The Infocomm Development Authority Expands Singapore’s Capabilities in Data Analytics

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IDA to build government, industry and manpower expertise in data analytics

The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore continues to expand Singapore’s capabilities in data and analytics. This commitment was underscored by IDA Executive Deputy Chairman Mr Steve Leonard this morning at the inaugural Emtech Singapore 2014, which IDA is supporting as host partner. EmTech is MIT Technology Review’s global emerging technologies conference.

Mr Leonard said, “Unlike some other resources, data does not deplete as you use it. Data becomes more valuable the more you share it and use it. The knowledge created through intelligent analysis of data enables us to deal with priority issues such as healthcare. Data and analytics underpin our development towards being an increasingly Smart Nation.”

Studies have projected that data and analytics could generate an additional S$10 to S$17 billion of value per year for Singapore¹, which is already benefitting from such opportunities. IDA has already undertaken initiatives to develop data capabilities, including releasing data sets to encourage the public, the industry and other organisations to capitalise on the numerous opportunities that data has to offer.

Activities such as data.gov.sg’s Apps4SG Competition encourage participants to use government data to develop innovative applications that improve the way we live, work and play in Singapore. The winning application at the inaugural event that ended on 8 January 2014 came from a nineteen-year-old whose app assists students to make informed education choices in a user-friendly manner. IDA will continue to build on such initiatives, which will involve collaborating with other government agencies and bringing together the public and private sector to solve real-world problems.

IDA’s Data Innovation Challenge is another example of the Government’s crowdsourcing effort to address data-driven business challenges with data sets provided by government and corporate entities. The Data Innovation Challenge is an initiative by IDA to connect User Enterprises and Data Providers with Data Specialists, ICT companies, Research Institutes, and IHLs to develop prototypes, proof-of-concepts and analytics solutions for data-driven commercial problems. More than 300 entries were received and six prototypes were shortlisted in the first challenge issued by DSM Engineering Plastics. The Living Analytics Research Centre team from Singapore Management University won Round 1 with a predictive sales forecasting model that was the most accurate and innovative.

IDA has also worked to strengthen data talent within the organisation. From January 2014, Prabir Sen leads IDA’s new Data Sciences Group, which will provide capabilities to IDA’s data-driven projects. IDA will further train and recruit for this group.

Mr Leonard said, “I would like to welcome on board IDA’s first Chief Data Scientist, Prabir Sen, who joins us this month. Prabir and the entire IDA team are committed to building deep domain expertise in the ‘art and science’ of interpreting data. IDA has the goal of supporting Singapore’s continued growth as a Smart Nation using data and analytics to improve the lives of citizens.”

To enable Singapore to be a regional analytics hub, IDA has also collaborated with leading players in the ecosystem as well as local Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to provide academic programmes, to facilitate industry attachment programmes, and to develop and enhance analytics capabilities for local students and professionals.

Related Resources:

- Factsheet on data.gov.sg
- Factsheet on Apps4SG competition
- Factsheet: Data Innovation Challenge
- CV of Prabir Sen
- Photo of Prabir Sen
- Factsheet: Building Manpower Capabilities in Data & Analytics

About Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore

The mission of the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) is to develop information technology and telecommunications within Singapore with a view to serve citizens of all ages and companies of all sizes. IDA does this by actively supporting the growth of innovative technology companies and start-ups in Singapore, working with leading global IT companies as well as developing excellent information technology and telecommunications infrastructure, policies and capabilities for Singapore. For more news and information, visit www.ida.gov.sg.

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Note to Editor:

¹ McKinsey