

ASEAN special

(Publicity)

Creative network to aid ASEAN-Japan content tieups

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Japan are marking the 40th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations this year. To celebrate this milestone and as part of its commemorative activities to promote and enrich exports from ASEAN to Japan, the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) has announced the launch of a new social networking system between the content industries in ASEAN and Japan called the ASEAN Creative Network (ACN).

In cooperation with the Digital Content Association of Japan (DCAJ), a non-profit organization to promote and distribute digital content, the AJC held a seminar in Tokyo on April 19 to introduce the system.

Demand for global outsourcing of creative services from advanced creative economies continues to grow, especially in animation and online game products. This is what has recently happened between Japan and the Southeast Asian region, and the region's creative industries can engage in more collaboration with Japanese counterparts to capture a substantial share of the global market for creative services.

To meet this demand and develop the content business market between the two regions, AJC established the ACN in cooperation with the Japan Online Game Association (JOGA), the largest organization of companies involved in Japan's online game business.

The AJC is an intergovernmental organization established in 1981 by an agreement between ASEAN Member States and Japan. All 10 ASEAN members — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — and Japan are members of the AJC. The AJC has been promoting exports from ASEAN to



Hayato Takano

Japan while revitalizing investment and tourism between Japan and ASEAN through the exhibition of ASEAN products, organization of seminars and workshops, capacity-building activities, dispatch and invitation of experts and missions, and publications and information services, among others.

Since 2010, the AJC has annually organized an international forum in Singapore on the development of the content industry for ASEAN and Japan. At the third forum, in 2012, in which 90 representatives from all 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan attended, the formation of the ACN was agreed to, creating networks between companies and creators in the content industry and supporting the building of new business ties between ASEAN and Japan.

At the April 19 Tokyo seminar, the panelists were Noriko Namikoshi, director of the international department of DCAJ; Hayato Takano, president director and CEO of PT. Adways Indonesia, one of the top digital media consultants and agencies in Indonesia; and Yoji Kawaguchi, secretary general at JOGA. About 100 people from the content industry participated, many seeking opportunities to start business relationships with ASEAN countries.

Namikoshi gave an overview of the ASEAN market and current content industry there. She spoke about the abundant potential of the ASEAN-Japan content business market.

The growing ASEAN population, with an estimated 600 million people, which is 8.8 percent of the world total, is expanding the region's economy, Namikoshi said. The content industry is one of the fastest-growing business fields, with Indonesia, especially, showing outstanding



Yoji Kawaguchi

development of the content business market, she said.

According to a trading company, the Indonesian game industry's degree of contribution to its gross domestic product (GDP) doubled in the last five years, and the number of such companies are six times as many as five years ago. More importantly, in this market, Japanese content such as animation, "manga" comic books and games have gained high popularity. At the same time, Japanese social-network game companies such as DeNA Co. and Gree Inc. are now actively expanding their businesses in the ASEAN region.

Today, about 97 percent of Indonesian people use mobile phones and 19 percent of them use smartphones. The nation is also called "Facebook country," as Indonesia has the second-most users of

The content industry is one of the fastest-growing fields in ASEAN, which has an estimated 600 million people and counting.

Facebook in Asia, behind India, while Japan is fifth.

Therefore, according to the development of infrastructure, it is clearly possible to expand the content business in Indonesia, Namikoshi said.

Adways Indonesia is viewed as one of the most successful examples of a company developing its content business in the ASEAN region. Takano talked about how he started and developed the provider of Internet marketing services in Indonesia.

A 30-year-old from Hokkaido, Takano founded an Adways branch in Osaka a month after he joined Adways Co. in Tokyo in 2007. The branch he later established in Indonesia has continued to grow.

Takano said the reason he chose Indonesia is that it seems to be well worth the effort to enter the country's market as it is not highly developed, unlike, for example, Singapore's. Regarding Indonesia's large population, area, many unexplored fields and, especially, with many people sticking with mobile phones, he felt somehow that if he could manage the situation well, it would be possible for Adways Indonesia to be the first and top company to develop the Internet marketing business there.

Takano said he is also looking forward to the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, when the ASEAN region will be economically integrated. He said he wants Adways Indonesia to be one of the top companies in the AEC.

By creating new company regulations to adjust to Indonesian culture and employees' religious practices, Adways



A seminar on the ASEAN Creative Network, a new system to connect content companies in the ASEAN region and Japan, is held at the ASEAN-Japan Centre in Tokyo on April 19. ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

Indonesia has grown to become one of the top Internet service companies in Indonesia.

Kawaguchi from JOGA explained how the ACN would work. Based on their wide network through the online game industry as well as abundant experience and examples of international business, JOGA plays a big role in managing the system.

Japanese content are popular not only in Indonesia, but also other areas in the region such as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, and many Japanese companies have tried to cooperate with creative companies in ASEAN countries. However, Kawaguchi said, many of those attempts have ended up in failure.

The skills and technologies of companies in the ASEAN region are developing and some are at a high enough level for them to produce original content by themselves. Japanese companies, due to the lack of information on companies in ASEAN, tend to expect these

companies they use for outsourcing to do things the same way as Japanese ones. That causes a failure in the business relations and even gives a bad impression of Japan to the ASEAN companies.

In addition, as if to add insult to injury, South Korea and its content are now gaining overwhelming popularity in Southeast Asia. Therefore, getting rid of those misunderstandings between Japanese and ASEAN companies would greatly improve the region's creative content capabilities, Kawaguchi said. Thus, the ACN works to share information and operates a sort of matching system among the member companies.

To register as a member of the ACN, a company should be recommended by another ACN company. This way, credit for the company is assured and it will allow the business to run smoothly. As of now, most member companies from ASEAN countries are admitted by governments, so based on

this, the network would expand, Kawaguchi said.

One of the advantages of this system is that it could offer a chance to continue the collaborative work through the network.

"Even though they could succeed in one collaboration, that might not lead to the next opportunity," Kawaguchi said. Members have to open up their companies' profiles, while a bulletin board to exchange opinions is available. Thus, through the ACN, other companies can easily know what kind of work the others do and contact each other. This would enable both companies to build a 50-50 relationship and work evenly on business.

Kawaguchi insisted that through the ACN, Japan would provide a way for business and education for ASEAN content creators.

"Japan could introduce young creators in ASEAN to raise the level of the content industry as well as to raise positive impressions toward Japan," he said.



Noriko Namikoshi



Regional cuisine from ASEAN nations are offered for participants at a networking reception after the April 19 seminar. ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

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2013 Schedule of ASEAN-Japan Centre Trade Division

Special Exhibition

interiorlifestyle

● Tokyo Big Sight, West Hall

<Business Meeting>
Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam
(Total of 16 companies from 4 countries)

June 5 (Wed.) - 7(Fri.)
10:00-18:00 (Last day is open until 17:00)

ASEAN Food Concierge

● ASEAN-Japan Hall

<First Event: Thailand>
was held on April 27.

<Second Event: Vietnam>
is scheduled to be held at the end of August

ASEAN Trade Missions and Exhibitions

● ASEAN-Japan Hall

<Exhibition and Business Meeting: Indonesia>

● Exhibition:
September 9 (Mon.) - 13 (Fri.) [Tentative]

● Business Meeting:
September 9 (Mon.) - 11 (Wed.) [Tentative]

<Exhibition and Business Meeting: Malaysia>

● Exhibition:
September 17 (Tue.) - 27 (Fri.) [Tentative]

● Business Meeting:
September 25 (Wed.) - 27 (Fri.) [Tentative]

The exhibition of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Laos will be held after October 2013.

For more information about ASEAN Creative Network, or any other upcoming events, seminars and exhibitions, please visit the following ASEAN-Japan Centre web site:
www.asean.or.jp/ja/trade/

ASEAN-Japan Centre
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