

Portrade moves into digital media

PORTRADE dotcom Bhd is now switching its focus from being a software developer to port operators, to being a player in digital media as the latter is a "matured business."

"Digital media would be a high growth business for us. The recent acquisition of Oriental Media Ltd would jumpstart us into the industry and allow us to tap into the regional markets," Portrade executive director Lau Kin Wai said last Friday.

Portrade has been making losses for the past four years since fiscal 2004. For its financial year (FY) ended June 30, 2007, the company suffered a bigger net loss of RM1.12 million compared to RM337,000



There are promising growth opportunities in digital media, said Lau

in FY06.

For the nine months to March 31, 2008, it incurred a net loss of RM1.35 million, or

1.11 sen a share, on a turnover of RM8.24 million.

Portrade is currently providing computerised applications for maritime port operators and its related trading and port user community. The group mainly derives its income from supporting and maintaining the existing projects which it has completed.

The change in business direction began in April this year when the company bought a 60% stake in Oriental Media for US\$300,000 (RM999.72) or US\$1 a share.

Oriental Media is involved in online media consulting, search engine marketing, lead generation, mobile advertisement, online display

advertising and ad-serving.

"It would take us around two years to build up the digital media business. We will double our staff strength and we will be looking into three main areas — gaming, Web 2.0 applications and digital services," Lau said,

At the company's EGM in Kuala Lumpur last Friday, shareholders approved its resolution to change its name to Oriental Media Group Bhd.

"The name change would better reflect our new business direction. Traditionally, digital media is ignored in the Southeast Asian region and we want to look into the region as a whole instead of individual countries," Lau said. — *By Jason Ng*