



Bank Rakyat ties up with Western Union

P42

Sandakan Harbour to have RM40m boutique hotel

P46

FRANCHISING: 51  
Francorp to introduce certified executive scheme



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FRANCHISING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2007 51

## Upgrading the industry



■ By Hamisah Hamid  
hamisahhamid@nstp.com

IN A MOVE to inject professionalism into Malaysia's franchise industry, Francorp Malaysia Sdn Bhd will introduce Certified Franchise Executives (CFE) programme in the country next year.

Francorp Malaysia president and chief executive officer Affandy Faiz said he likened a CFE to a chartered accountant as the CFE is a professional in the industry.

He said the CFE programme is endorsed by the US Institute for Certified Franchise Executives (ICFE), under New York-based International Franchise Association (IFA).

"(In Malaysia), it will be in the third or fourth quarter of 2008. If the demand or the need is urgent, then we may bring forward the CFE modules in Malaysia," he told *Business Times* in Kuala Lumpur.

Francorp Malaysia is the master franchisee for franchise consultancy group, Francorp USA. Established in April 2004, Francorp Malaysia holds the franchise for Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia.

Francorp USA is a member of IFA, the largest franchise association in the world.

Affandy said players in the growing franchise industry in Malaysia have to acquire skills and keep up with the latest developments in the industry such as managing people and settling disputes.

The programme is targeted at business owners, franchisors and franchisees, management staff of franchise business and also university students.

It will also complement the government's efforts to create more awareness.

The government is encouraging graduates to be involved in franchise upon graduation while Francorp Malaysia focuses on the working population.

"We focus on working people of over 30 and 40 years of age as they can take early retirement. They are also more mature and have savings," he said.

Francorp Malaysia has already started the CFE programme for Sripatum University in Thailand in November.

Affandy, a CFE, said there are 300 students, including businessmen for the first module of

the programme at the university.

"Five modules can be completed in one year. Lecturers for the programme are franchise practitioners and not academicians," he said.

Francorp Malaysia will also launch the programme in Singapore and Indonesia next year.

"We will also bring it to the Middle East," he added.

Francorp Malaysia has over 60 clients in the region. About 20 more clients will be added to its customer base list in the near future.

Besides the CFE programme, Francorp Malaysia is also organising weekly franchise seminars in Kuala Lumpur, where participants come from as far as Indonesia, Singapore and Australia.

Locally, Affandy is a consultant to Bank Perusahaan Keildan Sederhana Malaysia Bhd (SME Bank).

In Thailand, he is an adviser to the Department of Business Development of Thailand's Trade Ministry, a non-executive director at Sripatum University, and sits on the Franchise Law Committee.

AFFANDY: Players in the growing franchise industry have to acquire skills and keep up with the latest developments