**The Vientiane Economic Forum**

 Back to back with the Rendezvous de Vientiane

Landmark Hotel, Vientiane – LAO PDR

January 25th 2016

Concept Note

Organised by:

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***Vientiane Economic Forum* - back to back with *the Rendez-vous de Vientiane***

 **Wednesday, January 25th, 2017**

**Introduction**:

*The Vientiane Economic Forum* will be an essential business-focused event integrated into the Rendezvous de Vientiane which has a successful history as a major happening in Vientiane. It will be organised as a one-day conference and will be open to the public. With the European Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Lao PDR (ECCIL) and the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) as its organisers, the Vientiane Economic Forum can be regarded as one of the top three events targeting business people in the Lao PDR.

**Context:**

Today’s enterprises are operating in an environment which can be characterised by constant change. Increased availability of information and its linkages speed-up processing but reduce the life span of concepts which have been proven successful in the past. New business models appear and value-chains are restructured globally. This would suggest that all businesses are facing a challenge to identify and design innovative concepts reflecting the changing environment in order to guarantee their sustainability. Fortuitously, economic development, especially in the ASEAN region, has resulted in a growing middle class with increased purchasing power causing a strong demand for luxury goods. Nevertheless, with the increasing facilities for consumers to compare pricing and quality on a global basis coupled with a changing pattern of buying behaviour, complete industries are being turned inside out. As a consequence, early adaptation and strategic preparedness become essential for corporate executives, regardless of the size of the enterprises they are leading.

**Goals and Objectives:**

* To give an overview about new business strategies and business transforming trends in the Mekong region and the AEC
* To provide an insight into specific current and future trends in the market for luxury goods
* To provide practical examples of how market leaders in different luxury segments are positioning themselves
* To pinpoint innovations that will help to shape smart manufacturing
* To show how Lao entrepreneurs are part of the worldwide innovative start-up scene
* To provide detailed information of current and future trends in financing and how to gain access to it as a small to medium size company
* To carve out challenges and opportunities resulting from the advancing digitalisation in the service industry

**Expected Results:**

* Participants get to understand significant trends in the market for luxury goods and the implications these have for their own businesses
* An appreciation of the changing pattern of consumer behaviour will be established and participants will become able to strategically position their individual enterprises
* Participants will understand how to apply innovations in manufacturing to their own procedures
* An overview of the innovative start-up scene in the Lao PDR will have been created and its potential for potential cooperation pointed out
* Participants will have become familiar with the newest financial instruments and know how to access them for their own business models
* Indications as to how digitalisation changes the modes of product delivery in the service industry can be applied to participants’ individual enterprises

The conference is open to interested business people and consists of three plenary sessions which will include a presentation by an acknowledged expert from Europe followed by a panel session with high-level stakeholders from the Lao PDR and the region. The subsequent question and answer session will provide an opportunity to address specific topics relevant to the audience.

The opening keynote speech will address new business strategies that transform corporations and change the way SMEs do business, focusing on new trends and technologies in the finance sector.

The first session will be on new trends in the market of luxury products. Among a few general topics we’ll be developing answers to the following questions:

* *Changing consumer purchasing patterns and strategies and how to address them*
* *Strategy development to serve Generation X, Y and Z based on need-assessments*
* *The future of distribution: retail vs outlet vs E-commerce*
* *The global development of different market segments within the luxury market in the next three years*
* *Value creation: Master brand content and story-telling in the age of digitalisation*

The second session focuses on innovations with the potential to transform the way things are manufactured. Among others, we’ll have a close look at the following topics:

* *3D-Printing and new additive manufacturing capabilities*
* *Technology platforms that support real-time business intelligence*
* *Transparent supply chains that create virtual vertically-integrated manufacturing networks*
* *Evolving customer preferences and the chances to stand out from competitors*

Innovations and digitalisation in the service industry will determine the third session. We’ll focus on:

* *Digitalisation and its impact on the product delivery process*
* *Innovations in technology and the future of service robots in different fields*
* *Product Development 4.0*
* *Product innovation and the need for the Human Resource Development 4.0*

**Target group**: Lao companies

 Foreign and local companies in Laos and the region

 European companies

**Number of participants**: 100 - 150

**Location & Venue**: Landmark Hotel, Vientiane, Laos (tbc)

**Main Language:** The whole conference will be held in English. In case of sufficient demand simultaneous translation into Laos and potentially other languages will be provided.