

Daily Thai News Summary: 16 December 2015

1. Regional exhibition seminar held in Chiang Mai

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

Thailand has been chosen to host the *"UFI Open Seminar in Asia 2016"* under the theme *"Digital Disruption"* as a crucial platform to enhance knowledge and capability of exhibition professionals across the region as well as act as a bridge between global businesses and local service providers. Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) will host the event in Chiang Mai on February 25-26 next year.

Mark Cochrane, UFI regional manager for Asia Pacific, said the event would attract 200-250 delegates mainly from the Asian region including venues, exhibition organisers, associations, service providers and those from government sector. *"In the next 10 years, there will be a significant change in the exhibition industry and its technology. The key topic for this event is the effect of technology on events. The keynote speakers will dwell on how technology is shaping the events business. We can see more e-commerce platforms in the industry,"* said Mark. Mark further explained that the "Digital Disruption" topic would reflect the role and impact of digital marketing and how it would change business practices in the future for the international exhibition industry. Other interesting topics include the outlook for the Asean exhibition market, digital trends shaping events, assessing the impact of digital disruption, and mobile marketing trend.

2. Green light for Bt100 BN Thailand Future Fund

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

The Cabinet yesterday approved the launch of the country's first infrastructure fund, dubbed the Thailand Future Fund, with Bt100 billion in initial capital to help ease the government's financial burden from the expected investment on infrastructure next year. "If we rely solely on the government budget to fund the infrastructure needs, then you can believe that only a few projects can be done. *"The government wants these infrastructure projects to happen, as they will greatly improve the country's competitiveness,"* Finance Minister Apisak Tantivorawong said. The Bt2.72-trillion fiscal 2016 budget is projected to run a Bt390-billion deficit, as government revenue is projected at Bt2.33 trillion. The investment budget was set at Bt543.63 billion. "The idea is to design a fund to raise capital from the private sector, which has long-term funding such as from the insurance group and retirement funds.

3. Eurowings leads in budget flights from Europe to SE Asia

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

Eurowings, Lufthansa Group's long-haul budget airline, commences operations to Thailand this week, making it the first European low-cost carrier to link with Southeast Asia. Its first flight will be from Cologne to Phuket International Airport on Friday, reaching Thailand the following day. The initial flight on the second route - from Cologne to Suvarnabhumi Airport - leaves Germany on December 21, arriving the following day. Christian Hein, senior vice president for sales at Eurowings, said air travel in the Asia and Pacific region would continue to grow thanks to the area's booming economy and a continued increase in the number of international travellers.

Southeast Asia in particular is becoming a true emerging market for low-cost airline business, since all nations in the region will become a single market under the Asean Economic Community from the beginning of next year, he said. Asean is globally the third-largest region in terms of population, the fifth-largest in trading power, and the ninth-largest global economy, he added. Germany-based Lufthansa Group wanted to expand its low-cost network to Southeast Asia and decided to make Thailand its spearhead for linking Europe and the region, he explained. The move is part of a global expansion following Lufthansa Group's rebranding of the airline from Germanwings to Eurowings.

4. Bank set New Year reserve

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

Five commercial banks announced yesterday that they would reserve a total of Bt226.77 billion in cash for ATMs and branch services for the upcoming New Year holidays, down from Bt233.70 billion they reserved for the same period last year. The reduction in cash reserve is due mainly to Kasikornbank. The bank is the only one among five to reduced its cash reserve for the holiday period - down to Bt32 billion from Bt46.50 billion last year. This is to deal with the increase in payments via the digital channel, a KBank staffer said.

Bangkok Bank will reserve Bt60 billion in cash for its 10,000 ATMs nationwide for the New Year holidays (December 31 to January 3, 2016). The cash reserve is unchanged from the last New Year holiday. Customers can use the bank's services at more than 300 micro-branches in shopping malls and communities nationwide, which will be open for business as usual during New Year. The bank will resume normal operations from January 4. Krungthai Bank will increase cash reserve by 7 per cent to Bt67 billion for the holiday period. Siam Commercial Bank will reserve Bt55 billion cash for its ATMs and branches nationwide, a slight increase from Bt53.50 billion last year. Meanwhile, Krungsri has increased cash reserve by 19.3 per cent to Bt12.77 billion at its 5,485 ATMs and 665 branches.

5. Per MHz price of 900 Mhz licence already well above that of 1800 MHZ

Source: **The Nation** ([Link](#))

The latest bidding price for each of the two 900MHz licences, as of 9pm yesterday, had surged to Bt26.066 billion. At the end of round 26 at 5.32pm, the price of each licence was Bt22.846 billion. The starting price was Bt12.864 billion per licence and the full spectrum value Bt16.080 billion. After round 25 at 5.15pm, the price of each licence was Bt22.524 billion, indicating that the price per megahertz for a 900MHz licence is Bt150.16 million per year, a huge increase over the Bt149.59 million per MHz per year for two combined 1800MHz licences auctioned last month. The 900MHz licence contains 10MHz with 15-year period, while the 1800MHz contains 15MHz with an 18-year period.

As of press time, none of the four bidders had exercised the waiver right since bidding started at 9am yesterday. The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) secretary-general, Takorn Tantasith, ensured that the 4G service fee on 900MHz would not be high, despite the high bidding price. The auction condition obliges the bid winners to offer the service at a lower fee than the present 3G service fee. The average 3G voice and data service fee as of August was 72 satang per minute and 26 satang per megabyte. The bidding process, hosted by the NBTC at its headquarters on Phaholyothin Soi 8, was on at press time. The four bidders were Advanced Wireless Network (AWN) of Advanced Info Service (AIS), DTAC TriNet of Total Access Communication (DTAC), True Move H Universal Communication (TUC) of True Corp, and Jas Mobile Broadband of Jasmine International.

By Harsha Hazarika