

## Change agents to be trained to help heartland business go digital



Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Chee Hong Tat with Mr Jonathan Wong, senior optometrist at Logos Eyecare, during a visit to heartland enterprises at Ang Mo Kio Town Centre on June 4, 2019. ST PHOTO: KHALID BABA

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SINGAPORE - With changes in consumer demographics and the growth of digital purchasing, every business has to go digital in order to remain competitive and continue growing.

To help heartland businesses transform their operations and digitalise, the Singapore Productivity Centre will work with the Singapore Institute of Retail Studies to launch a programme on Tuesday (June 4) to train digital and productivity consultants as agents of change.

For a start, the two organisations will provide training under the Certified Digital and Productivity Consultant programme for consultants who will assist merchants with digitalising efforts.

The two organisations will be working with Heartland Enterprise Centre Singapore, which signed a memorandum of understanding on Tuesday with the Singapore Productivity Centre and the Singapore Institute of Retail Studies.

The Heartland Enterprise Centre Singapore was set up in March 2019 to champion the rejuvenation of heartland town centres and businesses.

The aim of the programme is to produce 100 digital and productivity consultants and 20 trainers as change agents over the next two years.

These consultants will be given projects to help heartland businesses digitalise and improve their productivity.

Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Chee Hong Tat witnessed the MOU signing at Ang Mo Kio Town Centre, where he visited heartland enterprises that have taken small steps in digitalising their businesses.

He said as "heartland businesses have a special place in our hearts", many Singaporeans want to see them continue to provide good services and products.

"But to do this, we need to make sure that (heartland enterprises) stay commercially viable," said Mr Chee on the sidelines of the event.

Mr Jonathan Wong, senior optometrist at Logos Eyecare at Ang Mo Kio Town Centre, said he is keen to learn more about the programme.

He had previously benefited from the Productivity and Innovation Credit scheme, which afforded him equipment upgrades for his shop. The business has been operating there since 1990.

"I will need someone to help me manage everything online," he said, adding that he does not have any Internet presence for his shop currently, and does not own a social media account.

