

The Sleek Motorcycle Story – Lower Emissions and Better Consumer Lifestyles SLEEK EV

Electric Motorcycles solve Multiple Problems

The usual problem electric vehicles (EVs) seek to solve is reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since more than 70 percent of adults in Thailand alone [own](#) a motorcycle, reducing emissions from motorcycles will help Thailand achieve its [New Zero plans](#). Sleek is part of the solution.

Yet, the benefits it offers go further. Another problem Sleek is working to solve, said co-founder ZQ Ong, is low incomes that impede better lifestyles. The transition to EVs is not a change of usage, he explained, and motorcycles are still just a mode of transportation. Moreover, many people in Southeast Asia care more about savings and feeding their families than about sustainability. Sleek is thus also focusing on improving peoples' lifestyles.

Sleek

SLEEK EV (Sleek) is a Singapore-headquartered electric motorcycle company with production and sales in Thailand, and with aspirations to enter other Southeast Asian markets. Its 25-person team leverages technology and processes to provide efficient customer journeys. Its mission is to “drive transportation towards a more equitable and sustainable future.”

Co-founder Ben Tun helped build the first EV motorcycle brand in Thailand, while Ong worked in technology startups in the US, Singapore and Thailand. When they started Sleek in 2019, they sold various brands of electric motorcycles. Seeing a far larger opportunity, they shifted focus and started producing them themselves in September 2022.

The Solution

While Sleek is headquartered in Singapore, it makes its motorcycles in Thailand from parts purchased locally in Thailand and overseas from China. Sleek has achieved CKD (Completely Knocked Down) assembly, allowing it to leverage economies of scale through contract assembly overseen by its engineers and reducing import taxes by almost 70 percent. Its modular production line at Nakhon Pathom can currently produce about 20,000 units per year.

Motorcycles have about 150 parts and assembly is straightforward, Ong explained. When Sleek started manufacturing motorcycles, it hired experienced staff who had made traditional motorcycles and worked with them to streamline its processes. It currently has one assembly line and makes 50 motorcycles per day, though it has the capacity to make 100 a day. Workers assemble the motorcycles manually and use streamlined processes for quality checks, testing and pre-delivery inspections.

EVs have an edge over conventional motorcycles, Ong said, because they use software and the internet of things (IoT). Purchasers almost all rely on loans, and financial institutions consider them to be high risk individuals. Sleek uses software to reduce the risk to the bank, which can reduce interest rates on the loans and improves peoples' lives.

Sleek expects to focus on enhancing software and the power train to manage its product range, while also continuing to outsource manufacturing so that it can control costs better.

Competitors and Competitive Advantage

There is little significant IP in a motorcycle, Ong said. While Honda claims IP in the engine, for instance, in reality most motorcycles are not substantially different.

The difference between traditional motorcycles and Sleek's electric ones, Ong explained, is in the software. A controller in the bike manages how much power to release to the motor. The software can be used to extract data, run diagnostics and predict servicing needs, which reduces downtime for repairs and improves customers' lifestyles. Sleek has designed its

controller system and software protocols so they prevent unauthorised adjustments or adaptation in the after-market. It has full control of the intellectual property (IP) in the software.

Sleek says it delivers increased control, flexibility, innovation, and cost savings of up to 50%. As people reduce their spending, their lifestyles can improve. Moreover, the motorcycle can deliver benefits outside the product by using data to deliver points or other benefits that reduce costs. The motorcycle then has more ways to improve lifestyles.

Over time, Sleek plans to target additional revenue by using its data to develop an ecosystem that includes gamification, rewards, carbon credits and financing. Sleek collects data about its customers that it can use for this expansion.

Sleek does face competitors. H Sem has been manufacturing EVs in Thailand for several years, firms such as Honda plan to enter the market and companies such as Chinese manufacturer Luyuan are setting up manufacturing facilities. Dat Bike in Vietnam [said](#) it may enter Thailand. That said, the \$2.7 billion motorcycle market has room for new competitors.

Go-to-market and Sales Strategy

The target customers are mass market consumers, not upscale consumers. Sleek wants to enable them to buy the motorcycle at a more affordable price. Prices start at about US\$1,380 in a market where prices range from about US\$1,000 to US\$5,000.

After selling through its app initially, Sleek has now signed up nearly two dozen dealerships as distributors and expects to expand the number. It has developed partnerships with BanpuNext to provide fleets for 7-11, for instance, and with Nim Express for Cold Chain Logistics. PTG Energy, the largest petrol station network in Thailand, is partnering with Sleek to convert their petrol stations into EV servicing centres and battery swapping stations.

Once it has a strong base and sufficient scale in Thailand, Sleek plans to expand into Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines. It expects that it can leverage scale and trust in its brand from Thailand to mine cost savings in those other countries.

Total Addressable Market, Traction and Financial Projections

Motorcycle sales volumes in Southeast Asia are huge. Motorcycle sales in Thailand [reached](#) 1.8 million units in 2022 and there is growing demand for electric vehicles, with a low market share for EVs of 0.5 percent offering tremendous room for growth. Sales in Indonesia [averaged](#) a far higher 6.5 million per year for the past decade, compared to 1 million automobiles, and the government is pushing EV sales. 3.3 million motorcycles were [sold](#) in Vietnam in 2022, Sleek commands only a tiny fraction of the market.

Revenue since the launch of the motorcycles in September 2022 exceeds \$1 million, and there is a backlog of about US\$1.4 million in orders from dealerships, corporates and individuals. Ong projects revenue of more than US\$3 million from sales of more than 3,000 motorcycles in 2023 if it receives financing that it can use to buy parts as well as machinery for automation, and it forecasts revenue of US\$20 million in 2024.

So far, Sleek has raised funds from friends and family. It is now seeking \$2 million to fund inventory, expand its staff, increase R&D, and conduct more marketing.

Overview

Sleek is an early-stage company with big ambitions. It has shown that it can achieve significant sales quickly, and it has developed an impressive distribution network. Its software can deliver a significant competitive advantage.

However, production has been manual and volumes have been low. While Sleek believes its experienced motorcycle experts can enable it to automate production and achieve significant scale, it is not yet a proven model and how effective it will be remains uncertain. Significant effort will be needed to grow sales volume, services and revenue from its ecosystem.

More details are available at <https://www.sleekev.com/>.

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