



2023 Trend Report

# Higher Education & e-learning in ASEAN

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# Summary of ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network Experts' Meeting Hosted by Thai MOOC: Empowering MOOCs for Sustainable Lifelong Learning in the ASEAN Region: Insights from Regional Experts' Meeting (January 2023)

#ThaiMOOC #TCU #ASEAN #MOOCs #LifelongLearning  
#OnlineEducation #SustainableLearning #HigherEducation  
#MicroCredentials #CreditTransfer #QualityAssurance  
#DigitalLearning #Collaboration #Inclusivity #SkillDevelopment  
#CompetencyBasedLearning #OpenEducationResources  
#MOOCExchange

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This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network Experts' Meeting hosted by Thai MOOC in January 2023, focusing on empowering MOOCs for sustainable lifelong learning in the ASEAN region. Regional experts from the ASEAN University Network (AUN), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, and Thailand shared their experiences, achievements, and future plans concerning MOOCs and online learning. The discussions highlighted the role of MOOCs in expanding access to education, promoting lifelong learning, and addressing the skill gaps and mismatches in the region. The paper emphasizes the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing among ASEAN countries to develop and improve MOOC initiatives, ensure quality assurance, and create sustainable models for lifelong learning. Additionally, the paper explores the potential of MOOCs for transforming higher education, fostering industry-academe partnerships, and promoting inclusivity in the ASEAN region.

## Thai MOOC Platform Hosted the ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network (AUN) Experts' Meeting

► The rapid growth of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has significantly impacted the landscape of higher education and lifelong learning worldwide. In the ASEAN region, MOOCs have emerged as a promising means to promote sustainable lifelong learning and address the diverse educational needs of the region's population. In response to this development, the Thai MOOC platform hosted the ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network (AUN) Experts' Meeting on 26 and 27 January 2023 at Asia Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, to facilitate discussions on empowering MOOCs for sustainable lifelong learning in the ASEAN region.



Figure 1. The Experts' Meeting Poster

The meeting brought together representatives from six organizations and countries: the AUN, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand. These countries and organizations shared their experiences, progress, and achievements in MOOCs and online learning. The meeting aimed to foster cooperation and exchange of best practices among the participating countries, identify common challenges, and explore strategies to enhance the quality and accessibility of MOOCs in the ASEAN region.

Participated AUN, Republic of Korea, and ASEAN experts include:

- Dr. Choltis Dhirathiti: ASEAN University Network (AUN) Executive Director
- Adjunct Professor Dr. Heon Joo Suh: Director of External Affairs at National Institute for Lifelong Education, Republic of Korea
- Professor Dr. Paulina Pannen: Chairman ICE Institute, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia
- Associate Professor Dr. Nurbiha A Shukor: Deputy Director, Center of Advancement in Digital and Flexible LearningUTM CDex, Chair Malaysia Public Universities e-Learning Council (MEIPTA), Malaysia
- Professor Dr. Melinda Dela Pena Bandalaria: Chancellor and Professor, University of the Philippines Open University, The Philippines
- Associate Professor Dr. Thapanee Thammetar: Thailand Cyber University Project, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
- Associate Professor Dr. Anuchai Theeraroungchaisri: Thailand Cyber University Project, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and
- Professor Dr. Jintavee Khlaisang: Thailand Cyber University Project, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
- Dr. Vorasuang Duangchinda: Sripatum University, Thailand as the Master of Ceremony



Figure 2.  
The Experts

This paper summarizes the insights and recommendations from the regional experts' meeting, highlighting the role of MOOCs in transforming higher education and promoting lifelong learning in the ASEAN region. The discussions focused on various aspects of MOOCs, including quality assurance, micro-credentialing, partnerships with industry, accessibility, and sustainability. Through this paper, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of MOOCs in the ASEAN region and offer valuable insights for future developments in online learning and lifelong education.

► Thailand Cyber University (TCU), the organizer of Thai MOOC, values the diverse opinions, experiences, and practicality offered by experts from various countries and organizations. By hosting this meeting, TCU aims to create a platform for regional stakeholders to share their knowledge, experiences, and best practices in the development and implementation of MOOCs. This collaborative effort is expected to pave the way for more effective and sustainable MOOCs for lifelong learning in the ASEAN region and beyond.

With the growing prominence of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in the ASEAN region has opened up new opportunities and challenges for higher education institutions and lifelong learners. As MOOCs continue to evolve and impact the way we approach education, it is crucial to learn from the experiences of different organizations and countries to maximize their potential benefits and address the challenges that they present. In this paper, we provide a summary of the contributions from each representing organization and country, followed by an analysis and conclusion that draw on the insights and recommendations discussed during the ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network (AUN) Experts' Meeting, hosted by Thai MOOC in January 2023.

Order of the summary is as follows; 1) ASEAN University Network (AUN) 2) Indonesia 3) Malaysia 4) the Philippines 5) Republic of Korea 6) Thailand (Host nation)

## Implications

AUN, ASEAN and Republic of Korea Experts Share Insights to Strengthen MOOCs for Sustainable Lifelong Learning: Collaborative Pathways Emerge from Regional Meeting Hosted by Thai MOOC"

## 02

Prof. Dr. Paulina Pannen  
Chairman of ICE Institute  
(Indonesia Cyber Education  
Institute), Universitas  
Terbuka, Indonesia

## Overview of the ASEAN Qualifications Framework for Online Learning

- ▶ Dr. Choltis Dhirathiti presented an overview of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), which aims to promote a higher quality of the qualification system by enhancing learning outcomes. The AQRF has six objectives, including support for recognition of qualifications, promotion of higher-quality qualifications systems, and development of qualifications frameworks that encourage lifelong learning.

Dr. Dhirathiti also discussed the implementation of the AQRF in each country and the ASEAN University Network's (AUN) current works on the "Measuring and Comparing Learning Outcomes in (Southeast) Asia" (CALOHEA) - Erasmus+ Project. The CALOHEA project aims to promote the internationalization of higher education institutions in Southeast Asia and involves the participation of thirty-one institutions from eight Asian countries and five European countries.

The AUN Quality Assurance emphasizes improvement and compliance to ensure education outcomes align with the demands of the workforce. Collaboration and consultation with multi-sector stakeholders are crucial for MOOC providers to maximize their strengths, capitalize on emerging trends and opportunities, and ensure contextual relevance in designing and implementing qualification assessments.

- The AQRF is an important framework for promoting higher quality of the qualification system and enhancing learning outcomes. The CALOHEA project has offered significant benefits to educational institutions in Southeast Asia, including clear agreements on graduate expectations in CALOHEA subject areas, a shared approach to measuring student workload, and authentic learning outcomes assessments. The AUN Quality Assurance is considering integrating online learning into its framework but needs more experience, and the MOOCs providers' network is expected to develop the Quality Assurance framework.

## Implications

AUN Encourages Collaborative Approach to Enhance MOOCs for Lifelong Learning

## 03

Prof. Dr. Paulina Pannen  
Chairman of ICE Institute  
(Indonesia Cyber Education Institute), Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

### The Progress and Achievements of MOOCs and Online Learning in Indonesia

- Prof. Pannen provided an overview of Indonesia's Distance Education Strategy and its focus on expanding access to higher education and promoting employability skills through online courses and micro-credentials. She presented the country's policies and regulations regarding distance learning and emphasized the need for collaboration among universities to improve the sustainability of MOOCs.
- Prof. Pannen also discussed the potential of MOOCs in Indonesia and the challenges the country faces, including low digital literacy among faculty and the need for improved collaboration among universities within and across countries. She presented the results of her research on the socio-emotional experience of students during online learning and the factors influencing their decisions to enroll in online courses.
- Indonesia has made significant progress in expanding access to education through online learning and MOOCs. However, the country still faces challenges such as low digital literacy among faculty and limited collaboration among universities. There is a need for continuous improvement in the online learning system to meet the expectations and satisfaction levels of students, particularly the younger generation.

## Implications

Indonesia's Efforts to Expand Access and Improve Quality of Education through MOOCs and Online Learning

# 04

## The Progress and Achievements of MOOCs and Online Learning in Malaysia

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurbiha A Shukor

Deputy Director, Center of Advancement in Digital and Flexible Learning UTM CDex, and Chair, Malaysian e-Learning Council for Public Universities (MEIPTA), Malaysia

- ▶ Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurbiha A Shukor provided insights on Malaysia's progress and achievements in MOOCs and online learning. The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2020-2025 guides MOOC development in Malaysia, with a focus on "Shift #9 Globalized online learning" and "Shift#3 Nation of lifelong learners." Malaysian MOOCs plan to produce 70% of courses in blended learning mode in 2025. Currently, accredited courses are byte-size courses carrying up to only one credit. Academic programs must satisfy two requirements to be classified as Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Malaysian public universities have created 192 micro-credentials, 1376 MOOCs, and 945 Open Coursewares (OCWs) and provided MOOC training courses to improve skills and knowledge.

The Experiential Learning and Competency-based Education Landscape (EXCEL) curriculum framework includes Personalized Experiential Learning (POISE) that allows learners to discover their interests by taking up to 40 credits worth of international MOOCs and micro-credential courses and transfer credits within the framework. Students can transfer up to 30% of their credits through MOOCs and another 30% through prior work experience, allowing them to transfer 60% of their online credits towards the degree.

- ▶ Malaysia's education blueprint guides the MOOC development in the country with a focus on globalized online learning and lifelong learning. Malaysian public universities have developed various online learning initiatives, and MOOC training courses have attracted a substantial number of participants. The POISE framework and MOOC credit transfer processes have helped learners personalize their learning experience and enhance their skills and knowledge. The transfer of credit based on work experience and MOOC courses can significantly reduce skill gaps and mismatch.

### Implications

Malaysia's Vision for Sustainable MOOC Development and Lifelong Learning

# 05

Prof. Dr. Melinda Dela Pena  
Bandalaria

Chancellor and Professor,  
University of the Philippines  
Open University, Philippines

## The Progress and Achievements of MOOCs and Online Learning in Each Country - The Philippines

- ▶ Prof. Bandalaria shared the experience of the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) in providing open and fully online education to learners in the gig economy, out-of-school youth, and dropouts. UPOU has offered MOOCs and micro-credential courses with certificates of completion since 2017. During the pandemic, UPOU developed a model of inclusive training through webinars and MOOC combinations, allowing learners to revisit recorded content and interact with teachers and their peers. The number of learners spiked during the pandemic. Prof. Bandalaria recommended two frameworks for evaluating the quality of MOOCs and also developed the quality of instruction in UPOP MOOCs. She proposed several methods to sustain MOOC initiatives, including implementing institutional policies, providing free certification, partnering with industry, securing research funds, tapping into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds, integrating with micro-credentialing and stackable credits, gig learning certification, and Universal Design for Learning. She also cautioned against the pitfalls of MOOCs for higher education.
- ▶ The experience of UPOU can be a valuable resource for other universities seeking to develop their MOOCs in the Philippines. The proposed sustainability methods and cautionary notes from Prof. Bandalaria can help improve the quality of online education in the country.

## Implications

Malaysia's Vision for Sustainable MOOC Development and Lifelong Learning

# 06

Dr. Heon Joo SUH  
Director of External Affairs,  
National Institute for Lifelong  
Education (NILE),  
Republic of Korea

## The Progress and Achievements of MOOCs and Online Learning in Each Country - Republic of Korea

- ▶ Dr. Suh presented the K-MOOC service in the Republic of Korea and its objectives, which include innovating teaching-learning methods in higher education, providing equal opportunities for access to higher education, and establishing a foundation for lifelong learning in the era of "Homo Hundred." The K-MOOC service was launched in response to the international spread of MOOCs, the shift in the paradigm of higher education, the increasing demand for workforce lifelong competency development, and the increased job mobility trend.

The K-MOOC ecosystem has six significant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, the National Institute for Lifelong Learning, Course Evaluation and Selection Committee, K-MOOC Operation units under NILE, MOOCs-providing institutions, and Partner organizations.

Starting in 2017, the Ministry of Education in South Korea has actively promoted the accreditation and usage of K-MOOCs. The follow-up measures include expanding the use of MOOCs and credit recognition among K-MOOC leading universities, encouraging credit recognition and exchange between K-MOOC participating universities, fostering the development and use of K-MOOCs by non-participating universities, promoting the use of K-MOOCs in in-service vocational education and training and adult lifelong education, and providing participating institutions with the best practice of credit recognition and building a credit recognition-related information system.

K-MOOC was a success with 1,424 courses and 1.1 million users, 2.7 million course registrations, and 28 million site visits as of October 2022. To ensure sustainability, Dr. Suh proposed a two-pronged strategy, which includes introducing a new degree scheme and digital badges and expanding openness and sharing of quality MOOCs. Additionally, the Korean government has played a significant role in recommending universities to introduce credit recognition for MOOCs since 2017 and revising related laws and regulations for the accreditation of MOOCs in 2019.

- ▶ The success of K-MOOC in South Korea provides valuable lessons for the ASEAN region in developing a sustainable MOOC ecosystem. The K-MOOC service has innovated teaching-learning methods in higher education, provided equal opportunities for access to higher education, and established a foundation for lifelong learning. The Korean government has actively promoted the accreditation and usage of MOOCs, and it has played a significant role in revising laws and regulations for the accreditation of MOOCs.



## Implications

Republic of Korea's K-MOOC Service: A Successful Model for MOOCs in the ASEAN Region

# 07

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thapanee Thammetar  
Prof. Dr. Jintavee Khaisang  
Director and Deputy Director,  
Thailand Cyber University  
Project (TCU), Ministry of  
Higher Education, Science,  
Research and Innovation  
(MHESI) Thailand

## The Progress and Achievements of MOOCs and Online Learning in Thailand

- ▶ Thai MOOC was founded in 2015 with the goal of providing educational access to all types of learners through a network of cooperation in online education, distance education management, and research and quality assurance. It aims to act as a learning management platform for universities to offer MOOCs for free, with micro-credential courses planned for the top three most studied categories: Computer and Technology, Business and Management, and Education and Training.

Thai MOOC's ecosystem includes a roaming account that allows students to log in with affiliated organizations' user accounts, an e-profile that collects learning records for lifelong learning, and a credit bank system that accumulates learning achievements for accreditation with partner agencies.

The credit bank system accumulates credits based on professional competencies gained through study, training, or work experience. Thai MOOC Academy places significant emphasis on ensuring the credibility and transferability of its certificates in collaboration with two government agencies: the Digital Government Development Agency (DGA) and the Electronic Transaction Development Agency (ETDA). The credit accumulated in the credit bank could be stored for a lifetime without limitations on the learner's qualification and time or duration of study for earning credits.

Thai MOOC also conducts MOOC exchange collaborations with overseas universities to enrich learners' knowledge and broaden their perspectives. To sustain the Thai MOOC platform and learners' enthusiasm, live broadcasts, and conferences are conducted to engage and stimulate learners' ambition.

- ▶ Thai MOOC's comprehensive ecosystem and credit bank system provide a significant contribution to online education in Thailand. The credit bank system, in particular, allows learners to accumulate credits based on professional competencies gained through study, training, or work experience, which can be stored for a lifetime and transferred to higher education institutions for accreditation. Thai MOOC's collaborations with government agencies and overseas universities also contribute to the platform's sustainability and learners' knowledge enrichment.

## Implications

Thai MOOC leads the way in online education with a comprehensive ecosystem and credit bank system

# 08

## The Analysis

The ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network Experts' Meeting hosted by Thai MOOC brought together experts from six organizations and countries to discuss the progress and challenges of MOOCs and online learning. The meeting highlighted the common challenges faced by MOOCs in the region and the unique approaches taken by each country to address them.

Dr. Choltis Dhirathiti from AUN emphasized the importance of collaboration, consultation, and context relevance in designing and implementing qualification assessments for MOOCs. Prof. Dr. Paulina Pannen from Indonesia discussed the Indonesian Distance Education Strategy, policies and regulations, MOOC providers in the public and private sectors, and the challenges faced by MOOCs in Indonesia. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurbiha A Shukor from Malaysia presented the Malaysia Education Blueprint as the guiding document for MOOC development in the country and discussed the sustainability model, MOOC credit transfer policies, and other actions undertaken through MOOCs and online learning.

Prof. Dr. Melinda Dela Pena Bandalaria from the Philippines highlighted the increase in MOOC usage during the COVID-19 pandemic and presented several sustainability strategies for MOOC initiatives, including partnering with industry and tapping into Corporate Social Responsibility funds. Dr. Heon Joo Suh from Republic of Korea focused on the K-MOOC service and its ecosystem, credit recognition and usage policies, and plans to expand accreditation to private-sector courses in the next five years.

Finally, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thapanee Thammetar and Prof. Dr. Jintavee Khlaisang from Thailand presented the Thai MOOC initiative, including its background, rationale, and ecosystem, as well as the transferable credits system and collaborations and sustainability models. They also revealed that since its launch, Thai MOOC has gained 1.57 million learners and issued 1.53 million certificates by 2022.

Overall, the meeting highlighted the progress and achievements of MOOCs and online learning in the region and the need for continued collaboration, innovation, and sustainability to ensure the success of these initiatives.

## Implications

Experts from ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea Discuss Progress, Achievements, and Challenges of MOOCs and Online Learning.

## Conclusion

Experts from six organizations and countries recently convened at the ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and ASEAN University Network Experts' Meeting hosted by Thai MOOC to discuss the progress and challenges of MOOCs and online learning in the region. The meeting highlighted the common challenges faced by MOOCs and the unique approaches taken by each country to address them.

The experts emphasized the importance of collaboration, consultation, and context relevance in designing and implementing qualification assessments for MOOCs. They also presented various sustainability strategies for MOOC initiatives, including partnering with industry and tapping into Corporate Social Responsibility funds. Furthermore, they discussed the progress and achievements of MOOCs and online learning in their respective countries, such as Malaysia's Education Blueprint, the K-MOOC service in Republic of Korea, and the Thai MOOC initiative, which has gained 1.57 million learners and issued 1.53 million certificates by 2022.

The meeting highlighted the need for continued collaboration, innovation, and sustainability to ensure the success of MOOCs and online learning initiatives in the region. Thai MOOC by TCU expressed pride in hosting the event and looks forward to further collaborations with other countries in the region and around the world.

### Implications

ASEAN, AUN, and Republic of Korea Experts Gathered to Empower MOOCs for Sustainable Lifelong Learning, a Bright Future of Education Ahead!

Thai MOOC by TCU hosts ASEAN Plus Republic of Korea and AUN Experts' Meeting, expresses pride and plans for future collaborations for empowering MOOCs for Sustainable Lifelong Learning, a Bright Future of Education Ahead!

# Leveraging Thai MOOC Academy for Continuous Self-Development: A Transformative Step Towards the Realization of Future Learning Organizations in Thailand

#Thai MOOC Academy #Thailand Cyber University  
#Online Self-development #Continuous Learning  
#Human Resource Management #Digital Learning Platform  
#Future Learning Organizations #Professional Development

Associate Professor Dr. Thapanee THAMMETAR / Silpakorn University, and Thailand Cyber University (TCU), Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation of Thailand.

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This report explores the progressive strategy of the Thailand Cyber University (TCU) project, under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) in Thailand, to shift towards online self-development methods through the Thai MOOC Academy. The discussion focuses on the potential of this initiative to foster continuous learning and professional development among Thai civil servants. The paper also highlights the key roles and responsibilities of the Human Resource Management team in spearheading this transformative process within their respective organizations. By leveraging the flexibility and accessibility of online learning platforms, the TCU aims to promote a culture of continuous self-improvement and create knowledge-centric governmental institutions that foster lifelong learning.

01

**Overview of The Thai MOOC Academy for Professional Development: A Cooperation between the Human Resources Department and Thai MOOC under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) Thailand**

## **Embracing a Strategic Shift Towards Online Self-development through the Thai MOOC Academy**

In this initial section, the paper elucidates the growing significance of the Thai MOOC Academy as a facilitator of self-development among Thai civil servants. The main objective of the referenced high-level meeting, as conveyed by the assistant secretaries of MHESI and TCU, was to promote a broader understanding of the principles and origins of self-development through the Thai MOOC Academy. Furthermore, the discussion highlights the importance of consistent self-development in transforming government offices into genuine future learning organizations (Thailand Cyber University, 2022).

## **The Pivotal Role of Human Resource Management in Facilitating Self-development**

This part of the paper outlines the critical role of Human Resource Management in promoting self-development among personnel. Drawing inspiration from the strategic plan laid out for 2023, it becomes apparent that developing and sourcing suitable courses that align with the developmental potential of civil servants is necessary (Hanley, 2022; Thammetar, 2021). Additionally, this section enumerates the responsibilities of the HRM team in carefully selecting courses and promoting the idea of continuous self-development among staff, thereby enabling a more tailored approach to professional growth.

## **Implications**

Leveraging Thai MOOC Academy for seamless and continuous personnel development aligns with Ministry's strategic shift towards online training, promising efficiency and cost reduction. Execution of Ministry Policies for Personnel Development via Online Training.

## **02**

## **The Current Progress of the Thai MOOC Academy for Professional Development**

The Thai MOOC Academy for professional development: a cooperation between The Human resources department and Thai MOOC under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) meeting was held online on May 19th, 2023. This meeting outlined the introduction of personal development through Thai MOOC Academy. The purpose of the meeting was to clarify the principles and background of this initiative, including a demonstration on how to use the system in order to prepare for self-training through Thai MOOC Academy. The meeting was opened by Assistant Secretary Wanee Nonsiri who also presented personnel development policy.



Figure 1. Assistant secretary of the ministry, Mr. Wannee Nonsiri, and the directors of Thai MOOC, Assoc. Prof. Thapanee Thammetar, and Prof. Jintavee Khaisang, during the opening session of the meeting

The principles and background were explained by Miss Sikhanat Manuwong, the Director of Human Resources Management Team. The annual plan for the year 2566 B.E (2023 A.D) outlined the development and provision of suitable curriculum that aligns with the personnel capability development, including the provision of curriculum to develop knowledge in order to support the work of the personnel. This development plan emphasizes continuous and consistent development to promote the office of the secretary and the office of the minister as true future learning organizations.

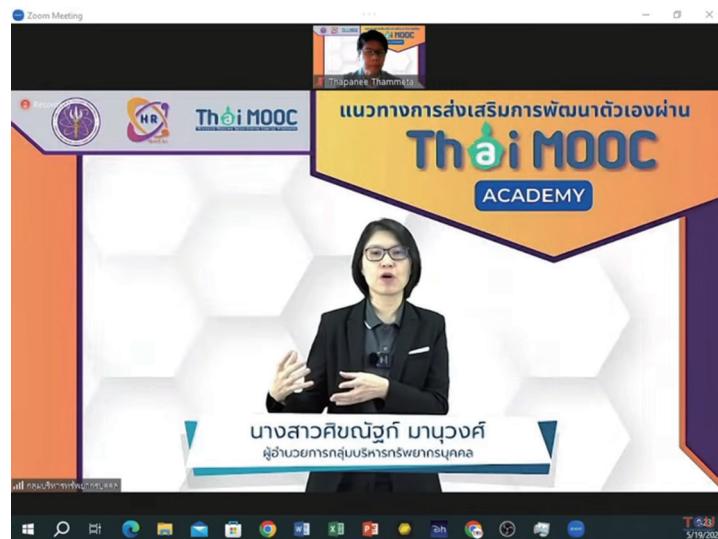


Figure 2. Miss Sikhanat Manuwong, the Director of Human Resources Management Team explaining the background of the project

Another point discussed was the policy from the secretary of the ministry who wants the Human Resources Management team to adjust their thinking in personnel development from having to send personnel for training, which often results in problems such as costs, time, and quota of the personnel sent, to more online systems. Given the efficiency of the existing platform and the growing popularity and acceptance of online systems in the past year, an order was issued for the Human Resources Management team to collaborate with the Thailand Cyber University project to promote personnel self-development through the online system of the Thai MOOC Academy.

## **Leaning into the Future: Realizing Potential through the Thai MOOC Academy for a Learning-Oriented Governmental Office**

In this project, the Human Resources Management Team has the following roles and missions:

1. Selection of suitable curriculum for each line of work and at each level of the personnel, so that development aligns with the line of work, knowledge, skills, and competencies of each person, thus preparing a training roadmap dividing personnel into 5 groups as follow:
  - 1.1 Group of entry-level civil servants and operational staff: This group consists mainly of new civil servants. The goal is to develop their understanding of government regulations, instill good attitudes, knowledge, and essential skills necessary for their job performance.
  - 1.2 Group of experienced operational staff: This group consists mostly of skilled civil servants. The goal is to enhance their performance and prepare them for future leadership roles, increasing their competency in their work.
  - 1.3 Group of managerial-level civil servants: The goal for this group is to develop their work efficiency and leadership skills.
  - 1.4 Group of administrative personnel/specialists: This group includes personnel in administrative or specialized positions. The development goal for this group is to enhance their management skills to support their transition into managerial roles in the future.
  - 1.5 Group of executive-level administrative/academic personnel: The development goal for this group is to strengthen and enhance the capabilities of high-level executives using a tailored curriculum for senior-level managers.
2. Promotion of continuous self-development of personnel, initially using the mechanism of assessing the results of the civil service performance to push the personnel to develop themselves.
3. Further designing the continuous self-development of personnel via Thai MOOC Academy in line with the competency-based curricula including core competency course and functional competency courses for all 5 groups.

Thus for, from the annual plan of 2023, it has been determined to develop and provide appropriate curricula that align with the development of employee skills, including the provision of courses to enhance knowledge to support employee job performance. The development plan emphasizes that such development should occur consistently and evenly to promote the Secretariat and the Ministry's offices as genuine future learning organizations.

Another point concerns the policy from the Minister who wants the Human Resources Management Team to adjust their thinking in employee development from sending personnel for training, which often involves problems such as costs, time, and quotas of the personnel sent, to a more online system. It is seen that there is already an effective platform combined with the popularity and acceptance of the online system increasing in the past year (Khraisang, 2021). and there has been an order for the Human Resources Management Team to work with the Thai Cyber University project to push for personnel to self-develop through the online system via Thai MOOC Academy. In this project, the Human Resources Management Team has the following roles and tasks:

1. The selection of appropriate courses for each job line and at each level of personnel to ensure development that aligns with the job line, knowledge, skills and competencies of each individual. Therefore, a Training Roadmap has been created, dividing personnel into the mentioned 5 groups.



Figure 3. The Five groups of personnel from training roadmap

2. The promotion for personnel to continuously self-develop. Initially, the mechanism of assessing the performance of government work will be used to push for personnel to self-develop.

Finally, there will be a system to follow up on the results of the personnel development to see the progress after going through the development course, to analyze, improve and adjust the system to be more effective. This would result in an agile, intelligent organization that is a learning organization, ready to drive the country towards Thailand 4.0, under the "New Normal" society.

## 03

### The Direction for the Implementation of the Thai MOOC Academy:

This high-level meeting presented a platform to discuss the profound vision of the Thailand Cyber University (TCU) towards fostering self-development through the Thai MOOC Academy. By shifting the traditional personnel development model from offline training to a more online-centric model, TCU aimed to offer more flexibility and accessibility, thereby promoting continuous learning within the governmental office (Theeraroungchaisri, et al., 2022).

Highlighting the direction for the implementation of the Thai MOOC Academy was Assistant Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI), Mr. Wanee Nonsiri, who provided an open forum to demonstrate the basic use of the system. Furthermore, he emphasized the need for readiness and preparation to utilize the Thai MOOC Academy for self-development and learning.

The development of the Thai MOOC Academy was inspired by the office's strategic plan for 2023, which mandated the provision of appropriate courses to support personnel development. The primary idea was to integrate knowledge enhancement with job performance, emphasizing continuous and consistent development to create a truly learning-oriented governmental office.

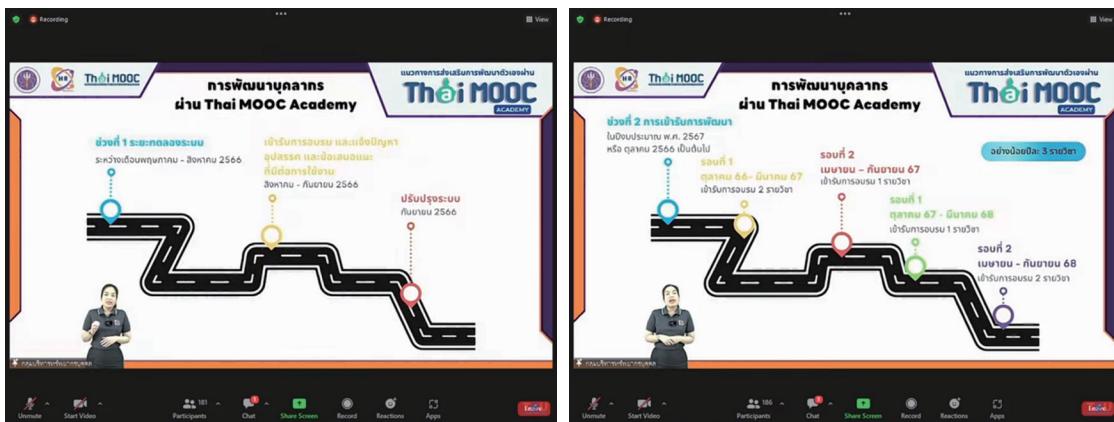


Figure 4 and 5. The development plan for the project

Ms. Sikanat Manuwong, the Director of Human Resource Management Team, elucidated the origins and principles of the Thai MOOC Academy. The past year had seen a surge in the acceptance and popularity of online systems, which was further encouraged by the MHESI. This signaled the shift towards more online learning systems like the Thai MOOC Academy. The Human Resource Management Team was then tasked with selecting appropriate courses for each job level and creating a training roadmap divided into five personnel groups.



Figure 6. Introducing the participants to Thai MOOC Academy platform

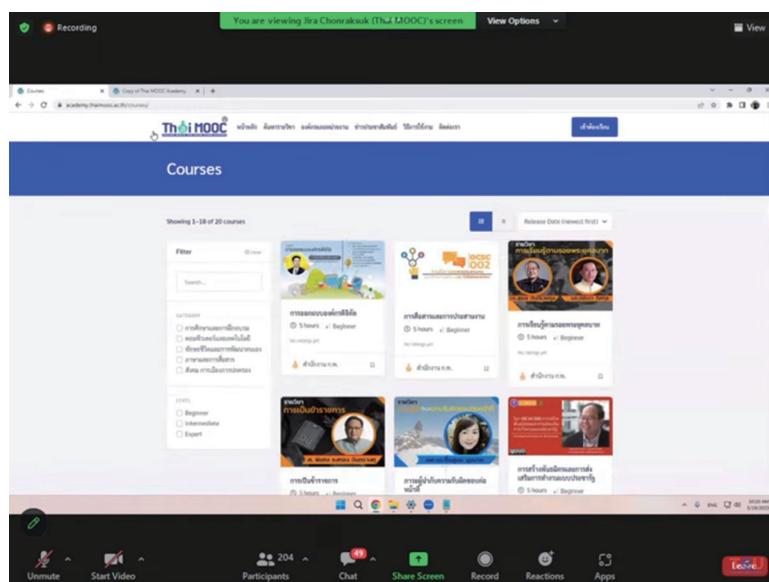


Figure 7. Introduce the participants to the layout of the platform and how to navigate through the website

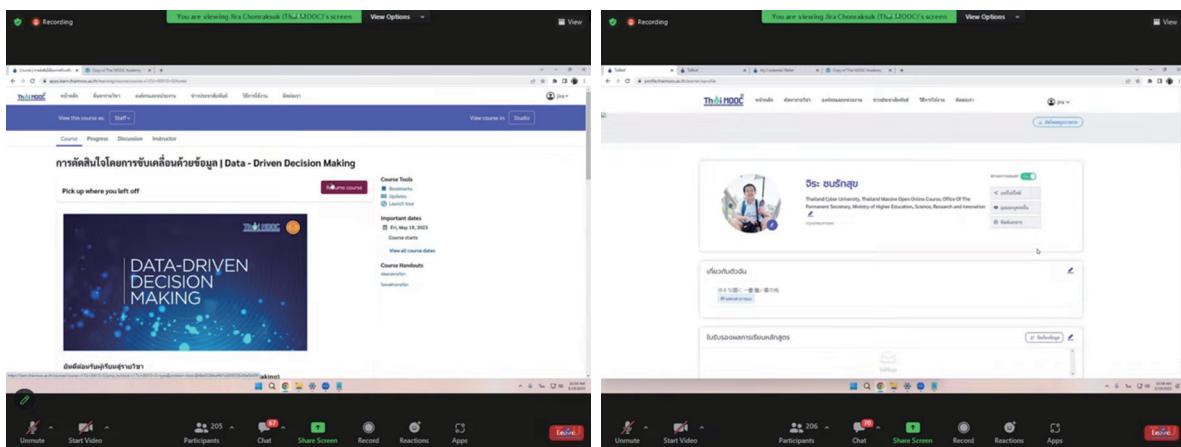


Figure 8 and 9. course page layout and e-profile page layout

Moreover, the MHESI advocated for a self-development-focused approach for personnel, leveraging the government's performance assessment mechanism to drive continuous learning. Consequently, the Thai MOOC Academy was envisaged as a strategic project that would enable personnel to learn at their own pace and convenience, thus cultivating a culture of continuous self-improvement.

The Thai MOOC Academy initiative is not only a response to the evolving learning landscape but also a significant step forward in the pursuit of developing a learning-oriented governmental office. The strategic approach undertaken by TCU and MHESI reflects their commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning, thereby ensuring that their personnel remain at the forefront of knowledge and skill sets.

This initiative underscores the potential of digital learning platforms in promoting self-learning and development. By leveraging the benefits of the Thai MOOC Academy, governmental offices can cultivate a learning-oriented environment, thereby fostering a culture of continuous self-improvement and capacity enhancement. This proactive approach to learning and development can serve as a valuable blueprint for other institutions and organizations seeking to harness the power of digital learning.

## Overcoming Obstacles in Traditional Training Approaches through Online Platforms

Transitioning from traditional methods of personnel training to a predominantly online system has its share of challenges, including issues pertaining to cost, time, and quota restrictions. In this context, the paper provides a comprehensive analysis of these hurdles and details the management's policy to shift towards a more efficient online system. Leveraging the Thai MOOC Academy, a powerful existing platform, becomes an instrumental part of this plan.

## Envisioning the Future Prospects of Online Self-development via the Thai MOOC Academy

This section offers a broader perspective on the future prospects of online self-development facilitated through the Thai MOOC Academy. It underscores the strategic plan of the HRM team to work collaboratively with TCU to foster self-development among civil servants through the Thai MOOC Academy. In the process, it paints a hopeful picture of what this collaboration could yield in terms of professional development in the Thai public sector.

# 04

## Conclusion

The transformative capacity of the Thai MOOC Academy to redefine the self-improvement journey of civil servants in Thailand is beyond doubt. However, it is crucial to comprehend that the transition to an online self-development platform does not merely signify an infrastructural or technological advancement. It essentially symbolizes a paradigm shift towards the creation of knowledge-centric governmental institutions that foster lifelong learning.

To realize this progressive vision, a synergistic and proactive collaboration among all stakeholders, with a special emphasis on the role of the Human Resource Management team, is indispensable. Their pivotal task in aligning the course selection with the multifaceted needs of the personnel and nurturing a culture that values constant self-enhancement forms the linchpin of this initiative. This endeavor goes beyond conventional personnel development strategies by integrating knowledge enhancement with actual job performance, thus fostering a truly learning-oriented governmental office.

This forward-looking initiative, if executed successfully, could indeed serve as a valuable model for future-oriented learning organizations worldwide. Nevertheless, it is critical to continuously assess and improve the platform based on user feedback and technological advancements to ensure its sustained effectiveness and relevance. Furthermore, in an increasingly globalized and digitalized world, it is equally important to ensure that this digital learning platform can cater to diverse learning needs and styles, thereby ensuring inclusivity and equity in learning opportunities.

In conclusion, the Thai MOOC Academy represents a significant stride towards the future of self-directed learning and development in Thailand. This initiative embodies the strategic vision of Thailand's Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation to not only keep up with the rapidly evolving learning landscape but also to proactively shape it. By leveraging the flexibility and accessibility of online learning platforms, the Thai MOOC Academy has the potential to redefine the self-improvement journey of civil servants and foster a culture of continuous learning within governmental institutions. This forward-looking initiative serves as a beacon of hope for the nation and could serve as a valuable model for future-oriented learning organizations worldwide. However, it is critical to continuously assess and improve the platform based on user feedback and technological advancements to ensure its sustained effectiveness and relevance.

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# Revitalizing Thai MOOC brand: A Journey to Launch a Line Extension of Thai MOOC Academy with Distinctive Brand Positioning and Integrated Communications in Thailand

#ThaiMOOCAcademy, #ThaiMOOC, #ThailandCyberUniversity, #DistinctiveBrandPositioning, #IntegratedBrandCommunication

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This report unveils the rigorous process behind the development of brand positioning and communications behind the massive launch of Thai MOOC Academy, under the purview of Thailand Cyber University (TCU), Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) in Thailand. The discussion focuses on 3 key steps of brand communication development: 1) situation analysis, 2) positioning development, and 3) communication planning. The situation analysis starts with a focus group discussion with key internal stakeholders to develop a SWOT analysis of Thai MOOC. The output from the analysis then feeds into brand positioning development by leveraging a well-recognized Brand key model as the lighthouse to guide the brand in the right direction. The communication plan is consequently crafted based on aligning the objectives and brand positioning to maximize effectiveness.

## 01

### Thai MOOC Expands to Thai MOOC Academy



Thai MOOC was established in 2017 under the purview of Thailand Cyber University (TCU), Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) in Thailand as a massive open online learning platform to promote lifelong learning for Thai people. The main goals are to 1) be the leading international standard learning platform to enable Thai people to learn everywhere and anywhere free of charge and 2) intrigue the lifelong learning mindset among the Thai community.

This opens up limitless and borderless learning opportunities for Thai people around the world to access to more than 600 high-quality online courses, developed by academic and professional experts from 120 leading academic institutions from both private and public affiliations. (ThaiMOOC, 2023; Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2021; Theeraroungchaisri & Khlaibang, 2019) In 2023, Thai MOOC is determined to expand the learning platform to Thai MOOC Academy as a brand extension with enhanced learning experiences and superior features to cater the development needs of the 21st century skillsets and align with 20-year Thailand national strategy to provide the opportunity for lifelong learning for Thai people. Firstly, Thai MOOC Academy will be the first platform in Thailand that allow learners to earn, collect, and deposit credits into central credit bank system.

This would allow the future transfer of credits to become a student of the accreditation institutions. Secondly, the learners who pass the testing requirement of each subject will receive a digital certificate of achievement to further their studies in the preferred institutions or increase competency to support their career progression. Thirdly, all learning achievements of learners are consolidated in the e-profile, allowing learners to export or share to prospective employers and universities. Fourthly, Thai MOOC academy upgraded the system security with the policy of one person, one account that requires learners to authenticate with an identification number from an ID Card. Finally, learners of Thai MOOC Academy will obtain a Google Suite account, consisting of educational cloud-based services from Google like other university students.

## Implications Thai MOOC Academy Expands Learning Opportunities for Thai People

- Provide Thai people with more opportunities to learn and upskill, regardless of their location or background.
- Help to develop the 21st- century skillsets that are in demand by employers.
- Align with the 20-year Thailand national strategy to provide the opportunity for lifelong learning for Thai people.

## 02

## Branding Positioning for Image Creation

The brand image of either product or service is derived from the perception of the target group. The brand image can be influenced by the creation of a brand positioning and communication plan. (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020) Most previous studies confirmed that the perception of the brand image towards higher academic institutions has a direct effect on the intention to apply to become a student. Therefore, many academic institutions place a strong emphasis on delivering powerful brand communication to communicate their unique positioning versus other institutions. This can effectively attract the target group of learners to enroll in universities. (Khanna, Jacob, & Yadav, 2014) Therefore, Thai MOOC initiated a project to develop the brand positioning for Thai MOOC Academy to occupy a suitable space and create a favorable intended image in the target learner's mind to drive awareness preferences and ultimately persuade learners to enroll in Thai MOOC Academy courses.

## Implications

### Thai MOOC Academy Launches Brand Positioning Project to Attract Learners

- Thai MOOC Academy has launched a project to develop its brand positioning in order to attract learners. The project is based on the research finding that the perception of the brand image towards higher academic institutions has a direct effect on the intention to apply to become a student.
- The project will focus on creating a favorable intended image of Thai MOOC Academy in the minds of target learners. This will be done through a variety of communication channels, including advertising, social media, and public relations.
- The goal of the project is to drive awareness, preferences, and ultimately persuade learners to enroll in Thai MOOC Academy courses.

Here are some of the implications of the branding positioning project:

- Help Thai MOOC Academy to stand out from other online learning platforms.
- Make Thai MOOC Academy more attractive to learners who are looking for a high-quality, affordable, and convenient way to learn.
- Help Thai MOOC Academy to achieve its goal of becoming the leading online learning platform in Thailand.

## 03

### Three Steps of Thai MOOC Academy Brand Communication Development

#### ► Situation Analysis

Thai MOOC Academy brand communication has gone through 3 steps of development: situation analysis, positioning development, and communication planning. The initiative phase is current situation analysis via conducting the online focus group interview with internal key stakeholders from the different units within the Thai Cyber University Project to come up with a SWOT analysis. This main purpose is to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats before building the brand positioning for Thai MOOC Academy. The outcome of the SWOT analysis can be summarized as follows. The main strength is that Thai MOOC is the most trusted official online learning platform supported by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI), with the largest network of worldwide MOOC platforms, local and international academic institutions, as well as public and private enterprise

Learners have positive perceptions of high-quality online courses, the ubiquitous nature of learning, and free of charge. The weakness lies in some of the emerging needs on the user interface, system security, and lack of credit bank system. The opportunity is familiarity and popularity of online learning post-COVID-19, shifting towards a lifelong learning mindset, and upskilling and reskilling demand in the workplace; however, the threats can potentially be internet connectivity and emerging of new players in online learning. This demonstrated that Thai MOOC has more strengths than weaknesses and opportunities than threats.

## ► Positioning Development through Brand Key

The second phase is to leverage the SWOT analysis to build up the brand positioning before crafting the communication plan. Brand positioning refers to the occupied space of the brand in the target consumer's mind when compared with other players or competitors in the market. Brand positioning is directly connected with perceived benefits in consumer's perception. (Kosteljik & Alsem, 2020; Kotler & Keller, 2016) There are various tools to help create a brand positioning strategy, from positioning statement perceptual map to the most popular tool in creating a corporate brand image called Brand Key. Brand Key was created by Unilever, one of the largest multinational corporations in the world. Brand Key, the key to a successful brand, has 8 elements: target group, competitive environment, consumer insight, value (brand personality), benefits, reason to believe, discriminator (the unique competitive strength), and brand essence (heart and soul of the brand linked with benefits) as shown in Figure 1.

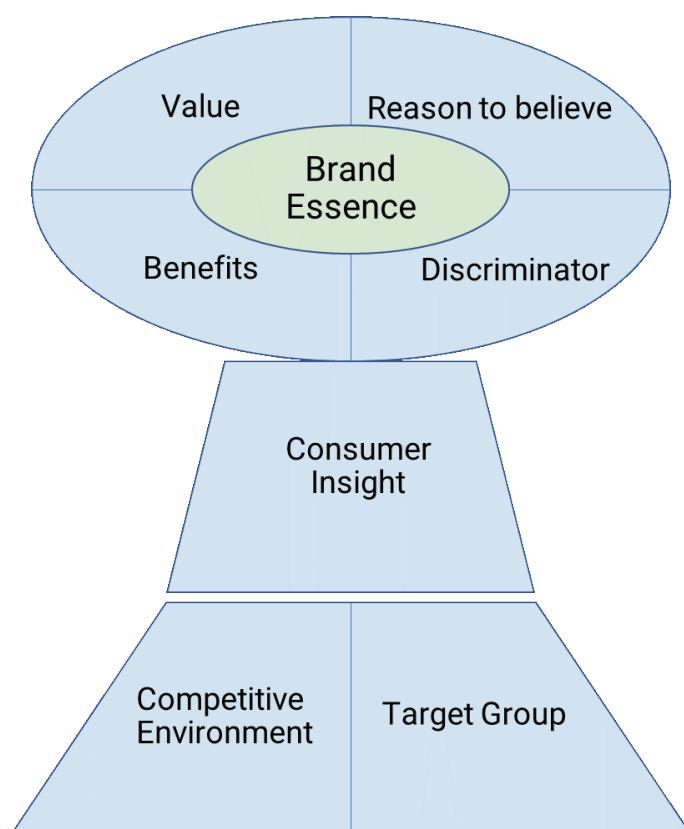


Figure 1. Brand Key (Kosteljik & Alsem, 2020 : P150)

From the situational analysis, work-in-progress Thai MOOC Academy Brand Key is drafted to build on the unique strengths and leverage on key opportunities as shown in Figure 2.

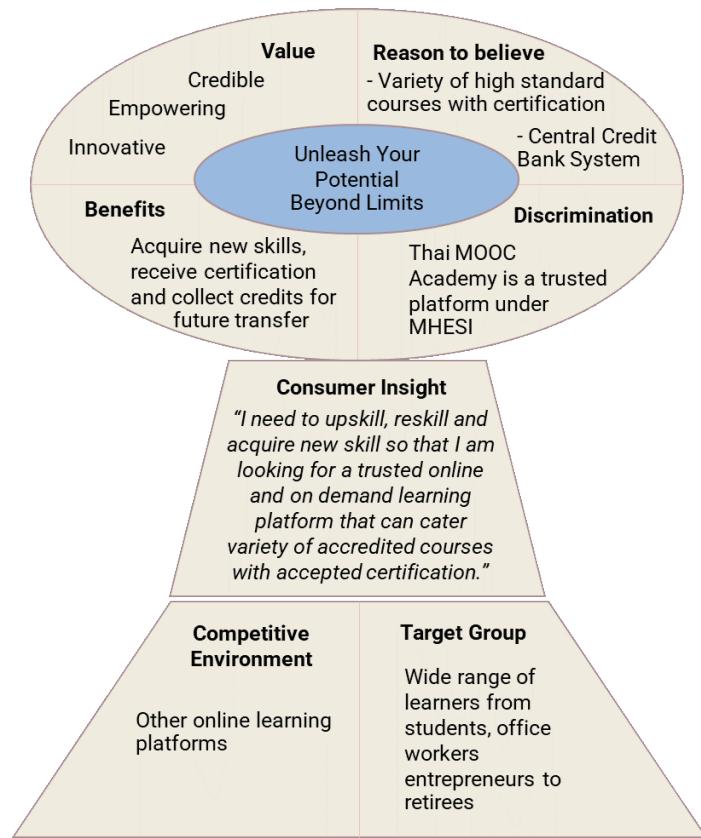


Figure 2. Work-in-progress Thai MOOC Academy Brand Key

This draft Brand Key may serve as the lighthouse to guide the brand safely to the target direction. Figure 2 demonstrates 8 elements and. The target group includes a wide range of learners, from students, office workers, and entrepreneurs to retirees, given the objective of MOOC to be a massive open online course to everyone to promote lifelong learning among Thai people. The broad insight of the target group is to enhance their knowledge and skills to adapt to the ever-changing environment and be competitive in the job market. They are looking for a trustworthy learning platform that can fulfill their needs to learn online anytime and anywhere with the right variety of accredited courses and certifications. The benefits that Thai MOOC Academy is committed to providing are a strong assortment of courses, well-recognized certification of achievement, and credit collection for future transfer to continue education with partnered higher education institutions. This is supported by the reason to believe in newly developed features of the credit bank system, certification of achievement, and, of course, the ever-increasing and updating of online courses. The communication mood and tone reflect the value/personality of the brand on 3 dimensions; credible, empowerment, and innovative to position the Thai MOOC Academy platform as the platform that empowers learners to be successful with state-of-the-art and innovative learning experiences. This first draft of Brand Key is a dynamic tool that is subject to further adjustment based on the management point of view, post-tracking of the communication campaign, and the learner's brand perception. As a result of the brand key, the Thai MOOC Academy logo is created building on the Thai MOOC credential with the "Academy" sign-off underneath to signify the superior and integrated learning experiences to promote lifelong learning for Thai people, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Thai MOOC Academy Logo

## ► Communication Plan

The communication plan for the Thai MOOC Academy launch is divided into 3 phases: pre-launch, launch, and amplification. The pre-launch objective is to intrigue the interests of the target group/learners with online media featuring Thai MOOC success stories and interviews of current and prospective learners on what's working and what's required in the future to prepare for the launch of Thai MOOC Academy, as depicted in figure 4. The pre-launch phase will take approximately 2-3 weeks.



Figure 4. Current & Prospective Learners' Interviews

The launch phase unveils the launch of Thai MOOC Academy with 2 online videos to stimulate interest among the target group. The first one is the talk from the management team of Thai MOOC on key features and benefits. The second video portrays the pilot test of the Thai MOOC Academy with the employees of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation as the show and tells the story of real users who will elaborate their impressions towards the platform. The official launch event is at the IEC 2023 conference on August 31st at Berkeley Hotel with onsite, online, and on metaverse.

The amplification has the important role of maintaining the campaign as well as persuading prospective learners to enroll in Thai MOOC Academy with the how-to-apply for Thai MOOC Academy as well as activation activities to maintain the launch momentum such as highlighted of new courses, learners' success story, and expanded partnership with regional and global MOOCs.

## Implications

### Thai MOOC Academy Launches Brand Communication Campaign to Position as Leading Online Learning Platform

Thai MOOC Academy has launched a brand communication campaign to position itself as the leading online learning platform in Thailand. The campaign will focus on three key areas:

- Building awareness of Thai MOOC Academy's new features and benefits, such as its credit bank system and certification of achievement.
- Persuading learners to enroll in Thai MOOC Academy courses by highlighting the platform's credibility, empowerment, and innovation.
- Maintaining the momentum of the launch campaign with activation activities such as highlighting new course learners' success stories and expanding partnerships with regional and global MOOCs.

The implications of the brand communication campaign are:

- Help Thai MOOC Academy to reach a wider audience of learners.
- Position Thai MOOC Academy as a credible and innovative online learning platform.
- Help Thai MOOC Academy to achieve its goal of becoming the leading online learning platform in Thailand.

Here is a link to the Thai MOOC Academy website where you can learn more about the platform and the brand communication campaign: <https://www.thaimooc.org/>

## 04

## Summary

The development of a communication plan for Thai MOOC Academy has gone through 3 steps: situation analysis, positioning development and communication plan. Even though brand positioning is a crucial prerequisite to the communication plan, it is dynamic and can be adjusted to align with the evolving needs of learners, post campaign tracking results, as well as management directions.



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