

CarParagon portal to revolutionize buying new cars in Thailand



Smoothlane Co., Ltd., founded by two Stanford Graduate School of Business classmates, launched its CarParagon portal in Thailand today enabling new car buyers to save time, money and hassle by functioning as an online multi-brand motor show, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Potential car buyers cannot only find information on car pricing, car specifications, promotional offers from major dealers and up-to-the-minute dealer inventory, but they can also request a test drive online with just a few clicks or speak to the dealer directly from their mobile phones via the CarParagon website.

Based on the venture-backed pre-revenue business model which is being successfully used in the US and Europe, the CarParagon website will initially be available to service those living in the Greater Bangkok area before expanding nationwide and throughout Southeast Asia.

“Motivated by the government’s Thailand 4.0 policy in encouraging creativity and innovation through the application of technology, we developed this one-stop new car shopping portal free of charge to eradicate the usual hassle and time consuming process of buying a car. In turn, we are also helping many authorized dealers in Thailand, who do not have the resources to build a comprehensive digital presence of their own, to further reach out to their target customers who are savvy Internet users,” revealed Mr. Varot Kamolchotiros, Co-founder and CEO of Smoothlane Co., Ltd.

The current 40 dealer partners represent a wide range of popular auto brands such as, Toyota, Honda, Mazda, Ford, Volvo, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Mercedes Benz and BMW, and it is expected that many more dealers will use the website as a marketing platform in the coming months. The website’s revenue will be generated from partnerships with car dealers through a combination of paid listings and performance marketing.

“Our website aims to ultimately benefit the new car buyer, the dealer and the manufacturer by improving inefficiencies that presently exist between buyers and car dealers. For instance, in the US, it has been estimated that 25% more new cars could be sold every year if the process was made easier for car buyers, who rated buying a new car as being more stressful than even planning a wedding! A new car buyer in Thailand will typically visit between 3 – 5 showrooms before deciding to buy a car,” commented Mr. Kyungmin Bang, Smoothlane’s Korean Co-founder and Chief Technical Officer.

Mr. Swee Chuan Yeap, President & CEO of SET-listed AAPICO Hi-tech Plc, added, “AAPICO has become a lead seed investor in the development of the CarParagon website because not only of our belief that the automobile industry will undergo a vast change in the coming years, but we are also committed to support the government’s Thailand 4.0 policy.”

The CarParagon website, which offers both Thai and English capabilities so as to also facilitate foreign expats living in Thailand when seeking to purchase a new car, has received a warm welcome with daily site traffic trending at 2,500 unique visitors so far since the beginning of this month.