



PRESS RELEASE

Study finds Over-the-top Services Contributes over THB 36 billion to Thailand's economy

Self-regulation and stronger public-private partnership with OTT platforms recommended to drive economic growth and benefit society in Thailand

Bangkok, 7 September 2018 – Thammasat University's Consulting Networking and Coaching Center (CONC Thammasat) and Asia Internet Coalition (AIC), the leading industry association for Internet policy in Asia, today launched a joint report, which finds Over-the-Top services (OTTs) contribute as much as THB 36 billion and 30,000 jobs to Thailand's economy, in line with the nation's Thailand 4.0 ambitions.

OTTs are described as any application or service travelling over the Internet, including text messaging and voice applications, video streaming services, social networks, as well as e-commerce and online fintech services.

The report, *'Online Video Study in Thailand'*, examines the value that OTT platforms in online video have brought Thailand, which include consumers acquiring knowledge and skills that translate to over THB 53,000/person in income a year, and local content creators having new distribution and revenue channels that enable them to grow and reach wider audiences.

Speaking at the launch event themed *'Online Video in Thailand: Growth, Innovation, and Opportunity'*, **Dr. Suthikorn Kingkaew, Director of CONC Thammasat and author of the report** said, "This study demonstrates that OTT services have given people in Thailand access to knowledge and skills that have enabled them to build entrepreneurial and creative businesses. The platforms also allow thousands of new entrepreneurs to gain direct access to audiences and create endless business opportunities. OTT platforms are creating tangible value to society and the economy, while supporting the nation's Thailand 4.0 aspirations."

He added, "The study highlights how a supportive ecosystem is critical to ensure OTT platforms continue to drive the innovation and creativity needed to grow Thailand's knowledge-based economy. The government should acknowledge all the potentials of such technologies and work together with industry associations and players to design policies that will position OTT platforms to benefit citizens and local entrepreneurs across the economy."

Jeff Paine, Managing Director, Asia Internet Coalition said, “The growth and competitiveness of Thailand hinges on the digital economy, requiring a smarter approach to regulation that ensures technology does benefit economies and societies. Thailand has a leadership opportunity in the region, and we look forward to continuing our dialogue with relevant agencies to promote well-informed policies that make Thailand an example of how countries can leverage OTT platforms for immense benefit.”

The study reveals that a more supportive approach to regulation is needed to ensure benefits are gained, and makes specific recommendations that should be implemented through public and private sector partnerships, including:

- **Reviewing regulations that hinder innovation:** Instead of applying existing current regulations for traditional broadcasters to the OTT industry, any new policy should be based on a rule-by-rule analysis, as existing policies for traditional broadcasters do not address the realities of new technologies which are diverse in nature. Poor policy also risks removing the incentive for traditional players to innovate and compete with OTT platforms.
- **Developing best practice for self-regulation:** It is critical to introduce regulations and amend laws only where specific issues cannot be first solved by self-regulation, given that prematurely introduced rules could stifle innovation. Self-regulation has proven to be the best way forward in addressing challenges in emerging, fast moving industries. For effectiveness, OTT players, public agencies and other stakeholders should collaborate and enable the development of a set of principles to guide self-regulation.
- **Investing in the creative industry:** Government agencies should create incentives for both foreign and local investors to partner with local content creators. For example, the Digital Economy Promotion Agency could extend their funding for creative content businesses to include new and existing content creators on OTT platforms. This will in turn create high-income jobs and encourage more competition within the Thai media industry.
- **Promoting digital literacy:** Digital literacy, including digital security, is vital to ensure people in Thailand can apply rational judgement and make healthy decisions in their selection and viewing of appropriate content.

The launch event also featured an interview and dialogue session with two Thai entrepreneurs – Bie The Ska, content producer and entertainer, and Titipong Pisitwuttina, Co-founder and CEO of SkillLane, a leading education platform for online learning and training – both of whom have successfully used online platforms and services to build their digital-enabled businesses.

An online version of this report can be found at www.aicasia.org

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About CONC Thammasat

CONC Thammasat offers clients diverse range of business consultancy, implementation services and training initiatives with practical tactics. It continues to practice and demonstrate new collaborative techniques to diagnose clients' companies in 360 degrees that have accelerated the clients' performances.

<https://conc.tbs.tu.ac.th/>

About Asia Internet Coalition (AIC)

The AIC is a leading industry association for Internet policy in Asia, representing the world's largest technology companies and helping governments develop well-informed policies that support the growth of the digital economy in Asia.

<https://www.aicasia.org/>

Media Contacts**CONC Thammasat:**

Ratsupang Supcharoen
ratsupang@gmail.com
+66 639 466 597

Asia Internet Coalition

Sam Lim
aic@teneostrategy.com
+65 8410 8007