“Entrepreneurship is an Endurance Sport” - Amarit Charoenphan

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 On Monday October 20th, Amarit Choroenphan, cofounder of Hubba came to speak with Mountbatten’s CfE Bangkok members to discuss his experiences as an entrepreneur and the market for start-up companies and co-working spaces in Thailand. Amarit and his brother Charle founded Hubba in 2011 when, confined to noisy coffee shops and home offices, they noticed the lack of effective spaces for entrepreneurs to get any work done within Bangkok. Recognizing the global boom in startup co-working spaces, Amit and Charle decided it was time for Bangkok to have one of its own.

Using personal financing and some assistance from friends and family, Amarit and Charle rented a space in Bangkok’s downtown Ekkamai district, set up a warm and productive environment, and waited for their customers to arrive at Bangkok’s newest startup space; which they called Hubba. When after the first few months, Hubba was barely filling seats, Amarit and Charle were struggling to find out just what was going wrong.

They decided to attend a start-up networking event in Singapore to figure out exactly how a business like this could truly succeed. What they realized was that they were incorrectly assessing their target customer’s needs. What an entrepreneur in Thailand needed went far beyond simply having a desk, a computer, and wifi in an office setting. Hubba’s customers were looking for an entire ecosystem of support services that would take their businesses from merely a concept to a thriving company. Since that realization, Hubba has worked to form valuable partnerships to allow them to provide their customers with top-notch training programs and valuable networking opportunities that connect Hubba’s customers with complementary business people and potential investors.

Since pivoting their business model and turning their modest co-working space into a full force startup ecosystem, Hubba has seen tremendous growth. With over 100 members in Bangkok and Chang Mai, Hubba hopes to add more spaces throughout Thailand, with the ultimate goal of generating Thailand’s first $1bn tech startup.

Amarit’s overall message to the group is to continue pressing on in the face of initial failure. “Entrepreneurship is an endurance sport,” and only those who are truly passionate, believe in their goals, and have the ability to pursue them will succeed.