

e-Newsletter

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AFTER COVID**
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MESSAGE FROM ASOCIO CHAIRMAN DAVID WONG

Welcome to the first issue of the ASOCIO newsletter in 2021.

What a year 2020 has been. The bleak scenario that enveloped the region and the world left an indelible mark on all of us. Waves of Covid-19 surges have forced many governments to institute lockdowns on the population impacting economic and social activities. While some countries have weathered the storm well, others had to grapple with the pandemic that caused unprecedented hardship.

Much can be learned from the pandemic and our response to it. ASOCIO published a regional report on the **ASIA AFTER COVID- Driving Digital in Response to the Global Pandemic** in December 2020 outlining some of the responses and intervention by economies in the region that had stood them well in this crisis.



The storm clouds are passing and we can look forward to a clear path to recovery with vaccine rollout in high gear across the globe. Among the first off the block is the technology sector. As one of the industries that had a relatively easier time during the pandemic, the recovery phase resulted in high demand for technology products and services.

Starting with the upstream shortages of chips and semiconductor components that are the essential building blocks to downstream retail demand for finished goods, the pandemic has fueled the demand for technology. Work from Home (WFH), online learning, e-commerce, virtual meetings and events are all the accelerated results of the pandemic.

The transformation taking place would not stop with the pandemic but rather the velocity of change will only increase as we adapt to the new normal and transform the way we do business. We are at the forefront of the digital transformation.



As ASOCIO, we are well position to grasp the opportunities that this change is bringing. Allow me to highlight some of the programs to take your business to a higher plane.

ASOCIO Meet & Greet is a new program designed to help your business grow. The Meet & Greet sessions will enable you to leverage on the regional strength of ASOCIO and seek connections in new markets. It is a platform to introduce your business to potential partners in the ASOCIO network.

The webinars would also continue with renewed vigor. A team has been out in place to drive the rollout of the webinars that would pique the interest and beneficial to our regional audience.

Our Policy Task Force and the New Normal Expert Working Group (NNEWG) have been busy at work to identify policy considerations by governments and multilateral organizations as we enter the recovery phase.

ASOCIO as a network is as strong as the ties that bind us. This year, we look forward to strengthening our ties and building new bonds through in-person events. After one year hiatus of physical events, Bangladesh will host our annual ASOCIO Digital Summit in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 11-14 November 2021 and Vietnam to host the Smart City Summit at Binh Duong, Vietnam on 11-13 October 2021.

As borders open, we look forward to rekindling our friendship and meet again soon at our flagship events. We will be keeping a close watch on the situation and will be updating you on the latest plans for ASOCIO as they unfold.

Wishing you all the success.

Thank you.

David Wong
Asocio Chairman

DIGITAL ASIA AFTER COVID

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

White Paper on Digital Response to Pandemic among ASOCIO Economies

Covid-19 has left a trail of destruction across the world, cutting a swathe through billions of lives, hundreds of million livelihoods, tens of million businesses and industries, and hundreds of economies and nations.

The pandemic has plunged the world into recession including Asia where three of four economies suffered a contraction in 2020. Given this scenario, businesses of all sizes from micro and small to medium and large corporations struggled to mitigate the economic impact of the global pandemic.

Among the issues they grappled with were: the drop in demand from a combination of enforced shutdowns, restricted movement preventing conventional sales, and physical distancing requirements leading to fewer customers; lack of supply from the disruption to the local and global supply chains as vendors face similar restrictions, and; obstacles to operations as usual as owners and employees faced various difficulties merely to turn up for work.

Across Asia and the world, digital solutions served to partially offset many of these problems, whether it was migrating to a digital and in many cases an e-commerce platform to create and meet demand, utilising e-procurement for supplies, or shifting to work-from-home (WFH) via online communication and interaction tools.

Amid this turn of events, ASOCIO published a white paper **ASIA AFTER COVID – Driving Digital in Response to the Global Pandemic** early January 2021 with input from 12 ASOCIO member economies. This collaborative effort was launched following an online roundtable discussion on 20 October, 2020.



The paper explored the shift towards digitalisation in Asia and elaborated on the response from governments across the region that introduced aid packages and rolled out initiatives to revive and revitalise economic activity including specific programmes to either develop the digital industry or accelerate digital transformation within the physical economy.

The paper also presented a brief look at some of the public and private sector initiatives for digital development, adoption, migration and transformation across the 12 ASOCIO member economies.

Their responses were featured in two separate sections. The first, **Digital Response and Best Practices** looked at how these economies responded to the pandemic, some of which can be emulated across the region. This section discussed the following:

- Leveraging on E-Commerce, Online Banking and Digital Payments
- Adjusting to Work from Home and Transitioning to Virtual
- Shifting Towards Digital Business Models
- Expediting Digital Adoption and Transformation
- Migrating to Online Education and Learning
- Supporting the Economy and Society with Government Aid Packages
- Accelerating National Digital Programmes

The second part outlined the **National Digital Response to Covid-19** in alphabetical order of economies, as follows:

- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Hong Kong
- India
- Japan
- Korea
- Malaysia
- Myanmar
- Singapore
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

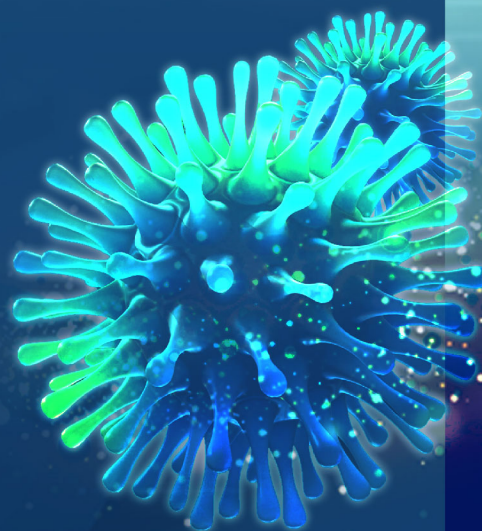


The paper closed with a call to action exhorting ASOCIO member economies to capitalise on the opportunity to champion digital development and transformation to their respective private and public sectors.

It encouraged collaboration among the members, particularly on narrowing the digital gap, and also in sharing strategies and processes such as digital transformation frameworks and roadmaps in order to increase cross-border business within ASOCIO.

Member economies were called on to take on a more active role in appealing to governments for further economic measures designed to accelerate the development of the digital industry and digital adoption across all other industries as well as throughout government and society.

Another area for ASOCIO to speak as one voice should be a call to their respective governments to build information and data platforms to share information on national digital projects. Information is, after all, the business we are in.



MEEET & GREET

ASOCIO is having its inaugural Meet & Greet session where it allows its members to meet potential partners in the Asian-Oceanic region. This session will be held on a bi-monthly basis on specific topic of interest and specific industry focus eg. Fintech, eCommerce, Cross Border Business, Cybersecurity etc.

TUESDAY | **1:00PM - 2.30PM**
20 APRIL 2021 (UTC +08.00 KL time)

Topic & Industry Focus:
Cross Border E-Commerce & Fulfillment

Who to Attend:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (i) Associations – Member Economies | (iv) Marketplaces |
| (ii) Providers | (v) Merchants/e-Tailers |
| (iii) Enablers | |

How it Works:

- Interested participants to register with Secretariat
- All participants to do a 2-mins pre-recorded introduction and submit to Secretariat on or before deadline
- The respective participant should be present during the Meet & Greet to attend to any Q&A
- ASOCIO will link the interested companies together

Feel free to contact the Secretariat secretariat@asocio.org for more information or clarifications.



THE RISK OF WORK FROM HOME (WFH)

BY PHIL CAPTAIN

In a time of social distancing and remote work, Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon raised a surprising topic during his latest earnings call with Wall Street analysts: togetherness. "Our firm has always had a team-oriented apprenticeship culture, and we benefit from being and working together," he explained. While many CEOs seem in no hurry to refill their office buildings, and several have told employees they need never return to the office, Solomon made it clear that he wants his colleagues back in the office as soon as is safely possible. He himself has never stopped going to the office through the pandemic.

Fortune August/ September 2020

Solomon's desire to bring his employees back together physically even as the coronavirus continues to rage around the globe, particularly in the U.S., isn't rooted in any simple calculation of efficiency. Facebook, Fujitsu, Nationwide, Otis, Siemens, Twitter, and other major companies have announced that large portions of their workforces may or must work remotely from now on. It saves money and may increase productivity, managers say. Many employees prefer it. A recent survey by Korn Ferry found that 64% of workers feel that they're more productive at home.

But a group of **hyper-successful contrarians**—Apple, Amazon, Goldman, Google, and others, have pointedly not offered the indefinite WFH option. They **want employees back physically together**. Considerable evidence supports their stance. It also shows that when employers offer indefinite WFH, they're messing with something more powerful than they may realize.

Allowing or requiring employees to leave the workplace was clearly the right thing to do when the pandemic arrived, and for many companies it will remain the right thing for some time to protect the health of their people. Google, acknowledging the likely timing of vaccine development and distribution, recently extended its voluntary WFH policy until July 2021. Some closings are imperative for public health. But **employers who have a choice should keep in mind that the costs of WFH are high and may not be obvious. The stiffest penalty may be lost creativity and innovation.** Every company is desperate for good ideas in this environment, and it would be hard to design a worse policy for finding them than unnecessarily requiring or encouraging employees to stay apart.



FACE-TO-FACE MATTERS

In one of the most revealing studies of creativity in the workplace to date, researchers from MIT, Northeastern University, University of Cologne, University of Bamberg, and Aalto University studied several teams working on projects involving computer science, economics, psychology, and other fields; their findings were published in the International Journal of Organisational Design and Engineering in 2012.

The subjects wore small badges called sociometers to record interactions within the teams, and the creativity and quality of the teams' ideas were rated by peers on a scale of one to five. The **results show strikingly what a deeply human experience it is to be creative in a group. The more that group members faced each other, the more creative was their output. The more they looked into each other's eyes, the more creative they were. The more willing they were to confide in one another, the more creative they were.**

Facing each Other, looking into the eyes, confiding—all those behaviors reflect and build trust. The researchers measured trust within the groups and found that it was crucial to the whole process. Their **conclusion: "There is no substitute for face-to-face interaction to build up this trust."**

Those high-achieving contrarian employers have understood all this for years. For example, Google's free top-quality cafeteria meals aren't merely a perk. They're **a way to bring together employees who might otherwise never see each other, and to make them wait in lines, where they'll talk.** Long, narrow cafeteria tables increase the odds of sitting next to or across from—and thus **talking with—strangers.** Such **chance interactions are where successful innovations often originate.** Gmail, Google News, and Street View came from engineers chatting at lunch.

Apple's Steve Jobs obsessed over face-to-face meetings. There's a temptation in our networked age to think that ideas can be developed by email and iChat," he told Walter Isaacson, author of a best selling Jobs biography. "That's crazy. **Creativity comes from spontaneous meetings, from random discussions.**" When asked by Fortune to recount the birth of the iPhone, Jobs said the earliest ideas arose from informal gabbing: "We all had cell phones. We just hated them, they were so awful to use." That **"watercooler talk"** is the "one part of the iPhone mythology that everyone tends to agree on," author Brian Merchant reports in his book 'The One Device'.

MISSING SPARKS



But with today's technology, does optimal interaction really have to be in person? Won't a Zoom meeting work almost as well? No, it won't. **We are hardwired from our development as humans to value the physical presence of others.** It's deeper than most of us think.

Consider something we're not supposed to do now: **shaking hands**. Job applicants who shake hands get rated more highly by evaluators than those who don't, even when everything else about them is the same. We judge people who shake hands to be more trustworthy and more competent than those who don't. **Shaking hands is literally an electric experience: Brain imaging shows that we energize the region associated with reward sensitivity—that is, we feel rewarded—by shaking hands, or merely by seeing other people shake.**

There is **a similar physical response when we converse with someone face-to-face**. The pupils of our eyes constrict and dilate in parallel with the other person's. Neither of us is aware it's happening, but **it builds trust. When we're physically together, we unconsciously mimic one another's posture, gestures, and tone of voice, which builds trust and empathy.**

Video is far inferior. Posture and gestures are partly or entirely invisible. People never look each other in the eye; they can't look directly into the screen and the camera simultaneously. **In video meetings, you can't turn from one person to face another; everyone is facing the camera. Natural conversational responding, turn-taking, and interrupting become maddeningly awkward.**

HIDDEN COSTS

Togetherness is in our deepest nature. "Natural selection mandated us to be in groups in order to survive," Michael S. Gazzaniga, a leading researcher in cognitive neuroscience, has written. Reached recently at his home—his office at the University of California at Santa Barbara is closed—he's feeling the loss of physical presence with others. "In the academic world I get a sense that the excitement and enthusiasm one can get up on an intellectual question is harder to sustain," he says. "It's humanity influencing the rational thing, and it gets lost on Zoom." Much of the most revealing work on team performance in the past decade has been conducted by MIT's Alex Pentland, who developed the sociometer badges mentioned earlier. Asked **what's being lost as millions of workers remain at home, he says: The feeling of connection and being a member of a team, and all the incidental conversations and nonlinguistic cues that get people on the same page and aligned, as well as the serendipity that is the source of most innovation.**"

His outlook for organizations and their people: "Completely standardized tasks work well. **You can rely on existing social ties to align people for a while. But that is expiring about end of summer.**"

Companies adopting large-scale indefinite **work-from-home policies will certainly save some money**—an important consideration now—and they may get along just fine for quite a while. The downside will accumulate only slowly and will be harder to appreciate fully. **What these companies gain can be quantified much more easily than what they lose.** But while they may take time to show up on the P&L, the losses could be much greater.

Phil Captain is a passionate **Business Leadership Coach** for many CEOs and Executives of startups and large corporations worldwide. He is driven by a simple phrase: **"Facts TELL, Stories SELL"**. His ability to dig out the facts, with a simple and direct approach, has facilitated many leaders to take their companies to Greater Heights.



FUTURE PLANS & PAPERS FROM MEMBER ECONOMIES

Singapore - SGTech

ADVOCACY PAPERS PUBLISHED

Multi-layered approach needed to address the energy needs of data centres.

Continued Cyber Security Preparedness a Critical Success Factor to Singapore's Digital Hub Status.

Three-Pronged Approach to Boost Singapore's Smart Nation Journey.

Understanding of AI's Benefits and Consideration of AI Ethics and Governance are Keys to Broadening AI and High Performance Computing Adoption in Singapore.

Company Culture, Clear Business Objectives and the Right Resources are Key Factors for Successful Digital Transformation.

INDUSTRY RESEARCH PUBLISHED

SMEs towards Cyber Security (Q4 2020)

A research report that looks at uncovering SME management/ owners' thinking and mindsets towards cyber security.

Singapore Blockchain Ecosystem Report 2020 (Dec 2020)

The report is co-presented by OpenNodes, Temasek, IBM, PwC Singapore, EY, and SGTech, and supported by the Infocomm Media Development Authority, and the Monetary Authority of Singapore. It highlights Singapore's lively blockchain research landscape due to active contributions from both academic institutions and the private sector.

Date 18 May 2021

Event Infocomm Leaders Golf 2021

Register sponsorship@sgtech.org.sg



SGTech Infocomm Leaders Golf provides an excellent opportunity for ICT leaders, professionals, vendors, clients and friends to gather for a day of fun and camaraderie.

PROGRAMME:

11:00 am	Registration & Lunch
1:00 pm	Shotgun Tee-off
6:00 pm	Pre-Dinner Cocktail
7:00 pm	Golf Dinner & Prize Presentation
9:30 pm	End of Event

Programme are subject to change at the organiser's discretion

Organised by:

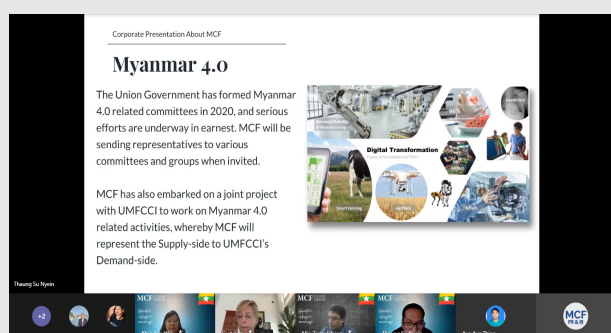
SGTECH

Corporate Sponsors :



Moving Forward to Myanmar 4.0

The government of Myanmar is committed to devote its newly-elected government to strengthen and uplift the economic, administrative, education and health sectors in order to bring development of the nation. Our “Myanmar Computer Industry Association” established under the leadership and guidance of “Myanmar Computer Federation” is also striving its best to boost the national development through Information and Communication Technology. The nation itself is aspired to revitalize the national economy based on Myanmar 4.0 and facilitate the growth of Myanmar 4.0 in other sectors. Therefore, we as MCIA are implementing Myanmar 4.0 in collaboration with other associations’ members as to align our works with the national policy of Myanmar 4.0.



We are magnifying our efforts to provide technical assistance to other associations. We have recently succeeded in signing the “Memorandum of Understanding” together with Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation, and “Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association”. As to demonstrate our steadfast support for the achievement of Agriculture 4.0, we would be rendering technical assistance to Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association. We have initially conducted a three-week webinar on Saturdays to share the knowledge of agriculture integrating technology. Moreover, we have bridged them with “Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation” for their sustainable cooperation.



The government of the Union of Myanmar is aiming to develop Digital Economy through four pillars, fourteen objectives of Sustainable Development, nine prioritized sectors, thirty-two short term plans and sixteen long-term plans. As the national government has recently signed “Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)”, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and SMEs are leading working group meetings in collaboration with Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry (UMFCCI), we are consistently taking part in these meetings.

Everyone witnesses the huge impact of the “black swan” of our era which is the global pandemic of Covid-19 and suffers from the repercussions of it in terms of deteriorating health, economic and social sectors by majority of the countries in the world. Even though Myanmar had barely known about the unpleasant potency of the pandemic during its first wave, the pandemic wreaked havoc the economic capital of the nation “Yangon” in the second wave as well as another important city of Myanmar “Mandalay” has suffered from its unpleasant potency. There had not been much demonstrated damages due to the pandemic in other parts of the nation and the administrative capital “Naypyidaw”. Since Yangon was primarily hit severely, it could create a ripple effect in dilapidating the national economy, Multi-National Corporations, SMEs and traditional businesses. As to revert the economy and to safeguard the sustainable growth of SMEs, the national government set a loan scheme for them. The loan scheme is one of the seven core objectives of the government’s Covid-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP).

These seven objectives are:

- Improve Macroeconomic Environment through Monetary Stimulus
- Ease the Impact on the Private Sector through Improvements to Investment, Trade & Banking Sectors
- Easing the Impact on Labourers & Workers
- Easing the Impact on Households
- Promoting Innovative Products & Platforms
- Healthcare Systems Strengthening
- Increase Access to COVID-19 Response Financing (Including Contingency Funds)

Additionally, the national’s E-Commerce, M-Commerce are being utilized much greatly by the people which stimulates the speedy growth of the sectors so that the national government is working its best to mandate E-Commerce Strategy Policy as quickly as possible. We as “MCIA” are dedicating our

Kickoff Activities of MCIA in Myanmar 4.0

best efforts and technical support to facilitate the policies development process of the national government.

To conclude, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is moving forward to implement Industry 4.0, therefore, transforming its administrative mechanism in digitalizing them. The nation is not only abundant in natural resources, a large pool of its human capital especially younger generations are more eager to learn IT related subjects and seek for employment opportunities in technology sectors. The recent event of M2 Mobile Legends: Bang Bang World Championship 2021 held in the last week of January where a gamer from Myanmar won the First Runner-Up Award can positively alter the landscape of Myanmar eSports sector and reinvigorate Myanmar Game Industry Development. I would like to concede this article by reassuring that the government of Myanmar would reinforce the development of its administrative, economic, education, health, agriculture, industrial and other sectors by leveraging Myanmar 4.0.



MoU between MCIA and other association

According to Myanmar 4.0, we have recently succeeded in signing the “Memorandum of Understanding” together with Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation, and “Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association” to become agriculture 4.0. In 2021, we will sign the MoU between MCIA and other associations to advocate their technological needs.



To collaborate with ministry of health with saw saw Shar (Early Finding) App

During the Pandemic, MCF developed Saw Saw Shar App that can be present the status of patients who suffered the Covid-19. The app also can be display the traces of victims and the viewer can avoid the places where the patients have been. We will more collaborate with MoH with this App in 2021. This app also won the award from WITSA GLOBAL ICT EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2020.



5th e-Government Conference & ICT Exhibition

The 5th e-Government Conference & ICT Exhibition will be held at Myanmar International Convention Center II, Naypyidaw in 2021. The date is not confirming yet because of the pandemic.



PCs donating event to social welfare organization

The Yangon Region Computer Industry Association (YRCIA) was donated 10 Laptop PCs to We Love Yangon organization which is social and voluntary organization and helping the citizens during pandemic. The aim of donation is to effective and efficient the daily operations in their organization. We will make more donation event in 2021.



Celebrating members' funfair 2021

We will celebrate the members' funfair on the MCIA members' day in 2021 and this is the annual gathering event for MCIA members.



Myanmar 4.0 related technical webinar series to other associations

According to Myanmar 4.0, MCIA will support technical webinar series to other Non-IT associations in 2021.

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MCF MYANMAR COMPUTER FEDERATION **MFVP** **MCIA** MYANMAR COMPUTER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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MFHL **MTI** Myanmar Technologies And Investment Corporation

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အပိုင်း (၁) E-Commerce

ဒေါက်တာဇော်လင်း

ဘဏ္ဍာရေးမှူး
(MCIA)

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PROPOSED EVENTS IN 2021

ASOCIO **SMART CITY SUMMIT 2021**

Binh Duong, Vietnam
October 11 -13, 2021

ASOCIO **DIGITAL SUMMIT 2021**

Dhaka, Bangladesh
November 11 -14, 2021



ASOCIO: Asian-Oceanian Computing Industry Organization

Website: <https://www.asocio.org>

Email: enquiry@asocio.org

Please sign up and follow us closely
on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.