

## Industry advised to pair up with educational institutions

MALAYSIAN industries need to collaborate with educational institutions to produce highly skilled and competent knowledge workers, said Inti Management Service Sdn Bhd (IMS) director Daniel Chi.

Chi said that besides internships and the practical training carried out by some educational institutions, other corporate-supported projects like competitions, industry mentorship and even job simulation should be organised.

"This needs to be encouraged as we increasingly hear that the typical college or university educa-

tion is mostly irrelevant to corporate realities and industry expectations; that graduates today are ill-prepared for the demand of the workplace," he said at a signing ceremony between the company and RHB Bank to sponsor prizes for the IMS Business Plan competition on Tuesday.

The competition is incorporated into the newly launched Coventry University Master of Science in E-Commerce Programme, which is represented by IMS in Malaysia, to promote e-commerce entrepreneurship and

to serve as a platform for students to nurture good e-commerce ideas with expert guidance.

RHB Bank would be sponsoring a grand prize of RM10,000 and two first prizes of RM5,000 to winners of the competition.

RHB Bank head of consumer banking division Peter England said that by supporting education, the bank would help to expand the stock of quality manpower, increase productivity and nourish creativity - the very elements that would sharpen Malaysia's competitive edge in future.

The bank also offers study loans to the general public and although it contributed less than 1% of its loans portfolio, it is part of customer relationship building as the graduates will come back to the bank for other services like housing loans and credit cards.

"RHB Bank started offering study loans 2 years ago and since then we have approved RM90mil worth of study loans," he said, adding that a gradual increase in loans growth of RM40mil to RM50mil per annum can be expected.