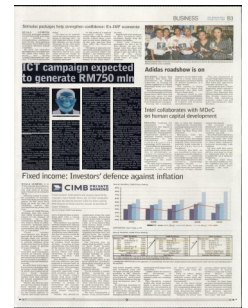


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# ICT campaign expected to generate RM750 mln

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The National ICT Month (NIM) 2009 campaign organised by Pikom, the national information and communications technology association, is projected to generate RM750 million in sales by year-end. Pikom chairman David Wong Nan Fay said the nationwide month-long campaign, themed "ICT — Enabling New Success", reinforced the association's key agenda to push the country's economy up the value chain by leveraging on ICT.

Events in NIM 2009 include a two-day leadership summit, an exhibition, an eWaste recycling campaign and a Buy Online campaign.

"In a month's time after the launch of NIM 2009, we forecast to capture sales of RM260 million," Wong said at a media briefing after the NIM launch at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday.

The event was officiated by Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili.

In conjunction with NIM 2009, Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC) today announced the launch of the MSC Malaysia



Datuk Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili

Great ICT sale, its first-ever ICT solutions sale targeted at local small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Its vice president of industry development division, Saifol Bahri Mohamad Shamlan, said MDeC was targeting RM3 million to RM5 million in total sales from the event.

"The sale will bring together more than 50 vendors to create unique bundles of products and services for SMEs through easy-to-select, value-added solution bundling options," he said.

The ICT sale runs in conjunction with NIM 2009 from July 20 to August 20 in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Johor Baharu.

Wong said NIM 2009 is one of Pikom's key initiatives to

mobilise industry players, researchers, academia, policy makers and consumers to create awareness, generate demand, and address issues and opportunities during the current economic downturn.

"ICT will be a major tool and enabler for new business success and Pikom believes that innovation is the way forward," he said.

However, Wong cautioned that the current state of human capital development in the domestic ICT industry posed a challenge for Malaysia to remain competitive in the global market.

"There is a gap between graduates' skills and industry needs. There is also a low level of English proficiency among graduates," he said.

To boost the growth of the ICT industry, there is a need to increase the penetration rate of personal computers (PCs) for households in Malaysia, according to Wong.

"Household penetration for PCs in Malaysia is still relatively low at 35 per cent currently," he said.

However, the availability of affordable computers could help to boost the penetration rate, Ongkili said.

He said that Mimos Bhd was developing low-cost computers costing below US\$300 and these are expected to be rolled out to the market soon.

"The Malaysian government has always championed the development of the ICT industry," Ongkili said at the media briefing.

"The ICT industry has always been strong and vibrant, continuing to grow positively year-on-year for the past decade with ICT spending totalling US\$9.32 billion in 2006," he said.

Ongkili said ICT spending is projected to continue growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 7.5 per cent until next year.

"In 2010, ICT spending is expected to hit a high of US\$12.31 billion," he said.

Wong also said that Pikom's ICT Strategic Review 2009/10 report found that only 3.4 per cent of the research and development (R&D) work in Malaysia has been commercialised.

"The report also heightens an urgent need for Malaysia to address the inadequacy and incompetence of local ICT graduates in the key areas of creativity and innovation," he said. — Bernama