

# SingTel unit sees business cloud lifting

**Alatum's growing list of deals includes a major project at the upcoming YOG**

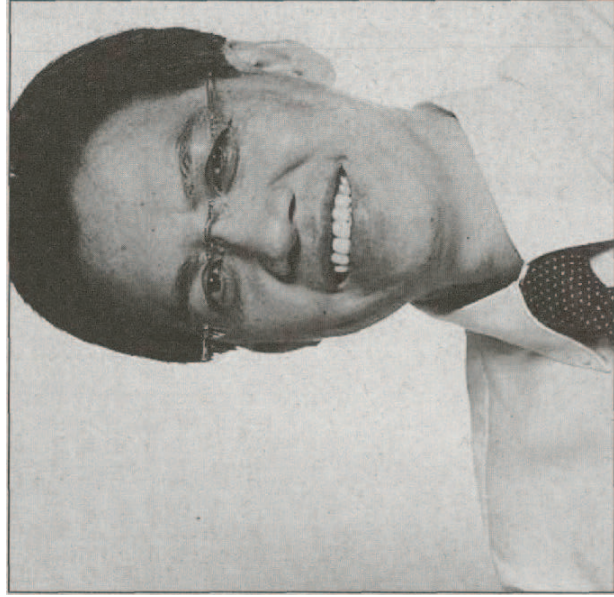
**By ONG BOON KIAT**

SINGAPORE'S ambition to become a hub for pay-per-use "cloud" and "grid" computing services is on track, judging by the steady sales chalked up by Alatum – one of the government's three designated National Grid service providers.

The SingTel unit has closed a number of deals in recent months. They include an eye-catching project at the upcoming Singapore Youth Olympic Games (YOG), its biggest deal to date.

It is also on track to hit its target of bringing in 70 partners and 700 customers by the end of next year, said Alatum's chief Alvin Kok.

In an interview last week with *BizIT*, Mr Kok said that take-up by govern-



**Mr Kok: Alatum is on track to hit its target of bringing in 70 partners and 700 customers by end-2011**

ment agencies for Alatum's services has so far been "encouraging", while enterprise customers are on the rise. From around 60 customers a year ago, Alatum now

has over 300 customers who are tapping on a variety of online software services provided by a crop of 32 independent software vendors and partners. There is also more com-

puting firepower to drive Alatum's services from its data centre at Bedok, at 3,300 processor cores compared to 2,400 cores about a year ago.

"We are pretty much on track with our targets. Cloud computing has gained more momentum in the last six months, both in Singapore and worldwide," said Mr Kok.

The formation of Singapore's National Grid service providers was first announced by the government in June 2008. Three groups – led by the Singapore Computer Systems (SCS), New Media Express and PTC System – were named the providers.

Alatum, which means "winged" in Latin, became a part of SingTel following the latter's acquisition of SCS at end-2008. US technology giant Hewlett-Packard is its major partner.

Grid and cloud computing are closely-related IT metaphors that describe technologies which let organisations and individuals

use software and computing resources over a network such as the Internet.

For such a computing model, users rent rather than own the computing resources that they use, on a pay-per-use basis. This can help organisations and individuals significantly slash their upfront IT equipment and software costs.

Mr Kok disclosed that a number of private and public-sector firms, including National University of Singapore, Tropical Marine Science Institute, Safra Radio and KDi Asia, have signed up with Alatum recently.

"The big one is the YOG," said Mr Kok, who declined to elaborate on the details of the contract at this stage.

Looking ahead, he said Alatum will be looking to further lift its business, especially since it now taps SingTel's considerable sales staff to drive its business.

"We will have more things to announce over the next couple of months," he said.