

# SUVITECH: THE TIME- TESTED CLICHE OF HARD WORK & INTEGRITY

## AND THE LOVE OF A COUNTRY, BY CASEY OH (EDITORIAL, BUSINESS/CORPORATE)

It is heartening to see success stemming from age-old values with a touch of poetry, especially in today's world of empty promises and scoundrels who leave you up the creek without that necessary paddle.

The two pillars of this rousing triumphs, personifies hard work, integrity and a love for a culture-rich land prided with inspiring history, economic richness and a thousand smiles.

Suvitech is an IT Service company incorporated in Thailand with operations in the Asia Pacific region. The company is certified by the Board of Investment (BOI) under the Ministry of Industry and is also a registered consultant with Ministry of Finance.

Suvitech's core business includes the provision of business solutions, systems integration and consulting services, with particular emphasis on the telecommunications and finance communities.

Today, the company has a very impressive wind underneath their wings, with the likes of IBM, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Siemens, Cerberus and a "major mobile operator and telecom provider" having called upon the services of Suvitech.

But why Thailand, you may ask, especially with co-founders of such international caliber? The answers lie in a long experience and affinity with Thailand, both on a personal and business point of view.

Both Subin Bhatia, MD and CEO, and Allan Dempster, President – Telecom Division, had in the past, successfully conducted international business while being based in Thailand and were thus keen to do it again.

Also, from a business standpoint, Thailand is today, one of the largest regional telecom and financial market. Both of these industries are experiencing tremendous changes creating further future opportunities.

In addition, Thailand offers a world-class infrastructure with further development in the pipeline, ideal geographical location and a well-qualified workforce.

Since its inception in 2002, Suvitech has had a triple digit growth rate every year, which the company expects to emulate again this year. This encouraging intensification took place amidst substantial investments in its in-house product R&D.

To top this off, Suvitech increased its customer bases consistently, expecting continued opportunities to celebrate, especially within their telecom's portfolio offering.

The company's list of products and services offered is impressive, more so if you look at the challenges in acquiring such expertise in such a short time. For Suvitech, the award goes to their

key team, who had the required experience and expertise at the time of Suvitech's inception itself. They had a clear idea of what they intended to do.

"We were quite aware of product and services in the market and the niche which we were going to cater to," said Bhatia. "Thus, we undertook the policy to engage strategic partnerships to acquire complementary technologies for our portfolio."

The nature of partnership included bilateral knowledge transfer, OEM deals and technical development. This was compounded by some excellent work done by Suvitech's technical people to bring to market their in-house products in a lightning-speed timeframe.

Over the past few years, the Thai economy has been performing relatively well. The slowdown due to the recent political changes and the upcoming elections will give way to a resurgence post new government formation.

In parallel, the intense competition between the telecom giants has made them more conscious about customer service, customer retention, revenue management and profitability enhancement solutions. Suvitech has benefited from this greatly, as these areas are directly related to what Suvitech offers.

"We expect the upcoming telecom liberalisation to throw up a whole new raft of opportunities for Suvitech," nodded Bhatia. "Liberalisation in the Thai telecom market still has some way to go, with issues such as the settlement of the concessions to be resolved before it can become a reality.

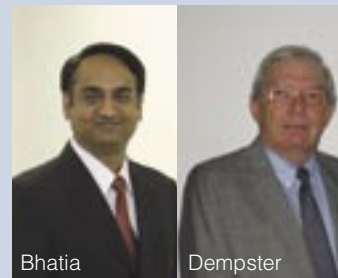
"Essentially, what we have seen is rapid growth in the mobile market, coupled with virtual stagnation in the fixed line market, which is currently dominated by TOT, True Corporation and TT&T. Apart from the mobile operators and ISPs, the only real competition we have so far is in the international call market between CAT and TOT."

"We see real opportunities arising in the future in the interconnect market (i.e. the traffic exchanged between different operators), which will be driven by the interconnect charge policy being mandated by the NTC and eventual licensing of new market entrants," added Dempster. "Our telecommunications interconnect management system (suviTMS), which consists of modules for real-time traffic and quality reporting, least-cost routing and profitability monitoring is ideally positioned to address these opportunities."

Bhatia is bullish about the Thai market in terms of economic development in general and IT sector in particular. He believes that in addition to the opportunities thrown up by the increasing competitive environment of Suvitech's customers, there will be lot of positive developments due to government driven initiative, like mega-projects, and regulatory changes, like telecom liberalisation and Basel II.

The future of Thai telecom industry in particular will be dependent to a large extent on the policy adopted by the NTC, particularly in respect of opening up the international call market to new entrants. Logically, the NTC should follow the policy already adopted in Singapore and Malaysia where the market has been opened to non-facility based operators (or ASPs) to simulate traffic and drive down prices without causing unnecessary duplication of network infrastructure.

In the mobile sector, the potential for 3G has to be questioned and many people share the view that the better approach maybe to go straight to 4G using Wi-Fi, WiMAX or HSDPA technology. Similarly, Fixed Mobile Convergence (FMC) services should be launched to stem the trend towards mobile substitution, Bhatia noted.



Bhatia

Dempster