

Cooperation increases cross-Straits ties

Taiwan has everything to offer in business, culture, education, and more

Taiwan has long held a position as an international trading hub, in no small part because of its advanced technology, rapid sea access, and proximity to

major commercial centers such as Tokyo, Singapore and Shanghai.

It has a vibrant business culture, an educated population,

and an international outlook. And, as China enjoys rapid economic growth both on the mainland and in Taiwan, cross-Straits business is flourishing.

The Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), ratified in 2010, combined with better regulations in a number of sectors, has given Taiwanese and mainland companies

even more opportunities for growth.

Cross-Straits investment, currently valued at \$110 billion, is set to rise, thanks to the ECFA, whose goal is to reduce tariffs on certain goods moving across the Straits.

Tariff concessions have been lifted on a long list of goods and investment restrictions eased in a number of sectors.

Taiwan's economy continues to depend heavily on high-tech industries such as semi-conductors and biotechnology.

Companies in three major science parks in Taiwan contributed \$74 billion in revenues in 2010, on the back of European and American demand. The island continues to lead the world in many technologies and is moving into other sectors such as tourism.

More tourists

In 2011, single tourists from the mainland will be able to enter Taiwan for the first time. Previously, travel was limited to tour groups and business people. There is no doubt that the impact on the tourist industry will be significant.

Last year 1.2 million mainland tourists visited Taiwan. That number is expected to more than double in the coming years, so, companies in tourism, such as airlines, hotels and theme parks are tailoring their services accordingly.

"Mainland travelers choose our airline because we offer a unique Taiwanese experience," was how China Airlines President H. H. Sun, explained it.

"We operate 76 flights a day across the Straits and cater to an increasing number of travelers."

Telecommunications companies are also set to benefit from the increase in tourism, because it includes business travelers as well.

One of Taiwan's leading telecommunication providers, Taiwan Mobile, is offering reduced rates for global roaming services across the Straits, through its partner-



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HAYDN CHEN
PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

ships with mainland companies.

It is also looking into value added service (VAS) opportunities on the mainland, such as music downloads via mobile phone, which, on the mainland is becoming a multi-billion-dollar industry.

And, while Taipei is still at the center of business on Taiwan, Kaohsiung continues to develop as an international trade hub, supported by its robust shipping business.

Many of Taiwan's agricultural and industrial products go out via the port there, the largest in Taiwan.

Kaohsiung has also emerged as a popular tourist destination because of its warmer weather and culture with an international flair.

Education ties

Education is another key area that is ripe for cooperation. Until now, students from the mainland could study in Taiwan but only as exchange students. Soon, however, for the first time,

they will be able to enroll in full degree programs, a major step forward.

True, the numbers will be restricted at first, but there is already a foundation set up to encourage education exchanges.

"We work closely with member universities on issues such as management and quality assurance of teaching and learning," commented Haydn Chen, president of the Association of Universities and Colleges, who added that the association is very active in assisting universities in attracting mainland students.

A good example of these universities getting excited about the reforms is Southern Taiwan University (STU) in Tainan.

The school's president, Dr Chein Tai, had this to say: "We work closely with the private sector to ensure that our degree programs offer students the practical skills they'll need for their career. I am passionate about tailoring our programs to meet the ever-changing needs of mainland students."

With its advanced medical system, Taiwan is a logical choice for the study of medicine. In fact, it has also become a leader in treating people from around the region, thanks to its modern medical care and relatively lower costs.

One standout in this field is the top school, National Yang-Ming University, located in an attractive part of northern Taipei.

"I'm proud to say that many of Taiwan's finest doctors studied at our university. We offer a complete range of medical and biomedical programs, including dentistry and life sciences," the school's president, Dr. Kung-Yee Liang, said.

"We also have courses in the humanities to ensure that our students receive a well-rounded education to compliment their specialized training."

This increase in cross-Straits cooperation in education is building a fine foundation for economic

webscape

Taiwan Mobile (TWM), founded in 1997, is one of Taiwan's largest telecommunications companies and the only telecommunication operator offering "Quadruple Play" services, or mobile, fixed-line, cable TV and broadband Internet. Taiwan Mobile is seen as one of the most respected and trusted enterprises in the business community.

www.taiwanmobile.com

Southern Taiwan University (STU) is one of the leading science and technological universities, and is heavily favored by companies for its technical and vocational education strengths. It is also widely recognized for its exceptional international student search and exchange programs. The university takes pride in giving its students both the knowledge and practical skills they need for their career.

engwww.stut.edu.tw/

The Association of Private Universities and Colleges (APUC) was established in 1994 to assist in the development of private higher education institutions in Taiwan. Its members include more than 13,267 faculty and nearly 9,000 staff members. It has about 368,000 students, who account for about one-third of Taiwan's total student population in comprehensive universities and colleges.

www.apuc.org.tw

The Photonics Industry & Technology Development Association (PIDA) was founded in 1993 to push Taiwan's photonics industry. Last year, it held the "Photonics Festival in Taiwan" and "Display Taiwan", which drew around 650 exhibitors, nearly 1,600 booths and more than 40,000 visitors and buyers. This annual event is the second-largest of its kind in the world.

www.pida.org.tw

cooperation in the future.

Under ECFA's aegis, companies on both sides of the Straits are making a more concerted effort to develop partnerships that will lead to greater contacts and therefore greater trade and investment.



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Taipei's 101 Tower is a symbol of the island's economic development and prosperity.

Dedicated to a first-class education

Since its founding as an engineering college in 1969, Southern Taiwan University (STU) has had a mission of developing Taiwan's next generation of business and industry leaders.

STU specializes in vocational and technical training while focusing on student needs and has always ranked among the top science and technological universities both on the

island and abroad.

"I'm passionate about our graduates and ensuring that they acquire not only a first-class education, but also very good practical knowledge for entering the workforce. We work closely with the private sector to tailor our degree programs in a relevant, modern way," said the school's president, Dr Chein Tai, a previous director general of South-

ern Taiwan Science Park.

STU is located in the southern part of Taiwan, as its name suggests, in the historic city of Tainan, former capital of the Ming Dynasty's Tungning kingdom.

Today, the school easily accommodates more than 18,000 students in a peaceful, friendly campus environment.

STU is proud of its academic exchanges with the mainland and has seven sister institutions there, including Suzhou University and Beijing University of Chemical Technology.

In fact, Dr Tai is head of the joint university admissions committee, which looks for mainland students and oversees mainland students in Taiwan.

"I'm enthusiastic about attracting top mainland students so they can study at STU. We make sure that they enjoy their time here at STU and have the best possible chance of prospering in their career after graduating," Tai said.

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DR CHEIN TAI
PRESIDENT OF SOUTHERN TAIWAN
UNIVERSITY

Business wants to be as trusted on the mainland as on Taiwan

Since it was founded in 1997, Taiwan Mobile has evolved into Taiwan's most versatile, well-rounded telecom company, and a household name, known for its mobile phone, fixed line and broadband services.

It is also expected to become Taiwan's No 1 cable TV service provider in the near future.

Taiwan Mobile's success can be attributed to its commitment to excellence, customer satisfaction, and product innovation.

"Taiwan Mobile is a name people know and trust," said Cliff Lai, co-president of the company.

"We maintain our competitiveness by adapting to customer needs and by putting them first."

And, the mainland is an integral part of Taiwan Mobile's business efforts because it is a massive market, one where the company is looking to expand its services.

"We've worked very hard to reduce global roaming charges for people traveling



Cliff Lai, co-president of Taiwan Mobile

between Taiwan and the mainland," Lai commented, in explaining the connection.

With the growth in the number of tourists to the mainland, more affordable roaming costs are a vital service for people on both sides.

Taiwan Mobile's objective is to strengthen cross-Straits trade and ties and to improve customer services. But it also intends to cooperate with mainland telecommunication companies in laying undersea cables, which will greatly improve communications with the mainland.

It is also acquiring a 51-percent stake in Fubon Multimedia, which will put it in a position to capitalize on the booming TV shopping and retail business in both Taiwan and the mainland.

"As cross-Straits economic cooperation grows, we're committed to tailoring our services to telecommunication companies on the mainland," said Lai.

The company looks forward to becoming a name that is as admired and trusted on the mainland as it is on Taiwan.

www.taiwanmobile.com

Southern Taiwan University
南台科技大學

- ★ A competitive international university
- ★ Favored by enterprises islandwide
- ★ Equipping young adults with a strong global mindset and independent thinking

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