Professional Reflections
The Key Instructional Technology Trends for Teachers in Thailand

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As an instructional technology instructor, the author has witnessed the integration of multimedia technology--both synchronous and asynchronous communication--into education in the areas of teaching, learning, working, and training modes in academic institutes and business education enterprises. For many educators and school teachers, technology is now a major tool in their working environment, particularly making changes in the way they teach. Some of the key trends in instructional technology for Thai teachers are to be focused on in 2016.

The accelerating power of technology has arisen substantially in the past decade, especially since STEM Education has been introduced to Thai schools in four specific disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. As four key strands of research and technological development, STEM subjects are to enhance competitiveness and productivity, and are also the critical components in sustainable development. Despite some improvement, the global average of STEM teachers is still at less than strategic plan (NSTC, 2013). The optimistic goals of the distribution of quality STEM learning opportunities and talented teachers can ensure that all students be involved and inspired by science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and have the chance to reach their full potential (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Kemp (2015) reports on Digital, Social and Mobile that more than 3 billion people around the world now use the internet via a variety of devices. Mobile's share of global web traffic leapt 39% from the same time last year, with one-third of all web pages now serving on mobile phones. In addition, a recent study by Bullas (2015) states that one quarter of the world's population uses social media. This means that almost two billion people are posting, pinning, tweeting, vining and instagramming. In every minute, five million posts are uploaded, three hundred thousand snaps are shared; and more than five million videos are viewed on YouTube (Morrison, 2015).

Considering the power of Mobile devices and Social media Integration concept for 2016, teachers need to manage and utilize technology to communicate by using a variety of communication tools including Mobile Learning, Web portals, wikis, websites, emails and electronic notifications. The other key point of how teachers can utilize technology to incorporate in and out-of-the-class activities must be in priority. Those activities can connect students interactively through project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, online projects, virtual communication, multi-cultural applications and the like.

Students are expected to be equipped with essential skills for the 21st century, including technical work skills, creativity and the ability to bring innovation and competence to the IT sector. Unfortunately, such expectations can be hampered by the current number of those studying science and technology falling at every grade level (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In this regard, we are in fact looking into how to make those expected skills possible in the new generation learners. One of the answers may lie in the educational use of social networking applications and the revolution of mobile devices in specific course management systems. One of

the attempts recently made in November 2015 by the Ministry of Education Thailand has been the new policy on reducing the number of classroom hours for the purpose of leaving time for creativity activities and self-directed learning.

The Key Instructional Technology Trends for Teachers in Thailand are inevitably nothing less than an educational investment for future digital citizens. The integration of social networking applications and mobile devices has potential to increase student involvement in class discussions and out-of-class communication among instructors and students (Albayrak & Yildirim, 2015; Chen and Wu, 2015). On this note, the author personally would like to encourage teachers to manage and utilize technology competently and wisely in support of their new generation learners.

The Author
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Comments: We welcome your comments and also any information that are pertinent to this topic in your context. Also please let us have your suggestions for the next round of "Professional Reflections."

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