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Rising energy overheads

Company sees need for businesses to address issue

SCHNEIDER Electric, a global specialist in energy management, says it thinks more businesses will begin adopting efficient energy-management standards because of the recent rise in Malaysia's electricity tariffs.

The average electricity tariff in peninsula Malaysia has risen 4.99 sen per kWh or 14.89% to 38.53 sen/kWh from the previous average rate of 33.54 sen/kWh. For Sabah and Labuan, the average tariff is up five sen per kWh or 16.9% to 34.52 sen per kWh from previous average rate of 29.52 sen per kWh.

Schneider Electric (M) Sdn Bhd president Soo Pow Leong thinks investments in energy efficiency are a win-win situation for investors, stakeholders, and the environment.

"Energy-saving techniques include the adoption of efficient energy-management standards, such as ISO 50001, that help improve operational efficiencies and maintenance practices while reducing energy costs. The implementation of the ISO 50001 standard is intended to lead to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy cost, and other related environmental impacts,

through a systematic management of energy," Soo said.

"A hike in energy tariffs will adversely affect the costs and profitability for many businesses in Malaysia, particularly in the manufacturing industry. This

increase in tariffs will also affect non-business users, such as home owners, schools and hospitals," he added.

In 2011, the company conducted a survey to gauge the sentiment of local businesses towards energy efficiency. Over 70% of the survey's respondents said energy costs were a burden to their businesses and they would like to invest in energy-efficient solutions.

During the company's Xperience Efficiency event in September last year, a poll was conducted to better understand how Malaysian businesses perceive the importance of "energy efficiency" in Malaysia. Out of the 427 participants who responded in the survey, 50% were receptive to the adoption of energy efficiency. The results show that business owners are aware of the importance of energy efficiency to their businesses and have put

energy efficiency agenda high up on their list of priorities.

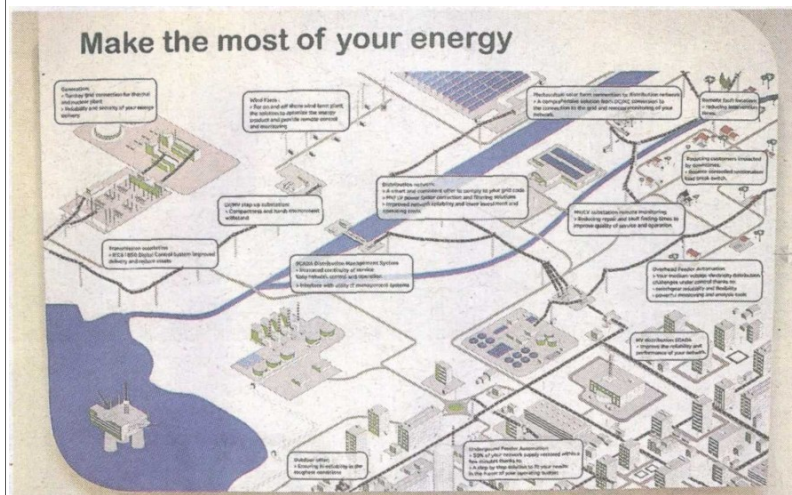
Soo says, based on the results of the survey, energy efficiency is being viewed favourably by businesses in Malaysia.

"The adoption of energy efficiency in Malaysia will continue to grow for businesses to achieve sustainable development.

Soo says Schneider Electric is committed to guiding Malaysian businesses in building commitment to energy efficiency through efficient energy management

standards because it is a specialist in energy management that offers solutions for buildings, data centres, and smart power grids.

"Against the backdrop of the hike in energy tariffs, it becomes even more important for business owners to take the opportunity to adopt energy management. With efficient energy-management standards, business owners are able to better plan, gauge and estimate electricity usage and have the ability to improve how energy is managed on a daily basis. As worldwide energy demand escalates, we must all act together to meet the challenge of doing more with less," Soo said.



The way forward: Schneider Electric says SMEs need to seriously look into energy efficiency to be cost competitive.