



**MAYPAC:** High charges deter more of its usage

private status in January 1987. To be fair, some remarkable changes for the better have occurred. But long-standing grouses surrounding high tariffs and slow technical trouble-shooting still remain.

For a start, the switch from government to private standing has enabled STM to show its mettle. Thumbs up for the change in attitude among its employees who come face-to-face with customers. The 83 *Kedai Telekom*, where one applies for services, pays bills and makes inquiries, are the most

common meeting place. It's not all smiles and hello, like when you step into McDonald's. But the change has been strong enough to warrant notice. 'Since privatisation, STM people are more commercial-minded in their conduct of business. There is vast improvement at the front door of *Kedai Telekom*,' observes Parama Raj, a system analyst at Perkom Sdn Bhd.

**MARKETING APPROACH.** Another visible about-turn is STM's marketing approach. It now emphasises 'go to the customer' rather than the previous 'wait for the customer' and this is cannot be illustrated more clearly than at the *pasar malam*. Yes, unbelievable by true — STM runs booths at the night markets which offer new phones within a week. That's for the ordinary guy. Corporate clients get a more personalised touch. Says a bank executive, 'In the past, when applying for services for the bank, I had to make an appointment to see Telecoms officers. Nowadays, they insist on coming to see me.'

The grouse, however, is that these welcomed changes are not a uniform feature throughout the country. Businessmen say

<b>MAYPAC USERS AUG 31, 1988</b>	
Area	No of customers
SABAH	40
SARAWAK	47
Johor	49
Melaka	18
N Sembilan	22
SOUTH	89
Selangor	104
Fed Territory	175
CENTRAL	279
Kelantan	22
Pahang	35
Terengganu	18
EAST	75
Kedah	25
Perak	30
Perlis	14
Penang	53
NORTH	122
<b>MALAYSIA</b>	<b>652</b>

the improvements are concentrated in the metropolitan areas, leaving out towns like Kuala Terengganu and Kota Baru. Besides, inconsistencies in different application procedures in different geographical locations still give some businessmen the run-around. Credit card companies, for instance, which need to secure telecommunication lines for credit authorisation have had such headaches.

Perhaps the most meaningful metamorphosis where the business sector is concerned is that STM is no longer an inflexible institution where it involves charges. An EDP manager says STM has given a substantial reduction in Datel, dial-up data transmission, charges since the second half of last year — from 720 rgt to 120 rgt a year. He is quite convinced STM has adopted an accommodating approach and is willing, when there is commercial sense for it, to charge lower than approved tariffs.

But despite this, high charges for services remain a common complaint of business clients. This is most obvious for packet switching, the Maypac (Malaysian Packet Switched Public Data) network. The high charges are partly to blame for the still low usage of Maypac; it has only 626 customers as at the end of August. The charges for Maypac are both time and volume sensitive. Raj, who deals in credit authorisation

<b>TELEX USERS AUG 31, 1988</b>	
Area	No of customers
SABAH	1,203
SARAWAK	1,093
Johor	654
Melaka	154
N Sembilan	138
SOUTH	946
Selangor	1,719
Fed Territory	3,428
CENTRAL	5,147
Kelantan	85
Pahang	178
Terengganu	156
EAST	419
Kedah	160
Perak	448
Perlis	30
Penang	882
NORTH	1,520
<b>MALAYSIA</b>	<b>10,328</b>

<b>REVENUE SOURCES DEC 31, 1987</b>	
Source	%
Residential telephones	34.1
Business telephones	50.2
Atur	1.8
Public payphones	1.4
Telex	5.4
Data services	0.1
Leased services	3.9
Miscellaneous	3.1