Thailand’s Readiness for E-Agriculture Strategy, Perspective from ICT Industry

Atip Asvanund, PhD.,
Secretary General,
Telecom Association of Thailand under Royal Patronage
Representative of telecom industry in Thailand

- All major telecom operators
- All state enterprises
- Governments
- Academics

Delivered industry development strategies to government

- Digital Economy & Digital Thailand
- Submarine cables & infrastructure planning
Thailand’s Readiness for Digital Consumption

Digital divide ended 2 - 3 years ago

Current statistics
- 68 M: population
- 38 M: Internet users
- 38 M: Facebook users
- 83 M: mobile numbers

Smartphone technology
- $60: affordability
- Requires no education
- 2G, 3G, 4G: expansive coverage, ranked #1 in WEF NRI 2015

Mobile superseded PC and fixed-line
- PC and fixed-line were struggling
Network Readiness Index 2016 by WEF

One year of Digital Economy and Digital Thailand

Ranked #59
- Government-related indices improved 20 ranks in one year
- After years of no improvements
- Still #3 in ASEAN behind Singapore and Malaysia
Citizens of Digital Thailand (38 M Users)

Age distribution

Facts

- Young people are early adopters
- Bangkok is #1 Facebook city
- Google has 99.02% marketshare in Thailand
- Thailand imports most digital content and services
Aging Population of Thai Farmers

Challenging mismatch for digital adoption

**Average farmers are baby boomers**
- Baby boomers late adopter of digital
- Younger generations do not wish to be farmers
- Thailand losing farming population: 67% of workforce forty years ago to 37% five years ago
- Next generation farmers will have more land per farmer

**Farmers still represents 16.7 M people**
- Many government policies towards individual small scale farmers
- Encouragement for farmers to remain independent

**How digital can help small scale farmers?**
Digital Technology for Small Scale Farmers

True Farm
- Targets children of farmers
- Farm management and planner
- Marketplace for farm services
- Decreasing family size, many farmers hire professional farm services
Digital Technology for Small Scale Farmers #2

CSR service by another mobile operator

Farmer Info
- The original digital service
- Market information
- Library of news and information

Governmental focus on promoting digital economy

Startups focusing on small scale farmers

- Yet innovative small scale farmers are still interesting niche
Summary

Digital divide has ended in Thailand

Smartphones led digital adoption

Government’s significant efforts to promote digital economy

Young people are early adopters of digital technology

But Thai farmers are aging and may not have adopted digital technology

Government has many policies for small scale farmers

Private sectors efforts to help small scale farmers with digital technology