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Philippe Pedeboscq, managing director of Siemens Healthineers, shares his impressions after taking the lead of the company's Thailand affiliate two years ago. Pedeboscq goes on to explain his strategic mission to position Siemens Healthineers as a long-term partner to the country's healthcare system by bringing holistic solutions to the market rather than simply products.

Mr Pedeboscq, you have an extensive career at Siemens, holding different positions across very different countries and cultures and this is your first time as a managing director in Asia. What has excited you when you decided to take the job?

The Thailand healthcare market is very attractive and in terms of size, it is one of the top markets for Siemens Healthineers in South East Asia. Furthermore, the healthcare providers here are very sophisticated with high-level private hospitals on the one hand and a large public sector with universal healthcare, which covers approximately 75 percent of the population on the other. Public-private partnerships have also emerged in the country for large investments, such as advanced imaging machinery.

Thailand has a unique and diverse healthcare landscape; you get an opportunity to collaborate with different types of customers and work with a variety of stakeholders through different business models. Moreover, investments in medical infrastructure are growing because of an ageing

population and the government push to promote medical tourism. Healthcare is a key priority for the government, especially rising the quality of care in the provinces. There are many opportunities for Siemens Healthineers to contribute to the advancement of Thailand’s healthcare system.

Secondly, the people and the Thai culture are unique. At first, the cultural adjustment can be a little challenging, but once you find your way to interact and connect, it becomes a fantastic human experience. Building relationships with the Thai people is extremely enriching.

What are the skills that you have been developing here at Siemens Healthineers Thailand?

A country manager is a local entrepreneur within a global corporation. There is a responsibility to lead, drive and adapt the company’s business to the local market specificities. Entrepreneurship coupled to a high level of curiosity is a key to success in such a job. Moreover, one must be able to create trustworthy relationships with the different stakeholders in order to be impactful in the long run.

On the people side, listening skills are extremely important, especially if the country manager comes from a country, where cultural norms are different. For instance, opinions are not always put forward in Thailand. Unspoken thoughts or ‘weak signals’ can be initially difficult to grasp. Improvements in listening and understanding the culture are very satisfying and rewarding.

What is the strategic importance of Thailand for Siemens Healthineers?

The Thailand market is obviously not as large as China or Japan. However, the South East Asia region is where Siemens Healthineers foresees growth opportunities. This is also a market where we would like to establish long-term partnerships with customers through innovative business models.

What key priorities are you focusing on at the moment?

It is our mission to enable healthcare providers to deliver high value care. Healthcare spending is rising at an unsustainable pace. Providers worldwide face pressure to deliver more and better care with fewer skilled resources as the population ages and the system-wide burden of chronic

diseases increases. The consequence of these developments is that healthcare must become more efficient. At the same time, we want to work with stakeholders like the ministry of health to support them to improve the healthcare infrastructure, to reduce the burden on the hospitals and clinics of Thailand.

We use our extensive know-how to help healthcare providers increase value by expanding precision medicine, transforming care delivery, improving patient experience and digitalizing healthcare.

As Siemens Healthineers is a pioneer in shaping the digital transformation of healthcare worldwide, what is your assessment of the receptiveness of Thailand's healthcare sector to digital disruption?

Digitalization leads to different levels of transformation. The first one is related to optimizing and/or automating the way medical systems are used in order to increase productivity and improve quality. This can be achieved by the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms for instance. We have already implemented 45 AI-powered solutions in our current product portfolio, which are also available in Thailand.

The second level of transformation is about leveraging the huge amount of medical data to generate new clinical and operational insights. Solutions like electronic medical records are critical to store, access and analyze patient data. Thailand like many other countries across the world is now considering to implement such a system nationwide. This will be important for creating a stronger continuum of care, therefore, improving the delivery of service.

The Thai government is aware of this and has launched the Healthcare 4.0 initiative. Global companies like Siemens Healthineers can be strong partners for such projects and share the experience they acquired in other regions of the world.

The Thai government now focuses on the Thailand 4.0 policy, aiming to create a more value-added economy by focusing on research and innovation – what is the role of Siemens Healthineers in helping the country achieve this mission?

One of the core responsibilities of Siemens Healthineers is education. We provide training on high-level technical skills in the fields of radiology, therapy and clinical laboratory. For example, a few

months ago, we launched our Siemens Healthineers Academy in Bangkok which aims at training medical technicians from across the country on advanced diagnostic techniques. This is a major commitment we are making to helping raise the knowledge and expertise of Thailand's medical staff.

It has been a year now since the company's successful listing on the stock exchange – which goal is also to allow Siemens affiliates for greater entrepreneurial freedom, and second, more flexibility. To what extent have these structural changes allowed you to further drive growth for the affiliate?

To grow and play an active role in shaping the future of healthcare, Siemens spun off its medical technology business in 2018, which endowed the newly named Siemens Healthineers with financial strength and entrepreneurial flexibility. Today, there is more opportunity to focus on how we can best fit within the healthcare markets.

Thailand's medical device market seems to have a vast number of players present and active. What sets Siemens Healthineers apart from competitors regarding its contribution to Thailand?

Siemens Healthineers' biggest competitive advantage is our unique portfolio offering. We have a range of products and solutions of unique breadth and depth. These include imaging procedures, laboratory diagnostics, systems to support imaging-based therapies, and minimally invasive procedures. In addition, we offer services for planning and operating medical facilities and digital healthcare services.

What also sets us apart is the in-depth technical expertise of our people, their long experience in healthcare and the strong partnerships that they built. At Siemens Healthineers, we embrace and value different viewpoints, backgrounds, experiences, expertise, and individual qualities. We are the employer of choice for all those who seek to continuously learn and contribute to both business and society.

Looking forward, what objectives are you aiming to achieve in Thailand as managing director?

Our focus is to become the partner of choice of the healthcare providers in Thailand. We are creating full solutions to improve systems and public health. One key initiative is to roll out digital solutions like AI in the market. Furthermore, we are establishing partnerships with high-level players with whom we share a similar vision. We collaborate on exciting development projects such as helping them transform their clinical processes to improve patient outcomes and reduce costs.

What is your personal motivation that has kept you inspired for working at Siemens Healthineers for the past ten years?

Siemens Healthineers colleagues share a true passion for pioneering healthcare innovations. It is really motivating to be part of a group where everyone has such a dedication to improving the lives of patients. More personally, I have had the opportunity to work across many different markets and functions which has always created a challenging environment of continuous learning.

What final words would you like to conclude with on behalf of Thailand and Siemens Healthineers?

Over the last couple of decades, the different public and private stakeholders have developed in Thailand a healthcare system of high quality. With Thailand 4.0 being such a transformative initiative, one can see the country’s ambition to move forward to the next level. Siemens Healthineers is fully committed to being a strong partner in this journey with our technology expertise, engagement in education and partnership spirit.

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