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STRANDCOM-LISTING

STRANDCOM AIMS FOR MESDAQ LISTING BY SEPT-OCT THIS YEAR

By: Mohd Arshi Daud

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 19 (Bernama) -- Strandcom Sdn Bhd, a Bumiputera company which is fast carving a niche in the smart home system by combining security and automation, is aiming for a listing on MESDAQ by September or October this year.

"We have got proposals from four merchant banks to sponsor our listing and we are at the stage of appointing one of them," its group chief executive, Badardin Ahmad, said today.

He said Strandcom expected to raise between RM10 million and RM12 million from the planned listing exercise which would be utilised for overseas market expansion.

"So far we have been focusing in Malaysia but last November we started to look at Thailand and last month at China. And the reaction that we get is that they have never seen anything like it before," he told Bernama here on the sidelines of the "Showcase Malaysia 2003" trade exhibition held in conjunction with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) meeting.

The company has carved a niche in the smart home system sector by combining security and automation at a fraction of the cost of imported products.

It has developed "mi.GUARDZ", an intelligent smart home alarm and automation system, offering features that cost 85 percent cheaper than imported ones.

An imported system that costs around RM25,000 is sold by Strandcom at less than RM5,000.

And Strandcom's quality is of international class as it meets standards set by Sirim Bhd and authorities in Europe and the United States.

"The test is not on technology as it is readily available but the test is on the ability to (remotely) control electrical appliances at a price acceptable to the masses," Badardin said.

He also said that Strandcom owed it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who instilled the "Malaysia Boleh" spirit among Malaysians for the company's successful international foray into the business.

"It's not something that people just talk about, it's actually lifting a nation from a certain mindset to a new mindset," he said of Dr Mahathir's ability to move people forward.

"He (Dr Mahathir) has shown us the way. You don't see Cyberjaya (a smart township at the heart of the Multimedia Super Corridor Project) in every country in the world," he said.

Badardin said that the existence of Cyberjaya had created a demand for world class smart home system and his company had been working with two of three property developers in Cyberjaya to fit their residential units with mi.GUARDZ.

Strandcom is also doing the same with over 30 other property developers throughout the country.

"We also have done projects for individual houses that cost as low as RM3,000 per house to as high as RM300,000 per house."

Badardin revealed that Strandcom had seen astonishing growth since its inception two-and-a-half years ago.

"We recorded a RM700,000 revenue in 2001, RM4.5 million in 2002 and target it at RM24 million this year. In the first year we made a loss of RM600,000 but we posted after-tax profit of RM1.3 million last year and this year we target a RM7 million profit after tax."

mi-GUARDZ is unique as it allows users to interface with electrical appliances through fixed line telephone, handphone, internet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), wireless phone and its own intelligent pad.

It enables a houseowner who is away from home, among others, to dim the lights, turn on the water heater, monitor their servants or children at home, activate the motorised window curtain or be alerted of intruders.

"Our system can take 128 appliances without the usage of complicated microprocessors. We manage to integrate such amount of appliances in a house because our architecture is simple.

"We believe in simplicity. As long as the brain of our system can get the information, it can control any appliances regardless of the brand and their protocol," said Badardin.

Come July, Strandcom would be redesigning mi-GUARDZ's motherboard so as to give the system additional features at a cheaper price.

"With the new product, we aim to fit mi-GUARDZ at residential projects under Syarikat Perumahan Negara, government quarters and low cost houses," he added.

On Strandcom's participation at "Showcase Malaysia 2003", he said it would serve to display the ability of Malaysian companies to produce world class products to NAM delegates.

"We want to show that there are Bumiputera companies that can do things without relying on government `crutches'," he said. -- BERNAMA

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