

Why Does a Management Degree Still Matter?

Why pursue an MBA in Thailand?

BANGKOK, BANGKOK, THAILAND, August 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As artificial intelligence transforms workplaces and business knowledge becomes increasingly accessible online, is a postgraduate degree in management still worth pursuing? We spoke with Associate Professor Nattavud Pimpa of the College of Management, Mahidol University (CMMU) in Bangkok about the continuing relevance of the [Master of Management](#), the advantages of studying business in Thailand, and what students should expect from a contemporary Asian business school. Drawing on his academic experience teaching in Australia, Singapore, Indonesia, China, Thailand and the United States, Pimpa argues that management education is becoming more—not less—important, but its purpose is changing.

Interviewer: Let us begin with the big question. Is a Master of Management still relevant today?



Natt Pimpa

Natt: Absolutely, but perhaps not for the reasons people traditionally assumed. Twenty years ago, I recalled people often pursued a master's degree or MBA because they wanted additional business knowledge and a qualification that could help them move into management. Those objectives remain relevant, but knowledge itself is no longer scarce. Today, you can learn accounting, marketing, strategy or finance from books, online courses and increasingly from AI.

“Look for a business school that challenges your assumptions, exposes you to people unlike yourself and connects theory with real problems.”

Nattavud Pimpa

The value of a Master of Management has therefore shifted. It is about learning how to think as a manager. How do you make decisions when information is incomplete? How do you manage people who disagree with you? How do you respond when financial objectives conflict with social or environmental responsibilities? And how do you adopt the right technology to thrive in a complex business environment? These questions cannot be answered simply by

memorising textbooks. Good management education develops judgement, critical thinking, communication and the ability to work with people who see the world differently.

Interviewer: But with AI providing information almost instantly, do students really need postgraduate management education?



Natt: I would argue that AI makes good management education even more important. AI can generate options, analyse information and improve productivity. But managers still need to determine whether an option is appropriate, ethical and strategically sensible. Technology can tell you what could be done. Management education should help you decide what to do. I tell students that their competitive advantage cannot simply be knowing more facts than somebody else. Machines are very good at retrieving facts. Human advantage increasingly comes from interpretation, creativity, empathy, contextual understanding and responsible judgement. Those are precisely the capabilities that contemporary management education should develop.

Interviewer: You have taught in Australia, Singapore, Indonesia, China, the United States and Thailand. How has that shaped your perspective?

Natt: Probably more than anything else. Teaching across countries teaches you quickly that there is no single model of management that works everywhere. Australian classrooms can be highly discussion-oriented and informal. Singapore combines Asian business culture with a strong global orientation. China exposes you to extraordinary scale, speed and entrepreneurial transformation. Indonesia highlights relationships, community and local institutional contexts, while the United States has had enormous influence on management theory and business-school pedagogy.

What I learned from moving among these systems is that context matters. We sometimes teach management theories as if they are universal laws. They are not. A leadership practice developed in the United States may operate differently in Thailand. A marketing strategy successful in Australia may require substantial adaptation in Indonesia or China.

That is why studying management in Asia is intellectually exciting. Students learn global theories, but they also learn to question how those theories travel across cultures.

Interviewer: What, then, distinguishes the Master of Management at CMMU?

Natt: One important characteristic is the balance between academic knowledge and practical application. CMMU was established specifically around management education, so there has always been a strong emphasis on applying management concepts to organisational problems. Students learn theories, but they also work with cases, projects, practitioners and real business challenges.

Another strength is diversity. Students come from different undergraduate disciplines, industries and professional backgrounds. Our academic staff also bring diverse disciplinary and international perspectives. That matters because management problems rarely belong to only one discipline.

The International Master of Management offers specialisations including corporate finance, entrepreneurship, general management, healthcare and wellness, and marketing and management. Students therefore gain a common management foundation while shaping the degree around their interests.

CMMU's international accreditations, including AACSB and AMBA-BGA, also provide external assurance that our management education is benchmarked against international expectations. But accreditation should never be the final objective. The real question is whether graduates can think, lead and act responsibly.

Interviewer: CMMU often emphasises practical learning. What does "practical" mean to you?

Natt: Practical learning does not mean abandoning theory. Good theory helps us understand why something happens; practical learning asks students to use that understanding.

Interviewer: So why should an international student consider studying business in Thailand?

Natt: Thailand is a fascinating management laboratory. We are part of Southeast Asia, one of the world's most dynamic economic regions, while Thailand itself combines multinational corporations, large family businesses, SMEs, social enterprises and rapidly emerging digital businesses. Students can observe modern global management alongside deeply rooted local business practices. Bangkok also provides access to businesses operating across ASEAN. When students discuss tourism, healthcare, sustainability, supply chains, entrepreneurship or international management here, these are not abstract concepts. They can see them happening around them. There is also a cultural advantage. Studying in Thailand develops cultural intelligence. Students learn that effective management is not simply about applying a framework correctly; it requires understanding people, institutions and social expectations.

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