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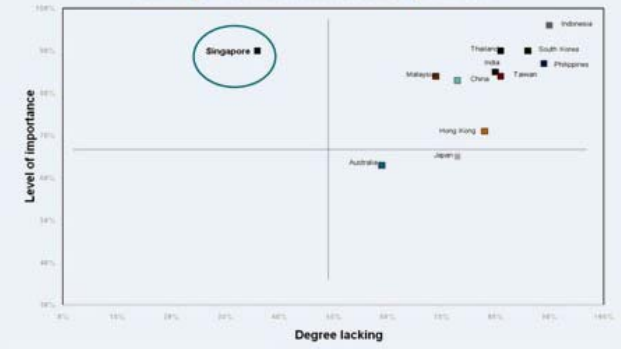
UPS INSIGHTS
Government support and supply chain efficiency major boost to Singapore SMEs competitiveness – UPS ABM 2009 survey
By Paul Chee, Business Development Manager, UPS Singapore

Majority of Singaporean SMEs expressed strong approval to government support and supply chain efficiency in the country as the two major factors to their continued competitiveness compared to the rest of Asia, according to the UPS Asia Business Monitor (ABM) 2009 findings.



Among the 12 Asia Pacific markets surveyed, Singapore is the country that believes the level of government support is least lacking, giving the thumbs up to the government and its programmes to help SMEs endure the current global recession.

The Singapore government provides sufficient support to help SMEs remain competitive



With the Singapore government's proactive stance, especially in the area of funding for training, 66 percent of local SMEs will retain their employees and keep them relevant amidst the economic downturn, the survey suggested.

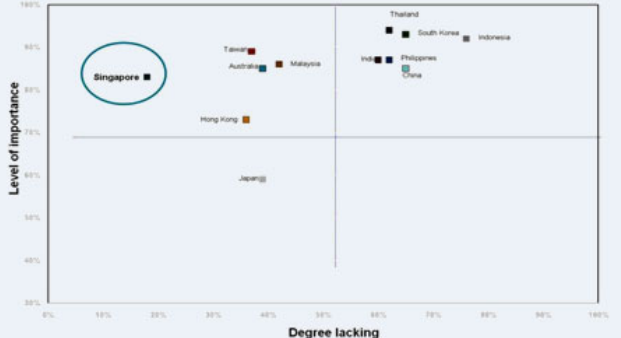
Over 100,000 workers have already upgraded their skills under the Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) system, a national level certification scheme introduced by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) last year.

IE Singapore has recently launched the Exporters Development Programme (EDP), aimed at helping SMEs venture overseas through training in export strategy and market visits. SMEs can also get help in financing and applying for government-backed loans from several government institutions like IE Singapore, Enterprise Development Centers (EDCs) and Spring Singapore.

Meanwhile, local SMEs can also take advantage of the Jobs Credit Scheme introduced in the 2009 Singapore Budget where the government gives businesses cash grants to retain existing workers and, when their business warrants, hiring new ones.

In the field of supply chain efficiency, Singapore stands out in being the country that thinks supply chain efficiency and infrastructure is least lacking and the least of an obstacle as compared to other Asian SMEs.

Singapore has a high level of supply chain efficiency which contributes to SME competitiveness



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UPS ASIA BUSINESS MONITOR
Hear Singapore's perspective in the 2009 UPS Asia Business Monitor survey.

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Singapore SMEs should leverage further on this competitive advantage. Seeking the right supply chain partner will not only aid them in cutting their expenditures but also guarantee that they operate efficiently in the long run.

UPS, a leading global trade expert with more than a century of experience in transportation and logistics, offers customers a wide range of shipping solutions that meet current market conditions. It is equipped with the expertise to help SMEs weather the recession through supply chain strategies that reduce their costs and increase efficiencies.

Other key findings in the UPS ABM 2009

- Seventy percent of Singapore SMEs surveyed said that there will be no change in their workforce projection, compared to a regional average of 65 percent.
- The top three economic pillars for Singapore over the next three to five years, according to Singapore SMEs, are financial services (43 percent), leisure and tourism (33 percent) and healthcare and pharmaceuticals (31 percent).
- Sixty-one percent of SMEs in Singapore cite Southeast Asia as the preferred region for expanding their businesses abroad.

About the UPS Asia Business Monitor

Since its launch in 2005, the UPS ABM has been conducted annually to deliver the latest insights on the changing business needs of the largest business community in the region, the SMEs. As discussed at the third APEC Business Advisory Council Meeting in August 2008, SMEs make up 95 percent of all businesses in the Asia-Pacific region and employ 80 percent of the workforce. This year, the UPS ABM 2009 surveyed 1,200 company owners, proprietors, CEOs, Managing Directors and other top management employees across 12 markets.

Interested to know how the pulse of Singapore SMEs compares with the rest of Asia? [Click here](#) to receive a copy of the UPS Asia Business Monitor 2009.

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