

FACEBOOK FRIENDS

PwC plans to capitalise on Bangkok's status as the Facebook capital of the world. **B10**

CONSULTANTS

PwC targets Facebook capital Bangkok for social media

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Leading global consulting firm PwC is launching its social media service in Thailand to capitalise on the most popular city for Facebookers in the world.

The service aims to help organisations use social media to grow their businesses for the advent of the Asean Economic Community in 2015.

Sira Intarakumthornchai, chief executive of PwC Thailand, said Thailand is the first country in Asean to be offered the service.

Thailand has 24 million internet users, of whom 17.5 million have signed up for Facebook, he said.

Based on Socialbrakers.com statistics, Bangkok is the top city for Facebookers in the world with 12.8 million users, followed by Jakarta in Indonesia with 11.7 million and Sao Paulo in Brazil with 8.8 million.

"Social media growth in Thailand is

expected to continue growing over the next five years, fuelled by the exponential increase in demand for smartphones and tablets," Mr Sira said.

But local enterprises have just started using social media as marketing or advertising channels, he added.

Mr Sira said social media tools could improve business efficiency and productivity and encourage collaboration.

PwC has an internal communication tools, called Spark, to connect and collaborate with its employees globally.

Mr Sira said increasing competition in the business world is forcing companies to use social media. Companies in Thailand using social media actively are telecom and consumer firms including Ichitan, Pepsi-Cola and DTAC.

Ted Shelton, managing director for strategy transformation at PwC in the US, said large companies use social media by allocating 30% of their marketing budget to digital and mobile channels.