



For Immediate Release

SMU partners with leading cybersecurity provider to boost students' skills in combating cyber threats

Singapore, 08 Oct 2025 - Singapore Management University today announced that it has inked an educational partnership with DerSecur, a leading application security testing platform company, and its local distributor Athena Dynamics Pte Ltd, that will equip the university's computing students with hands-on experience using industry-standard cybersecurity tools.

The partnership, formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), will support students at SMU's School of Computing and Information Systems (SCIS) in software development and cybersecurity to enhance their IT and security literacy, which will be vital in the professional development of future IT specialists.

Under the MoU, SCIS aims to cultivate a robust cybersecurity talent pipeline that can use modern tools from DerSecur to perform application security testing and analysis. The School recognises that designing security into software from the outset is far more effective than adding it later, as this approach scales better with growing system complexity. As such, training future software engineers to code with security in mind from the start is a key priority.

Under the partnership, DerSecur will provide the University with a non-commercial license for the DerScanner platform, a robust solution designed to detect and address vulnerabilities in software code early in the development process. It is a comprehensive application security testing platform that helps organisations identify and fix vulnerabilities in their software early by analysing the software's source code and executable files to make it safer against hacking and other security risks. As the strategic partner, Athena Dynamics will integrate the technology, conduct training, and manage licenses, contributing to the development of Singapore's cybersecurity talent pipeline to meet real-world industry needs.

Professor Pang Hwee Hwa, Dean of School of Computing and Information Systems said, "We are excited about this partnership with DerSecur and ADPL. By enabling our students to use DerScanner as a comprehensive, full-cycle security platform for our software and security courses, we ensure that they not only learn about security in theory, but also gain hands-on experience from the onset."

Cybersecurity students at SMU will gain crucial skills in vulnerability analysis and threat detection. DerScanner's advanced binary analysis allows them to examine software when the source code is not available, and to correlate static and dynamic application security testing findings. For Software Engineering students, the value is in developing a security-first mindset. By using DerScanner, they will learn to identify and fix vulnerabilities, and have a deeper understanding of how their code contributes to secure applications.

Mr Ken Soh, CEO at Athena Dynamics Pte Ltd, said, "The future of cybersecurity starts with our people. By giving SMU students hands-on access to DerScanner, we're equipping them with real-world application security skills, harnessing disruptive innovation in application security to build their capability and confidence to secure software and lead in a digital-first world."

Ms Lauren Connell, PR Director at DerSecur, said, "We are proud to support students at SCIS as they take their first steps into the field of application security. Their success matters to us, because today's students will soon be the specialists responsible for protecting the systems we all rely on. DerScanner is already used by enterprises to identify and fix security flaws in business-critical software. By bringing the same tools into the classroom, we give students real-life experience with the technologies and practices companies depend on every day."

In recent years, demand for skilled cybersecurity professionals has risen. Worldwide, it has been estimated that [4.8 million](#) more professionals are needed globally to fully secure organisations, as cybercrime increases.

By being able to access DerScanner in the curriculum, SCIS computing students would have invaluable hands-on experience in detecting and analysing security vulnerabilities in web/mobile applications and DevOps in SCIS courses such as Web Application Development, Data Security & Privacy, and Collaborative Software Development. Their understanding of industry-standard security practices and tools will better prepare them for careers in defending against cyber threats and creating a safer digital domain for all.



Caption: (L-R) Mr Nyan Tun Zaw, CTO at DerSecur's local distributor ADPL; Mr Ewen Lim, Head of Marketing at ADPL; Mr Ken Soh, CEO at ADPL; Dean SCIS Professor Pang Hwee Hwa; SCIS Principal Lecturer of Computer Science Lee Yeow Leong; SCIS Assoc Prof of Computer Science Shar Lwin Khin

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About SMU

Established in 2000, Singapore Management University (SMU) is recognised for its disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research that addresses issues of global relevance, impacting business, government, and society. Its distinctive education, incorporating innovative experiential learning, aims to nurture global citizens, entrepreneurs and change agents. With more than 13,000 students, SMU offers a wide range of bachelors, masters and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with six of its eight schools - Accountancy, Business, Computing, Economics, Law and Social Sciences. Its seventh school, the SMU College of Integrative Studies, offers degree programmes in deep, integrative interdisciplinary education. The College of Graduate Research Studies, SMU's eighth school, enhances integration and interdisciplinarity across the various SMU postgraduate research programmes that will enable students to gain a holistic learning experience and well-grounded approach to their research. SMU also offers a growing number of executive development and continuing education programmes. Through its city campus, SMU focuses on making meaningful impact on Singapore and beyond through its partnerships with industry, policymakers and academic institutions. <https://www.smu.edu.sg/>

About Athena Dynamics

Athena Dynamics (ADPL) is a Singapore-based cybersecurity consulting firm founded in 2014 through a spin-off from SGX-listed BHG Group. Specialising in disruptive technologies, ADPL serves government, defence, maritime, and enterprise sectors. Its ethical hacking arm, Good Hacker Alliance, features experts with world-class credentials. With over 300 enterprise clients, ADPL earned recognition through more than 300 invited thought leadership contributions. Awards include Cyber Security Leaders 2023 (AiSP/CSA), ASEAN CIO 100, and D&B Business Eminence 2022. ADPL's CEO chairs SGTech's Cyber Security Chapter, and the firm continues expanding regionally, focusing on advanced solutions where conventional methods fall short.