
GS1 Singapore eCommerce Seminar 2017: Building Your Online Business Competition and breaking into the Halal Consumer Market

What does it mean to have a presence in the Halal online market? In this growing technology age, more and more consumers are adopting the Halal lifestyle, forcing more businesses to rely on technology to reach out to a rapidly growing Halal market. These consumers are also increasingly looking for better quality products that they are willing to pay premium prices for. Convenience is also a huge consideration for consumers when shopping. The introduction of online shopping has brought a whole new meaning to the word 'convenience'. Consumers nowadays are enjoying the benefits of being able to purchase goods from the comfort of anywhere, at any time, pay for them and have them delivered to any location required. With such rapidly changing consumer shopping needs, businesses need to learn how to gradually move onto the online platform to fulfil the needs and demands of consumers.

This was exactly what was in store for the 32 participants, coming from 24 different organisations, who attended the **GS1 Singapore eCommerce Seminar** held on the **8th of March 2017**. Organised jointly with **Aladdin Street Singapore**, the seminar offered the participants insights into how businesses can improve on their eCommerce presence, and also provided advice on how local businesses can break into the ever-growing Halal market.



Mr Liew Wai Leong, CEO, GS1 Singapore Limited, welcoming the participants to the seminar

The seminar brought in 3 speakers who are experts in their own individual fields – speaking first on the topic **“Smart Searching online – anywhere, anytime: How global standards help to enable the management and communication of product data”** was Mr Andy Siow, Manager, Technical Solutions and Service, GS1 Singapore Limited.

He mentioned in his presentation that consumers now search the web extensively to look for what they want, and businesses must be able to provide the information that consumers need as clearly as possible. He introduced the **GS1 SmartSearch** which is a GS1 Standard that uses a text-based data format to describe a product comprehensively using structured data. “This standard will help businesses transform their product information online into structured data, which in turn enables the data to appear at the top of search engines when consumers search for a product. **Seeing is buying,**” he said.



Mr Andy Siow speaking on the GS1 SmartSearch

Speaking second on the topic “**Understanding the Halal Consumer Market: How to adopt self-awareness and health in your business**” was Mr Zuraimi Jumaat, Managing Director, PIH & CO. a member of the Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SMCCI). He brought with him extensive knowledge on how businesses can learn to understand the behaviour of Muslim consumers, which he shared in detail to the participants.

He mentioned that for Muslim consumers, the importance of Halal is a personal responsibility and that businesses must understand the importance of the Halal declaration to Muslim consumers. “Halal is not just about specific food preparation processes that meet with Islamic principles, but it is also about **best practices, food safety, food hygiene and healthy choices** – that is holistic from farm to fork,” he said.



Mr Zuraimi Jumaat speaking to the participants on the importance of Halal

Speaking last on the topic “**Global Trends in Online Shopping: How can SMEs in Singapore identify the right resources to succeed online**” was Mr Saikat Bose, Google Ads Product Specialist, South East Asia, Google.

He mentioned that Singapore at **91%** has the **highest Smartphone penetration** in South East Asia. Singaporeans also leads the percentage of shoppers who shop online on their Smartphones. Using these statistics, he emphasised to the participants the importance of making their online websites as mobile friendly as possible. He then introduced **Google Shopping**, which will be launching in Singapore, and explained the convenience and benefits of businesses listing their products via the Google Shopping site. "With Google Shopping, consumers can now find you via your products and not your store. **This makes speaking to consumer needs even more intimate than ever,**" he said.



Mr Saikat Bose explaining the statistics of eCommerce penetration to the participants

Dato Dr Grace Kong, President of Aladdin Street Singapore, presented all the speakers with a token of appreciation for their participation as a speaker on the seminar. The token presented was a book titled "**Break The Ceiling, Touch The Sky**", courtesy of Mr Anthony Rose, author of the book and Founder and CEO of House of Rose Professionals. The seminar then ended with a networking tea-break where participants networked and interacted with each other.



Speakers (from far left picture) – Mr Andy Siow; Mr Zuraimi Jumaat; Mr Saikat Bose respectively – receiving their tokens of appreciation from Mr Anthony Rose (on left) and Dato Dr Grace Kong (on right)