

EDITORIAL

Southeast Asia is now eighteen months away from the ‘moment of truth.’ As the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is edging closer to December 31, 2015, the deadline for the ASEAN Economy Community (AEC) to become operative, preparations are gathering momentum. Companies, large and small are actively developing strategies to take advantage of the upcoming Single Market and face the challenges that will come with it.

In Thailand, one of the major challenges is a chronic shortage of labor, combined with labor migration issues, as illustrated by the recent abrupt return home of an estimated 125,000 Cambodian workers. Yet, all this is happening even before the AEC comes into operation. As Dr. Philip Nicholls argues in Article one, *The ASEAN Mutual Recognition Agreement on Tourism Professionals in Thailand: A Mixed Blessing?*, there is a strong indication that the inflow of hospitality industry workers into Thailand will far exceed the outflow once the AEC becomes operative. Focusing on the tourism and hospitality industry in Thailand, the article explores aspects of the possible constraints on job mobility in relation to the anticipated outcomes that may flow from the implementation of the Mutual Recognition Agreement on Tourism Professionals.

Article two, *How Many Methods Do we Need to Effectively Train Multicultural Teams?*, also focuses on cross-border labor issues. In this case, the focus is on the critical role cross-cultural training for multinational teams can play in enhancing a team’s performance. In this evaluation research, Dr Martin Goerlich investigates the experiences of the stakeholders of a specific cross-cultural Training, named Model of Freedom, and seeks to determine whether different training methods may be needed to deliver effective training.

In Article three, *An Assessment of Hanoi International Tourism Development*, attention shifts from cross-cultural and cross-border labor issues to tourism in Hanoi. Focusing on tourism service quality and foreign tourists, Dr. Tran Thi Hong Viet assesses the relevance of the current policies in place and the quality of the services provided to foreigners in Hanoi, through the investigation of three prominent sites in the Vietnamese capital.

Article four, *Factors Influencing Cosmetics Purchase Intention in Thailand: a Study on the Relationship of Credibility, Reputation, and Persuasive Capabilities of Beauty Bloggers* touches on some of the issues associated with the exponential growth of e-commerce. Specifically, Peerapatra Chaovalit explores the extent to which trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, reputation, and persuasive capabilities may impact the decision-making process of Thai people purchasing cosmetics on line.

Article five once again explores e-commerce. In *Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction and Trust in an e-Commerce Setting: a Case Study of Muachung.vn in Vietnam*, Hang Thi Nguyen, focalizing on a ‘deal-of-the-day’ e-commerce website in Vietnam, examines various stimuli such as product offer and price; service quality, or ease of use to name a few and assesses their impact on customer satisfaction and trust toward the online company.

Finally, in Article six, *Tourists’ Perception of Sustainable Tourism Development of Tianzhu Mountain in Anhui Province, China*, Weijing Zhao considers one particular aspect of the strong correlation and conflict between tourism development and the preservation of the environment. Specifically, she seeks to determine how tourists perceive the economic,

environmental, and socio-cultural aspects of sustainable tourism development in a region renowned for its natural beauty and still largely spared by the over-exploitation of its natural resources. The perception of tourists (one of the main stakeholders in the preservation of the environment and also one of its potential sources of destruction) as to what could/should be done does matter. Although this article specifically focuses on one specific area in China, the growing concerns about the environment reported in this article may be a harbinger of new trends in the region and a signal that environmental issues are taking hold of the collective mind.

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