



Sabah

## Robots to take over office jobs

📅 August 11, 2017, Friday 📍 Jenne Lajiun

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KOTA KINABALU: Those in the construction and property industries in Sabah were advised to become acquainted with digital technologies.

Asean Service Providers' Confederation executive director Dr Chew Cheng Sim told participants of the CEO roundtable conference when presenting his topic "How Digital Economy Affects Properties" that in five to 10 years from now, office robots would be widely used in many sectors of the economy, including real estates.

Chew said that due to the adoption of office robots, some routine jobs such as accountants, auditors and even real estate agents would become irrelevant as their tasks could be taken over by office robots.

He said this was already happening in Japan, citing that an insurance company in the country had laid off 30 of its workers and replaced them with office robots to calculate payouts to policy holders.

While the set-up investment was high, he said the company was able to get its return on investment in as little as two years.

Chew also mentioned how the use of an Apple technology, the iBeacon, could be used to help provide much needed information concerning properties that are for sale to prospective buyers.

He said with the technology, real estate agents needed no longer be on-site with their prospective clients to show a property on sale.

With the use of the Apple technology, the information could be delivered directly to the prospective buyers' smartphones, explaining the sizes of each room, for example, he said.

Other technologies he mentioned were drones that could be used to send supplies that had been ordered by customers right up to their doorsteps.

He said the technology had already been adopted by companies outside the country and would help reduce their dependence on delivery trucks and drivers.

Meanwhile, founder and chief executive officer of Widebed Sdn Bhd, Ivan Chong, who was discussing the booming short-term rental properties, said home sharing was a new concept that was becoming popular among home owners.

Ivan said among the benefits of home sharing was its capability to lighten the financial load of home-owners in the sense that they could rent out property for a short term and earn extra revenue.

He added that his company was working with developers and home owners who were keen to venture into the area.

Among the services rendered by the company to their customers included search engine optimisation, booking optimisation as well as train them in customer service and hospitality tourism.

Ivan also said many home sharing providers that were now in the city were not versed in hospitality tourism.

He added that as one in the industry, he had tried several of the home sharing providers here and found them lacking in hospitality.

He stressed that hospitality was an important aspect that needed to be emphasised, especially when one dealt with tourists who were probably here for the first time.