

**SME Development Fund/  
Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales  
(Organisation Support Programme)**

**Final Report of Approved Project**

Project ref. no. : D10 004 007  
Project title : To lower the entry barrier to IT Investments for  
SMEs in Retail, Wholesale, and Distribution  
Industries through independently tested and  
evaluated Cloud Applications  
Period covered : From 15/02/2012 to 14/02/2013  
(dd/mm/yy) (dd/mm/yy)

## 1. Project Details

(Please mark with "\*" if any of the following project details is different from that in the project proposal appended to the project agreement.)

### Project Reference and Title

To lower the entry barrier to IT Investments for SMEs in Retail, Wholesale, and Distribution Industries through independently tested and evaluated Cloud Applications (D10 004 007)

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### Project Summary (in not more than 150 words)

For SMEs, it is widely agreed that the use of IT will certainly help make their operations more efficient. However, their IT adoption has been low because they lack the capital to invest in, and the knowledge to purchase, operate and maintain an IT system.

The recently available "cloud-based applications" will lower the entry barrier for SMEs to adopt IT. "Cloud-based applications" are computer applications that are hosted in the "Cloud" or Internet. Users no longer need to have the expertise to install and maintain the software system nor are they required to set up costly computer servers in the office to host the applications. SMEs can now use these cloud-based applications by accessing them through the Internet on a monthly fee basis. With the "pay-per-use" business model of cloud computing, SMEs no longer need to pay a hefty upfront cost to purchase the computer hardware and software. Thus, with cloud computing, useful IT applications such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Human Resources and Payroll can be made available to SMEs through Internet access at a relatively low cost.

However, as cloud computing is still new to many SMEs, they either do not understand fully what cloud computing is, what it can do, or worry about the performance of cloud applications. In addition, they lack a reliable and independent source of information on cloud applications/services, based on upon which, SMEs can make a decision on if and what cloud solutions will benefit their operations.

To tackle this problem, the SME Global Alliance proposes to initiate this project to carry out a Cloud Solutions Testing & Evaluation Programme to address the concerns of SMEs. An information database and knowledge bank of field-tested cloud solutions will be made available for SMEs. The focus will be on solutions for the Retail, Wholesale, and Distribution Service sectors, which comprise over 50% of all SMEs, are among the most competitive fields, and have relatively low IT adoption rates among all businesses in Hong Kong. The results of the programs will be disseminated through seminars, project website and other related channels free of charge.

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### Project Objective(s) (in not more than 80 words)

In response to the pressing needs of SMEs, the major objectives of this Cloud Solutions Testing & Evaluation Programme is to:

- Raise the awareness of SMEs in the Retail, Wholesale and Distribution Service sectors in cloud services/solutions;
  - Enable the target SMEs to identify a right cloud service/solution easily;
  - Encourage the adoption of cloud services/solutions in order to lower the IT investment of the target SMEs; and eventually,
  - Enhance the IT capability of the target SMEs in order to streamline their operation and enhance their competitiveness.
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**Grantee /Collaborating/Implementation Organisation Agent**

Grantee

: SME Global Alliance Limited

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**Collaborating Organisation(s)**

Information and Software Industry Association Ltd.  
 Hong Kong Retail Management Association  
 Hong Kong Retail Technology Industry Association Ltd.  
 Hong Kong Small And Medium Enterprises Association  
 Hong Kong Electronic Industries Association (HKEIA)  
 Modern Enterprise Integration & Innovation Association  
 Hong Kong Software Industry Association  
 The Hong Kong Association for the Advancement of Science and  
 Technology (HKAAST)  
 Hong Kong Information Technology Federation (HKITF)  
 Internet Society Hong Kong  
 Hong Kong Computer Society (HKCS)  
 Hong Kong Association of Freight Forwarding and Logistics Ltd (HAFFA)  
 The Hong Kong Shippers' Council  
 Hong Kong Logistics Association

**Implementation Agent(s)**

: Hong Kong Productivity Council

**Key Personnel**

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organisation</u>	<u>Tel No. &amp; Fax No.</u>
Project Co-ordinator :	Mr. Tommy Lo	SME Global Alliance Ltd.	3583 6488 (T) 3753 2401 (F)
Deputy Project Co-ordinator :	Mr. Gordon Lo	Hong Kong Productivity Council	2788 6208 (T) 2788 5860 (F)

**Project Period**

	<u>Commencement Date</u> (day/month/year)	<u>Completion Date</u> (day/month/year)	<u>Project Duration</u> (No. of months)
As stated in project agreement	15/02/2012	14/02/2013	12
Revised (if applicable)	[n/a]		

**Methodology Employed**

- **Project Steering**  
Establish a Project Steering Committee (PSC) to oversee project execution.
- **Cloud Solutions Evaluation**  
PSC to select a target list of potential cloud solutions for test and evaluation. Carry out testing and evaluation of the selected cloud solutions.
- **Results Publication**  
Present the test and evaluation results in the guidebook. Publish the guidebook in print and soft copies on the project website.
- **Dissemination and Promotion**  
Organise seminars to promote the project and the guidebook. Organise training workshops to train up SMEs on practical skills of cloud computing.

## 2. Summary of Project Results

### Project Deliverables

(Please list out the targeted project deliverables as stated in the project proposal appended to the project agreement and provide details of actual result achieved, including beneficiaries, for each of them.)

#### 1. Test and evaluation of cloud solutions

- 24 cloud solutions for SMEs in the retail, wholesale and distribution service sectors were tested and evaluated.
- The results were published in the guidebook “香港中小企業雲端方案應用指南”，available in print (3,000 copies) and as electronic copy for download on the project website.

#### 2. Promotional seminars

- 3 half-day seminars were organised to promote the project and disseminate the project results.
  - (1) Seminar 1 「雲端運算：為何要上？為何不上？」 - 講座  
Date: 22 May 2012  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 214
  - (2) Seminar 2 「如何選擇合適的雲端方案」 - 講座  
Date: 23 Nov 2012  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 110
  - (3) Seminar 3 「如何應用雲端方案提升競爭力」 - 講座  
Date: 18 Jan 2013  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 105
- 429 participants attended the seminars (averaging 143 participants per seminar).
- Guests included Dr. Samson Tam, former Legislative Council member, and Mr. Charles Mok, Legislative Council member.

### 3. Training Workshops

- 4 one-day training workshops were organised to train up SMEs on practical skills of cloud computing.
    - (1) Workshop 1 「雲端運算幫到你」 - 工作坊 (一)  
Date: 25 Jul 2012  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 27
    - (2) Workshop 2 「雲端運算幫到你」 - 工作坊 (二)  
Date: 31 Aug 2012  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 33
    - (3) Workshop 3 「雲端運算幫到你」 - 工作坊 (三)  
Date: 2 Nov 2012  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 31
    - (4) Workshop 4 「雲端運算幫到你」 - 工作坊 (四)  
Date: 29 Jan 2013  
Venue: HKPC  
Participants: 28
  - 119 participants attended the training workshops (averaging 29.75 participants per workshop).
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### 4. Publication of Guidebook

- The guidebook “香港中小企業雲端方案應用指南” was published in Nov 2012, containing practical tips on how to evaluate and choose cloud solutions according to an SME’s business needs, and an evaluation of the 24 cloud solutions to serve as examples illustrating to SMEs how to choose the right cloud solution.
  - 3,000 hardcopies as well as a softcopy of the guidebook were made and distributed through websites and other marketing channels.
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### 5. Project Website

- The project website ([www.sme-cloud.org](http://www.sme-cloud.org)) was created, containing project and event information, seminar photos and presentation files, as well as the test and evaluation results in the guidebook.
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#### **Actual Benefits to SMEs/Enterprises**

(Please indicate in clear, specific, tangible and quantifiable terms the benefits of the project and its contribution to enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong’s SMEs / enterprises in general or SMEs / enterprises in specific sectors / assist Hong Kong enterprises in general or in specific sectors in developing brands, upgrading

and restructuring business operations, and promoting domestic sales in the Mainland, in not more than 400 words.)

The project has contributed to enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong's SMEs by introducing the benefits of cloud computing to the target SMEs and educating them on how to choose the right solutions to realize the benefits. According to the survey results of the 3 seminars and 4 workshops, on average 92.84% of the respondents indicated that they will apply the recommendations provided in the seminars/workshops in their daily business operations.

The beneficiaries participating through project activities include participants to seminars and workshops (548) and those reached through database marketing, distribution of the Guidebook, on-line channels and advertisements (over 60,000).

Through the guidebook, the SME beneficiaries gained important insights on what specific features and parameters they should pay attention to in selecting cloud solutions, which help them evaluate and choose cloud solutions suitable for their needs. The guidebook lists out the evaluation parameters in a clear format and offers 24 example cases to illustrate the evaluation process.

The project attracted media coverage, reaching a wider audience to receive benefits from the project. This included 2 pieces of news about the project found on Hong Kong Commercial Daily (4 Dec 2012) and Ming Pao Daily News (8 Feb 2013). The project was also featured in the HKPC publication *Industry Focus* (Feb 2013).

#### Milestones (in chronological order)

(# Please indicate if the milestone is completed (C), deferred (D) or not achieved (N). If it is deferred, please indicate the revised completion date. For those milestones which are deferred or not achieved, please also provide the reasons under item 2.4.)

	<u>Milestone</u> (as set out in the approved project proposal appended to the project agreement)	<u>Original target completion date</u>	<u>Revised target completion date</u> (if applicable)	<u>Status</u> (C/D/N) #
	<b>Project Mobilization</b>	29/02/2012		C
(a)	Project Steering Committee Formation			C
(b)	Project Kick Off	14/03/2012		C
(c)	Project Website Preparation (Initial Version)	14/04/2012		C
(d)	Selection of Cloud Solutions for Testing and Evaluation	30/06/2012		C
(e)	Cloud Solution Test and Evaluation	14/09/2012		C
(f)	Cloud Solution guidebook Publishing	30/11/2012		C
(g)	Promotion Seminars (3) & Training Workshops (4)	14/02/2013		C

### Marketing/Dissemination Activities (in chronological order)

(Please provide details of all completed and on-going promotional and/or dissemination activities for each of the project deliverables. Such activities may include advertisements, seminars, workshops, etc.)

<u>Date/ Period</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>No. of beneficiaries (SMEs/Enterprises*)</u> *please delete as appropriate
04/2012 – 02/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Database marketing via HKPC marketing database and member lists of supporting organizations</li> <li>• HKPC e-Newsletter</li> <li>• HKPC publication <i>Industry Focus</i></li> </ul>	Promoted to over 50,000 recipients via database of HKPC and supporting organizations, and to readers of HKPC publication
05/2012 – 02/2013	Project Website ( <a href="http://www.sme-cloud.org">www.sme-cloud.org</a> ) for promotion of seminars, workshops and the guidebook	Promoted to over 50,000 recipients via database of HKPC and supporting organizations
22/05/2012	Seminars (x3)	Attracted 429 participants
23/11/2012		
18/01/2013		
25/07/2012	Training Workshops (x4)	Attracted 119 participants
31/08/2012		
02/11/2012		
29/01/2013		
09/2012 – 12/2012	Advertisements on Linux Pilot (x4)	Over 10,000
10/2012 – 01/2013	Side banner advertisements on BQ Journal website to promote guidebook	Over 10,000
11/2012 – 12/2012	Top banner advertisements on BQ Journal website to promote guidebook	Over 10,000
23/11/2012 – 14/02/2013	Guidebook distribution hardcopies	3,000
04/12/2012	News report on Hong Kong Commercial Daily	Over 10,000
08/02/2013	News report on Ming Pao Daily News	Over 10,000
Total no. of beneficiaries :		Over 60,000

### Future Plan for Promoting the Project Deliverables

The electronic copy of the Guidebook is available on the project website, which will continue operation till one year after project completion (14 Feb 2014).