



Thailand Accelerates SME Digital Transformation Through AI Adoption and Public–Private Technology Initiatives

Thailand is witnessing a coordinated push by both public and private sector organisations to accelerate the digital transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a particular focus on artificial intelligence (AI), data-driven tools, and smart infrastructure. These initiatives form part of a broader national objective to enhance SME competitiveness, reduce operational inefficiencies, and support long-term economic resilience in an increasingly technology-driven business environment.

Private sector-led initiatives are playing a central role in this transition. Advanced Info Service (AIS), in collaboration with Microsoft Thailand, has launched the “AI Ready for SMEs” programme to support secure and practical adoption of AI technologies among Thai SMEs. The initiative integrates Microsoft 365 and Copilot solutions with dedicated support services, training programmes, and nationwide roadshows. It also includes tailored packages, workshops, and on-site training for eligible SMEs, aimed at enabling businesses to integrate AI tools into core operations such as customer management, productivity enhancement, and workflow optimisation.

Beyond productivity tools, AI adoption is increasingly being positioned as a strategic necessity rather than a discretionary upgrade. The programme reflects the recognition that SMEs, which account for a significant share of Thailand’s GDP, employment base, and total number of enterprises, may face structural disadvantages without access to scalable digital technologies. AI-driven solutions are therefore being promoted as a means of levelling the competitive landscape between smaller enterprises and larger corporations by providing access to similar technological capabilities at lower entry costs.

In parallel, other private sector initiatives are focusing on operational efficiency gains, particularly in relation to energy management and cost reduction. For example, AI and Internet of Things (IoT)-based “smart energy” systems are being deployed to reduce electricity

consumption and address inefficiencies arising from undetected energy losses in commercial operations. These solutions highlight a broader trend in which digital transformation is extending beyond administrative functions to core operational infrastructure, including energy usage, logistics, and facility management.

On the public sector side, the Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA) has launched nationwide programmes aimed at increasing digital maturity among SMEs, with a focus on improving adoption beyond basic digital tools such as social media. Government-supported initiatives include workshops, roadshows, business matching activities, and consultation services across key provinces and priority industries such as trade, services, tourism, and manufacturing. Despite gradual improvements in digital maturity indicators, SMEs are still generally categorised as “digital followers”, reflecting limited integration of technology into core business processes such as data analytics, inventory management, and operational optimisation.

From a broader legal and commercial perspective, the increasing integration of AI and digital systems into SME operations signals a structural shift in Thailand’s regulatory and economic landscape. While these initiatives are largely facilitative in nature, they are also likely to influence future regulatory expectations regarding data governance, digital compliance, and operational transparency. As SMEs become more dependent on digital ecosystems and third-party technology providers, issues relating to data protection, cybersecurity, and contractual allocation of technology risk may become increasingly significant.

Overall, Thailand’s SME digital transformation agenda reflects a convergence of technological innovation, economic policy, and workforce development objectives. While AI and digital tools present significant opportunities for productivity gains and cost reduction, their successful adoption will depend on SMEs’ ability to integrate these technologies into core business functions and adapt organisational mindsets accordingly. Businesses should therefore not only consider the operational benefits of AI adoption, but also prepare for an evolving regulatory and commercial environment in which digital capability becomes a key determinant of competitiveness.

Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact us via info@bglballaw.com

