Perspective for Suggestion about Communication Plan / Strategy of Thailand Using for ASEAN One Community Relevant to the 3 Pillars: APSC, AEC, and ASCC

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Abstract:
ASEAN leaders agreed to shorten the time to establish and integration of the ASEAN Community by year 2015; the community has been divided into 3 different communities which are ASEAN Political-Security Community-APSC, ASEAN Economic Community-AEC, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community-ASCC. A communication plan is significant in order to achieve common understanding. With well understood, ASEAN’s activities can be of considerable advantage to every country. Thailand’s government policy has focused on preparing the country to become an ASEAN member in 2015 through its national development strategies to build and strengthen the economy, social and cultural affairs, and international trade. Strategy for Thailand in the ASEAN One Community are Education, in this paper provides the case studies of how Thai University prepare the Thai students for year 2015 to become ASEAN one community. Three Thai University are mentioned in this paper are Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University: STOU, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce: UTCC and Huachiew Chalermprakiet University: HCU. This examples show that there are approaches to teaching and learning to prepare people for ASEAN by offering 4 main skills to step into ASEAN and a future career in KCCM: Knowledge, Communication Skill, Creativity, and Morality.

Keywords:
Communication Plan, Communication Strategy, Thailand, ASEAN One Community, the 3 Pillars, ASEAN Political-Security Community-APSC, ASEAN Economic Community-AEC, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community-ASCC

INTRODUCTION

At the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, Philippines, ASEAN leaders agreed to shorten the time to establish and integration of the ASEAN Community by five years, to 2015; the community has been divided into 3 different communities such that each congregation has the following goals (Tanesh Kongprasert, 2012).
1. ASEAN Political-Security Community-APSC aims to promote cooperation in political and security affairs; to strengthen and maintain the peace and stability of the region; to make each country live together in peace; and to resolve problems and conflicts when possible by peaceful means.
2. ASEAN Economic Community-AEC also aims to create ASEAN as a single market and production base and to make the movement of goods, services, investment, and skilled labor free.
3. ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) aims to enhance the quality of life of the population in member countries, the well-being, a good environment, and a feeling of unity for the deeper cooperation in six areas (Acharapan Taiyarat, 2012).

1) Development of human resources
2) Protection and social welfare
3) Rights and social justice
4) Environmental sustainability
5) Creation of an ASEAN identity
6) Reduction of the development gap

Among ASEAN (ASEAN Community) is a cooperative agreement with the most progressive cooperative agreement and the emergence of this community in 2015 will have an impact and make an extensive difference in the socio-economic aspects of member countries extensive. In the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is a draft or blueprint (Blueprint), which is an integrated plan for economic performance to achieve the following four goals:

1) To make ASEAN a single market and production base. There will be a movement of goods, services, investments, and skilled workers and more liberal capital movements to follow the country's original ASEAN 6 member countries (i.e., Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei) in gradually reducing or eliminating trade barriers to non-tax (non-tariff barriers) and marketing services sectors with investment liberalization by 2015.

2) Strengthen capacity in the economic competitiveness of ASEAN with a focus on policies that will promote economic integration: competition policy, consumer protection, intellectual property rights, tax policy and infrastructure development, finance, transportation, information technology, and energy.

3) Economic development through equity by promoting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to reduce the gap of economic development between member countries.

4) Integration into the global economy by coordinating ASEAN economic policy with countries in other regions to achieve economic cooperation, such as the preparation area. FTA with ASEAN dialogue partners is encouraged to create a network in the field. Production and regional distribution linked to the global economy, etc.

Operations to move goods freely have set up guidelines, for example;

1. Member States will have to reduce tariffs on more than 8,300 items of imported goods to 0 percent with the exception of some products that have been designated as sensitive products (sensitive list) or very sensitive products (highly sensitive list) to protect local manufacturers in the country.

2. The liberalization of trade in services. Member States will have to reduce the barriers to entry into the market for all service branches and all forms of service. The group covers 12 sectors or professions: communications, construction, distribution, education, environment, finance, health, transportation, tourism, recreation, computer, telecommunications and other fields such as beauty spa, etc. In 2010, equity participation was allowed for the four branches of computer technology, health, tourism, and air transport by giving investors a stake of more than 70 percent.

3. Liberalization of investment ASEAN. ASEAN must treat investors as well as their foreign investors. ASEAN Investment Agreement, or the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement, includes major investments such as investment promotion,
Trade liberalization and facilitation to invest, and investment protection covering manufacturing, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, and related services.

4. The liberalization of the capital AEC will have the opportunity to have a combination of financial and capital markets to facilitate trade, investment, and increased capital flows in the region.

Communication Plan
A communication plan is important to manage to achieve mutual understanding. If the people of each country can communicate and be well understood, ASEAN’s activities can be of significant benefit to every country. Using all types of media is necessary, but in this digital age, we all need to recognize that digital media is very important to build cooperation in various fields quickly and efficiently.

Trend Digital Media and interesting statistical information in Asia and Thailand
A team from the advertising agency ZenithOptimedia (2012), lecturing on the topic of Trends of Digital Media in Thailand, found that there are Top 3 web sites that Internet users use in Thailand. They are; http://google.co.th or http://google.com, Facebook, and YouTube. Thais used them for information sharing and networking. Their conclusions of how Asians use the Internet and social media are shown in Infographic: Asia-Pacific Social Media Statistics in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4.


In Figure 1 the most Internet user growth is 12,035% in 10 years which is Vietnam. China has the second-highest user growth with 1,767%. India has the third-highest user growth with 1,520%. Indonesia has the fourth-highest user growth with 1,400%. The fifth is the Philippines with 1,385%. Thailand is the sixth with 660% user growth. In Figure 2 is the comparison between Internet penetration and mobile penetration of
Australia and countries in Asia. The highest Internet usage is in South Korea and Australia, followed by Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The highest mobile usage is in Singapore and Hong Kong; followed by Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

![Infographic: Top Social Media Usage in Asia](http://www.digitalbuzzblog.com/infographic-asia-pacific-social-media-statistics-stats-facts/)

The latest information on Thailand ICT Q2 2013, compiled by IMC Institute; September 2013, mentioned that the Top 4 social media that Thais use is as shown in Figure 4. The most popular is Facebook, with 18.5 million users, which can be compared with the previous information, shown in Figure 3, that in 2010 there were 10.6 million Facebook users in Thailand. The second is Line Application on mobile phones with 18 million users. The third is Twitter with 2 million users and the fourth is YouTube with 5.3 million users.

![Social Networks Population in Thailand 2013](http://www.slideshare.net/imcinstitute/thailand-ict-overview-q2-2013)

![Google Reach Thai Online User](http://storify.com/imsakulsri/digital-media-trend-in-thailand)
Figure 6. Shows that in Thailand 14.9 million people use Facebook = 21.4% of the total population, accounting for 81.3% of the people who use the Internet. Of people accessing Facebook in 2012, users aged 45-64 increased the most. Resource: http://storify.com/imsakulsri/digital-media-trend-in-thailand

Figure 7. 6.6% of Thai people buy products and goods by shopping online. The site with the most is “weloveshopping”. Resource: http://storify.com/imsakulsri/digital-media-trend-in-thailand

Figure 8. Trend growth of the Internet in Thailand, most of Social media followed by entertainment / email / searching mobile banking. Resource: http://storify.com/imsakulsri/digital-media-trend-in-thailand

Figure 9. Internet access of people aged 15-19 years mostly from 18:00 to 21:00 am = Prime time digital ads / online ads & promotion. Resource: http://storify.com/imsakulsri/digital-media-trend-in-thailand
Offering a Digital Media Perspective on ASEAN

A survey on digital media trends in Thailand made it clear that users’ knowledge and skills are very important in modern times. As in every field, skills are necessary to learn, work, do business, etc. In all political, security, economic, and social and cultural activities digital media is used. Therefore, it is important to teach all individuals digital literacy to avoid the loss of money and the physical and psychological pain caused by people's deception in using digital media. Digital information and data can benefit people in Asian countries and the media can be used efficiently and cost effectively.

ICT for ASEAN One Community

Thailand’s government policy has focused on preparing the country to become an ASEAN member in 2015 through its national development strategies to build and strengthen the economy, social and cultural affairs, and international trade. The preparatory action plan by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) established six strategic areas: **Strategy 1:** Economic change (economic transformation) is needed to prepare an appropriate environment for business in order to attract trade, investment, and business creation in the field of information technology and communications.

**Strategy 2:** The participation of the people and capacity building for the people (people empowerment and engagement) will improve the quality of life through easier access to ICT at reasonable prices.

**Strategy 3:** Innovation will promote the information and communication technology industry about the environment (going green) by using creativity and novelty, including the promotion of research and innovation in striving for academic excellence.

- **Strategy 4:** Infrastructure development for ICT will support services, information technology, and communications across all communities in the region, including the management and integration of meteorological information warning systems and effective and time disaster management.
- **Strategy 5:** Human capital development will involve human resources with ICT skills and capabilities to support the growth of the ICT industry and help promote other industries.
- **Strategy 6:** Reducing the digital gap will develop and put ICT to good use on a daily basis to build careers.

“The action plan to achieve the ASEAN Community’s ICT Ministry herein guidance to agencies and governments and relevant private was conducted within the ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology conference and ASEAN including coordination and oversight of projects and activities. Information and Communication Technology Master Plan of ASEAN and under the framework of ASEAN cooperation involved. The action plan will be reviewed every year for updates and
additional projects/ activities. There may be a need to set up to meet mission readiness towards the ASEAN Community in Thailand” (Chaiyun Peangkeiatpairog, 2014).

Ms. Areewan Howerangsi (2013), a consultant to the Foreign Ministry, said the government and the Ministry of ICT have made ICT a priority. The government has established a national strategy that includes the following:

- **Strategy 1:** Create a competitive advantage over other countries.
- **Strategy 2:** Decrease the differences and create equal opportunities in society.
- **Strategy 3:** Build an environmentally friendly infrastructure.
- **Strategy 4:** Modify the administration with good governance for a balanced system administration. Use the strategic national approach to deal with issues related to the preparation to join the ASEAN community.

The mission of the Ministry of ICT relates to the three pillars of the ASEAN community: 1) services that move freely, such as computer services and telecommunications services; 2) the development of an information technology infrastructure and e-commerce; and 3) promote the use of ICT among disadvantaged children and women, including the management of disasters and the security of information (cyber-security).

**Strategy for Thailand in the ASEAN One Community**

**Education for ASEAN One Community**

In education, there will be an operating mechanism that includes sectorial meetings among senior officials and the Council of Ministers and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community to achieve ASEAN’s caring and sharing goals. The Declaration Cha Am-Hua Hin on strengthening cooperation in education will be reviewed. The role of education in building the ASEAN Community by 2015 will involve according three pillars:

1. **Role of academia in the political and security pillar**
   - Support, understanding, and awareness about the ASEAN Charter; more ASEAN charter schools; and publications in the local languages of the nations in ASEAN to focus even more on the principles of democracy.
   - Respect for human rights and values in ways that support peace in the school curriculum.
   - Understanding and awareness of cultural diversity, regional traditions, and beliefs among teachers trained in exchange programs.
   - Establishment of basic information online so school leaders can meeting regularly and exchange views on various issues in the region.

2. **Role of education in the economic pillar**
   - Content development in ASEAN for schools to serve as a reference point for training and coaching teachers by offering a degree program in universities and proposing a national ASEAN language.
   - A foreign-language elective in school to support regional projects focused on promoting awareness among the youth about ASEAN and the endorsement of other initiatives, such as the ASEAN Schools Tour, ASEAN Student Exchange Program, ASEAN Youth Cultural Conference, and Youth Summit among ASEAN university students.
   - The ASEAN University Network and youth speech contest to support lifelong learning in ASEAN countries.
A meeting of ASEAN to promote research, education, research and development, cooperation, and to provide a forum for researchers from member countries to exchange views on issues and matters related regional support, understanding and awareness of awareness of the issues and the environment by integrating the curriculums in schools.

- Provide awards for green schools during ASEAN Day celebrations and consider the establishment of a regional development fund for education to ensure that participants receive adequate financial support for their operations.
- Allow the ASEAN Sectorial Ministry and ASEAN to continue to follow up on this mission by providing guidance and support for a 5-year plan of ASEAN on the subject of education.

On Monday, August 23, 2010, there was a meeting at the Ministry of Education involving a national committee to promote education in the region in preparation to join the ASEAN Community in 2015. The meeting approved the draft policy and the education policy, as well as the following five policies:

- Policy 1. The provision of educated news information and about ASEAN to raise awareness and prepare credentialed teachers and educational personnel, students, and the public to step into the ASEAN Community by the year 2015.
- Policy 2. The development of students and the public with the right skills to join ASEAN, such as learning English and a neighboring language and learning information technology skills and expertise to adapt to changes in line industries and thereby increase the chances of finding jobs for all people to increase production.
- Policy 3. The development of policies to promote educational standards for the students and teachers in the region and the recognition of academic qualifications as ASEAN promotes cooperation among various institutions and youth exchanges for distance education in support of an education for a lifetime; the promotion and improvement of education, vocational education, and professional training upstream and downstream and the promotion and enhancement of cooperation among institutions of the member countries of ASEAN.
- Policy 4. The preparation of a policy to liberalize education in ASEAN, mutual recognition of educational talent development experiences in various fields to support the liberalization of education, coupled with the liberalization of labor mobility.
- Policy 5. The development of youth missions as a key resource in advancing the ASEAN community.

In promoting university education in Thailand, various fields will need to adjust and prepare as follows (Thai Post Newspaper, 2012):

1. Adaptation and preparedness of the agency is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries. The agency should have a policy on higher education institutions and strategic plans in support of higher education to prepare Thailand to step into ASEAN and put this into practice in the various universities. Both state and private sectors are part of the value chain.
2. Adaptation in the preparation of teachers and educational personnel in different universities. The need to develop their own potential for learning, teaching, research, academic services, and the preservation of culture, particularly in English, which is the common language of communication in the region. But the current problem is that some
universities’ employees, both academic and support call status, face insecurity, and since they lack a contract, ties to the system’s stability are insecure. They depend on the evaluation system to gain a contract, indicating instability in the profession. Also, the management or governance of the Executive Committee of the University, which affects the status of teachers, has changed. The potential and efficiency of teaching and learning in Thailand and increasing the quality of education have been compromised to the extreme, and no system to strengthen and encourage employees has developed potential in both languages. And further education to higher levels adequate to support the ASEAN community by entering related and affiliated university itself is considered an important factor affecting Thailand’s tertiary education and preparation to step into the ASEAN community. Governments and related agencies must take measures to resolve the issue ASAP and must have a clear policy on human resources, as the need for this in such studies is substantial.

3. Adaptation to prepare the student. It is inevitable that students will have to learn to adapt and prepare for the future, as students must be interested in and aware of the consequences stemming from the integration of various countries. ASEAN, in terms of advantages and disadvantages, is complex to fully grasp. The emergence of the ASEAN community, which is reflective of modern society, is increasingly a multicultural society. A new generation of students is so necessary to adjust the learning process, as an attitude adjustment that remains aware of nationhood is vital. The modern paradigm of learning should be a goal, including such aspects as knowing the situation, creating the ability to work with others of different cultures, and learning about the history and culture of neighboring countries to achieve a better understanding between them. With the opportunity to learn a foreign language and to increase skills in the English language, students can learn to communicate very well.

4. Adaptation and preparedness of local communities to step into ASEAN. Because if the local community does not support measures or plans to step into ASEAN, it will be a disadvantage in the competitive market. In addition, the local culture is something that is paired with a social Thailand and the creation of an ASEAN economic community. Local communities need a leader with a vision who has the ability to link the economic integration of ASEAN to the global economy. The local institutions must have support in the coordination and implementation of public relations and providing knowledge about ASEAN. Advantages and disadvantages to going to the local community in the future mean that the community leaders and local citizens must learn and adapt to the local community in planning for the next step in the ASEAN community.

Mr. Chaiyaphruek Serirak (2013), Secretary of the Office of Vocational Education, discusses strategies to prepare for the ASEAN Economic Community. The preliminary plan includes increasing the capability for competition of students studying to become vocationally skilled technicians. Dividing the students into two groups to drive efficiency includes designating the first group as the group of students that is potent enough to go out into international competition. The course will be taught entirely in International English starting in the year 2013. This course, which is now offered to 28 of 32 provinces, aims to reach 150 provinces in year
2013. Meanwhile, to prepare the second group of students to support the ASEAN community, three aspects are currently weak, including the following:
1. Language skills for careers
2. Information technology skills (ICT) for careers
3. Skills in working with people of different cultures

In addition to the undergraduate program, vocational institutions that are ready will coordinate moving students into private internships as a preamble to opening 28 branches such as electrical and electronics, automotive parts, travel, etc. Students will be exposed to 30 students per classroom. Bachelor’s Degree Occupational practice to be performed which makes vocational become a major force in the production of quality personnel to support the move towards liberalization of the ASEAN Economic Community.

David M. Kennedy and Bob Fox (2013) said in their research that students also agreed that technologies, for example, social networking software and web-conferencing, can improve their communication with other students and teachers and thus assist their studies.

There are interesting facts from the three universities in Thailand; they offer the international program for Thai and foreign students. They use the ICT in different ways to enhance the performance of teachers and students, as in the following case studies.

Case study 1: Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University: STOU

STOU offers Designing4Learning (D4L) as a course-design process that was developed especially for student-centered learning environments. Students will get the experience of distance learning with a teacher and friends as though they are sitting in the classroom with the teacher and their classmates, as shown in Figure 11.
Italy, Singapore, Ethiopia, Taiwan, South Africa, Congo, Mexico, and the Philippines. In the highly competitive and rapidly changing environment, the curriculums are incessantly improved and developed; furthermore, new curriculums such as Logistics Management and Global MBA, Master of Science in Business Informatics are offered to meet the demands of the new economy.

David M. Kennedy, Bob Fox (2013) also emphasize that the overall relationship between students and technology is significant, ubiquitous and a part of the everyday life of a student, whether they are engaged in social or educational activities. Conole et al. (2006) categorized the student views of technology and their opportunities for learning into eight components. They were the following: pervasive and integrated, personalized, social, interactive, changing skills set, transferability, time, and changing work patterns.

Now, UTCC engaged the new technology and the new way of communication in class to assist the students, as seen in Figure 13 and 14, such that the students used iPad and iPhone to make presentations in the class.

Figure 13. Thai Undergraduate students used iPhone and Smart Phone with Slide Shark Application to present their work

Figure 14. Thai Undergraduate students used iPad and tablets to review what they will present in front of the class.

Case study 3: Huachiew Chalermprakiet University: HCU

HCU is a private university which also offers international programs. The program aims to enhance their English language skills and knowledge about China and Chinese culture together for supporting business growth in China in the future and to prepare to study abroad at a higher level, and also to provide the opportunity for international students to study the science and culture of Thailand. There are two international undergraduate majors, which are the Faculty of Liberal Arts, offering a major in English for Chinese students, and the Faculty of Business Administration, offering a Bachelor of Business in Chinese or English.

According to Marketingupdate.co.za (2013), lecturers must adapt to the changing environment of their students by meeting them where they are most comfortable in the social media space, and, as education expert Natasha Madhav says, “Generally speaking, institutions continue to remain too passive to the changing needs of their student body.” Madhav is the head of the Program of Information Technology at the Independent Institute of Education, South Africa’s largest
and most-accredited private higher education institution. For HCU, the lecturers are using Social Media to connect with colleagues in the same department or in the same faculty or school for help and collaboration. Also using Facebook to connect to students within the class group as seen in Figure 15, by setting the group as a secret group, will help in saving the information securely within the group.

Figure 15: The Facebook page of a lecture group for collaboration with colleagues and students
Resource: https://www.facebook.com/groups/

“Facebook and other forms of social networking media have become part of most people’s lives, and almost without exception part of the lives of the youth. They communicate, socialize, learn and entertain themselves through the internet and more especially using social platforms to connect to each other,” notes Madhav at Marketingupdate.co.za (2013).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Dr. Wiriyah Ruechaipanit (2012), founder of www.eduzones.com, said that there are approaches to teaching and learning to prepare people for ASEAN by offering 4 main skills to step into ASEAN and a future career in KCCM: Knowledge, Communication Skill, Creativity, and Morality. This paper shows that the most important aspect is to plan the use of digital media, ICT, and modified forms of education to support the various activities. As Thailand is a member of ASEAN, we need to emphasize and focus on three approaches, as enumerated in the following recommendation:

1. Digital media for all

1.1 Each person must find their knowledge and skills in the use of digital media in order to outsmart the technologies that are changing rapidly. Seeking out their own knowledge by using the mobile/smart phone or internet is the most convenient and possible way for the new generation.

1.2 Government agencies and the private sector need to help by supporting learning via easier and cheaper access to digital media. There are many free course materials available online, called open courseware, from the University of Cambridge website.

1.3 Each country should cooperate in the exchange program to learn digital media between the people of their country and the people of neighboring ASEAN countries in order to achieve learning together and to help with sharing new knowledge with each other. For example, there are many joint programs in which students study in a university in Thailand and travel to have a short research period and final defense exam in Myanmar.

2. ICT for all

2.1 Learning about information technologies and communications that change regularly. Affordable technologies are everywhere, as PC tablet smart phones are getting cheaper and have better quality each year. The easy interface and familiar menus with the touch screen function help develop technology skills and make the world smaller, bringing people closer.
2.2 With funding from the government to promote ICT training for entrepreneurs and the general public. Small and medium enterprises can start a business in one hour with a website, blog, and social media. There are many college/university students and even high school students who are business owners, selling products on the internet.

2.3 Arrange TV programs or presentations about ICT knowledge through media channels, TV, and Internet media. YouTube and Internet TV became the major broadcasting sources of entertaining and knowledge; the cost is almost zero, the user can be the teacher by posting content, and users can be students at the same time by watching.

2.4 In order to welcome 21st-century learning, educators must be prepared for an academic shift, to include technology, and to create networked learning environments that harness collaboration, learner participation, problem solving, and the sharing of ideas. Social networking sites can assist teachers and students in collaborating.

3. Education for all

Integration of these digital media, ICT, and education will lead to creating effective communication plans or strategies for Thailand, understanding each other, and helping each other, along with developing ourselves and using for ASEAN One Community the three relevant pillars: APSC, AEC, and ASSC.

REFERENCES


