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ASIA EDITION

Singapore's Experian connects COVID-19 impacted consumers in Asia

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Experian collaborates with Leading Telcos across Asian markets for rapid assistance to their subscribers by offering temporarily increased credit limits, reduced fees and through relaxing the eligibility criteria to allow more subscribers to be provided with airtime advance



Experian, the world leader in information services, 18 May 2020 announced that it is working with its existing telco partners across Southeast Asia and the wider region to better support subscribers digitally during this challenging period. Experian is actively collaborating with telcos to help them broaden existing criteria to enable them to rapidly roll out extended offers to subscribers who have been impacted by the lockdown measures.

As part of the containment strategies of several countries, forced lockdowns and movement controls have disrupted livelihoods across the region, leaving individuals and communities struggling as a result of the downstream impact on the economy.

In particular, staying connected during movement control restrictions have proven to be critical, allowing consumers to gain access to essential services like food supplies and in managing the psychological effects of isolation, among other benefits. In a recent study from Sri Lanka, in-person mobile top-ups experienced spikes during off-curfew hours, indicating that many subscribers risk infection from COVID-19 to continue to use their mobiles.

Experian initiated collaborations with its telco partners to change their current eligibility criteria as deployed through their existing Dynamic Airtime Advance (DAA) service. The subscriber benefits are manifold and includes increased eligibility, data top-ups, promotion to non-active users and increase airtime advance limits.

In Sri Lanka, Experian worked with Hutch Sri Lanka to make the necessary changes on their DAA eligibility criteria, completing it hours before the lockdown came into effect in the island nation on 20 March. While offers for subscribers are typically determined by their usage patterns, the focus has been on actively widening the eligibility to ensure a broader pool of subscribers stay connected. With Hutch Sri Lanka, this included the following changes to criteria:

- The increase to the number of individuals that are eligible for the service by reducing the minimum access requirements;
- The increase in airtime advance limits to a broader number of customers; &/or
- A one-time discount to encourage inactive subscribers to use the service.

"We are happy to have collaborated with Experian as they have proven to be a reliable partner and most of all, for consistently being available to collaborate in an agile and rapid way to help Sri Lankans during unprecedented events such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The changes in subscriber eligibility and credit limit have allowed us to keep more subscribers connected despite the new challenges faced," said Hamdhy Hassen, General Manager - Marketing for Hutch Sri Lanka.

Dev Dhiman, Managing Director, Southeast Asia & Emerging Markets, Experian said, "We are striving to innovate at speed and contribute to the larger ecosystem by making a social impact to the communities we live and work in. In some cases, this also means that we will share financial losses incurred by our partners. However, that does not deter us from the larger goal - to stand together to make a collective impact, to show our resilience in the face of uncertain adversities, and to unite to definitively tackle one of the greatest challenges in modern history," he added.

Experian is working with other telco partners in the region to roll out similar initiatives in the spirit of ensuring more individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic continue to get access to telecommunication services.

Experian is focused on helping people stay connected during these uncertain times and make a social impact in economies that have been adversely impacted by the pandemic.