

## **Lazada empowers the growth of female-owned online businesses and celebrates the success of women entrepreneurs.**

THE e-commerce industry has continued to flourish in recent years. According to the **Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)**, the country's e-commerce revenue has increased 23.1% year-on-year (y-o-y) to RM801.2bil in the first nine months in 2021. With the steady acceleration and growth of e-commerce in Malaysia and the region, there has been a rising number of women business owners that are trailblazing the entrepreneurial path and contributing to the nation's digital economy.

More women are becoming successful entrepreneurs in the e-commerce landscape, thanks to the convenience and how easy it is to start their online business with just a few clicks. E-commerce platforms like Lazada has further bridge the digital divide with stimulus packages and other seller benefits to ease the transition from bricks to clicks.

With this, more female business owners are now tapping into the vast potential of e-commerce, since factors such as low barriers of entry, the capacity of starting a home-based business paired with the ease of setting up a store on an e-commerce platform like Lazada, as well as hands-on guidance, the availability of toolkit, services and solutions provided by Lazada are facilitating the digitalisation of local businesses, thus making it easier to kickstart, sustain and grow their businesses online.

"Many women initially onboarded Lazada to stay afloat during the pandemic. Today, these women have fully adapted to the digital space and are expertly leveraging on the Lazada platform and tools to establish their brands online," said Iv Ho, head of seller engagement, Lazada Malaysia.

In conjunction with International Women's Day, Lazada hosted its annual Lazada Forward Women Awards (LFWA) to celebrate the success of its female entrepreneurs in South-East Asia – as they continue to break barriers, challenge conventions and achieve their goals.

This year, 18 female entrepreneurs owning successful businesses on Lazada were recognised across the seven award categories. Top honours – the Lazada Forward Woman of the Year Award – were conferred to six sellers from each of the territories Lazada operates in.

Three Malaysian women entrepreneurs bagged several accolades this year: Lazada Forward Woman of the Year Award – Kong Wai Theng (Big Care Mart); Creative Award – Nurul Izzan Zamzuri (Niz Craft) and Bricks to Clicks Tech Adopter (runner-up) – Pang Jie Hui (Healthy Baker).

"This is a clear reflection of the evolution of female entrepreneurs – from the pioneers in the early 2000s having to start their own business due to reasons like lack of education opportunity, unemployment or loss of breadwinning spouse or parent<sup>1</sup>, to the current landscape of more women becoming entrepreneurs and onboarding the digital marketplace to achieve their dreams.

"Today, women own 20.6% of businesses in Malaysia and have contributed RM69.1bil to the country's GDP in 2021,<sup>2</sup> " said Ho.

With their diverse backgrounds and experiences, these winners exemplify the strength, resilience and unique talents of women across South-East Asia, and serve as motivation for other women to believe in themselves, adapt to any situation, overcome their fears, turn challenges into an opportunity, dare to dream and pursue their passions.

“It is incredible to witness the remarkable achievements of female sellers across South-East Asia's digital commerce ecosystem,” said Lazada Group chief operating officer Raymond Yang.

“Our Lazada sellers have continued to innovate and adapt their businesses to the e-commerce environment, cater to their customers and enhance their product offerings. We are proud to journey alongside these winners and create a world that is diverse and inclusive.”

Kong, from Selangor, ventured onto e-commerce when she started to lose customer footfall for her small Big Care Mart pharmacy in her neighbourhood. Encouraged by the thriving e-commerce in Malaysia, she made a bold move and brought her business onto Lazada.

“I experienced a few hiccups when I first digitalised my retail business in 2015. However, I soon got the hang of it after familiarising myself with the seller tools that Lazada offers and started seeing a significant growth in sales,” said Kong, 44, who is a qualified pharmacist.

“At one point, I successfully achieved sales of seven figures. Lazada has helped me regain my confidence as a businesswoman. As my way of giving back to the community, I registered as a trainer for Lazada University (LU) to share my experiences with other entrepreneurs who are just starting their digital journey.”

LFWA Creative Seller Award winner Nurul Izzan Zamzuri, 38, of Niz Craft, said: “I’m fortunate that I get to turn my passion into a business. But before starting the business, I did some research to ensure that it’s the right products that people would be interested in.

“When I identified a gap in the market, I explored that opportunity and maximize on the potential of e-commerce with Lazada.

“During the pandemic, there was a huge demand for the type of yarn that I sell, as many Malaysians were experimenting with new activities to do at home during the lockdown. “

Izzan also credits her success to the bold move of leaving a full-time career in finance - information technology to start her own business, as well as having an empowering support system, in particular her husband and her mother.

“I especially enjoy operating my business on Lazada thanks to its seller tools such as Flexi Combo, while sale opportunities like the Lazada Mega Campaigns have greatly helped me to reach out to more customers. The Lazada seller interface is simple to navigate, especially with Lazada University providing me with guidance.

“E-commerce has given my business global visibility, as overseas suppliers have also contacted me to bring their products into Malaysia, which I plan to do as I continue to expand my current inventory.”

Lazada is focused on accelerating the progress of Malaysia's digital economy through commerce and technology by championing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to embrace digital adoptions for sustainable business growth.

It is committed to reducing the barriers of entry to e-commerce and aid digital adoption, by providing stimulus packages to local SMEs – offering incentives to onboarded sellers such as zero commission fee, free shipping vouchers and full access to Lazada's suite of technology and innovative tools.

When the pandemic first hit, Lazada Malaysia offered a digital lifeline to local entrepreneurs, especially micro sellers, through its stimulus package for SMEs – Pakej Pintar Niaga – launched in April 2020. The platform saw more than a 300% increase of new sellers onboarding with a growth sales uplift that more than doubled by the end of 2020.

Lazada Malaysia also collaborated with various government bodies to accelerate the digitalisation of SMEs through campaigns including Shop Malaysia Online, Go-eCommerce and Buy Malaysia Campaign.

This year, Lazada Malaysia is offering a new seller kickstarter package – Hari-Harimau Campaign (HHM) – which aims to build an inclusive digital economy and support offline sellers to digitalise their business. Specifically, key incentives offered under the Hari-Harimau 2022 new seller kickstarter package include:

- \*No set-up cost, 0% commission fee, 2% payment fee waiver, and free shipping services

- \*Free ad credits for sponsored discovery worth RM150, and exclusive traffic and exposure on the Hari-Harimau campaign page

- \*Training and platform support on Lazada University

- \*Free one-month access to Lazada's premium customer engagement management (CEM) tool, which allows sellers to proactively engage with customers through customised messages and boost their branding.

Since 2012, Lazada has been at the forefront of Malaysia's e-commerce journey, and it has spent the last ten years building and strengthening the local eCommerce ecosystem. Hundreds of thousands of MSMEs, SMEs and brands have joined the Lazada Malaysia platform, in which many of the sellers are women and their team running the operations of their online stores are female of all ages.

Moving forward, Lazada will continue to find a better way of doing business that is more inclusive for all stakeholders, including female entrepreneurs within the local and regional value chain, as well as work together with industry peers and partners to build a stronger e-commerce ecosystem in Malaysia.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/starpics/2022/03/10/lazada-empowers-the-growth-of-female-owned-online-businesses-and-celebrates-women-entrepreneurs-success>