



Publisher's Day

Sinchai Chaojaroenrat is the author of over 25 books, a pastor, and an educator. He is also the director of Church Education and Development (www.cedthai.org) in Bangkok, Thailand.

Tools to Grow Thai Churches

I have always loved to read, even when I was not a Christian. Books have always inspired me.

When I met Christ, the Bible inspired me. Another book that helped me was *The Normal Christian Life* by Watchman Nee.

Now, I am happy that I can write Christian books and seminary textbooks for Thai people. Some of my books have been reprinted six times, and there are over

10,000 copies in circulation. They are found in Thai Christian communities all over the country.

My goal is to lift up the quality of Christian literature until it can compete with secular literature. The ministry of Church Education and Development (CED) is to promote Christian evangelism, discipleship, leadership, training, and church growth. We have five employees: one editor, one manager, two sales people, and myself. Our office is a small, two story building in Bangkok.

I live in another province, quite far from the office, about 100 kilometers. I don't go into work everyday. I am in the office one to three days a week, depending on my schedule and our needs. Most of my time is used for writing because I have to travel to many places for seminars. I maintain all of my contacts through e-mail.

The first thing I do each day is hold a staff meeting. We start with a devotional which is led by staff members on a rotating basis. I check the progress of each department, the development of products, the organization of upcoming book launches, and the cash flow management of every account.

I know that meeting with the staff and motivating them is very important. I always stimulate them to think about their calling and the Great Commission, and then I link these to what we are aiming at in our ministry. I focus on the importance of what we do, what we are doing, and what we will do in the future.

I tell my staff about the tangible results of our literature ministry in the Kingdom of Thailand. For example, we often discuss how our work has benefited church members as well as nonbelievers. I remind them of the number of new churches developed, the status of books just launched, and the success of recently organized seminars. The news encourages not only them, but me as well.

There are many ways in which we evaluate our ministry in our meetings. First, we look at the response of the church customers. If they are buying the materials, then the publications must be helpful.

Second, we look at our training programs. If people respond well to our seminars, then we know the mission is effectively being fulfilled.

Third, we look at our church partners. The rate of growth and the quality of each church indicates that our work is not in vain. It is hard to measure spiritual growth, but we monitor if members are praying more, reading the Bible more, and are more enthusiastic about their faith. We often receive oral reports on a church's condition as well as written letters from pastors.

Our staff is very close. We are more than friends—we are family. Close relationships help in our business. I have worked with some of the staff for two and a half years, but most of the employees have been with CED for a shorter time. I only hire Christians and find that



"I am excited about the growth of the church in Thailand," says Chaojaroenrat. "That is the heart of our ministry: reaching the next generation."

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some positions are easier to fill than others. It is difficult to find good managers because they must not only be faithful but understand the ministry as well.

After our meeting, our staff has lunch together. It is very light-hearted and we like to chit-chat. I like to keep the atmosphere fun because the work itself is often quite serious. We are all fun-loving people. We order in Chinese noodles, Thai food or pizza. The urgency of our work means that we must dine in.

After I am finished at the office, I teach at the seminary. It is located very near to my office and I try to visit both places in the same day because they are so close. In my perspective, both jobs help each other and form a mutual relationship.

Students at the seminary range from 18 to 50 years old. I have been teaching for eight years. I am currently working on my Ph.D. and I find it hard to mix that with my teaching schedule. I am very busy! I teach two classes a day, one in the afternoon and one at night.

Besides directing CED, I am also a pastor and a church planter. My real field ministry experience has greatly helped the literature work at CED. It lets us publish tools that are relevant to the churches and that we hope national church leaders will recommend.

I am very excited that we now have a daughter church

on the border of Thailand and Cambodia. In Thailand, more than 98 percent of the people are Buddhist, the official religion. The next most popular religion is Islam. Less than one percent of the population is Christian. CED trains churches so that they can better their ministry and develop the church in Thailand, but our books are also reaching Thai and Laotian churches in the U.S., and they have been translated for use in Laos and Cambodia.

I teach a formal leadership training program twice a year. I use my experiences as a seminary lecturer, pastor, and publisher to train people all over Thailand. CED also offers church training programs every two months. We rotate this training between four different regions.

Traveling keeps me very busy. After I teach each day, I have to talk, eat, and sleep with the group. I spend all of my time with them. I am constantly in fellowship with them; I must show that I am a disciple too.

The curriculum that I use was written and developed in three months. The textbook was gradually written and finished over the course of three years. The materials were completed four years ago. I have been traveling ever since, teaching and using the materials for every seminar.

Most Christian books in Thailand use theological and technical terms that are hard

for nonbelievers to understand. As a theologian, I try to be more cross-cultural and understandable to readers. I know many nonbelievers say that after reading the Bible, they cannot comprehend the passages because of the use of ancient names and terms.

I've learned many things from working in the publishing industry. As a Christian publisher you must maintain a balance between being a child of God and a businessman. Sometimes it is hard to do something that we know will surely lose money for the sake of the ministry. It is always a struggle to serve God and do business at the same time.

Out-of-date presentation and quality often reduces the acceptance of Christian literature. We need to offer more attractive books and writing

methods, especially for the next generation. I think the way that secular companies produce books is worthy of emulation. The pictures, colors, and layouts of the covers are not only attractive, but the writing methods are as well. But the more attractive a book is, the more money it is going to cost to produce.

I try to be creative in cutting costs and enlarging our marketing and sales channels on a daily basis. My dream is to develop CED's publishing ministry until Christian literature is one of the best tools for the church in Thailand to use for evangelism, discipleship, leadership training, and building churches. We want Christians to be able to pass our books on to nonbelievers. If I can achieve this, then it is good enough. Better than enough. ▽



Sinchai Chaojaroenrat, right, attended Cook's September 2004 International Christian Publishing Institute for leaders. Also pictured are Yevgeniy Zhabotynskyy of Bogomyslie Publishing in Odessa, Ukraine, and Anton Palchikov of Mirt Publishing in St. Petersburg, Russia.