



A boy is playing the 'Cookie Run' game on his tablet. APICHT JINAKUL

Game makers in smartphone battle

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Thailand's mobile game business is an intense battlefield, with more big players joining the market to take advantage of growing smartphone use and wireless broadband availability.

Line's *Cookie Run* game reports 10 million users in Thailand, the most in the world for the app.

Asiasoft Corporation Plc, a SET-listed online game maker, entered the market this year.

Kittipong Prucksa-aroon, deputy managing director of Asiasoft, said the company sees growth potential of 90% among the more than 30 million local smart-

phone users.

Smartphone-based games generate higher revenue per user than do basic phone games.

Gamers usually get free downloads, but some users are willing to shell out 200 baht a month for individual games.

Asiasoft's *Ragnarok Mobile*, an extended version of the popular Ragnarok computer game in Thailand, now has 200,000 users after its launch on Android and iOS this year.

Asiasoft recently joined with Total Access Communication Plc (DTAC) to expand the mobile operator's channel and reach new users, especially the 7 million

who use DTAC's Android.

"*Ragnarok Mobile* will be available in DTAC's game room portal for two months, exclusively for DTAC customers," Mr Kittipong said.

Suebpong Charoenmechaikul, senior vice-president for the product division at DTAC, said the company expects to have 2 million mobile gamers within a year, up from 800,000 now.

"Games are one of the most popular multimedia content categories generating revenue in the non-voice format," Mr Suebpong said.

DTAC plans to launch bill payment through Google Play, letting postpaid customers buy games and other apps without a credit card.

The ceiling for purchases is set at 300 baht a day and 1,500 baht a month to prevent bill shock.

Asiasoft plans to launch five mobile games this year in the casual, action and role-playing genres.

The company forecasts mobile game income to make up 10% of a projected 1 billion baht in revenue this year.

Ponthep Sethiwan, chief executive of MagicBox Asia, the country's first mobile game publisher, said Thailand's mobile game market has a value of 1.2 billion baht and strong growth potential as smartphones and tablets become widespread.