

Standard Chartered makes banking easier for the visually-impaired

Bank introduces its first "Talking ATM" in Singapore

5 October 2012, Singapore - Standard Chartered has introduced Singapore's first Talking ATM at the Standard Chartered Upper Thomson Branch, the Standard Chartered branch closest to Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH).

More than 90 per cent of blindness occurs in developing countries and in many of the markets where we operate. To make banking more convenient and inclusive for people with visual impairments, Standard Chartered has introduced Talking ATMs in China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan and Singapore. The launch of this ATM facility is in line with Standard Chartered's community initiative – Seeing is Believing – the Bank's global programme which raises funds to tackle avoidable blindness. Funds raised are matched dollar to dollar by the Bank. Since 2003, this programme has provided 31 million people with access to essential eye care.

Standard Chartered's Talking ATMs allow customers to make cash withdrawals, change their PIN and check their balance through a voice-activated system. Using either their own earphones or earphones available at the branch, customers are able to listen to a pre-recorded voice that takes them through their banking options. Each ATM has a raised '5' to help visually impaired customers find the middle of the keypad.

The Standard Chartered Talking ATM in Singapore has been specially designed for the visually handicapped, incorporating recommendations from SAVH on how to make touch screen ATMs accessible to the visually handicapped.

Dennis Khoo, Head of Consumer Banking Singapore, Standard Chartered Bank said, "It is important for us to listen and cater to the needs of all segments of our customers. With the launch of this Talking ATM, we have created a more inclusive banking experience for our visually-impaired customers and improved their access to finance."

Mr Phillip Lee, President of Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped, said, "We are most appreciative that Standard Chartered has specially designed a talking ATM for the visually handicapped. This will allow our clients to become more independent and make banking convenient for them. In addition, Standard Chartered has provided the privacy and security of the visually handicapped through the use of earphones. We hope that more of such ATMs will be installed across Singapore."

Feedback for the Talking ATM has been positive. Ms Serene Ng, a visually handicapped client of SAVH, said: "It is great to finally have an ATM that caters to the needs of the visually impaired. With this Talking ATM, I can now bank independently and with confidence."

There are plans to install two additional Talking ATMs in Singapore.