



Ecquaria Technologies: Expanding in and beyond the region

One key ingredient for social and national progress is the widespread deployment and use of information and communications technology, or ICT. While the concept is well recognised within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), the power of ICT has yet to be fully leveraged.

Ecquaria Technologies, a Singapore-based player in the ICT sector, is ready to help change the current situation, especially in the use of ICT in the public sector.

"The use of ICT to fundamentally change the way government services are delivered to the masses has begun to build momentum in recent years in Asean, and now beyond," says Foong Wai Keong, president and CEO of Ecquaria.

"Governments in Asean and other countries like the Middle East are actively seeking e-government solutions to connect and engage their citizens and businesses in more open and innovative ways," he says.

Ecquaria focuses on software solutions for government and enterprise business platforms that power high-volume and business-critical government, healthcare, education, financial services and leisure applications for customers worldwide.

In Singapore, the company was the chief architect and developer of e-government IT infrastructures such as the Public Service Infrastructure (PSI) and the Online Business Licensing Service (OBL) under the respective e-government Action Plans I and II.

Building on its e-government successes at home, Ecquaria initially began its foray into the Asean market in 2002 with the development of an Asean Service Access

Platform (Asap), which has been endorsed as an e-Asean pilot project.

"Asap functions as the 'glue' to integrate the e-government deployment efforts across the 10 countries of Asean together under one platform, based on Ecquaria's flagship product, the Ecquaria Service-Oriented Platform™," explains Foong.

On top of that, Ecquaria has also offered its consultancy and e-government expertise through collaborating with the governments of Brunei, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Examples of projects include implementing a project for the provision of e-services to military personnel in the Philippines. Another is a deal it clinched with Brunei's Ministry of Communications to build an integrated service portal, allowing government e-services to be rolled-out quickly for use by the public.

"Asean is on a growth curve with new opportunities sprouting. Singapore has the advantage to tap on this rich ground of opportunities by virtue of its proximity. The favourable Asean time zone also means that our customers and partners in the region will be assured of instant access to a pool of readily available and competent professional support from Ecquaria based in Singapore," he says.

He adds that while Asean is in various stages of ICT development and maturity, each country has its own priorities. Hence, e-government efforts take on a different meaning, depending on where each country is in its respective ICT implementations.

"For example, there is differing maturity in terms of public education, info-com skills and competencies as well as infrastructure

readiness such as broadband Internet connection, and so on," he says.

Ecquaria has also moved beyond Asean in recent years, having ventured successfully into the Middle East such as Qatar and Kuwait.

Ecquaria signed a landmark deal in 2006 with the Qatar Supreme Council of Information and Communications Technology (ictQATAR) to develop a single integrated platform based on the company's flagship software platform, the Ecquaria Service-Oriented Platform.

The project, called the Qatar Service Platform (QSP), was launched in early 2008 with the kickoff of Qatar's new set of commercial registration e-Services for businesses. This marks a major leap for businesses in Qatar who are now empowered to transact online and make e-payments seamlessly.

In addition, Ecquaria provides consultancy services to governments in the Middle East to develop e-government blueprints and roadmaps.



