



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

New National E-Commerce Standard to Build Trust and Transparency in Online Transactions

Guidelines will help businesses improve e-commerce processes and policies, and enhance consumers' online shopping experience

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1. Enterprise Singapore (ESG) and the Singapore Standards Council (SSC) have launched the first national standard, Technical Reference 76 (TR 76)¹, on guidelines for e-commerce transactions. TR 76 supports ESG's efforts to bolster SMEs' online presence in the growing e-commerce market². In Singapore, online retail sales generated an estimated 5.0 and 5.8 per cent of total retail sales value in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This year, the figure has increased from 5.5 per cent in January to 17.8 per cent in April³, reflecting the substantial increase in e-commerce transactions fuelled by the COVID-19 outbreak.
2. TR 76's guidelines serve as a practical reference for e-retailers, and online intermediaries such as e-marketplaces. The guidelines provide comprehensive end-to-end coverage of the e-commerce transactions' process, from pre-purchase activities of browsing and selection, to purchasing and payment procedures, and post-purchase activities which include fulfilment⁴, delivery, tracking of products, and returns, refunds, and exchange. Refer to ANNEX A for more information on TR 76.

¹ A TR is a provisional standard that is developed to address urgent industry demand and issued for industry trials for a period of time. Comments received during this trial period are considered when a TR is reviewed.

² Source: Supply Chain Asia (2018), Singapore: E-Commerce Gateway to ASEAN and Southwest Pacific. Enterprises here are also well-positioned to leverage e-commerce for local and regional sales, due to Singapore's key geographic location and status as a logistics and air cargo hub.

³ Source: Singapore Department of Statistics

⁴ Fulfilment refers to packing the purchased products for delivery.

3. Businesses can refer to the guidelines as a checklist to develop e-commerce processes and policies, and convey clear and comprehensive information to consumers. This includes details on the e-retailer or merchant, their products or services, returns and refunds policies, and payment and shipping processes, so consumers can access the information easily and make informed choices. For example, where applicable, taxes, import and export fees, return charges, and additional surcharges based on selected modes of payment should be reflected before purchases are made. TR 76 also lays out best practices on providing adequate and responsive customer support to address queries, feedback, and complaints.
4. Developed by the Working Group on e-commerce appointed by ESG and SSC, the formulation of TR 76 is an industry-led effort comprising representatives from the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE), Singapore Retailers Association (SRA), e-marketplaces including Carousell and Shopee, e-retailer FortyTwo, Nanyang Polytechnic's Singapore Institute of Retail Studies (NYP-SIRS), and payment and logistics service providers.
5. **Ms Choy Sauw Kook, Director-General (Quality & Excellence), Enterprise Singapore**, said, "E-commerce is a new stream of business for retailers diversifying from traditional brick and mortar shops. E-marketplaces and e-retailers will be able to implement, maintain and improve their internal processes and policies related to business-to-consumer and consumer-to-consumer transactions. TR 76 will also help these businesses develop customer-centric business policies and processes, to enhance consumer confidence and trust; key considerations which will drive the growth of the e-industry."
6. **Mr Loy York Jiun, Executive Director, Consumers Association of Singapore**, said, "We hope more businesses will take on the guidance in TR 76, especially with more consumers turning to e-commerce during the current COVID-19 situation. This will enable consumers to have access to transparent product and pricing information so that they can make informed purchasing decisions. Consumers can also shop with greater assurance knowing that there are clear avenues and processes available to resolve issues post-purchase."
7. **Ms Rose Tong, Executive Director, Singapore Retailers Association**, said, "As more retail companies venture into online platforms, TR 76 will support businesses in implementing e-commerce effectively and efficiently. We expect

online retail to make up a larger share of retail sales with the prolonged COVID-19 situation. Hence, we strongly recommend retailers to use this opportunity to go or expand online, diversify, and tap on new customer segments both locally and overseas.”

8. TR 76 can be purchased from the Singapore Standards eShop at www.singaporestandardseshop.sg. For a limited time to support enterprises' efforts in combating COVID-19 and boost recovery, the public can view TR 76 and other selected international and Singapore standards online for free via Enterprise Singapore's website at www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/standards-covid19.
9. ESG is working with NYP-SIRS to organise a webinar for the launch of TR 76. Titled *Building a Trusted Online Business*, the event on 2 July 2020 will see participants learning about TR 76 and how the new guidelines will apply to e-commerce transactions. Retailers diversifying into e-commerce will take away insights on creating smooth, secure, and customer-friendly processes for their online customers. Companies which have adopted TR 76 will also be sharing their experiences and tips on how to maximise the guidelines for better outputs. Interested participants can register via upskill@sirs.edu.sg for the webinar launch. Refer to ANNEX B for more details.

Annex A: Information on TR 76 on Guidelines for Electronic Commerce Transactions

Annex B: Information on the webinar launch for TR 76

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Information on TR 76 on Guidelines for Electronic Commerce Transactions

TR 76 covers the end-to-end process of e-commerce transactions, extending from pre-purchase activities, to purchasing and payment procedures, and lastly to post-purchase activities. The guidelines also cover best practices on customer support and managing relations amongst e-marketplaces, merchants and consumers.

	Examples from TR 76 (<i>Non-exhaustive</i>)
Pre-purchase	TR 76 details the information that should be clearly displayed on e-commerce platforms. This includes information on (a) the organisation, (b) the products and services, and (c) the transaction.
Purchase	<p>TR 76 states that e-marketplaces and e-retailers should ensure information regarding products and services placed in the shopping cart are listed clearly.</p> <p>For example, this includes the (a) name, description, quantity, availability, and price of the product and/or service, (b) product warranty and its validity period (if applicable), (c) applicable taxes, such as Goods and Services Tax (GST) or import/export fees, (d) modes of payment, (e) delivery options, fees, and estimated delivery date, (f) amount, frequency and expenses arising from recurring charges (if applicable), (g) free gifts or purchase-with-purchase entitlements with this product (if applicable), and (h) additional surcharges based on the selected payment mode etc. (<i>Non-exhaustive</i>)</p>
Post-purchase	<p>TR 76 covers various considerations within the scope of delivery, including (a) delivery time, (b) product handling during delivery, (c) payment on delivery, (d) self-collection, (e) delivery information, (f) proof of delivery, and (g) failed delivery.</p> <p>These may include e-marketplaces and e-retailers working with third-party logistics service providers to fulfil the delivery of products and services purchased.</p>
Customer Support	TR 76 details how e-marketplaces and e-retailers should put up information relating to terms and conditions, frequently asked questions, and mechanisms to manage interactions with customers. These include mechanisms to handle (a) general enquiry, (b) feedback, and (c) complaints, as well as resolve disputes related to e-commerce transactions.
Merchant Verification (<i>applicable to e-marketplaces</i>)	TR 76 lists guidelines for e-marketplaces to put in place strong internal processes and controls to manage trust between the marketplace, merchants, and customers.

About the Webinar Launch: *Building a Trusted Online Business*

Enterprise Singapore is working with Nanyang Polytechnic's Singapore Institute of Retail Studies (NYP-SIRS) on the webinar *Building a Trusted Online Business*.

Corporates, SMEs, e-marketplaces and consumers will be able to learn how to apply the TR 76's guidelines for a predictable, top-notch customer digital experience.

NYP-SIRS will also be conducting a series of one-day workshops after the webinar – *Best Practices of eCommerce Transactions* – to guide merchants on the journey of creating a well-designed customer transaction experience online. Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents can enjoy up to 90% SkillsFuture subsidies on workshop fees.

Those interested in the webinar or workshops can email upskill@sirs.edu.sg.

Details on the Webinar Launch

Date: 2 July 2020 (Thursday)

Time: 11.00am to 12.30pm

Platform: Webex

Programme:

Time	Activity
10.30am	Webinar Admission (Successfully pre-registered participants will receive an access link)
11.00 am	Opening Remarks
11.10am	Introduction to TR 76 by Mr David Lee, Digital Commerce Lead, Nanyang Polytechnic's Singapore Institute of Retail Studies
11.30am	Panel Discussion and Crossfire Session: Bespoke customer experience with digital commerce transactional clarity: Applications of TR 76 for organisations and consumers Panellists: Mr Jason Teo, Director of Product Group, Carousell Mr Loy York Jiun, Executive Director, CASE Mr Jheeva Subramaniam, CFO, BHG
12.10pm	Q&A Session
12.30pm	End of Launch Event

About Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development. We work with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise.

We also support the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups, and build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.

Visit www.enterprisesg.gov.sg for more information.

About Singapore Standards Council

The Singapore Standards Council (SSC) facilitates the development, promotion and review of Standards and Technical References in Singapore. This work is done through partnerships with the industry, academia and government organisations, under the national standardisation programme overseen by Enterprise Singapore.

About Consumers Association of Singapore

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) is an independent, non-profit organisation that is committed towards protecting consumers' interest through information and education, and promoting an environment of fair and ethical trade practices.

For more information, please visit the CASE website at www.case.org.sg.

About Singapore Retailers Association

Singapore Retailers Association (SRA) is a non-profit, independent/non-governmental retail trade body in Singapore, funded entirely by the private sector. Led by 18 Council Members from leading companies and SMEs, SRA's vision is to be the respected and collective voice of the retail industry and advance the interests of the retail industry via insights, education and strategic collaborations. SRA is also committed to advance initiatives under the Retail ITM to help bring about greater value creation in the retail industry through innovation; enhance retailers' productivity and capabilities; maximise workforce potential for improved business growth and internationalisation.