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Connecting to Digital China Panel Discussion: The Playbook For Business Expansion in Asia



TechNode Global (SG)

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Today, in this rapidly changing technology landscape, internationalisation has become a vital process for businesses to grow and reap higher profits. While internationalisation entails high risk, it is crucial for businesses in Singapore to expand, as the size of the local market pales in comparison to that of other countries. But, how can you successfully expand? At the Alibaba Cloud Summit, Connecting to Digital China breakout track, 7 industry experts gathered for a panel discussion on business expansion in Asia. We've gathered some tips to help you with your internationalisation plan.



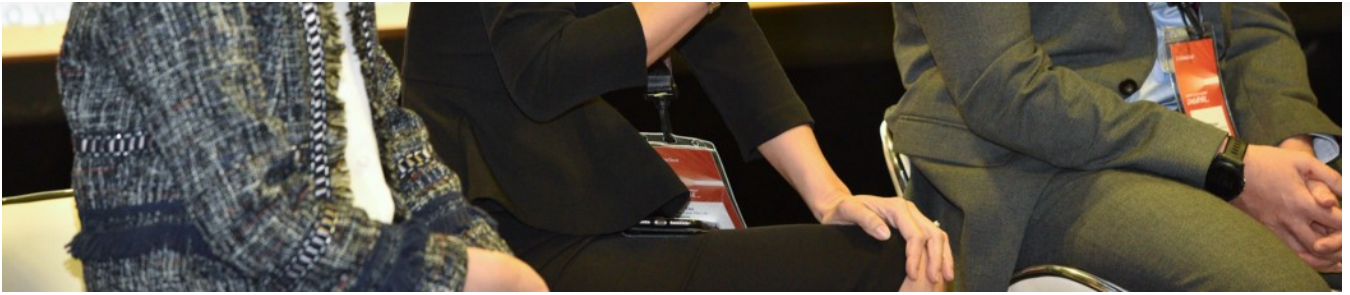


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Ms Shi Hui Tan, Ms Sharon Teo and Mr Francois Mercier (From Left to Right)

Experts' tips to successfully internationalise your business

1) Research, research and more research

Researching on a country prior to entry is a point that all our speakers agree in unison. While it may appear as something that is intuitive, our speakers revealed that many are still doing insufficient research. So, what exactly did our panellist mean by research? Ms Sharon Teo, Chairman of SGTech Enterprise explained that research entails being physically on the ground interacting with the locals and learning their culture. Mr Edmas Neo, Chief Executive Officer of Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE) supported Ms Sharon's point and echoed similar sentiments, highlighting that many Singaporeans often mistake being able to speak Mandarin as understanding the country's culture. He stressed that true understanding of a country's culture will include knowing the consumption habits, the lifestyle and interest of the people in each specific city.

However, as a foreign company entering a new market, obtaining such information can be difficult. Thus, that brings us to the second tip from the experts.





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and difficult without the right partners. Quoting an example, he explained that given China's startup scene, there is a high chance that you will find another startup doing the exact same thing as you but with better technology, more funding and is quicker in going into the market. Ms Gajia Parsons, Head of Partnership and Ecosystem supported his idea and highlighted that having the right partners can help companies survive in a foreign market. She credited partners, such as Alibaba Cloud and key bank partners, to have supported Airwallex's growth and helped to make their expansion expansion to 8 countries in a short span of 3 years much easier. Mr Kenny Tan, General Manager of Alibaba Cloud Malaysia further elaborated that with the right partners, pursuing something like digital transformation can be a breeze for any company. Recognising that digital transformation can be a treacherous process, he highlighted that with Alibaba Cloud's technology infrastructure and consultation services, today, businesses no longer need to fear this precarious process.



Mr Chris Leung, Ms Gajia Parsons and Mr Edmas Neo (From Left to Right)

3) Develop multiple business strategies

So how can companies ensure that they thrive in a foreign region? Ms Gajia hinted that the key to succeeding in multiple countries concurrently would be to empower each international office to develop their own processes where relevant. By recognising that each jurisdiction's differences may not always allow for a uniform set of processes (around people, marketing, sales, compliance etc.), companies will be able to stay nimble and agile, helping them to stay ahead of the ever-changing economy. At the end of the day, Mr Edmas highlighted that companies should always



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Mr Francois Mercier and Mr Chris Leung (From Left to Right)

Moving forward, where should companies go?

Mr Francois Mercier, Head of IBS (Integration Business Solutions) APAC Transformation & Consulting, Henkel suggested that Asia and SEA are areas that we should observe as many interesting technologies are coming out of this region. Mr Chris Leung echoed similar sentiments and highlighted that in view of the recent trade war, SEA would ultimately stand to gain. As investors take a breather from the ongoing trade war between China and the US, Mr Chris Leung observed a diversion of investment from China and Hong Kong, to places like Thailand and Cambodia instead. Moreover, coupled with the Belt and Road initiative, he suggested that this initiative will encourage more from China to put its resources in SEA.

About the Speakers

1) Mr Edmas Neo, Chief Executive Officer, ACE

Edmas Neo is CEO of Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE). He joined ACE in 2017 bringing over 20 years of technology consulting, innovation programme management, entrepreneurship development and business advisory experience to the organisation. As CEO, Edmas leads in strategic execution of ACE's mission in building a vibrant Singapore startup ecosystem. Under his leadership, ACE's has strengthened its support for startups across all stages and has expanded its International Centre into China and Thailand. He has led in the setup of a connected ecosystem comprising over 25,000 startups across 16 cities that supports open innovation and startups growth.

Prior to joining ACE, Edmas, was Regional Director, Partnership and Collaborative Innovation at Singapore Innovate, a Singapore government wholly owned private venture capital firm and deep-tech startup builder. During his term, he initiated the TAGPASS accelerator with a portfolio



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degree in Electrical (& Electronics) Engineering from Nanyang Technological University.

2) Ms Gajia, Head of Partnership & Ecosystem, Airwallex

As Head of Partnerships at Airwallex Gajia Parsons builds pioneering relationships with financial institution partners around the world to expand Airwallex's payment network and product suite beyond FX and payments. Gajia and team also focus on strategic partnerships and integrations with other tech-led platforms for acquisition and data powered opportunities to better serve Airwallex's growing client base. Before joining Airwallex, Gajia was the Director of Strategic Partnerships — Financial Services & Ecosystem for Xero where she led a team responsible for partnerships with major banks and non-bank financial services providers across Asia, as well as growing Xero's ecosystem of API connected applications, creating a platform of integrated solutions for small businesses and their advisors.

Gajia has over a decade of experience from various roles across financial services in London, Melbourne and Singapore and has worked directly with the private wealth, small businesses, institutional and retail sectors.

3) Mr Kenny Tan, General Manager of Alibaba Cloud Malaysia

Kenny Tan is currently General Manager at Alibaba Cloud Malaysia. With over ten years of management experience, he plays a fundamental role in driving digital transformation for key clients in various industry verticals such as aviation, government, enterprise, and the financial sector.

4) Mr Chris Leung, Executive Director and Chief China Economist, DBS Bank

Mr Chris Leung is DBS Bank's Executive Director and Chief China Economist, who joined in January 2002. Mr Leung is responsible for monitoring the macroeconomic conditions of the Greater China region. He frequently conducts economic/investment seminars across Asia. Prior to joining DBS Bank, Mr Leung was an economist at Citibank and Chase Bank. As an expert on the Chinese economy, he appears regularly on Bloomberg, Cable TV, ATV, TVB, CNBC, CNN and various print media, providing his professional views on financial and economic issues. His insights have been published in the Financial Times (Chinese version) and a book published by China Economic Publishing House. Mr Leung is frequently invited to attend various economic meetings convened by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Mr Leung graduated from the University of Washington with a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration. He also holds a Master's Degree in Statistics from Columbia University, a Master's Degree in Economics from New York University, and an Advanced Diploma in Managing Economic Crisis and Reform from the Harvard Institute for International Development, Programme Involved: China — BRI, Automation and the Evolving Supply Chain

5) Francois Mercier, Head of IBS (Integration Business Solutions) APAC Transformation & Consulting, Henkel

Francois Mercier. French. Henkel, Head IBS APAC of transformation and consulting team. In charge of rolling out major IT program and drive digitalization in APAC for Henkel. He worked in various countries in Europe and APAC managing team across the world to deliver major IT



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ecosystems for regional and global Henkel needs.

Main area of interests: Digital transformation, Innovation (process and new technologies) and delivery (Customer satisfaction and methodology).

6) Sharon Teo, Chairman of SGTech SEC + CEO at InspireTech

Sharon Teo co-founded InspireTech in 2000 after starting out from the financial industry.

Venturing into the IT industry, she led InspireTech from a humble start-up to an international organisation with multi-faceted services. Sharon is responsible for making major corporate decisions, overseeing overall sales and marketing activities, as well as technical development operations. Driven to disrupt status quos and challenge tradition, Sharon goes from strength to strength to build future-proof products, cultivate a dynamic culture and develop sustainable relationships with partners and customers. She is currently the Chairman of the Singapore Enterprise Chapter of SGTech. She is passionate about helping Singapore tech companies to strengthen, collaborate and go international.

7) Tan Shi Hui, Country Manager, TechNode Singapore

Shi Hui is responsible for TechNode Global's growth in Southeast Asia, implementing the company's strategic direction and bridging China with the rest of the world. Prior to joining TechNode, Shi Hui had spent 3 years building Singapore's tech community and running government-backed startup incubation program. As the Southeast Asia and China tech community start to grow exponentially and vibrantly, she stays connected with the industry players and actively seek for collaboration opportunities.



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TechNode Partners Alibaba Cloud To Empower Businesses In Singapore With Digital Capabilities And Expertise To Expand In Asia and China



TechNode Global (SG)

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May 30 · 2 min read

Alibaba Cloud and Eight Local Partners Launch China Gateway initiative



Singapore, May 30, 2019—Alibaba Cloud, the data intelligence backbone of Alibaba Group, launched a landmark China Gateway Program today at the Alibaba Cloud APAC Summit with eight local partners at a signing ceremony witnessed by Guest of Honor Mr. Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Trade and Industry & Ministry of Education.

“As the largest public cloud provider in Asia Pacific and our role as the data intelligence backbone of all business units in the Alibaba ecosystem from e-commerce to payments, logistics and supply chain management means we have the proven expertise and experience to help businesses grow. With the support of our partners here, we are confident of supporting local businesses of all sizes and from all backgrounds to grow beyond Singapore, especially into China’s

market.” said Selina Yuan, President of Alibaba Cloud Intelligence International.

Partners that are supporting the initiative include the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA), Enterprise Singapore, DBS SME Banking, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), SMU Academy, SGTech, Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE) and **TechNode**.

The program leverages the accumulated technological knowledge and experience of Alibaba Cloud, which has powered Alibaba Group’s growth into a world-leading company, to help local businesses capture and capitalize on growth opportunities in Asia and China. Through the local partners in Singapore and around the region, Alibaba Cloud will provide firms of all sizes with an in-depth immersion program on doing business in China, connecting them to Chinese companies and consumers via the Alibaba ecosystem.

Contact TechNode (bd@technode.com) to learn more about expanding your business into China.

Asia Digest: Alibaba Cloud launches China gateway; Austrade-SG Landing Pad cohort



Photographer: Gilles Sabrie/Bloomberg

By [Quynh Nguyen](#)

May 30, 2019

Alibaba Cloud has launched China Gateway Program while Austrade's Singapore Landing Pad Program unveils largest cohort of Australia's best startups to deepen SEA-Australia startup collaboration.

Alibaba Cloud launches China Gateway Program

Alibaba Cloud, the data intelligence backbone of [Alibaba Group](#), on Thursday launched China Gateway Program at the Alibaba Cloud APAC Summit with eight local partners, according to an announcement.

Partners that are supporting the initiative include the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA), Enterprise Singapore, DBS SME Banking, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), SMU Academy, SGTech, Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE) and TechNode.

Through the local partners in Singapore and around the region, Alibaba Cloud will provide firms an in-depth immersion program on doing business in China, connecting them to Chinese companies and consumers via the Alibaba ecosystem.

Austrade's Singapore Landing Pad Program unveils largest cohort

The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) Landing Pad in Singapore has officially unveiled its latest cohort of promising startups in the country, according to an announcement.

Eight startups across the fields of cybersecurity, fintech and HR-tech were unveiled in Singapore, where they will be undergoing a 90-day tailor-made residency program.

For this cohort, Austrade has also partnered with the Australian Cyber Security Growth Network (AustCyber), supported by the Australian government. Together both bodies look to mitigate and eliminate cyber-crime across the Asia-Pacific region.

“By connecting these startups with investors, enterprises and government agencies, we are helping them accelerate their growth internationally,” said Taliessin Reaburn, Trade Commissioner, Austrade Singapore.

Through the efforts of the Landing Pad and Austrade, recent graduates have expanded to markets such as India, Indonesia, Nepal, The Philippines and Vietnam.

The Landing Pad has helped raise around \$15.8 million. Over 50 collaborative agreements have formed, including one with a Singapore government agency.

[Alibaba Cloud](#)
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Alibaba Cloud launches China Gateway program in Singapore

Xinhua | Updated: 2019-05-30 14:56



The logo of Alibaba Group is seen at the company's headquarters in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, July 20, 2018. [Photo/Agencies]

SINGAPORE - Alibaba Cloud, the data intelligence backbone of Alibaba Group, launched the China Gateway program on Thursday at the Alibaba Cloud APAC Summit with eight local partners.

"The program leverages the accumulated technological knowledge and experience of Alibaba Cloud to help local businesses capture and capitalize on growth opportunities in Asia and China," said a press release from Alibaba Cloud.

It added that through the local partners in Singapore, including the Info-communications Media Development Authority, Enterprise Singapore, DBS SME Banking and Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and around the Asia-Pacific region, Alibaba Cloud will provide firms of all sizes with an in-depth immersion program on doing business in China, connecting them to Chinese companies and consumers via the Alibaba ecosystem.

Chee Hong Tat, Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry, said at the summit in his speech that Alibaba Group had been a strong partner in Singapore's digital transformation journey, and beyond digital transformation, Alibaba Cloud's China Gateway program could also be a valuable channel for Singaporean small- and medium-sized enterprises to access China as they think about internationalization.

"With the support of our partners here, we are confident of supporting local businesses of all sizes and from all backgrounds to grow beyond Singapore, especially into China's market." said Yuan Qian, President of Alibaba Cloud Intelligence International, delivering a speech at the summit.

She told Xinhua that the China Gateway program is a global program launched in Singapore, and Alibaba's partners in China will also join in the program and help overseas enterprises enter the Chinese market.

She said Alibaba Cloud would like to share its cloud-related technologies and business practice experiences with the partners, and contribute more to the digital transformation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Also at the summit, Alibaba Cloud unveiled more than 10 new products and features that are available for the first time outside of China and can now be accessed by customers worldwide, including the PolarDB relational database, the Alibaba Log Service and the SaaS Accelerator.

Meanwhile, it launched an upgraded service support campaign designed for SMEs that enables SME customers to benefit from greater access to resources and support from Alibaba Cloud.



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