NEWS

Unveiling of the Council for
Term 2008-2010

UPCLOSE WITH THE NEW PRESIDENT

Interview with SMa's newly
elected President,
Mr Renny Yeo

ASK EDC@SMa

Learning more about the
Environment Technology
Capability Development
Programme (EnviroTech CDP)

MANUFACTURING: MITIGATING THE INFLATIONARY ENVIRONMENT

Dear readers

The month of July marks the new term of 2008 to 2010 for SMA and we're most excited of the unveiling of the new Council which comprises of some of the big names in manufacturing. With their inclusion, SMA and the manufacturing community can only benefit from their experience and expertise.

In this new term, Mr Renny Yeo has also been elected to take the helm as the new President. He replaces Mr Edwin Khew and has promised to work closely with the Secretariat to raise SMA's global presence and dominance as a world-recognised federation making a difference to its members.

With the current inflationary situation causing businesses in Singapore to be cautious and pessimistic towards the economic outlook, we present you a special report in this issue where we read how some of our local manufacturers are mitigating the high costs. I hope this report would serve some of us well in learning some of the strategies undertaken by these members.

Another recent matter that had been brought to our attention is the traffic congestions that are occurring at our two causeway links at Woodlands and Tuas between Singapore and Malaysia. It has been said that the jams especially during peak periods has worsen and has affected our manufacturers who have facilities set up in Johor.

We want to take this opportunity to assure members that we will work with the relevant authorities to present all these issues and work out the best visible solution towards our nation's progress in mind.

With our members placing their trust in SMA, the federation has the responsibility to deliver our valued proposition of adding value to our manufacturing community as it has for the past 76 years.

Best regards,



Dennis Ng
Chief Editor



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SMA Council / Secretariat

Inside

Features

Special News	06
News in Brief	08
Upclose with the New President	10

Focus

Manufacturing: Mitigating the Inflationary Environment	16
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Opinions

Investment in Netherlands	22
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Regulars

Foreword by Chief Editor	02
Events	13
Ask EDC@SMA	20
Trade Calendar	23
Snapshots	24
Lifestyle	27
Updates	28



SMA COUNCIL MEMBERS

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GP Batteries International Ltd

Sunny Koh
Chinatown Food Corporation Pte Ltd

Dr Tan Kok Kheng
Mycobiotech Ltd

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Singapore e-SCM Council

Mr Renny Yeo takes helm as new SMA's President



New Office Bearers. From Left: Mr Simon Li, Dr Moh Chong Tau, Mr Renny Yeo and Mr John Kong

On 30 June 2008, it was announced that Mr Renny Yeo had been elected as the new President during the 5th Annual General Meeting. With this new appointment, Mr Renny Yeo becomes SMA's next president after Mr Edwin Khew for the new term of 2008 to 2010.

"I am honoured to be elected to lead SMA for the new term. Together with the new Council comprising of industry leaders in the manufacturing community, I am confident that we, together with the Secretariat will be able to manage the commercial challenges in our fast-paced and ever-changing business environment ahead by taking SMA to new heights," said Mr Yeo.

As President, Mr Yeo also shared his plans in taking SMA to the next level of success by focusing on the Federation's two key pillars- its corporate members and the Secretariat team. His vision is to re-capture SMA's dominant position in the business community by being a world-recognised federation making a difference to its members.

Mr Yeo added, "I'm looking forward for this new Council and the Secretariat to work harmoniously together in a safe, appreciative and rewarding environment and that's because one-third of the Council are serving for the first time as Council members of SMA.

Besides Mr Renny Yeo, the other newly-elected key office bearers are:

- Deputy President, Dr Moh Chong Tau from Makino Asia Pte Ltd
- Honorary Secretary, John Kong Wai Meng from BlueScope Steel Asia Pte Ltd.
- Honorary Treasurer, Simon Li Suet Man from Feoso Oil Singapore Pte Ltd

The newly-elected Council members will serve for a two-year term from 2008 to 2010.- CONNECT ■

Newly Elected SMA Council

No.	Name of Company	Name of Council
1	Singapore Cables Manufacturers Pte Ltd	Mr Renny Yeo (President)
2	Makino Asia Pte Ltd	Dr Moh Chong Tau (Deputy President)
3	BlueScope Steel Asia Pte Ltd	Mr John Kong Wai Meng (Honorary Secretary)
4	Feoso Oil Singapore Pte Ltd	Mr Simon Li (Honorary Treasurer, Chairman- Oil & Gas and related industries IG)
5	Amoy Canning Corporation (S) Ltd	Mr George Huang Chang Yi (Vice-President, Chairman- Health, Safety, Security & Environment Function Committee)
6	Poh Tiong Choon Logistics Ltd	Mr Poh Choon Ann (Vice-President, Chairman- China Business Function Committee)
7	Siemens Pte Ltd	Mr Hans-Dieter Bott (Vice-President, Chairman- Trade and Investment Function Committee)
8	II-VI Singapore Pte Ltd	Dr Ahmad Magad (Vice-President)
9	IUT Global Pte Ltd	Mr Edwin Khew (Honorary President)
10	B. Braun Singapore Pte Ltd	Ms Theresa Michelman -Lim (Chairman- Medical Technology IG and Chairman- Membership & Corporate Communications Function Committee)
11	SP Consulting International Pte Ltd	Mr Lim Meng Wee (Chairman- IT and Technology Development Function Committee)
12	Chinatown Food Corp Pte Ltd	Mr Sunny Koh (Chairman- Food & Beverage IG)
13	DORMA Far East Pte Ltd	Ms Rowan Tan (Chairman- Fire Protection Safety & Security IG)
14	E.Mation Technologies Pte Ltd	Mr Liang Chong Kang (Chairman- Automation IG)
15	Eng Bee Paper Merchant Pte Ltd	Mr Yeo Cheong Guan (Chairman- Lifestyle IG)
16	GP Batteries International Ltd	Mr Tsang Kwan Lung (Chairman- Electrical Electronics and Allied Industries IG)
17	Mycobiotech Ltd	Dr Tan Kok Kheng (Chairman- Life Sciences IG)
18	Packagers Pte Ltd	Mr Albert Lim (Chairman- Plastics & Packaging IG)
19	Singco (Pte) Ltd	Mr James See (Chairman- Metal Machinery & Engineering IG)
20	South East Metal Industries Pte Ltd	Mr Alan Lee (Chairman- Building Products & Construction Materials IG)
21	Yeo-Leong & Peh LLC	Mr Jennifer Yeo
22	Hamilton Sundstrand Pacific Aerospace Pte Ltd	Mr Tony M. Flippo
23	Nestle Singapore (Pte) Ltd	Mr Suresh Narayanan
24	Asia Pacific Breweries (S) Pte Ltd	Mr Bennett Neo Gim Siong
25	HTL International Holdings Ltd	Mr Por Khay Ti
26	Brite Konzept Pte Ltd	Ms Annabelle Tan Lan Hiang
27	Clipsal International Pte Ltd	Mr Tan Boon Chong
28	Paclin Office Products Pte Ltd	Mr Patrick Chang
29	Wanin Industries Pte Ltd	Mr Tan Tjin Hong
30	Concord Associates Pte Ltd	Mr Birch Sio
31	Hoclink Systems & Services Pte Ltd	Mr George Wong
32	Jesplan Consultants	Mr Stephen Lee
33	Spot Management Services Pte Ltd	Mr Wong Choon Kin
34	Tay Choon Mong Agency	Mr Tay Choon Mong

S'pore and Egypt to enhance infocomm tech linkages

Singapore and Egypt have agreed to enhance links in infocomm technology, in areas such as cybersecurity, manpower development and business linkages.

This was announced in June after a meeting between Communications, Information and the Arts Minister Lee Boon Yang and his Egyptian counterpart, Tarek Kamel.

Egypt is looking at Singapore companies to invest in its growing infocomm technology market. It also wants to be a hub for these companies to expand to the Middle East. Both sides are expected to exchange trade missions by the end of the year.

Global economy seeing its worst financial crisis in half a century

UOB Chairman Wee Cho Yaw said that it could take another two years before the global economies see a reprieve and stabilise.

Speaking after being conferred an honorary doctorate by the National University of Singapore in July, he added that a prolonged recession in the US will threaten the global economy, which is already shaken by spiralling fuel and food prices.

The sub-prime mortgage crisis in the US, severe credit crunch, and unprecedented inflationary pressures have created what Mr Wee called the worst financial crisis he has seen in 48 years in the banking industry.



S'pore shines in rankings as a key centre of commerce

According to a study by MasterCard Worldwide Research, Singapore ranks second in Asia after Tokyo as a key centre of commerce.

The study ranks the top 75 centres of commerce by comparing how they perform critical functions that connect markets around the world.

Globally, Singapore takes fourth spot ahead of Hong Kong which is sixth in this year's index.

London was number one in the global ranking, followed by New York, Tokyo, Singapore and Chicago.

Singapore shines as a financial hub for its ease in doing business, economic stability, as well as legal and political framework.

Environment and water industry grows

From a survey by IE Singapore, Singapore's environment and water industry is growing significantly at a compounding rate of 24 per cent between 2006 and 2008.

The survey covered various sectors such as water, waste management, and alternative energy.

Overall, revenue from the environment and water industry grew to a record S\$2.3 billion in 2006, up 69 per cent over 2004.

Majority of the companies polled said expanding to global markets will be their key growth strategy in the next three years.

According to these companies, their overseas markets made up two-thirds of overall revenue in 2006 with China making up the biggest market, forming two-thirds of all revenues, while Southeast Asia was second.

Manufacturing re-look in their position in today's market

According to economists, the manufacturing sector will have to look towards high value-added segments as Singapore can no longer compete with China and India for low-cost production.

Certainly at this juncture in Singapore, the oil and gas industry is the one which is still the bright spark, (and) transport engineering is a bright spark.

And apart from new sectors such as medical technology, biotechnology and precision engineering, economists said clean energy will also be a major growth driver going forward.

Industry players said local manufacturers already have the skills set to leverage on this growth. ■



Welcoming our Newly Elected President, Mr Renny Yeo

Mr Renny Yeo needs little introduction to the manufacturing community with his more than 20 years of service in Council for SMA. As Chairman of 9 companies from Australia to Asean and India, including Singapore Cables Manufacturer Pte Ltd, Renny brings his wealth of experience and cutting edge leadership that would proof advantageous in leading SMA forward in today's globally challenging business climate. CONNECT spoke to our new President and this is what he shared with us.

CONNECT: Congratulations on being elected as our new President! Would you care to share with us your thoughts and feelings on your new appointment?

RENNY YEO: First of all, I would like to thank my fellow Council members for having the confidence in me by electing me as their President at a time when SMA is facing internal and external challenges.

I am, of course excited to be given this chance to lead a team of leading CEOs and Captains of industries and at the same time to work with a team of dedicated Secretariat staff.

CONNECT: I believe you had considered the enormous responsibility and task that was to be shouldered as SMA's President. Could you share with us what motivated you to accept this appointment as President?

RENNY YEO: Firstly, I am very encouraged because 21 out of the 22 present Council members voted for me in a secret ballot. As far as I am aware, this is the first time a secret balloting was carried out to vote for a President.

However, I must stress that this (secret ballot) was done on my insistence. I did it because for me to succeed, I needed the Council to work as a solid team and similarly, the Secretariat must work as a solid team.

As we all know, it is only when we work as a team then we can be better than others. We want to “re-make” ourselves. This vote of confidence gives me the motivation and drive to do my best and together bring SMA to new heights.

On the question of what motivated me to accept the appointment; I have always (throughout my working life) believe that what we “take from society, we must return to society”.

As business people, we benefit from the business community and the markets. On the other hand, we must also do what I call “national service” to advance and improve the manufacturing community.

The biggest motivation I guess is I feel I could “value add” to SMA.

CONNECT: What are your expectations of your Council members?

RENNY YEO: My expectations are for them to always carry and “wear the hat” of SMA when they are performing their duty pertaining to SMA and to contribute selflessly to SMA.

I expect them to contribute at all SMA meetings and functions with new ideas or improvements of the way we do things and also of how we can continuously improve our services to our members and again continuously to build better relationships with government bodies to arrive at a win-win situation for both government bodies and our members.

After all, this is something that we should do as volunteers and as CEOs, and I’m sure we share the same values of: whatever is worth doing is always worth doing well with passion.

CONNECT: Now as President for SMA and the manufacturing community, what are your immediate and long-term plans in taking SMA to the next phase of growth?

RENNY YEO: I believe that, before SMA goes out to serve the manufacturing community, we must strengthen our internal organisation and one of the areas would be to quickly strengthen our research capability.

This is important as in order to serve our members, we must have enough research data to know what our members want, to know what the challenges in the manufacturing community are and what is happening in the region that affects our members, especially in countries which are relevant to our members.

My long-term plan would be to make SMA a premium manufacturing association that is able to value add to its manufacturing community and to the government. We should have an established relationship with other manufacturers’ association in the region as most of our members are regionalised and therefore we are able to link and value add to our members through our overseas network.

CONNECT: Going a little a personal. Care to share with us on your family life?

RENNY YEO: I am happily married for 36 years and I have a son and daughter. My son is now 34 year-old and daughter 29 year-old. My son is married and I have two grandsons. My wife is a homemaker and a Church Elder. My son is a Private Banker while my daughter is a Reference Librarian at our National Library. Our family is practicing Presbyterian and we worship at the Orchard Presbyterian Church.



“ I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT NO MATTER WHAT INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS ONE IS IN AND EVEN IN ASSOCIATIONS, AS A LEADER, ONE MUST HAVE THE PHILOSOPHY THAT OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET IS OUR PEOPLE. ”

– Mr Renny Yeo
SMA’s New President
(above)

CONNECT: What is your philosophy and values that you believe are vital in being successful in business and in life?

RENNY YEO: I have always believed that no matter what industry or business one is in and even in associations, as a leader, one must have the philosophy that our most valuable asset is our people.

To me in today's fast moving world, technology and equipment can obtain through a push of button and you can purchase the technology or equipment that you need for your business.

On one hand, you may have the strong financial power but without a good team of people working for you, you will soon lose your money. On other hand you may not have the financial power but if there are good people working for you, they would be able to, as a team, help you to convince the bankers to provide the funds!

To me as a "chief slave" of the organisation, my people are my most valuable asset and my main role is to motivate my team of people. Taking care of our human capital is one of the critical key success factors.



Brief Profile: Singapore Cable Manufacturers Pte Ltd (SCM) is a subsidiary of Draka Cableteq Asia Pacific Holding and is a market leader in Specialty Low-Voltage cables (Fire Resistant & Flame Retardant, Halogen Free and Instrumentation & Control) and Marine, Oil & Gas cables.

CONNECT: Thank you once again for your taking your time to share your life with us. Anything else you would like our members to know?

RENNY YEO: I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members for their support especially during the times where we were going through some internal difficulties.

On behalf of the Council, I thank you for members for their continued support and I would like to also encourage all members to provide feedback when our Secretariat contacts you or send circulars to you.

We can only provide you better services if we know what your needs are and if we know how you are doing so that we can feedback to our government and discuss with our government on areas that we can improve our cooperation.

For example, we intend to work very closely with SPRING, as you all know they provide a wide range of services that our members can take advantage of and also IE Singapore as they have offices all over the world which can help our members export and expand their presence.

I encourage members to use these facilities that are available directly or through SMa. Our Secretariat will help you connect to the relevant government departments.

–CONNECT ■

Local F&B manufacturers at International Food Fair in Czech Republic

By Pauly Tan

A group of local food manufacturers who went under the flagship of Sma did Singapore proud at the Salima International Food Fairs 2008 held in Brno, Czech Republic from 4 March to 7 March 2008.

This was the first time that the F&B manufacturers penetrated into Central Europe market which consists of the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, Poland, Austria and Slovenia. This region alone has a potential market of 100 million people.

In total, 6 local household brands took the lead in representing Singapore in this emerging market. They were Asian Home Gourmet, Owl International, Chinatown Food Corporation, The Factory Chocolat, Maicar and Tong Garden.

"We are confident that our made-in-Singapore products would be well received at this Food Fair," said Mr Sunny Koh, Group Managing Director of Chinatown Food Corporation, "Our Singapore brand has established a reputation for quality taste and high standards of production over these years."

These efforts to internationalise Singapore food manufacturers and to promote international trade were supported by our government agency, IE Singapore. – CONNECT ■



Above: An overview of the exhibition in SALIMA 2008



Left: Mr Gregory Tay of Owl International Pte Ltd with Russian visitors

SEMICON's marks its 15th year milestone

By Pauly Tan

Taking this annual affair into its 15th year, SEMICON held a special celebration to mark the occasion at the Suntec Singapore from 5 May to 7 May 2008.

This year's show featured more than 300 exhibitors showcasing the latest products and services for photovoltaic, microelectronics manufacturing, assembly and packaging with more than 8,000 visitors.

With the Southeast Asia region consistent role in playing a vital part of the assembly and test of semiconductor devices in the global semiconductor materials market, SEMI President Mr Paul Davis expects a surge in growth of 9.3% from US\$43 billion (2007) to US\$47 billion (2008). – CONNECT ■

SMA led the following companies under the Singapore Pavilion:

1 Automated Micron Assembly Pte Ltd	10 RS Technik Pte Ltd
2 Anewtech Systems Pte Ltd	11 Servo Dynamics Pte Ltd
3 D Squared Technology Pte Ltd	12 Swisslog Pte Ltd
4 Facronics Systems Engineering Pte Ltd	13 Solidheat Industries Pte Ltd
5 FA Systems Automation (S) Pte Ltd	14 Technco (Pte) Ltd
6 Illios Systems Pte Ltd	15 TechnoDigm Innovation Pte Ltd
7 Island Optical Singapore (S) Pte Ltd	16 TNS Asia Pacific Pte Ltd
8 Metrohm Singapore Pte Ltd	17 Ultra Industrial Automation Pte Ltd
9 MSV Systems & Services Pte Ltd	



SEMICON- Mr Ko Kheng Hwa, Managing Director of Economic Development Board (centre) as the Guest-of-Honour during the launch

SEMICON
Singapore 2008

For queries on SEMICON Fairs, please contact Ms Pauly Tan, Executive for International Trade Development at DID: +65 6826 3079 or Email: paulytan@smafederation.org.sg.

Cross Industries Networking Series 1

By Lyn Soon

On 9 May 2008, the first of the cross industries networking series was held at one of Singapore's iconic nightspots- St. James Power Station.

Members from the Building Products & Construction Materials (BPCM), Fire Protection, Safety & Security (FPSS); Life Science Industry Group (LS); Medical Technology (MT) and Oil & Gas and related industries (O&G) Industry Groups were treated to a TIGER Live tour and icy cold glasses of golden and freshly brewed TIGER beer.

Indeed, it was a great "TIGER time!" with members getting acquainted with one another from different industry groups. This networking platform was organised with the intention to foster better relations within members and create business opportunities, and was kindly sponsored by GE Commercial Finance. - CONNECT ■



About GE Commercial Finance

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Above: Members networking over their TIGER Time!

Below: Honorary Treasurer, Simon Li Suet Man from Feoso Oil Singapore Pte Ltd trying his hand at tapping a glass of TIGER beer



Exclusive Wine Appreciation Session for CEOs

By Lyn Soon

On 16 May 2008, an exclusive "CEO Wine Appreciation Networking" event was organised for the first time for some of our corporate business leaders in the manufacturing community.

Adding a finer touch to life with our networking sessions, this wine appreciation event presented the techniques in recognising the various flavours of wine and the fundamentals of wine tasting. Facilitating the wine tasting session was Mr John Chua Liat Kiang, President of Chinelli Consultancy who was named "Wine Personality of The Year" by The Wine Review in 1994.

This first-ever event was kindly sponsored by Epicor Software (Asia) Pte Ltd and Sevenoaks Wines. Both are corporate members of Sma. – CONNECT ■

About EPICOR.

EPICOR provides comprehensive business solutions for mid-market companies and MNCs globally. The company provides integrated solutions with ERP, CRM and SCM for industry-specific verticals – Manufacturing, Distribution, Hospitality, Services and Retail in more than 140 countries worldwide.

With a global client base who are constantly requesting for localised solutions, EPICOR solutions support up to more than 30 languages, serving over 20,000 customers all over the world.

To find out more about EPICOR, you may visit their website- www.epicor.com or contact Ms Christina Tay, Senior Marketing Manager at DID: +65 6333 8121 or Email: ctay@epicor.com

For queries on corporate sponsorship, please contact Ms Lyn Soon, Senior Executive for Membership Industry Development at DID: +65 6826 3037 or Email: lynsoon@smaderation.org.sg.



Above: Learning the tasting techniques at the wine tasting session



Top left: Sma Member Mr Ivan Tan (right), Sma Council Member James See together with Epicor's Mr Robin Chao (left), Ms Christina Tay and Mr David Ho (center) at the networking session



Left: Sma Council Member, Mr Jerry Tan presenting a token of appreciation to Mr John Chua

CommunicAsia and BroadcastAsia 2008

By Cecilia Tham

Touted as the key infocomm and media event, CommunicAsia and BroadcastAsia took up eight halls at the Singapore Expo with 2,300 exhibitors on display this year.

The first day of the four-day event which was held from 17 June to 20 June 2008 attracted more than 12,000 visitors, with half of them being overseas visitors.

Mr Stephen Tan, Chief Executive of Singapore Exhibition Services pointed out that this infocomm and media event was not just to learn about the relevant and leading technological solutions, but also a chance to meet leaders in the field, which was why high-level decision makers made it a point to visit.

"For most visitors, CommunicAsia along with BroadcastAsia, is the perfect opportunity to witness convergence" said Tan. "The solutions on display are continuously pushing the edge of technological advancements on a regional and global level."

For the third consecutive year, Sma led the Singapore Pavilion in CommunicAsia and BroadcastAsia. – CONNECT ■



The high technology solutions and equipments were the highlight of this annual exhibition in the Asian region

Manufacturing:

Mitigating the Inflationary Environment

It was widely feared that a US recession may have already begun when the inflation rate took a climb to the highest level of 7.5 per cent in 26 years. In fact, prices have not only gone up, but have stayed up.

Factors for the recent rise in prices

The recent rises in prices, especially in food and raw materials have been attributed to the growth in developing economies of Asia and Africa by around 9 per cent and 6 per cent respectively against 2 per cent in Western Europe and North America. This stretches the demand in the global marketplace which has exerted pressure on supply and inevitably on prices.

Other attributing factors are the change in weather conditions across the globe due to climate changes, leading to droughts that has affected and lowered food production in several countries. One such country is Australia which has suffered from crop failure because of global warming.

In addition, in some developed countries where huge agricultural subsidies are endorsed in encouraging the leaving of agricultural land fallow to maintain global prices of agricultural products and the diversion of food to bio-fuels especially by the US, which has diverted 20 per cent of its production of corn crop towards ethanol production are other factors influencing the prices by reducing the section under the food grain production.

Likewise, the hike in oil and commodity prices is a fall out of a spurt in global demand, especially from developing countries, which is putting pressure on available supplies.

Therefore, it is apparent that what we are witnessing today is what we call "import inflation" and Singapore is not alone in this. In other countries, the inflation rate in China is at 8.5 per cent, the highest in 12 years. In Australia, inflation is at 4.2 per cent, the highest in more than 17 years. In India, inflation soared to a 7-year high at 8.75 per cent. And to name a few within our region, Vietnam's inflation rate has risen to 25 per cent and Thailand's to 7.6 per cent.

The impact on our manufacturers

This staggering inflation with soaring food, housing and transportation or logistic costs, against the backdrop of the looming rise in fuel prices thrust the growth-versus-inflation dilemma to the top of our manufacturers in Singapore.

For certain, the escalating costs has aggravated an already tumultuous market, hit by a depreciating US dollar, which makes

With inflation recording a 26-year high and oil prices surging as high as US\$147 per barrel, we take a look at what manufacturers are doing in coping with the challenges.

By Andrew Ong

products and services less competitive. This is a double blow as overheads have risen out of proportion due to inflationary impact with further oil-price driven surging cost directly or indirectly affecting businesses.

SMA's corporate member, Kuraray Asia Pacific (KAP) Pte Ltd, formerly known as Poval Asia Pte Ltd, is manufacturer of poval resins in Singapore. Mr Tadahiro Yamamoto, KAP's Managing Director said that the increase of oil prices and utilities prices such as steam and electricity have a big impact on KAP's production cost.

"Our raw materials that we use in production is VAM (Vinyl Acetate Monomer), which is produced by Ethylene/Acetic acid/Oxygen. Ethylene is produced by NG (Natural Gas) and oil. When Ethylene price goes up, that affects our production cost."

However, Mr Yamamoto was quick to add that KAP was presently fortunate to have high demands for their PVA at high production rate. For now, this is helping KAP in remaining competitive, but he did suggest that a sales price hike was in the cards as the inflation situation had gone beyond their own efforts of cost reduction through heat recovery.

Another member, Manufacturing Integration Technology (MIT) Ltd, an integrated automation solution manufacturer to the semiconductor industry all over the world also shared on how they were impacted by inflation situation.

"Although oil is not a direct raw material in our manufacturing process, the rising cost of oil has indirectly increased our cost of operations through higher components costs, utilities, rental and logistics. With 90 per cent of our products exported all over the world, the rise in logistics costs has affected us greatly. Coupled with a weakening US dollar, our margins have been compressed," said Mr Lim Chin Tong, MIT's Executive Director.

Navigating through the inflation storm

Given that the present inflationary environment is not expected to cool down any time soon, this poses an enormous challenge for our manufacturers and requires the deepest level of business insights to navigate the rough seas of the global economy.

In curtailing the impact and remaining competitive, MIT has diversified their customer base and businesses through strategic mergers and acquisitions. For instance, they have added medical equipment assembly into their range of products which have broadened their revenue base.

Mr Lim Chin Tong said that as today's global inflation was not within their control, MIT had to be realistic about what they could do and resort to cutting whatever costs wherever possible. In procurement, they had widened their search for quality suppliers of components with the aim of securing more competitive supplies.

"This is a strategy that will continue irrespective of the inflationary environment as we need new income streams to moderate the cycles inherent in the global semiconductor industry," he added.

Similarly, KAP (formerly known as Poval Asia) had undertaken the strategy of merging and acquiring with their merger with Kuraray Specialities Asia (KSA) on 1 July 2008. This was done to boost their sales products with new products to enhance their competitiveness and increase revenue base.

Generally, manufacturers have tightened their budgets by deploying cost-reduction strategies to sustain their growth. But we can also observe how manufacturers such as MIT and KAP are navigating through the present inflationary environment with consolidation via mergers and acquisitions in forming strategic alliances as a cost-effective and long-term strategy in remaining competitive.



Conclusion

With oil prices looking likely to remain high on cost, some other cost-reduction initiatives are the adoption of innovative application of technologies and applying for either the Energy Audit Scheme or Energy Efficiency Improvement Assistance (EASE) Scheme. Both schemes are administered by the National Environment Agency (NEA).

In brief, these initiatives and schemes will help manufacturers in identify opportunities for improving energy efficiency regularly where measures can be taken to increase the energy efficiency of their facilities by adopting or upgrading technology or improving processes. Resulting in potential cost savings that in turn will help optimise consumption of resources and sharpen their competitive edge.

Other measures that manufacturers are secretly hoping for that might help to mitigate the affects of inflation could be the reduction of our government's corporate tax and introduction of more tax incentives to create a more conducive business operating environment for MNCs and SMEs alike.

In addition, initiatives like increased subsidies for human capital development can help to boost productivity, develop a highly skilled workforce and retain staff in the tight labour market.

Ending on a special note to our members, be assured that Sma will remain committed in providing the relevant and value-add service the manufacturing community needs during this cautious period to compete in our global market.

With the introduction of our new Council with newly elected President, Mr Renny Yeo for the new term of 2008-2010, the manufacturing community can further be assured that the federation will be at the forefront of the challenges ahead to provide the leadership and expertise to carry the manufacturing sector forward. ■

Ask EDC@SMa

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

Question: What is the Environmental Technology Capability Development Programme (EnviroTech CDP) about and how do I qualify for this programme?

Answer: The Enviro Tech CDP was created to provide resources to local enterprise to upgrade their capabilities for greater competitiveness in the global market by in capability development efforts in the following areas:

Water and wastewater treatment such as embarking on unique commercial product/process development to address regional market demand.

Clean or alternative energy such as efficient recycling processes converting waste to energy.

Solid waste management and recycling such as increasing productivity with process automation.

Air pollution treatment and filtration leading to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Certification projects such as ISO 14000, Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS).

Enhancing engineering services and systems such as developing efficient process and control instrumentation (PCI) devices and systems.

The EnviroTech CDP is for all local environmental technology SMEs that are keen to enhance their enterprise competitiveness and industry innovation.

The projects initiated by the SMEs should aim to:

- Build new enterprise capabilities that add new service offerings or significantly improve productivity
- Lead to commercialisation of innovative technology, environmental products and new intellectual properties

Question: What sort of incentives can we expect in applying for this programme?

Answer: The EnviroTech CDP covers the whole value chain from applied research, product development and commercialisation.

The grant will defray a portion of project qualifying costs which include manpower, equipment, materials, and professional services. Generally, support of up to 50% for enterprise-level projects and up to 70% for industry-level projects can be provided.

This latest CDP is expected to benefit over 60 SMEs and more than double value-added contribution to \$300 million, over the next five years. ■



Enquiries

For Environmental Technology SMEs who are interested to participate in the EnviroTech CDP, please contact our EDC@SMa team at Tel: +65 6826 3000 or Email: edc@edc.org.sg

Manufacturing in the Netherlands

The Dutch business environment offers a strategic base to cover Europe for manufacturers to take advantage as an ideal gateway to expand globally. **CONNECT** brings you the details.

By Andrew Ong

The capital city of the Netherlands is Amsterdam. The country is a constitutional monarchy with Queen Beatrix, and the government is a liberal democracy. Presently, the Netherlands has a population of 16.5 million people which makes it the 23rd most densely populated country in the world.

The national language is Dutch but 85 per cent of its population speaks English. With labour force making up to 7.5 million, the country is the 16th largest economy in the world and ranks 10th in GDP (nominal) per capita. Last year, economic growth was at 3 per cent and the unemployment rate was 3.2 per cent.

The Netherlands' strong manufacturing position has attracted over 1,850 North American companies - one third of them Fortune 500 companies - and a large number of European and Asian companies for assembling and manufacturing operations.

Key factors for manufacturing in Europe

Crucial factors that contribute to making the Netherlands a good location for manufacturing facilities are the excellent distribution infrastructure, proximity to a wide range of markets, technical sophistication and leadership, availability of materials and suppliers, and a workforce that is highly educated, multilingual, productive and flexible.

1. Productive workforce

The high productivity in the Netherlands is a result of the high overall standard of education and training, an efficient work organisation, a relatively high level of automation and efficiency in production processes, the good working attitude of the Dutch employees and their flexibility, and a small number of working days lost to strikes annually.



2. Supplier network

More than two-thirds of the Dutch gross domestic product is fueled by the service industry, the largest sector. The Netherlands features a strong and diverse manufacturing sector as well, led by the agro-industrial, chemical, electronics and metal industries. This is demonstrated by the fact that five of the world's leading multinationals - Philips, Unilever, Royal Dutch Shell Group, DSM and Akzo Nobel - were founded in the Netherlands.

3. Logistics infrastructure

Two of the Netherlands' greatest assets are its world-renowned entry points: Amsterdam Schiphol Airport and the Port of Rotterdam. Added to these are the country's lattice work of river connections that are overlaid with a dense infrastructure of ultramodern and well-maintained roads, railways, inland waterways, pipelines, airports and seaports. – **CONNECT** ■

For more information about NFIA and investment and expansion opportunities in the Netherlands, contact:

Ms Linnie Mackenzie, Area Director, Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency

541 Orchard Road, #13-01 Liat Towers, Singapore 238881,

Tel: +65 6739 1135/ 137, Fax: +65 6737 1940, Email: mackenzie@nfia-singapore.com

www.nfia-singapore.com



Trade Exhibition 2008

NAME OF EVENT	INDUSTRY SECTOR	CITY/ COUNTRY	DATE	CONTACT PERSON
CosmoBeaute Indonesia 2008	Cosmetics and beauty	Jakarta Convention Center, Jakarta	14 - 16 Aug	Ms Cecilia Tham E-mail: ceciliatham@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3030
ITU Asia 2008	Infocomm Technology/ Telecommunication	Bangkok, Thailand	2 - 5 Sept	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
10th China International Opto Electronics (CIOE)	Electronics/Photonics/ Optics/Laser	Shenzhen, China	6 - 9 Sept	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
Industrial Automation	Precision Engineering	HCMC, Vietnam	17 - 19 Sep	Ms Pauly Tan E-mail : paulytan@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3079
HOSPIMedica Asia	Medical	Suntec, Singapore	17 - 19 Sep	Ms Pauly Tan E-mail : paulytan@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3079
METALEX Vietnam 2008	Tools/Machinery	Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam	1 - 3 Oct	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail : vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
Canton Fair	Multi-Industries	Guangzhou, China	15 - 19 Oct	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
InfocommAsia 2008	SystemIntegration/ Lightings & AV Technology	Hong Kong, China	19 - 21 Nov	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
GSMA Mobile Asia Congress	Infocomm Technology/ Telecom Equipment & Device Manufacturers, Service Providers & Operators	Macau-SAR, China	18 - 20 Nov	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
Expo Comm Italia 2008	Telecommunications/ Navigation Equipment/ Control System/ Information Technologies	Rome, Italy	2 - 4 Dec	Ms Vivien Yen E-mail: vivienyen@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3032
SEMICON Japan	Precision Engineering	Chiba, Japan	3 - 5 Dec	Ms Pauly Tan E-mail : paulytan@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3079

Trade Mission 2008

DATE	NAME OF EVENT	CITY/ STATE	INDUSTRY SECTOR	CONTACT PERSON
15-18 Sep	Business Mission to Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	Multi-Sectoral	Ms. Katherine Heng E-mail : katherineheng@smafederation.org.sg DID : +65 6826 3031
22-25 Oct	Business Mission China	Nanning	Multi-Sectoral	



1. Ms Pauly Tan (extreme right), International Trade & Development Executive for SMA with Mr Ng Hai Seng (2nd right) of NPC Systems Pte Ltd and his friends
2. Ms Cheryl Tan of IE Singapore looking all cheery after receiving more than 1,000 prospective leads for Made-in-Singapore exports.
3. The stream of visitors at the Singapore pavilion exhibition area



Event: "CompAir Saves Energy" Seminar
Date: 13 May 2008
Venue: EDC Auditorium@SMA
By: CompAir Far East Pte Ltd



1. Participants swamping around CompAir Sales Manager, Mr Sebastian Fuan with queries
2. Managing Director, Mr Russell Parton of CompAir addressing the audience with introductory speech



Event: National Workplace Safety & Health Closing Ceremony
Date: 30 May 2008
Venue: HortPark- The Gardening Hub
By: WSH Council



1. Mr Birch Sio, Deputy Chairman of SMA's Environment, Health, Safety & Security Function Committee (EHSS FC) receiving the token of appreciation from WSH Council's Chairman, Mr Lee Tzu Yang in recognition of SMA's partnership in the campaign
2. From left: Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) Senior Assistant Director for Corporate Safety, Mr Hashim Mansoor, Mr Wong Choon Kin and Mr Birch Sio representing the EHSS FC for a "Safety is Cool!" shot
3. Group shot of NWSH partners in arms

Event: Official Opening Ceremony of Murdoch University's International Study Centre
Date: 6 June 2008
Venue: East India Room, Raffles Hotel
By: SMa School of Management (SOM)



1. The SMa and SOM Family. From left: Mr Chua Chew Yong, SMa's Special Advisor, Mr Simon Li, Honorary Treasurer, Mr Lim Meng Wee, Council Member, Dr Moh Chong Tau, Deputy President and Chairman of SMa-SOM, Josephine Leo, General Manager of SMa-SOM, Mr Richard Soh, Honorary Treasurer for Term 2006-2008, Mr James See, Council Member, Mr John Teo, General Manager of SMa-SOM and Mr Dennis Ng, Acting Secretary-General.
2. His Excellency, Mr Miles Kupa, High Commissioner from the Australian High Commission giving his speech as Guest-of-Honour
3. His Excellency taking a tour around the campus guided by Mr James Wong, CEO of SMa-SOM
4. The cutting of ribbon to officiate the opening of the Murdoch University International Study Centre. From left: Dr Moh Chong Tau, Chairman of SMa-SOM, His Excellency, Mr Miles Kupa and Professor Gary Martin, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Enterprise & International) of Murdoch University



Event: "Food Automation- Your Vital Growth Engine" Seminar
Date: 11 July 2008
Venue: The Pines
By: SPRING Singapore

1. Mr Sunny Koh, Chairman of SMa's Food & Beverage Industry Group giving his presentation on food automation from his personal experience as Managing Director of Chinatown Food Corporation
2. Participating audience making up of food industry professionals and leaders at the seminar

persimmon

Fused to Amuse

Text and photos by Dr Leslie Tay.

I think I finally figured out how to make fusion cuisine work.

You see, the problem with local fusion is that when stuff tastes too much like the local dish, most people would wonder why they would want to pay so much for something they can get at a hawker centre for a fraction of the price. So the simple solution to the problem is to ensure that what you are serving is 80% Western and 20% local and not the other way around.

So take for instance the Fisherman's Pie at Persimmon. It is more like a Fisherman's Pie than it is like Laksa and it worked very well for me. I have a thing for puff pastry with creamy seafood sauce—just love the way the puff pastry soaks up all that yummy creamy sauce.

Persimmon's version of the Fisherman's Pie, chock full of fresh seafood, marries the classic recipe with a hint of Laksa but without the coconut cream or the spiciness. It's akin somewhat to Japanese-style curry where you get all that Umami flavour of the spices but without the heat of an Indian curry. So when you eat Japanese curry, it is distinctly Japanese but with an Indian influence. Similarly, the Fisherman's Pie is still distinctly Irish but with a Singaporean influence, which is what I think makes this dish work. **Rating: 4.25/5.**

Crab cakes are one of my all time favourite starters. The version served at Persimmon is supposed to be reminiscent of our famous white pepper crab dish. It was tasty but would have been better if there is a creamy sauce to go with it. **Rating: 4/5.**

Laksa Pesto seems to be the in thing for many restaurants recently. The Laksa leaf in this dish has such a wonderfully distinct taste that one can't help but think of Laksa when you taste it. So even though the pasta dish is only made from olive oil and Laksa leaves sans the spices and coconut milk, you still can't help thinking about Laksa. I think this version of Pesto Pasta with a Laksa twist works for me. **Rating: 4/5.**

Being an unabashed carnivore with an obligatory concern about my cholesterol levels, I am always on the lookout for vegetarian dishes that can provide me with as much epicurean epiphany as a Foie Gras lollipop. Although the Mushroom Ravioli is still some way from hitting that threshold, I must say it is a veggie dish that was revelatory in its own right. The Ravioli is filled with bamboo shoots, water chestnuts and mushrooms and is wonderfully crunchy. But the real gem is in the Chilli cream sauce which was surprisingly good. It's a little sweet and hinted of the chilli fragrance without the heat. It blended perfectly with the Ravioli and the wonderfully sweet sautéed Portabello mushrooms. **Rating: 4.25/5.**



Fisherman's Pie \$24++



Linguini Laksa-Leaf pesto \$28++



White Pepper Crab Cakes \$16++
(4 pieces)



Mushroom Ravioli \$19++

Persimmon

50 Tiong Bahru Road. #01-07 Link Hotel. Tel: +65 6227 2271
Open daily

Exclusively for Connect readers:

- 3 Courses for the price of 2 Set Lunches daily, at \$23++.
- 15% off a-la carte prices (for Dinner only).
- Valid from 1 August to 30 September 2008.

I don't usually like fusion very much but I must say that there were a few items at Persimmon that really did hit the right note for me. The place is bright, cheery and informal and would be great for a casual lunch or dinner. ■

About the author:

Dr Leslie Tay is a family doctor who believes in only eating tasty food. An avid photographer, he publishes mouthwatering pictures of Singapore food on his popular food blog: ieatshootpost.sg. His practice is at Karri Family Clinic in Tampines St 83.

Welcome New SMa Members!

May 2008

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SMa Mid Year Staff Promotion 2008

(Congratulation to the following staff on your recent promotion:-)

Manager to Director

1. Sylvia Teo (Human Resource/Admin)

Assistant Manager to Manager

1. Karen Yeong (Finance)
2. Koh Kok Yong (IT)

Executive to Senior Executive

1. Andrew Ong (Research & Corporate Communication)
2. Chin May Fang (Membership & Industry Development)
3. Claudia Tey (Finance)
4. Emilyn Soon (Membership & Industry Development)
5. Leong Mun Yin (Centre for Corporate Learning)
6. Nancy Quek (Global Standard 1)

Assistant Executive to Executive

1. Sharon Liang (Centre for Corporate Learning)

Member Spotlight: AMS Biomedical Pte Ltd



By Andrew Ong

With Singapore growing into a medical hub in South East Asia, AMS Biomedical Pte Ltd is a local manufacturer of high-end medical equipment and devices.

Taking advantage of Singapore's location as a "Gateway to Asia", AMS Biomedical is capturing part of the high-end Medical Technology market in the light of growing outsourcing trends in the US and Europe.

AMS Biomedical is part of a parent company- Manufacturing Integration Technology (MIT) Ltd which is listed on the Singapore Exchange and is a proud member of SMa for the past four years.

"Being a member with SMa, we have been able to expand our network of business contacts through the various events and activities organised by SMa," said Mr Cavin Teo, Head of Corporate Group Services of MIT, "our participation has also helped enhanced our presence in the Medical Technology industry." ■

To know more about AMS Biomedical, visit their website- www.ams-biomedical.com

Latest Exclusive Benefits

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- 15% Discount for Aesthetic Services (Male and Female) at Thomson Aesthetics@Thomson Lifestyle Centre *Terms and Conditions apply **NEW**

For more queries on enjoying this benefits, please contact Ms Marilyn Tan, Assistant Manager of Membership & Industry Development at DID: +65 6826 3054 or Email: marilyntan@smafederation.org.sg

SMa has Moved!

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