

**For Immediate Release**

## **Lazada Pledges to Cultivate Eight Million eCommerce Entrepreneurs and SMEs by 2030**

*Commits to sustainable eCommerce ecosystem in Southeast Asia for the long term*

**Singapore, 5 November 2018** – Lazada Group has pledged to support eight million eCommerce entrepreneurs and small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast Asia to grow and thrive by 2030. The company also announced its commitment to create an inclusive and sustainable eCommerce ecosystem in the region and champion opportunities in technology and logistics infrastructure to benefit its ecosystem of sellers, consumers and local communities.

As part of the pledge, Lazada will assist SMEs to digitise their businesses and gain better access to Internet-savvy and mobile consumers; make it easier for sellers to create their own brands on Lazada; while leveraging the company's logistics network to facilitate the transfer of goods.

At the opening speech of a panel discussion hosted by Lazada on the state of eCommerce in Southeast Asia, Lucy Peng, Executive Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer, Lazada Group, said: "Having overcome the early challenges of building up the business and industry in a nascent landscape, we now want to lead our ecosystem through the era of robust digital transformation. Our focus is on creating a trusted platform connecting sellers to the Southeast Asian consumers. By enabling sellers with our technology and logistics capabilities, we want to help sellers flourish, to become sustainable businesses that will contribute to Southeast Asia economic growth in the long run."

The panel comprised S. Iswaran, Minister for Communications & Information, Minister-in-Charge of Trade Relations; Pierre Poignant, Executive President, Lazada Group; Simon Baptist, Global Chief Economist and Managing Director, Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) in Asia; and media personality Anita Kapoor.

### **Building entrepreneurs into thriving businesses in the digital economy**

As the region's leading online shopping and selling platform, Lazada is committed to establishing eCommerce as a prolific facet of the evolving digital economy. Healthy and flourishing SMEs are key components of a thriving eCommerce ecosystem – their existence helps unlock the full potential of Southeast Asian nations, allowing the region to digitize.

An area that came under spotlight during the panel discussion was SMEs' eCommerce knowhow and access to local consumers. To help sellers reach more customers, Lazada has developed various initiatives, comprehensive tools and dedicated trainings that enable sellers of all sizes to attract, engage and convert more consumers into sales.

That being said, Lazada continues to aspire to do more. "New generation of sellers no longer view eCommerce as a good-to-have, but a necessity in order to drive success. And eCommerce players like Lazada can be strategic partners to sellers who are committed to their professional and business growth. Their thriving businesses will boost the ecosystem," said Pierre Poignant, Executive President, Lazada Group.

On cross-border trade, another common challenge faced by SMEs raised at the panel, Simon Baptist, Global Chief Economist and Managing Director, Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) in Asia, said, "Singapore has led the way in actively pursuing an agenda for open trade borders. However, there are still challenges for SMEs, especially in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, due to a lack of access to financial and support services, as well as a need to develop capacity in e-payments and eCommerce."

## Supporting digital consumer growth with improved infrastructure

Faced with limited fulfilment players, a small and fragmented transportation sector, as well as vastly different infrastructure landscapes, logistics remains a huge challenge for eCommerce players big and small across Southeast Asia.

“Our research showed that logistics is a challenge, particularly in archipelagos like Indonesia and the Philippines. Road networks, as well as the retail and distribution network, came up as higher-risk areas for eCommerce firms,” said Baptist.

On customer experience, panellists identified data and technology as the two key factors that will dynamically evolve the experience for online shoppers, due to Southeast Asia’s heterogeneity. eCommerce businesses that can leverage data to navigate specific local consumer tastes and direct consumers to take desired actions are well-poised to succeed.

“By allowing SMEs to tap into Lazada’s logistics network to facilitate the transfer of goods across countries, businesses will be able to deliver to customers anywhere,” said Poignant. “Through our technology powered by data and insights, Lazada enables small businesses to connect with their shoppers through a trusted platform, providing them the opportunity to build their businesses and tap into the vast potential that Southeast Asia presents,” he added.

## Developing local female entrepreneurs

The eCommerce sector also presents tremendous opportunities for local talents and communities. A new generation of entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly prominent given wider access to social media and new innovative tools. In particular, the flexibility of maintaining an eCommerce business has attracted many female entrepreneurs to start their businesses while taking care of their families at home.

“When you consider how female shoppers will be key demand drivers as ASEAN economies develop, it makes business sense for large eCommerce players to cultivate female entrepreneurship, particularly in certain eCommerce categories, like cosmetics and children’s products, that will be fuelled by female-driven growth,” said Baptist.

“Women play a significant role in the digital economy, and an inclusive eCommerce ecosystem is one that creates an empowering environment for women entrepreneurs. In supporting the local female community, Lazada has rolled out a few initiatives. For instance, our Mompreneurs programme provides stay-at-home mothers with free training and assistance, so they are equipped to run an online store while juggling family responsibilities. The programme is currently available in the Philippines, and we are looking to expand this initiative to other markets in Southeast Asia,” said Poignant.

The panel discussion today was held in conjunction with the launch of Lazada’s 11.11 Shopping Festival, its biggest one-day sale with 400,000 brands and sellers participating to offer shoppers over 50 million blockbuster deals.

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**About Lazada Group**

Launched in 2012, Lazada is the number-one online shopping and selling destination in Southeast Asia –present in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. With 350 million SKUs available, Lazada offers the widest range of products in categories from beauty, fashion, and consumer electronics to household goods, toys, sports equipment and groceries. Focused on delivering an excellent customer experience, it offers comprehensive customer care and hassle-free returns through its own first and last mile delivery arm supported by approximately 100 logistics partners. Lazada Group is majority owned by Alibaba Group Holding Limited (NYSE: BABA).

**About Lazada 11.11 Shopping Festival**

The Lazada 11.11 Shopping Festival is the biggest one-day shopping and selling event in Southeast Asia. The annual event is aimed at showcasing the convenience and value of online shopping, and allowing shoppers to take advantage of “out-of-this-world” prices on some 11,111 brands and products. For 24-hours starting midnight of November 11, shoppers in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam can enjoy more than 50 million blockbuster deals from LazMall and local sellers on Lazada marketplace. They can also stand a chance of collecting vouchers and great offers through interactive games and features like “Wonderland, “SlashIt” and “Shakelt”.

The Lazada 11.11 Shopping Festival is now part of Alibaba’s ecosystem, which includes Tmall and Taobao, who join hands with Lazada to bring the shopping phenomenon to millions of shoppers in the Southeast Asia region. All this, to bring a truly more mobile, connected, personalized and convenient shopping experience to Lazada shoppers.

**Media Contacts**

Jermyn Chow  
Lazada Group  
+65 9090 2331  
[jermyn.chow@lazada.com](mailto:jermyn.chow@lazada.com)

Julie Toh  
Edelman on behalf of Lazada Group  
[EdelSGLazada@edelman.com](mailto:EdelSGLazada@edelman.com)