

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Among several ways of recording people's ideas in the form of permanent evidence, printing has long been played an important role in human history. Printing has been involved in many activities such as business, manufacturing, education, etc. Until now, printing is one of the top five most important industries in the USA (Adams & Dolin, 2002), and also in Thailand.

Printed materials can be divided into four types and ranked by its importance and usage in the market. They are (1) packaging, (2) books and magazine, (3) advertising printed materials, and (4) occasional printed materials (สมาคมการพิมพ์ไทย, 2549). According to the study of Adams (2002), package printing—printing on containers—is now becoming in high demand and gained the most market share when compared to the rest of the printing types because package printing can differentiate the goods, make the goods unique, and draw the attention of customers to buy the goods.

In Thailand, the printing industry is booming which can be evidenced by the increase of the production index of printed materials and export value in 2007. From Table 1, the production index of printed materials accounted for US\$126.6 million in 2007, which was an increase of 2% (The Industrial Economics Information, 2007). In the same year, the import value of printed materials was US\$ 165.5 million, while the export value of that was US\$700 million (สมาคมการพิมพ์ไทย, 2549). These figures show that the export value is about four times as much as the import one. This is a good sign for the printing industry in Thailand to gain more income through exporting high quality printed materials.

**Table 1. Production index of pulp and paper (US\$, m)**

Production index	Year				
	2005	2006	% <i>change</i>	2007	% <i>change</i>
Pulp	127.3	136.6	7.3	144.2	5.6
Printing and writing paper	126.9	124.1	- 2.2	126.6	2.0
Paperboard	104.2	99.9	- 4.1	122.3	22.4

*Source: Office of Industrial Economics, 2007*

In addition, the Thai Printing Association Journal no.78 reported that the situation of the export market in the printing industry in 2007 was flourishing with a sharp growth rate at 715%. This statistic broke all of the previous statistics in Asia.

Today, Thailand is the main exporter of printed materials to the USA. The amount of the export value increased by 93.2% in January to June 2008 with an amount of US\$1,452 million out of the target value of US\$2,445 million for the whole year.

Although the rapid increase in the export value of printed materials, providing high quality of goods and services to customers is necessary to keep the loyalty of customers in the cut-throat competition among international printing houses around the world. In this regard, the study of customer satisfaction with the products and services of printing houses in Bangkok is an interesting way to gauge feedback. Printing houses will use the results of the study to improve their product and service quality in the future.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS**

This study focused on the questions as follows:

### **Main problem:**

What is the level of customer satisfaction with the products and services of printing houses in Bangkok?

**Sub-problems:**

- 1) What are the characteristics of high quality printed materials?
- 2) What are the ways to improve the product and service quality to meet customer needs?

**1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

This study consists of two main objectives as follows:

**Main-objective:**

To find out customer satisfaction with the products and services of printing houses in Bangkok.

**Sub-objectives:**

- 1) To investigate the characteristics of high quality printed materials and services.
- 2) To find out the ways to improve the quality of the products and services to meet customer needs.

**1.4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

**Printed materials:** the printed out which is made of paper with a common operation system command to print a specific file list (Chapman & Hall, 1994). In this study, there are four types of printed materials: (1) packaging, (2) books and magazine, (3) advertising printed materials, and (4) occasional printed materials

**Printing:** Process of the manufacturing of multiple copies of graphic images (Delmar, 2002)

**Printing house:** the place to produce printed materials, including the location

**Lead-time:** the period of time that printing houses use to produce the printed materials

**Quality of printed materials:** appearance of the printed materials which can be judged by the eyes

**Bangkok area:** The six districts in Bangkok: Phranakorn, Klongsan, Bangkhuntien, Sathon, Rajthevee and Donmueng districts. These areas are the target places of this study.

**Customers:** The person who orders printed materials from printing houses in Bangkok.

### **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study aimed to understand customer satisfaction with the printed products and services from printing houses in Bangkok. The respondents of this study aged between 25-45 years old residing in the Bangkok area. The research focused on four main types of printed materials which were books and magazines, advertising printed materials, occasional printed materials, and packaging.

### **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study will be beneficial to all of the printing houses to improve printed materials in terms of value added in their products and enhance the ability of staff in the printing industry to provide better services for customers. At present, the competition is very high, so this research shares some facts of customer needs and satisfaction to give printing houses knowledge to choose the best solution to match customers and organizations.

### **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This paper is divided into five chapters: Chapter one is the introduction including the background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, definition of the terms, scope of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter two provides review of literature. Chapter three describes the research methodology. Chapter four presents results of the survey. Finally, the last chapter summarizes the study, and shows the discussion, conclusion, and recommendations for further research.