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EYE ON THAILAND

KP Soft is a leading-edge software development company based in Thailand and established since 2004. We employ highly qualified software development engineers to assure our client with the right software solutions and services. Over eight years of work, we have developed a range of solutions especially for hire purchase, leasing, automobile business and many others. We contribute to the forward-looking transformation of society through quality software development. Please contact us at www.kpssoft.co.th

Thai Chamber of Commerce
Based in Bangkok, the Thai Chamber of Commerce works closely with its 76 provincial chambers of commerce in Thailand, as well as the Board of Trade, the various foreign chambers of commerce, and the Trade Association in order to create a strong and immense business network, aimed at assisting the further development and contribution of business to the Thai Economy. The chamber maintains around 60,000 members nationwide. www.thaichamber.org

The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Thailand plays a prominent role in sustaining and strengthening bilateral trade and investment between Thailand and Japan. JETRO Bangkok offers information and consultation services to Japanese small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) that are planning to set up their operations in the country. www.jetro.go.jp/thailand

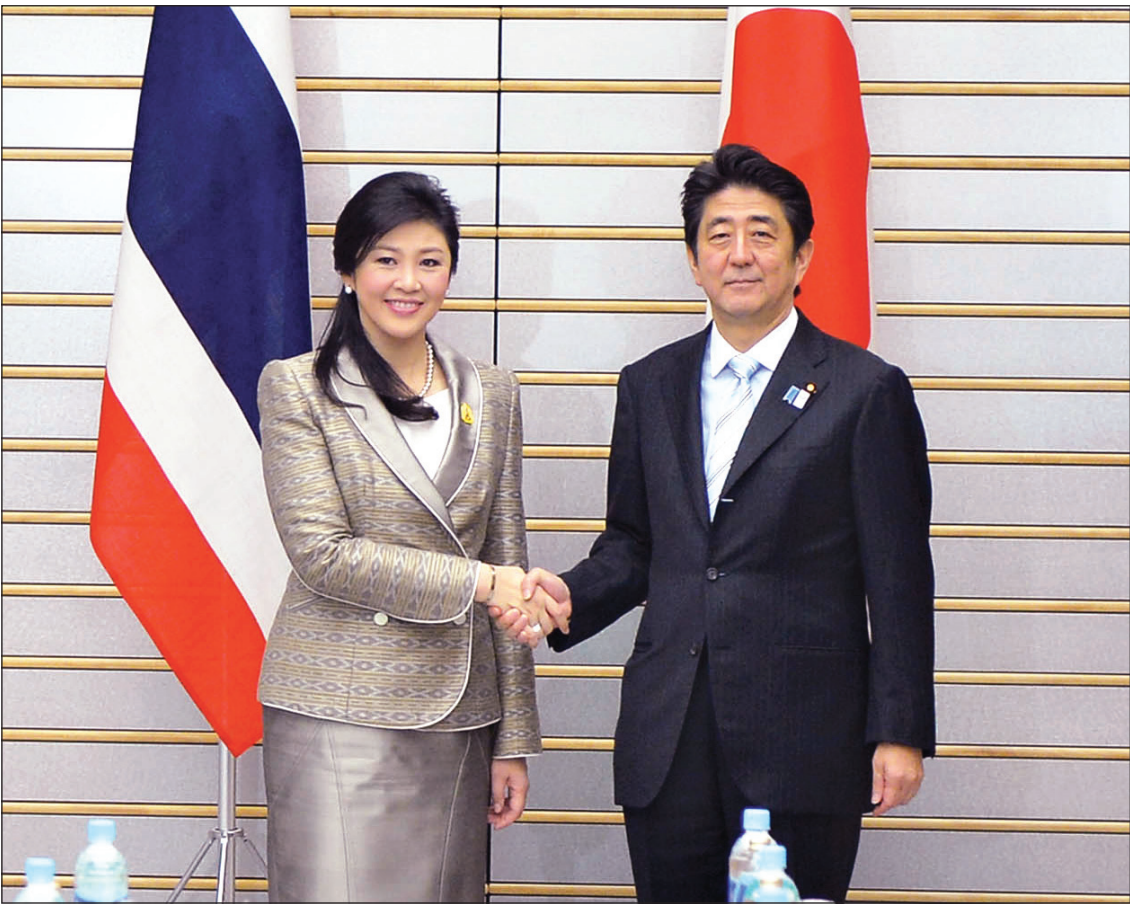
Thai-Japanese ties critical for success of planned ASEAN Economic Community

Undeniably, Japan's partnership with Thailand is one of the strongest national partnerships in the Eastern Hemisphere. With over 125 years of diplomatic ties, the relationship has evolved into a strategic partnership based on the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement

Thailand is now a premier destination for international investment in a wide array of industries.

(JTEPA). Today, as the bases for the future ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) are being laid, this relationship is becoming even more important.

Over the years, Japan has remained one of Thailand's premier trading partners. In 2012, Japan-Thailand trade value reached over \$73 billion. Not only is Japan the kingdom's chief trading partner, it is also Thailand's largest foreign direct investor — with total investment of over \$10.5 billion by the end of 2012. Japan's fiscal interests



Prime Minister of Thailand Yingluck Shinawatra shaking hands with the Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe at their bilateral meeting in May 2013 at Abe's official residence in Tokyo

span a variety of industries that fuel the Thai economy, especially in the automotive, electronics and chemical manufacturing sectors.

"Now is a great time to invest in Thailand, especially for Japanese," advises Setsuo Iuchi, president of JETRO Bangkok. "Thailand and Japan have over 400 years of historic ties — it's a long-lasting relationship and a committed partnership."

infrastructure investment and the importance of human resources."

Early in 2013, the prime minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, traveled throughout Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia to strengthen the message of economic and cultural partnerships between the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region and Japan. Japan has cooperated with the ASEAN summit for 40 years. "More than

In 2012, The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) was the best performing market in Southeast Asia."

— CHARAMPORN JOTIKASTHIRA
President
Stock Exchange of Thailand



Needless to say, after centuries of development, the Japan-Thai relationship has undergone changes in dynamics. "Japan and Thailand have come to learn that the key to each country's growth will be mutual development," adds Iuchi. "More Japanese companies and investors are looking to contribute more to the development of Thailand as a nation, focusing on

numbers or finance can show, Japan is the most important partner for Thailand, and in fact ASEAN as a whole," says Isara Vongkusolkrit, chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. Japan currently stands as the top export destination for ASEAN and the second largest trading partner for ASEAN after

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

SYS supports Thai and ASEAN growth and development

Siam Yamato Steel (SYS) manufactures and supplies hot-rolled structural steel for construction projects in Thailand and various other overseas markets. Established as a joint venture in 1992 between the giant Thai-based Siam Cement Group and the Japanese companies Yamato Kogyo, Mitsui and Sumitomo Corp., SYS has been taking part in building Thailand's infrastructure from the ground up.

"Any kind of partnership with Japan encourages job creation in Thailand," says Paitoon Jiranantararat, managing director of Siam Yamato Steel. "We also benefit from technology transfer. Japan is a leader in design and engineering. We have based our new manufac-

turing process in our second mill on the foundation of Japanese technology."

SYS is the market leader in Thailand for large steel structures. Its product lines are used in the construction of industrial parks, oil and gas offshore platforms, commercial buildings, etc.

The company is capable of producing high-quality steel that conforms to both local compulsory standards and various other popular international standards. It currently exports about 60 to 70 percent of its production overseas. Major export regions span the globe and include Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and the Middle East.

In October 2011, Thailand was

hit by devastating floods that kept many manufacturing sites north of Bangkok underwater for up to six months. The immediate result was an increased demand for flood prevention measures, and steel sheet piles from SYS have the features that could be utilized to speed up most projects involved.

SYS now produces its sheet piles to create barriers around factories, tunnels and bridges. These can now be easily found in most of the major manufacturing hubs around Bangkok, as well as surrounding Singapore's waterways and Hong Kong's subway systems.

Paitoon's priority for 2013 is to focus on delivering packaged solutions as well as products. "We sell solutions," he explains. "For example, last year, the Thai government encouraged its people to buy more cars — this resulted in a demand for more parking areas in cities. SYS came up with designs for car parks that could be set up and dismantled within a very short time, and generate quick return to investors."

SYS started the commercial production of its second mill in the Rayong area, east of Bangkok, in March 2010. With the total combined production capacity of 1.2 million tons, the company is pre-



Paitoon Jiranantararat, managing director of Siam Yamato Steel

pared for an increase in demand in preparation for the planned ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. It also expects to expand its global reach continuously by exploring opportunities in all emerging economies.

"We need to adjust our strategy from time to time to cope with the changing business environment," Paitoon comments. "This year, we have seen a rise in competition from European companies trying to capitalize on the Southeast Asian region's economic growth. I don't want to compete with them — I want to move into uncharted territory and focus on sustaining our growth. Our strategy is delivering solutions and innovation to customers." ♦

www.syssteel.com

The right time in the right place for securities in Southeast Asia

Thailand is currently in an advantageous position, with foreign direct investment in the country — particularly from Japan — substantially surpassing the level received by its neighboring countries. And, like others in the booming Southeast Asian region, Thailand has remained particularly resistant to the weaknesses of the global financial climate.

The inflow of investment interest from the international community is mainly due to Thailand's political and economic stability. Other contributing factors include the country's burgeoning middle-class, ideal geographic position to serve the ASEAN market and a highly talented and young workforce.

"Thailand is the ideal investment destination in the ASEAN region," says Chaipatr Srivisarvacha, CEO of KT Zmico — one of Thailand's largest securities brokerage firms. "Following the flooding in 2011, volumes were in a stagnant position and IPO deals were limited. Today, the country has recovered. It is the crossroads of Southeast Asia again."

Trading volume in Thailand is the largest in ASEAN and Indo-

china — and even higher than in Singapore. "Part of the reason is strong investor confidence in the domestic economy and corporate earnings growth," Srivisarvacha explains.

KT Zmico offers retail and institutional brokerage, wealth management, derivatives and investment banking — including equities and fixed income capital markets. Fifty percent of the company is held by Krung Thai Bank, with the other half owned by Seamico.

It is the only Thai brokerage with investments in other countries in the region, with a presence in Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia. It is also one of the only two brokers that currently exist in Laos.

For Japanese investors looking to enter the Thai and Southeast Asian capital markets, KT Zmico is well positioned as the ideal agent due to its long experience and history of trustworthy service.

"We are looking at the future," continues Srivisarvacha. "We have already positioned ourselves as a gateway into Indochina for the past five years. We are looking forward to expanding our regional

Thailand is the ideal investment destination in the ASEAN region... Today, the country has recovered. It is the crossroads of Southeast Asia again."

— CHAIPATR SRIVISARVACHA
CEO
KT Zmico



and Thai operations even further."

KT Zmico is currently involved in a number of cross-border deals and IPOs both in Thailand and in the surrounding area. Further opportunities are expected to open up following the scheduled start of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 — especially given that Thailand is in the center of negotiations.

Srivisarvacha explains that

there is a high volume of securities investment coming into Thailand from Japan. Over the coming years, he expects to see even more Japanese investment into Thai capital markets. "There are lots of opportunities in Thailand for a wide array of industries," he concludes. "For our firm alone, we are expecting volumes to double in 2013." ♦

www.ktzmico.com

From periphery to center of the world's most dynamic market

Teijin Polyester has over 40 years of history in the "land of smiles." Along with its sister company — Teijin Thailand — it is a subsidiary of Japan's well-known chemical industry leader: Teijin. Led by Toshihide Fukushima from the company headquarters in Bangkok, Teijin Polyester continues to grow in parallel with its adopted country.

"We invested very early in Thailand," he says. "Among the ASEAN countries, it was one of the first to experience high growth. It has good infrastructure. Thai people are skilled workers and very welcoming to Japanese."

The company's main revenue comes from the production of synthetic fibers for industrial applications, with a focus that

has evolved from earlier days. "In the last 10 years, we used to focus almost exclusively on textiles, but we now believe that what will propel our growth from here on is the automotive industry," Fukushima explains. "This industry and its affiliated sectors are experiencing success."

Many Japanese manufacturers in Thailand, including Teijin Polyester, were affected by the country's disastrous flooding in October of 2011. Much of the next year was spent on renovating facilities. "Now we are back on track," he declares. "We have two plants located in Pathum Thani and Ayutthaya. Both were flooded for one month, which caused us to stop operations from October 2011 to March 2012. By September of the same

year, they were back in full operation. 2013 will be a year of stabilization, and so far it is going very well for us."

Teijin Polyester continues to provide its high-quality, cost-conscious and efficient service as before. "Our core technological principles stem from Japan," Fukushima explains. "Major research and development is done there, but we also have our own R&D here in Thailand."

While the Thai subsidiary was originally planned to export products primarily to North America and Japan, ASEAN has become a huge market itself in the last decade. "The ASEAN region is growing, and we are now focusing on it," he adds. "Teijin Polyester is able to specialize its products to meet all requirements."



Toshihide Fukushima, general manager of Teijin Thailand

"Our strategy has changed," Fukushima concludes. "We are in the center of a growing market, and our customers are local. Our sales are domestic, while exports are focused on Thailand's neighbors." ♦

www.teijin.co.th

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We provide ...

"Equity and Derivatives brokerage services for retail and institutional clients, with specialization in Indochina (Thailand, Laos, Vietnam)."

"International reach and expertise wealth management."

"Corporate financial solutions including equities and fixed income activities, and advise on mergers and acquisitions."

Asia's foremost auto parts production base, DENSO helps advance Thailand to global level

February 2007 marked a milestone for DENSO in Thailand. The global auto components producer established its Asian regional headquarters, DENSO International Asia Co., Ltd., in Thailand. "Thailand is a very important market and is now a key base of operations for the group, as we account for over 5 percent of our group's global sales," says Shigehiro Nishimura, DENSO International Asia's CEO and president, in Bangkok.

DENSO began its Thai operations in 1972 as the country's first auto parts supplier. Today, more than 40 years later, the Thai DENSO Group maintains eight affiliate companies employing around 10,000 people. The global group is turning its Thai subsidiaries into a key manufacturing base serving the world's automotive market especially in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

"Clearly, Thailand is a leader

within ASEAN in the automotive industry," says Nishimura. "We need to fully utilize the strengths of the Thai economy and of the supportive Thai government policies in order to maintain our competitiveness. Moreover, as its auto industry consists of firmly developed tiers of supporting industries, we foresee its steady growth and positioning of Thailand as the mother plant taking care of our affiliates in the Asia region."

Additionally, as ASEAN-

based companies prepare for the planned 2015 ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which is aimed at linking the member economies in a common market akin to the European Union (EU), Thai DENSO is making sure it will be ready. "Since the late 1990s we have implemented our own 'ASEAN Complementation Scheme' by optimizing our regional manufacturing network with intensively centralized production to offer economically advanced products and services. So, we will have already been doing this type of activity for many years and will enjoy more when AEC arrives," Nishimura explains.

"With contributions to sustainable local manufacturing, DENSO Training Academy (Thailand) was introduced in

2005 to provide training and the transfer of technology for both DENSO associates and our suppliers in order to upgrade the entire auto industry. Furthermore, in early 2013, we also established ASEAN's best climatic wind tunnel at our Technical Center in Thailand, featuring simulated conditions with temperature ranging from 50° Celsius to -30° Celsius, allowing all types of vehicle testing globally. This enabled us to develop local engineers and products to meet local customers' needs and it also reiterates our dedication to Asia's auto industry. This local development can be proven by three golds and one silver medal that our Thai associates won from the CNC Turning categories in the last four WorldSkills Competitions."

It's all part of the DENSO Group's long-term strategy: the contribution to Asia, especially Thailand, for sustainable advanced growth of the automotive society with self-reliant management concepts promoting local associates to take part in development and securing profitability. As a global auto parts player, DENSO has been shaping the future advancement of the automotive industry. People can enjoy driving with utmost safety, while promoting a greener environment and this will enable the realization of a brighter future for our next generation. ♦ www.denso.co.th

“Thailand is a leader within ASEAN in the automotive industry, we need to fully utilize the strengths of the Thai economy and of the supportive Thai government.”

— SHIGEHIRO NISHIMURA
CEO and President
DENSO International Asia



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Early experience of Thai life turns to a ride aboard its booming economy

Ask anyone in Bangkok about the seemingly endless traffic jams and you will receive a roll of the eyes and a disapproving head shake. But while the bumper-to-bumper situation may produce headaches for most of the city's population, automotive companies — such as Yokohama Tire Sales — see only advantage and opportunity.

The Thai Automotive Industry is unique in having its strength stem not only from domestic production capacity but also from Thailand's strong domestic demand. Established in 2008, Yokohama Tire Sales primarily promotes the sale of replacement tires in the local market.

"We believe strongly in the Thai market," says the company's managing director, Yutaka Furukawa. "In 2008, our total sales figure in replacement tires was around 100,000. In 2012, this grew to more than 300,000."

Furukawa has a goal of 380,000 tires sold for 2013. "We have a strong sales and customer network including the Yokohama Club Network (YCN)," he explains. "YCN helps the company build value for

Yokohama Club Network (YCN) helps the company build value for its loyal customers by allowing them a direct channel for communication and after-sales care."

— YUTAKA FURUKAWA
Managing Director
Yokohama Tire Sales



VER

its loyal customers by allowing them a direct channel for communication and after-sales care."

Furukawa attributes his company's impressive growth to working closely with local motorsports events in order to raise Yokohama's brand image and awareness. "Our market share is quite modest compared to that of our competitors," he admits. "But by working with unique media opportunities and events, such as motorsports, we see

great opportunity for growth in the Thai market."

When Furukawa arrived in Thailand in 2011, the company only maintained around 140 dealers throughout the country. Now, the company boasts a network of over 200 dealers: a number that keeps growing.

Furukawa has placed great value in capturing the tremendous growth in the country by increasing the company's sales network and di-

versifying its product line. In fact, his mission may seem more like destiny: "I spent some of my early teenage years growing up here in Thailand," he remarks, "and the country has experienced so much change since then. The potential for growth is so high in Thailand and the whole of ASEAN, and I am very pleased with the challenge of leading Yokohama Tires Sales to ever greater heights here." ♦ www.yokohamathailand.com



YOKOHAMA

The Yokohama Club Network (YCN) is a network of professional service points offering both advanced technological knowledge about tires and specialistic equipment.



For global auto parts group, Thailand leads the way

Automotive component manufacturers vie for supremacy on a global basis, but these rivalries are magnified when focused on a single market such as Thailand. From its base in Chonburi, southeast of Bangkok, Calsonic Kansei Thailand (CKT) heads a major auto parts business that covers the entire ASEAN region and India.

CKT, part of the Japanese Calsonic Kansei group that is headquartered in Saitama, maintains five centers of operations — two in Thailand, two in India, and one in Malaysia — and an impressive client portfolio that includes Nissan, Isuzu, General Motors, Suzuki, Mitsubishi Motors and Mazda.

Though the mother company's origins date back to 1938, the

group took its modern form in 2000 through the merger of Calsonic and Kansei corporations.

Following this, it experienced an era of rapid expansion and development.

"From a global point of view, CKT is a very important market for our worldwide sales and production," says its president, Hironori Kimura. "I certainly feel the pressure, but I am also confident that we will succeed."



Hironori Kimura, president of Calsonic Kansei Thailand



CKT has been able to record steady growth in sales transactions in recent years due to an increase in domestic demand, as well as stronger exports to other arms of the CK group. In fact, it made operating profits of more than \$20 million in 2011. And in 2012, the company's earnings made a significant jump to over \$40 million.

Two years ago, the company announced its midterm plan dubbed "CK GX4 T10," which aims to establish a "Great" company and corporate foundation via "Green" initiatives, "Growth" and "Global" awareness throughout. The plan includes provisions for the introduction of 10 new eco-products, as well as the goal of becoming one of the top 10 global automotive suppliers in sales and operating profit.

Calsonic Kansei was lately listed in 18th position in the Top 100 Global OEM part sup-

pliers. "There is much work to do be done," says Kimura, "but we have a clear strategy of how we will grow in the future." Its stated target is to achieve the CK GX4 T10 goals by 2016.

"There are several competitors in Thailand," Kimura remarks, referring to some of the rival Japanese companies ranked in a superior position globally. "Although worldwide our company is not as strong as them, in Thailand we are very close behind in both sales and production."

"We have increased our Thai staff in managerial positions and expanded our facilities so that our clients, competitors and employees can clearly see that CKT is dedicated to the Thai market, and has much room for growth and prosperity in the future," he concludes.

CKT is betting its strong position in Thailand is a bellwether of its own progress globally. ♦ www.calsonickansei.co.jp

Thai-Japanese ties critical for success of planned ASEAN Economic Community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

China.

Many SMEs and international corporations are looking at Thailand as a strategic location to serve the ASEAN region. As a result, more IT, banking, and financing resources are increasing their presence in the country to manage international operations as the need for professional services grows. "Thailand is at the crossroads of ASEAN," continues Isara. "With our increased investment in railway

infrastructure, using Thailand as a base of operations for ASEAN makes perfect sense for Japanese companies."

"In 2012, The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) was the best performing market in Southeast Asia — even better than the Singapore Exchange," boasts Charamporn Jotikasthira, president of SET. "In fact, we are among the best performing exchanges in the world."

"We have seen a trend moving from agricultural to industrial investments," adds Charamp-

“More than numbers or finance can show, Japan is the most important partner for Thailand, and in fact ASEAN as a whole.”

— ISARA YONGKUSOLKIT
Chairman
Thai Chamber of Commerce



TCC

“I would like to urge Japanese investors to continue investing in Thailand as a manufacturing production base.”

— BOONSONG TERIYAPIROM
Minister
Ministry of Commerce of Thailand



MINISTRY OF COMMERCE OF THAILAND

“Now is a great time to invest in Thailand, especially for Japanese.”

— SETSUO IUCHI
President
JETRO Bangkok



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WITTHAYA / 123RF STOCK PHOTO

Bangkok's modern BTS Skytrain system stands as a premier example of the world-class infrastructure within Thailand's capital. The system currently maintains around 30 stops, with 5 more additions planned for next year. The extensive system aims to deliver workers and travelers to all points of Bangkok in order to remedy the city's traffic situation and allow for rapid and reliable transport as the country continues in its urbanization and industrialization.

orn. This movement of investments into more technological industries exemplifies the country's growth and international appeal. Once viewed as just a farming nation, Thailand is now a premier destination for international investment in a wide array of industries.

"We would like to see more Japanese portfolio investments coming into Thailand," concludes Charamporn.

Traditional manufacturing industries continue to serve as

that will expand our trade and investment opportunities," he adds. "Given our strategic location and well-endowed physical and social capital, we are poised to be the gateway to the AEC in coming years."

Despite the disastrous 2011 flooding that affected factories and industries throughout Thailand, the country's automotive manufacturing industry experienced quick recovery, and is again positioned in the top 10 of global market leaders. Major

Many SMEs and international corporations are looking at Thailand as a strategic location to serve the ASEAN region.

the backbone of Thailand's economic growth. Steel, construction and chemical manufacturers are prospering as infrastructure improves for the metropolitan regions and industrial plants.

"Looking ahead, I would like to urge Japanese investors to continue investing in Thailand as a manufacturing production base," says Thailand's Minister of Commerce Boonsong Teriyapirom. "We have world-class infrastructure in the form of international airports, deep-water ports, highway systems to all provinces and neighboring countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar.

"Thailand will be a strategic member within the future AEC

Japanese automotive companies will be establishing new factories by the end of 2013 to meet increased domestic and international demand. "The outpouring of support and assistance we received from the Japanese community in Thailand and Japan during and after the flooding crisis was tremendous," says Isara.

Today Thailand's public and private sectors are preparing for the AEC, which is planned to start in 2015. As ASEAN showcases its importance and strength in the new global order, Thailand and Japanese cooperation and ties will be critical to the success of regional economic stability and growth. ♦

Thailand

Promoting world peace through tourism

H.I.S. Tours is Japan's largest tourism company. It also has a substantial presence internationally, with 119 international branches in 94 cities abroad that employ more than 8,000 people. In Thailand, H.I.S. Tours has been present for more than 15 years, and is currently led by its general manager, Kenji Nakamura.

In Thailand, as it does all over the world, the company offers a wide range of services: providing air tickets, travel packages, hotel coupons, group tours and online reservations for outbound clients, as well as accommodations, transport, guide and tour services for inbound clients. Its concern for clients is such that, for example, its Bangkok office is open seven days a week — a real boon for travelers.

"Although Thai people travel often to nearby countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, Japan is always their No. 1 destination of choice," says Nakamura. "Japan is a relatively more costly destination for Thai people. That's why we at H.I.S. Tours work hard to create attractive travel packages to meet the demand."

Founded in 1980 in Japan, H.I.S. Tours quickly expanded throughout Japan, and then around the world. Its 274 branches around Japan enable it to offer travelers the most complete range

of services for that country. The company aims to be the premier travel agency in Thailand, meeting the needs of the Thai people better than any other agency. As part of its current expansion plans, it will set up more branches around the country in the coming years.

Although Thai people travel often to nearby countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, Japan is always their No. 1 destination of choice."

— KENJI NAKAMURA
General Manager
H.I.S. Tours



H.I.S. TOURS

Staying relevant in a booming economy

The Thai information and technology sector is evolving and adapting to the country's rapidly maturing economy, and IT specialist KP Soft is a prime example of a local success story that has successfully ridden this growth wave.

KP Soft was established in 2004 with just three employees and a vision to become a market leader in finance, management and purchase/lease software solutions for businesses in Thailand and the ASEAN region.

Today, the company has 140 employees, half of whom are software developers, and is located in two offices in Bangkok and northeast in Khonkaen province. Its clients include both SMEs and such larger Japanese corporations as Kubota and Mitsubishi. Its proprietary SaaS software is now used daily by more than 3,000 clients in

the banking and finance and automotive industries.

As the Thai economy continues to transform, KP Soft is investing in its research and development departments to expand the company's expertise. KP Soft's mutually beneficial relationships with Khonkaen's universities has enabled the company to get access to the most innovative and creative talent while contributing to the development of the country's professional services.

Almost 10 years ago, when the company's managing director and CEO Somchai Kitiporn created KP Soft, he focused on banking

and finance institutions. "I was educated in computer sciences, and I'm comfortable programming, but my work experience was primarily in finance," he explains.

However, as Thailand's automotive industry expanded, Somchai customized KP Soft's software to serve the sector's dealer, purchase and leasing and management needs as well. Today, the company is expanding to e-commerce and retail solutions through cloud computing, mobile applications and "edutainment." "KP Soft strives to create the benchmark by constantly researching, evaluating markets and staying relevant,"

Somchai says.

Applications in other sectors remain open. "KP Soft's unique coding is easily customized to adapt to various markets," he comments. "This versatility allows the company to focus on expanding internationally as well."

Looking ahead, the company plans to go public in 2014. With the additional funding and partnerships this brings, KP Soft is well positioned to become a market leader in Thailand as well as ASEAN in preparation for the planned economic community in 2015. ♦

www.kpssoft.co.th



KP Soft's unique coding is easily customized to adapt to various markets. This versatility allows the company to focus on expanding internationally as well."

— SOMCHAI KITIPORN
Managing Director and CEO
KP Soft



KP SOFT

Sturdy bridge for Japanese businesses in Thailand

International business is a volatile, unpredictable landscape. In most countries, businesses require consultants who can help them to navigate the local market and ensure profitability through the ups and downs of the economy's fluctuations, and Thailand is no exception to this rule.

Arriving in April 2010, ABeam Consulting's managing director — Hiroyuki Aitani — first set foot in the kingdom at the height of the "red shirt" political protests. The year after that, Thailand was hit with one of its worst floods in history, interrupting business and supply chains throughout the country. "My first three years here have been very exciting," says Aitani.

"Notwithstanding, our company fully believes in the growth and potential of the Thai economy, and we are looking to grow alongside our clients as Thailand progresses."

ABeam Consulting was founded in Japan in 1981, and branched out to Thailand in 2005. The company offers expertise in consulting services, including business process improvement, enterprise solutions, IT implementation — especially SAP — and outsourcing.

Drawing on its wealth of knowledge in manufacturing, focused on the automotive and consumer product goods sectors, ABeam promotes growth not only of Japanese companies, but also other multinational and Thai local clients. "We see great promise in the automotive market in Thailand,"

says Aitani.

In addition to providing support and consulting services to corporate clients within the automotive industry, ABeam also aims to provide automobile leasing. "Through this method, we can serve the entire Thai automotive industry — from the manufacturing and distribution stages through to the consumer process," he adds.

ABeam is now looking to

Thailand's food and beverage industry for diversified growth. "ABeam in Japan has gained great expertise with its food and beverage clients, and I would like to bring this knowledge to Thailand in the future," Aitani explains.

As Thailand's economy continues to grow, Aitani has set robust growth targets for his company. "When I arrived here three years ago, we had around 40 consultants in our staff," he recalls. "Today, we have 100."

He assigns great value to continuing localization and the training of the company's Thai staff. "Human resources are our

strongest asset," he asserts. "By the end of 2013 I aim to have at least 150 consultants." ABeam Thailand aims to increase its capabilities across the board, with a revenue growth objective of 60 percent in 2013.

"One of my main objectives is to raise the corporate brand image and awareness of ABeam in Thailand," Aitani concludes. "Our aim is to provide a 'Real Partner' for our clients. By this, we mean to work in collaborative efforts alongside our partners in order to sustain long-term and productive growth." ♦

www.abeam.co.th/eng/

ABeam in Japan has gained great expertise with its food and beverage clients, and I would like to bring this knowledge to Thailand in the future."

— HIROYUKI AITANI
Managing Director
ABeam Consulting



ABEAM

www.worldeyereports.com

The science of visibility in Southeast Asia

With over 42 years of service in Thailand, Tokyo-based Toyo Ink is the Southeast Asian country's largest supplier of gravure ink, offset ink, plastic colorant and coating services for printing.

Despite experiencing hardships along the way, Toyo Ink in Thailand has stayed ahead on the basis of its corporate philosophy: not only supporting its staff during difficult times, but also supporting clients with its business continuity management (BCM) and business continuity planning (BCP) programs.

"Learning from negative experiences in the past, our company launched its BCP and BCM programs," says Kazuo Semba, president of Toyo Ink in Thai-

land. "This allows us to support employees and customers."

"Our BCM program, on the other hand, kicks in when our business is damaged by any unexpected natural disaster," he explains. "To remain active, we ask our affiliate group companies in the other ASEAN countries for finished goods to service our customers."

Emperor Akihito's visit to the Thai Royal Family in 2006 is an indication of the close relationship between Japan and Thailand. Japanese companies are

fully at home in Thailand, and Toyo Ink's long history there is symptomatic of the mutual trust and confidence between both countries' business communities.

As a part of its future business expansion program in Thailand, Toyo Ink is also developing new product series for its materials. They enable its corporate customers to provide value-added functional materials and services to their clients in turn.

"Rather than quantity, we go after quality," explains Semba. "What differentiates Toyo Ink from its competitors is our ability to develop innovative products that will support our customers' success." Toyo Ink's

motto — "Visible Science for Life" — exemplifies the group's focus on the latest technology applied to everyday life.

Looking beyond, Toyo Ink is planning to heavily expand its operations in the rapidly growing ASEAN, India and Middle East — easily reachable from its Thailand base. The company plans to its presence in this region in collaboration with Toyo Ink group companies.

"Our key to success is trust," says Semba. "Change and constant improvement, as well as safety and CSR activities, are the most important elements of our corporate values." ♦
www.toyoink.co.th

Rather than quantity, we go after quality, what differentiates Toyo Ink from its competitors is our ability to develop innovative products that will support our customers' success."

— KAZUO SEMBA
President
Toyo Ink Thailand



TOYO INK

Servicing a future united Asia

Thaioil Group has contributed to Thailand's economy for over 50 years. The publicly listed company, led by Veerasak Kositpaisal, operates throughout the entire scope of the oil industry — from refining to manufacturing — with operations covering Southeast Asia.

The group consists of four primary divisions: oil refinery, petrochemicals and lubricants, power generation, and transportation and logistics. "With the shale gas boom in the U.S., it is undeniable that the cheaper crude supply from the Middle East and West Africa will be of benefit to Thaioil," says Veerasak. "We will invest in improving and upgrading our production process in order to increase the flexibility of our crude oil sources."

"In addition, it is necessary to consider energy regulations and global oil demand — which is growing at a slower rate — as the main challenges to the industry," he adds.

"Thaioil Group is one of the leading fully integrated refinery and petrochemical complexes in Asia Pacific, with a vision of sustainable growth and development," Veerasak explains. "We aim to continuously develop and expand our business further along our product value chain to meet more complex demands. To achieve our goal, Thaioil Group by TPX (one of the group's wholly owned petrochemical manufacturing subsidiaries) partnered with Mitsui & Co., Ltd. (the leading linear alkyl benzene-LAB trader in the region) to form LABIX."

LAB is a key raw material for fabric and home care manufacturing. "As the pioneering LAB producer in Thailand, LABIX also is the first fully integrated LAB plant in Southeast Asia,"

Today, this figure has grown to 275,000.

Veerasak believes Thaioil "can compete in this industry with cost competitiveness."

"One of our specific advantages is operational excellence," he says.

The group was recognized this year by Corporate Governance Asia for its commitment to the communities surrounding its factories, as well as its R&D in clean energy innovation. It is the first company in Asia to achieve Euro IV standards for all its products.

"We see the planned ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 as one big opportunity in which we could expand our business, through the marketing of our products or via seeking opportunities in refining, aromatics, or lube base oil related projects with strategic partners," Veerasak says. "With the future elimination of import tariffs, we can effectively access demand throughout the region. Our strategic location would also provide us with a key advantage over other exporters in Asia." ♦
www.thaioilgroup.com

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— VEERASAK KOSITPAISAL
CEO
Thaioil Group



THAIOIL

FAST FACTS



Area:	513,120 sq. km
Population:	67,448,120 (July 2013 est.)
Currency:	Baht (THB)
Ave. exchange rate:	\$1= THB 31.083 (2012 est.)
Real GDP:	\$365.6 billion (2012 est.)
GDP growth:	6.4% (2012 est.)
GDP per capita:	\$10,300 (2012 est.)
Inflation:	3% (2012 est.)
Unemployment:	0.7% (2012 est.)

Main industries: Tourism, textiles and garments, agricultural processing, beverages, tobacco, cement, light manufacturing such as jewelry and electric appliances, computers and parts, integrated circuits, furniture, plastics, automobiles and automotive parts; world's second-largest tungsten producer and third-largest tin producer

Total exports:	\$226.2 billion (2012 est.)
Total imports:	\$217.8 billion (2012 est.)

Major export goods: Electronics, computer parts, automobiles and parts, electrical appliances, machinery and equipment, textiles and footwear, fishery products, rice, rubber

Major import goods: capital goods, intermediate goods and raw materials, consumer goods, fuels

Main export markets (% share): China 11.7%, Japan 10.2%, U.S. 9.9%, Hong Kong 5.7%, Malaysia 5.4%, Indonesia 4.9%, Singapore 4.7%, Australia 4.3% (2012)

Main import markets (% share): Japan 20%, China 14.9%, UAE 6.3%, Malaysia 5.3%, U.S. 5.3% (2012)

