

**ROLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE MARKETING
CAMPAIGNS OF THAI START-UPS IN BANGKOK**



NATTASUDA ANUSONADISAI

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
STAMFORD INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
ACADEMIC YEAR 2014**

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**The Research has been approved by
Stamford International University
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Title: Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns
of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were (1) to determine the roles of social media marketing within a young Thai start-up company's marketing strategy; and (2) and to determine whether social media marketing has affected the young, Thai company's use of traditional marketing such as advertising through television, radio, print advertisements including newspaper, magazines, internet ads as well as strategies.

Research Methodology; qualitative method by which fifteen young Thai start-up companies in various fields had been contacted for Individual Depth Interviews (IDI), however, seven different company representatives agreed to be interviewed as listed. Additionally, theories used to guide this study explain that social media is most effective when used together with traditional ones, not just as a stand-alone technique.

Research findings were as follows; from the Individual Depth Interviews, it seems that social media marketing is predominantly used for retention purposes, with traditional marketing used mainly for acquisition. More than that, social media marketing also appeared to have significant effects on the company's traditional marketing campaign, as they aim to make use of free PR strategies to support their traditional marketing methods. (For the purpose of this thesis, traditional marketing is defined as advertising through television, radio, print advertisements -- including newspaper, magazines, traditional internet ads and banners as well as strategies like PR and mailings.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Young Thai Companies, Start-ups, Traditional Marketing, Thailand,

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problems

In the digital world these days, it is obvious that marketing is the most important way for a company to create brand and product awareness, as well as to grow their customer base and increase profits. Whether a company utilizes newspaper advertisements or Facebook, I believe that it is safe to say every company or organization has a marketing plan to help their business grow; in today's increasing globalized world, companies get ready to branch out from their home market into the international business arena. However, marketing a company to be appealing to the rest of the world can be an intimidating task since traditional advertisements must be translated into different languages, not to mention cultural norms.

After the invention of social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, nevertheless, companies have new marketing tools and can fit them into their strategies that can target their audience throughout the world without spending a lot of money (money is still a factor even with advertisement on social media.)

Moreover, the use of social media has created different types of marketing, where customer relations is key and interaction with customers on a more personal level provides the ability to bring the company into the living room of anyone in the world.

Other than the effectiveness of social media in increasing customer base and becoming a marketing tool, the use of social media can also become a mean for other companies, to follow and grow their business in a way that they have not been able to do before.

Bangkok, Thailand these days, we have seen start-up companies use traditional marketing as a mean to promote their products or services as advertisements and we have seen how social media is changing the way those companies interact with customers and the way that they market products.

However, what we do not know is to what extent that those young Thai

companies are using both traditional and social media market. In other words, what kind of role does social media play on the use of traditional marketing in start-up Thai companies and what effects do they have on their use of traditional marketing?

1.2 Objectives

The objectives for this study of “Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok” include

1. To determine the roles of social media marketing (as defined in the next chapter) within a young Thai start-up company’s marketing strategy
2. To determine whether social media marketing has affected the young, Thai company’s use of traditional marketing such as advertising through television, radio, print advertisements including newspaper, magazines, internet ads as well as strategies like PR and mailings(as defined in the next chapter)

1.3 Significance of the Study

The National Statistics report in the year 2013 suggests that young Thai companies in the online market is worth over 700 billion Baht. This underlines that fact that potential customers who go online and most likely using social marketing is a Huge Market!!

Moreover, the former National Center for Peace and Order stated in the same year that Thailand has about 30 million people with Facebook accounts in Thailand.

What can be stated about Thai companies, especially the start-ups that normally lack funding, is that they are increasingly using social media as a solo marketing method to get their products or services to the market due to their lack of funding and experiences.

However, after the reviews of various related theories. It seems that the use of social media to market the products or services is not efficient. Hence, this study seeks to help identify the extent to which the roles of social media are playing on the marketing campaigns of Thai start-ups in Bangkok. Moreover, to see how relevant

current practices of start-ups are when compared to studies and theories regarding this issue.

From looking at Marketing-School.org, it states that print marketing is the oldest form of advertisement, which dates back to ancient Egypt, whereas broadcast marketing had become popular after the creation of the radio and television. Almost every company makes use of some sorts of traditional marketing, because it is an easier way to advertise a new product or service as a mass message to public. However, Kotler, 1999 suggests that no matter what form of traditional marketing a company uses, it is normally based on marketing budget of the company.

We have seen huge companies utilize expensive television time slots such as the Super Bowl in the United States, in order to capture the attention of their target market in a massively. As mentioned by Marketing-Schools .org that one of the biggest benefits of this form of marketing is 'staying power' in the mind of customers which can be seen in the top marketing campaigns of the 20th century: McDonald's campaign "You Deserve a Break Today" "Marlboro Man," from Marlboro and "Just Do It" from Nike (These are one of the top three marketing campaigns of the 20th century according to NBC)

It has been defined that social media marketing is the promotion or selling of products or business on sites of popular social media and the goal is to come up with content that will and can be shared on various social media sites in order to generate electronic word of mouth.

We got to know the first social media sites in 2002 which is Facebook. University of North Carolina at Pembroke, 2013, states that it has more than 1 billion users worldwide making it one of the biggest social media network sites in the world.

In May 2014 when Facebook went down for the whole Thailand, NCPO or the National Council for Peace and Order confirms that Thailand has about 30 million people with Facebook accounts in Thailand.

Following the invention and increasing popularity of the smart phones, tablets, and notebooks, Thai people are able to stay connected virtually anywhere, updating

their status, posting on Facebook about their moods, their thoughts and Instagramming their food. It is not surprising that social media has caught the attention of advertisers and marketers, because this is a huge opportunity for them to turn this popular trend into incomes and profits. For example, Facebook accounted for 13 percent of worldwide mobile ad revenue in 2013, not to mention that 70 percent of business-to-consumer marketers have acquired a customer through this social network.

1.4 Scope and limitation of the Study

Due to the lack of funding and time limitation, this research only studies the roles of social media on the marketing campaigns of start-ups in Bangkok and what effects it has on the traditional marketing campaigns of those start-ups. Therefore, it may only show the trend of practices within those start-ups, in term of their use of social media and traditional marketing.

However, the researcher tried to interview chief marketing officers, CEOs or the owners of start-ups in Bangkok in various fields in order to find the most reliable insights possible so that she can interpret and present those insights in the most accountable way possible.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

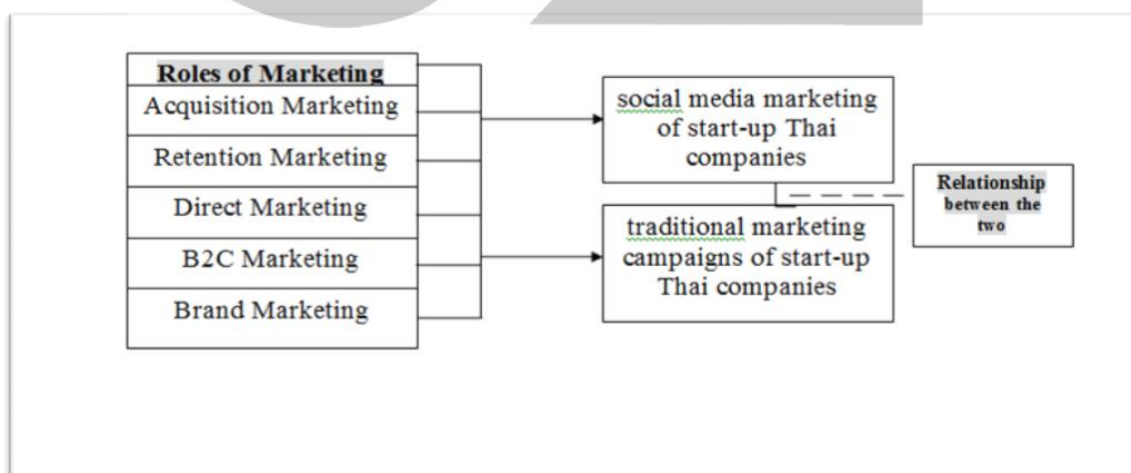


Figure 1.1 Theoretical Framework

This thesis aims to research on two different questions: First, what role does social media play within Thai start-ups? Second, what effect, if any, does that have on their traditional marketing initiatives? Through Individual Depth Interviews (IDI's) with the Chief Marketing Officer of young Thai companies, the researcher can gather data on how these companies utilize social media marketing and the relationship between social media marketing and traditional marketing.

The process for conducting this research started from theoretical literature reviews. Then, followed by a practical qualitative research method: through thorough analysis of the IDIs taken with different start-up Thai companies. This will allow the researcher to assess the roles of social media marketing within a company. This analysis helps to answer the first part of the research question; which is what role does social media play within young, Thai companies?

Once this has been fully investigated, through the interviews, it will be possible for the researcher to draw the relationship between social media marketing and traditional marketing within each of the companies, find answers for the research questions and see how this applies to the guiding theories of this research.

1.6 Research Questions

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine how young companies are making use of social media marketing and traditional marketing and within their overall marketing strategies. To make this clear, the research questions are as follows:

1. What kind of role does social media play within a young start-up Thai company?
2. What effect, if any, does the role of social media have on the traditional marketing objectives within these companies?

1.7 Basic Assumption

Since the late 1990s, Internet has acted as one of the most widely utilized channels of communication for people all around the world. The invention of various popular social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook or Twitter has made interacting with the crowd on the Internet easier than ever.

Originally, these social media sites were meant to connect people, e.g. those you have long lost touch with, those you have never met before, or even those you see on regular basis. In the last ten years, these interactive platforms have gone from connecting people to connecting businesses and products to the crowd and the other way around.

From the beginning of the last century, a lot of marketers express their opinions on the changing and evolving fields of marketing. Most major companies have their Marketing department shifted their focus to advertising on Internet banners and they engage a lot more on online media advertisements when compared to their previous traditional advertisements in newspapers and radio. It looks like they are trying to grab the attention of the target group, who are increasingly spending more time online.

Upon the creation and popularity of social media, it seems that the marketing plans of companies were forced to change again. Nowadays, we see a lot of companies keep themselves up-to-date and active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as to stay current with their customer base and maintain their competitiveness over the competitors. These companies' profiles on the social media sites have brought new opportunities for companies to spread their message on low budget. Also, they get to interact with customers and potential customers in a much friendlier manner.

Among these new opportunities, companies are able to gain followers that are notified of the company's latest updates, share information with others and help customers and potential customers get excited about the products and services that a company has to offer. Now that these companies are using social media, there are huge possibilities for capturing larger market shares, target new audiences, and

connect with customers. From looking at numerous international companies' hiring page, it is obvious that they have created new positions within marketing departments specifically responsible for social media strategies, communications and keeping their account active.

Thailand has been known as a hub for business in Southeast Asia region and Thai people have engaged a lot in social media as well. As stated by techinasia.com, there are over 24 million Facebook users in Thailand (as of February 2014) and Bangkok is the city with the most Facebook users in the world. From looking at Facebook and Instagram pages these days, a lot of Thai businesses and even media themselves have opened their accounts and keep themselves active to stay connected with the audience's daily lives.

Due to the popularity of social media especially Facebook and Instagram and the increasing number of account owners in Thailand which is astonishingly high on international standard, it seems that Thai start-ups in Bangkok make use of this benefit and promote their products or services solely on this venue.

However, this assumption for Thai start-ups is on the opposite side of the results of related studies overseas, where the majority of them seem to collide with the related theories that traditional media marketing should be used to obtain or acquire new customers, whereas social media marketing is more suitable and effective when used to retain customers.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Table 1.1 Defining Marketing Roles

Role of Marketing	Description
Acquisition Marketing	Marketing to new, potential customers in order to gain their business
Retention Marketing	Marketing to existing customers in order to build profitable, long-term relationships and maintain

	their business
Direct Marketing	Marketing through various advertising media that interact directly with consumers, generally calling for the consumer to make a direct response
B2C Marketing	Business to Consumer, Marketing directly to the consumer
Brand Marketing	Marketing to increase loyalty, awareness, perceived quality, strong associations, etc. to specific brand

Source: Kotler Armstrong and Saunders Wong, 1999

As defined by Dave Lavinsky, the author of the book “Start at the end; how companies can grow bigger and faster by revising their business plan, traditional marketing refers to advertising through television, radio, print advertisements including newspaper, magazines, internet ads as well as strategies like PR and mailings. This form of marketing is fairly impersonal, involving the encoding of one message, from the producer to the consumer, with little interactivity between the two.

The theory used to guide this thesis has been introduced by Nelson-Field, 2012 by which they present a study on the comparison between the actual buying base of a brand and the Facebook fan base of the brand. They explained that it is true that social media, and Facebook are great marketing tools, they should not be used as the only advertising method, but rather they should just be a part of a marketing mix.

Furthermore, a similar study shows that Facebook and other social media platforms are most effective when used for to retain customers as a part of retention marketing, whereas traditional marketing is more suitable to acquire customer as part of acquisition marketing technique.

Additionally, a theory put forth by Tariq and Wahid (2011:Online), explains how young companies are more likely to adopt a social media marketing strategy over traditional marketing, due to both a lack of funds and a lack of marketing expertise.

These theories and studies are strong examples of the current research in the marketing field of the relationship between social media marketing and traditional marketing. By analyzing the interviews that are taken with young, Thai companies, it

will be possible to identify whether or not young Thai companies tend to follow current theories.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Traditional Marketing

It is very important to understand how traditional marketing campaigns are viewed today, in order to understand the effects that social media marketing have on traditional marketing.

Barlow and Birkhahn (2005:Online) conducted three different surveys to assess the views of corporate brand/marketing executives, advertising executives, and consumers on mass marketing which shows that 63 percent of consumer respondents believe that traditional advertising (as defined by this research as print, TV and basic internet advertisement) is still an effective means of marketing a new product or service while the Chief Marketing Officer of McDonald's feels that "the days of mass marketing are over"

In another survey, the advertising executives agreed with the marketing executives, that the decline in perceived effectiveness of traditional media can be blamed on two fronts: today's mass media is incredibly cluttered and tremendously noisy and new, alternative media channels are becoming more and more attractive to consumers (Barlow &Birkhahn, 2005).

Studies done by The Nielsen Company, 2013, however, show that in the United States, television advertising is still an effective type of traditional marketing, since it bears the highest ad revenue of all the traditional marketing forms. 68 percent of the respondents said they would take action due to an advertisement that they saw on the television, with newspapers advertisements guiding slightly at 65 percent, and magazine ads at 62 percent.

Randall Beard, global head, Advertiser Solutions at Nielsen, explains that such traditional marketing methods bears a lot of trust “Even though online advertising has numerous chances to engage effectively with consumers, ads buyers’ trust in traditional advertisements is growing strong as they become more pervasive and believable.”

However, this may not be applicable to the whole world, because another survey showed that, in Latin America, consumers are more likely to take action based on traditional advertisements but the Europeans are least likely to follow.

Even though online and social media marketing seems to grab the attention of younger people, it does not necessarily mean that traditional marketing is going down the grave.

In 2005, as Barlow and Birkenhahn concluded that companies should never ignore new and alternative marketing methods, nor should they only focus on traditional marketing means. They should find the middle way that balances both usages of these marketing techniques.

The author believe that just as the marketing mix must find an appropriate balance between the four P’s, marketing executives must find an effective mix of traditional, Internet and social media marketing that helps them retain their current customers and attract new, potential customers.

Eid and Truman (2002) conducted a literature review on the need for an updated marketing strategy as they explain “it is unrealistic to apply the same marketing strategies [as traditional marketing] without making some modifications to be appropriate to the electronic edge.”

Adzharuddin (2012) conducted a literature review on the current trend of traditional media marketing versus new media and the research found that internet marketing allows for something that radio and television has never been able to offer before; it allows interactivity as two-way communication, and highlighting unfocussed truth that customers want to be and are active players rather than passive.”

Furthermore, O'Callaghan and Fahy in 2002 suggested that online marketing provides ability to skip clutter in traditional marketing activities such as TV/radio and newspaper advertising”.

By using Internet as a marketing tool, marketers has cheap, measurable, and immediate resources to get to their target audience, with the ability to test and experiment in a way that was not possible before.

A digital marketing news website mentions a statistic done via surveys in the year 2012 that worldwide Internet marketing is going strong and likely to get stronger. In 2012, Internet marketing campaigns increased by 14.3 percent from the previous year in budget spending, whereas the spending on traditional marketing fell by 16.5 percent.

Numerous Extensive researches have been done to determine the impact of the Internet on marketing, and studies have shown that marketers are still driven by the same motivations as they were before the rise of Internet. Also, the role of marketing within an organization still remains the same.

While the Internet has impacted how marketing is conducted creating new acronyms like SEO (search engine optimization) and PPC (pay-per-click advertising) for marketers to learn by which O'Callaghan & Fahy, 2002 states that it has only added another important tool to the marketing mix that was not accounted for before.

2.1.1 Cost of Traditional Marketing

This probably does not come as a surprise that the costs of traditional marketing are high, and the cost of traditional marketing can be a big factor for younger companies. Not only does it cost money to create the advertisement itself, whether it's in-house or outsourced, but the costs for the actual advertising spot, on television, radio or in the newspaper is, very often, higher. In Kobliski, (2006)'s research shows that the average cost of a newspaper advertisement can range from between \$200 USD (64,000 baht) for local newspaper advertisements and can be as high as \$20,000 USD or around 640,000 baht, depending on the type of publication, the size of the

advertisement itself, and where it is placed.

Radio advertisements very much depend on the area that the station services, ranging from (Brueski, 2009) \$3 USD per 60 spots for a small, suburban radio station, like in Petoskey, MI, to \$500 USD per 60 spots for a large city radio station, e.g. in Los Angeles, United States.

In Television advertisements, they can get even pricier, according to (Crupi, 2011) the average TV prime-time advertising spot costing around 110,000 USD or around 3.5 million baht. These costs are for the advertising spots alone and do not include the costs of production for the advertisement itself.

As finding this information in Thailand does not come as an easy task, the author found through an interview that a small advertisement on a famous English newspaper in Thailand (3 inches x 3 inches) costs around 15,000 and is only valid for 3 consecutive days.

According to the key findings from U.S. Digital Marketing Spending Survey in the year 2013, marketing spending is quickly shifting from traditional media to digital advertisements, with the average marketing budget going 25 percent to digital marketing.

While the costs of traditional marketing are high, the marketing and advertising works are generally outsourced to an ad agency with the aim of saving time for the company so that they can focus on other marketing initiatives. Overall, the marketing budgets for radio, television, and newspaper advertisements are decreasing and digital marketing, specifically online advertisement, is quickly increasing and making up a large portion of the marketing budget for companies today.

2.2 Social Media Marketing

Through a case study of social media as a part of the marketing mix, Mangold and Faulds (2009:Online) concluded that “social media is a hybrid element of the

promotion mix because in a traditional sense it enables companies to speak casually to their consumer. Also, in a non-traditional sense, it allows customers to talk directly to one another.”

For example, when someone Likes a company page on Facebook or retweets a tweet from a company, they are essentially endorsing this company to the rest of their Twitter followers and Facebook friends.

In a number of surveys done by Chadwick, Martin, and Bailey in 2013, it shows that around 75 percent of people are “somewhat or highly likely to share content they like online with friends, co-workers or family.” Moreover, around 40 percent of these people, it was reported that they are doing this at least once a week. Now that word of mouth proves to be one of the strongest factors that influence customers to try a new product or brand, it helps understand why social media is getting more and more popular in the business world. Also, it gives companies the ability to gain positive (but sometimes negative) word of mouth publication within global community.

With this increasing popularity, there is a lot more “noise” and “clutter” within the social media advertising realm. Even though social media seems to be very effective in marketing world in recent years, (Nelson-Field, 2013) disagree by saying that advertisements on Facebook are becoming less and less effective due to the increased amount of clutter found on the social networking site.

Through the increased noise from advertisers in social media, Facebook is becoming very similar to traditional media in term of its advertising effectiveness.

A study conducted by Nelson-Field (2013) explains how “advertising clutter on Facebook reduces the Facebook user’s ability to remember the advertisements to which he or she is exposed to...this is the same pattern seen in television and radio advertising.”

In 2012, Facebook attempted to combat this increased noise by decreasing the amount of content that is actually shared in the Newsfeed (Constine, 2012).

Mangold & Faulds, 2009 disagrees with what marketers say about being unable

to control all of the information that is passed through social media. They suggest that “ignoring the reality of the impact of information transmitted through these forums on consumer behavior is tantamount to surrendering the communications process to the vagaries of the marketplace”

Today, companies must participate and have a presence in social media, if they want to survive, because customers expect them to do so, similar to the general social expectation that every company has a website or telephone numbers. Those companies that choose not to participate are often thought of as an outdated company and consumers will more likely be won over by its competitors (Schlinke & Crain, 2013).

With the pace of the world today, social media does answer to consumers’ demand of being able to have access to the products 24 hour a day, and companies must keep up with this demand.

Overall, research shows that being involved in social media and interacting one on one with consumers is more profitable. According to a McKinsey Report, 2012, about the value and productivity of social technologies, the study showed that networked companies, meaning those that are involved in newer technologies and reach out to their customers often perform better than companies that don’t, in terms of market share, market leadership and profitability,” (Corstjens & Umblijs, 2012).

While the interactive quality of social media has both advantages and disadvantages, it is one of the most popular ways for new companies to begin their marketing campaigns and this does say a lot for the future of marketing.

2.2.1 Cost of Social Media Marketing

According to Advertising Age’s writer, a number of companies have embraced social media marketing, and by doing so, have decreased their marketing budget spending. Small businesses today, are normally spending less, due to the advantage of lower or even ‘no cost’ digital marketing, and have decreased their traditional advertising budgets.

As explained by Andrew Whitman, a managing partner of 2x Consumer Growth Partners which is an investment firm that helps expand growth capital for smaller companies states that smaller businesses have always spent less on marketing. This is because of their limited budget and resources. Also, Neff (2013), states that new-media world has helped a lot in the marketing world. Meaning that companies do not put a lot of spending on advertising, but they can still get desirable results. Not only that it is cheaper, very often, it is more measurable.”

Tariq and Wahid, 2011 says that small businesses are also more likely to adopt a social media marketing strategy as “they are often cash-strapped and lack marketing expertise for carrying out innovative marketing campaigns”

According to Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels (2009), companies increasing focus their attention in cheaper means. So instead of competing to pay, millions of dollars for a Super Bowl television advertisement, they look more towards blogging and word-of-mouth campaigns to initiate or expand their marketing efforts.

While social media marketing, on average, shows to be cheaper than campaigns of traditional marketing, social media marketing’s prices have been on the rise. Since Google Ads and Facebook have tons of clients, more companies are making use of this state and they are making more money via advertising on social media. However, Neff 2013 suggests that since competition is driving the costs down, these sites will often offer less free services.

It seems, however, that even though the actual monetary cost of social media is lower than traditional media, the time and effort spent on these online marketing campaigns is huge.

Constant Contact survey 2013, suggest that, on average, an extra hour of work for small businesses can be worth as much as \$273 USD or over 8,000 baht per hour. Some respondents even say that an extra hour is worth up to \$5,000 USD or around 160,000 baht.

Now, a lot of companies value social media marketing in terms of time value

rather than monetary value. Hence, to them, saving a lot more time meaning saving more money. So they are increasingly outsourcing their social media campaign to marketing consultants.

We have seen that current researches suggest that Facebook and other social media platforms is performing as effectively, but also increasingly as cluttered as traditional media such as radio or television advertisements, social media marketing is still used mainly in their advertising strategies, due to the fact that it is cheaper. But how will this last, only time will tell.

2.3 Previous Studies

2.3.1 Related Theories

Nelson-Field, Riebe and Sharp (2012) five different marketing roles which include acquisition marketing, retention marketing, B2C marketing, direct marketing, and brand marketing, they seek to understand how these roles affect a company's performance.

Through a case study of social media as a part of the marketing mix, Mangold and Faulds (2009) concluded that "social media is a hybrid element of the promotion mix because 1)it enables companies to talk to their customers, in a traditional sense, and 2)it enables customers to talk directly to one another, in a non-traditional sense it."

Nelson-Field, Riebe, & Sharp (2013) suggests that in a technical sense, this is still true, researchers found that the amount of marketing "noise" within social media has grown immensely. Also, they found that more and more money must be spent, if a company seeking to advertise though social media, want to be heard by their target group.

A study conducted by Nelson-Field (2013) explains how "advertising clutter on Facebook reduces the Facebook user's ability to remember the advertisements to

which he or she is exposed to...this is the same pattern seen in television and radio advertising.”

2.3.2 Related Studies

Nelson-Field (2012) presents a study on the comparison between the actual buying base of a brand and the Facebook fan base of the brand. They explained that it is true that social media and Facebook are great marketing tools, they should not be used as the only advertising method, but rather they should just be a part of a marketing mix.

Furthermore, Nelson-Field (2012) presented a similar study that Facebook and other social media platforms are most effective when used for to retain customers as a part of retention marketing, whereas traditional marketing is more suitable to acquire customer as part of acquisition marketing technique.

Additionally, a theory put forth by Tariq and Wahid (2011), explains how young companies are more likely to adopt a social media marketing strategy over traditional marketing, due to both a lack of funds and a lack of marketing expertise.

These theories and studies are strong examples of the current research in the marketing field of the relationship between social media marketing and traditional marketing. By analyzing the interviews that are taken with young, Thai companies, it will be possible to identify whether or not young Thai companies tend to follow current theories.

2.4 Relevant Research

The theory used to guide this thesis has been introduced by Nelson-Field, Riebe and Sharp (2012) their studies was on the comparison between the actual buying base of a brand and the brand's fan base on facebook. They explained that while social media sites, Facebook in particular, are great marketing tool. However, they should not be used as a single advertising technique, rather they should just be part of multi marketing mix.

Furthermore, their study shows that Facebook and other social media platforms are most effective when used for retention marketing, and traditional marketing is optimal for acquisition marketing (Nelson-Field, 2012)

Additionally, a theory put forth by Tariq and Wahid (2011), explains how young companies are more likely to adopt a social media marketing strategy over traditional marketing because they lack funding and marketing expertise. These theories show how current research in the marketing field explain about the relationship between social media marketing and traditional marketing.

By analyzing the interviews (IDI) that are taken with young, Thai companies, it will be possible to identify whether or not these companies follow the current theory.

2.5 Literature Reviews on Roles of Marketing

This study investigates the role of social media marketing within start-up Thai companies, and in order to properly assess this, it is important to understand what current literatures say about the role of social media in terms of marketing on acquisition, retention, B2C marketing, direct marketing, and brand marketing.(Nelson-Field, Sharp & Riebe, 2013)

2.5.1 Acquisition Marketing

Hutton and Fosdick (2011) make a strong case for the use of social media marketing specifically in the role of acquisition marketing via their study in cooperation with Universal McCann, which research on global social media trends through social media indicators with the use of survey on consumers. What they found out is that, most likely, consumers join a company's Facebook page in order to be on the "front row seat" of the brand's updates, and upcoming events. In this study, they also found that, in the six months of joining a brand community, potential consumers were more likely to buy products. This shows how having a strong social

media presence can help companies acquire new customers.

In 2009, Trusov et al. also found that, through specific methods, social media can be a perfect way for companies to gain new customers. This can be done through a very simple laid-out formats sent from a current user to a friend which is very close to the ones we find on Twitter and Facebook .By doing this, a company can gain new customers, while retaining current customers by offering incentive for a referred friend method. This can be done easily through the use of social media and can be sent to a lot of potential customers with very little effort on of current users, making them more willing to participate

2.5.2 Retention Marketing

While numerous researchers find that social media marketing fulfills the role of acquisition marketing, Nelson-Field's research (2012) disagrees. As mentioned previously in the second chapter of this research, Nelson-Field, found that traditional media marketing is best used for acquisition marketing and social media marketing is best for retention marketing. This is because traditional media normally use only one way advertisements which can grab the attention of potential customers, whereas social media allows companies to keep previous consumers and retain their businesses through building and maintaining a relationship.

2.5.3 Direct Marketing

While many may feel that direct marketing is going down the grave, however, it seems to have a significant comeback with the use of social media marketing. According to (Mortimer, 2010) published on Marketing Weekly, more than 30 percent of marketers have been shifting quite a big portion of their direct marketing initiatives and budget to the world of social media. This is because social media provides direct

marketers with the interaction with their target customer base that they have always wanted. Through social media, marketers are able to customize and tailor their offerings, while directly interacting with potential customers. Palmer and Koenig-Lewis (2009), through their experiential-based model of social media and direct marketing, confirmed these findings, demonstrating how crucial social media has become for successful direct marketing.

Direct marketing is predominantly affected by the Word-of-Mouth that can be found on social media. One of the biggest advantages to this role of marketing is positive Word-of-Mouth. This feedback can come either through a comment on a blog post, a tweet, or from someone who has taken the time to write on the Facebook wall of a business.

2.5.4 B2C Marketing

According to Deiser and Newton (2013: Online), within traditional marketing, company holds one-way conversations with their consumers through the use of advertisements, newsletters, etc. However, through social media, the company has opportunity to directly communicate with customers in real time situation. This helps turn one-way conversation into two-way communication.

Some of the most popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, allow for users to have a say by commenting on posts, writing on the company's wall, or tweeting responses to a company's original tweet. These platforms, give users the ability to easily share information posted by the company.

2.5.5 Brand Marketing

In both traditional and Internet marketing, advertising and branding initiatives are almost solely done by the marketing department. However, now that social network is on the rise, (Brenner, 2012) states that marketing is the job for every employee. This is due to the fact that most employees in a company personally or professionally use

at least one social media site and every employee ends up being an extension of the company brand (Brenner, 2012). Thus, if an employee is very open on privacy settings and allows non-friends or non-followers to take a look at details on their sites, everything he or she does on the social media site can be seen and, will most likely affect the image and branding of the company.

Moreover, Johnny Spindler (2011) states that marketers need to use social media as monitoring tools to find out exactly what customers are saying about a brand or product. This can help the company find the source of influence, whether it is negative or positive so that they can either capitalize or fix it”

In Mangold & Faulds, (2009,) it states that within the brand communities and platforms that a company creates on social media, consumers communicate with a lot of other consumers very quickly and easily. This can be a huge asset to a company by gaining traction within the minds and everyday lives of their users. Additionally, if marketers are diligent at monitoring social media, it is possible to influence and shape these discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s brand and mission.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample and Population

In this study, fifteen young Thai start-up companies in various fields had been contacted for interviews, and they were picked according to the criteria that the company must be under 5 years old, based in Thailand and in different fields. However, with certain limitations, the author decided to pick the method of convenience.

Seven different company representatives agreed to be interviewed through Individual Depth Interviews (IDI's) According to Twaha K. Kaawaase from Makerere Business School, the rule for qualitative inquiries is simple: Interview respondents until what is known as the "saturation point" This is the point when the themes starts to re-occur i.e when no new information is added for each additional interviewee. This saturation point can start from 5 interviewees

For these seven start-ups, marketing officers were requested for the IDIs, however, since some of them are at the very beginning stage and do not have the position, some interviewees were CEO or the owner of the company. The interviews were conducted in English and recorded.

There are thousands of start-ups that fall into this category, however, in order to narrow down the research, certain restrictions were placed on the companies that were to be interviewed: chosen companies had to be five years old or younger (According to an article of Forbes Magazine, an interview of Neil Blumenthal, co-CEO of Warby Parker)and based in Bangkok, Thailand. The companies that fit this criterion were then contacted (either through telephone, email, Facebook, or their website) and asked to participate in the study

As many of the contacted companies are quite young, not all of them had a specific Chief Marketing Officer, so in those cases, the email was sent to the Chief Executive Officer. With the plan of interviewing between five to seven different companies, a total of 15 companies were contacted, with the full list below

ChefstalkCo.,Ltd, a fresh fruit and vegetable exporter

#Status: Interviewed

Herse and merseco., Ltd, a skincare and cosmetic producer

#Status: Interviewed

Highland magazine Co., Ltd., an alternative magazine

#Status: Interviewed

TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd., a certified organic seed company

#Status: Interviewed

Addo Solution Co., Ltd., an import & export company

#Status: Interviewed

The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd., an IT solution company

#Status: Interviewed

Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd., a Software System company

#Status: Interviewed

Socialhappen Company, a mobile advertising company

#Status: Declined

Infinet Closet Company, a fashion company

#Status: Declined

RealMeal Company, a marketplace

#Status: Declined

YogaTrail Company, an entertainment and lifestyle company

#Status: Declined

Universal Partner, a Business Consultant

#Status: Silent

Wisanu Trading, a trading company

#Status: Silent

Envirosell (Thailand) Co., Ltd., a market research company

#Status: Agreed at later stage

Global Security, a stock broker company

#Status: Declined

3.2 Research Methodology

Qualitative Research

According to Twaha K. Kaawaase from Makerere Business School, the rule for

qualitative inquiries is simple: Interview respondents until what is known as the "saturation point" This is the point when the themes start to re-occur i.e when no new information is added for each additional interviewee. This saturation point can start from 5 interviewees

In this study, fifteen young Thai start-up companies in various fields had been contacted for interviews, however, seven different company representatives agreed to be interviewed through Individual Depth Interviews (IDI's)

3.3 Data Collection

7 start-up' representatives in Bangkok were individually interviewed for this study. The list of participating companies is shown below.

ChefstalkCo.,Ltd (fresh fruit and vegetable exporter, founded in 2010)
#Interviewed at Cloud 47, Silom on January 5, 2015

Herse and merseco.,ltd (skincare and cosmetic company, started in 2012)
#Interviewed at Casa Lapin, Aree on January 3, 2015

Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd. (Alternative Magazine, started in 2014)
#Interviewed at Highland Coffee House, Saphanmai on February 9, 2015

TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd. (Certified organic seedcomopany, founded in 2013)
#Interviewed at Waft Me, Chaengwattana on February 14, 2015

Addo Solution Co., Ltd. (Import and Export Company, founded in 2010)
#Interviewed at Som Tum Bangkok, Aree on February 8, 2015

The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd. (IT Solutions, founded in 2013)
#Interviewed at Swissotel, Ratchada on January 18, 2015

Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd. (Software Systems, founded in 2014)

#Interviewed at Dean and Deluca, Mahanakorn on February 20, 2015

The interviews were held at a location convenient for the respondents, either at their company headquarters or a quiet coffee shop. Allowing the respondents the opportunity to choose the time and place of their interview ensured their comfort with the settings and the openness to speak freely.

While the majority of the respondents are Thais, the researcher asked for an interview in English, so that it is more accurate when transcribed for the Appendix of this study. For those who are not comfortable with this arrangement, the recording will be in Thai and the author will translate them into English.

The researcher will try to keep each interview under an hour long, but if some respondents are comfortable with the interview and willing to share more experience, relevant parts of the conversations will be transcribed.

The researcher prepared a set of open questions, which were reviewed by the Thesis's advisor and 2 marketing experts, to ask those company's representatives (Questions shown in Chapter 4.)

Also, the researcher cleared marketing terms that could lead to confusion before the interview starts.

3.4 Data Analysis

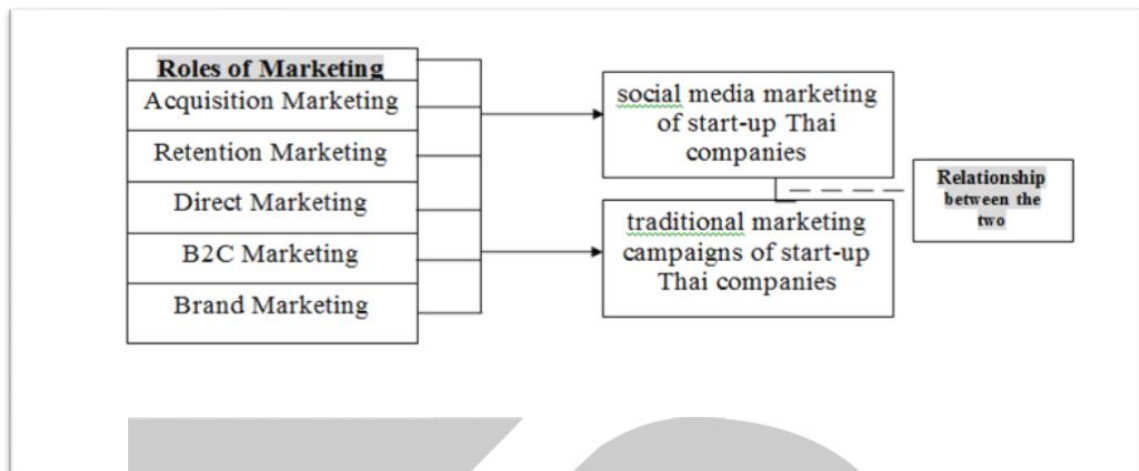


Figure 3.1 Theoretical Framework

The answers gathered from each respondent were analyzed according to the criteria shown above, which will mainly focus on the how each role of marketing affect their marketing practices in social media and tradition marketing. Simply put, they were analyzed by cross-checking each answer, that derives from each role of marketing, with its role. Then, interpret how they fall into each marketing practices of the company, namely social media marketing and traditional marketing. So as to determine how each answer the research questions of, firstly, what roles that social media play within Thai start-ups and secondly, what effect, if any, they have on the traditional marketing initiatives.

This is to see the relevance between the answers and the main purpose of this thesis, which is to examine how young companies are making use of social media marketing and traditional marketing and within their overall marketing strategies.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The process for Data Collection follows this procedure.

1. Send email to potential respondents, asking for the Chief Marketing Officer, if none, then refer to Chief Executive Officer.
2. Ask for their background in Marketing, if not, prepare to explain the terms used for this research such as retention marketing and acquisition marketing, so that they

fully understand the scope of the research and can explain their current marketing activities.

3. After the researcher and the respondents agreed upon an interview time, the interview will be conducted and recorded for this study.



4.1 Research Findings

The interview results were broken down into parts according to each question put forward for each company participating in this research. However, full transcripts of the interviews can be seen in Appendix.

Table 4.1 Results for IDI Question 1

#1.How does your company utilize traditional marketing?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Chefstalk Co., Ltd	Mainly use direct sale. The marketing team has to build friendship with chefs in each hotel of interests in order to get the purchasing orders and they need to keep maintaining the contacts
Herse and Merse Co., Ltd	Since cosmetics depend heavily on knowledge of customer behavior, Herse focuses their traditional marketing efforts in rural area outside of big cities of Thailand by taking advantage of going to see potential customers in the community.
Highland Magazine Co., Ltd.	For traditional media mostly employ the use of posters, launching campaigns, magazines, branded t-shirt but t shirt is for sale and they limit the give-away of magazine to reduce cost, they are shifting to online magazine
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Hardly use traditional media but sometimes depend on brochures still they have to limit the amount for give-away because it is costly.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Use Connections and lobbying as the main marketing method but they also have to employ catalogues and brochure in order to show interested clients of the existing products and services.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Mainly use traditional networking with friends and relevant people in order to acquire jobs and get the work of mouth for the company out in the market.

Table 4.2 Results for IDI Question 2

#2. How does your company use social media as a marketing tool?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and Merse Co.,Ltd	the company does not focus on social media but each sale representative sets up their own website and social media pages to get their local people to get involved for example: some use knovy.com to sell the product, another one use IG to sell their product.

Highland Magazine Co., Ltd.	Depend heavily on social media by communicate the Highland brand with new updated information, news, events to potential customers with an up-beat manner to become viral. Also they post vdos, posting pictures online on social networking sites and even do e-commerce by selling products there. Also, social media is a way to perform customer relationship management.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Sets up Facebook, instgram pages and also use blogging to influence people to make decision on their product. They constantly maintain activities on social media sites to try to shape the opinion more than 4 times per week.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Hardly use social media to market the products, they target focused group, niche market and their main clients are government and public sectors such as police, army. However, they heavily use LINE application and free social media platforms such as Facebook and Google Hangout to maintain good relationship by opening up relevant groups for each category of the product to be tight with customers to give updates and feedback to them.
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Beginning to try to use social media such as Facebook, Line (Groups) and e-magazine posting on social sites to try to grab younger customers' attention and to keep them posted with the company's promotions on social media.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Adjusting marketing technique to attract younger generations of company's owners who are one of their target groups by engaging in social media such as giving out information and promotions on facebook.

Tables 4.3 Results for IDI Question 3

#3.What kind of marketing techniques do you use to acquire new customers?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and Merse Co., Ltd	Face to face communication is the main method used here in order to gain customer feedback and to maintain good customer relationship and focus on improvements they can make with the products with regards of those feedbacks.
Highland Magazine Co., Ltd.	Try to create brand awareness by sharing, posting, and tagging relevant information as much as possible on social media. They are very consistent on these activities as they post something every day. Also, they are clear on brand positioning and brand story telling of being an alternative magazine tackling on tough topic in the society such as marijuana and arranging a seminar at a university.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Posting interesting pictures, sharing videos, come up with interesting and related topics for discussion within their social media platforms and chatting with customers, putting together events, and giving out promotions.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Mostly use different Connections and networking and other traditional techniques to get people they already know to introduce them to new customers and relevant people hoping for future cooperation which yield effective results.
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Use social media sites and online world to search and look for customers mostly different public organizations such as Transportation Authority and make phone calls to get in touch with the IT department of the ministry then they have to go and present the project and keep good relationship with them. Also, they frequently update the company profiles on websites and advertise their company on magazines and newspapers.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Try to attract younger generations with and social media info. However, they use traditional media as a main gateway by trying to expand the customers base through connections and networks. They use traditional media such as magazine and brochures to help acquire new customers.

Table 4.4 Results for IDI Question 4

4. What kind of marketing techniques do you use to retain customers?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Chefstalk Co., Ltd	In order to retain customers, chefstalk normally use facebook to keep the relationship with chef in each hotel in order to get repeating purchasing orders because the company is located in Thailand and it's more cost effective. Some existing chefs regularly place order on the company's facebook page.
Herse and Merse Co., Ltd	Herse and Merse spends on sales representatives to keep customers coming back however each sale representative constantly keep relationship with their customers through their facebook pages and line. One sale representative takes care of the maximum of 15 customers and if any sale representative wants to increase their sales then they find team members.
Highland Magazine Co., Ltd.	Social media marketing is the main method for customer relationship management. They promote the quality of products and services, constantly improving ways of reaching to clients.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	In order to keep communicating quality services promotions, set up meet & greet campaigns, they continue to upload and keeping up activities on social media sites to keep existing customers up to date and to stay in trend.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Constantly stay in touch with customers online through customer Relationship Program as well as using catalogs to send to existing customers, send them gifts, fruit baskets, with brochures attached and company's name cards stapled to create their own occasion to start a project with existing customers rather than waiting for New Year.
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Retain customers by keeping contact, they do not make too many phone calls because it makes them look bad, instead they use social media to keep in touch by keep updating the technology with customers, send emails about services they provide.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Keeping contact with current customers on the company's website and social media platforms, also they keep updating the technology upcoming trend that would be beneficial with the customers.

Table 4.5 Results for IDI Question 5

#5. Do you use advertising media to directly reach out to consumers, calling for them to make direct response? Please explain.

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Chefstalk Co.,Ltd	They only use facebook page to remind the customer that they still exist but not much activities since the results are clearer with face to face communication with chefs
Herse and Merse Co.,Ltd	The company has the main website to make sure people can find them online, however each sale representatives is responsible to maintain their social pages such as facebook and instagrams to increase the sales and call for customers to purchase.
Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd.	The magazine asks for people's participation in many of their events such as the up-coming seminar on legalizing marijuana at a university, raising money for the project through facebook pages and trying to build a community.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	They share photos, videos, and facts about relevant product to gain new audience, and to create a viral on social media.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Join platform that businesses around the world register to asking them to check the company out if the products offered and needed could be matched. Also, they ask for customer's respond on joining events they created.
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Advertise about free seminars to get customers' attention and asking them to respond. Then they keep contact by using traditional and social media such as posting about seminar or sending gifts to connect wid new customers.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Sometimes they hire magazine to produce articles on them to gain customer's attention and set up campaigns on facebook that invite customers and potential customers to participate in exchange for gifts or discounts on their services.

Table 4.6 Results for IDI Question 6

#6. Do you market your products directly to consumers (B2C)?
Please explain

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and merseco.,ltd	In baby product, Herse brings them directly to customers by giving free products to all new-born in some hospitals in BKK. They also educate the parents on how to take care of the baby by using their products. This is an effective sales method as the average of birth is over 80 a month in private hospitals
Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd.	They reach out to target communities to promote their alternative products and try to build a community as well as publicly announcing their activities on different social media platforms calling for responds.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	After having somewhat high amount of fan base on social sites, the company creates get-together events to do organic planting and visit organic farms together to set good moods for product purchasing opportunity.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Through the use of platform, the company engages with businesses around the world to register to advertise their products using famous Business Matching Platforms such as Alibaba, Global Sources, Trade India, and Trade China. They contact customers and suppliers with high-potential profiles and proceed for buying and selling, import and export
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	They constantly bring products to customers and potential customers to present and auction for projects. Also, they try to take advantages of previous successful stories and use them to convince

Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd. They look for potential customers online and contact them directly before directly bringing the products for them to trial, mostly governmental sectors. Also they create work of mouth and ask for contact expansion when one job is finished.

Table 4.7 Results for IDI Question 7

#7. How do you create brand loyalty, awareness?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and merse Co., Ltd	Try to create recognition by constantly getting the customers to try the products especially baby products that they give away for free. They also educate parents of how to take care of the baby as an corporate social responsibility program to raise the brand's awareness.
Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd.	Create Brand loyalty by building a community or bringing exiting communities together at the same time as communicating the story of the brand's origin to customers and potential customer alike. Other than that, they maintain the jobs of creating engaging with customers on daily basis to build tight relationship.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Create brand awareness by strongly focusing on the quality in product and services as well as claiming for lost or dissatisfaction and warranty. Differentiate the brand design and try to build an organic farming sense of belonging and how that could be done together as a member of TCOS family.
Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Connections have been valued to create brand awareness and acceptance. Since the customers are focused group, traditional methods are more frequently used to keep the relationship, also constantly throwing events and attending others' social events to keep the connections strong.

The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	To create brand awareness, they use both traditional marketing and social media ones. For traditional, magazines columns are sponsored, create their own IT magazine quarterly and getting the company's name out to the niche target group. For social media, they keep existing (mostly governmental) customers happy by posting success stories online.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Starting to focus more on social media such as posting interesting bits of their e-magazine to try to excite and not bore the younger customers. They come up with a trial period to create loyalists and give them special packages. Also, they still use reliable brochure and professional magazine as well.

Table 4.8 Results for IDI Question 8

#8. Can you give me an estimated annual spending on traditional marketing initiatives, on social media marketing initiatives?

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and Merse Co., Ltd	For products promotion and trial roughly around 300,000 baht not including sales representative's trainings. For social media not much extra cost except overtime works for some staff.
Highland Magazine Co., Ltd.	Around 30,000 baht for traditional marketing method Around 15000 or less for social media for page design services.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Not investing a lot on traditional media, so less than 5000 baht per year. For traditional media, the company's owner does it himself.

Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	For Alibaba, there are both Free user and Premium Users, they have to pay 399-1200 US dollars for premium fees per year. Also, they pay around 500,000 baht to a million baht a year for taking customers abroad and buy them expensive gifts Social Media – no extra budget and they use google hangout Fabebook, Line
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Annual spending for social media is no cost except for salary of staff’s responsible of this job. However, getting the facebook and blogging pages to look good costs them 10,000 baht For traditional ones, newspapers and magazine feature or news coverage cost them around 5000 baht per one year and 60,000 per year for all the magazines
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	For Social media platforms, maintaining activities and getting the pages to look professional, good and having reliable staff to take their questions cost them a staff’s salary (300,000 baht yearly) since he is directly hired for this purpose. For traditional media they have to pay around 100,000 per year for newspaper stories, brochures, pamphlets, name cards, etc.

Table 4.9 Results for IDI Question 9

#9. Which of the two marketing initiatives do you think is more effective for your company? Please explain.

Company Interviewed	Key Answers
Herse and merseco.,ltd	Traditional Marketing method and direct sales works best Herse and Merseco
Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd.	Social medias because of the speed it spreads, accurate target group, and ease of access to audience.
TCOS Thailand Co., Ltd.	Social marketing. Because they believe almost everyone in Thailand uses social media to socialize and shop more than on tv or radio. And they believe theirmy business could reach out to more audiences on social marketing. Especially our business does not need to transport big items so we can use mail delivery and collect money

online - much easier.

Addo Solution Co., Ltd.	Traditional ones because, they can get very close to clients. They believe their business needs tight relationship but not forget to keep contacting them even on social media
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.	Traditional marketing campaign since magazine newspapers and the like, keeps their marketing alive. They provide to keep contact and keep their trust that they are representing the company. Also the company rep. said that he and the company are not certain social media in Thailand and the effect of its 'noise' and cluster so decided to see the trend before investing in social media.
Managing Information Technology Co., Ltd.	Rely more on traditional marketing campaigns because when going to meet the customer face to face, company's representative including PR people can see customers' face as they speak to them and also they can get their reactions. Other than that, they believe that advertising on newspapers seems to get them recognized at higher rate than on social media.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The author followed 5 steps of analyzing qualitative data as suggested by Ellen Taylor-Powell, evaluation specialist, and Marcus Renner, research assistant, Program Development and Evaluation, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Step 1 Get to know your data

Step 2 Focus the analysis - Focus by case, individual or group.

One case

One individual

One group

Step 3 Categorize information

Identify themes or patterns

Organize them into coherent categories

Step 4 Identify patterns and connections within and between categories

Within category description

Larger categories

Relative importance

Relationships

Step 5 Interpretation – Bringing it all together

The answers gathered from each respondent were analyzed according to the criteria shown above, which will mainly focus on the how each role of marketing affect their marketing practices in social media and tradition marketing. Simply put, they were analyzed by cross-checking each answer, that derives from each role of marketing, with its role. Then, interpret how they fall into each marketing practices of the company, namely social media marketing and traditional marketing. So as to determine how each answer the research questions of, firstly, what roles that social media play within Thai start-ups and secondly, what effect, if any, they have on the traditional marketing initiatives.

The main purpose for this analysis is to see the relevance between the answers and the main purpose of this thesis, which is to examine how young companies are making use of social media marketing and traditional marketing and within their overall marketing strategies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

In this study, the researcher focused on roles of social media marketing within start-ups, young Thai companies and its effect, if any, on the use of traditional marketing methods of the company. From doing Individual Depth Interviews with seven start-ups, the results show that their practices support both theories used to guide this research which are Nelson-Field, 2012 and Wahid and Tariq, 2011.

Firstly, it turns out social media marketing was used typically for the purpose of retaining customers and traditional marketing was mainly used to acquire customers by which this result goes along with the theory of Nelson-Field, 2012.

Secondly, roles of social media marketing significantly affect the company's use of traditional marketing campaign, meaning that most companies employ social media marketing as per the society's expectation by just having sites to ensure visibility, whereas they mainly make use of traditional Public Relation methods; Connections and Networks to lobby for projects, interviews and relinquishing other marketing methods, especially for public and governmental sectors.

Thirdly, this research shows that Thai start-ups are going towards adopting social media marketing over traditional marketing strategies because they lack both funding and marketing expertise as suggested by Tariq & Wahid, 2011.

5.2 Discussions

The purposes of this study were to find the relevance between the roles of marketing (acquisition marketing, retention marketing, direct marketing, B2C marketing, and/or brand awareness) that social media marketing performs within start-ups Thai companies and what effect that it has on the company's use of traditional marketing strategy. Related studies such as Nelson-Field, 2012 and Ab

Hamid, 2013 suggested that social media marketing work most successfully for retention marketing. Also, traditional marketing is more efficient when used in acquisition marketing, which is comparable to the outcomes of this study.

5.2.1 Traditional Marketing

During the interview with Thai start-ups for this research, traditional marketing method seems to be somewhat forgotten. Even if traditional marketing was distinctly explained before the interview started, many company representatives had a hard time remembering the traditional marketing initiatives that they employed or used to employed.

However, surveys done by The Nielsen Company in 2013 suggests that the public favors traditional marketing campaigns. Also, in their study the participants said they were convinced by advertisements on television and newspaper. However, many companies representatives interviewed in this study felt somewhat different. They said mass traditional marketing was overvalued. It was surprising to learn that even though some of them acknowledge that fact that they were better known and got attention after being featured on magazine and newspaper, they still felt more confident in social media marketing than in mass traditional media.

Within the seven companies interviewed for this study, a few spend lot of money on traditional marketing strategies. However, they were mostly for PR campaigns of lobbying or securing personal connection and networks for future cooperation, mostly with governmental and public sectors.

In 2005, Barlow and Birkenhahn suggest that a suitable blend of traditional, Online and social media marketing methods have to be identified and none of them shall be ignored. However, many companies often focus on one initiative and even pick one over the other. In this study, the majority of respondent chose traditional marketing over social media marketing, citing that it is more effective because they can clearly see the results.

5.2.2 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing was obviously a popular agenda during the IDIs with seven Thai start-ups since every participating company has either facebook or instagram pages but twitter was not hot in Thailand. The absence of Twitter in Thailand is most likely because of the circumstance since Twitter is not so popular among Thai users.

However, all seven companies interviewed for this study set up a Facebook page right away after or even before the company was started. It seems that these days, Thai customers expect every company to be present on social media platforms, similar to the fact that they expect them to have phone numbers.

Most interviewees said their followers actively use facebook by either commenting, liking or even sharing their posts. In this study, a number of companies participated do not have large marketing budget. So they stated that in order to further business, they might only focus on social media marketing.

About facebook, there was something that almost all of the companies representatives mentioned, the growing clutters present on Facebook which is backings the findings of Nelson-Field in2013 that lot of companies acknowledge that Facebook has not been so effective in terms of marketing in recent years since almost everyone either people or companies are active on posting making facebook newsfeed full of “Noise,”

Other than the increasing clutters on facebook, a number of social media platforms keep changing rules for pages that companies can use. At the very beginning, all posts created by companies can be seen and shared by anyone on their friend list, followers and people who liked their pages. However, in the past years Constine (2012) explained that Facebook regulated the posting and sharing and they only allow 16 percent followers of companies’ pages to see their posts. If the companies would like the same amount of visibility, they have to pay for Facebook to use ‘sponsored and boosting posts’ even though these services use to be free of charge.

In short, from the Individual Depth Interviews with seven Thai start-ups, most companies are using social media marketing typically for the purpose of retaining customers and traditional marketing was mainly used to acquire customers. These findings go along with the theory of Nelson-Field, 2012 given in the theoretical framework of this research.

5.3 Roles of Marketing

During the individual depth interviews with the seven Thai start-ups, it was apparent that they each have the determinations of using social media on different levels. Earlier, the researcher has discussed five most prominent roles of marketing which include acquisition, direct, retention, business to customer and brand marketing to better comprehend the importance and how those start-ups make use of social media within their marketing strategies. It was obvious that those companies engage in traditional marketing in order to acquire customers. However, when it comes to using social media to retain customers the answers were less apparent. They all have social media accounts for their companies, and apparently in term of brand marketing, they feel that having social media presence these days can substitute appearance of traditional media, such as newspaper interviews, tv commercial, radio spots and this encourage them to look at traditional media in regards of focused PR campaigns or personal connection and lobbying. Some even had hard time remembering what traditional media marketing they had been using to promote their companies.

5.3.1 Acquisition Marketing

Even though the majority of companies interviewed for this research agreed that they mainly make use of traditional marketing to acquire customers, there were two companies that believed social media is a better and more of an applicable method to gain targeted customers. These two companies are TCOS Co., Ltd. and Highland Magazine. Their representatives also said that social media is an effective means of

marketing to retain customers as well. This helps clarify their lack of traditional marketing initiative usages, however, they employ some brochures and magazines explained through the company's lack of utilization of traditional marketing, except for brochures and some magazines. More than that, they accept that acquiring new customers online through social media group gatherings is an effective method, for their target customers are mostly young and active on social media.

In conclusion, it was obvious during the individual depth interviews that in order to acquire new customers, the majority of start-ups use traditional media rather than social media in their marketing initiatives.

5.3.2 Retention Marketing

During the IDIs, it was clear that the majority of interviewees favored social media for the purpose of retaining customers. This actually supports the theory of Nelson-Field, 2012 that is used to guide this research as explained in the theoretical framework.

Most interviewees even say they maintain high activities on social media pages on daily basis in order to keep close relationships with the customers and potential customers. They perform this technique by constantly finding relevant photos or vdo clips to post on their facebook pages, updating status and reminding the audience of their products or services.

Moreover, all companies participated in this study have a considerable number of followers that are involved with social media and posting on daily basis. This finding goes along with the study of Ab Hamind, 2013 who published that there is a direct connection between the act of following social media and customers' retention.

5.3.3 Direct Marketing

A couple of companies interviewed talked about the very short time required to

post something on social media and that benefits the company as a whole in its marketing initiatives. However, a couple others believed that using social media to attract customer, companies have to make effort to be creative and interesting. This findings was supported by an interview of the chief of innovation officer at BBDO, a world wide advertising agency network which is available on the company's website that 'Companies have to step up to the contest with direct marketing on social media since it is not easy or quick as it may look like.

A number of companies explain that they make use of direct marketing on their pages of social media because of the ease in coming up with products or services for focused groups and can be tailored for users from different sources.

5.3.4 B2C Marketing

Employing this marketing technique allows companies to communicate with their target groups and existing customers, enabling them to have unique connection with them, which is unlike traditional advertisement such as in magazines or newspapers. Hence employing B2C together with other marketing initiatives allows for greater opportunities for optimistic WOM. This goes in line with the research result of Marshall, 2012 which says that making use of the retweet and sharing features, customers are generating very positive word of mouth to their friends and networks about the product or service of the company they adore.

Noted that all companies participated in this research is a Business to Customer Company except for Addo Solution, which is a business-to- business (B2B) company. Nonetheless, this company does perform some B2C marketing.

Due to these positive benefits, a lot of companies interviewed are attracted to the use of Business to Customer marketing, especially on their pages of social media. However, B2C was not the main focus of the study of roles of social media on the traditional marketing campaign of Thai start-ups since the interviewees' lack of knowledge of the topic making the researcher decided to touch upon this topic slightly.

5.3.5 Brand Marketing

According to the IDIs with seven Thai start-ups, brand marketing was second only to retention marketing in terms of popularity as the roles of marketing used within their social marketing initiatives.

Most of the companies discussed the importance of using social media in the company's marketing campaigns to help influence customers in terms of their image and to start conversation with them to enhance this method on the social media and networking pages. This research result confirms the findings from Mangold and Faulds in 2009.

Moreover, on the opposite side, negative WOM can easily damage the image of the brand and the groups that companies have worked hard to nurture, meaning that it is absolutely important for the companies to keep inspecting conversations taking place on social media and give clarification or explanation when it is needed as a damage control or even try to turn it into a positive word of mouth.

A number of companies admit that they have somehow affected by some negative word of mouth on their social media pages. Also a research done by Corstjens and Umblijs in 2012 suggests that the higher the ability of a company to reply to such negativity on the social media sites, the better the personal relation that company can form in the mind of the customers or bystanders. None of the companies interviewed have been badly damaged by negative words of mouth as we have seen in the US, eg. the human error of tweeting pornographic photo to the followers of a US airlines, these companies realize how that can badly damage the brand image and keep an eye on the possibility of human errors on social media pages.

5.4 Recommendation for further research

For recommendation, extra researches can be done in order to collect more

information from start-ups involved in this study to clearly figure out which marketing strategy is more efficient. However, it was interesting to learn that very few companies ever did research about how their customers have learnt about their businesses or services. This is clearly a lack in knowledge and it is an unproductive in terms of marketing.

Moreover, it would be effective and interesting to repeat this research in a few years to see if the trends that we have discovered from the seven Thai start-ups are still active in the future.

While it is true that Individual Depth Interviews is an effective mean for this research, it would be interesting to perform a qualitative research to see how the results would be on the roles of social media within the traditional marketing methods of young Thai start-ups in Thailand with a few more of the Thai companies within this category. By doing that, it would have been less focused and might not get as much in-depth interviews results as were discovered from this study, however, it would be more effective and might disclose more valuable information during the research. Moreover with less restrictions on time matter, it would be more effective to conduct similar Individual In-depth interviews with more respondents within start-ups young Thai companies.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

List of Interview Questions

1. How does your company utilize traditional marketing? (Defining traditional marketing as "advertising through television, radio, print ads (i.e. newspaper and magazines and internet ads, as well as attending conferences and other PR campaigns

Probing Questions

Which of these traditional marketing platforms does your company use? When did your company begin to use traditional marketing?

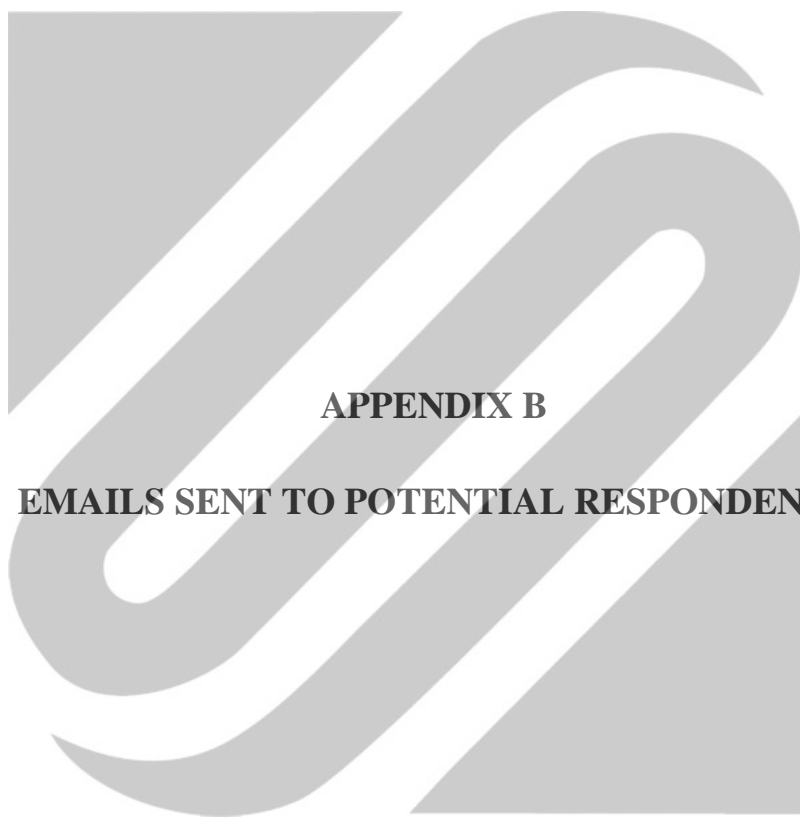
How active are you in your traditional marketing campaigns?

2. How does your company use social media as a marketing tool? (Defining social media as "forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)"

Probing Questions

What social media platforms do you use, i.e. twitter, Facebook, blogging? How active are you in updating these platforms? How long has your company been active on these social media platforms?

3. What kind of marketing techniques do you use to acquire new customers?
4. What kind of marketing techniques do you use to retain customers?
5. Do you use advertising media to directly reach out to consumers, calling for them to make direct response? Please explain.
6. Do you market your products directly to consumers? Please explain
7. How do you create brand loyalty, awareness?
8. Can you give me an estimated annual spending on traditional marketing initiatives?
On social media marketing initiatives?
9. Which marketing initiatives do you think is more effective for your company?



APPENDIX B

EMAILS SENT TO POTENTIAL RESPONDENTS

Emails Sent to Potential Respondents

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Nattasuda Anusonadisai and I am finishing my MBA in Marketing at Stamford University, Thailand. My final thesis is on social media marketing, and I am conducting interviews with young Thai companies to better understand their marketing practices. I would be very interested in interviewing your [INSERT COMPANY NAME] for my research.

The interview will be conducted in English (as my thesis must be written in English) and recorded, so that the transcription of the interview can be included within the appendix of the thesis. The interview will take no longer than one hour. I would like to interview your Chief Marketing Officer and ask seven questions about [INSERT COMPANY NAME]'s marketing strategies. The questions will all be related to my research question which are..

What kind of role does social media play within start-ups Thai companies, and what effect, if any, does it have on the company's employment of traditional marketing methods?

For the purpose of my research, traditional marketing is defined as advertising (television, radio, print ads, including newspaper, magazines, internet banners) as well as strategies like PR and mailings, whereas Social media marketing is defined as strategies centered on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Blogging, Pinterest, LinkedIn, etc.) in an effort to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to interact with the company (retweet, ask questions, share with their own personal networks, etc.).

Please let me know, at your earliest convenience, if you are willing to participate in this study. I can schedule the interviews at any time during December, 2014.

Warm regards,

Nattasuda Anusonadisai

Email address: feb_fon@hotmail.com

Mobile Phone: 081-7197701

(Conversations had during the interviews were recorded, with permission of the interviewees. Transcript of each interview was added.)





APPENDIX C

INDIVIDUAL DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Individual Depth Interviews of the seven companies

Company 1

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Ms. Sinsupa Wannasut,
Managing Director, Chefstalk Co.,Ltd

Type of Company : Export fresh fruit and vegetable to top stars hotels in the Maldives

Founded in : 2012

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Cloud 47, Silom on January 5, 2015

We mainly use direct sale. The marketing team has to build friendship with chefs in each hotel of interests in order to get the purchasing orders and they need to keep maintaining the contacts. Other than setting up facebook and instagram pages for the company, Chefstalk does not use much of social media as a marketing tool since they believe it is more effective to stick with the connection and networking.

We try to learn the behaviors of people in each area and use local people to promote the product that match with behavior. Mainly focusing on traditional marketing techniques. In order to retain customers, chefstalk normally use facebook to keep the relationship with chef in each hotel in order to get repeating purchasing orders because the company is located in Thailand and it's more cost effective. Some existing chefs regularly place order on the company's facebook page.

We only use facebook page to remind the customer that we still exist but not much activities since the results are clearer with face to face communication with chefs Chefstalk sales representatives build relationship with the chefs before trying to close a deal with them and most of the time they bring products directly to the chefs to convince of the quality and good services.

Method for creating brand loyalty and awareness for chefstalk is to strongly maintaining good connection with chef and restaurants and to have good services when unexpected situation occurs. Also, expand the good word of mouth on their social network pages

Roughly around 20% of the revenue for our company comes from traditional media, depending on how well the business goes with particular chef and restaurants. We do not spend much on social media except for marketing staff's salary.

We think it depends on the product and target group whether which marketing method is more effective, but traditional one works best with chefstalk since we get to see feedbacks and act on it right away.

Company 2

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee: Ms. Sasikarn Worapironruk,
Managing Director, Herse and Merse Co.,Ltd

Type of Company : Skincare and Cosmetic Products

Founded in : 2012

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Casa Lapin, Aree on January 3, 2015

Since cosmetics depend heavily on knowledge of customer behavior, Herse focuses on traditional marketing efforts in rural area outside of big cities of Thailand by taking advantage of going to see potential customers in the community to explain and try to change customer behaviors. So mostly they use sales representatives. We believe this group of customers need something tangible and explicit. So in big city as Bangkok, Chiangmai, Koen Kan, Phuket, we have sale representative.

We believe that cosmetics depend heavily on knowledge of customer behavior, Herse focuses our traditional marketing efforts in rural area outside of big cities of Thailand by taking advantage of going to see potential customers in the community to explain and try to change customer behaviors. So mostly we use sales representatives. We do not focus on social media but each sale representative sets up their own website and social media pages to get their local people to get involved for example: some use knovy.com to sell the product, another one use IG to sell there product.

Face to face communication is the main method used here in order to gain customer feedback and to maintain good customer relationship and focus on improvements we can make with the products with regards of those feedbacks.

Herse and Merse depends on sales representatives to keep customers coming back however each sale representative constantly keep relationship with their customers through their facebook pages and line.

One sale representative takes care of the maximum of 15 customers and if any sale representative wants to increase their sales then they find team members. Our company has the main website to make sure people can find us online, however each sale representatives is responsible to maintain their social pages such as facebook and instagrams to increase the sales and call for customers to purchase.

In baby product, Herse bring them directly to customers by giving free products to all new-borns in some hospitals in BKK. We also educate the parents on how to take care of the baby by using their products. This is an effective sales method as the average of birth is over 80 a month in private hospitals in Thailand.

In order to try to create recognition, we constantly getting the customers to try the products especially baby products that we give away for free. We also educate parents of how to take care of the baby as an corporate social responsibility program to raise the brand's awareness.

For products promotion and trial roughly around 300,000 baht not including sales representative's trainings. For social media not much extra cost except overtime works for some staff. We believe that Traditional Marketing method and direct sales works best at Herse and Merse.

Company 3

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Mr. Peth Worasakul
Marketing Officer, Highlandmagazine Co., Ltd.

Type of Company : Alternative magazine focusing on herbal living

Founded in : 2014

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Highland Coffee House, Saphanmai on February 9, 2015

For traditional media, we mostly employ the use of posters, launching campaigns, magazines, branded t-shirt, but we do have t-shirts for sale and we limit the give-away of magazine to reduce cost because we are shifting to online magazine. We depend heavily on social media by communicating the Highland brand with new updated information, news, events to potential customers with an up-beat manner to become viral. Also, we post vdos, pictures online on social networking sites and even do e-commerce by selling products there. Also, social media is a way for us to perform customer relationship management.

Moreover, we try to create brand awareness by sharing, posting, and tagging relevant information as much as possible on social media. They are very consistent on these activities as they post something everyday.

Also, they are clear on brand positioning and brand story telling of being an alternative magazine tackling on tough topic in the society such as marijuana and arranging a seminar at a university. All of which were done by communicating through different media and constantly updating reaching out to new audience.

For us social media marketing is the main method for Customer relationship management as they promote the quality of products and services. Also, they are

constantly improving ways of reaching to clients and vice versa. Moreover, our magazine asks for people's participation in many of events such as the up-coming seminar on legalizing marijuana at Dhurakij Bundit university, raising money for the project through facebook pages and trying to build a community.

What we try to do is to reach out to target communities to promote our alternative products and try to build a community as well as publicly announcing our activities on different social media platforms calling for responds. We create Brand loyalty by building a community or bringing exiting communities together at the same time as communicating the story of the brand's origin to customers and potential customer alike. Other than that, we maintain the jobs of creating engaging with customers on daily basis to build tight relationship.

In terms of spending, last year we spent around 30,000 baht for traditional marketing method and around 15000 or less for social media for page design services. We reckon that social media is a more effective marketing method because of the speed it spreads. It helps us reach accurate target group with an ease of access by the audience.

Company 4

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Mr. Nattapon Palkalwongnaayutthaya,
Marketing Chief of TCOS Co., Ltd

Type of Company : Certified organic seeds

Founded in : 2014

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Waft Me, Chaengwattana on
February 14, 2015

We hardly use traditional media, but sometimes we depend on brochures but we still have to limit the amount for giveaways because it is costly. We set up Facebook, instagram pages and also use blogging to influence people to make decision on their product. We constantly maintain activities on social media sites to try to shape the opinion more than 4 times per week. We do this by posting interesting pictures, sharing videos, come up with interesting and related topics for discussion within their social media platforms and chatting with customers, putting together events, and giving out promotions.

For us, in order to keep communicating our quality services, promotions, we set up meet & greet campaigns and continue to upload and keep up activities on social media sites to keep existing customers up-to-date and to stay in trend.

We share photos, videos, and facts about relevant product to gain new audience, and to create a viral on social media. Moreover, after having somewhat high amount of fan base on social sites, our company creates get-together events to do organic planting and visit organic farms together to set good moods for product purchasing opportunity.

We create brand awareness by strongly focusing on the quality in product and services as well as claiming for lost or dissatisfaction and warranty. We differentiate the brand design and try to build an organic farming sense of belonging and how that could be done together as a member of TCOS family. We do not invest a lot on traditional media, so less than 5000 baht per year and for traditional media, the company's owner does it himself.

We think social marketing is more effective because we believe almost everyone in Thailand uses social media to socialize and shop more than on tv or radio and we believe that our my business could reach out to more audiences on social marketing. Especially our business does not need to transport big items so we can use mail delivery and collect money online - much easier.

Company 5

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Mr. Kerati Hirunwiboon
Managing Director, Addo Solution Co.,Ltd

Type of Work : Import and Export of small and heavy machines

Founded in : 2010

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Som Tum Bangkok, Aree on February 8, 2015

For traditional media, we mainly use Connections and lobbying as the main marketing method but we also have to employ catalogues and brochure in order to show interested clients of the existing products and services. We hardly use social media to market the products, we target focused group, niche market and our main clients are government and public sectors such as police, army. However, we heavily use LINE application and free social media platforms such as Facebook and Google Hangout to maintain good relationship by opening up relevant groups for each category of the product to be tight with customers to give updates and feedback to them.

We mostly use different Connections and networking and other traditional techniques to get people that already know about us to introduce us to new customers and relevant people hoping for future cooperation, which yield effective results. Also, we constantly stay in touch with customers online through customer Relationship Program as well as using catalogs to send to existing customers, send them gifts, fruit baskets, with brochures attached and company's name cards stapled to create our own occasion to start a project with existing customers rather than waiting for New Year. These get us to find new clients as well as maintaining the relationship.

We also use joining platform that businesses around the world register to ask potential customers to check our company out if the products offered and needed could be

matched. Also, we ask for customer's respond on joining events we created. Through the use of this platform, our company is engage with businesses around the world to register to advertise their products using famous Business Matching Platforms such as Alibaba, Global Sources, Trade India, Trade China. We contact customers and suppliers with high-potential profiles and proceed for buying and selling products for import and export. Other than that, connections have been valued to create brand awareness and acceptance. Since the customers are focused group, traditional methods are more frequently used to keep the relationship, also constantly throwing events and attending others' social events to keep the connections strong.

For Alibaba, there are both Free user and Premium Users, since we want to be an the very top, we have to keep updating and matching keywords and paying 399-1200 US dollars for premium fees per year depending on the level of the package used. Also, we pay around 500,000 baht to a million baht a year to take the customers abroad sometimes and buy them expensive gifts

We think traditional method is the most effective for our company because, we can get very close to clients. We believe our business needs tight relationship and we do not forget to keep contacting them even on social media.

Company 6

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Mr. Worachat Sarsa, Managing Director,
The Excellent Communication Co., Ltd.

Type of Company : Software Systems

Founded in : 2014

Date and Place of the Interview: #Interviewed at Swissotel, Ratchada on
January 18, 2015

For traditional marketing, other than face-to-face connections maintaining, we employ magazines, newspapers and host seminars. Also, we make direct telephone calls and meeting up with buyers. Moreover, we are beginning to try to use social media such as Facebook, Line (Groups) and e-magazine posting on social sites to try to grab younger customers' attention and to keep them posted with the company's promotions on social media

Moreover, we normally use social media sites and online world to search and look for customers mostly different public organizations such as Transportation Authority and make phone calls to get in touch with the IT department of the ministry then they have to go and present the project and keep good relationship with them. Also, we frequently update the company profiles on websites and advertise their company on magazines and newspapers.

In order to retain customers, we keep contacts with them. We do not make too many phone calls, though because it makes us look bad, instead we use social media to keep in touch by keep updating the technology with customers, send emails about services they provide We also advertise about free seminars to get customers' attention and ask them to respond. Then we keep contact by using traditional and social media such as posting about seminar or sending gifts to connect with new customers.

We also constantly bring products to customers and potential customers to present and auction for projects. Also, we try to take advantages of previous successful stories and use them to convince customers to start using our products. In order to create brand awareness, we use both traditional marketing and social media ones. As for traditional marketing, we use magazines columns are sponsored, create our own IT magazine quarterly and getting the company's name out to the niche target group. For social media, we keep existing (mostly governmental) customers happy by posting successful stories online.

About annual spending, for social media, there is no cost, except for salary of staff who is responsible of the job. However, getting the facebook and blogging pages to look good costs us around 10,000 baht at the beginning. For traditional ones, newspapers and magazine feature or news coverage cost us around 5000 baht per year and 60,000 per year for all the magazines

We think traditional marketing campaign is more effective for our company than social media ones. They provide to keep contact and keep their trust that they are representing the company. We are not certain with the effectiveness of social media in Thailand. Also there is a lot of 'noise' and cluster on Facebook right now. So we decided to see the trend before investing in social media.

Company 7

Topic : Roles of Social Media on the Marketing Campaigns of Thai Start-ups in Bangkok

Interviewee : Mr. Palath Tocharoenthanapol,
Owner of Managing Information Technology

Type of company : IT Solutions

Founded in : 2013

Date and Place of the Interview : #Interviewed at Dean and Deluca, Mahanakorn on February 20, 2015

We mainly use traditional networking with friends and relevant people in order to acquire jobs and get the word of mouth for the company out in the market. Moreover, we adjust marketing technique to attract younger generations of companies' owners (customers) who are one of our target groups by engaging in social media such as giving out information and promotions on facebook. Even though we try to attract younger generations with social media info, however, we use traditional media as a main gateway by trying to expand the customer base through connections and networks. We also use traditional media such as magazine and brochures to help acquire new customers.

Other than that, we also keep contacts with current customers on the company's website and social media platforms and keep updating the technology and upcoming trend that would be beneficial to the customers.

Sometimes we hire magazine to produce articles on our company or CEOs to gain customer's attention and set up campaigns on facebook that invite customers and potential customers to participate in exchange for gifts or discounts on the services.

Also, we look for potential customers online and contact them individually before directly bringing the products for them to trial, mostly governmental sectors, in order

to create word of mouth and ask for contact expansion when one job is finished. At the moment we are starting to focus more on social media such as posting interesting bits of their e-magazine to try to excite and not bore the younger customers. We come up with a trial period to create loyalists and give them special packages. Despite the difference, we still use reliable brochures and professional magazines as well.

We believe that for Social media platforms, maintaining activities and getting the pages to look professional, good and having reliable staff to take their questions cost them a staff's salary (300,000 baht yearly) since he is directly hired for this purpose. For traditional media we have to pay around 100,000 per year for newspaper stories, brochures, pamphlets, name cards, etc.

For our company, we rely more on traditional marketing campaigns because when going to meet the customer face to face, company's representative including PR people can see customers' face as they speak to them and also they can get their reactions. Other than that, we believe that advertising on newspapers seems to get us recognized at higher rate than on social media.

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Nattasuda Anusonadisai
DATE OF BIRTH	5 th February 1988
EDUCATION	
YEAR	MASTER'S DEGREE
2013-2015	Master of Business Administration
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