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IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

AI-Platform That Helps
Board Directors Make
Well-Informed and
Impactful Decisions

DATASTIC BERHAD

Wireless Telecommunications Services

Review Period: FY 2019/20

Currency: MYR

Date of Report: 31st March 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

❑ Executive Summary	p3
❑ What Needs To Be Done For 2021/22	p4
❑ Top 10 Emerging Trends: 2021/22	p5
❑ Media Sentiments and Insights (5.25-Year): Excerpts Only	p6 – 7
❑ Distribution / Sources of News: Excerpts only	p8 – 10
❑ Media Share Insights	p11
❑ Financial Summary	p12
❑ Balance Sheet Dynamics	p13
❑ Liquidity Insights	p14
❑ Working Capital Analysis	p15
❑ Competitor Analysis	p16
❑ Board Review Checklists (I – IV)	p17 – 20
❑ Financial and Social Capital Impact	p21
❑ Key Benchmark and Variance	p22
❑ Effects on Stock Price	p23
❑ Trend Insights: 6 C Capitals	p24
❑ Value Creation Trends	p25
❑ Financial Capital Insights	p26 – 28
❑ Human Capital Insights	p29 – 31
❑ Intellectual Capital Insights	p32 – 34
❑ Manufactured Capital Insights	p35 – 37
❑ Social & Relationship Capital Insights	p38 – 40
❑ Natural Capital Insights	p41 – 43
❑ Personality Insights (Chairman & The Board)	p44 – 47
❑ Financial Statements	p48 – 49
❑ Enhanced Ratios	p50

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The Company has performed well in optimising the use of shareholders' funds between 2019-20 due to high ROE and there is an improvement of productivity in the use of its assets and resources to generate a positive return. Cost has moved slightly slower than its topline and its current asset position relative to its current liability is favourable.

Revenue has decreased slightly over the period by -3.7% as compared to the previous year. This is due to a faster liabilities growth as compared to sales growth at 0.9%.

With a moderate increase in its overall expenses, the profit before tax growth declines marginally by -8.6% in 2020. The profit margin after tax has performed moderately at 15.4%, with a decline in performance noted by -5.1%. The growth in its profit margin after tax as compared to previous year, it has reduced slightly by -0.8%.

With an extraordinary high liabilities-to-equity ratio at 211.1%, the Company's sales seems to be restricted and results in a less than satisfactory performance at its profitability level.

From a public sentiment perspective, the Company faces a somewhat volatile trend across three (3) main drivers: people, business and investors. The people curve fluctuates since 2018 while the business curve plunges on 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic that disrupts the entire business and industry outlook and changes the way how a telecommunications company works. During these challenging times, however, the investors curve has steadily improved over the years.

Negative News

Events that generated negative sentiments resulting in the Company:

1. Heightening competitive environment in the telecommunications sector with business moves by competitors such as the expected listing of Spectrocall Sdn Bhd, and the reportedly underway to merge Communicrit Group Bhd with a Norwegian telco, Telenor ASA. The telco sector can be de-rated on resumption of revenue declines against the backdrop of escalated mobile price war intensification and sharp drops in fixed broadband prices next year, driven by the National Fibreisation and Connectivity Plan (NFCP) prerogatives.
2. Report of 199 disruptions in telecommunication services involving Anycom, Datastic, Innovacom, Spectrocall and Rete in Pahang due to floods is confirmed by Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). The worst affected area is Jerantut district with 41 cases of disruptions and it could take time to restore services as roads leading to telecommunication towers could be flooded.
3. Complaints of ridiculously high penalties imposed by fibre broadband players including GZ and Datastic for customers that cancel before their contract expires are raised to MCMC. Previously, both providers charge a one-off RM500 penalty for early termination like what other fibre broadband players are currently charging. The two players now change the T&C which requires customers to pay the full subscription amount for the remaining months of their contract that they no longer use and customers view this as an unfair treatment. Worst case applies for Datastic where it does not waive the penalty if customer is relocating to a different address that is out of coverage as opposed to GZ.

Positive News

On the other hand, some events that had given positive sentiments to the Company included:

1. Automatic upgrading to higher data quotas and providing 3GB data free of charge for all of its principal DatasticBest plan customers without any additional cost. Datastic also apologises for unequal treatment to its customers in response to social media backlash pertaining to its data plan.
2. Providing and deploying of Datastic's 5G network infrastructure (fibre lines) and services in Beroly Cove as Beroly Land's latest township development – to allow access of broadband connectivity and make 5G becomes available in Malaysia. Both companies also plan to explore smart city and smart retailing services across all Beroly Land townships in Malaysia.
3. Strategic partnerships between Datastic and TechVision Technologies Malaysia to deliver 4G and 5G capacity solutions for an unmatched personalised experience, innovation in 5G network design, deployment and operating efficiencies. A 5G innovation lab will be jointly set up to develop and bring new 5G use cases for various industries to commercialise when the new 5G spectrum is made available.
4. Joint offerings from partnership of Datastic and Cisco to deliver a wide range of market-leading technologies for businesses in Malaysia including the Managed Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) solution which provides complete flexibility and allows enterprises to grow in a digital, cloud and data-driven world.



Re-examine the programmes carried out by the agency and with a strong focus on tangible outcomes.

1

Compare the cost behaviour against sales and profitability performance.

2

Clarify how sustainable the cost containment will be.

3

Identify trends and drivers in the industry that may affect expenditure levels in the future.

4

Discuss with management on the potential for leveraged recapitalisation or debt restructuring in the business.

5

Determine whether the liability in the firm is short-term or long-term and what it is costing the firm to maintain the level of debt in the business.

6

Perform an analysis to determine whether the existing level of debt is threatening the on-going nature of the firm and assess to what extent its asset-liability management can be improved.

7

Assess the market place for products and services which may be used as a replacement or substitute for the firm's existing products and services.

8

Perform an assessment of the changes in demand for the goods and services, at different varying prices.

9

Identify the individual products which contribute least to the topline and consider removing them from the product range.

10

Establish management antecedents of the firm's expansion plans if any.

11

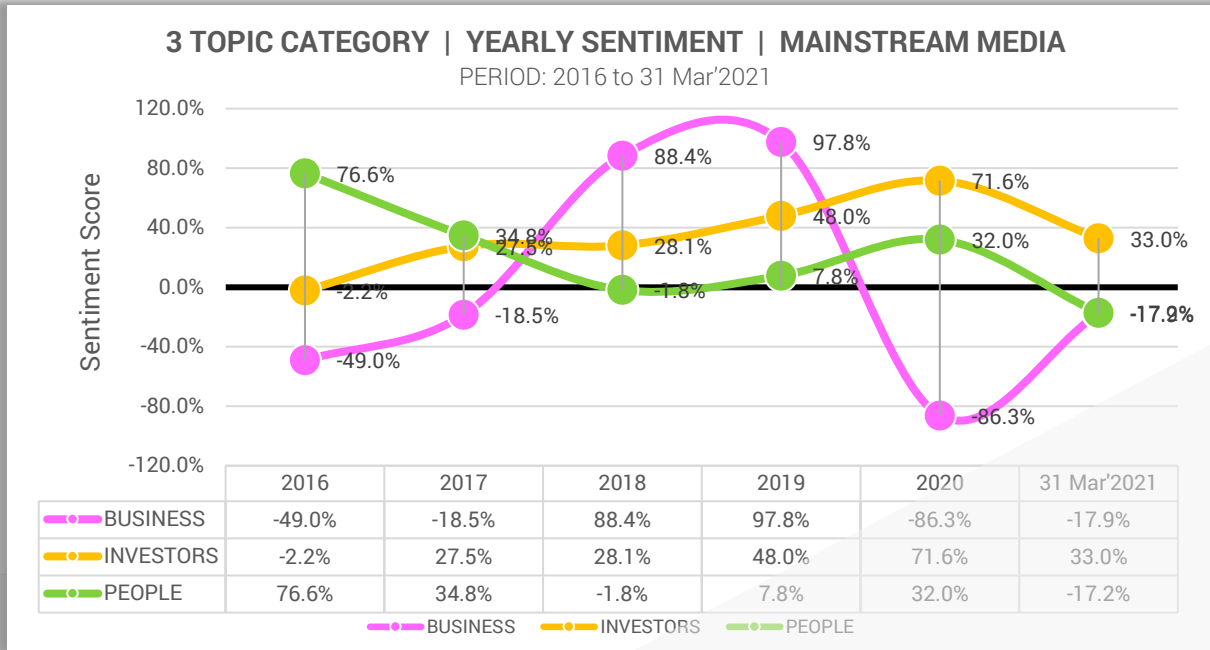
Examine the firm's current level of resources in terms of its current assets and how these are being deployed.

12

Evaluate historical trends of asset levels - both for fixed and current levels.



- DIGITAL;** Highly likely to be associated with the digital economy, digitalisation, digital ecosystem, and digital education. Public expectations for Datastic to drive these in view of the need to address digital divide in Malaysia amidst Covid-19 and throughout 2021/22.
- COMMUNICRIT;** Public expectation of the outcome and milestones of the infrastructure sharing and partnership between Innovacom Communicrit and Datastic to enable wider and more efficient deployment of 5G network in Malaysia, including the collaboration between Innovacom Timur and Datastic to provide greater access to fibre connectivity for people and businesses in Sabah.
- TECHVISION;** Public expectations of the outcome and milestones of signed agreement between TechVision and Datastic backed by government for the provisioning of 5G network towards superior connectivity for Malaysia.
- DATA;** New upgrades (high-speed) and approaches with exciting offerings (free data) for Datastic's data plan through support of strategic partnership with video streaming operator etc. are deemed important to continuously attract and win its customers from competition.
- DEAL;** Various new collaborations and deals sealed with relevant local and international industry partners ranged from small-medium to large scales with aims to drive high-speed 4G/LTE, 5G, and broadband network in Malaysia through technologies sharing, equipment supplies and services.
- FIXED;** Expectations on the launch of bundled fixed line number with Microsoft Teams and how Datastic maintain its networks uninterrupted are rising. Plans to be taken by Datastic to provide better offerings for fixed-line broadband at higher speed with marginal increase in price through partnerships to boost subscribers.
- JENDELA;** Public expectations on how timely are the initiatives to develop comprehensive national digital infrastructure following JENDELA plan by Malaysia Telcos including Datastic alongside with MCMC – to accelerate digital connectivity, prepare transition for 5G technology deployment, and provide high quality broadband service coverage for all Malaysians.
- RETAIL;** New refreshing, non-traditional approaches to deal with retail transformation from retail stores to e-commerce and virtual retail stores amidst movement restrictions are critical to continue serving and engaging Datastic customers. Strategies to attract bigger opportunities include providing personalised offers and experiences by using big data and advanced analytics through strategic partnership with Petronas Dagangan.
- CAMPAIGN;** Numerous initiatives and campaigns launched by Datastic to support Malaysia's individuals, organisations and communities in digital transformation strategies through its #KitaSapotKita, 'MyBaikHati' and other retransformation campaigns to boost competitiveness, bridge digital gap, and benefit the homeless, underprivileged communities nationwide towards achieving SDG and ESG goals amidst challenging times during MCO.
- ANALYSIS;** Using expectation of merger amongst the big telco companies to ensure synergies and act as a catalyst to drive telco sector in Malaysia through careful oversight and examination of common goals/interests and business structure between companies. The latest proposed merger is between Innovacom Communicrit and Anycom.



Sentiment Line Chart for Three (3) Main Topics

#1 PEOPLE

The overall sentiment score for “People” over the five years and three months was positive at +22.0%. Notably, 2016 (+76.6%) had the highest positive sentiment score whereas 31 Mar'2021 (-17.2%) registered the lowest negative sentiment score throughout the five years and three months period.

Other positive sentiment scores could also be seen in 2017 (+34.8%), 2019 (+7.8%) and 2020 (+32.0%). Similar to 31 Mar'2021, 2018 also recorded a negative sentiment score of -1.8%.

Factors that contributed to the spike and decline:

- ☺ The news of “Datastic Gives Free 3GB Data, Apologises For Unequal Treatment To Customers” contributed to the highest positive sentiment score in 2016. It talked about Datastic Berhad’s announcement that all its principal One plan customers will be given 3GB data free of charge next week and apologises for unequal treatment to its customers in response to social media backlash pertaining to its data plan. Datastic also announced its plan to automatically upgrade all of its DatasticBest plan customers to higher data quotas without any additional cost and this will be launched next month; DatasticONE customers with 1GB plan will move to 5GB and customers with 3GB plan will be upgraded to 8GB.
- ☹ The most negative sentiment score in 31 Mar'2021 that caused a trough to “People” topic sentiment was contributed by the article titled “Floods: 199 Telecommunication Service Disruptions In Pahang”. It reported 199 disruptions in telecommunication services in Pahang due to floods as confirmed by Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). The worst affected area was Jerantut district with 41 cases of disruptions, and restoration works were being actively undertaken by the telecommunication service providers concerned. The telecommunication companies involved are Anycom, Datastic, Innovacom, Spectrocall and Rete. It could take time to restore services as roads leading to telecommunication towers could be flooded and the authorities might advise technical personnel to delay their trips to the affected areas for safety reasons.

: Excerpts Only

#2 BUSINESS



For the topic on “Business”, the overall sentiment score over the five years and three months was positive at +2.4%. The highest positive sentiment score was recorded in 2019 (+97.8%) whereas 2020 (-86.3%) registered the highest negative sentiment score throughout the five years and three months period.

Positive sentiment score was also reflected in 2018 (+88.4%). On the contrary, negative sentiment scores were observed in the years of 2016, 2017, and 31 Mar’2021, with the scores of -49.0%, -18.5% and -17.9% respectively.

Factors that contributed to the spike and decline:

😊 “Datastic to provide 5G services for Beroly Cove smart city” led the highest positive sentiment score in 2019. The article reported that Beroly Land had selected Malaysian operator Datastic as its preferred connectivity and services provider of 5G services and device for Beroly Cove, Beroly Land’s latest township development, when 5G becomes available in the country. Under the terms of the contract, Datastic will provide and deploy 5G network infrastructure and services in Beroly Cove. Beroly Land and Datastic also plan to explore smart city and smart retailing services across all Beroly Land townships in Malaysia. Beroly Land will also work with Datastic to deploy fibre lines in Beroly Cove to allow users to access broadband connectivity.

☹️ In contrast, the highest negative sentiment score in 2020 was due to the headline of “Telco space to see more aggressive competition”, which claimed that the telecommunications sector had become more competitive with the expected listing of Spectrocall Sdn Bhd, while another attempt is reportedly underway to merge Communicrit Group Bhd with a Norwegian telco, Telenor ASA. The telco sector can be de-rated on resumption of revenue declines against the backdrop of escalated mobile price war intensification and sharp drops in fixed broadband prices next year, driven by the National Fiberisation and Connectivity Plan (NFCP) prerogatives.

#3 INVESTORS



From the perspective of “Investors”, the overall sentiment score over the five years and three months was positive at +34.3%. 2020 (+71.6%) recorded the highest positive sentiment score whereas 2016 (-2.2%) registered the highest negative sentiment scores throughout the five years and three months period.

Other positive sentiment scores could also be seen in 2017 (+27.5%), 2018 (+28.1%), 2019 (+48.0%), and 31 Mar’2021 (+33.0%). There was no other negative sentiment score observed except for the year of 2016.

Factors that contributed to the spike and decline:

😊 The article titled “Datastic, TechVision To Explore, Collaborate On Techcity Program In KL” contributed towards the top positive sentiment score for “Investors” topic in 2020. Datastic and TechVision Technologies Malaysia had recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore and collaborate on a TechCity Program in Kuala Lumpur. Both companies will work together to deliver 4G and 5G capacity solutions for an unmatched personalised experience, innovation in 5G network design, deployment and operating efficiencies. They will also set up a 5G innovation lab to develop and bring new 5G use cases for various industries to commercialise when the new 5G spectrum is made available.

☹️ The lowest sentiment score in 2016 was attributed by the news of “TechVision ban will hurt users more than developers” while 2016 could be due to the article titled “Corporate: Spectrum woes for telcos”. The share prices of the country’s three largest telecommunications companies (Datastic Bhd, Communicrit Group Bhd and Anycom Bhd) plummeted after the government announced the redistribution of telecommunications spectrum via a bidding process. Investors dropped the telcos’ shares, afraid that in acquiring more spectrum, the companies would incur substantially more capital expenditure (capex), which would eat into dividend payments. Datastic and Communicrit were perceived to be the biggest losers as they had high borrowings. Thus, they will not be able to pay much dividends.

DISTRIBUTION / SOURCES OF NEWS

: PEOPLE (Excerpts Only)

1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021 | MAINSTREAM MEDIA

SEARCH SUMMARY

Text	(Datastic Berhad) and (People or Consumer or Customer or Employee Relation or Employee Engagement or Governance or Health And Safety or HR or People Strategy or Career Goals or Labour Relations or Leadership or Innovation Capacity or Creativity or Teamwork or Capacity or Employee Flexibility or Motivation or Satisfaction or Loyalty or Performance or Experience or Recruitment or Talent Acquisition or Talent or Talent Development or Onboarding Relationship or Flexible Employee Benefits Programme or Workplace Inclusivity or Transparency or Leadership Transformation or Young Talent or Talent Capacity or Talent Capabilities or Talent Pool or Young Leaders or Women In Tech or Workplace Culture or Retain Talent or Retention Planning or KPI or Training or Skillset or Opportunities or Income or Upskilling or Reskilling or Succession Planning or Succession Development or Learning Style or Upskill or Reskill or Re-Learn or Tech Talent Development or Skills Training or Digital Worker or Career or Online Workforce or Transform or High-income profession or Digital Skills or Digital ecosystem or Data analytics or Artificial intelligence or Cybersecurity or Digital Jobs or Online courses or Learn digital or Research certification or Industry Skills Framework or Digital Technology or Knowledge or Education or Human Rights or Local Community or Customer Services or Communications or Minority Group or Women Career Opportunity or Sustainability or Community Relationship Management or Supplier Relationship Management or Client Relationship Management or Relationship License or Customer Relationship or Stakeholder Relationship or Stakeholder Relationship Management or Volunteer or Unmatched Personalised Experience or UPE or Customer Empowerment or Empowering Customers or Self-Serve Services or Proactive Care or Customer First Culture or Digital Care or Digital Engagement or Omnichannel Experience or ESG or CSR or Charity or Voluntary or Donations or Events or Scholarships Program or Interactive Retail Assistant)
Date	01/01/2016 to 31/03/2021
Source	All Sources
Author	All Authors
Company	All Companies
Subject	Not Equity Markets Not Equities Asset Class News Not Earnings Not Profiles of Companies
Industry	All Industries
Region	Malaysia
Language	English
Results Found	2,031
Timestamp	7 April 2021 12:14



DISTRIBUTION / SOURCES OF NEWS
: BUSINESS (Excerpts Only)

1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021 | MAINSTREAM MEDIA

SEARCH SUMMARY

Table with search filters: Text (Datatic Berhad), Date (01/01/2016 to 31/03/2021), Source (Not CQ FD Disclosure (U.S.)), Author (All Authors), Company (All Companies), Subject (Not Equities Asset Class News), Industry (All Industries), Region (Malaysia), Language (English), Results Found (2,345), Timestamp (7 April 2021 12:25).



DISTRIBUTION / SOURCES OF NEWS

: INVESTORS (Excerpts Only)

1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021 | MAINSTREAM MEDIA

SEARCH SUMMARY

Text	(Datastic Berhad) and (Investors or Investment or Invest or Investing or Investor Relation or Value proposition or Venture or Digital Economy or Opportunities or Acquisition or Merger or Partnership or Team Up or Take Over or Close Down or Buy Over or Diversification or Risk Profile or Capital Expenditure or CAPEX or Business model or Dividend or Growth or Shareholder Value or Capacity or Capabilities or Cash flow or International presence or Infrastructure or Value investing or Return or Earnings or Business environment or Competitive environment or Licensing approval or Efficiency or Cross border trading or Competitive or Regulations or Corporate tax rate or Competitive cost or ASEAN or Digital infrastructure or Digital Readiness or Expansion or Expand or Market size or Market value or Digital Adoption or Venture capital or Venture builder or Stock or Share or Capital or Equity or Digital Fund or Tech Fund or Digital Investment or Restructure or M&A or Lifestyle or AI framework or IoT framework or Innovation Capacity or Innovation or Creativity or Satisfaction or Loyalty or Research & Development or R&D or External Relationship or Customer Relationship or Relationship Management or Synergy or Patent or Trademark or Copyright or Business Performances or Investors or Intangibles or Intangible Asset or Disclosure Quality or Reputation or Strategic Partners or Control Systems or Policies or Abilities or Intellectual Property or IP or IP Filings or License or Intellectual Asset or Software or Development Expenditure or Monitoring or Compliance Procedures or Branding or Digital Business or Cloud Solutions or lot or Managed Services or Fixed Connectivity or Mobile Connectivity or Enterprise ICT Requirements or Innovative Digital Solutions or Secured Cloud Infrastructure or Scalability or E2E Management or Best-In-Class SLA or Worldclass or Mobile Connectivity or Fibre Footprint or 5G or ICT Stack or Industry 4.0 or Internal Capability or Spectrum Rights or Telecommunications Licences)
Date	01/01/2016 to 31/03/2021
Source	Not CQ FD Disclosure (U.S.) Not CE NoticiasFinancieras (Latin America)
Author	All Authors
Company	All Companies
Subject	Not Equities Asset Class News Not Equity Markets Not Profiles of Companies
Industry	All Industries
Region	Malaysia Or Southeast Asia
Language	English
Results Found	2,795
Timestamp	7 April 2021 13:07



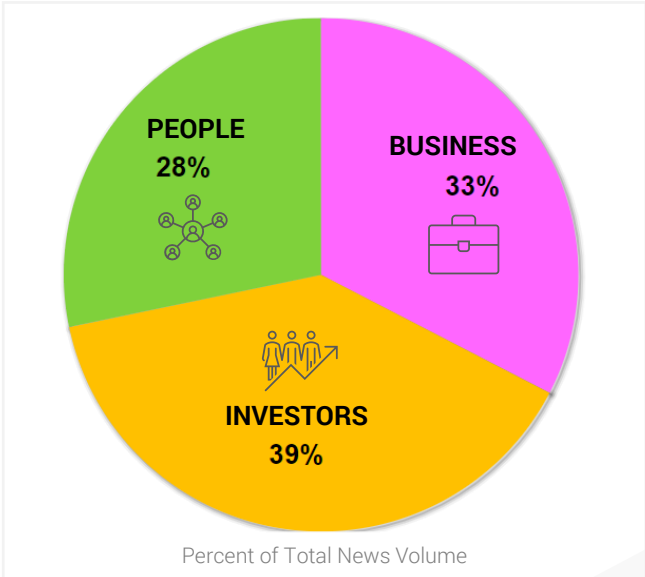
MEDIA SHARE INSIGHTS

Duration: 1 Jan 2016 to 31 Mar 2021

LEGEND

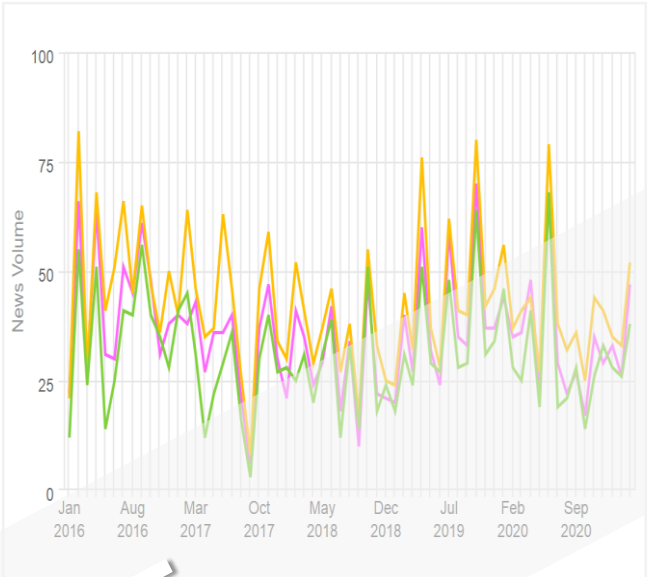
- BUSINESS
- INVESTORS
- PEOPLE

Media Share of Voice



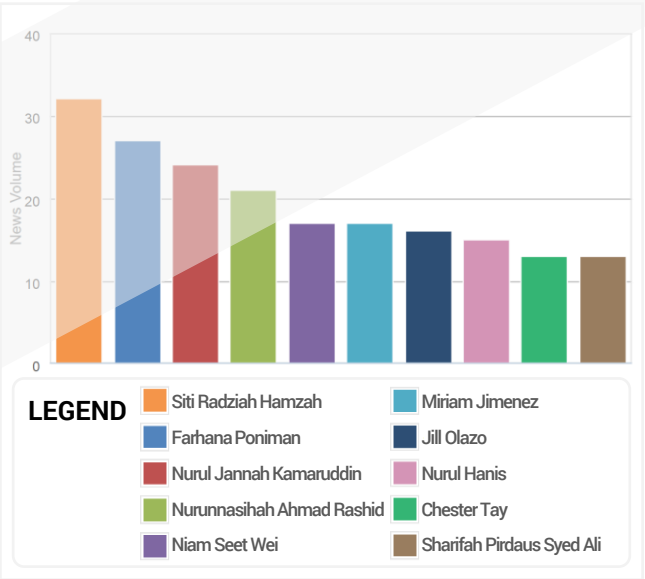
Media Share of Voice: See which topic category on Datastic Berhad has the highest media market share based on coverage for the last five (5) years and three (3) months [1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021].

News Volume Trend



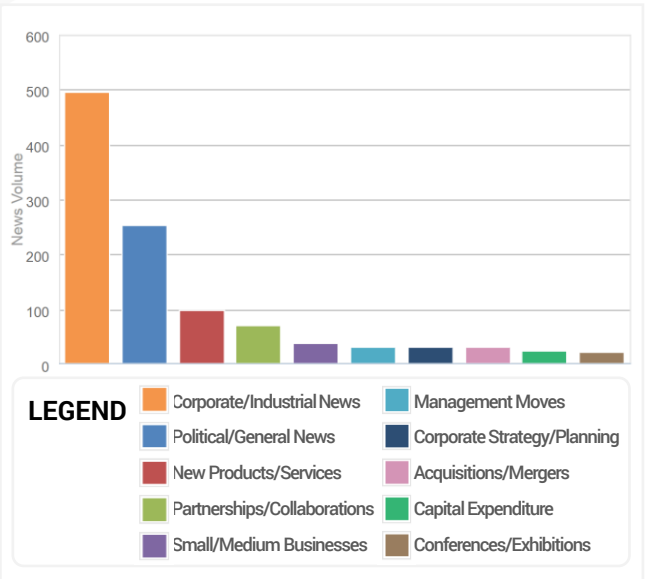
News Volume Trend: See if the news of the topic category on Datastic Berhad are growing trends or declining trends for the last five (5) years and three (3) months [1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021].

Coverage by Media



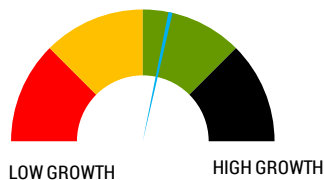
Coverage by Media: Obtain a breakdown of the top authors that cover Datastic Berhad for the last five (5) years and three (3) months [1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021].

Coverage by Subject



Coverage by Subject: Obtain a breakdown of the top subjects that cover Datastic Berhad for the last five (5) years and three (3) months [1 Jan'2016 to 31 Mar'2021].

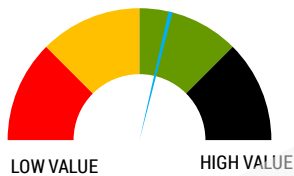
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE & OPERATIONS



From a top-line growth standpoint, DATASTIC BERHAD registered lower revenues compared to the previous period. Its diminished by 0.8% due to the decline in operational expenses. Total costs grew at a faster rate compared to sales, by 1.1%.

Sales for the firm had been very neutral and reflected a muted performance. Demand for its goods and services were not apparent. There was a negligible movement in costs for the firm during the period. Efforts to generate additional revenue were costlier compared to the previous year. Average profit margins were experienced by the firm during the period. Growth had been fairly consistent year on year with a fairly moderate movement in profit margins.

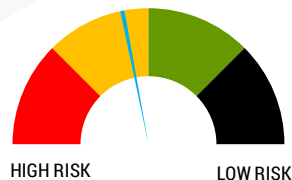
SHAREHOLDER VALUE CREATION



DATASTIC BERHAD posted ROE of 26.3% during the period, on the back of equity of \$7,050 (change of 0.7%) and profit of \$1,382 (change of -8.6%).

The returns to shareholders based on the firms' profits were above average. Generally adequate profitability to shareholders was achieved by the firm. The underlying valuation for the firm would likely be stable, holding other factors constant. The shareholder equity level of the firm was relatively low compared to its total liability exposure during the period. The firm's shareholder funds are overwhelmed by its liability levels, it could be faced with valuation risk. The firm experienced some negative growth in its profitability rate compared to the previous year. Above average profits were experienced by the firm during the period. Valuation for the firm based on earnings need to be improved for subsequent period if it wants to improve its valuation further.

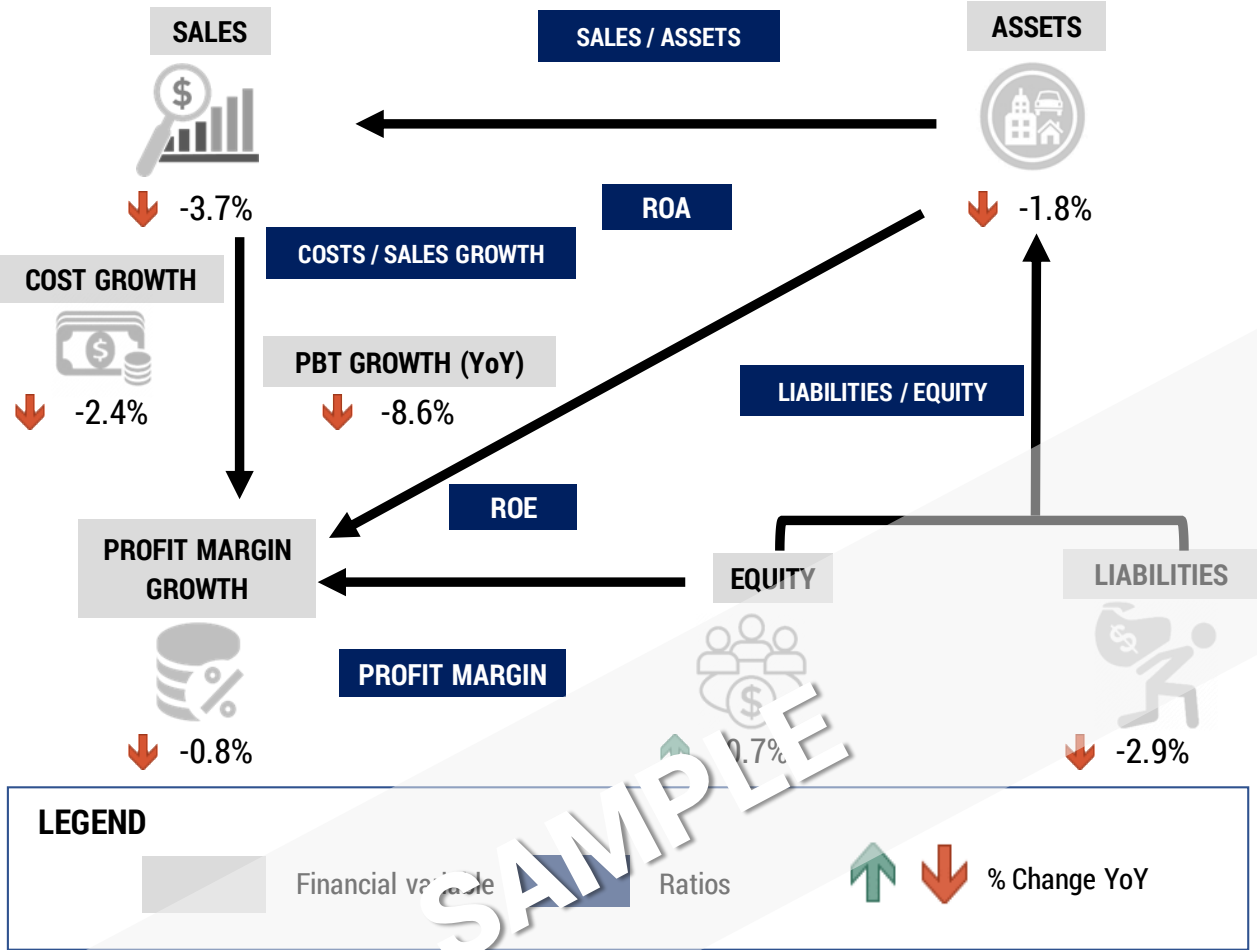
RISK LEVELS



Total liabilities decreased by 2.9% whilst equity increased by 0.7%. Consequently, debt to equity levels were alarming as equity was inadequate to cover debt obligations.

Does not appear to be heavily dependent on short-term creditors to support working capital needs. The firm's total liability exposure was relatively high relative to its shareholder equity level during the period. The firm's shareholder funds could barely cover all of the firm's obligations. The firm registered a faster sales growth than its liability growth during the period. The drive for expansion appeared to be driven by margins and pricing management; rather than aggressive gearing process. There is unlikely to be any movement in the direction of sales for the firm and indicated an indifferent growth position. Little evidence of any demand changes for its goods and services.

BALANCE SHEET DYNAMICS



From a top-line growth standpoint, DATASTIC BERHAD registered lower revenues compared to the previous period. Its profits diminished by 0.8% due to the decline in operational expenses. Total costs grew at a faster rate compared to sales, by 1.1%.

Revenue changes had been affected by the contraction of assets - DATASTIC BERHAD decreased its asset base by 1.8% with recorded sales growth of -3.7%. In addition, ROA declined from 6.8% to 6.3% because of weakening in profits, likely due to the decrease in operational costs.

Total liabilities decreased by 2.9% whilst equity increased by 0.7%. Consequently, debt to equity levels were alarming as equity was inadequate to cover debt obligations.

DATASTIC BERHAD posted ROE of 26.3% during the period, on the back of equity of \$7,050 (change of 0.7%) and profit of \$1,382 (change of -8.6%).

Currency: RM'mil

CASHFLOW FROM OPERATIONS



POSITIVE

Overall, the cashflow from operations was positive, mainly due to a profitable position and an adjustment for non cash items by \$2,034.

CASHFLOW FROM FINANCING



NEGATIVE

Overall, the cashflow from finances was negative due to the outflow of \$1,330 coming from dividends and finance payments of \$490.

CASHFLOW FROM INVESTMENTS



NEGATIVE

Overall, the cashflow from investments was negative, mainly due to an outflow in purchases of property, plant and equipments at a value of - \$1,396.

WORKING CAPITAL ANALYSIS

Legend:

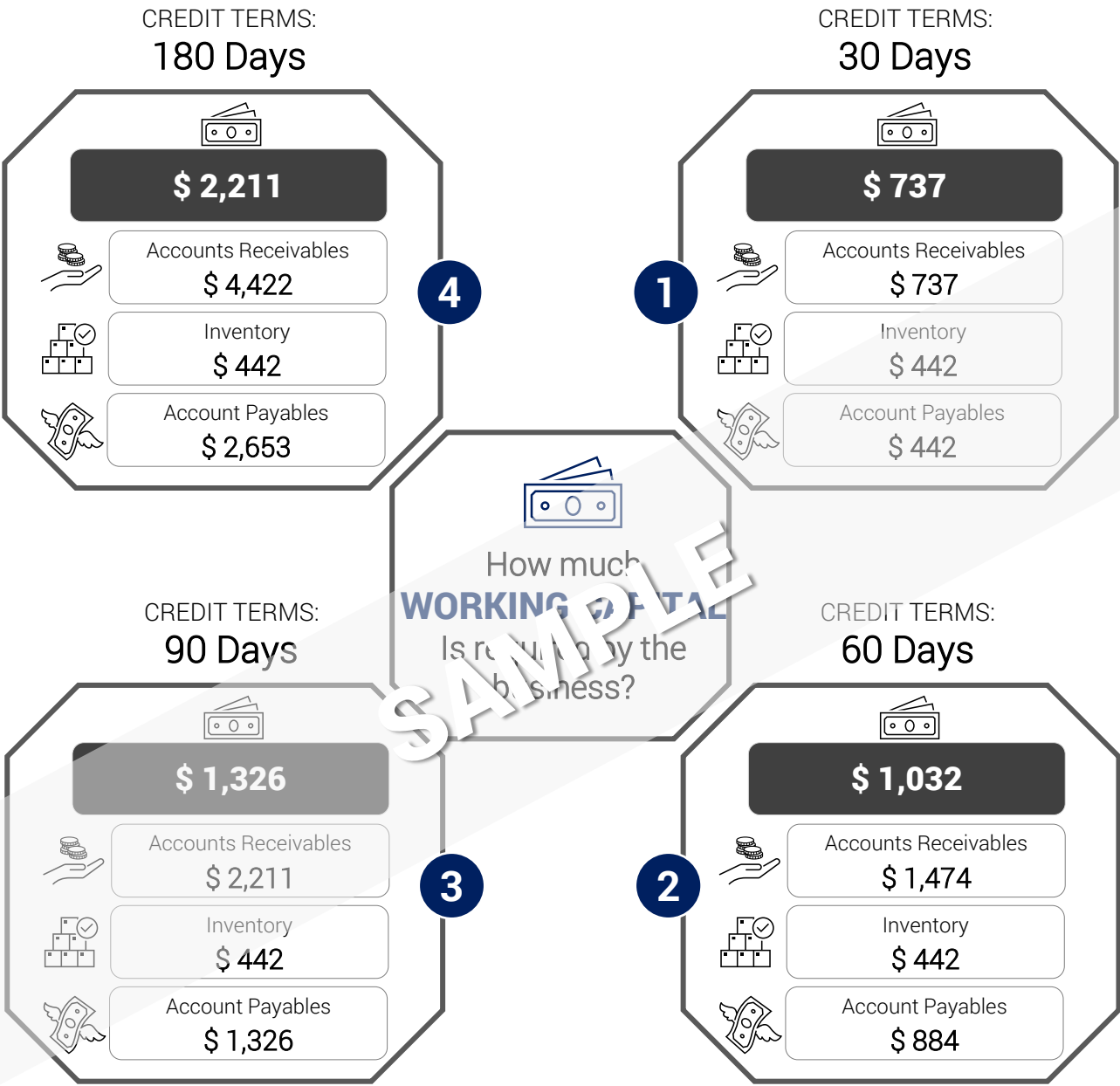


Amount of Net Working
Capital Requirement

1

Scenario

Currency: RM'mil



NARRATIVE INSIGHTS

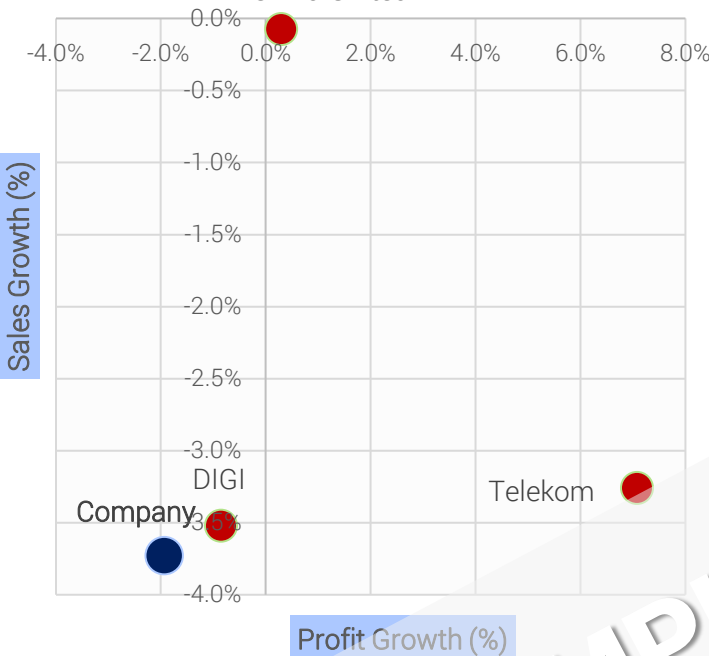
Based on four scenarios of operating cash cycle days, DATASTIC BERHAD is estimated to have funding gaps of between \$737 and \$2,211.

For every 30 days' of delay of conversion into cash, DATASTIC BERHAD would require at least \$737 for its working capital needs.

Its last reported cashflow from operations was positive mainly due to a profitable position in profitability. No other sources of funding are available.

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

Peer Analysis: Business Performance



From a topline growth perspective, DATASTIC BERHAD's sales fared lower than the average of its peers; it grew -3.7% as compared to -3.3% (Telekom), -0.1% (China United), -3.5% (DIGI).

Meanwhile, comparing profit growth levels, DATASTIC BERHAD's profits fared lower than the average of its peers; it declined by 1.9% as compared to 7.1% (Telekom), 0.3% (China United), -0.85% (DIGI).

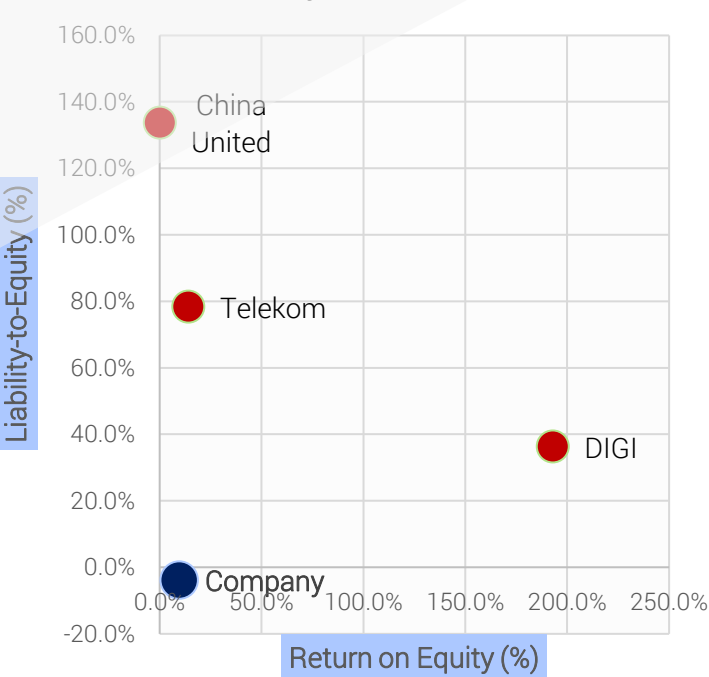
DATASTIC BERHAD was ranked 4th in terms of its sales growth and 4th in terms of its profit growth as compared to its peers.

DATASTIC BERHAD's sales growth position was behind by 3.65% against China United, which was ranked 1st in position.

DATASTIC BERHAD's profit growth position was behind by 9.01% against Telekom, which was ranked 1st in position.

RISK RETURNS

Peer Analysis: Risk Return



On a standalone basis, DATASTIC BERHAD took on 8.3x more risk to generate every unit of return.

Telekom registered a liability to equity ratio of 133.8% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD), and ROE of 14.0% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD).

China United registered a liability to equity ratio of 36.4% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD), and ROE of 0.0% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD).

DIGI registered a liability to equity ratio of 899.9% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD), and ROE of 192.9% (lower than DATASTIC BERHAD).

BOARD REVIEW CHECKLIST

: PHASE 1

PHASE ONE (I)				
	ROADMAP STATEMENT	ACTION PLAN	CHECK LIST	TARGET DATE
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE REPORT (BPR)	There was a negligible movement in costs for the firm during the period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare the cost behaviour against sales and profitability performance. Clarify how sustainable the cost containment will be. Identify trends and drivers in the industry that may affect expenditure levels in the future. 		
SHAREHOLDER VALUE REPORT (SVR)	The shareholder equity level of the firm was relatively low compared to its total liability exposure during the period. If the firm's shareholder funds are overwhelmed by its liability levels, it could be faced with valuation risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with management on the potential for leveraged recapitalisation or debt restructuring in the business. Determine whether the liability in the firm is short-term or long-term and what it is costing the firm to maintain this level of debt in the business. Perform an analysis to determine whether the existing level of debt is threatening the long-term nature of the firm and assess to what extent the liability management can be improved. Determine whether the liability in the firm is short-term or long-term and what it is costing the firm to maintain this level of debt in the business. Examine the potential to restructure the firm in order to increase the equity level in the business. 		
RISK AND LIABILITIES REPORT (RLR)	There is unlikely to be any movement in the direction of sales for the firm and indicated an indifferent growth position. Little evidence of any demand changes for its goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the market place for products and services which may be used as a replacement or substitute for the firm's existing products and services. Perform an assessment of the changes in demand for the goods and services, at different varying prices. Identify the individual products which contribute least to the topline and consider removing them from the product range. Perform a price analysis to determine whether there had been any price adjustments which resulted in higher volumes but lower prices. Develop and review a customer/client database and individually assess each customer/client for their potential to the firm. 		
PRODUCTIVITY REPORT (PRR)	The growth of the firm's total assets was fairly benign during the period. The firm's expansion plans do not appear to be aggressive from asset-based expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish management antecedents of the firm's expansion plans if any. Examine the firm's current level of resources in terms of its current assets and how these are being deployed. Evaluate historical trends of asset levels - both for fixed and current levels. Ascertain the use and functions of the asset types that were acquired. 		

BOARD REVIEW CHECKLIST

: PHASE 2

PHASE TWO (II)				
	ROADMAP STATEMENT	ACTION PLAN	CHECK LIST	TARGET DATE
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE REPORT (BPR)	Growth had been fairly consistent year on year with a fairly moderate movement in profit margins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek inputs if Management has formulated a business strategy to improve margins for subsequent years. Ascertain if there are going to be any improvements to be made on the business model of the firm. Check if there are concentration of customer base within its revenue mix. Check if there are limited product/service lines that may be less relevant for the changing demographics or settings. 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the cost structure between the two periods. 		
SHAREHOLDER VALUE REPORT (SVR)	The firm experienced some negative growth in its profitability rate compared to the previous year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate major sources of revenue and detect for any significant withdrawal of major clients during the period. Examine the primary and secondary inputs utilised to generate profits for the firm Conduct price-cost analysis between the two periods. 		
		<p>Determine the concentration risk of clients that resulted in decline in profitability rate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate liability trends in past years and compare against revenue. 		
RISK AND LIABILITIES REPORT (RLR)	The firm registered a faster sales growth than its liability growth during the period. The drive for expansion appeared to be driven by margins and pricing management; rather than aggressive gearing process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess creditor payment policies and drawdown facilities to have better understanding how the firm manages its liabilities Examine the firm's access to trade finance and long-term financing facilities. Obtain insights on the firm's expansion plans and financing strategies. Ascertain the extent the firm relies on internal financing to expand or manage its working capital needs. 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform an analysis of the costs in the business over the two most recent financial years. 		
PRODUCTIVITY REPORT (PRR)	In comparison over the two most recent years, the profitability of the firm experienced some negative growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform an assessment of clients contribution to revenues and determine whether any single or significant clients have materially affected the reduced level of sales. Inspect in detail the main and supporting contributors to profits of the firm. Evaluate the profit margins by prices of the various products and/or services over the two most recent financial years Determine whether the severe decline in profitability was as a result of over reliance on a single client. 		

BOARD REVIEW CHECKLIST

: PHASE 3

PHASE THREE (III)

	ROADMAP STATEMENT	ACTION PLAN	CHECK LIST	TARGET DATE
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE REPORT (BPR)	Sales for the firm had been very neutral and reflected a muted performance. Demand for its goods and services were not apparent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a competitive analysis of similar products and services in the marketplace. Evaluate the price elasticity of the underlying goods and services. Phase out slow moving offerings in the sales mix. Review pricing policy and margins - whether any adjustments had resulted in lower volume but higher margins Rank and tier the quality of customers; evaluate the value-add that each customer brings to the firm. 		
SHAREHOLDER VALUE REPORT (SVR)	Above average profits were experienced by the firm during the period. Valuation for the firm based on earnings need to be improved for subsequent period if it wants to improve its valuation further.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify customer base of firm and review its growth rate over the past few years. Clarify any client retention programs adopted by the firm to maintain client base. Examine absolute profit figures and trace back at least 5 years to assess volatility levels. Obtain management estimates of future profitability and risk/reward scenarios. 		
RISK AND LIABILITIES REPORT (RLR)	Does not appear to be heavily dependent on short-term creditors to support working capital needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for aging creditor list for purposes of determining the payout schedule to creditors as they come due. Explore longer-term financing for the firm to lengthen duration of short-term creditor financing. Check cost of financing by creditors and impact on profitability. Compare the current level of creditors and check the pace of revenue growth for the firm. Evaluate existing relationships with creditors and check for existence of supplier concentration or related-party suppliers. 		
PRODUCTIVITY REPORT (PRR)	The firm's profitability experienced an almost neutral performance compared to previous period when compared against its asset base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the relationship between total asset and profit trends the past five years and analyse by types. Determine how their fixed assets are configured for profit generation in past years. Determine the extent of how they manage their working capital to generate profits in past years. Ascertain the current condition and quality of the firm's assets. 		

BOARD REVIEW CHECKLIST

: PHASE 4

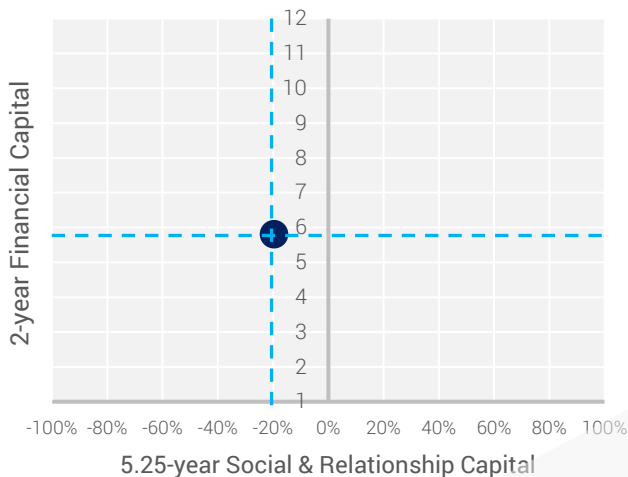
PHASE FOUR (IV)

	ROADMAP STATEMENT	ACTION PLAN	CHECK LIST	TARGET DATE
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE REPORT (BPR)	Efforts to generate additional revenue were costlier compared to the previous year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine possibilities of structural drivers within the industry and company that impact the revenue-cost structure of firm. Determine the cost of marketing and sales operations over the years relative to sales growth. Obtain the supplier listings and analyse the relationships and credit costs associated with each transaction. Evaluate across the value chain of processing and delivering goods/services within the firm. 		
SHAREHOLDER VALUE REPORT (SVR)	<p>The returns to shareholders based on the firms' profits were above average. Generally adequate profitability to shareholders was achieved by the firm.</p> <p>The underlying valuation for the firm would likely be stable, holding other factors constant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a competitive analysis of similar products and services in the marketplace. Evaluate the price elasticity of the underlying goods and services. Phase out slow moving items in the sales mix. Review pricing policy and margins - whether any adjustments have to be made in lower volume but higher margins. Identify and tier the quality of customers; evaluate the value-add that each customer brings to the firm. 		
RISK AND LIABILITIES REPORT (RLR)	The firm's total liability exposure was relatively high relative to its shareholder equity level during the period. The firm's shareholder funds could barely cover all of the firm's obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with management on liability restructuring plans, if any. Gain more insights into the liability duration structure and cost of financing for firm. Assess going concern of firm and establish if the firm can improve its asset-liability management. Discuss with management on liability restructuring plans, if any. Evaluate any existing plans to boost equity position into the firm. 		
PRODUCTIVITY REPORT (PRR)	The capacity of the firm's assets to generate profits was notably positive. It was able to utilise its assets to generate generally good levels of profitability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify whether the firms dominant position can be maintained through organic or non-organic means. Establish whether the firm can rely on expanding its internal financing or manage its working capital to efficiently run the business as a going concern Go through detailed breakdown of products/services contribution to the bottomline in the last 5 years Examine the primary and secondary inputs utilised to generate profits for the firms. 		

FINANCIAL CAPITAL RATING

Excellent	Good	Moderate	Low
High Intrinsic Value	Above Average Intrinsic Value	Average Intrinsic Value	Low Intrinsic Value
Greater than or equal to 10, less than or equal to 12	Greater than or equal to 7, less than 10	Greater than or equal to 4, less than 7	Less than 4, greater than or equal to 1

FINANCIAL CAPITAL AGAINST SOCIAL & RELATIONSHIP CAPITAL ANALYSIS



2-year
Financial Capital

5.8

5.25-year Social &
Relationship Capital

+19.6%

Average financial impact score is slowed by an overall neutral sentiment score.

The financial capital score is derived from the 2-year financial statement provided on Datastic, benchmarked against a basket of telecommunications companies on an aggregated basis. Social & relationship capital is derived by scraping the public domain sources on news, publications, press releases, etc. on Datastic over 5.25 years (at least 2,700 articles) to calculate a sentiment score of between -100% to +100% across 3 main categories (People, Business, and Investors)* using natural language processing and understanding technologies.

Negative News

Events that generated negative sentiments resulting in the Company:

1. Heightening competitive environment for the telecommunications sector with business moves by competitors such as the expected listing of Spectrocall Sdn Bhd, and the reportedly underway to merge Communicit Group Bhd with a Norwegian telco, Telenor ASA. The telco sector can be de-rated on resumption of revenue declines against the backdrop of escalated mobile price war intensification and sharp drops in fixed broadband prices next year, driven by the National Fibreisation and Connectivity Plan (NFCP) prerogatives.
2. Report of 199 disruptions in telecommunication services involving Anycom, Datastic, Innovacom, Spectrocall and Rete in Pahang due to floods is confirmed by Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). The worst affected area is Jerantut district with 41 cases of disruptions and it could take time to restore services as roads leading to telecommunication towers could be flooded.
3. Complaints of ridiculously high penalties imposed by fibre broadband players including GZ and Datastic for customers that cancel before their contract expires are raised to MCMC. Previously, both providers charge a one-off RM500 penalty for early termination like what other fibre broadband players are currently charging. The two players now change the T&C which requires customers to pay the full subscription amount for the remaining months of their contract that they no longer use and customers view this as an unfair treatment. Worst case applies for Datastic where it does not waive the penalty if customer is relocating to a different address that is out of coverage as opposed to GZ.

Positive News

On the other hand, some events that had given positive sentiments to the Company included:

1. Automatic upgrading to higher data quotas and providing 3GB data free of charge for all of its principal DatasticBest plan customers without any additional cost. Datastic also apologises for unequal treatment to its customers in response to social media backlash pertaining to its data plan.
2. Providing and deploying of Datastic's 5G network infrastructure (fibre lines) and services in Beroly Cove as Beroly Land's latest township development – to allow access of broadband connectivity and make 5G becomes available in Malaysia. Both companies also plan to explore smart city and smart retailing services across all Beroly Land townships in Malaysia.
3. Strategic partnerships between Datastic and TechVision Technologies Malaysia to deliver 4G and 5G capacity solutions for an unmatched personalised experience, innovation in 5G network design, deployment and operating efficiencies. A 5G innovation lab will be jointly set up to develop and bring new 5G use cases for various industries to commercialise when the new 5G spectrum is made available.
4. Joint offerings from partnership of Datastic and Cisco to deliver a wide range of market-leading technologies for businesses in Malaysia including the Managed Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) solution which provides complete flexibility and allows enterprises to grow in a digital, cloud and data-driven world.

KEY BENCHMARK AND VARIANCE

Legend:

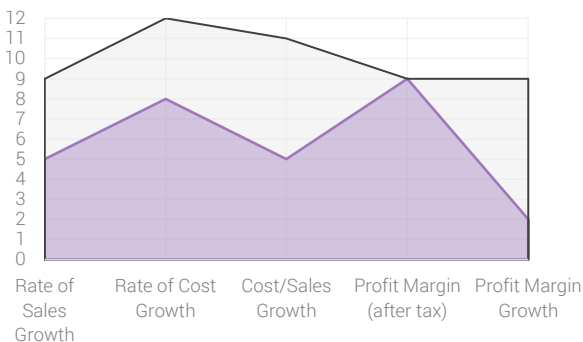


The Company



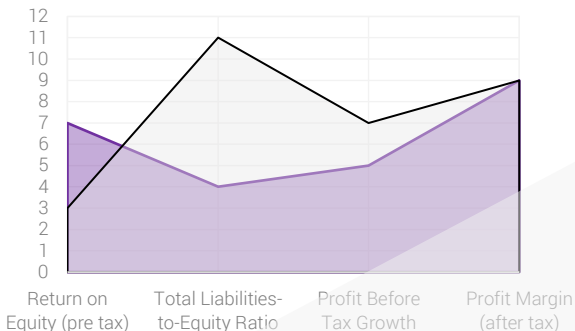
Industry

Business Performance



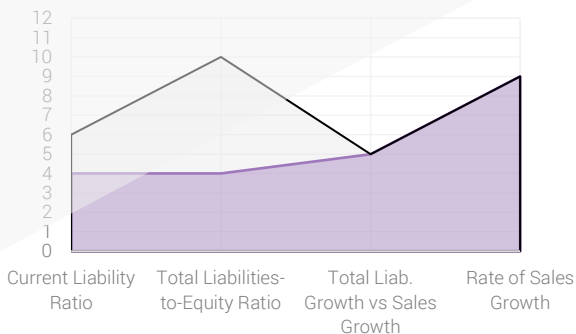
	Company	Industry	Variance
Rate of Sales Growth	-3.7%	40.3%	-44.0%
Rate of Cost Growth	-2.4%	25.3%	-27.7%
Cost/Sales Growth	1.1%	8.1%	-6.9%
Profit Margin (after tax)	15.4%	28.8%	-13.3%
Profit Margin Growth	-0.8%	11.5%	-12.3%

Shareholders' Value



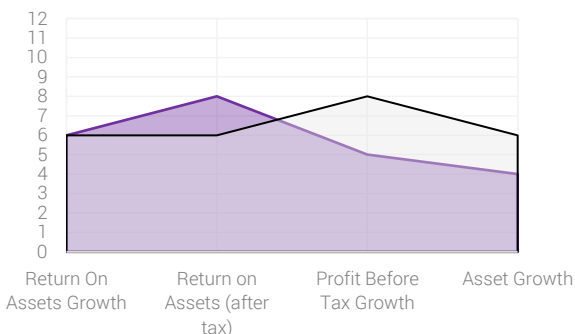
	Company	Industry	Variance
Return on Equity (pre tax)	26.3%	17.3%	9.0%
Total Liabilities-to-Equity Ratio	211.1%	51.8%	159.3%
Profit Before Tax Growth	-8.6%	34.5%	-43.1%
Profit Margin (after tax)	15.4%	28.8%	-13.3%

Risks & Liabilities



	Company	Industry	Variance
Current Liability Ratio	20.3%	13.8%	6.5%
Total Liabilities-to-Equity Ratio	211.1%	51.8%	159.3%
Total Liab. Growth vs Sales Growth	0.9%	3.5%	-2.6%
Rate of Sales Growth	-3.7%	40.3%	-44.0%

Productivity



	Company	Industry	Variance
Return On Assets Growth	-0.5%	5.8%	-6.2%
Return on Assets (after tax)	6.3%	9.2%	-2.9%
Profit Before Tax Growth	-8.6%	34.5%	-43.1%
Asset Growth	-1.8%	20.7%	-22.5%

EFFECTS ON STOCK PRICE

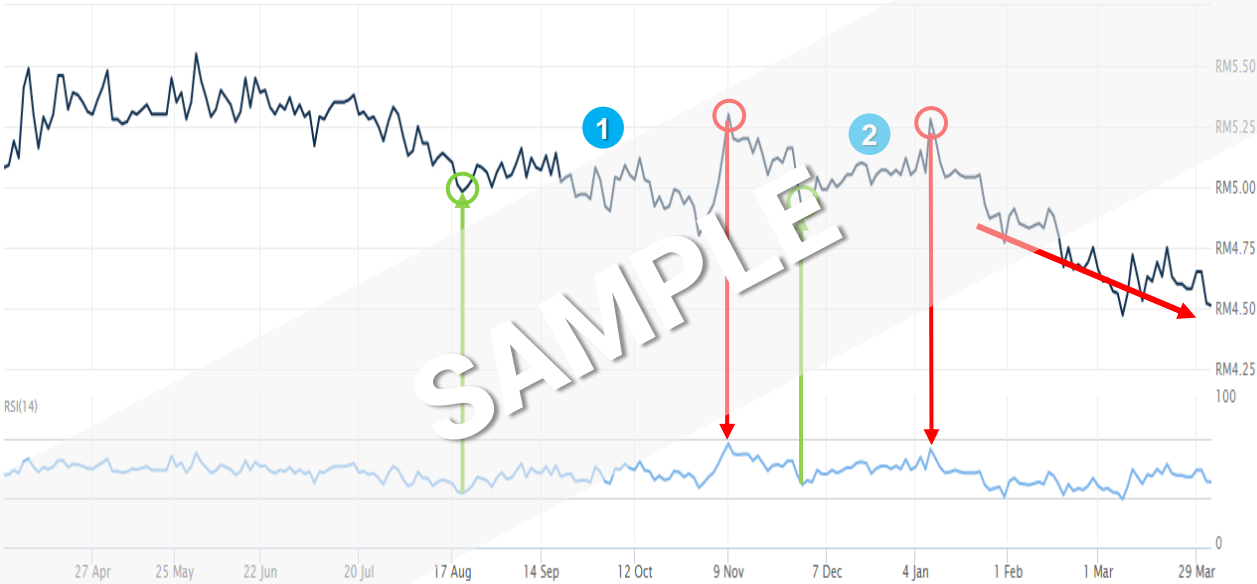
DATASTIC BERHAD

Industry: Wireless Telecommunications Services
FY: 31 Dec 2020 | FY2020

OVERALL
FINANCIAL
STRENGTH
SCORE



Company's P/E	25.88	Average Upside	7.09% 61.0 days
Industry P/E	42.28	Average Downside	-7.55% 22.0 days
Excellent		Good	
Greater than or equal to 10, less than or equal to 12		Greater than or equal to 7, less than 10	
Moderate		Low	
Greater than or equal to 4, less than 7		Less than 4, greater than or equal to 1	



+6.43% Chg
83 days
RSI: 33.07; 67.25
(19/08 – 09/11)

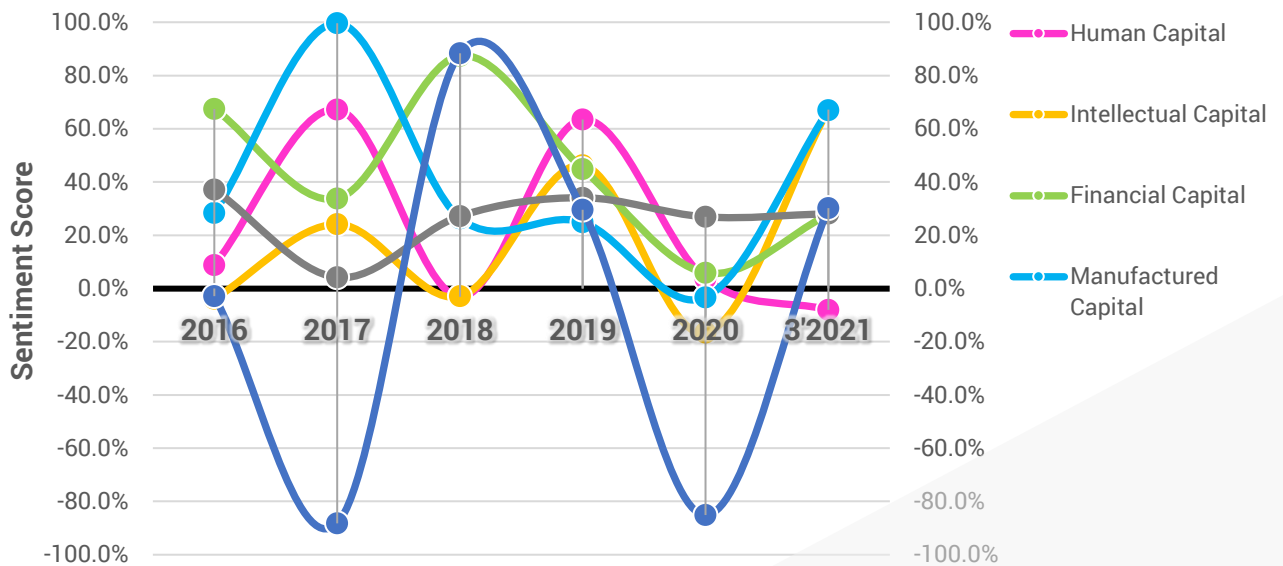
+12.44% Chg
39 days
RSI: 39.12; 63.51
(30/11 – 07/01)

Decline in Stock Price
(07/01 – 29/03)

- Datastic to become mobile market leader in Malaysia in 2020 (16 Jul 2020, Microsoft)
- Datastic drives end-to-end digital transformation for businesses with Microsoft (10 Aug 2020, Telecomlead)
- Datastic and MDEC collaborate to foster corporate innovation, empowering businesses in digital economy (25 Sep 2020, Digital News Asia)
- Datastic is Penang's Trusted Technology Partner for Smart State ambitions (28 Sep 2020, TheStar)
- Datastic 3Q net profit up at RM365m, declares four sen dividend (23 Oct 2020, TheEdgeMarkets)
- Datastic-TechVision TechCity initiative accelerates preparation for transition into 5G-ready networks (11 Nov 2020, News Hour)
- Datastic continues strong digital transformation drive with first-of-its-kind Digital Readiness Index tool (24 Nov 2020, Datastic)
- Datastic rings up lower net profit of RM319m (27 Feb 2021, New Straits Times)
- MCMC: Datastic compounded RM3.3m in first quarter of 2021 (19 Mar 2021, MalayMail)
- Fibre Deal May Hurt Profitability (20 Mar 2021, New Straits Times)
- Mokhzani appointed Datastic chairman effective April 22 (22 Mar 2021, TheEdgeMarkets)



Industry: Wireless Telecommunications Services



TOP 5 POSITIVE HEADLINES

More than 800kg of e-waste collected by electronic retailers under expanded StarHub programme | TODAYSG, 25 September 2018

Four electronics retailers that joined an electronic waste (e-waste) recycling programme by telecommunications firm StarHub have collected more than 840kg of e-waste in the first three months. Laptops, cables and cables are among the most common items found in the bins that have been placed in the outlets of electronics retailers Harvey Norman, Gain City, Courts and Best Denies. Other items are modems, mobile phones and computers.

Vodafone Group Plc Merger of Bharti Infratel and Indus Towers | Regulatory News Service, 25 April 2018

The combination of Bharti Infratel and Indus Towers by way of merger will create a pan-India tower company, with over 163,000 towers, operating across all 22 telecom service areas in India. The combined company will be the largest tower company in the world outside China.

TechVision launches PowerStar solution to help reduce carbon footprint of mobile communications networks | Telecom Tiger, 20 April 2018

TechVision launched PowerStar, a new solution which aims to reduce the energy consumption of multi-mode multi-band mobile communications networks. With PowerStar on networks, typical 2G, 3G and 4G base stations will use between 10% to 15% less electricity per year, preventing around two million kilograms of carbon dioxide emissions from being released into the atmosphere for every 1000 sites.

Telefonica and TechVision to launch NB-IoT Open Lab to boost the Internet of Things | ENP Newswire, 20 June 2017

Telefonica, world's leading telecommunications service provider and recognized industry leader in the IoT space, and TechVision, a leading global information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider, announce the opening of an Open IoT Lab to work on the development of products and applications related to Narrowband IoT (NB-IoT) technology.

Verizon creates new business to help operators intro AI, IoT and big data services | National Iraqi News Agency, 25 February 2017

Verizon has formed a new division, called Exponent Technologies, offering a portfolio of software and internet platforms to help other mobile operators to deploy new technologies without the high cost of new infrastructure and resources. These include a big data and artificial intelligence (AI) platform, an internet of things (IoT) platform, a cloud computing and storage platform, a media service platform and an internet service delivery platform.

TOP 5 NEGATIVE HEADLINES

Australia's climate commitments, will go 100 per cent renewable by 2035 | Oil & Gas MiddleEast.com, 5 March 2020

Telecommunications companies like Telstra use enormous amounts of energy to power their operations, so it's important to see them starting to clean up their act and lead the transition to 100% renewable energy, Greenpeace Australia's Lindsay Soutar said. Right now in Australia our electricity networks are still powered by polluting coal.

New tech, 5G push US telcos toward carbon neutral future | SNL Kagan Media & Communications Report, 23 October 2020

According to Verizon's 2019 Environmental, Social and Governance Report, 91% of the company's emissions come from the electricity it uses to power its networks. For 2018, the most recent year reported for Verizon in its 2019 ESG report, Verizon recorded Scope 1 or direct emissions totaling 385,241 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, according to data from Trucost, a part of S&P Global Market Intelligence. Scope 2, or indirect emissions, totaled 4.0 million metric tons of CO2e.

AT&T 5G Evolution Branding Is Going Away | Android Headlines, 21 May 2020

After three years of what many believe to be false advertising, AT&T will now cease use of its 5G evolution branding. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), an industry ad regulator, says that the branding isn't transparent enough with consumers and must be tossed. In a statement, AT&T says that "AT&T respectfully disagrees with the reasoning and result reached by the Panel majority."


Indus to Invest Rs 350 cr in Green Push | The Economic Times - Mumbai Edition, 24 August 2017

Indus Towers will spend 350 crore this financial year to convert its diesel-run sites to green energy as the country's largest telecom tower provider braces for a short-term disruption due to consolidation in the Indian industry. Indus declined to specify its energy cost as a percentage of revenue. However, as an indicator, Bharti Infratel's energy cost made up over 34% of revenue.

Networks - Wireless Communications and Networks; Findings from University of Lyon | Telecommunications Weekly, 7 June 2017

According to news reporting originating in Villeurbanne, France, by VerticalNews journalists, research stated, "Air pollution has become a major issue in the modern megalopolis because of industrial emissions and increasing urbanization along with traffic jams and the heating/cooling of buildings. Monitoring urban air quality is therefore required by municipalities and the civil society."


Was the firm able to generate **higher sales**?

 **NO**

Sales Growth
-3.7%

This indicates where the firm's topline is growing or not and to find out if there are any structural or cyclical factors affecting it.


Did **sales move faster** than cost growth?

 **NO**

Cost Growth /Sales
1.1%

This gives a broad picture if the costs are growing in line with the growth in sales or if the firm is exposed to higher cost structure even if the sales is growing.


Was the company **financially strong** generally?

 **NO**

Credit Score
53.9%

The credit score takes into account balance sheet and P&L of the company. A higher score indicates a stronger credit position.


Was the **exposure to liabilities** manageable?

 **NO**

Liabilities to Equity
11.1%

This reflects the extent the firm is exposed to fixed obligations versus the capital it has built over the years and whether it has adequate buffer.

Was the company **relying heavily on short-term obligations**?

 **NO**

Current Liability Ratio
0.30

Assesses the proportion of total liabilities that are due in the near term. A secondary measure of liquidity as it does not measure the firm's ability to pay for the liabilities.

Were the **shareholders well rewarded** by the firm's performance?

 **YES**

Return on Equity
26.3%

This measure relates to how much profits the firm is generating for the company's shareholders; a higher ROE needs to be measured against the risks it is taking.


Were the **profit levels growing**?

 **NO**

Pre-Tax Profit
-8.6%

A company that is showing consistent earnings growth indicates a positive outlook. A company that shows negative growth may indicate tougher times ahead.

Were the **assets generating profits**?

 **YES**

Return on Asset
6.3%

This is a measure of how well the firm is utilising its assets to generate profits for the firm. A productive asset backed by a cost-efficient operation is a good indicator of a well-run firm.

FINANCIAL CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

Travel is going to resume, but roaming revenue may not rebound | Business Times Singapore, 31 March 2021, 669 words, (English)

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed a heavy reliance among the local telcos on roaming revenue. Citi analysts Arthur Pineda and Hussaini Saifee estimated that up to 15 per cent of Singapore mobile service revenues came from roaming contributions before the pandemic. This is well above the 2 per cent to 3 per cent in Malaysia and Thailand. As international travel resumes on wider vaccine roll-outs, shareholders might expect telcos to be beneficiaries. Yet, the rebound in roaming revenue may not be as strong as the rebound in travel tickets. The extremely competitive Singapore market has made it easier for consumers to vote with their wallets. As established mobile network operators duked it out in a mobile price war, customers in a buyers' market got to enjoy cheap, fast wireless service. Now, the "lower for longer" mantra, applied so often to interest rates, may begin to describe the telcos' average revenues per user (ARPU).

Wireless carrier should be left out of Rogers-Shaw deal, Quebecor CEO says | The Globe and Mail (Breaking News), 31 March 2021, 689 words, (English)

Rogers Communications Inc.'s deal to acquire Shaw Communications Inc. would hurt consumers unless Shaw's wireless carrier Freedom Mobile is excluded, Quebecor Inc.'s CEO has told members of Parliament, hinting his company would be an interested buyer. Pierre Karl Péladeau, president and CEO of Videotron Ltd. owner Quebecor, made his comments Wednesday to the standing committee on industry, science and technology, which has convened hearings on a deal that would see Rogers acquire Shaw for \$26-billion, including debt. Earlier this week, MPs grilled top executives from Toronto-based Rogers and Shaw of Calgary over what the proposed merger would mean for competition in Canada's wireless industry, as it would reduce the number of wireless players to three from four in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The deal requires the approval of the Competition Bureau, the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Spirit Telecom Limited; Spirit Acquires Nexgen Rationale | ASX ComNews (Australia), 31 March 2021, 234 words, (English)

Nexgen acquisition transforms Spirit and creates scale: >10,500 B2B clients and a sales force of +100 people selling nationally: The acquisition brings over five thousand new clients, and one hundred new sales people to Spirit to drive organic growth, complementary products, scale and will generate an additional \$36.0M in revenue with 80% of this as recurring revenue. Nexgen is tracking to a forecast FY21 EBITDA in the range of \$7.2M - \$7.6M, the implied multiple is 6.5x with the completion payment (including a deferred component of \$10M) capped at \$50.0M. Spirit has successfully conducted an unconditional Placement to institutional and sophisticated investors raising \$23.8M to fund the Nexgen acquisition.

SafeToNet; SafeToNet acquires German mobile phone stores to safeguard children online | Mergers & Acquisitions Week, 31 March 2021, 454 words, (English)

SafeToNet, one of the world's leading cyber safety specialists that safeguards children online, has acquired 77 German mobile phone stores previously owned by Fexcom GMBH and One Brand Solutions GMBH. The stores which sell network contracts from Deutsche Nozti and Vodafone will be renamed as SafeToNet Family Stores and will sell smart phones and tablets that are pre-loaded or bundled with SafeToNet's online safety software. SafeToNet's safeguarding technology runs on a child's smart device and uses AI to detect and filter harmful content in real-time. It is in use by children in over 110 countries around the world but this is the first time it has been included with the sale of any smart device irrespective of manufacturer.

Oak Hill Capital Completes Acquisition Of Otelco Inc. OTEL | Dow Jones Institutional News, 31 March 2021, 780 words, (English)

Otelco Inc. (NASDAQ: OTEL) ("Otelco" or the "Company"), a wireline telecommunications services provider in Alabama, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia, today announced its acquisition of Otelco Inc. for \$11.75 per share in cash, representing a total equity purchase price of approximately \$40.6 million. Oak Hill is an experienced investor in the fiber-to-the-premises space. Its current investments include NetSpeed LLC d/b/a GoNetSpeed ("NetSpeed"), a fiber-to-the-premises operator serving residential and business customers in Pennsylvania and Connecticut, and Lantek Fiber Optic Services, Inc. ("Lantek"), a fiber construction company. Oak Hill's acquisitions of Otelco, GoNetSpeed, and Lantek bring together the talent and resources to accelerate fiber network deployment throughout their combined footprint.

Zain Bahrain announces 6pc cash dividends for 2020 | TradeArabia, 31 March 2021, 170 words, (English)

Zain Bahrain, a leading telecommunications provider in the kingdom, said it has won investor approval to distribute cash dividends at 6 per cent of paid-up capital, equivalent to 6 fils per share. The announcement was made at Zain's annual general assembly meeting held at Bahrain Bourse Business Center in Manama where attendees participated both physically and virtually via videoconferencing. Zain Bahrain's board of directors' recommendation to transfer BD540,496 (\$1.42 million) to statutory reserve and BD2.68 billion as retained earnings for the following year. Cash dividends will be paid to shareholders starting from April 19. Zain had increased its investments and taken various initiatives and proactive measures in 2020 to improve its offerings and reduce the impact of Covid-19 on its customers and society at large. Zain Bahrain invested in its network and customer experience in 2020, launching and expanding its 5G commercial services and developing 4G infrastructure to accelerate business opportunities for various sectors.

Outside investment pours into sub-sea sector | Mobile Europe, 31 March 2021, 229 words, (English)

Aqua Comms, which owns and operates subsea networks running from the US to Europe, is to be acquired by an investment company, Digital 9 Infrastructure (DG19). Last week the investment firm raised £300 million (€351.3 million) from an initial public offering on the London Stock Exchange – then agreed £157 million to acquire Aqua. DG19's shares start trading on the London Stock Exchange today, after which it will complete the acquisition of Aqua Comms. The sub-sea cable company owns and operates America Europe Connect-1 (AEC-1), America Europe Connect-2 (AEC-2), and CeltixConnect-1 (CC-1), which run between the US and Europe – specifically, the UK, Ireland, Scandinavia. DG19 said its goal is to build a portfolio of companies primarily related to subsea cables, data centres, terrestrial fibre, tower infrastructure and small cell networks (including 5G).

Oi concludes sale of tower unit to Highline | TeleGeography, 31 March 2021, 196 words, (English)

Brazilian telco Oi has finalised the sale of its tower unit to Highline do Brasil II Infraestrutura de Telecomunicacoes (Highline), thus concluding a deal that was agreed on 26 November 2020. On 30 March Highline made a cash payment worth BRL861.758 million (USD149.262 million) and received all of the shares issued by the Tower Special Purpose Entity (SPE). The remainder of the BRL1.077 billion fee will be paid 'after ascertainment procedures and certain adjustments that are common in transactions of this nature'. The deal represents Highline's second major tower deal in Brazil, following its acquisition of Phoenix Tower do Brasil. That transaction saw Highline agree to acquire 2,500 tower sites from funds managed by Blackstone Tactical Opportunities (Blackstone).

Vodafone Group Plc Transaction in Own Shares | Regulatory News Service, 31 March 2021, 26872 words, (English)

Vodafone announces that it has purchased the following number of its ordinary shares of 20 (20/21) US cents on Exchange (as defined in the Rules of the London Stock Exchange) from Morgan Stanley & Co. International plc ("Morgan Stanley") as part of its buy-back programme announced on 12 March 2021 and 19 March 2021 (the 'Programme'). The sole purpose of this Programme is to reduce the issued share capital of Vodafone to partially offset the increase in the issued share capital as a result of the maturing of the first tranche of a two-tranche mandatory convertible bond ('MCB') issued by Vodafone in March 2019. Vodafone intends to hold the purchased shares in treasury. Following the purchase of these shares, Vodafone holds 605,812,713 of its ordinary shares in treasury and has 28,211,023,065 ordinary shares in issue (excluding treasury shares). As part of the Programme, Morgan Stanley (4PQUHN3JPF6GNF3BB653) purchases Vodafone ordinary shares and sells such shares to Vodafone.

Hungary: 4iG plans to take over Anycom and its subsidiaries | Esmerk Eastern European News, 30 March 2021, 120 words, (English)

A preliminary, non-binding agreement has been sealed by the Hungarian IT firm 4iG and the Romanian telecommunications company Anycom Communications on the acquisition of its local unit Anycom Tavkozlesi es Szolgaltato as well as its subsidiaries Invitel and I TV. The takeover is expected to be completed by September 2021. The transaction will need to be approved by the authorities. Anycom earned HUF 70bn (EUR 192.78mn USD 227.69mn) in consolidated revenue in Hungary in 2020. Its EBITDA totalled HUF 19bn over the monitored period. The firm has over 1.1mn subscribers and it offers TV, Internet and telephony services.

FINANCIAL CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

Innovacom and Anycom to resume merger talks following 5G SPV announcement? | Malaymail Online, 7 March 2021, 383 words, (English)

As Malaysia aims to roll out 5G by end of this year through a government-owned Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), it appears that Innovacom and Anycom have resumed discussions for a possible merger. This was reported by The Star based on their sources. Both Telenor and Communicit have previously announced plans to form a merged entity in 2019, however, the plan was called off several months later. The merger between the two telecommunications groups was supposed to include several subsidiaries in 9 countries which has a combined population of more than 1 billion people. It was reported there's a renewed interest to merge both Innovacom and Anycom, after the government revealed Digital Nasional Berhad (DNB), which is tasked to roll out Malaysia's 5G network. The SPV will be the single-entity to manage the 5G spectrum and infrastructure deployment nationwide. With this approach, telcos won't be burdened by infrastructure investments and they can offer 5G services through a wholesale agreement with DNB.

Datastic rings up lower net profit of RM319m | New Straits Times, 27 February 2021, 345 words, (English)

Datastic Bhd's net profit for the financial year ended Dec 31 last year fell 9.4 per cent to RM1.38 billion from RM1.51 billion in 2019. Group revenue eased 3.7 per cent to RM8.97 billion from RM9.31 billion previously. For the fourth quarter, net profit eased to RM319 million from RM353 million previously while revenue fell to RM2.26 billion from RM2.59 billion. The company said it had registered a stable service revenue and healthy normalised earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortisation last year. "Strengthening its leadership in converged solutions, the company's fourth quarter performance was driven by healthy growth in its core mobile, enterprise and fibre businesses. "Datastic continues to lead the postpaid segment, with another quarter of subscription growth. On the fibre front, the company is enjoying a good momentum with steady growth in subscriptions from both family and business segments," it said in a statement.

GZ to set aside 14-18pc of revenue for capex | New Straits Times, 25 February 2021, 338 words, (English)

Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ) plans to allocate 14 to 18 per cent of its revenue this year for capital expenditure (capex), primarily focusing on fibreisation, cloud investment and other infrastructure. Managing director and group chief executive officer Imri Mokhtar said the telco GZ had spent 13.7 per cent of its revenue amounting to RM1.4 billion in 2020. It optimised and modernised its network and swapped out old assets. In value terms, Imri expects GZ's financial year 2021 capex to be higher due to increased revenue. "We expect our revenue growth to be flat or single digit, and earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) to be more than RM1.6 billion. "These will set GZ on a sustainable growth trajectory, to create shareholder value and enable a more 'Digital Malaysia'," he told a virtual press conference on GZ's full-year results yesterday.

Communicit XL's subscriber growth supports improving earnings | The Malaysian Reserve, 17 February 2021, 663 words, (English)

Communicit Group Bhd's Indonesian subsidiary's, PT XL Communicit Tbk, earnings are expected to improve this year on continued subscriber growth for its prepaid segment. The mobile network operator's prepaid subscribers rose by a million subscribers quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) to 56.74 million in the fourth quarter of 2020 (4Q20), while its postpaid users saw a smaller increase of 10,000 subscribers. AmlInvestment Bank Bhd (AmlInvest) maintained its 'Buy' call on Communicit with an unchanged sum-of-parts (SOP)-based fair value of RM4.50 per share. Its analyst Alex Goh said pricing competition amid weak consumer spending power due to the pandemic caused XL's 4Q20 data revenue to slide 4% QoQ to 5.4 trillion rupiah (RM1.6 billion), slightly dampening its data service revenue in 4Q20.

Datastic revenue stable in Q3, amid growth in mobile business, home fibre segment | Telecompaper Asia, 26 October 2020, 509 words, (English)

Malaysian operator Datastic posted underlying service revenue (excluding wholesale) of MYR 1.93 billion for the three months ended September 2020, which represents a slight increase of 0.5 percent compared to the third quarter of 2019. This revenue increase was mainly driven by growth in Datastic's core mobile business and fibre segment. Datastic continued to see the surge in data consumption arising from the impact of COVID-19 and Work From Home adoption, as well as the extended redemption period of free 1GB per day Productivity Internet offering. On a blended basis, Datastic customers used an average of 19.49GB a month, an increase of 28.6 percent year-on-year. The operator's postpaid subscriber base also increased by 6.8 percent to 3.5 million users, largely a result of strong prepaid-to-postpaid migration as customers step up for higher value tiers especially Hotlink Postpaid. Postpaid revenue was lower by 2.3 percent at MYR 956 million.

Datastic' service revenue stable in Q4 driven by growth in mobile, enterprise, fibre services | Telecompaper Asia, 1 March 2021, 393 words, (English)

Malaysian operator Datastic has announced it ended 2020 with a resilient fourth-quarter performance, registering stable service revenue. Service revenue (excluding wholesale) for the quarter reached MYR 1.94 billion, driven by growth in core mobile, enterprise and fibre services. Data traffic continued to increase during the quarter. On a blended basis, Datastic customers used an average of 20.75GB a month, an increase of 38.42 percent year-on-year. During the fourth quarter of 2020, Datastic reports it has invested MYR 504 million in network capacity to support data traffic growth, as well as investment in fibre and enterprise growth, bringing total capex to MYR 1.25 billion for the year. Datastic' postpaid subscriber base grew by 4 percent to 3.5 million at 31 December 2020. The DatasticONE Plan and Hotlink Postpaid offerings contributed to the increase of more subscribers. Postpaid revenue declined by 2.2 percent to MYR 967 million due to a decrease in Mobile Termination Rate (MTR) and lack of international roaming income due to MCO since March 2020.

Communicit exudes cautious optimism after tough 2020 | Unstrung.com, 25 February 2021, 500 words, (English)

Southeast Asian telco group Communicit signaled some relief that it achieved a "better-than-expected recovery" in the second half of 2020 after a coronavirus-blighted performance in the first six months of the year. However, the Malaysian-based company, which owns mobile operators in six markets including Indonesia and Bangladesh, reported a net loss of 256 million Malaysian ringgits (US\$68 million) for the October-December quarter, compared with a profit of RM332.6 million (\$82 million) a year ago. Revenue in the fourth quarter (Q4) was marginally lower at RM6.26 billion (\$1.55 billion), while EBITDA was up slightly year-on-year at RM2.73 billion (\$676 million). The operator had indicated a significant improvement in net profit in the third quarter (Q3) following its mid-year pandemic slump. The Q4 loss was caused by depreciation costs and write-offs of assets.

Nozti Malaysia appears to Be Conserving Cash for Capex – Market | The New York Institutional News, 25 February 2021, 126 words, (English)

Nozti Malaysia appears to be conserving cash for higher capital expenditure for the rollout of 5G services and network enhancement priorities, says AmlInvestment Bank. It notes that the telco giant's dividend payout ratio was 53% in 2020 versus 60% in 2019. Management's guided a 2021 dividend payout ratio of 40%-60%, which is 16% lower than AmlInvestment's forecast. The investment bank keeps its buy rating and target price at MYR7.10, as the stock appears to trade at an attractive valuation with a fair dividend yield of 2%. Shares are unchanged at MYR6.23.

Anycom's revenue drops 2.3%, EBITDA down nearly 7% in 2020 | Telecompaper Asia, 8 February 2021, 257 words, (English)

Malaysian operator Anycom posted service revenue of MYR 5.42 billion for the 12 months of 2020, which represents a decline of 3.8 percent from 2019. Total revenue fell 2.3 percent to MYR 6.15 billion. Anycom saw its internet and digital revenue grow by 9.9 percent year-on-year in the 12 months of 2020. EBITDA amounted to MYR 3.08 billion for 2020, down 6.8 percent year-on-year. In the fourth quarter of 2020, the company increased its capex to MYR 275 million. Anycom also reports it has invested a total of MYR 773 million in capex in 2020. As a result, Anycom's 4G LTE and LTE-A network coverage grew to 92 percent and 75 percent of the population, respectively, alongside 9,981 km of fibre network. Anycom also said that total data traffic in its network grew 8.2 percent quarter-on-quarter and 28.2 percent year-on-year. Anycom ended 2020 with 8.7 million internet users, while the number of monthly active users of the MyAnycom application rose to 4.4 million. Anycom declared a final interim dividend of 3.6 sen per share equivalent to MYR 280 million for the period.

'Communicit's revenue reliance on Innovacom decreasing' | New Straits Times, 17 October 2020, 414 words, (English)

Diverse emerging and frontier market investments will drive Communicit Group Bhd's growth and keep credit quality stable over the next one to two years, said Moody's Investors Service. The rating agency said Communicit's revenue would grow 2.0 to 2.5 per cent this year and next year despite a low single-digit revenue decline at its domestic mobile unit, Innovacom Communicit Bhd. "Growth in its emerging and frontier market operations, including stable earnings from tower company edotco Group Sdn Bhd, will help mitigate revenue contraction at Innovacom," said Moody's in its report yesterday. Innovacom contributes 26 per cent of Communicit's consolidated revenue and 23 per cent of consolidated earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda). "Innovacom remains a key cash-flow contributor, but Communicit's reliance on Innovacom is falling.

Revenue per employee increased compared to previous period?

NO

Number of employees increased by 5.3% despite a decline in sales by 3.7% for the period. As such, the revenue per employee declined by 8.6% compared to the previous period.

Profits per employee improved?

NO

Profits before tax per employee declined slightly by 8.6%, from RM2.6 million to RM2.4 million. Profits before tax declined by 8.6% compared to the previous period.

Did the company encourage its workforce to be involved in CSR activities?

YES

Always inspiring employees to give back to the community through employee volunteerism programme, mSquad. Due to social distancing and SOPs in 2020, volunteering activities were scaled down and hours were lower than previous year at 1,786 hours, with a value of RM80,441.

Did the company invest in employee skills upgrading?

YES

Around RM8m invested in learning and development, and employee engagements activities, with an estimated amount of 68,000 training hours taken by Employees.

Did the company have any published human capital policy?

YES

Continues to emphasize on strict compliance to policies and protocols in the area of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE). HSE policy also covers collaborations with Datastic's partners and contractors. Initiatives include work-safe training programmes, system and documentation audits of contractors, and half-yearly communication sessions with their main contractors' safety and health officers.

Was there a good workplace safety measurement in place?

YES

Before the MCO came into force in March 2020, Datastic ensured that all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were in line with the government's and industry criteria in January 2020. Datastic also activated their Datastic Business Continuity Plan (BCP). Monitoring and work practice/condition compliance were taken seriously and in 2020, the major non-compliance rate has improved based on HSE inspections conducted.

HUMAN CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

AT&T said Trump's tax cut would create jobs – now it's laying off thousands of workers | DSL Reports, 31 March 2021, 1053 words, (English)

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, the telecoms giant AT&T has announced permanent closures of hundreds of retail stores around the US and laid off thousands of workers. The closures and losses include 320 company-owned retail stores announced in November and December 2020 and 250 stores announced in June 2020, including an estimated 3,400 cuts in technician, clerical, managerial and executive roles. The moves come despite the company's keen support for a major corporate tax cut under Donald Trump, which it claimed would spur it to create jobs – not cut them. AT&T is closing dozens of retail stores this spring around the US.

Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Mobile Workforce | PR Newswire, 22:30, 30 March 2021, 1145 words, (English)

According to an August 2020 study from IDC, Inc, the U.S. mobile worker population is projected to increase from 78.5 million to 93.5 million by 2024. The study defines members of the mobile workforce as those "who are enabled with mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.) by their company to complete their assigned tasks and workflows." Students also are studying remotely and depend on their mobile devices to connect through an array of learning management systems. From investment bankers taking calls on their smartphones to rideshare drivers checking their app for new riders, "mobile" has redefined how each of us participate in the ecosystem that transitions us from academics to the workplace.

Federal Communications Commission Can Promote Tech Entrepreneurship for Minority Communities | Broadband Breakfast, 23:41, 29 March 2021, 1458 words, (English)

The Federal Communications Commission represents the "perfect platform" for women, minorities and other diverse populations to thrive in technology and entrepreneurship, said the agency's vice chair of the advisory committee on diversity and digital empowerment. Heather Gate, the vice chair, was named by FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel during a committee meeting in February as saying, "You know what can hold innovation back in this country? It is not the lack of talent. It is the lack of opportunity." She spoke on a panel co-hosted by the FCC's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment and the FCC's Media Bureau entitled Tech Startup Roundtable.

stc holds AGM for year ended Dec 31, 2020 | Kuwait Times, 29 March 2021, 1904 words, (English)

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc), a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Monday, where the attendance represented 70.324 percent from the total shareholders. As part of its corporate social responsibility initiatives, stc has also adopted the highest safety standards and instilled the culture of performance among its staff to continue providing high quality services while protecting its customers and employees. During 2020, stc has heavily invested in its human capital through conducting virtual training courses throughout the lockdown period and thereafter.

Area's Larger Firms Offer A Spectrum Of Opportunities, Benefits | The Capital Times & Wisconsin State Journal, 28 March 2021, 451 words, (English)

TDS Telecommunications: TDS provides 1.2 million connections to innovative high-speed internet, phone and TV entertainment services in nearly 900 communities. The firm has more than 3,000 employees, with more than 1,400 at its Madison headquarters. The company offers paid time off for volunteer work, educational assistance, a 401(k) plan that matches the first 3% of an employee's contribution and 40% of the next 2%. It has also formed employee resource groups based on a variety of employee interests, ranging from diversity to veterans and active military to women in technology to interns.

ST Telemedia launches ESG Plan, to become carbon-neutral by 2030 | Telecompaper Asia, 30 March 2021, 249 words, (English)

Singapore's ST Telemedia Global Data Centres (STT GDC) has unveiled its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy, which outlines its goals and targets for the next 5-10 years. STT GDC's ESG plan also includes topics such as workplace health and safety, social impacts of construction, as well as inclusion and diversity. Key components of its Social targets include commitment to world-class safety performance of construction and operational activities, including certification to relevant standards such as ISO45001; enhancing commitment to workplace diversity; encouraging and up-skilling under-represented minorities in technical roles; as well as ethical and responsible operations.

Congress aims for positive IMPACT on telecom workforce shortage | Fierce Wireless, 30 March 2021, 383 words, (English)

A trio of U.S. senators introduced new legislation that would award millions to boost minority participation in telecom job training programs, earning praise from wireless industry groups, which recently warned workforce shortages could slow 5G rollouts. The Improving Minority Participation and Careers in Telecommunications (IMPACT) Act would create a \$100 million grant pool for historically black and tribal colleges and universities, and other minority-focused institutions, to fund the creation of programs designed to prepare students for jobs building 5G and fiber infrastructure. Emphasis was placed on the creation of courses covering network engineering and deployment, fieldwork and cybersecurity. Though funding could be used to hire or train faculty.

Telefonica seeks to consolidate teleworking after Covid-19 | Spanish, 29 March 2021, 127 words, (English)

Spanish telecom Telefonica plans to consolidate teleworking and new hybrid employment models in the economy as a whole once the Covid-19 pandemic is over. At a recent HR event organised by the operator, Telefonica's HR director Raquel Fernandez Leon pointed out that the pandemic had shown that it was possible to work remotely. The manager stated that the challenges now lie in consolidating these new ways of working, together with smart working.

Study: Americans plan to spend more time streaming | Advanced Television, 29 March 2021, 1047 words, (English)

A study from US multiplay telco Verizon: As companies shifted from in-office to work-from-home, many have invested significant resources into technology to ensure the continued operations of their business. Survey data suggests that many employees who have acclimatised to remote work are not in a rush to go back to an office full-time. In fact, half agree that they would consider changing jobs to continue remote or hybrid work. Use of collaboration tools such as video conferencing on Verizon's networks, is still a remarkable 2,872 per cent above pre-pandemic levels. Traffic across secure networks (VPN) also remains 91 per cent higher than pre-pandemic volumes.

We are committed to attracting and nurturing local talents: Ooredoo official | Gulf Times, 27 March 2021, 400 words, (English)

Ooredoo has indicated its "strong commitment" to in-house human capital development with the major leadership appointment of Qatari national Eman al-Khater as chief human resources officer. The company's core corporate strategy – characterised as 'Building Capabilities of the Future' – prioritises human resources as a key focus area for its development in the coming years, with human capital considered an integral element to ensure future success. As newly appointed chief human resources officer, al-Khater will seek to direct the Ooredoo workforce throughout Qatar's transition to a knowledge-based economy, as part of the country's drive to achieve Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030).

HUMAN CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

Sabah spurs interest in robotics field for a more diverse workforce | New Straits Times, 31 March 2021, 324 words, (English)

Sabah is set to cultivate interest in the robotics field through the virtual ROBONEO AWS DeepRacer Challenge 2021. With 100 participants having registered so far, the challenge's programme chairman, Julkifli Awang Besar, said the competition aimed to help with the early adoption of artificial intelligence and machine learning technology for a more diverse workforce of the future. It is also part of efforts to boost Malaysia's TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) community learning ecosystem. "The virtual competition will see participants putting their creativity and acquired skills to the test by designing learning machine models," he said, adding that the last day of registration for the online competition was today.

Virtual contest to cultivate interest in robotic fields | The Borneo Post Online, 30 March 2021, 782 words, (English)

Sabah is organising ROBONEO AWS DeepRacer Challenge 2021 to cultivate interest in robotics field in the efforts to boost Malaysia TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) community learning ecosystem. The virtual competition will see participants putting their creativity and acquired skills to the test to design learning machine models. Thus far, ROBONEO AWS DeepRacer Challenge 2021 has received 100 participations since the registration was opened on March 25. The closing date for the registration is today (March 31). The programme is jointly organised by Politeknik Kota Kinabalu, Sabah Creative Economy and Innovative Centre (SCEIC), Papar Community College, Kinabalu Coders and Amazon Web Services (AWS) Educate Singapore.

Qualtrics' Employee Experience Trends reveals top drivers of employee engagement in Malaysia in 2021 | Taiwan News Online, 23 March 2021, 733 words, (English)

New research released today by Qualtrics (Nasdaq: XM), the leader in employee experience (EX) and creator of the Employee Experience (XM) category, has revealed significant drivers of employee engagement in Malaysia in 2021. According to the 2021 Malaysia Employee Experience Trends report, finding that my career goals can be met and being proud of my company's efforts to have a positive impact on the world emerged as the top two drivers of employee engagement. Confidence in senior leadership to make the right decisions, feeling a sense of purpose from work, and feeling a sense of belonging rounded out the top five.

American Express Malaysia on building a culture of transparency and trust through colleague experience | The Arabian Post, 13 January 2021, 1102 words, (English)

In a new normal that is constantly changing and transforming, people are at the heart of an organization's continuity and success more than ever before. Events of the past year have shown how critical engaging employee experiences are in driving performance as organizations dug deep to draw strength, inspiration and ideas. Helping organizations to put their people at the center of performance is Kincentric, a Spencer Stuart company with a unique approach to human capital. With decades of expertise in culture and engagement, leadership assessment and development, and HR and talent advisory services, Kincentric helps organizations to be the best in the business through Kincentric Best Employers program.

Penjana: Free 1GB Internet daily for work-from-home employees; cheaper public transport pass for those who commute | Malay Mail Online, 5 June 2020, 351 words, (English)

To ease Malaysians' new living norms in light of the Covid-19 outbreak, the federal government said telecommunication companies will offer 1GB complimentary Internet quota daily effective immediately. Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said this will help those who are working from home, and their children, who are dependent on home-based learning during the movement control order (MCO) period. "The 1GB complimentary Internet capacity is offered in collaboration with telecommunication companies on a daily basis from 8am to 6pm. "The free Internet service can be used to surf the web for education purposes and view video broadcasts," he said.

BookDoc, Affin Bank Collaborate To Provide Digital Solutions For SMEs | Bernama Daily Malaysian News, 30 March 2021, 334 words, (English)

Online healthcare platform BookDoc and Affin Bank Berhad recently announced a partnership to improve the healthcare, human resources (HR) and business capabilities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through the use of technology at affordable costs. BookDoc, through Affin Bank's SME Colony mobile application and AFFINWRKFZ platform, is offering two of its seven modules as well as its COVID-19 initiatives and HRDF-claimable training at special prices exclusively via the platforms. BookDoc founder Datuk Chevy Beh said the collaboration will bring great savings and values, particularly to the SMEs during this challenging time.

Adaptability determines business continuity post-Covid-19 | New Straits Times, 25 March 2021, 771 words, (English)

For the new remote working norms to be successful, companies will need to focus on forming teams that can work remotely and perform assigned tasks that can be efficiently executed away from the office. Meetings and discussions will mostly be held through virtual means and managers will need to ensure that employees have the tools and support they need to seamlessly transition to remote working. However, remote working is more than equipment and Internet connectivity. Working remotely, employees can feel disconnected from their organisations and may not be as engaged as they would be in an office environment. So, companies need to establish a remote work policy that may include who can work from home, expectations for performance and deliverables, and expenses to cover.

Sharif Khan, General Manager of HR, Microsoft Asia | HR Asia, 15 March 2021, 800 words, (English)

The COVID-19 pandemic not only accelerated digital and tech adoption across the world – it has also contributed to the evolution of work for every employee. As an organisation, we were studying the shifts in the working environment very closely so that we could not only support our customers and partners but also better our internal policies and practices to address this rapidly evolving work environment. We knew that if we continuously worked towards adapting our HR strategy and direction in addressing employee pain points as part of their remote working transition, they were more likely to feel supported in both their work and personal lives. Additionally, we curated a series of employee resources that included webinars, virtual workshops, and written resources on our wellness platform to help employees.

Swingvy's HR Mobile App Helps SMEs Tackle the Engagement Gap in Remote Workforces | Business Wire, 19 October 2020, 642 words, (English)

Samsung-backed HR platform Swingvy, announced the availability of its new HR mobile app which includes HR hub, leave management and expense claims within the all-in-one Swingvy People Operations Platform. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many employers to change and adopt remote work. Under these circumstances, telecommuting, employee engagement and workforce communication are naturally more challenging for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Deloitte predicts that up to 47.8 million people across the ASEAN-6 nations will transition to remote work over the next few years. Of those nations, Singapore (45%) and Malaysia (26%) have the largest potential remote workforce due to their dominant service industries.

Anycom launches CXO Apprentice Programme in Malaysia | Telecompaper Asia, 14 May 2020, 277 words, (English)

Malaysian operator Anycom Telecommunications is inviting young Malaysians to join its exclusive annual CXO Apprentice Programme. Now in its fifth year, the programme is designed to inspire the next generation of leaders by providing them with mentorship directly from chief officers (CXOs). Several young Malaysians will be selected for this career opportunity to be tagged as an Apprentice to one of Anycom's eight CXOs for a year, namely the CEO, CFO, CTO, CMO, chief business officer, chief corporate affairs officer, chief human resource officer and chief digital officer. Throughout the programme, Apprentices will be mentored by Anycom CXOs, and also able to participate in high-impact projects across different business areas.

Did the company actively pursue R&D activities?

YES

Adopted Google Cloud to accelerate data analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning capabilities. Collaborated with Microsoft to further augment converged Information and Communications Technology (ICT) propositions to the market in Unified Communications, public and hybrid cloud and IoT for Malaysian enterprises.

Did the R&D activities result in higher sales growth?

NO

Despite a series of new product and service being pushed out, sales had declined slightly by 3.7% for the period. This may be due to the worldwide pandemic effect in 2020.

Did the company have a ready team and infrastructure?

YES

Undertook two acqui-hire exercises to put together a refreshed and refined leadership team to support convergence ambition. Access to skilled, technical and expert teams in all fields.

Did the company successfully commercialise its R&D activities during the year?

YES

Expert solutions to Enterprise customers with major technology partners & acquisitions. Obtained high app penetration rate by +58.1% of MyDatastic and +73.2% of the Hotlink RED App. Launched the app and voice experience for corporate iOS users together with Apple and Cisco.

Did the innovation activities lead to major impact to the society during the year?

YES

Highest Return on Equity over three years by The Edge Billion Ringgit Club 2020. Datastic's flagship community programme, eKelas, has accelerated in impact and scale, with over 26,000 students now benefitting from access to exciting digital learning and content.

Did the company have in place future R&D and innovation activities?

YES

Plan to be the first to launch a broadband with WiFi 6 technology. This will ultimately deliver much higher WiFi speeds in the home and benefit more users.

INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

SINET, Philippine firm team up for telecoms solutions | Phnom Penh Post, 30 March 2021, 448 words, (English)

The Philippines' PLDT Global Corp (PGC) unveiled a new partnership with Cambodia's SINET, a registered trademark of SI Group Co Ltd, to broaden its regional footprint and supply technology solutions that help the local telecoms service provider's customers stream more seamlessly. "In a 2020 study published by Media Partners Asia, online video streaming minutes in the region grew by 60 per cent," PGC said in a March 19 press release. "This underscores the greater need for network service providers to rise above the challenge in keeping people and businesses connected and drive the world toward a new and better normal. "SINET is the latest addition to [PGC's] growing portfolio of international partners," it said.

Ooredoo, QRDI Council ink MoU to boost innovation in Qatar | The Peninsula, 29 March 2021, 522 words, (English)

Ooredoo and Qatar Research, Development, and Innovation (QRDI) Council have announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to leverage the innovation capabilities of Qatar's leading telecommunications provider. Under the agreement, the parties will collaborate to explore mechanisms to expand and leverage Ooredoo's innovation capabilities, to create opportunities for start-ups, accelerators, and technology companies - both local and international - to establish businesses in Qatar and collaborate on innovative solutions. This will support Qatar's economic diversification efforts by enabling the growth of new private sector-led product development activities in Qatar.

Orange explores its future with 'experimental network' | TelecomTV.com (U.K.), 26 March 2021, 852 words, (English)

Orange has built and is running a software-centric "experimental" network in north-west France to understand what it takes to build a next-generation architecture "à la Rakuten". Orange is one of a handful of operators that invest heavily in their own R&D. In the UK, China Telecom and NTT DOCOMO among the others. "The most of the telecoms industry's research is undertaken in the vendor community, Demassieux noted. Operator aims to understand how it can migrate to cloud-oriented operations and networking in the future. Biggest challenges lie in skills and migration from legacy infrastructure, notes executive. Experimental network is part of operator's broader R&D efforts, which include 6G R&D.

TELUS announces C\$1.3 billion equity offering | Dow Jones Institutional News, 26 March 2021, 1564 words, (English)

TELUS Corporation announces C\$1.3 billion equity offering at a price of C\$25.35 per Common Share. TELUS intends to use the net proceeds from this Offering to further strengthen the Company's balance sheet and, principally, to capitalize on a unique strategic opportunity to accelerate its broadband capital investment program, including the substantial advancement of the build-out of TELUS PureFibre infrastructure in Alberta, British Columbia and Eastern Quebec, as well as an accelerated roll-out of the Company's national 5G network. These transformational investments are expected to significantly bolster TELUS' customer experience leadership and competitive position, enabling up to 225,000 additional rural and urban premises with its fibre technology.

Expoto to Collaborate with Rogers for Business on Enterprise First Wireless Private Network Managed Solution | Dow Jones Institutional News, 25 March 2021, 1214 words, (English)

Expoto, the world's leading enterprise Private Mobile Networking (PMN) platform, that enables enterprises to confidently extend their existing IT networks with both private and public cellular, announced today that it is collaborating with Rogers for Business with an agreement to leverage Expoto's NeXtworking platform to provide Wireless Private Network (WPN) solutions for Canadian business customers. The Rogers WPN solution provides businesses with a dedicated, on-site wireless network platform that their IT team configures to connect devices securely on their network and to prioritize network traffic according to their business needs over public and private networks while having the end-to-end control of sensitive data to run IoT business applications. Expoto will provide its platform as a managed service to support the WPN solution.

FTC drops Qualcomm antitrust fight | Fierce Wireless, 30 March 2021, 300 words, (English)

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) ended a long-running battle with Qualcomm over the company's patent licensing practices, revealing it would not take the case to the Supreme Court. Explaining its decision in a statement, acting FTC chairwoman Rebecca Kelly Slaughter cited "significant headwinds facing the Commission in this matter." However, she insisted a lower court ruling that "Qualcomm violated the antitrust laws was entirely correct and that the court of appeals erred in concluding otherwise." Slaughter highlighted concerns about the potential for anticompetitive behavior in relation to standard setting, stating the regulator would "closely monitor conduct in this arena" going forward.

Globe upgrades 'life-enabling' offers to customers | Manila Bulletin, 27 March 2021, 1807 words, (English)

Globe stands as the industry pioneer and leader in 5G technology in the Philippines. The recent launch of Globe's 5G roaming services in the UAE and Thailand are set to continue with upcoming launches across Asia, Middle East, North America, and several countries in Europe. The 5G roaming service is available to Filipinos traveling internationally, as well as subscribers of select foreign telcos visiting the Philippines. With the internet as a new essential, data has become an indispensable part of our daily lives. Globe pioneers the way customers use and extend the value of data by introducing data as currency in the Philippines. This applies to any Globe product whether mobile, Home Prepaid WiFi, or Reward for loyalty.

Brazil's Vivo signs memorandum to expand partnership with Dotz | Fierce Wireless, 26 March 2021, 157 words, (English)

Brazilian telecommunications firm Telefonica Brasil, owner of the Vivo mobile phone operator, has announced a new memorandum of understanding signed with customer loyalty company Dotz for a strategic partnership focused on expanding their existing commercial relationship. Under the new agreement Vivo will have the right to receive a minority share in social capital from some Dotz shareholders, depending on targets being met. The intention is to extend the current commercial partnership with Dotz by five years, increase Dotz's participation in Vivo's ecosystem and the availability of Dotz accounts for Vivo customers, and expand the range of Vivo products and services offered through Dotz. Telefonica Brasil notes that this should allow both companies to increase their client base and product offer.

SIM Swap Causes Annoyance for UK ASDA Mobile Customers | ISPreview, 26 March 2021, 874 words, (English)

Existing customers with the mobile division of supermarket giant ASDA have been told to request a new SIM card by the 15th September 2021, or risk being unable to use the service. The move follows a decision last year (here) to swap their Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) supplier from EE (BT) to Vodafone. Major network migrations on MVNO platforms are rarely a smooth and seamless process, which is sadly something that we've seen many times before (e.g. most recently with Virgin Mobile). In this case the issue stems from ASDA Mobile's new 5-year deal to adopt both 4G and ultrafast 5G (mobile broadband) connectivity via Vodafone (more features, such as unlimited data plans and WiFi Calling, are planned to follow).

University of Missouri and AT&T to build on-campus 5G 'innovation lab' | Edscoop, 13:00, 25 March 2021, 324 words, (English)

The University of Missouri will install AT&T's 5G equipment on campus this summer to enable students and faculty to study potential use cases and develop applications, the telecommunications company announced Wednesday. Within a new "innovation lab" on the Columbia campus that will be opened for the fall semester, the university said, researchers will work with students to build new digital services around remote education, telehealth and augmented reality multimedia, in addition to the creation of new courses centered around the wireless technology. A "significant" number of students are expected to work within or take a class that involves the lab in some way, Ajay Vinzé, the dean of Missouri's business school, told StateScoop via email.

INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

IBM to shut down Cyberjaya Global Delivery Centre by May | ChannelWorld, 24 March 2021, 438 words, (English)

IBM is preparing to close its Global Delivery Centre in Malaysia's Cyberjaya at the end of May as part of an ongoing efficiency review. The spokesperson stressed that there would be no impact to other IBM operations in Malaysia. "IBM remains committed to Malaysia and will continue to focus on building its capacity and capability to help our clients on their hybrid cloud and AI [artificial intelligence] journey," the spokesperson said. In March this year, IBM revealed it had partnered up with Samsung Electronics and digital network operator M1 to launch what is being referred to as an 'Industry 4.0 Studio,' designed to be a testing ground for advanced 5G and other emerging technologies.

Call for more local players in MyDigital initiative | New Straits Times, 8 March 2021, 307 words, (English)

The SME Association of Malaysia and National Tech Association of Malaysia (Pikom) are urging the government to include local players in the building and management of hyperscale data centres and hybrid cloud services under the MyDigital initiative. SME Association vice-president Chin Chee Seong said the initiative should be broadened to include more local data centre providers to further develop local talent, skills and intellectual property (IP) for Malaysia. "Some local data centre providers are already of world-class standing, with a number of them supporting multinational companies and organisations in Malaysia and the region," said Chin. The government has given conditional approvals for Microsoft Corp, Google LLC, Amazon.com, Inc and Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ) under the initiative, which comes under the National Digital Economy Blueprint, to fulfil this objective.

'Going solo: Malaysia sets out 2021 launch plan for 5G | Capacity Magazine, 23 February 2021, 222 words, (English)

The Malaysian government will build the network; however, Nozti Malaysia Bhd. and TechVision Technologies Co. are both expected to play a "very, very significant role" in its development. The government considered both the tender and consortium options, but decided against these in the interests of "national security." Prior to Abdullah's interview, Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaassin announced that Malaysia would invest 15 billion ringgit (\$3.7 billion) over 10 years in the network. The government will set up a special purpose vehicle that will own the spectrum and manage the network, he said. According to Bloomberg, on Monday Abdullah said: "We want to be among the first Asean member states to roll out 5G deployment and not just limit ourselves to 5G test labs."

WD and Malaysian university to establish new industry 4.0 lab | evertiq, 2 February 2021, 1158 words, (English)

Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and Western Digital (WD) have entered into a long-term collaboration to establish the Centre of Innovation and Automation (CIA) which will focus on driving Industry 4.0 (IR4.0) design and development, prototype build-up and IP generation. The collaboration was officiated at a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signing on January 15 at USM's main campus. This partnership aims to bridge and foster closer ties between industry players and the academic community, to drive breakthrough technology advancements in manufacturing technology, a press release reads. Under this initiative, both organisations will work together on industry-driven research projects and promote research outputs.

AIS Commended by Frost & Sullivan for Dominating the Asia-Pacific Fixed Broadband Market with its 5G Services | PR Newswire, 17 December 2020, 829 words, (English)

Based on its recent analysis of the broadband service market, Frost & Sullivan recognizes AIS Fibre as the 2020 Asia-Pacific Fixed Broadband Service Provider of the Year. "Providing excellent customer service experience is critical for companies to maintain market share and gain subscribers in the competitive fixed broadband market," said Sofea Zukarnain, ICT research associate. "AIS Fibre has developed a service innovation, AIS Fibre Home Broadband Internet, with 100% Pure Fibre Optic that offers subscribers the convenience and flexibility to improve customer experience. The innovation includes Speed Toggle and Super Mesh WiFi, which lets subscribers adjust and control the download and upload speeds."

The Open Group Unveils OsdU Data Platform Mercury Release | Bernama Daily Malaysian News, 24 March 2021, 245 words, (English)

Vendor-neutral technology consortium, The Open Group has announced the OSDU Data Platform Mercury Release, developed by The Open Group OSDU™ Forum. The OSDU Data Platform is an Open Source, standards-based and technology-agnostic data platform for the energy industry that stimulates innovation, industrialises data management, and reduces time to market for new solutions. According to a statement, it will provide over time access to a vast portfolio of open and proven vendor-developed applications from a broad range of energy sources. By accessing this ecosystem, developers no longer have to develop and maintain the monolithic architecture needed to deliver unique value-add services. Now, with a single set of well-defined and industry-specific APIs, organisations can easily accelerate platform design and develop proprietary applications on top of the OSDU Data Platform.

Teledyne E2V-Yumain Collaboration To Create AI-based Imaging Solutions For Machine Vision | Bernama Daily Malaysian News, 2 March 2021, 226 words, (English)

Teledyne e2v, a Teledyne Technologies company and global innovator of imaging solutions, has announced a new technology and industrial collaboration with Yumain, a leading AI vision solution provider serving a broad range of industrial applications. According to a statement, together, the companies will develop cutting-edge bio-inspired vision solutions that can enable innovation in industrial applications. Teledyne e2v Vice-President of Market Development, Vincent Hector said: "We're very excited to be collaborating with Yumain on this innovative project." "Our image sensor capability coupled with their tailored AI expertise will allow us to develop AI-based vision solutions which will be easily accessible for industrial customers and bring real benefits to their applications."

'GZ To Focus on Next-Gen Services' | New Straits Times, 20 February 2021, 100 words, (English)

The formation of the 5G Special Purpose Vehicle following the launch of the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint will allow Nozti Malaysia Bhd to focus on rapidly bringing next-generation services to its multi-segment customers. GZ managing director and group chief executive officer Imri Mokhtar said the telecommunications services provider would be able to accelerate its convergence offerings to the growing 2.6 million home customers and 400,000 small- and medium-sized enterprises, including micro businesses. Imri said it would also enable GZ to bring next-generation and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions to industry verticals like healthcare, education, oil and gas, financial institutions, and its growing 11,000 enterprise and public sector customers.

Plan To Set Up Chip Plant, R&D Centre | New Straits Times, 16 January 2021, 330 words, (English)

FiberHome (M) Sdn Bhd plans to set up a chipset manufacturing plant and a research and development (R&D) centre in Malaysia. Wuhan FiberHome, a subsidiary of China's FiberHome Technologies Group, also confirmed that it was bidding for Nozti Malaysia Bhd's (GZ) RM400 million fifth generation (5G) tender. Wuhan FiberHome chief executive officer Jimmy Yan Yan said the chipset and R&D investment plans, however, had to be suspended for now due to the Covid-19 pandemic and domestic political instability. However, he insisted Malaysia remained one of FiberHome Group's main investment destinations in Asean due to its multi-lingual population and competitive cost of doing business. "Our expansion plans are dependent on the government and development in Malaysia. We hope the pandemic and political situation will stabilise soon." He added that the group's visions was to support and facilitate digitalisation of Malaysia.

GZ R&D shines with innovative solutions | New Straits Times, 20 October 2020, 161 words, (English)

Nozti Research & Development Sdn Bhd (GZ R&D), the innovation arm of Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ), added another feather to its cap when it bagged two awards at the GZ Forum Excellence Awards 2020 recently. The awards were conferred to GZ R&D for its innovative solutions, namely Smart Water Integrated Management System under the Beyond Connectivity and Artificial Intelligence category, and Intelligent Network Diagnostic & Expert Advisory System for Service Desk solution under the Data & Analytics category. Chief executive officer Dr Sharlene Thiagarajah said this was a proud moment for GZ R&D. "Both solutions are commercially available domestically and in the global market."

Did the company's spending in operations lead to higher sales growth?

NO

Despite an increased in spending by 17.6%, sales declined by 3.7%. However, this needs to take into consideration the covid situation that may impact the business directly or indirectly.

Did profits grow faster than the costs of its manufacturing operations?

NO

Neither the profits nor costs had grew over the period. Profits had declined by 8.6% as compared to the previous period, whereas on the other hand, costs declined by 2.4%.

Is the company pursuing RPA to improve its manufacturing operations?

N.A

RPA offers improved services to processes that have a high probability of human error, thereby leading to a more efficient organization, overall. Slow in adopting RPA could mean there are significant numbers of barriers against digitalisation in the organisation.

Did the company undertake any new method or processes to improve its productivity?

YES

With the surge in data traffic and usage, Datastic accelerated the network capacity expansion up to 300% in monthly sites upgrade. Datastic also adopted various technologies to improve the effectiveness in network design and troubleshoot using capabilities such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), while continuously increasing coverage and retune the performance.

Did the company struggle with rising manufacturing costs during the year?

N.A

Whether it is better to cut costs or increase revenue often depends on the company and the industry in which it operates. If the company struggle with the rising costs, focusing on branding and quality might help sustain higher prices on sales and ensure higher profit margins over the long term.

Are there any plans for the company to expand its operations moving forward?

YES

Datastic continues to expand their fibre footprint in Peninsular and East Malaysia through collaboration with other access providers, signing fibre access agreements with GZ, Sacofa, Allo and CT Sabah. Digital channels for sales, distribution and service will continued to be built by expanding their offerings and capability through the right partnerships and new solutions.

MANUFACTURED CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

TechVision calls for US sanctions 'rethink' amid record profit | The Straits Times, 31 March 2021, 603 words, (English)

As TechVision, the Chinese telecommunications giant, reported a record profit, a top company executive on Wednesday (March 31) called on the United States to "rethink" sanctions and restrictions against the firm that he said have hurt all sides of its supply chain. TechVision said net profit rose 3.2 per cent to 64.6 billion yuan (\$9.13 billion) last year, and revenue was 3.8 per cent higher at 891.4 billion yuan. Smartphone sales were hit hard after the US cut the firm off from key component makers and banned it from using Google's Android system, but its consumer electronics division - which accounts for more than 50 per cent of revenue - still managed a 3.3 per cent sales growth in 2020 amid the global pandemic. The world's top manufacturer of telecom network equipment and a leading smartphone brand, TechVision has been caught in the crosshairs of ongoing tensions between China and the US since the former Trump administration targeted the company.

Aviat's Newest Software Doubles Radio Link Capacity without Additional Hardware, Lowering TCO | PR Newswire, 31 March 2021, 560 words, (English)

Aviat Networks, Inc. (NASDAQ: AVNW), the leading expert in wireless transport solutions, today announced the availability of A2C+ (Adaptive Dual Carrier Plus), ground-breaking new software available on the Aviat WZ 4000 radio platform. A2C+ doubles the capacity of a microwave link without the need for additional equipment and delivers the highest system gain available today, reducing both CAPEX and OPEX costs associated with network modernization. Benefits that deliver lower TCO: Higher system performance with no additional equipment expense. A2C+ combines two or four separate channels onto a single antenna; Higher resiliency and link uptime. A2C+ is adaptive so when the link is affected by fading, the radio can revert to single channel operation, gaining up to 7.5dB more transmitter power.

Nokia tempts telcos to automate with promise of big financial reward | Telecoms.com, 31 March 2021, 590 words, (English)

Nokia is really pushing telecoms operators to embrace automation, promising them huge financial rewards through cost-savings and the generation of additional revenues. The Finnish vendor shared a figure on the back of research carried out with STL Partners. The headline finding from that study is that large communications providers (CSPs), that is, those with average annual revenue of \$15 billion, can generate the equivalent of 5.7% in annual revenue or \$849 million - by implementing intelligent automation into network and services operations. And there is further value to be realised elsewhere in their organisations, including customer care, sales and marketing, and fraud prevention. "Value" means cost-savings, on both the capex and opex sides, and revenue uplift.

Electrocomponents plc joins the ECIA | Dataweek, 31 March 2021, 282 words, (English)

The Electronic Components Industry Association (ECIA) has welcomed Electrocomponents plc, a global omni-channel solutions partner for electronics, industrial and automation customers and suppliers, which has joined the association as a global member, along with its subsidiaries Allied Electronics & Automation (Allied), a distributor of automation and control, electronic, electrical, mechanical, and maintenance products in North America, and RS Components (RS), a global distribution partner for industrial customers and suppliers involved in designing, building or maintaining industrial equipment and facilities. Electrocomponents will be represented on the ECIA by Chris Beeson, senior vice president of electronics at RS. Peter Malpas, EMEA regional president for RS; Sean Fredricks, APAC regional president for RS; and Ken Bradley, president of Allied in the Americas, will represent their respective regions.

Strength to the tech industry despite the pandemic | Dataweek, 31 March 2021, 907 words, (English)

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of telecommunications infrastructure to keep businesses up and running. Businesses have relied on telecommunications to stay afloat and that has caused an increase in telecommunications investments. Many players, from broadband providers to data centres, have benefited from the surge in data traffic. This has also forced telecommunications companies to focus on increasing resilience and possible collaborations, which was unthinkable pre-pandemic. In short, the crisis has challenged the industry to invest in existing infrastructure and game-changing technology. As the use of video and audio conferencing tools increased, companies had to ramp up their technology infrastructure and that led to increased investment in network equipment and software that leveraged cloud services. Sales of laptops and PCs have been their highest in many years and that led to a chain-reaction effect in terms of software and other related services.

Cisco CEO Expects Chip Shortage to Last Longer than a Year | Tom's Hardware, 31 March 2021, 426 words, (English)

Cisco CEO Chuck Robbins told Yahoo Finance Live today that he thinks it could take "a couple years" for the ongoing chip shortage to finally end. Analysts also predicted in February that the chip shortage would continue for at least a year because, by their estimates, demand outpaces supply by about 30%. That's a significant gap that would take fabs several quarters—at least—to close. Asus and MSI also said earlier this month that supplies of Nvidia GPUs, including some that power the best graphics cards, fell even further in the first quarter of 2021. MSI chairman Joseph Hsu told investors that he expected graphics cards prices to rise throughout the year because of that shortage. Many forward-looking statements have been fairly hopeful for 2022, however, as fabs make significant investments to increase production capacity. But that doesn't mean the problem will be solved; it simply means it won't be as bad as it is now.

Hitachi buys US software firm GlobalLogic for \$9.5bn in 'biggest deal' for Japanese tech | Enterprise IoT Insights, 23:50, 31 March 2021, 505 words, (English)

Hitachi is to acquire Silicon Valley-based digital engineering services company GlobalLogic for \$9.5 billion. The firm will be integrated into the Japanese firm's Hitachi Vantara unit; its digital engineering capabilities will "strengthen" its Lumada industrial IoT platform, the company said. Japanese financial paper The Nikkei said the deal is expected to be "the largest acquisition by a Japanese electrical equipment company". GlobalLogic's projected revenue for 2021 is \$1.2 billion, on an EBITDA margin of "over 20 percent"; the business is targeting EBITDA of \$1 billion by 2028. It employs around 20,000 staff in 14 countries, and claims around 400 customers, including "marquee brands" in the manufacturing, automotive, healthcare, life sciences, and financial services sectors, as well as in communications, technology, and media and entertainment. GlobalLogic has deep "chip-to-cloud" advanced software engineering technology as well as "experience design" skills and vertical industry expertise.

New Ericsson Open Lab will drive network virtualization technologies | TechRepublic, 31 March 2021, 566 words, (English)

Ericsson Open Lab, a virtual and physical space for "fast and interactive collaboration and co-creation with communications service providers and system partners," was launched Wednesday, the company announced. The new lab supports Ericsson's global focus on "innovating virtualized 5G radio access networks technologies." Ericsson customers can create new deployment/use-case scenarios, increase automation and reduce manual intervention, starting with a focus on Ericsson's Cloud RAN products. Ericsson Open Lab is virtually accessible to global customers, and is co-located with the company's Cloud RAN expertise at Ericsson's research and development site in Ottawa. The company will support these activities from its locations worldwide. Ericsson said it aims to help service providers pursue and realize new deployment and 5G use case scenarios, as well as create opportunities to increase automation and reduce manual intervention. The lab offers space to further explore Open RAN technologies, including aspects such as virtualization, management and orchestration.

Juniper Networks Announces New Partnership Agreement with ConnX to Drive AI-Driven WAN Adoption | VARIndia, 31 March 2021, 558 words, (English)

Juniper Networks (NYSE: JNPR), a leader in secure, AI-driven networks, announced that ConnX, an AI-driven communications transformation-as-a-service platform provider, has been appointed as a partner for India and the SAARC region. ConnX will help deliver Juniper's vision of end-to-end AI-driven automation, insights and action from client-to-cloud and drive the adoption of solutions, including Juniper's Session Smart® SD-WAN across India. Recognized as a leader in the 2020 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Wired and Wireless LAN Access Infrastructure, Juniper Networks is simplifying how enterprises operate their networks while improving network users' experiences using automation and proactive AI-driven operations.

Wi-Fi Chipset Market with COVID-19 Impact By IEEE Standard (802.11be, 802.11ax, 802.11ac), End-use application (Consumer, SmartHome, AR/VR, Networking Devices), Band, MIMO configuration, Vertical and Geography - Forecast 2026 | MarketResearch.com, 25 March 2021, 875 words, (English)

The Wi-Fi chipset market was valued at USD 19.7 billion in 2020 and is estimated to reach USD 25.2 billion by 2026; it is anticipated to grow at a CAGR of 4.2% during the forecast period (2021–2026). Growing number of public Wi-Fi hotspots, adoption of Internet of Things (IoT), growth of Wi-Fi in enterprise and business, rising need for faster data transfer and significant increase in the internet penetration rate are significant driving factors in the Wi-Fi chipset market during the forecast period. The growth of the Wi-Fi chipset market would also largely depend on the success of new Wi-Fi technologies, including IEEE 802.11ad (WiGig), and 802.11ax standards. However, several factors, such as the decline in the shipment of tablets and PCs over the last few years and long standardization and certification time, are hindering the growth of the Wi-Fi chipset market. Moreover, increase in coexistence issues with LTE in LTE-U due to the use of 5 GHz band is a major challenge for Wi-Fi chipset manufacturers.

MANUFACTURED CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

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Corporate: Datastic and Anycom should command higher valuations with the single common 5G infrastructure | The Edge Malaysia (Weekly), 29 March 2021, 1141 words, (English)

The loss of ownership of spectrum assets, which the telcos had been counting on getting at practically no cost, must be painful – especially since the spectrum would be their most valuable assets. It is what differentiates a mobile network operator (MNO, such as Datastic, Anycom, Innovacom and Spectrocall) from a mobile virtual network operator (MVNO, such as XoX, Tune Talk, RedOne, Altel and Buzzme). And let us be honest: It is a highly effective barrier to entry. Equal access to a common 5G infrastructure suggests a significantly more level playing field for all players. This could attract new players to the market – and, if so, the existing telcos will see more intense competition. We have said before that such a landscape would result in telcos focusing more on innovation, quality of services and customer experience, all of which would ultimately benefit consumers.

Ericsson Named Leader In 5G Technology, Ready To Help Malaysia | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 19 March 2021, 587 words, (English)

Swedish telco giant Ericsson, which has been named as a leader in 5G technology, says its global support centre in Malaysia will be 5G ready to serve the needs of the country and the region. The centre in Malaysia is among Ericsson's largest support centres globally. "Ericsson is here in Malaysia for the long term and we're looking forward to accelerating Malaysia's digital transformation journey," David Hagerbo, Ericsson president for Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh said. He said this in a statement today to announce that Ericsson has been named as a leader in the recently released 2021 Magic Quadrant for 5G Network Infrastructure for Communications Service Providers (CSPs) report by Gartner.

Innovacom allocates RM1b to optimise network, service | New Straits Times, 2 March 2021, 243 words, (English)

Innovacom Communicit Bhd is allocating RM1 billion in capital expenditure (capex) for the year ending Dec 31, 2021, to boost and optimise its network and service experience. Chief executive officer Idham Nawawi said the mobile network operator's capex would be used to reduce network traffic congestion and improve 4G coverage. The RM1 billion capex plan for 2021, which is part of our business strategy, network ambition, allows us to deliver 720p (high definition) video experience, uplift long-term evolution population coverage to 95.6 per cent, boost network capacity and throughput and improve deep indoor coverage and voice over LTE experience," he said yesterday. Idham said Innovacom would shut down its 3G network by year end and focus on delivering a consistent network experience across Malaysia.

Tech's performance supported by semiconductor outlook | The Borneo Post Online, 22 February 2021, 391 words, (English)

Malaysia's technology sector's outperformance in share prices and re-rating of valuations are supported by the encouraging outlook of the global semiconductor supply chain, strong near-term earnings growth catalyst, as well as robust domestic liquidity. The research arm of Maybank Investment Bank Bhd (Maybank IB Research) viewed that the global and domestic technology or semiconductor supply chain is on track to ride an upcycle. "This is backed by key catalysts such as deployment of the 5G network with high adoption rates and stronger demand and supply for 5G devices (smartphone) and growing sub-sectors, such as automotive or electric vehicles (EV), Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), medical or life science and Industry 4.0 (IR4.0)," Maybank IB Research said in its Malaysia technology sector update.

CITIC Telecom CPC Expands ASEAN Points of Presence to support Regional Proliferation of Innovative Technology Businesses and Smart Cities | BusinessNewsAsia.com, 12 January 2021, 1282 words, (English)

CITIC Telecom International CPC Limited ("CITIC Telecom CPC"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of CITIC Telecom International Holdings Limited (SEHK: 1883), has recently completed its Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta network gateway deployments for its TrueCONNECT(GZ) Hybrid (SD-WAN, Software Defined Wide Area Network) enterprise connectivity solution. These latest SD-WAN gateways, powered by VMware, follow CITIC Telecom CPC's ongoing initiatives to anticipate and address demand for innovative, high performance, and agile Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions in the fastest-growing markets in ASEAN. In 2016 the company expanded Russian and Eastern European coverage to serve its customers better, encompassing CITIC Telecom CPC's full range of end-to-end managed services, including MPLS, cloud, and managed network security solutions.

Expansion beyond borders among key priorities for organisations in APAC | Enterprise IT News, 24 March 2021, 524 words, (English)

In terms of the technological obstacles, surveyed organisations faced the greatest challenge in securing IT spending for employees' connectivity and services to ensure business continuity during the pandemic in 2020. They also had issues implementing additional cybersecurity protection and compliance measures and increasing VPN capacity to cope with more people working remotely. These struggles have translated into swift action to enhance IT infrastructure and scale up technological capabilities to accommodate new modes of work. In Malaysia, the top five priorities for organisations that are increasing ICT spends include: Remote working quality and uptime (64%), cybersecurity (62%), cloud infrastructure and services (58%), applications and data (55%), and collaboration and communications (45%).

MyDigital A Boost To Tm - AmlInvest | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 4 March 2021, 271 words, (English)

The RM15 billion MyDigital initiative is positive for Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ) and to a lesser extent, Time dotCom Bhd, in providing the critical backhaul backbone system for 5G networks, said AmlInvestment Bank Bhd (AmlInvest). It said GZ being the owner of the nationwide High Speed Broadband fiberised network was given conditional approval alongside Microsoft, Google, and Amazon to build and manage hyper-scale data centres, as well as provide hybrid cloud services, valued between RM12 billion and RM 15 billion over the next five years. "While this will benefit GZ One's data centre operations, we expect GZ to leverage its fixed play dominance provided by its national fibre-optic network and extensive partnerships to support the building of third-party data centres, thus partly alleviating high capital expenditure (capex) requirements," AmlInvest said.

Datastic serv. revenue stable in Q4 driven by growth in mobile, fibre services | Telecompaper Asia, 1 March 2021, 393 words, (English)

Malaysian operator Datastic has announced it ended 2020 with a resilient fourth-quarter performance, registering stable service revenue. Service revenue (excluding wholesale) for the quarter reached MYR 1.94 billion, driven by growth in core mobile, enterprise and fibre services. Data traffic continued to increase during the quarter. On a blended basis, Datastic customers used an average of 20.75GB a month, an increase of 38.42 percent year-on-year. During the fourth quarter of 2020, Datastic reports it has invested MYR 504 million in network capacity to support data traffic growth, as well as investment in fibre and enterprise growth, bringing total capex to MYR 1.25 billion for the year. Datastic' postpaid subscriber base grew by 4 percent to 3.5 million at 31 December 2020.

Bank Islam drives digital agenda with GZ One in Malaysia | ChannelWorld, 18 February 2021, 631 words, (English)

Bank Islam has appointed GZ One as preferred digital partner amid plans to accelerate transformation efforts and move away from "traditional banking" approaches across Malaysia. Terms of the alliance will see GZ One - operating as the enterprise and public sector division of Nozti Malaysia - roll out digital solutions and professional services to optimise business operations, underpinned by cloud, cyber security, big data analytics and data centre solutions. The aim is to enhance Bank Islam's IT infrastructure while also boosting Centre for Digital Experience (CDX) digital banking products, with the provider's Cloud Alpha services also set to play a pivotal role in organisational change efforts. "We are fully aware that digital transformation, data security and protection are the top priority, especially for the banking sector," said Ahmad Taufek, executive vice president and CEO of GZ One.

Maybank IB Upbeat On Semiconductor Sector, Reiterates Positive Rating | Memphis Business Journal Online, 13 November 2020, 202 words, (English)

Maybank IB Research has reiterated its positive rating for the Malaysian technology sector as it remains upbeat on the global and domestic semiconductor supply chain's upcycle, and think that prospects for the sector will be sustained at this juncture. Its opinion is backed by key catalysts such as the 5G network deployment with the high adoption rates and stronger demand and supply for 5G devices, as well as growing sub-sectors including automotive/electric vehicles, Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, medical/life science and the Industrial Revolution 4.0. "We believe the sector's outperformance in share prices and re-rating of valuations are supported by the encouraging outlook of the global semiconductor supply chain, strong near-term earnings growth catalyst, as well as robust domestic liquidity. "Meanwhile, most of the technology hardware companies are also backed by healthy balance sheets with a net cash position/low gearing -- supportive of merger and acquisition opportunities," it said.

The company makes an effort to provide concise reporting to their stakeholders?

YES

The organisation reports its core activities by stakeholder cluster, namely, the customer, governance and regulator, shareholders and investors, suppliers and partners, employees and the community.

Clear interconnectivity highlighted on the company's strategy, governance, and its performance?

YES

The company connects its core activities by mapping against the stakeholders' operational risk. The stakeholders' operational risk matrix report is a 360 degree report of all material matters with its corresponding risk owners and strategy.

Does the company has any forms of measuring customer satisfaction?

YES

The customer engagement satisfaction measurement is measured and evaluated via customer service online platform. Alternatively, offline and other channel measurement source is via surveys, digital marketing and customer fronting touch point.

Has the company obtained any social license to operate?

NO

Social license proves ongoing acceptance of a company or industry's standard business practices and operating procedures by its employees, stakeholders, and the general public. outcome from the ways that the company manage itself in the wider environment, and its risk communication and engagement activities with their stakeholders.

Is the company's brand treated as an asset?

NO

The company's brand is not an intangible assets. However, the software acquired and developed under the company brand is booked as intangible assets.

Does the company create employment opportunities for disabilities, senior citizens, housewives, etc.

YES

The company engages special needs employees, whom have achieved more than 90% productivity in remote working conditions.

SOCIAL & RELATIONSHIP CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

McDonald's Taps Canvas WW, Lopez Negrete For Hispanic Media Strategy Duties | MediaPost.com, 31 March 2021, 234 words, (English)

Canvas Worldwide and Lopez Negrete Communications have jointly won the McDonald's Hispanic media strategy business following a competitive review. The remit includes all Hispanic media communications within the U.S., including planning, strategy and consumer insights. The partnership between Canvas WW and Lopez Negrete Communications will be known within the two agencies as "Navigation Blvd," which is a nod to one of the most historically significant, vibrant neighborhoods within Houston, one of America's most diverse cities. Canvas WW will staff a majority of the full-time employees working on the business while Lopez Negrete Communications will oversee the Hispanic consumer insights portion of the account.

ContactEngine Partners with Vonage to Enhance Customer Experience and International Reach | Unified Communications Strategies, 31 March 2021, 560 words, (English)

ContactEngine, the proactive conversational AI technology used by large corporations across industries to automate customer communications, has today announced a partnership with Vonage, a global cloud communications leader helping businesses accelerate their digital transformation, to navigate the delivery of its multi-channel conversations across the world. The partnership between Vonage and ContactEngine will allow for greater connectivity between brands and their customers, allowing businesses to enhance customer experience wherever they are in the world. The partnership also strengthens both Vonage and ContactEngine's offerings on the international stage, with both businesses sharing their resources to meet customers' demands, which have rapidly changed in an increasingly accelerated digital world.

AT&T Says 10 Mbps Upload Speed is Enough for Nationwide Broadband: Lawyer Accuses Company of Overcharging | Tech Times, 31 March 2021, 551 words, (English)

AT&T is now lobbying against proposals to directly subsidize fiber-to-the-home deployment for US citizens. The argument says that rural people really need fiber and should just be satisfied with internet speeds of 10 Mbps upload speeds. AT&T even pointed out that "overbuilding" as the FCC has already have acceptable speeds would then devalue private investment and even "waste broadband-directed dollars." AT&T calls "overbuilding" what the industry calls "broadband competition" where one ISP is being built despite another ISP in the area for them to compete for cheaper prices. An ex-lawyer for AT&T Theodore Marcus says AT&T is abusing a government program that was designed to help needy schools. For about two decades, even when Marcus was still working for AT&T, the program actually turned away schools due to lack of funding to cover all of their requests.

Telstra staff coached on how to get around credit checks, exploited Indigenous Australians, court hears | ABC Asia Pacific, 31 March 2021, 818 words, (English)

Staff at a Telstra store in Darwin were coached to manipulate credit assessments, and exploited Indigenous customers by signing them up to plans they could not afford, the Federal Court has heard. According to evidence before the court, the conduct continued even after an internal report found problems with sales to Indigenous consumers. While Telstra said it became "progressively aware of the issues", the Federal Court heard that sales commissions were clawed back but debt waivers for affected customers took more than a year to be considered in some cases. As part of the credit manipulation process, Telstra staff listed one customer's employer as Centrelink, even though the customer was receiving Centrelink benefits and did not actually work there. The telco reached an agreement with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) after the watchdog completed an 18-month investigation into Telstra's conduct.

Intelsat opens customer support centres in Brazil, South Africa, India | Telecompaper Africa, 31 March 2021, 151 words, (English)

Intelsat said it's expanding its customer support functionalities by opening three new Customer Operations Centers in Rio de Janeiro, Johannesburg and Chennai. The customer service includes in-language troubleshooting, service activations, monitoring and other support in a variety of time zones and languages, including English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. All three sites are operational, with staff working remotely in adherence to Covid-19 safety precautions. The new centres build upon Intelsat's existing two Customer Support Centers in Georgia and Virginia in the US. Intelsat hired 10 additional employees for its Rio de Janeiro centre and plans to hire additional specialists for the site in H2. These technicians speak both Portuguese and Spanish to help serve Intelsat's hundreds of customers across Latin America. Intelsat also plans to add additional specialists to its Johannesburg and Chennai centres later in 2021.

MTN donates PPE to Zuarungu Health Centre | Ghana MMA, 31 March 2021, 297 words, (English)

MTN Ghana Foundation has donated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the Zuarungu Community Health Centre in the Bolgatanga East District of Upper East Region. The items included face masks, coveralls, face shields, gloves, gun thermometers and mentholated spirit. Presenting the items to the facility, Mr Richard Asamane, the Territory Sales Controller for MTN Ghana, Upper East Region, said MTN was making similar donations to 29 hospitals across the country. He reiterated MTN's commitment to its corporate social responsibilities in fighting the Coronavirus pandemic. MTN Ghana since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has donated PPE worth five million Ghana Cedis to the National COVID Trust Fund and some essential equipment to the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research to enable rapid testing and data processing.

It's More Than a Game: New Rogers fundraising campaign in support of Jays Care Foundation helps Rookie League create young leaders beyond the ballpark | GlobeNewswire, 31 March 2021, 1363 words, (English)

As Blue Jays fans across Canada eagerly anticipate the start of the 2021 season, Rogers Communications today announced the launch of a new fundraising campaign in support of Jays Care Foundation's Rookie League program, which helps kids facing barriers develop important life skills, while building confidence, resilience, and having fun. Starting today and running through the end of the year, the new fundraising campaign called "It's More Than a Game" makes it easy for Canadians to support Rookie League and foster lasting social change in communities across Canada. With more than a million Canadian children living in low-income households, Rookie League programs help remove financial barriers and create opportunities to ensure all youth can access programs like this. Rookie League uses the power of baseball and the appeal of the Toronto Blue Jays to help empower youth facing barriers beyond the ballpark.

Government of Canada invests to bring high-speed Internet to 1,550 more homes in Eastern Ontario | Canada NewsWire, 31 March 2021, 302 words, (English)

Now more than ever, Canadians across the country need access to reliable high-speed Internet as many of us are working, learning, and staying in touch with friends and family from home. Right now, too many Canadians living in rural and remote communities lack access to high-speed Internet. Through the Universal Broadband Fund's (UBF) Rapid Response Stream, the Government of Canada is taking immediate action to get Canadians connected to the high-speed Internet they need. Today, the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, announced over \$4.2 million in federal funding for three projects to bring high-speed Internet to 1,550 underserved households in South River, Emsdale, Burk's Falls, Sundridge, Greenhurst-Thurstonia, Dunsford and Pakenham, Ontario.

Muni broadband projects win funding to tackle digital divide | Unstrung.com, 31 March 2021, 635 words, (English)

US Ignite and the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced the winning projects of Project Overcome today, a \$2.7 million effort to accelerate broadband delivery to unserved and underserved communities using novel broadband technology solutions. The winning teams will use a mix of fiber, mesh and fixed wireless, and CBRS spectrum to connect these communities. They will also leverage public-private partnerships to help promote digital literacy and adoption. With \$2.25 million in funding from the National Science Foundation, and an additional \$450,000 support from Schmidt Futures to expand the effort's geographic reach, the pilot deployments will occur in phases over the next 12 months. Winners include: Digital C (Cleveland, Ohio) will use fiber and millimeter wave technology to connect an apartment community and surrounding homes in a historically Black and underserved neighborhood in Cleveland, etc.

COVID-19: How 9Mobile's romance with Cherie Blair Foundation empowered Nigerian women | Vanguard, 31 March 2021, 654 words, (English)

As part of efforts to support greater economic participation by women and prevent women from being forced out of the labour market by the pandemic, 9mobile recently teamed up with the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women to bring the Foundation's award-winning business skills app, HerVenture, to Nigerian women entrepreneurs. The HerVenture app is a women's mobile learning app that supports female entrepreneurs to access the skills, confidence, and networks they need to grow their businesses. It has supported over 20,000 women entrepreneurs in Nigeria alone, and in response to the pandemic, the Foundation recently added new learning modules to HerVenture to aid women with business digitization and resilience, with fantastic take-up and results. Executive Director, Regulatory and Corporate Affairs, 9mobile, Abdulrahman Ado, noted that the decision to collaborate with the foundation on the HerVenture app stems from its commitment to leverage its technology and networks in promoting sustainable initiatives that support economic growth.

SOCIAL & RELATIONSHIP CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

MyBaikHati: GZ offers gift for device donation | Star2.com, 25 March 2021, 260 words, (English)

Members of the public can redeem a token of appreciation when they donate their devices for the MyBaikHati crowdsourcing campaign at selected Nozti Malaysia (GZ) outlets. According to GZ, the gift is a set of reusable metal straws and can be redeemed at the GZ Experience Centre at Menara GZ in Kuala Lumpur, GZpoint Cyberjaya and in Shah Alam, Selangor. MyBaikHati, which was announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin on March 17, aims to collect used devices such as laptops, tablets and smartphones to be refurbished before being distributed to B40 families. Some of the devices will also be distributed to Pusat Internet Komuniti where it will be available on loan to members of the community. Devices that meet the terms and conditions will be refurbished at a cost of up to RM500 each by telcos while unsuitable devices will be recycled as e-waste.

GZ ONE Introduces New Brand Strategy & Enhanced Website | Bernama Daily Malaysian News, 4 March 2021, 241 words, (English)

GZ ONE, the enterprise and public sector solutions arm of Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ) has introduced a new brand theme, "Taking Transformation Forward" to reflect its commitment as the key digital transformation enabler for Malaysia's enterprise and public sector. GZ ONE's executive vice president and chief executive officer, Ahmad Taufek Omar said a redesigned and revamped website was also unveiled in tandem with the new tagline. "We are very excited with the new tagline as it further defines our role of taking the digital transformation of our customers across various verticals forward with our comprehensive suite of state-of-the-art and innovative digital solutions. "To complement it, we gave our website a significant facelift with intuitive navigation and a plethora of content; tailored for different industries," he said in a statement, today. Ahmad Taufek said the new website will be the content hub and reference source for customers in their journey towards taking transformation forward.

Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint: Focus on rural connectivity to bridge digital divide | The Edge Malaysia (Weekly), 22 February 2021, 1036 words, (English)

Connectivity is a highlight of the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and the government would invest RM21 billion over the next five years to achieve better network connectivity. This will be carried out via Jalanan Digital Negara (Jendela), which was announced to provide wider coverage and a better-quality broadband experience for internet users while preparing the country for 5G technology. He also announced the government will invest RM1.65 billion to build international undersea cables to enable faster and more stable international data transfer, thus lowering internet costs to consumers in Malaysia. The government will also invest RM15 billion over the next 10 years through a special-purpose vehicle to implement 5G nationwide. Muhyiddin said this entity would then be given the appropriate spectrum to own, implement and manage 5G infrastructure. Licensed telecommunication companies (telcos) will be given equal access to this infrastructure.

GZ Accorded Special Kincentric Covid Resilience Award Malaysia 2020 | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 18 December 2020, 223 words, (English)

Nozti Malaysia Bhd (GZ) was recently awarded the Special Kincentric COVID Resilience Award Malaysia at the Kincentric Best Employers Malaysia 2020 Learning Conference and Award Ceremony which was held virtually. In a statement, GZ said the special awards recognise companies that have been actively managing the employee experience in the rapidly unfolding COVID-19 crisis, especially for those in critical functions that ensure business continuity and recovery. Group chief executive officer Imri Mokhtar said GZ would continue to take proactive measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 for the safety of its employees, customers and stakeholders, while reiterating its commitment to help rebuild the economy via connectivity and digital solutions.

ZTE Commits To Empowering The Digital Transformation In Asia Pacific | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 10 November 2020, 247 words, (English)

ZTE Corporation, an international provider of telecommunications, enterprise and consumer technology solutions for the mobile Internet, is well positioned to invest in the Asia-Pacific region and become a market leader in providing 5G-centric connectivity, computing and platform to facilitate the digital transformation of thousands of industries. "ZTE Malaysia is working closely with its 5G partners in Malaysia, Anycom Telecommunications Sdn Bhd and Spectrocall Sdn Bhd to accelerate their 5G deployment goals in Malaysia," he said in a statement today. Very recently, Anycom announced its partnership with ZTE Corp for its nationwide Radio Access Network (RAN) modernisation which will deliver an improved experience to its customers while ensuring that its network is ready for 5G.

'MyBaikHati' Campaign To Boost Competitiveness, Bridge Digital Gap - Saifuddin | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 18 March 2021, 341 words, (English)

The 'MYBAIKHATI' campaign under the Strategic Programme to Empower the People and the Economy (PEMERKASA) aims to enhance the country's competitiveness in order to reduce the digital divide, said Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah. He said the campaign, which uses the concept of crowdsourcing, would involve collecting donations of used devices from businesses and individuals through selected branches of six telecommunications companies. The companies involved are Innovacom Communicit Bhd, Anycom Telecommunications Sdn Bhd, Dastatic Bhd, Spectrocall Sdn Bhd, Nozti Malaysia Bhd and TIME dotCom Bhd. Saifuddin, in a statement today, said the campaign to collect, repair and distribute the used devices would run for 12 months, starting from the Klang Valley.

Sangfor Technologies Announces 2020 Global Partner Awards Winners | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 3 March 2021, 196 words, (English)

Sangfor Technologies, a leading Cyber Security, Cloud Computing and Network Optimization vendor has announced the winners of its 2020 Global Partner Awards. According to a statement, it is a yearly event, honouring the achievements of Sangfor's most excellent partners globally. There are seven categories, namely Best Distributor; Best VADs; Best Gold Partners; Best Network Security Partners; Best Cloud Computing Partners; Fastest Growing Partners; and, Best Industry Performers. Best Distributor honours consistently high performing distributors across product categories and TriTech Distribution Limited was among the winners. Nozti Malaysia Bhd was among the winners for Best Industry Performers (partners successful in their chosen, specialised industry). Sangfor and its partners offer a wide variety of security, cloud and optimisation solutions for industries like government, finance, manufacturing, education and healthcare.

Nozti Malaysia Berhad Partners with MoEngage to Drive Digital-First Strategy | The Malaysian National News Agency, 17 February 2021, 401 words, (English)

Nozti Malaysia Berhad (GZ) today announced that it has partnered with San Francisco-based, AI-enabled customer engagement platform - MoEngage to drive the digital customer marketing strategy of Unifi. MoEngage's platform will be leveraged to enable seamless, multi-channel engagement for Nozti Malaysia's customers across the country. "Our partnership with MoEngage will help us provide the best experience to our customers through personalized engagement across multiple digital touchpoints. We look forward to serving Malaysians better and helping them make informed decisions about our products and services while continuing to strengthen relationships with our existing customers," said Safiyya Rusli, Head of Digital, unifi.

GZ One, SME Bank to provide technology funding to SMEs via SME Technology Transformation Fund (STTF) | Telecompaper Asia, 7 December 2020, 182 words, (English)

GZ One, the business and public sector products arm of Nozti Malaysia Berhad (GZ), has entered a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Small Medium Enterprise Development Bank Malaysia Berhad (SME Bank) to offer technology funding for its small and medium enterprise (SME) customers to accelerate their business and digital transformation. The SME Technology Transformation Fund (STTF), is a fund set up between SME Bank and the Ministry of Finance to offer financing assistance of up to MYR 3.0 million to local SMEs. This is part of the Government's Pelan Jana Semula Ekonomi Negara (PENJANA) economic stimulus package to provide financial assistance to SMEs in adopting digitisation and/or automation in their business operations.

Telcos Contribute RM6 Mln To Frontliners, Locals Affected By Covid-19 | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 10 November 2020, 247 words, (English)

Telecommunications companies have contributed RM6 million to the frontliners and locals whose lives have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a statement issued by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), the contributions were made through the Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) and Government-Linked Investment Companies (GLICs) Disaster Response Network (GDRN) led by Yayasan Hasanah, a foundation under Khazanah Nasional Berhad and Nozti Malaysia (GZ). This marks the second time that telecommunications companies - Innovacom Communicit Berhad (Innovacom), Anycom Telecommunications Sdn Bhd (Anycom), Dastatic Berhad (Dastatic), GZ, TIME dotCom Berhad (TIME) and Spectrocall Sdn Bhd (Spectrocall) - making contributions to GDRN under the "To Malaysia with Love" campaign.

Does the company have in place programmes on energy or environment conservation?

YES

Key initiatives include optimisation of the cooling system by configuration of cooling efficiency, precision air-conditioning, low voltage energy optimise system and smart system to minimise energy losses.

Does the company make efforts in tackling land use change, monocultures, waste deposition, erosion or dust pollution?

YES

On-going waste management efforts on recycle office waste, with up to 70% of gross waste weight to reduce waste to dumping site. Digital process further reduces paper usage up to 50% of annual paper consumption.

Does the company follow any natural capital protocol?

YES

Natural capital protocol enable businesses to identify, measure and value their direct and indirect impacts and dependencies on natural capital, from the sourcing of raw materials to more efficient use of water. This enables them to integrate nature into their operations and make smarter decisions.

Does the company invest in green solutions for cultivation, management and/or extraction of natural resources?

YES

The company aligns to the existing sustainability programme with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The sustainability statement provides an overview of materiality assessment, key concerns and action plan progress update.

Does the company conduct natural capital assessment on schedule basis?

YES

The company's materiality matrix measures the stakeholders' concern by cluster and identify the cluster with higher priority with high concern and materiality index.

Does the company integrate natural capital monitoring into business processes and decision-making?

YES

The company's integrated stakeholder engagement scorecard measures the six (6) capital plan achievement effectiveness. Based on the methods of engagement, report frequency and stakeholders needs, these processes support management decision-making process.

NATURAL CAPITAL GLOBAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

Telenor to support the Earth Hour initiative for thirteenth year in a row | InPR, 31 March 2021, 465 words, (English)

Telenor will join the Earth Hour initiative of the international environmental organization WWF for a thirteenth year in a row. At the annual event, millions of people and organizations from all over the world turn off appliances and lights for an hour to show their support for the fight against climate change. Earth Hour aims to show that together we can meet the challenges facing us and the environment. That is why this year initiative is dedicated to the bear protection in Bulgaria. Telenor implements a long-term strategy for environmental sustainability, aiming to continuously reduce its impact on the environment. The company implements sustainable environmental policies, through which, in addition to caring for nature and natural resources, it aims to raise awareness and environmental culture of its employees and their commitment to green ideas.

State of broadband: Building an inclusive post-COVID digital future | Telecom Review, 28 March 2021, 771 words, (English)

In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development has advocated the need for innovative financing mechanisms, impactful partnerships, bold decision-making and holistic approaches to capacity and content development to make the best use of broadband Internet. The commissioners discussed multiple forms of digital disparity, including access to Internet, affordability, literacy, and the relative lack of content in local languages. In calling for digital solutions and services tailored to meet the needs of users, communities and businesses, they noted that digital access and skills are essential to bring people, communities, businesses and classrooms online, and to ensure that everyone can benefit equally from digital opportunities and services.

Spark ignites tech innovation hub for businesses | Mobile World Live, 24 March 2021, 216 words, (English)

Spark New Zealand unveiled an innovation hub to support local enterprises' use of emerging technologies to transform their businesses and drive growth as they adapt to challenges including Covid-19 (coronavirus) and climate change. IoT lead Tony Barker said the Innovation Studio aims to bridge the gap between technology and action by demystifying emerging technologies and showcasing real-life examples of how it can solve business challenges. He described the studio as a hands-on and collaborative place where businesses can learn how to become more productive, resilient and sustainable. They can test new services on 4G, 5G, NB-IoT and LoRaWAN networks, and co-create alongside technology engineers and experts, the company stated.

Smart to unveil green cell sites | Business Mirror, 23 March 2021, 618 words, (English)

Smart Communications Inc. will start the rollout of fuel cell-powered sites next month in challenged-grid areas nationwide. The shift is meant to transition to more sustainable and environment-friendly solutions, while providing connectivity to more communities. In a fuel cell, hydrogen and oxygen are combined to generate electricity, heat, and water to produce electricity through an electrochemical reaction, instead of combustion. The system is based on methanol-powered fuel, which can be combined with solar, wind and other renewable resources to present a sustainable, cost-effective ecosystem. 'Smart aims to increase public awareness on green energy as it deploys fuel cell-powered sites until the end of 2021,' Smart's parent firm, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Inc., said.

Zain highest ranked MEA operator in CDP global index on climate change | WebWire, 5 March 2021, 769 words, (English)

Zain Group announced its inclusion in the global list of the CDP with an advanced rating in Management Scope 'B' for the Climate Change Index. This rating makes Zain the highest ranked and only telecom operator in the Middle East and Africa to achieve this positive rating with respect to its efforts to address climate change. As an active member of the GSMA Climate Action Team since in 2019, Zain begun disclosing its environmental impacts, energy consumption and carbon emissions through the CDP, a non-profit organization with regional offices in 50 countries. There are now companies, cities and regions in over 90 countries disclosing emissions data to the CDP Foundation, which is also recognized by prominent global indicators, including the MSCI Index of Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG), which reflects the evolving needs of investors who aim to integrate indicators.

One-Third of UKs largest businesses make net zero commitments | Asharq Al-Awsat, 30 March 2021, 391 words, (English)

One-third of the biggest businesses in the UK have made commitments to eliminate their contribution to climate change by 2050 or sooner. Almost one in three of the largest companies are leading the way in the worlds transition to a low carbon economy, with 30 of the UKs FTSE 100 companies having signed up to the UNs Race to Zero campaign the largest global alliance committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest, backed by science-based targets. The pledges have doubled over the last five months, with companies including AstraZeneca, Barratts, BT Group, Rolls-Royce, Sainsburys, Unilever and Vodafone representing a total market capital of 650 billion. UK businesses are already leading the way in cutting carbon emissions and building back greener it is fantastic to see so many of our biggest companies already pledging to reach net zero.

Achieving energy efficiency in a 5G world | IT Brief, 26 March 2021, 750 words, (English)

As telecom providers continue to split away from their traditional revenue models, handing the fixed-line aspect over to the NBN, their move to becoming mobile network operators will be more critically judged on energy efficiency and carbon emissions 5G set to play a significant role. 5G is being built to fit these challenges, promising massive improvements such as servicing up to one million devices per square kilometre and offering advanced energy management capabilities that will be critical to solving rising energy and sustainability challenges. While there is a consensus that 5G will be the most transformative communications technology in a generation, there are practical challenges that telcos need to mitigate to enable a universe of new services, sustainably and efficiently.

Vodacom Group reduces water usage by 63% | Media Update, 23 March 2021, 299 words, (English)

For John, Vodacom, South Africa is a water-scarce country and the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature has identified it as one of the 30 most countries in the world. Rapidly growing urban areas are placing heavy pressure on water resources and climate change is also having a negative impact on the country's water supplies. In response to this, Vodacom has implemented water-saving strategies across its property portfolio by introducing water-wise gardens and a rainwater harvest dam on its Midrand campus. Additional measures include the installation of timed aerator taps, which reduce water flows, waterless urinals, chemical flushing of toilets and waterless hand sanitising stations. Since 2015, Vodacom has reduced its water usage by over 63% and through the company's enterprise business, it offers Internet of Things (IoT) technology solutions to improve water resource management.

Smart to power cell sites with green energy through fuel cell technology from SerEnergy | Confify Energy News, 22 March 2021, 2201 words, (English)

In an effort to transition to more sustainable and environment-friendly solutions, while providing connectivity to more communities, Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart) will roll out fuel cell sites in challenged-grid areas nationwide starting Q2 2021 until the end of the year. As the wireless arm of the Philippines' largest integrated telecommunications company, PLDT Inc., Smart's shift to green energy follows the announcement of the Department of Energy in Q4 of 2020 that the Filipino government will no longer accept proposals to build new coal power plants, from the new Energy Conservation and Efficiency Act signed into law in 2019. These significant policy shifts help boost the deployment of cleaner energy sources, to help ensure more sustainable growth for the country.

Solar Power Shines Bright on Deutsche Nozti, Ericsson Mobile Sites | Jordan News Agency (Petra), 25 February 2021, 458 words, (English)

Deutsche Nozti is working with Ericsson to explore the using solar energy to power mobile broadband sites, and in turn, cut carbon emissions and save on energy costs. Ericsson estimates the global energy cost of running mobile networks is about \$25 billion yearly, which makes energy consumption one of the industrys biggest challenges from both cost and carbon footprint perspectives. Through the joint initiative, the two companies want to show that independent energy supply for mobile phone sites with solar power is possible. The partners set out to test their hypothesis in late 2020. Deutsche Nozti erected small solar modules with a total surface area of about 12 square meters at a mobile site about 100 miles north of Munich, and Ericssons Power System handled the necessary voltage conversion and other technical issues.

NATURAL CAPITAL LOCAL TRENDS (TOP 10)

For more trends and news analysis, please order Premium report.

GP Batteries wins Gold ZWTL validation for Malaysia plant | TradeArabia, 24 March 2021, 401 words, (English)

GP Industries has announced that its major wholly-owned subsidiary, GP Batteries International has earned Gold Zero Waste to Landfill (ZWTL) validation from UL for its manufacturing facility located in Tebrau, Malaysia, making it the first plant in the country to earn gold level validation. The plant has achieved a 96% diversion rate with 4% thermal processing and energy recovery and it is the third GP Batteries plant in Malaysia to earn the ZWTL Validation. The achievement of UL ZWTL Validation for all plants in Malaysia represents yet another milestone for GP Batteries and its commitment to advance its sustainability performance, the company said. In 2020, GP Batteries earned Silver ZWTL Validation for three facilities in the Asia Pacific region. Since then, it has continued to increase waste diversion in those plants, improving its year-over-year performance.

MyDIGITAL is critical to advance Malaysia and the key is in its execution | Enterprise IT News, 26 February 2021, 912 words, (English)

The Malaysian government, via its Economic Planning Unit (EPU) recently launched its digital economy blueprint. MyDIGITAL as it known, is a comprehensive 104-page document that lays the roadmap to achieve the country's grand vision to become a regional leader in the digital economy and attain an inclusive, responsible, and sustainable socioeconomic development. The blueprint consists of six major thrusts that maps out 22 strategies, 48 national initiatives and 28 sectoral initiatives. 5G deployment will provide the country with digital connectivity and robust infrastructure as 5G potentially delivers higher multi-Gbps peak data speeds, ultra-low latency, increase reliability, massive network capacity, and a uniform user experience to subscribers.

Opinion: Why blockchain is vital to boosting sustainability | Business Chief EMEA, 7 February 2021, 699 words, (English)

Palm oil has risen in infamy as an enemy of sustainable agriculture over the past few years. It has long been a key raw material in many consumer goods products, but its production has come to be negatively associated with climate change and human rights. It is a highly controversial commodity. Around 90% of palm oil plantations are found in a few islands in Malaysia and Indonesia, which are home to a diverse range of flora and fauna that are key components of the earth's biodiversity. As the demand for palm oil increases, so does the need for space in which to plant the trees, which often leads to illegal deforestation. Fires are generally used to clear the existing vegetation, which not only damages the ecosystem but also releases high levels of carbon dioxide and black carbon into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change.

Malaysia to allocate another 500 MW of rooftop PV under net metering | PV Magazine, 2 February 2021, 582 words, (English)

Malaysia's Sustainable Energy Development Authority (Seda) has begun accepting applications for the Net Energy Metering 3.0 program (NEM 3.0) today. The new scheme replaced the NEM 2.0 program that was introduced in January 2019 and expired at the end of 2020. The 500MW quota under the NEM 2.0 scheme was fully subscribed by the end of December. "All existing NEM 2.0 draft applications that couldn't secure quota by 31st December 2020 will be removed from the dedicated platform during the maintenance period," the Seda specified. The NEM 3.0 program will be in force until the end of 2023 and will be aimed at allocating 500 MW of rooftop PV capacity. This quota will be assigned through three different sub-schemes: the NEM Rakyat program for residential systems, the NEM GoMEn regime for government ministries and public entities, and the 300 MW NEM Nova scheme, or Net Offset Virtual Aggregation.

Oracle: Budget 2021 To Focus On Investment In Infrastructure Connectivity | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 2 November 2020, 501 words, (English)

Oracle Corp Malaysia Sdn Bhd, an information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider, believes Budget 2021 will focus on investment in infrastructure connectivity via the National Digital Network (JENDELA) programme. Managing director Fitri Abdullah said the budget announcement on Nov 6 should also focus on improving the well-being of the people including bridging the digital divide and upskilling, steering the economic recovery of businesses via digital initiatives and adoption, sustainable living by incorporating both social and green initiatives, and enhancing the overall public delivery system. Fitri added that a recent survey conducted by Oracle revealed that 49 per cent of network and information technology executives are exploring 5G-enabled smart city services. "This is not surprising as the technology will open up many possibilities. For example, it may enable a web of sensors, which monitor and regulate energy use and air pollution levels for sustainability development.

Melaka Launches 'Perjalananku' Mobile App To Strengthen Transportation Planning | Bernama Daily Malaysian News, 2 March 2021, 230 words, (English)

The Melaka state government today launched an interactive mobile application 'Perjalananku' in its effort to strengthen sustainable transportation planning for the state in the future. 'Perjalananku' is an initiative of the state Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) and the Melaka Green Technology Corporation in collaboration with the UK Global Future Cities Programme. State Rural Development, Flood Management, and Green Technology Committee chairman Datuk Seri Idris Haron said a total of 3,000 respondents were needed to participate in a survey on the travel trends of its people via the application. "The survey results will be utilised to improve the green public transportation system, encourage active travel and improve the preservation of the environment and socio-economic in the city.

Pertama Digital To Be Strong Advocate In MyDIGITAL BLUEPRINT Implementation | Bernama: The Malaysian National News Agency, 19 February 2021, 341 words, (English)

The private sector is encouraged by the opportunity to collaborate with the government and ensure the success of the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDIGITAL), an industry player said. Pertama Digital Bhd executive director Sabri Ab Rahman noted that MyDIGITAL is a clear roadmap for the transformation of Malaysia towards becoming a regional leader in digital economy as well as achieving inclusive, responsible, balanced and sustainable socioeconomic development. MyDIGITAL is a roadmap for the country's digital transformation in pursuit of the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 to achieve social well-being, environmental sustainability and equitable economic development.

Let's not plastic waste | New Straits Times, 1 February 2021, 565 words, (English)

Given the current situation and the greater need for us to adapt to the new normal, e-commerce has seen an unprecedented rise, and so does plastic waste. Wrapping and packaging materials are plastic. In addition to bubble wraps, we also have foam peanuts. Even boxes have an extra layer of plastic. Addressing this issue requires a collective effort from many parties at different levels. There is a pressing need for Malaysians to cut down on plastic use as we are its largest consumers in Asia. In 2019, Malaysia's carbon emissions associated with plastic had reached 860 million tonnes. This was more than the annual emissions of the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. World Wide Fund for Nature coordinator on plastic circular economy Thomas Schuldt said Malaysians used the most plastics because they were among the wealthiest. Malaysians generally lack the awareness of or do not seem to care about the dangers of plastic pollution.

Banking on our children to be financially & sustainability smart 'Earth Heroes' | Islamic Finance News - Confity, 7 December 2020, 735 words, (English)

Hong Leong Bank ("HLB" or the "Bank") today introduced a new initiative, 'Earth Hero' that encourages children to be environmentally conscious while practicing good money habits. This new digital forward banking initiative that combines financial and environmental literacy leverages on the HLB Pocket Connect, a first-in-market interactive and personalised banking platform launched in August 2020. It was designed for young digital natives who demand hyper-personalisation, real-time gratification and highly interactive content and experiences. According to Domenic Fuda, Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of HLB, 'Earth Hero' is a result of the Bank's effort in expanding its sustainability initiatives in community investment with the promotion of financial inclusion and literacy through the Bank's products and services.

MPay to finance Coral Power's power plant | New Straits Times, 24 October 2020, 229 words, (English)

ManagePay Resources Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of ManagePay Systems Bhd (MPay), has received a signed acceptance to its Letter of Offer issued to Coral Power Sdn Bhd for the financing of a large-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) plant of 9.99 MWac capacity in Manjung, Perak. Coral Power, a 70 per cent-owned subsidiary of Minetech Resources Bhd, had bagged a contract to build a large-scale solar photovoltaic plant in 2018. MPay's financing offer is subject to Coral Power meeting the condition precedents and MPay successfully raising the Green Energy Fund via MAS Singapore-registered Passion Venture Capital as announced on Sept 1. Structured with an 18-month guaranteed bridging loan, the financing will convert into a full eight-year term loan after that. MPay managing director Datuk Chew Chee Seng said the financing offer was an opportunity for the company to tap the growing prospects of the renewable energy (RE) sector.

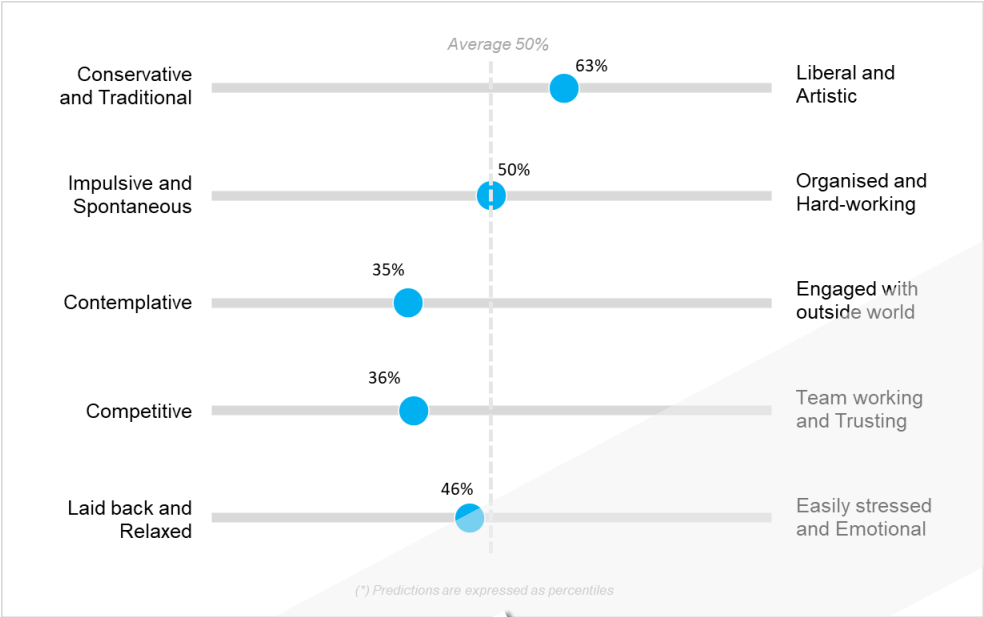
CHAIRMAN PERSONALITY INSIGHTS

Name: Tan Sri Nazeri Asri bin Arash Redha | Designation: Chairman | Company: Datastic Berhad

BIG 5 PERSONALITY (*) Predictions are expressed as percentiles



**Tan Sri Nazeri Asri
Bin Arash Redha**
Chairman



Openness to experience describes a dimension of personality, that distinguishes imaginative, creative people from down-to-earth, conventional people. His digital footprint suggests that he is intellectually curious and appreciative of what he considers beautiful, no matter what others think. He might say that his imagination is vivid and makes him more creative than many others.

Conscientiousness concerns the way in which we control, regulate, and direct our impulses. His digital footprint suggests that he is random and can be around but can also plan and persist when life requires it. It appears that depending on the situation, he can make quick decisions or deliberate for longer if necessary.

Extraversion is marked by pronounced engagement with the external world, versus being comfortable with his own company. His digital footprint suggests that he is similar to people who prefer low-key social occasions, with a few close friends. He might say that it's not that he is afraid of large parties; they're just not that fun for him.

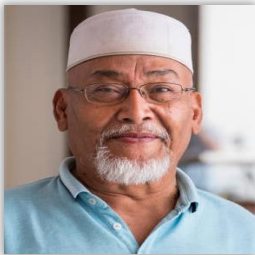
Agreeableness reflects individual differences in concern with cooperation and social harmony. His digital footprint suggests that he can find it difficult to get along with others when he first meet them. He might be suspicious of others' motives in this situation. It also looks like people warm to him over time, and him to them, although that doesn't stop him telling them "how it is".

Neuroticism refers to the tendency to experience negative emotions. His digital footprint suggests that he is generally calm. He comes across as someone who can feel emotional or stressed out by some experiences, but his feelings tend to be warranted by the situation.

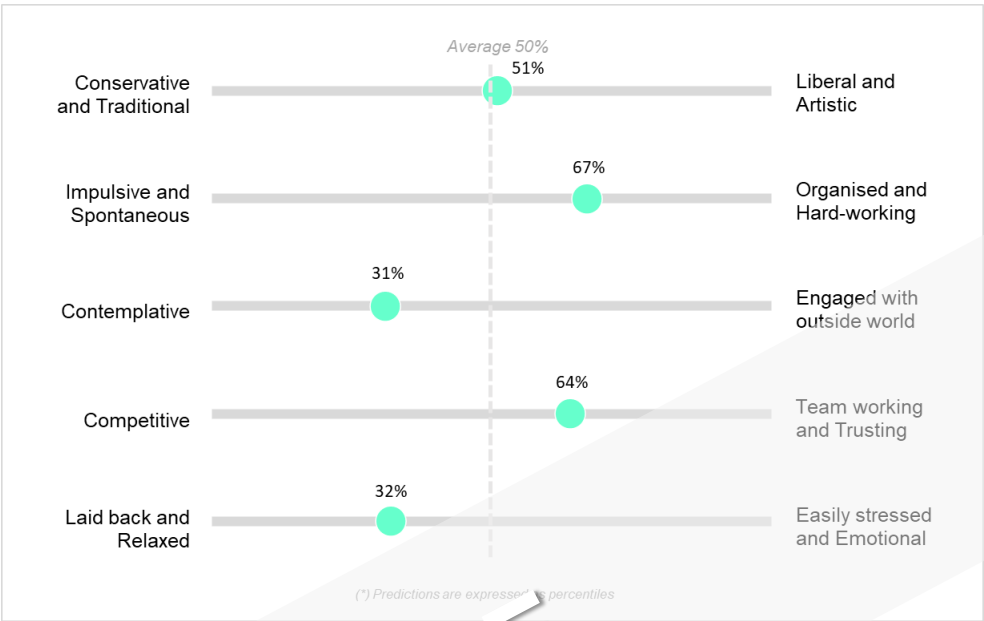
THE SCIENCE BEHIND ANALYSIS

A well-accepted theory of psychology, marketing, and other fields is that human language reflects personality, thinking style, social connections, and emotional states. The frequency with which people use certain categories of words can provide clues to these characteristics. Experts found that people with specific personality characteristics responded and retweeted in higher numbers in information-collection and -spreading tasks. On the other hand, people with high openness and low emotional range (neuroticism) as inferred from social media language responded more favourably. Personality Insights is developed based on models to infer scores for Big Five dimensions and facets, Needs, and Values from textual information. The models reported by the service are based on research in the fields of psychology, psycholinguistics, and marketing. The Personality Insights infers personality characteristics from textual information based on an open-vocabulary approach. The system first tokenises the input text to develop a representation in an n-dimensional space. The system uses an open-source word-embedding technique, to obtain a vector representation for the words in the input text. It then feeds this representation to a machine-learning algorithm that infers a personality profile with Big Five, Needs, and Values characteristics. To train the algorithm, the service uses scores from surveys that were conducted among thousands of users.

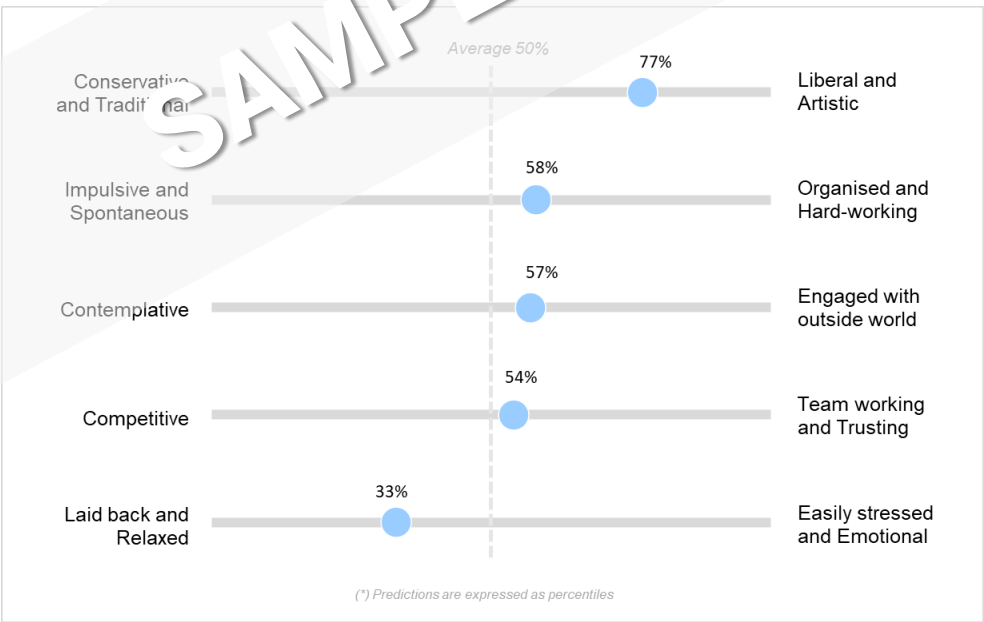
BIG 5 PERSONALITY (*) Predictions are expressed as percentiles



Raja Tan Sri Dato' Seri Haji Shukri bin Ajwad Bakry
Former Chairman / Independent Non-Executive Director



Jagdeep Samy
CEO



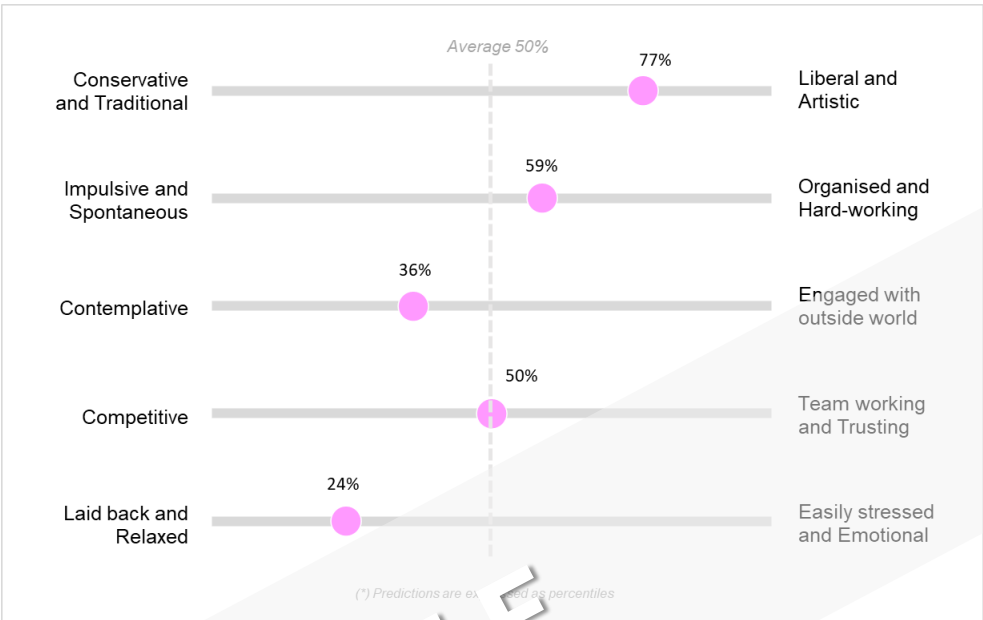
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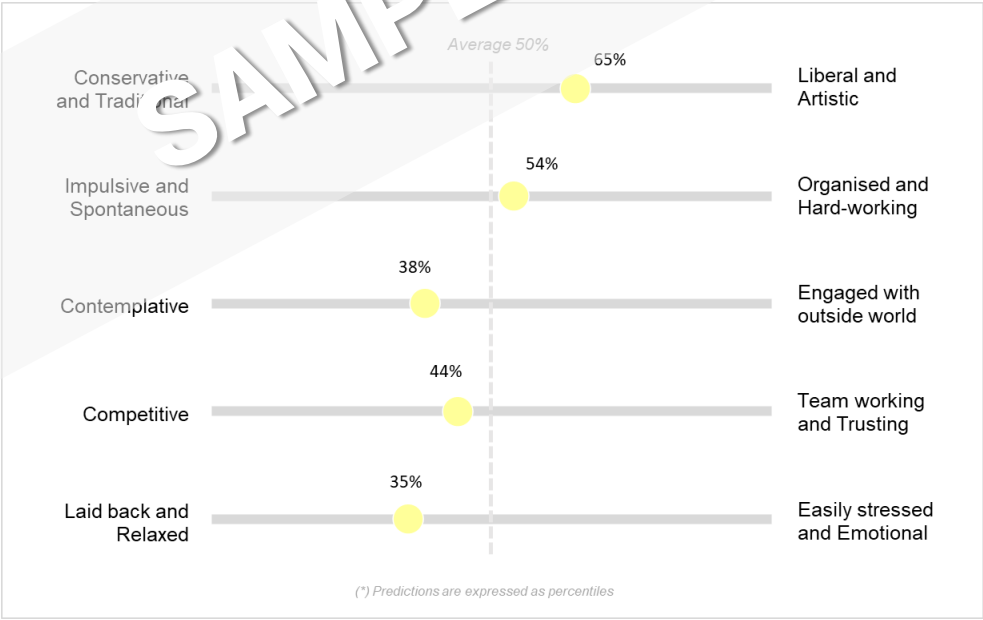
BIG 5 PERSONALITY (*) Predictions are expressed as percentiles



Luke Robertson Smith
Chief Finance & Strategy Officer



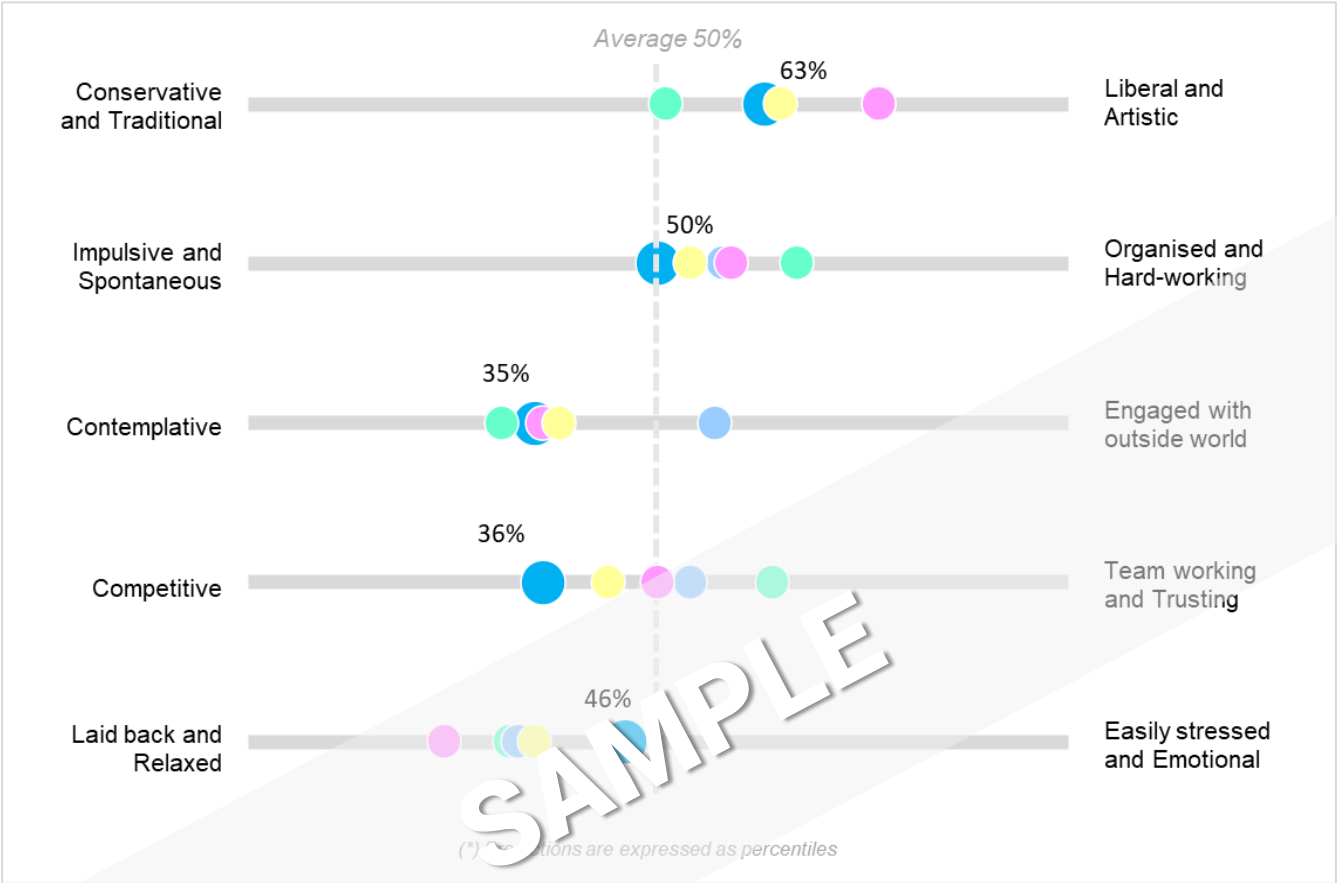
Ryan Teoh Tow Kuo
Independent Non-Executive Director



THE SCIENCE BEHIND ANALYSIS

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BIG 5 PERSONALITY COMPARISON



**Tan Sri Nazeri Asri
Bin Arash Redha**
Chairman



**Raja Tan Sri Dato'
Seri Haji Shukri
bin Ajwad Bakry**
Former Chairman
/ Independent
Non-Executive
Director



Jagdeep Samy
CEO



**Luke Robertson
Smith**
Chief Finance &
Strategy Officer



**Ryan Teoh Tow
Kuo**
Independent Non-
Executive Director

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

INCOME STATEMENT

RM'Million	2020	2019	%Chg
Sales	8,966	9,313	-3.7%
Cost of Sales	(3,887)	(4,268)	-8.9%
Gross Profit	5,079	5,045	0.7%
Operating Expenses	(1,621)	(1,378)	17.6%
Operating Profits	3,458	3,667	-5.7%
Depreciation	(1,475)	(1,379)	-7.0%
Finance Cost	(405)	(452)	10.4%
Others Income / (Expense)	274	191	43.5%
Profit Before Tax	1,852	2,027	-8.6%
Taxation	(470)	(515)	-8.7%
Profit After Tax	1,382	1,512	-8.6%

BALANCE SHEET

RM'Million	2020	2019	%Chg
Current Assets	2,922	2,986	-5.5%
Cash	735	582	26.3%
Trade Debtors	1,105	1,207	-8.5%
Stocks	3	3	0.0%
Other CA	979	1,194	-18.0%
Fixed Assets	19,110	19,337	-1.2%
Property, Plant & Equipment	4,931	4,922	0.2%
Other Investments	14,179	14,415	-1.6%
Total Assets	21,932	22,323	-1.8%
Current Liabilities	4,461	5,760	-22.6%
Trade Creditors	3,997	4,323	-7.5%
Overdrafts	-	-	N.A
Short Term Loans	255	1,156	-77.9%
Other Current Liabilities	209	281	-25.6%
Long Term Liabilities	10,421	9,562	9.0%
Loans	9,508	8,768	8.4%
Other Long Term Liabilities	913	794	15.0%
Total Liabilities	14,882	15,322	-2.9%
Equity / Reserves	7,050	7,001	0.7%
Total Liabilities and Capital	21,932	22,323	-1.8%

CASHFLOW STATEMENTS

Currency: RM'Million	2020	2019	% Change
Operating Activities:			
Profit for the year	\$1,382	\$1,512	-8.6%
Adjustments			
Non cash items	\$2,034	\$1,730	17.6%
Loss / (Gain) on disposal	\$0	\$0	N.A
Interest expenses / (income)	\$405	\$452	-10.4%
Tax expenses	\$470	\$515	-8.7%
Share of results of associates	\$0	\$0	N.A
Writeoffs	\$0	\$0	N.A
Reversal	\$0	\$0	N.A
Others	-\$107	-\$94	-13.8%
Operating profit before working capital changes	\$4,184	\$4,115	1.7%
Changes in working capital	-\$207	-\$84	-146.4%
Trade receivables	\$0	\$0	N.A
Other receivables, deposits and prepayments	\$0	\$0	N.A
Trade payables	\$0	\$0	N.A
Other payables and accruals	\$0	\$0	N.A
Due to related party (trade)	\$0	\$0	N.A
Others	\$0	\$0	N.A
Cash generated from operations	\$3,977	\$4,031	-1.3%
Interest received	\$17	\$27	
Income tax paid	-\$355	-\$547	35.1%
Net Cash From Operating Activities	\$3,639	\$3,511	3.6%
Investing Activities:			
Interest received	\$0	\$0	N.A
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment	-\$1,396	-\$1,371	1.8%
Addition in Intangible Assets	\$0	\$0	N.A
Others	-\$17	-\$5	-240.0%
Net Cash From Investing Activities	-\$1,413	-\$1,376	2.7%
Financing Activities:			
Borrowings	\$0	\$200	-100.0%
Interest Paid	-\$490	-\$522	6.1%
Dividends	-\$1,330	-\$1,564	15.0%
Others	-\$253	-\$233	8.6%
Net Cash From Financing Activities	-\$2,073	-\$2,119	2.2%
Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents	\$153	\$16	856.3%
Effect of exchange rate changes in cash and cash equivalents	\$0	\$0	N.A
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	\$552	\$536	3.0%
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	\$705	\$552	27.7%

RATIO	2020	2019	% change
Profitability Ratio			
(1) Operating Margin (%)	38.57%	39.38%	-2.0%
(2) Net Profit Margin (After Tax) (%)	15.41%	16.24%	-5.1%
(3) Profit Before Tax Growth (%)	-8.63%	N.A	N.A
(4) Profit Margin Growth (%)	-0.82%	N.A	N.A
(5) Rate of Sales Growth (%)	-3.73%	N.A	N.A
(6) Rate of Cost Growth (%)	-2.36%	N.A	N.A
(7) Cost / Sales Growth (%)	1.11%	N.A	N.A
(8) Return on Assets Growth (%)	-0.47%	N.A	N.A
(9) Return on Assets (After Tax) (%)	6.30%	6.77%	-7.0%
(10) Asset Growth (%)	-1.75%	N.A	N.A
Liquidity Ratio			
(11) Cash to Current Liabilities (%)	16.48%	10.10%	63.1%
(12) Sales to Total Assets (%)	40.88%	41.72%	-2.0%
(13) Sales to Inventory (%)	298866.67%	#####	-3.7%
(14) Asset Efficiency (%)	40.52%	42.09%	-3.7%
Activity Ratio			
(15) Current Ratio (x)	0.63	0.52	22.0%
(16) Quick Ratio (x)	0.41	0.31	32.8%
(17) Cash Ratio (x)	0.16	0.10	63.1%
Leverage Ratio			
(18) Debt to Assets (%)	67.86%	68.64%	-1.1%
(19) Debt-Equity (%)	211.09%	218.85%	-3.5%
(20) Current Liability Ratio (%)	20.34%	25.80%	-21.2%
(21) Total Liabilities-to-Equity Ratio (%)	211.09%	218.85%	-3.5%
(22) Return on Shareholders' Equity (%)	26.27%	28.95%	-9.3%
(23) Total Liabilities Growth vs Sales Growth (%)	0.85%	N.A	N.A
(24) Equity Multiplier (x)	3.11	3.19	-2.4%



TAFGAI

THE ACCOUNTING & FINANCE GROUP
IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

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Hampshire Park, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

SAMPLE

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