

Improving service delivery via online tools

By [Abdul Rahman Mamat](#)

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By Abdul Rahman Mamat
rahman@miti.gov.my



IN THE early days, people walked from point A to point B. Thanks to the accompaniment of animals that made their journey faster and easier. Then came the wheels and engines, and now people can even travel to outer space in a short period of time. Technology and innovation continue to make peoples' lives easier.

The same applies in the public service where technology and innovation has helped improve the delivery system of the government to the public. At Miti, efforts are undertaken to migrate many of its services supporting the business community to a new Internet portal, enabling business owners to conduct many government-related activities online instead of at point-of-service locations thus reducing time and cost of doing business.

This undertaking follows an assessment of global e-services best practices between government and business communities. Private sector productivity plays a vital role in the country's overall economic strength and the government hopes to significantly boost the efficiency and effectiveness of Malaysia's private sector by making it easier to access and employ important government services.

Many of the services that have been migrated to the new portal include those designed to streamline the way small- and medium-size business owners certify, register, import and export their products.

Several existing and new services are now available through Miti's e-services initiatives, specifically Electronic Preferential Certificate of Origin (e-PCO), MyExport service, E-Connect, E-Newsletter, E-Publication and SME Online Registration.

Over the past decade, Malaysia has completed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with several countries and is a key player in Asean Free Trade Agreement (Afta). The government encourages Malaysian exporters to efficiently take advantage of the benefits offered through various FTAs and Preferential Schemes by using the e-PCO tool found on the new portal. e-PCOs are issued exclusively by Miti and enable a selection of products to receive preferential status when exported to countries participating in an FTA with Malaysia.

The e-PCO system also has the capability to auto-calculate the origin criteria percentage, based on the raw material details declared by exporter. e-PCO is able to define the origin criteria for the finished product based on the specific rules of origin stipulated in different FTAs or Preferential Schemes.

Issuance of Approved Permits (APs) was done manually and many companies were not able to efficiently complete the application process for the permits. With e-services, the process of applying for an AP is clear. The Trade Facilitation Information System (TFIS) ensures that the APs are issued and enables users to receive real-time updates on their AP applications.

Online services are also extended to subscription of shares allocated by Miti. Forms are made available online for companies or individuals to subscribe for Bumiputera or 100 per cent Bumiputera shares for initial public offerings (IPOs).

Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) promotes exports through e-services and provides access to events such as international trade fairs, trade and investment promotion missions and general marketing missions through online. Information on upcoming events and applications to participate in various exporter development programmes, seminars and workshops organised by Matrade are available on the portal. It is a one-stop shop for businesses wanting to expand or conduct trade with other countries.

More than 1,200 Malaysian exporters have benefited to date from trade leads and international tender notices published online by Matrade through MyExport. The service is free to registered Malaysian exporters and provides real-time updates on trade-related information such as trade enquiries for Malaysian products and services, international tender notices, product/market study reports and facilities for members to check on the status of applications, update company profiles and publish product images.

The Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (Mida), is another agency under Miti that provides eServices through Enterprise Connect (E-Connect), E-Newsletter and E-Publication. These services are targeted at local and foreign investors who need information related to conducting business in Malaysia.

E-Connect is a web-based tool that assists investors with identifying suitable joint-venture partners such as contract manufacturing and technical collaborations in Malaysia and overseas.

E-Newsletter and E-Publication provide free updates to registered members on government policies, events and initiatives. More than 11,000 members from over 7,000 companies currently are enrolled in E-Newsletter and E-Publication.

Small and Medium Enterprise Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp) provides valuable market development guidance to Malaysian companies by offering a variety of online services, including the Grant Status Application module and the SME Registration module.

The Grant Status Application module enables SMEs to check the status of their grant application online or via SMS by logging on to its portal.

The SME Registration module allows Malaysia's small- and medium-sized companies to stay updated with the latest news events, policies and programmes specifically involving the SME community. Once they are registered, their profiles are published at SME Corp's website.

Miti and its agencies are dedicated to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Malaysia's businesses through the use of innovative online tools. The ultimate goal for implementing eServices is to promote the overall competitiveness of the Malaysian business community. The government encourages SMES, in particular, to explore ways of streamlining their business operations through the use of Miti's new e-Services tools.

Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Mamat is the secretary general of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry