



# Swiss Thai



October 2021 | SWISS-THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | E-NEWSLETTER #135

Good food, Good life

## TOP NEWS:

- Economy:** Economic Report of the Swiss Embassy - Summary
- Legal:** Thailand deploys relief measures to help insured persons under the social act
- STCC Internal News:** Update on the Asian Trails Family
- New Members:** Banpu Next/Italasia/RECOFTC/St.Regis Bangkok
- RIS Swiss Section:** School re-opening in sight

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## ED's MESSAGE

# Dear Reader, Dear Members,



As we now enter Q4 2021, I believe there is light at the end of the tunnel. The number of Covid-19 Cases in Thailand is decreasing and the measures are gradually being relaxed. Now I hope that the borders to the Kingdom will be opened within the next two months, so that business and holiday travellers can enter once again without quarantine. In the meantime, as we await such positive announcements, I will update you below on the latest developments in our Chamber:

**Office Project Completed!**  
After several delays related to

Covid, I am pleased to announce that our office on the premises of the Swiss Embassy in Thailand is ready. As you can see from the picture accompanying this foreword, I am already working full time in this office and I can report that this innovative office concept offers a very pleasant workplace. The large windows give you the feeling of working directly in the beautiful garden of the Embassy. A detailed construction report will be published in the next issue of the newsletter and on our website.

With this new office, our Chamber has reached a big

## SERVICE

# MEMBER DETAIL UPDATES

Do you have changes among your delegates or changes to your e-mail, mobile, telephone, or fax numbers?

Please send all updates to [secretary@swissthai.com](mailto:secretary@swissthai.com)



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## ED's MESSAGE

milestone in its 23 years of existence. The office has space for up to 3 staff members who will work to increase the value of your membership in our Chamber, push advocacy with Thai institutions on behalf of our members and increase our activities. This was only made possible by our office sponsors, to whom I would like to express my sincere thanks:

- [Noventa](#)
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An official opening will hopefully take place towards the end of the year when the restrictions on in-person events have been lifted. This leads me to the next point:

### **Upcoming Events**

We are currently carefully monitoring the situation and regulations regarding in-person events. We still have some STCC events on our agenda for this year, as well as the traditional Tri-Nation Networking Stamm and our STCC networking evening at the Residence of the Swiss Ambassador. However, in order to allow such events, a change in the current regulations is needed. As soon as such a relaxation of the regulations is announced, I will start detailed planning for these events and inform you in good time.

In the meantime, I will do my

best to introduce you to interesting and relevant webinars either organised by the STCC or supported by our office. If your company is planning an online event that you would like to share with other members, please do not hesitate to let me know.

### **Office staff**

I regret to inform you that our intern Napat Prompat, who has been looking after the social media channels and communications for the last two months, has been hired by another company and has left our Chamber early before the end of his six-month internship. I wish him all the best for his future. This means that, until further notice, I will again perform all operational tasks of the Chamber myself.

Having said this, now that we have a functioning office with three workstations, the Board has decided that an additional full-time staff member should be hired for the Chamber by the end of the year/beginning of next year. This person would take care of all the communication aspects of the Chamber. So, if you know someone who would be interested and qualified to assist the Chamber as a Communications Officer, please do not hesitate to let them know about this vacancy at the Chamber. A detailed job profile will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

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## ED's MESSAGE

This leads me to the last update that I would like to share with our members and readers:

### New Format of the Newsletter

After many years of publishing our newsletter as a PDF file that could then be downloaded, we will be switching to a new email newsletter format from November onwards. Technological developments have made such a solution possible, and you will have noticed that most companies

and associations nowadays opt for this format. Please note that there will be no advertisements in the November and December issues as we want to give you the opportunity to get to grips with the new format. From January there will be advertising opportunities again, for which we will provide you with the media kit at the beginning of November.

As you can see from the above, our Chamber is continuously grow-

ing and introducing new tools and benefits, always keeping our members' interests at heart, even in difficult times. I hope that these changes will benefit you and increase the value of membership in the STCC.

Best regards,

David Stauffacher  
Executive Director  
execdirector@swissthai.com

## STCC Calendar October 2021:

Thursday, October 14: **EEC Business Forum - Hybrid Event**

Tuesday, October 19: **Supported Webinar: HR Talk 3/2021 - Compensation & Benefits and other HR Trends In Post COVID-19 Environment**

Wednesday, November 17: **WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP - Resilience**



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STCC office pavilion



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## ECONOMY

# Summary of the Economic Report of the Swiss Embassy in Thailand

After receiving international acclaim for its handling of the first waves of COVID-19, Thailand has been struggling to cope with its third wave since April 2021.

The country being particularly dependent on tourism and international trade, several million jobs have been lost in these sectors. Thailand has seen its GDP shrink by -6.2% in 2020. It is expected to grow by 1-1.5% in 2021.1 This crisis reinforces the economic inequalities and political tensions that divide the country.

Terms of reference for negotiations on a Thailand-EFTA free trade agreement have been transmitted to the Thai government. Thailand's feedback on this document is being analysed by EFTA. The feasibility study commissioned by Thailand is optimistic about the benefits of such an agreement. A visit of EFTA parliamentarians to Thailand is currently planned for the first half of 2022.

Thailand is Switzerland's 15th largest trading partner and its 2nd largest partner in South East Asia (after Singapore).

Switzerland is Thailand's 15th largest trading partner, 13th largest foreign investor and its largest European partner, with a bilateral trade volume of CHF 9.6 billion in 2020 (+25.6%), the highest rate since 2012. Gold and precious metals account for 87.9% (+51.5%) of Swiss imports and 57.8% (+13.9%) of Swiss exports, followed by pharmaceuticals and medicinal products (+7%), watches, beauty products and precious stones (down).

Thailand has put in place numerous modernisation programmes ("Thailand 4.0", BCG model), the realisation of which remains however difficult. At the same time, several assistance programmes have been established to protect the most vulnerable people and companies from COVID-19.

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## ECONOMY

### Economic Structure Thailand

	2015	2020p
<b>Distribution of GDP</b>		
<b>Primary Sector</b>	<b>6.37%</b>	<b>6.17%</b>
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6.37%	6.17%
<b>Manufacturing Sector (Industrial)</b>	<b>33.49%</b>	<b>31.18%</b>
Mining and quarrying	2.53%	2.03%
Manufacturing	27.63%	25.91%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	2.88%	2.71%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.4%	0.5%
<b>Service Sector</b>	<b>60.1%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>
Construction	2.8%	2.8%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	13.9%	15.4%
Transportation and storage	6.3%	5.6%
Accommodation and food service activities	5.1%	4.2%
Information and communication	4.8%	6.0%
Financial and insurance activities	6.8%	7.7%
Real estate activities	3.6%	4.1%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2.1%	2.0%
Administrative and support service activities	1.8%	1.5%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	5.3%	5.1%
Education	3.4%	3.2%
Human health and social work activities	2.2%	2.3%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.7%	1.0%
Other service activities	1.4%	1.5%
Activities of households as employers	0.2%	0.2%

Source: National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), [www.nesdc.go.th](http://www.nesdc.go.th), under the Prime Minister Office (2020p is the latest available data).

## SWISS ADVICE.

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## ECONOMY

	2015	2020p
<b>Distribution of Employment</b>		
<b>Primary Sector</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	32.3%	31.3%
<b>Manufacturing Sector (Industrial)</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
Mining and quarrying	0.2%	0.2%
Manufacturing	17.0%	15.9%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.3%	0.3%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.2%	0.3%
<b>Service Sector</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>
Construction	6.0%	5.9%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	16.2%	16.7%
Transportation and storage	3.2%	3.5%
Accommodation and food service activities	7.0%	7.6%
Information and communication	0.6%	0.6%
Financial and insurance activities	1.4%	1.4%
Real estate activities	0.5%	0.6%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1.0%	1.0%
Administrative and support service activities	1.4%	1.4%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	4.2%	4.4%
Education	3.1%	3.2%
Human health and social work activities	1.8%	1.8%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.7%	0.7%
Other service activities	2.0%	2.4%
Activities of households as employers	0.6%	0.6%

Source: Bank of Thailand [www.bot.or.th](http://www.bot.or.th) (2020p is the latest available data).



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ECONOMY

**Main Economic Data Thailand**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>GDP (USDbn)*</b>	544	502	539	578
<b>GDP per capita (USD)*</b>	7,807	7,295	7,675	8,247
<b>Real GDP Growth rate (%)*</b>	2.3	-6.1	2.6 <sup>72</sup>	5.6
<b>Inflation rate (%)*</b>	0.9	-0.3	1.0	1.1
<b>Unemployment rate (%)*</b>	1.0	2.0	1.5	1.0
<b>Fiscal balance (% of GDP)*</b>	-0.8	-4.7	-4.9	-1.5
<b>Current account balance (% of GDP)*</b>	7.0	3.3	0.5	2.6
<b>Total external debt (% of GDP)**</b>	32.0	32.4	32.2	32.4
<b>Debt-service ratio (% of exports)**</b>	6.7	6.5	6.2	6.0
<b>Reserves (months of imports)**</b>	12.4	11.5	10.8	10.1
<b>International reserves (% of GDP)**</b>	47.4	45.0	42.5	40.1

 = Estimation     = Projection

<sup>72</sup> 1-1,5% according to World Bank September 2021 and Economist Intelligence Unit August 2021 ([Link](#))



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## ECONOMY

### Trade partners Year: 2020

#### Host country view: THAILAND

Rank	Country	Exports from Thailand (USD million)	Share	Change <sup>73</sup>	Rank	Country	Imports to Thailand (USD million)	Share	Change <sup>1</sup>
1	United States	34'344	14.8%	9.6%	1	China	49'853	24.1%	-0.8%
2	China	29'754	12.9%	2.0%	2	Japan	27'680	13.4%	-16.6%
3	Japan	22'876	9.9%	-6.7%	3	United States	14'853	7.2%	-14.1%
4	Hong Kong	11'292	4.9%	-3.6%	4	Malaysia	10'212	4.9%	-20.0%
5	Vietnam	11'164	4.8%	-7.9%	5	Taiwan	8'225	4.0%	1.8%
6	Australia	9'829	4.2%	-3.9%	6	South Korea	7'660	3.7%	-11.5%
7	Singapore	9'509	4.1%	7.2%	7	Singapore	7'525	3.6%	-0.8%
8	Malaysia	8'734	3.8%	-15.7%	8	Indonesia	5'820	2.8%	-19.4%
9	Indonesia	7'650	3.3%	-16.0%	9	United Arab Emirates	5'469	2.6%	-25.8%
10	<b>Switzerland</b>	7'525	3.3%	42.1%	10	Vietnam	5'455	2.6%	0.2%
11	Cambodia	6'089	2.6%	-14.8%	11	Germany	5'212	2.5%	-17.1%
12	India	5'490	2.4%	-25.2%	12	India	4'284	2.1%	-10.9%
13	Philippines	5'052	2.2%	-27.0%	13	Saudi Arabia	3'987	1.9%	-30.4%
14	Netherlands	4'321	1.9%	-8.7%	14	Australia	3'377	1.6%	-14.6%
15	South Korea	4'243	1.8%	-10.3%	15	Philippines	3'033	1.5%	-5.9%
16	Germany	4'071	1.8%	-10.2%	16	Lao PDR	2'975	1.4%	17.2%
17	Myanmar	3'798	1.6%	-13.0%	17	Myanmar	2'795	1.4%	-13.9%
18	Taiwan	3'791	1.6%	-5.6%	18	Brazil	2'342	1.1%	14.8%
19	Lao PDR	3'360	1.5%	-12.7%	19	France	2'250	1.1%	-26.1%
20	United Kingdom	3'087	1.3%	-19.8%	20	<b>Switzerland</b>	2'247	1.1%	-38.0%
1	ASEAN	55'470	24.0%	-11.7%	1	ASEAN	39'368	19.0%	-12.2%
2	NAFTA	38'227	16.5%	6.5%	2	EU (28)	17'285	8.4%	-17.3%
3	EU (28)	20'724	9.0%	-12.1%	3	NAFTA	16'339	7.9%	-14.0%
4	EU (27)*	17'637	7.6%	-10.6%	4	EU (27)*	15'497	7.5%	-16.2%
5	Middle East	7'367	3.2%	-13.3%	5	Middle East	13'734	6.6%	-29.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>231'468</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>206'992</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-12.4%</b>

Source: Customs Department Thailand

\* From January 2020 onwards, EU comprises 27 countries and United Kingdom is excluded.

<sup>73</sup> Change from the previous year in %



## ECONOMY

**Bilateral trade (Total 2)<sup>74</sup>**

Year	Exports (CHF m)	+/- (%)	Imports (CHF m)	+/- (%)	Balance (CHF m)	Volume (CHF m)	Change +/- (%)
1995	876.2	-3.0	479.4	-6.8	396.8	1'355.6	110.6
2000	753.0	28.3	605.1	11.7	147.9	1'358.1	0.2
2005	933.8	10.1	723.3	9.8	210.5	1'657.1	13.4
2010	1'111.3	19.7	880.7	12.4	230.6	1'992.0	16.4
2011	1'134.3	2.1	922.8	4.8	211.5	2'057.1	3.3
2012*	5'851	-	4'601	-	1'250	10'452	-
2013	7'469	27.7	1'558	-66.1	5'911	9'027	-13.6
2014	2'887	-61.3	1'865	19.7	1'022	4'752	-47.3
2015	2'714	-6.0	2'488	32.9	226	5'202	9.5
2016	2'036	-25	4'947	99.7	-2'911	6'983	34.2
2017	3'564	75.0	4'294	-13.2	-730	7'858	12.5
2018	3'766	5.7	2'598	-39.5	1'168	6'364	-19.0
2019	2'102	-44.2	5'562	114.1	-3'460	7'664	20.4
2020p	1'973	-6.2	7'654	37.6	-5'681	9'627	25.6
<b>(Total 1)**</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>-14.8</b>	<b>-98</b>	<b>1'682</b>	<b>-19.5</b>
2021 (I)	513	262.3	74	-89.8	438	587	-32.8

\* The Swiss Customs Administration made changes to the way it calculates imports and exports as of 1 January 2012. Since then, comparisons between 2012 and the previous years have no longer been possible.

\*\* **(Total 1): without gold bars and other precious metals, coins, precious stones and gems, works of art and antiques.**

Export	2019		2020		
	% Share	CHF m	% Share	CHF m	Change
1. Gold, incl. platinum-plated gold, in raw form or as semi-finished product or powder	47.6	1,000.8	57.8	1,140.1	13.9 %
2. Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products	9.8	205.5	11.2	219.8	7.0 %
3. Watches and watch parts	7.6	160.1	4.7	92.5	-42.2 %
4- Skincare and beauty products	2.1	43.1	1.8	35.9	-16.8 %
5. Gemstones and precious stones	1.5	31.6	1.5	30.4	-3.9 %

Import	2019		2020		
	% Share	CHF m	% Share	CHF m	Change
1. Gold, incl. platinum-plated gold, in raw form or as semi-finished product or powder	79.8	4,437.1	87.9	6,724.1	51.5 %
2. Watches and watch parts	3.7	207.5	1.8	138.7	-33.1 %
3. Machines	1.5	83.7	1.1	86.0	2.7%
4. Jewelry	1.3	74.7	0.6	42.8	-42.8 %
5. Gemstones and precious stones	1.2	68.2	0.4	32.9	-51.7 %

<sup>74</sup> Source: Swiss Customs Administration SCA, General total (total 2): including gold bars and other precious metals, coins, precious stones and gems, works of art and antiques. Total 2 for the years prior to 2012 does not contain gold, silver or coins.



## ECONOMY

### Main investing countries

Year: 2020

Rank	Country	Stock FDI 2020p (USD Mn)	Share 2020	Change 2019-2020 (Stock FDI)	Net FDI 2020p (USD Mn)	Rank Net FDI 2020p
1	Japan	95'256	33.10%	1.87%	1'245	# 2
2	Singapore	54'167	18.82%	21.34%	2'030	# 1
3	Hong Kong	24'237	8.42%	3.35%	424	# 4
4	United States	18'109	6.29%	-1.29%	-164	# 46
5	Netherlands	13'943	4.84%	-7.08%	-230	# 47
6	British Virgin Islands	9'757	3.39%	-6.75%	181	# 7
7	United Kingdom	8'482	2.95%	1.23%	-9'583	# 48
8	China	7'818	2.72%	3.19%	489	# 3
9	Mauritius	6'777	2.35%	6.29%	146	# 10
10	Taiwan	6'272	2.18%	95.34%	200	# 6
11	Germany	5'262	1.83%	4.73%	169	# 8
12	Cayman Islands	5'128	1.78%	5.68%	163	# 9
13	<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>4'879</b>	<b>1.70%</b>	<b>6.49%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b># 5</b>
14	South Korea	4'320	1.50%	1.62%	42	# 18
15	Australia	3'221	1.12%	3.17%	63	# 16
16	Malaysia	3'196	1.11%	0.13%	70	# 15
17	France	2'625	0.91%	11.34%	118	# 11
18	Luxembourg	1'214	0.42%	13.74%	117	# 12
19	Denmark	977	0.34%	-0.70%	-45	# 44
20	Sweden	948	0.33%	2.59%	22	# 20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>287'805</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5.48%</b>	<b>-4'764.47</b>	

Source: Bank of Thailand



## LEGAL

# Is it secure to use E-Signature for Commercial Transactions in Thailand?

Contribution by [Frank Legal & Tax](#)

This article discusses the topic of e-signatures and electronic transactions in Thailand. For reasons which we will cover in this article, it is often best to seek legal advice before using e-signatures in the Kingdom.

Electronic signature has been recognized by law in Thailand since 2001, with the Electronic Transactions Act B.E 2544 ("Act"). Under Thai law, a written signature is not necessarily required for a valid contract; however, some requirements must be followed to comply with the Act. The Act states that contracts cannot be denied on the premise that they are concluded electronically. It is crucial to note that not all electronic signature applications or technology are allowed under the Act

### **A. Electronic Transactions Act B.E 2544 (2001)**

According to the Electronic Transactions Act B.E 2544 (2001), "transaction" means any act related to civil and commercial activity. "Electronic transaction" means a transaction in which an electronic means is used in whole or in part.

According to Section 8 of the Act, in the case that the law requires the transaction to be made in writing if the transaction is generated in an electronic form without being altered, then it is deemed that such information is already made in writing. Furthermore, according to Section 9, an electronic signature shall be deemed complete if 1) it can identify the signatory and the signatory can verify that they are the signatory, and 2) the electronic signing is deemed appropriate and credible for the contracting parties.

Often, there is no clear practice of the authority to

accept or consider the agreement signed electronically. However, in order to comply with Act, the following conditions must be met:

- Able to identify the owner of e-signature or digital signature and;
- Able to track back to the tools or processing that were used in the signing process such as technology, program, or Company (Public Key Infrastructure: PKI technology);
- Any change that may or may not happen to the signature must be able to be detected; and
- In cases where the law requires a signature, the ability to generate a certificate of completion once the documents have been signed.

### **B. Timestamping**

Electronic time stamp provides electronic documents with the reliable Timestamping Authority (TSA) and verifies the validity of reference times. It can be used with a digital signature to certify the existence of documents by having the TSA act as a witness or a trusted third party because they do not have any interest in such documents. It can also be used to verify that a time-stamped electronic document is valid.

### **C. Using electronic signature services**

Electronic document signing services (such as DocuSign or Adobe Sign) can be applied based on the service's specific features. However, we do not advise our clients to use e-signature because it may cause issues such as determining the signer's intent or validating signatures. Furthermore, e-signature is still relatively new in Thailand, and not all government departments accept them. Moreover, we suggest that e-signature should be used in combination with e-timestamping to validate the document at all times.



## LEGAL

### Cases where it is not usually recommended to apply electronic signature:

- Transactions that may require registration with government authorities typically may not be conducted using an electronic signature, such as:
  - Contracts of sale of immovable property, large ships, or floating houses
  - Gift contracts relating to the items mentioned above
  - Contracts of sale with right of redemption relating to the above-mentioned items
- Hiring immovable property for a period of 3 years or more (except lease contracts up to 3 years and other contracts related to real estate, which can be signed validly via any form of electronic signature) (Sec. 538 of CCC)
- Mortgage contracts
- Transactions concerning family or succession (Royal Decree Prescribing Civil and Commercial Transactions which are Exempted from the Application of the Law on Electronic Transactions, B.E. 2549 (2006))

### Cases where an electronic signature may be permitted:

- HR documents such as work contracts and as part

of the employee onboarding process

- Corporate agreements between commercial organisations such as NDAs, purchasing documents, and some types of sales contracts
- Certain types of consumer agreements or documents
- Real estate documents such as lease contracts and other related property documents

### D. Company seal

According to our research, in cases where a company affidavit is required, even if the e-signature is valid, the corporate seal is still needed in the signing process. So, if a document or contract lacks the company seal, its legitimacy may be questioned in court.

### E. Conclusion

It is important to recognize that not all applications, services, or technologies are accepted under the Electronic Transaction Act B.E 2544 (2001). The use of electronic document signing services should be subject to the definition of electronic transaction and effective under the law. Therefore, a proof of agreement made and signed through the signing service should be provided.



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It should be noted that many government officials still require hard copies; often, they do not accept documentation related to electronic transactions. Furthermore, we do not recommend e-signatures for high-value transactions. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions at [info@franklegaltax.com](mailto:info@franklegaltax.com)

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## LEGAL

# Immigration News

Contribution by [Dej Udom & Associates](#)

### Three Day Rule Lifted

Due to the relaxation of lockdown measurements announced by the Centre of COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) effective September 1, 2021, the Immigration Bureau announced that the rules for filing 3 days in advance before the visa expiration date have been lifted. The rules for filing visa extensions return to the same rules previously used before the lockdown.

For Non-BOI applications:OSSC process: Visa extension applications can be filed at the OSSC no longer than 45 days before the expiration date.

Regular process: Visa extension applications can be filed at the Immigration Bureau at Chaeng Wattana no longer than 30 days before the expiration date.

For BOI applications:

Visa extension applications can be made when the applicants have received the queue booking reservation from the BOI-Single Window System.



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STCC INTERNAL NEWS

# AN UPDATE ON THE ASIAN TRAILS FAMILY



This CEO story is about the people who make Asian Trails what it is today: our employees. I would like to dedicate this article to the 450 Asian Trails staff. This is to say thank you for being part of the Asian Trails family in these difficult times and to tell my readers what colleagues have been doing during their work and free time.

Most of our employees have been operational on a fifty per cent work schedule and reduced salaries since 2020 and life has changed substantially for the majority. Working from home has been a challenge, with limited infrastructure in many of



our countries of operation. Trying to balance work and family life has not been an easy task.

We have not only supported our employees financially, but also helped to look after their



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## STCC INTERNAL NEWS

physical and mental well-being. Each country's managing director has helped with tips and tricks on how to exercise and eat a healthy diet, on staying connected with colleagues and friends, on keeping busy and entertained, on developing new skills and also learning how to deal with social media and constant negative Covid-19 news.

We have a focused agenda on what objectives we want to achieve during these testing times. We never lose sight of our long-term objectives and our strategy, but steps to achieve our pre-defined goals have been adapted to ongoing situations. I always recommend a focus on small steps, even if these may seem inconsequential, since lots of small steps will bring us up the ladder to reach our targets. It is important to never stand still.

With our clients at the centre of everything we do, constant online communication remains critical. With a preference, we conduct this personally through one-on-one calls. We also continue with activities that improve our client's knowledge of our destinations and products. We arranged webinars such as fun cooking classes and language lessons just to mention two examples. It is not just about keeping engaged on the business side of things, but also about simply keeping in touch.

A distinct focus at Asian Trails is the improvement of our technology and connectivity. Our teams are working hard on taking us to the next level of technology and there will be a lot of news on new developments in our newsletters next year.

Product improvement and the creation of new excursions and multi-day tours have kept our product teams busy. In line with our 'Explore and Trails' product philosophy, we look forward to welcoming customers to our improved themed Sustainability Trails, Family Trails, villa holidays and many other new and updated programmes. When our borders reopen, we will be operating new walking excursions with our partners Vox City Walk.

These fun itineraries involve hop-on hop-off walking tours in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Hanoi and they include self-guiding options.



I am really proud that many of our employees used their free time to get involved in volunteer work. Covid-19 hit developed nations very hard and with limited help from most governments in South-East Asia and officials overwhelmed by their tasks, many private organisations took it upon themselves to help.

Our colleagues volunteered in many ways, such as organising logistics for Covid-19 isolation centres, finding oxygen and filling oxygen bottles through private sources, distributing food packages and donating clothes to the poor, organising and supporting activities at an orphanage, undertaking administration work at local councils, helping to connect medical teams with patients, donating items in short supply, assisting with a suicide awareness campaign and taking care of abandoned animals are just some of the selfless intervention activities.

Many employees acquired new skills and learning a new language proved popular among many. We organised English, French and Thai lessons in some offices and numerous staff took online courses in Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and





## STCC INTERNAL NEWS

Italian. It was lovely to hear a Thai and a Vietnamese converse in Spanish and correct each other's pronunciation: welcome to Asian Trails' ASEAN friends meeting European languages!

Besides English lessons, we also organised classes in social media skills, as well as in geography and history. A passion for history inspired one of our employees to create a history Instagram account to share his love of old pictures and information on the kingdom of Solo/Surakarta.

Taking up new hobbies kept many of our employees happy and entertained. The most prominent one is probably cooking, since many wanted to improve their culinary skills. Baking bread and cakes also seems to have been popular, with home-baked fresh croissants regularly making their way into the office. Reading books was a favourite pastime for many who took the occasion to read a tome that had been sitting on a book shelf for years. Quite a few of our employees who live in houses with adjoining land planted and harvested their own herbs and vegetables and some even started to raise their own livestock.

Some employees started small businesses borne out of their hobbies, such as selling vegetables online, or baking cakes for special occasions. A few helped out at their families' or friends' businesses and some took part-time jobs to make ends meet.

Music is another pastime that attracted quite a following. From learning to play a saxophone to composing original songs involving the whole family; and from taking singing lessons to recording songs, a lot of musical activity has been taking place. I am sure that some of our next staff parties will involve music and singing contests!

Traveling to unknown regions of one's own country, when not in lockdown, was an occasion for many to learn about new sites and attractions. Some took up photography and others helped their families or

friends in the countryside to renovate homes.

I was also happy to learn that our corporate social responsibility activities helped to create awareness and find their way into private homes. Some worked out entire new plastic reduction strategies and pursued plastic-free lives. Enterprising initiatives included recycling plastic and food cans into everyday objects. One employee even created a kitchen table out of plastic bottles. One of our offices created their own 'coffee experience' where locally grown coffee replaced international brands and three-in-one plastic sachets were ditched in favour of milk and sugar jars. Re-usable food containers were also taken from home when buying street food and plastic straws were made obsolete. Some employees participated in community rubbish cleaning and other awareness campaigns. Some offices organised art days – turning everyday objects into pieces of art and painting wooden racks that had been stuck for years in an attic.

Last but not least, keeping fit has been important to many of our employees. Jogging has had quite a following. Others got on their bikes and some pursued yoga lessons. Since gyms are closed in many Asian countries, employees became inventive in exercising at home in front of TV screens, following YouTube, or their online gym instructor.

Learning new meditation techniques helped many employees to calm their minds. One of our managers even trained as a licensed health coach and offers free assistance in staying healthy through nutrition, sleep and movement strategies.

I could elaborate on our employees' activities on many more pages, but that would make for a very long story. To protect the privacy of our employees, I have not mentioned any names, but if readers would like to learn more about specific activities, or the initiatives I have mentioned, please get in touch with me and I will connect you with the relevant people.



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The Covid-19 situation has brought mental and physical stress to everyone. I am glad that Asian Trails' family members, out of their own personal initiatives, made the sense of belonging together even stronger and the company's 'learning from each other' culture more prevalent.

Colleagues communicating with each other, their cheering each other up and sharing their experiences made the loss of personal social interaction during lockdowns and work from home

periods easier to bear. South-East Asia seems to be one of the last regions in the world still heavily impacted by restrictions and lockdowns, but there is light at the end of the tunnel with re-opening strategies starting to turn into reality.



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## NEWS MEMBERS

# BANPUNEXT

### **Banpu Next**

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Website: [www.banpunext.co.th](http://www.banpunext.co.th)

**Representatives:** Mr. Andrew Jones, Senior Vice President - E-Mobility and Ms. Kannika Moonchan, Section Manager-E-Mobility

### Company Profile:

Banpu Next Company Limited (Banpu Next) was established on February 27, 2020, is a subsidiary of Banpu Public Company Limited, a leading international diversified energy provider.

Banpu NEXT provides the leading “Smart Energy Solution TM” in the Asia-Pacific region. Conduct business under the vision 'To give everyone access to limitless energy solutions' aims to create business growth in line with future energy trends. The concept of smart city development (Smart City) and meet the lifestyle of modern consumers. by adhering to the needs of customers as important Bring data to analyze and drive (Human Centric & Data Driven) as well as bring knowledge and expertise. and

energy technology that meets international standards to develop into ' Smart Energy Solutions TM ' (Smart Energy Solutions) to present a smart energy solution. optimize Reduce the burden on the customer's business environmentally friendly and help improve people's quality of life sustainably

### Business Partner

Banpu NEXT seeks technology partners and to support startups continuously to increase the potential in business and create a stronger business ecosystem In the past, the company It has invested in leading companies in a variety of industries, including Sunseap Group Pte Ltd., Singapore's major solar power services company, Durapower Holdings Pte Ltd. Specializing in the design, manufacture and installation of lithium-ion (LiB) energy storage batteries for automobiles and backup power systems, Urban Mobility Tech Co., Ltd. ) Thai start-up, electric tuk-tuk service provider MovMi (MuvMi), Haupcar Co., Ltd., a car rental service provider through an application, and GEPP Saad Co., Ltd. (GEPP SA-ARD Co.,Ltd. ) A Thai company that provides waste management services. to jointly deliver the best solution and meet the needs of each customer including working with government agencies and other private Bringing smart energy solutions to drive Thailand into a smart city.





## NEWS MEMBERS



### Italasia

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E-Mail: [italasia19@hotmail.com](mailto:italasia19@hotmail.com), [cedric@italasiagroup.com](mailto:cedric@italasiagroup.com)

**Representatives:** Mr. Cedric Veith, Key Account Manager HORECA

Company Profile:

### Company Background

ITALASIA GROUP - one of the leading, most well established import and export organizations in Thailand has its history dating back to November 1962. Since then, Italasia has diversified into several separate departments, yet providing the large and growing food service industry in Thailand with many products.

### Products and Services

#### A) Hotel Equipment and Supplies

Supplying leading hotels and resorts throughout Thailand with many high quality products from leading hotel/restaurant manufacturers in the field of Table top items, Glass and stemware, Silverware, hollowware, banquet items, porcelain plates and accessories, bench and patio furniture and In-room equipment.

#### B) Food Service Equipment

Supplying restaurants, hotels and larger factories with many machinery for Fast food equipment for small or larger chain restaurant and hotels, Food service preparation and processing areas in factories, Machinery for Industries, Providing

installation and After Sales service.

#### C) Food and Beverage Department

Importing and distributing food and beverage from all over Italy such as Wines, Liqueurs and Spirits, Beer, Coffee, Mineral Waters, Olive oils and many other items. Our services provide solution through the team of expert in the various sub sector.

### Facts & Figures

Year Established: 1962

Registered Capital: 123 Million THB

Annual Turnover: 1200 Million THB

Total Employees: 300

solutions to drive Thailand into a smart city.





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**RECOFTC**

### **RECOFTC**

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E-Mail: [info@recoftc.org](mailto:info@recoftc.org)

**Representatives:** Mr. David Ganz, Executive Director; Ms. Jana Thuaud, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Officer

### Company Profile:

At RECOFTC, we believe in a future where people live equitably and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forests. We take a long-term, landscape-based and inclusive approach to supporting local communities to secure their land and resource rights, stop deforestation, find alternative livelihoods and foster gender equity. We are the only non-profit organization of our kind in Asia and the Pacific. We have more than 30 years of experience working with people and forests, and have built trusting relationships with partners at all levels. Our influence and partnerships extend from multilateral institutions to governments, private sector and local communities. Our innovations, knowledge and initiatives enable countries to foster good forest governance, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

### **Our Values**

Our core values are the foundation of our culture and guide all our work. We:

Embrace innovation

Adapt to, and learn from, challenges

Collaborate with partners and stakeholders  
Nurture commitment, responsibility and ownership  
Prioritize sustainability  
Cultivate participation, social inclusion and gender equity

### **How we work**

We help countries and communities achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for poverty, hunger, environment, climate change and gender. We are the trusted broker in the Asia-Pacific, bridging gaps among communities, countries and international organizations and alliances such as ASEAN. We build the capacity of all and transform conflict into collaboration. Our entry point to sustainable development and climate change solutions is community forestry.

### **What we do**

More than five million people participate in community forestry in Asia and the Pacific. They manage 15 million hectares of forest, an area the size Cambodia. Through community forestry we:

- Ensure the land and resource rights of local people are protected, exercised and compensated through collaborative landscape management
- Ensure women and men, youth, Indigenous Peoples and marginalized groups have the skills and experience to manage their forests
- Promote good governance and meaningful participation in decision-making
- Help governments and institutions adopt and practice rights-based approaches
- Help local people access resources, find affordable legal and protection services, and understand and use grievance mechanisms
- Help countries and communities mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Help communities preserve traditional livelihood mechanisms
- Increase the economic value of forest landscapes for local people through sustainable investment and community-based enterprises



## NEWS MEMBERS



- Develop partnerships among communities, responsible investors and private sector companies
- Develop feasible business models with social safeguards
- Empower women’s leadership and entrepreneurship
- Build regional, national and local multi-stakeholder platforms and facilitate learning, forums, events and networks

- Develop, implement and support communication and advocacy initiatives

### Where we work

We work throughout the Asia-Pacific. We have a main office in Bangkok and offices in seven countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. solutions to drive Thailand into a smart city.





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**ST. REGIS**  
BANGKOK

### St. Regis Bangkok

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E-Mail: [stregis.bangkok@stregis.com](mailto:stregis.bangkok@stregis.com)

**Representatives:** Mr. Klaus Christandl, General Manager and Mr. Sam Chia, Executive Assistant Manager

### Company Profile:

Located on the prestigious Rajadamri Road, in the heart of the city, The St. Regis Bangkok is situated in the heart of the city's key commercial corridor, among worldwide corporate offices, magnificent high-end shopping and The Royal Bangkok Sport Club's golf course.

The St. Regis Bangkok offers 228 guest rooms, including 51 suites, The Owner's Penthouse and 53 residential units with the renowned St. Regis Butler Service offering unparalleled personal attention to every guest at any hour. Epicurean experiences abound at The St. Regis Bangkok with a wide range of dining venues and bars including IGNIV Bangkok

by Andreas Caminada is all about a unique fine dining sharing experience; VIU, which boasts a spectacular view; The Lounge, for an intimate social gathering or business meeting; The St. Regis Bar and The Drawing Room, offering the celebrated afternoon tea; Decanter wine bar.

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## RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

# RIS SWISS SECTION - DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

After almost half a year of distance learning, many member families of the STCC, along with parents all over the country, have been eagerly awaiting possibilities for a safe return to school for their children.

### **School re-opening in sight**

It looks like the waiting may soon come to an end at RIS Swiss Section: In compliance with the rules set by the Office of Private Education Commission (OPEC), RIS has submitted a comprehensive re-opening plan for 18th October and is now waiting for OPEC approval for a safe, staggered, and

controlled return of students and teachers to campus.

Despite all the challenges, we are proud that our teachers, under the lead of our teaching development group, have continuously developed and fine-tuned their online-classes, the delivery of lessons and student assessment methods. Considering how little guidance about distance learning had been available for K12 schools prior to the pandemic, we can proudly consider ourselves at the forefront of successful education development and delivery.



### **Training the teachers**

On September 24th and 25th it was once again time to “review and rethink” for the teachers of RIS Swiss Section on two professional development days.

Friday’s schedule emphasized language teaching and language acquisition methods in various workshops and working groups. Textbooks for specific subjects are usually written with

nativespeakers in mind and can be challenging for students at international schools who may still be in the process of learning the language. On Friday morning, the focus was thus on taking a closer look at such texts and how teachers can adapt them for the students for better understanding.

“How to conduct successful teacher-student coaching conversations” was the title of a seminar



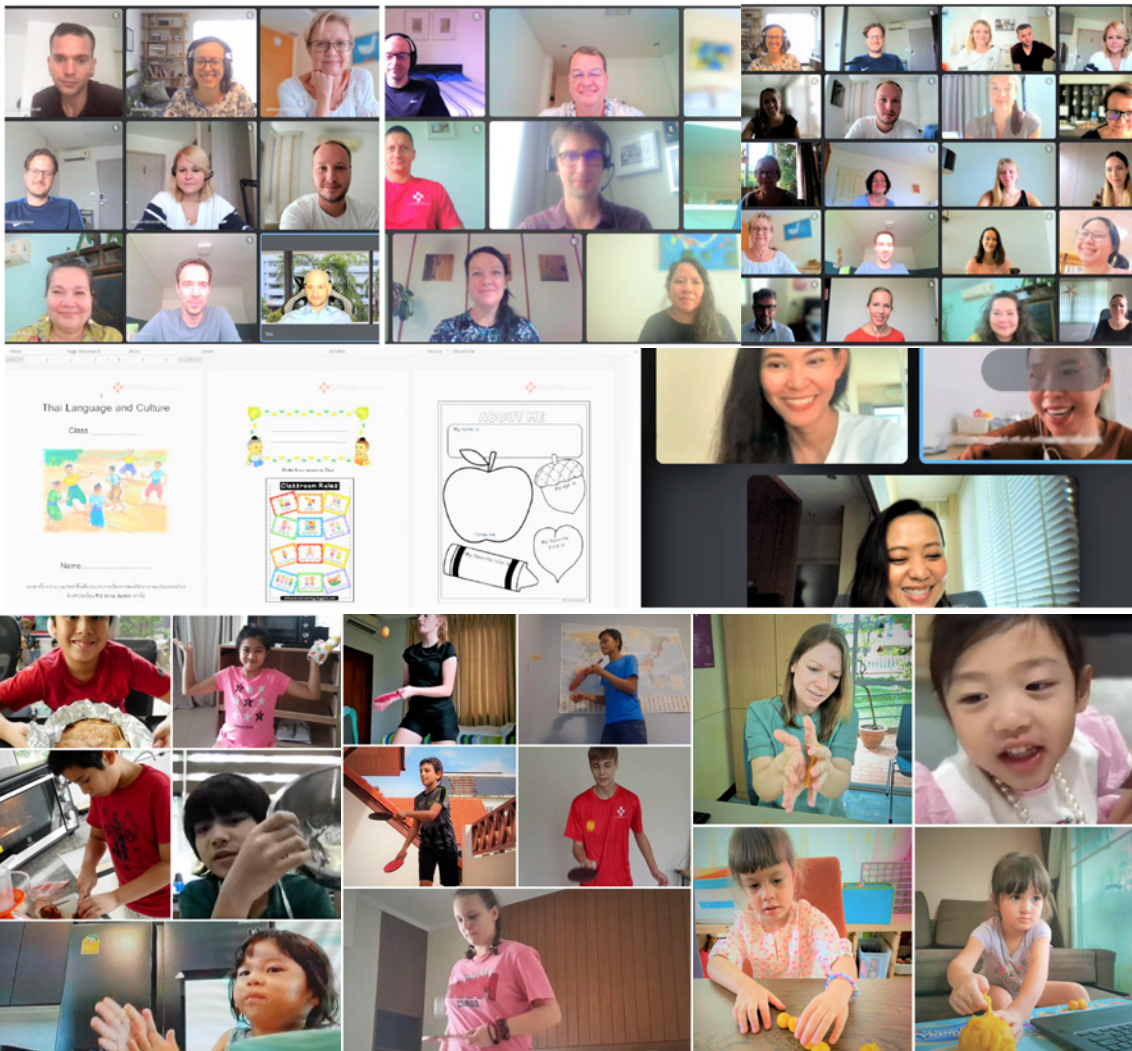
### RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

by well-known German school psychologist and leadership coach Stephan Deiner in the afternoon.

hands-on activities like sports, breadmaking and playdough exercises for the smallest ones.

Since online learning continues to be a necessity for our students and teachers, Saturday was all about the creation of fresh ideas to keep students motivated and engaged during distance learning from didactic tips and tricks to the planning of

One of the teachers concluded: "The workshop was very well organized, entertaining and informative. What we learned will help us a lot, because everything was very practice-oriented."



### The Swiss Matura: Gateway to excellence

Seven Swiss and 22 German universities in the global Top TOP 200. Leading the DACH-country group is the ETH Zurich on place 14. That's the result of the latest Times Higher Education world university ranking released in September, one of

the most authoritative rankings for tertiary education. A very impressive outcome, considering that the DACH countries (Germany – Switzerland – Austria) emphasize cooperation over competition in their education sectors. And proof of the high standards of education and research at DACH



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## RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK



ETH Zürich #14



EPE Lausanne #43



Uni Genf #149



Uni Lausanne #191



Uni Zürich #73



Uni Basel #92



Uni Bern #109

universities, which are generally free of charge for qualified high school graduates.

The bilingual Matura at RIS Swiss Section is an universal entry ticket: It allows unrestricted access

to all study majors at universities in the DACH countries (and often beyond). This is something no other high school qualification can offer, not even those created specifically for globalization.

## Public event calendar for the first semester of the school year 2021-22:

11-15.10.2021	Autumn Holidays	
21.10.2021	SEA AGM	(19:30 – 22:00)
09.11.2021	Open House Day	(7:30 – 14:30)
12.11.2021	Lantern Parade	(KG - Grade 3 - evening)
19.11.2021	Making Krathongs/Loy Krathong	
16.12.2021	Celebration Christmas Party	(from 13:00)
20.12.21-07.01.22	Christmas/Winter holidays	

*Please visit our website [www.ris-swiss-section.org](http://www.ris-swiss-section.org) for more information about upcoming events.*



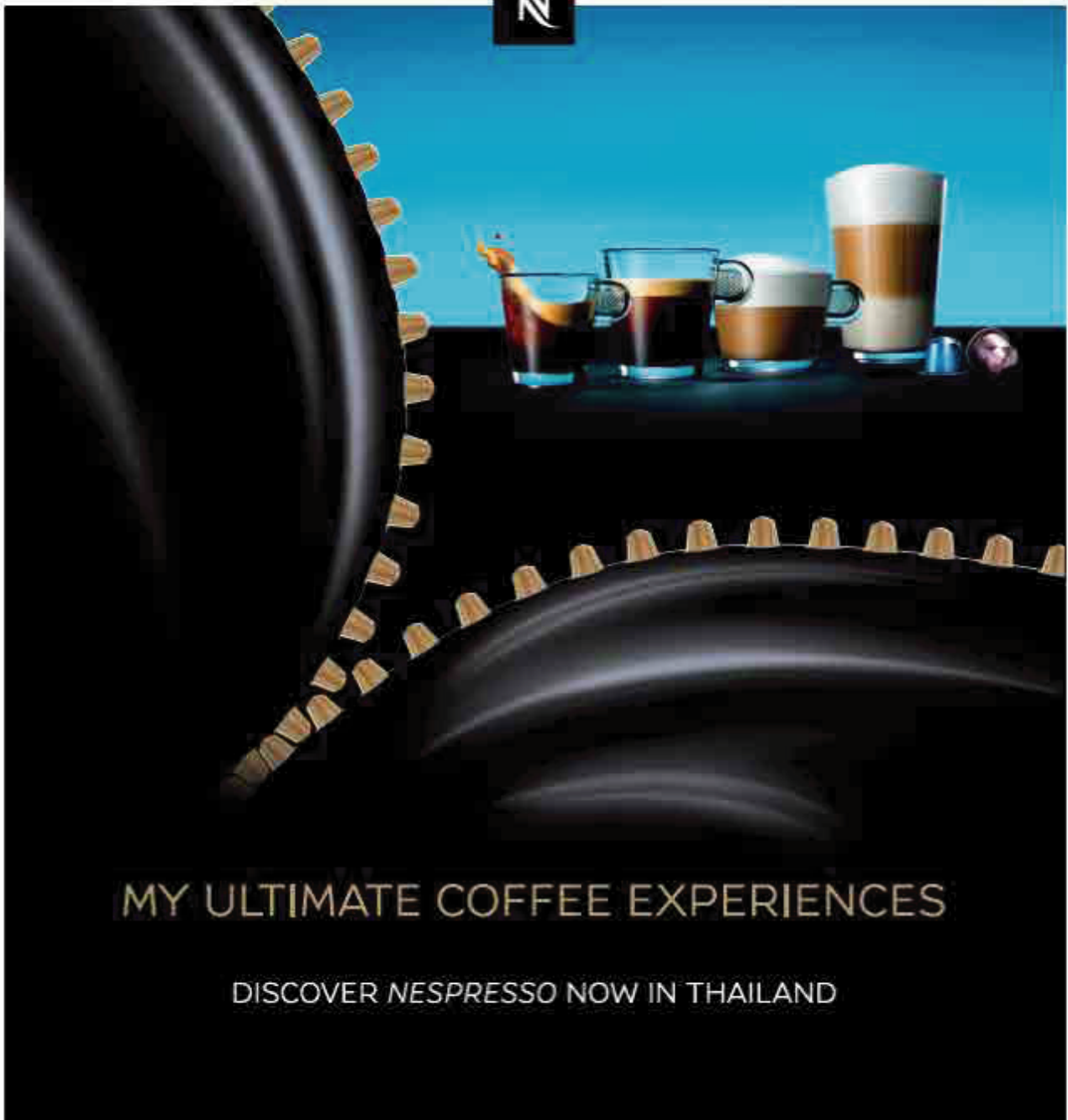
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