

Thai Gifts and Houseware Entrepreneurs to Enjoy Access to International Markets with THAI AIM - A Competition to Help Thai Entrepreneurs Venture Abroad

Global Entrepreneurship Thailand (GET) and Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), in collaboration with OSMEP, will jointly launch the Thai Access to International Markets video Competition (THAI AIM) to help start-ups and small businesses by providing them with the platform and opportunities to catapult their products to international buyers.

THAI AIM is a video competition that encourages entrepreneurs to harness the power of social media. This competition uses the “Thai Go Viral” mobile app, provided by www.joinmethere.tv, where participants can submit videos of their products. Participants are then encouraged to use Facebook to promote their videos and the public can also vote for their favourite videos. Ten short-listed qualifying entries will be selected and their products will be exhibited at two trade fairs in Hong Kong, giving it access to nearly 80,000 buyers from around the world.

It is one of the events of Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), which runs from 17th – 23rd November, 2014, where 150 countries are participating in the world’s largest global campaign to jointly intensify a week of events and activities to inspire entrepreneurship globally.

10 short-listed participants from THAI AIM will receive training by HKTDC and Livinism on branding and online marketing as part of the package to help prepare them for the global market place. Furthermore, the top three who received the most number of enquiries at the trade fairs will be invited to be Global Entrepreneurship Thailand Ambassadors, or “GET Ambassadors”.

These three winners will also have the opportunity to promote their products and share their experience with other Thai SMEs at seminars and workshops organised by OSMEP, GET and HKTDC in Thailand. As a “GET Ambassador” they will be encouraged to mentor other SMEs in their local business communities, sharing their experience on international business and online marketing, in an effort to inspire and help more Thai SMEs and entrepreneurs to go global.

“HKTDC helps nearly 500 Thai companies to go global every year, and we are excited about this new initiative.” Said Dannie Chiu, Regional Director, Southeast Asia and India of HKTDC. “Thai design is renowned in the world, and we believe start-ups in Thailand will have a lot of opportunities in the global market.”

“With the onset of AEC, we aim to inspire more Thai start-ups and help more small businesses to scale up and access global markets,” Said Mr Steve Cheah, President of GET. “Inclusive Entrepreneurship is a sustainable approach for socio-economic development in Thailand.”

OSMEP and Thai-Hong Kong Trade Association will sponsor the 10 finalists to showcase their products through the “Small Order Zone” both at the HKTDC Hong Kong Gifts & Premium Fair, the largest of its kind in the world; and HKTDC Hong Kong House-ware Fair, the largest in Asia.

The Small Order Zone is a B2B Online-to-Offline (“O2O”) marketing solution combining showcase in trade fairs and an online trade portal, enabling buyers to source products in small quantities and pay suppliers online directly.

“Currently there are 2.76 million SMEs in Thailand, of which 99.52% are small enterprises, and medium sized enterprises accounts for only 0.48%. How to grow small businesses into big ones is OSMEP’s objective.” Said Wimonkan Kosumas, Deputy Director General and Acting Director General of OSMEP, a key sponsor in this Competition. “I believe Thai AIM will be a good channel to help SMEs, especially in the houseware, handicraft, and gift sectors.”

“SMEs can enhance their competitiveness and expand their markets internationally through the Small Order Zone and exhibitions in Hong Kong. Buyers from all over the world can contact the SMEs directly electronically and SMEs can save travelling costs. In addition, as the Zone is specifically for small orders, small companies can manage with their current manufacturing capacity.” Dr. Wimonkan added.

The Thai-Hong Kong Trade Association is another sponsor of the Competition.

“We are a group of Hong Kong businesses operating in Thailand, and we are excited that we can help Thai companies to go global via our home city – Hong Kong.” Said Danny Yu, President of Thai-Hong Kong Trade Association. “This supplements our existing efforts, such as giving free Chinese class to our Thai members, so that they can capture opportunities in China through Hong Kong.”

Mr. Leslie Lu, Vice President of the Association and also the Country Manager for Cathay Pacific, will sponsor economy class return tickets to Hong Kong from Bangkok, allowing the winners to visit the Inno Design Tech Expo in Hong Kong, where global designs will be exhibited, in December 2015. “Cathay Pacific is delighted to be a part of this meaningful project, bringing innovative design from Thai SMEs to the international market via Hong Kong, the global gateway to the world. With our impressive 59-flight a week operation between Bangkok and Hong Kong, together with our extensive network reaching out to over 190 destinations around the world, Cathay Pacific will continue to partner with Thai companies on their journey to the international stage every step along the way.”

The Thai AIM logo is a combination of a key hole and the Pha Jum Yam flower, symbolizing Thai designs’ key to the international market. The logo is designed by Livinism, a Hong Kong branding consultant with presence in Thailand. “We are proud to be the branding consultant for the Thai AIM competition.” Said Donald Woo, Director of Livinism. “I have many Thai suppliers, and their products have good design. With appropriate branding, their product value can increase tremendously. Hong Kong can help them do that.”

The Thai Go-Viral mobile apps is a joint-venture between GET and joinmethere, the winner of the Thailand Creative Business Cup 2014 Competition.

Submission of video is open on 18 November 2014; public voting will start at the same time, ending on 31 December 2014. Participants must be on a company basis, and only Thai SME registered with the government will be eligible for sponsorship. The company must also be able to supply in small quantities (5 – 1,000 pieces).

- Thai AIM: www.facebook.com/thaiaim2014
- HKTDC Small Order Zone: www.hktdc.com/so
- Global Entrepreneurship Thailand: <http://gethai.org>
- OSMEP: www.sme.go.th
- Thai-Hong Kong Trade Association: <http://thta.or.th>
- Livinism: www.livinism.com
- Cathay Pacific: www.cathaypacific.com/th

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Background of Thai AIM Competition

HKTDC has been assisting Thai companies to go global, and GET has been encouraging entrepreneurship in Thailand. The two organisers collaborated with OSMEP, the official SME promotion body in Thailand, and other Hong Kong businessmen in Thailand to launch a programme with an objective of stimulating entrepreneurship, as well as helping small companies to effectively reach the global market. It was launched as one of the events of the Global Entrepreneurship Week.

The flow of the Competition is as follows:

1. Thai entrepreneurs in the gifts, handicraft and houseware sectors can upload a 15-second product video through the Thai Go Viral app, available in iOS and Android systems. The app is developed by www.joinmethere.tv, the winner of Thailand Creative Business Cup 2014.
2. Their videos will be uploaded to www.facebook.com/thaiaim2014, where the Thai general public can “like” their favourite Thai product from 18 November to 31 December 2014.
3. Entrepreneurs with the top votes will go through a selection panel in January 2015, to select 10 finalists on the basis of design, marketability, functionality, and popularity.
4. The 10 finalists will have a training session on branding and online marketing, to be provided by Livinism, a branding consultant; and HKTDC.
5. The finalists will be sponsored by OSMEP and Thai-Hong Kong Trade Association to exhibit at the “Small Order Zone” on www.hktdc.com, an award-winning trade portal, and both HKTDC Hong Kong Houseware Fair and HKTDC Hong Kong Gifts & Premium Fair. The finalists simply need to send their products to Hong Kong, and HKTDC will assist them to display the product. International buyers can simply scan the QR codes at the Small Order Zone to interact with the finalists.
6. The top three most-enquired companies will be the winners. They will be invited to speak at various OSMEP and HKTDC seminars in Thailand, and win a return air ticket from Bangkok to Hong Kong, sponsored by Cathay Pacific, to visit the Inno Design Tech Expo in Hong Kong, where global designers will present their work.