

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The contents in this chapter are (1) summary of the study, (2) summary of the findings, (3) discussion, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the customers' satisfaction with the products and services of printing houses in Bangkok. The sub-objectives of this study are (1) to investigate the characteristics of quality printed materials and services, and (2) to find out the ways to improve the products and service quality to meet the customers' needs.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

The subjects of this study were 132 respondents who had to ordered printed materials from the printing houses in Bangkok. The research design which was used in this research was the descriptive cross-sectional design. The instrument to collect the data was self-administered questionnaires which were composed of both close-ended and open-ended questions. Each questionnaire had 33 questions and was divided into four parts: demographic information of respondents, frequency of using printed materials, satisfaction level, and suggestions. The five-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of satisfaction.

The data were collected from 22 December, 2008 to 12 January, 2009 and were analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program (version 16). The descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and mean) was used to illustrate and compare the respondents' answers.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study are as follows:

5.2.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

The number of respondents of this research was 132 (47 males and 85 females). The majority of the respondents were under 25 years old. Most employees held a bachelor's degree. Almost three quarters of the employees were single. More than half of the respondents (53.8%) worked in the private sector. Most of the respondents had an income per month of less than 20,000 baht, and they had been working in private companies for 2-5 years.

5.2.2 Frequency of Using Printed Materials

This study revealed that package printing had the highest volume of orders from customers followed by advertising materials used for promotional events, books and magazines, and occasional printed materials.

5.2.3 Customer Satisfaction Level

This study explored customer satisfaction in four aspects: (1) satisfaction with printed materials, (2) satisfaction with the services of printing houses, (3) factors affecting the selection of a printing house, and (4) problems which the customers had encountered. Satisfaction was measured according to the Likert scale's principle: strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree.

For customer satisfaction with printed materials, the respondents were extremely concerned with both the quality of the products and appropriateness of the price. The location of printing houses was not a major consideration of customers because more than half of the respondents were uncertain of the printing houses' location. The sales promotion also affected the respondents' decision making in printing orders. Lead time of production and the finished products were the main points that customers were concerned about.

As for satisfaction with the services of printing houses, the staff working for printing houses were important to the success of the printing companies. To demonstrate, this study showed that most of the respondents wanted to contact printing houses with the professional staff who could solve customer problems and give useful advice to customers. In other words, the staff's expertise was a key for

printing houses to attract the customers. Half of the customers were concerned about the staff's politeness, courtesy, and expertise.

In terms of factors affecting the selection of a printing house, this study found out that there are three main important factors: product quality, printed material price, and knowledgeable staff. Eighty-one respondents (61.4%) strongly agreed that product quality was the number one factor motivating them to give printing orders to a printing house. Next, the appropriate printed material price was the second most important factor, followed by knowledgeable staff from which the customers could ask for help and advice.

Finally, the respondents mentioned about the problems they often encountered. The problems the respondents mostly faced were delays of product delivery, under expectation of printed materials, and limitation of special techniques in printing.

5.3 DISCUSSION

In this part, the findings of the study are discussed in order to answer the research problems written in Chapter 1. The discussion of each aspect is as follows:

5.3.1 Satisfaction of Product Quality

The results of this study is in contrast to the findings of Stalk (as cited in Bittle, 1991) in terms of lead-time. Stalk stated that short lead-time created customer satisfaction, especially when the job is finished before the due date, especially if that job is related to promotional printed materials which often request swift service from printing houses. However, this research revealed that punctual delivery of finished printing products was more important than short lead-time. In other words, lead-time could be negotiated, but on-time product delivery must be met to achieve customer satisfaction with the printing house's services.

In terms of the volume of printed materials, the findings of this research showed both similarity and dissimilarities with the work of Adams and Dolin (2002). Adams and Dolin (2002) stated that packaging was the most used printed material followed by books and magazines, advertising printed material, and occasional material, respectively. The result of this study was consistent with that of Adams and

Dolin (2002) that packaging was the most sought. However, the second rank of this research was advertising printed materials instead of books and magazines.

5.3.2 Satisfaction with Service Quality

The results showed that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the ability of staff to solve problems. These findings are consistent with theory of Schneider and White (2004)—the service quality in terms of “professional skills”. Namely, the employees must be able to use their skills to solve customer problems in a professional way. This result confirmed that having skillful staff in the printing house is a key to success. Printing house owners or management teams should train their staff to be more skillful in the printing work. The findings, moreover, obviously revealed that the most impressive service for customers was the satisfaction with staff’s skill. The customers need to give the printing jobs to the staff who are able to help them solve problems.

5.3.3 Factors Affecting the Selection of a Printing House

Not only did this study find out that there are three main important factors affecting the selection of the printing house: product quality, printed material price, and knowledgeable staff, it also showed some remarkable points which were consistent and/or contrasted with several previous studies. Those points are the following:

1) Reputation of Printing House

According to Howard (1994), customer behavior is concerned with the intention to buy. When customers want to buy something, they think about the brand with which they are familiar. In this study, the results showed that none of the respondents ordered printed materials from printing houses which were not well-known. If we compare these two factors—reputation of printing house and word of mouth—which lead customers to choose a printing house to do a printing job, we will see that the respondents place an emphasis on the printing house’s reputation (31.8%) much more than word of mouth (18.2%). In this regard, the reputation of printing houses can promote customer trust and lead to printing orders. In addition, the personal relationship between the staff of printing houses and customers can create printing orders as Adams and Dolin (2002) stated that customers always place orders with printing houses with which they were familiar.

2) Location of Printing House

According to Chapman & Walker (1991), the factory's location is important for the delivery process. Tornquist (1977) also stated that large firms put an emphasis on location as a strategy to select the manufacturers (as cited in McPherson, 1995). However, the result of this study showed that location is not a main factor for purchasers in choosing a printing house. Nowadays, many printing houses are being expanded, and it is not necessary to be located along main roads.

5.3.4 Most Encountered Problems

The problems the respondents mostly faced were delay of product delivery, under expectation of printed materials, and limitation of special techniques in printing. All of these problems are new findings which are revealed by this study.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

5.4.1 Production Quality

This study showed that qualified printing products with on-time deliver are a strong concern of the customers. Moreover, customers choose a printing house by considering its reputation.

5.4.2 Service Quality

Having professional or skillful staff who are able to provide useful advice to customers is an important factor. Customers are happy to make printing orders with printing houses whose staff are polite and willing to help customers.

5.4.3 Factors motivating customers to choose the printing house

There are three main factors motivating customers to choose the print house: product quality, printed material price, and knowledgeable staff.

5.4.4 Product and service problems of printing houses

This study shows that three main problems of the printing houses are delay of product delivery, under expectation of printed materials, and limitation of special techniques in printing.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings, discussion, and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for future research.

5.5.1 Further study about customer satisfaction with the printed materials and services from printing houses should be conducted at both private printing houses and government printing houses in such a way that people can compare the results.

5.5.2 Further research should be done with broader target groups and should be conducted on various product lines and businesses in order to gain more details.

5.5.3 Further research should study a wider area in order to make the survey more accurate and more reliable. The study should cover all the districts in Bangkok.