



AP Honda president Yoichi Mizutani (left) and Greyhound executive creative director Bhanu Ingkawat present Cub House cafe, a new channel for motorcycle sales.

Honda, Mudman debut Cub House

PIYACHART MAIKAEW

AP Honda, the local distributor of Japanese motorcycles, has teamed up with Mudman Plc, an MAI-listed restaurant operator, to launch a new distribution channel through 40 cafe locations nationwide by 2020.

The company announced yesterday that it would join forces with Mudman's Greyhound to create a new brand called Cub House.

According to AP Honda vice-president Suchart Arunsaengroj, Cub House will be the third outlet brand for AP Honda after Wing Center for mass motorcycles and BigWing for big bikes.

"Cub House will sell iconic and unique Honda motorcycles such as the legend Monkey and the products are differentiated from other Honda outlet brands," he said. "Moreover, it will be the first time Honda motorcycles globally expands dealership outlets with lifestyle cafes."

Mr Suchart said the partnership with Greyhound will enhance AP Honda's capability to supply food and drinks.

Greyhound also has fashion specialists that could also serve AP Honda in designing motorcycle accessories in the future.

AP Honda plans to open its first flagship Cub House in Ekamai on a plot of 800 square metres by March next year, when the new iconic motorcycle will be launched as well.

"The flagship outlet will be wholly-owned by Honda, but the remaining 39 outlets will be operated by Honda dealers or other interested investors nationwide," he said.

AP Honda refused to provide budget details for the flagship Cub House, but said the future dealers for Cub Houses in provinces will have to spend around 10-15 million baht per outlet.

Mr Suchart added the new outlet brand is expected to respond to the changing demands of Thai riders, who increasingly own motorcycles for sentimental value rather than solely for function.

"The country's motorcycle market is veering towards sporty, with more niche motorcycles and high-end big bikes," he said.

AP Honda has 1,200 Wing Centers and 20 BigWings nationwide.

In 2017, AP Honda expects 1.47 million units to be sold, up 6.9% as the overall market has shown improving economic sentiment.

The overall motorcycle market is projected at 1.85 million units, up 6.1% from 2016.

AP Honda posted its performance from January to July at 850,955 motorcycles, up by 4%, while the overall market also rose by 4% to 1.085 million units.

As of July, Honda motorcycles comprised 78% of the Thai market, making it the leader of the motorcycle market for 29 straight years.