

BUSINESS

To the point that people in the US are losing jobs or incomes, it is a downward weight... and it will have ramifications on the ability to consume globally.

SENIOR ECONOMIST ELIZABETH CROFOOT, at the Conference Board, which documented a record drop in global consumer confidence in a recent survey. **B9**

Solar panels on the rooftop of JTC Space @ Gul. JTC Corporation's SolarRoof Initiative aims to fast-track solar power adoption on the rooftops of 50 JTC buildings as well as those of JTC's lessees, spanning about 18ha. This is expected to create 15MWp of solar deployment by 2022. PHOTOS: JTC



Key figures

- **More than 10MWp:** Current solar capacity at JTC buildings and temporarily vacant land.
- **100MWp:** Estimated solar deployment capacity across JTC building rooftops and vacant land by 2022.
- **2GWp:** Singapore's target deployment of solar capacity by 2030 – equivalent to powering around 350,000 households a year.
- **18ha:** Additional area of solar panel deployment under SolarRoof.

Choo Yun Ting

leasing – JTC group director of engineering Calvin Chung said the solar leasing model included in the SolarRoof tender meets companies' needs better than direct ownership, as no upfront capital outlays is required.

There is also no capital cost borne by the government agency, he added.

"The solar company will generate revenue from selling power to the national power grid, and our customers also get to earn some rental or enjoy discount for their power, depending on which scheme they choose," he said.

JTC has received interest from some customers located in its industrial estates, such as Seletar Aerospace Park, Tuas Biomedical Park, its own wafer fabrication parks and one-north, Mr Chung added.

Pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline and developer Ho Bee Land are among these potential clients.

Currently, the agency has deployed solar panels on temporarily vacant land on Jurong Island and on the roofs of more than 20 buildings, including Jurong Town Hall and JTC Space @ Gul, amounting to more than 10MWp of installed solar capacity.

It expects to increase this solar capacity to 100MWp within the next three years through SolarRoof and SolarLand, an initiative that uses vacant land for solar deployment.

This would be enough to power more than 17,500 households a year and reduce carbon emissions by more than 39,000 tonnes, JTC said.

Several of JTC's lessees have deployed solar capacity on their own in the past few years, which has contributed to cost savings.

For example, sustainable packaging company Greenpac spent about \$1 million to install solar panels on the rooftop of its building in 2011.

Solar energy now powers about half of the company's overall operations and has helped it save close to \$100,000 a year in energy costs, Greenpac chief executive Susan Chong said.

Dr Toshiharu Shimizu, managing director of South-east Asia and India for manufacturing company Yamazaki Mazak Singapore, said deploying a solar energy system has enabled the firm to reduce both its carbon dioxide emissions and operating costs.

"The shade that the panels provide to the roof naturally helps to reduce the temperature of the fully air-conditioned factory, thereby helping cut down on the plant's energy consumption," he added.

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JTC launches tender to help companies adopt solar energy

Firms can lease solar panels and get power discount or lease out rooftop space for panels

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Industrial landlord JTC Corporation has launched a tender to help companies adopt solar energy and make its industrial estates more environmentally friendly.

This initiative aims to fast-track solar power adoption on the rooftops of 50 JTC buildings as well as those of JTC's lessees, spanning about 18ha.

It is expected to create 15 megawatt-peak (MWp) of solar deployment by 2022.

Under this new model, businesses can either lease solar photovoltaic panels and get a discount of about 15 per cent on the electricity generated, or lease out part of their rooftop space for solar vendors to install solar panels, receiving revenue in return.

The SolarRoof tender was launched last Tuesday, is expected to close on Aug 18, and is slated to be awarded in December.

It seeks to mitigate some of the challenges companies face in



JTC Corporation currently has solar panels on temporarily vacant land on Jurong Island (above), and on the roofs of more than 20 buildings, amounting to over 10MWp of installed solar capacity. It expects to increase this capacity to 100MWp within the next three years by using more rooftops and vacant land for solar deployment.

switching to cleaner sources of energy, such as a lack of understanding of solar deployment models and legal and procurement processes.

The tender also includes an option

for solar vendors to suggest other ideas, such as combining solar deployment with rooftop farming.

Solar vendors who could take part in the tender include existing

players such as Sunseap, Sembcorp, Keppel, Sun Electric and Terrenus.

Outlining the solar business models available in the market – direct ownership, solar leasing and roof

COOL BENEFIT

The shade that the panels provide to the roof naturally helps to reduce the temperature of the fully air-conditioned factory, thereby helping cut down on the plant's energy consumption.



DR TOSHIHARU SHIMIZU, managing director of South-east Asia and India for manufacturing firm Yamazaki Mazak Singapore, on how deploying a solar energy system has enabled the company to reduce both its carbon dioxide emissions and its operating costs.

Pandemic has sped up digital transformation in firms: Study

Sue-Ann Tan

The coronavirus pandemic has significantly accelerated digital transformation in companies, a study noted today.

It found that around 70 per cent of those polled here and across the world believe that the crisis stemming from Covid-19 has forced their business to move much quicker in adopting online tools. The poll by Twilio, a cloud communications platform, also noted that respondents expect digital communication strategies to be sped up by an average of six years as a result of the difficulties brought on by the crisis.

Twilio chief customer officer Glenn Weinstein said: "Over the last few months, we've seen years-long digital transformation road maps compressed into days and weeks in order to adapt to the new normal as a result of Covid-19."

"Our customers in nearly every industry have had to identify new ways to communicate with their customers and stakeholders – from patients to students to shoppers and even employees – essentially overnight."

The study polled 2,569 respondents from countries such as Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and Britain, including 270 here. Half of the respondents were

directors and the rest vice-presidents and executives.

Most of the participants agreed that enabling digital communication has been critical in addressing business challenges during the crisis. Almost all companies polled are also seeking new ways of engaging their customers and stakeholders as a result.

Meanwhile, more than 30 per cent felt barriers to transformation – the need to seek executive approval, the lack of a clear strategy, reluctance to replace legacy software, insufficient budgets or a lack of time – have been broken down amid the pandemic as firms move fast to shore up their operations.

70%

Percentage of those polled here and across the world who believe that the crisis stemming from Covid-19 has forced their business to move much quicker in adopting online tools.

80%

Percentage of those polled who said the crisis has stimulated an increase in digital transformation budgets in their companies.

Around 80 per cent said the crisis has even stimulated an increase in digital transformation budgets in their companies, while around 90 per cent added that their organisations are likely to expand online communication channels as the world reopens. One in three companies started using live chat and interactive voice response channels for the first time as a result of the pandemic.

Live chat functions, e-mails and videos were also increasingly used as communication channels.

When broken down by sectors, technology, energy and healthcare companies said they were most likely to speed up digital transformation. Construction and energy

companies saw the greatest acceleration in their digital communication strategy specifically, while technology firms said they were very likely to expand in this area as the world reopens.

The energy, construction and finance industries added the most new digital channels during the pandemic, such as live chat and video functions.

Mr Weinstein said: "Cloud scale, speed and agility are enabling organisations to innovate faster than ever."

"We believe the solutions being built today will be the standard for digital engagement in the future."

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