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Sun is committed to investing in Malaysia

Azrani Rustam

SUN Microsystems Inc believes Malaysia remains one of the best places to invest in Southeast Asia and will continue its commitment to assist the country in the creation of knowledge workers and the development of a local software industry.

Its chief operating officer Ed Zander said the company was also quite confident that the economic downturn would not deter the development of a thriving information technology industry in the region, especially in Malaysia and Singapore.

"We have been here for the past 10 years and our business in Malaysia and Singapore has been a major source of our revenue growth.

"We believe this is the place to be, a place to invest and a place of strategic significance," Zander said in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Sun Microsystems has poured in investment of more than US\$50 million (RM210 million) in this region over the past decade through its regional branch in Singapore.

Speaking at a Press conference after the presentation of Java software development grants to the Education Ministry for several local academic institutions, Zander said he was also impressed with the forward thinking of leaders and IT industry players here.

"I am impressed with the technology and the understanding of technology here. There is a lot of futuristic thinking here that appeals to a company like Sun," he said at the conference.

Zander, who is visiting Malaysia and Singapore, said that in the long term the company believed that its investments here would bring in ample financial reward.

"Economic uncertainties notwithstanding, this is the place to be over the long term and we are very happy with our success and our investments," Zander said.

"It will pay off in the long term both in terms of business opportunities and technology innovation," he added.

Because of this, the company was firmly committed to the development of the local software industry and the creation of knowledge workers by organising software development programmes.

One of the programmes being organised is the Competence Centre for Java education programme which aims to build an alliance with institutions of higher learning to promote and facilitate the use of Java technologies in the institutions' curricula and Research and Development programmes.

The scheme is also aimed at creating a pool of talented programmers, developers and architects for the leading edge technologies industry.

The RM4 million competence centre is being jointly developed with Mimos Berhad.

Zander, who met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad earlier, also said he was impressed with the commitment of Dr Mahathir to making the Multimedia Super Corridor a success.

Sun Microsystem's donation of Java software to local academic institutions worth RM25 million is also aimed at training local programming experts.

Among the institutions which will receive the software are Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Tun Abdul Razak and Universiti Petronas.

The grant was presented to Education Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Johari Mat, who represented Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.  
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