

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussions of significant findings, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further study.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

The study has been conducted to find out mobile users' attitudes toward roles of SMS advertisement on consumers' purchasing decisions at Siam Square area.

##### **5.1.1 Objectives of the study**

This study aimed to find out the attitudes of mobile users toward the roles of SMS advertisement on consumers' purchasing decisions. In addition, it aimed to study the message factors that have an influence on consumer attention and consumer response, to investigate the media factors that have an influence on consumer attention and consumer response, and to identify whether or not the message frequency has an influence on consumer attention and consumer response.

##### **5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures**

###### **5.1.2.1 Subjects**

The samples of the study were Thai mobile phone users whose ages were between 18-32 years old, own a mobile phone, and have received either advertisements or services via SMS at Siam Square area. 200 of them were given the questionnaires between December 16-31, 2007.

###### **5.1.2.2 Materials**

The self-administered questionnaire was used as the instrument in this study. The questionnaire comprises four parts. The first part was to find out the personal information of the respondents. The second part was to acquire general information about advertisement via SMS. The third part was to obtain mobile users'

attitudes toward receiving SMS, message factors, media factors and message frequency. The last part, then, was to acquire successful measures of SMS advertising in order to find out the attitude of mobile users' towards SMS advertising.

#### **5.1.2.3 Procedures**

The random sampling method was used to select customers who own mobile phone, and have received either advertisements or services via SMS. Copies of questionnaires were distributed to 200 samples who visited Siam Square area between December 16 and December 31, 2007. The results from the 200 completed questionnaires were valid and used for data analysis. The data collected from the survey were analyzed by SPSS and were presented in frequency distribution, percentage, and relevant descriptive statistics. Furthermore, the mean was applied to find out the independent variables that influence mobile users' attitude toward roles of the SMS on consumers' purchasing decision.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

### **5.2.1 Personal Information of the Respondents**

The respondents of this research were mostly female. Their occupations vary with most of them working for private companies (48%) with an income of 10,001-20,000 baht per month, followed by students (36%), business owners (12%) and others (4%). They were mostly in the age range between 23-27 years old (70 respondents or 35%), followed by 18-22 years old (62 respondents or 31%), 28-32 years old (44 respondents or 22%) and more than 32 years old (24 respondents or 12%). There were no respondents who were aged below 18. The majority of mobile users (68%) responding to the survey hold a Bachelor's degree while 32% had earned a Master's degree.

### **5.2.2 The Attitudes of Mobile Users Towards Roles of SMS Advertising**

*RQ 1: What are the attitudes of mobile users toward the roles of SMS advertisement on consumers' purchasing decision?*

For the attitude of mobile users towards advertisement via SMS, the respondents see registering for SMS service which they can terminate at anytime as the most important factor with a mean of 3.85. It can be concluded that mobile users prefer to have the right to discontinue receiving SMS that they are not interested in without any conditions.

*RQ 2: To what degree do message factors influence mobile users' attention and response to SMS advertisement?*

For message factors, these are major effects that can grasp consumer attention. The respondents see the SMS advertising that offer discount, sales promotion as the most important factor with a mean of 4.24. It showed that the respondents like to receive the SMS that can attract their attention by offering discount or sales promotion.

*RQ 3: To what degree do media factors influence mobile users' attention and response to SMS advertisement?*

For media factors which are classified into media fit to low or high involvement product, the respondents placed the most important component on the simple function of SMS affects consumers' decisions to react back to the sender and the advertisement messages of on sales products, help attract consumer's attention with a mean of 3.60 and 3.53 respectively.

*RQ 4: Is there any influence of message frequency on mobile users' attention and response to SMS advertisement?*

For message frequency, the respondents view that the SMS should not be sent too frequently per day. This is the most important factor with a mean of 3.80. It showed that frequency of sending the SMS has an effect on the mobile users' attention. In case too many or too few SMS have been sent, consumer attention of that advertisement may be ignored because those SMS cannot grasp their attention.

### **5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

This section concerns interesting issues drawn from the summary of the findings in the study.

#### **5.3.1 Personal Information of the Respondents**

Based on the findings, the majority of the respondents are female. This can be explained that women still play a major role in sending and receiving SMS. Most of the respondents were 23-27 years old. This is followed by the age range between 18-22 years old. Most of them earned a bachelor's degree and work for a private company. In terms of monthly income, most of them earned a salary between 10,001-20,000 baht per month. Not only did the majority of the age group use SMS service but it also showed that SMS was generally used among the other age groups as well.

#### **5.3.2 The Attitudes of Mobile Users Towards Roles of the SMS Advertising**

Mobile users prefer that advertisers provide them the flexibility to receive the advertisement. Mobile users prefer that they terminate the service at anytime and also be asked for permission from advertisers before sending them the advertisements. Moreover, consumers prefer to receive the advertisement that offers them discount or special offers, or provides them right to choose to receive any advertisements that fit their interests. At the same time, advertisers could also save their advertising budget because they can get an audience that is interested in their message, as a research by Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy and Scharl (2004) stated that spam is the strongest negative influence on customer attitudes towards SMS advertising while consumer permission helps to decrease the unwanted messages that flood into their device.

Another research conducted by Haghirian, Madlberger, and Tanuskova (2005), stated that consumer permission is related to privacy, and consumers may possibly trade off up to a certain degree of their privacy and get benefits if they perceive these benefits to be sufficient and satisfying.

Of the research findings, consumer permission is counted as one of the most important factors towards successful measures of SMS advertising. Most respondents are willing to accept coupon discounts or other interesting sales promotion via SMS as long as it is perceived to be relevant and have value to them. In addition, they are

willing to enter to the SMS service as long as they can quit or terminate from the service without any conditions whenever they desire. These results can show that the mobile users' privacy is one of the most important factors; the advertisers should consider this factor to develop advertising via SMS or other future data service applications.

For message factors, this research finding has a different result from the previous study of Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, and Scharl (2004) as quoted from Barwise and Strong's research in 2002 which stated that entertaining characteristics is ranked as the third most important factor. Another study from Haghirian, Madlberger, and Tanuskova (2005) stated that entertaining, informative and credible messages are positively associated with advertising value when sent to customers via mobile phone. However from the result in Table 10 (page 29), it showed that respondents agree that the information about discount, sales promotions shown in their SMS could make the advertising message more interesting and can attract their attention. At the same time, the credibility of the message could make that advertising message more reliable and interesting. Thus, further research on this factor is recommended on the specific target group because entertaining messages fit well when is used with young people.

For media factors, based on Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, and Scharl (2004), the distinctive characteristics of SMS advertising are better for frequently purchased items rather than expensive and infrequently purchased products. Barwise and Strong (2002) showed that the samples considered SMS advertising the best fit with low price items, and frequent purchases rather than high involvement products. In addition, findings from Heinonen and Strandvik (2003) aligned with Barwise and Strong's that low involvement products such as clothes, CDs, hamburgers, pizza, and cosmetics received high positive responsiveness percentages of SMS advertising. It can be concluded that SMS is best fit with low involvement products than high involvement products.

Since the majority of respondents earns an average income of 10,001-20,000 baht, this may lead to the characteristics of SMS advertising as the media best fit with low involvement products. Also the simple function of mobile phone, can affect consumers' decision. The study from Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, and Scharl

(2004) stated that both direct and indirect impact of SMS application is because it advocates recipients to act such as joining campaigns. Another impact is the vital effect when recipients may forward advertising messages to their families and friends when they see that those advertising messages are interesting.

From the research findings, it was found that media factors have an impact on success measures of SMS advertising in both sides of consumer attention and consumer response. This is in line with the study of Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, and Scharl (2004).

It can be concluded that the advertisers and content providers should pay more attention when investing money in advertising via SMS. It is possible that the simple function and lower forwarding cost of SMS can grasp customers' attention and response to the advertising messages.

For message frequency, although advertising via SMS is counted to be less interfering than phone calls, Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy, and Scharl (2004) stated that advertisers and marketers should not ignore the frequency of sending advertising SMS because low repetition may not grasp customer's attention or may not lead them to notice the advertisements. On the other hand, they could be irritated from repetitive messages.

In this research, the results revealed that the respondents were satisfied to receive the messages that are not being sent too frequently to their devices. And the results also showed that the more frequently advertising messages were sent, the more negative effects of that advertisement there would be. Based on the results, in order to grasp the customers' attention and response, the advertisers and marketers should not send the advertising messages too frequently, and repetition of the same message sent to the customers can cause consumers' ignorance.

## **5.4 CONCLUSIONS**

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above. In conclusion, the findings of this research have answered all the research questions and met all objectives. Although some of the results were different from the previous

studies, these differences might come from a different target population, which are Thais and Europeans. Including life styles, cultural backgrounds, and time to conduct the research were also factors that made the results different among target population. However, advertisers and marketers should still pay attention to all four factors since those factors lead to success of SMS advertising. For customers' attitude, as per the findings, we can conclude that many service providers, content providers, advertisers, and marketers take advantage of this advertising channel by sending unwanted advertising messages to customers. As it is hard for mobile users to change their mobile number, if advertisers and marketers would like to make mobile phone devices to be effective, and also be a long term advertising tool, consumer permission should be taken into serious account. For message factors, according to the findings, it showed that discount and sales promotion make the advertisements more attractive. And credibility is also important, but the respondents may not give much importance to credibility as this medium is viewed to be appropriate with low involvement products. Thus, credibility is viewed less important to low involvement product advertisements. For media factors, SMS is considered to be suitable for low involvement products but it does not always mean that SMS should only be the medium for this product type. The simple and easy use of function can enhance customers to respond. According to the findings, it can be concluded that to encourage consumers to make a decision such as replying back, or joining campaigns, advertisers and marketers should make easy steps of joining promotions. For instance, the phone number to let customers send SMS back should be short and easy to remember, or there should not be too many steps to complete the campaign. For message frequency, as seen in the results of the survey, together with the frequency, sending large repetitions of the same message and the time of sending should be taken into consideration before sending the advertising messages in order to know the most appropriate time that the SMS should be sent along with the frequency of sending messages per day.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research.

5.5.1 As the samples of this research are mobile phone users aged between 18-32 years old, it is recommended that advertisers and marketers should study the specific age range for each product target group because each age range has different outcomes that may affect the product's target groups.

5.5.2 Further study may also not focus only on age ranges, but other demographic characteristics should also be included in a further study because they may influence the perception of SMS advertising.

5.5.3 A further study may focus on the other advertising tools via mobile phone such as Multi Messaging Service (MMS) as MMS is not just a text, but also has sound, images, video from one mobile to another mobile, including no size limit as well.