Agrobank to boost agriculture microfinance roll-out to RM240M

Agrobank has targeted microfinance volume of RM 240 million for this year. President & CEO Datuk Wan Mohd Fadzmi Wan Othman said that among the steps to be taken by the Bank is the expansion of products through cooperation with agencies in the Agricultural and Agro-based Industry Ministry to secure customers on a group basis. He added that through microfinance, traders or entrepreneurs have an opportunity to expand their businesses or projects further. Agrobank had already provided microfinance of RM 1.56 Billion to 109,795 traders. Agrobank’s microfinance is specifically meant to help entrepreneurs and small traders meet their fixed and working capital with financing of between RM 1,000 to RM 50,000. Groups benefiting from this are farmers, breeders, fishermen and others such as restaurants and snack food operators. It is to meet their needs in segments such as production, processing, services and marketing. Agrobank has been a pioneer in various forms of microfinance for the agricultural sector since 1969.

CGC, OCBC Al-Amin Bank to jointly raise SME wholesale guarantee to RM1b

Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) and OCBC Al-Amin Bank Berhad will increase the country’s first and only SME wholesale guarantee to RM1 billion before year-end. In a joint statement issued recently, a fresh RM 500 million would be made available in two tranches of RM 250 million each in May and December. It launched two tranches of the same amount in April and November last year. CGC president and CEO Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak said CGC was pleased with the success of OCBC Al-Amin’s first two tranches and the quick and seamless progression to the third tranche in May and the fourth in December 2015. With the availability of CGC’s role in sharing the risk in this guarantee, more banks can now have the confidence to come forward to provide innovative financing options to meet the growing needs of SMEs that are projected to contribute 41% to the country’s gross domestic product by 2020. The new tranches of the wholesale guarantee will see the ratio of risk involved in the financing of businesses shared equally between CGC and OCBC Al-Amin for a guarantee period of five years, helping more than two thousand businesses from industries ranging from retail and wholesale to manufacturing.

DFCC, GIZ Germany team up for energy-efficient SMEs

Sri Lanka’s DFCC Bank was recently chosen to be a project partner of GIZ GmbH, commonly known as German Development Cooperation. The project intends to guide and direct small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to employ energy-efficient processes, thereby benefiting the organization and the environment. Apart from targeted workshops and knowledge sessions, selected SMEs will have walkthrough energy audits performed on their operations which would be an added benefit. Another component of this program is the integration of energy considerations into the Bank’s project evaluation process and bank staff will be specially trained in this aspect of project evaluation. Participation in this project is in line with DFCC’s development role as it meets the objectives of promoting energy efficiency, as well as nurturing SMEs to become more viable and cost effective. GIZ as a federal enterprise supports the German government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. DFCC Consulting (Pvt) Ltd., a fully owned subsidiary of DFCC Bank, will facilitate and coordinate the entire program on behalf of the Bank.

Hitting sales target for SMEs

“Teams with formal processes that are monitored and measured are far more likely to meet their sales goals,” says Claudia Mason, a BDC Business Consultant who advises entrepreneurs on their sales and marketing challenges. She enumerated 3 easy steps for hitting your sales target.

Step 1—Define clear steps in the sales process. An effective process begins by establishing and documenting a series of
CBMongolia, SMEDF sign cooperation pact

The Ulaanbaatar-based Capital Bank of Mongolia and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Fund (SMEDF) signed a cooperation agreement to promote SMEs in the country. In Mongolia, around 55,000 companies are actively operating out of 71,000 registered companies. Within this number, around 45,000 companies are operating in the field of SME. That is, 82% of companies within the active companies are SME operators. The main purpose of SMEDF is to develop the production sector, specifically to provide soft loans for environment-friendly productions, for equipment, technological advancement, and employment generation. CBM has implemented 27 projects and programs dedicated to SME operators through its branches and units with the cooperation of Mongolian government and international organizations. CBM will further participate in supporting the comprehensive projects and programs with the aim to regionally develop the SME which is the core for the development of the country’s economy.

Making SMEs thrive in financial crisis

During the 1997/1998 Asian financial crisis, SMEs remained profitable and the factors that contributed to these were the following:

(i) Financial accessibility. SMEs relying on their own capital and with limited access to finance were better positioned to avoid the serious shocks from the financial and banking crisis than large firms. However, low access to finance negatively affected SME survival and growth rates in general.

(ii) Localization and niche marketing. Creating a niche market separate from open markets enabled SMEs to survive the crisis. Locally based business operations, in which SMEs were not involved in subcontracts with large firms, also enabled SMEs to survive.

(iii) Internationalization and export-orientation. SMEs that shifted from domestic to international markets, and were not reliant on imported materials, were able to weather the crisis.

(iv) Specialization and clustering. SMEs that successfully cooperated with other enterprises—to reduce their production costs, share and renew technologies, and form wide-ranging sales networks—were able to survive the crisis.


Designing your brand elements

A word of caution: unless you have a good solid background in the graphic arts, do not try to design your trademark yourself. A lot of entrepreneurs think they’re saving money by designing their brands themselves, but this leads to loss of credibility over the long term due to price or some other competitive factor?

Step 2—Score leads as they move through the pipeline. Next, apply a score to each step in your process, indicating the chances of closing a sale. For example at the proposal stage, you might score the lead as follows. Will win—Customer has given verbal agreement and a purchase order is in progress. Could win—Still in negotiation: we are clearly favored. Doubtful win—The lead is interested in a competitor’s offering or is lukewarm for some other reason. More time will be required.

Step 3—Communicate continuously with your team. Communication begins with speaking the same language. Many companies introduce a sales methodology but fail to establish common vocabulary when tracking and ranking opportunities. Use common terms both in written communications and during regular meetings to monitor progress and reinforce accountability and transparency. Speaking the same language is the only way to nip problems in the bud, make corrections mid course and determine if goals will be attained. Are my reps making enough calls? Are they following up with warm leads quickly enough? Are our proposals failing due to price or some other competitive factor?

It’s too late to wait until the end of the month or the quarter when confronted with missed sales targets to find answers to these questions.

Success does not consist in never making mistakes, but in never making them a second time. 
–George Bernard Shaw

http://www.bdc.ca/

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