Cultural influences on the social network marketing effectiveness: A case Study in Thailand

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EFO705 Master Thesis in Business Studies with Specialization in International Marketing

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Västerås, Sweden
4th June 2012
Abstract

DATE | 4th June 2012

UNIVERSITY | Mälardalen University (Mälardalens högskola)
School of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology

COURSE | Master Thesis in Business Studies with Specialization in International Marketing

COURSE CODE | EF0705

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TITLE | Cultural influences on the social network marketing effectiveness: A case study in Thailand.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS | How does collectivism influence the effectiveness of social network marketing?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY | The purpose of this thesis is to investigate and analyze whether the cultural dimension of collectivism among Thais has an influential impact on the effectiveness of social network marketing implementation on clothing retailing companies toward online customers or not.

METHODOLOGY | This thesis has employed both primary and secondary data to operationalize the conceptual framework. A questionnaire given to 160 respondents and the interview of 2 Thai expert marketers has been carried out to operationalize this research question.

CONCLUSION | The collectivistic behaviors among Thais show a slightly positive relationship which supports the effectiveness of social network marketing implementation. The other influential factors, apart from collectivism, are detergency in educational levels, knowledge of using social network, smartphone trends, and internet facility readiness.

KEY WORDS | Social networks, Social network marketing, Social media, Collectivism, Individualism, Hofstede, Culture, Thailand
Acknowledgement

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the following persons, without them this research would not be possible:

First of all, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the interviewees, Ms. Thunsuda Limsiripothong and the social network manager, who kindly provided us precious time for the interviews and quality information as well as extra knowledge for the project. We would like to extend our gratitude to all the survey respondents who spent the valuable time with our questionnaire.

We also would like to extend our appreciation for our direct project supervisor, Mr. Konstantin Lampou. His kind comments and feedbacks have improved our work greatly. Besides, we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Tobias Larsson and Mrs. Eva Maaninen-Ölsson for guiding and advising us through the courses.

Furthermore, we would like to express our appreciation to all of our seminar members for the useful and creative comments that help us to make it through the project and also gain improvements.

Additionally, we would like to extend our thanks to all friends in the international marketing program who shared plenty of memorable experiences and ideas for our work, especially Mr. Mark Phillips who proofs our grammar and provides us with his useful suggestions. At the same time, we would like to extend our appreciation to all friends in Thailand who spent their time with our questionnaire. We cannot wait to meet up with them, very soon.

Last but not least, we would like to thank to our families who subsidize and provide us the opportunities and fund to study abroad and receive wonderful experiences at Mälardalen University, Västerås, Sweden.

Phanugorn Poo-im
Västerås, May 28\textsuperscript{th} 2012

Sangkan Savaikiat
Västerås, May 28\textsuperscript{th} 2012
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1. Introduction

This chapter is to introduce the background of this thesis in order to illustrate and clarify the problem and purpose that will be carried out in this thesis.

1.1 Background

Social networks play important roles as communicative tools and channels for many people (Stelzner, 2011). Eighty two percent of 1.2 billion online populations, among 171 countries, are social network sites. This percentage shows that people are gradually connected via and undisputable getting used to social networks according to the Comscore (2011, p. 4) incorporation report, the global leader in measuring the digital world and preferred source of digital business analytics. What exactly they are then. Social networks are online services that allow the users to create their own profiles, to participate with other people within their network, and to explore the existing network according to Boyd and Ellison (2007). Further details and definitions of social network are presented in appendix I.

Social networks are not only the services that let people communicate or share files with each other, but they also serve the business purposes (Stelzner, 2011). Marketers acknowledge and gradually make use of social network since implementing social network for marketing can increase the operational flexibility and reduce the costs (Stelzner, 2011). According to the study conducted by Stelzner (2011), on 3,342 marketers as survey participants, shows that 93% of participants used social network for marketing purposes. Moreover, 90% of samples claimed that social network is an important marketing channel for their businesses. For example, a very well-known car manufacturer like Toyota has also used Second Life, the virtual world network, to promote its product. Not only do businesses use social networks for their marketing, sometimes, even an important person like Barack Obama, the US president does. He uses Twitter to offer his opinions and his political views into his network to make people aware of his acts. He used social networks for marketing himself to the public. Social networking is, now, widely used around the world, not only particular in the US, according to the Communities and Local Government (2008, p. 8-14), it was evident in the United Kingdom where a community aims for decentralizing governmental authority.

From the high result of social network usage for marketing purposes, social networks and marketing are considered to be very interesting issues for a study. However, there are not many case studies of social network marketing available in Thailand. Therefore, in this thesis, Thailand is selected as a case study due to the similar interests and the values contributed to social network marketing shared by the authors. Thailand is also considered as a potential nation that
provides high opportunities in running business according to the result from the World Bank Survey of Ease of Doing Business in June 2011 (Philippe, 2012). Thailand was ranked as the 3rd well performed country in Asia regarding business opportunities, which catch investors’ interests (Philippe, 2012).

Previous studies indicate that Thai corporations made progress of using social network but one of the main obstacles is the cultural issue, especially collectivism as reported by Burson-Masteller Asia-Pacific a global public relations and communications firm-in 2011. Collectivism is the key concept reflected on the people who are emotional dependence of the people with respect to the groups that they are belonged to (Hofstede & Mooij, 2010). In cooperate use of social networks study in Thailand from Burson-Masteller (2011), the results shows that Thais reserve to explicitly make an online conversation.

Since cultural issues regarding collectivism show the obscure influences on social network and marketing, the concrete result should be conducted to determine the interrelations between collectivism and social network marketing effectiveness. In order to avoid uncontrollable factors, a particular business field was selected based on the high relevance of the business marketing conducts that associated with social network and marketing. The clothing retail business is an interesting field for the scope of study on social network marketing. Clothing and jewelry goods have the highest amount of online transactions in Thai markets, according to The Thai National Statistical Office in the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (2010).

1.2 Problem statement

The authors have extra interests in social media and networks. One of the most popular social networks in Thailand is Facebook accounting for 75.8 % of the market and it now becomes highly involved with everyday life of Thais, especially younger generations (Burson-Marsteller Asia-Pacific, 2011). The study of Burson-Masteller Asia-Pacific (2011) claimed that the cultural dimension of collectivism might be an influential factor that goes against the social network marketing effectiveness in Thailand.

Even though the study indicated that collectivism might have an influential impact on the effectiveness of social network marketing implementation in Thailand, yet there are not many substantial researches regarding this issue. Therefore, this area is indeed necessary. In order to understand the interrelations between collectivism and social network marketing effectiveness, the understanding between the expectation and experience of both customers and companies in high collectivism society, like Thailand, should be examined.
1.3 Purpose

The aim of this research is to investigate how collectivism in Thai culture has an influence on the effectiveness of social network marketing. In order to understand the interrelations between these two variables, the investigation of organizational aspect on social network marketing and customer response and participation on social network marketing should be clarified. The investigation of these two variables will explicitly explain how the unpleasant respondents participating in a high collectivistic nation, like Thailand, influence the effectiveness of social network marketing through the company point of view as well as the experience of customers. The outcomes from this investigation will not reflect only on the interrelations between collectivism in Thai culture and the effectiveness of social network marketing but they will also give the proper solutions to organize and to implement social network marketing in Thailand. To serve the purpose of this study, the research question has been created as follows:-

“How does collectivism influence the effectiveness of social network marketing?”
2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will introduce the selected theories and literatures as the basis to conduct this research and to construct the conceptual framework for fulfilling propose as well as answering the research question.

“Their problem is that there exists a culture clash between ad agencies and social media marketing. The difficulty is the result of both philosophical and tactical problems.” (Falls, 2009)

According to Falls (2009)’s statement, culture is considered as a crucial factor for implementing social network marketing. Once the cultural issues are overlooked, the marketers would eventually encounter with theoretical and strategic problems in implementing marketing on social networks and social media.

"Undoubtedly, the most significant cross-cultural study of work-related values is the one carried out by Hofstede” (Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982)

Greet Hofstede is one of the major researchers who is specialized in studying cross-cultural communication. He started with his research in IBM in 1980 with a factor analysis of 32 questions in 40 countries (Jones, 2007, p. 3).

2.1 Hofstede’s cultural dimension Framework

There are five cultural dimensions in Hofstede’s model. They are power distance index, individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity, uncertainty avoidance index, and long-term and short-term orientations. (Hofstede, 2001, p. 24)

Power Distance is the degree that demonstrates the acceptance and unequal gap between the powerful people and less powerful people (Hofstede, 2001, p. 79).

Masculinity and Femininity is the preference in society or sub-society norms indicated by the majority of dominating power based on the nature of the genders. Masculinity is a preference toward more the male nature and values which are authority, rules, reasons, assertive, competition, warfare and economy, whereas Femininity is a preference expressing female nature and values which are harmony, cooperation, relationship, emotion, human rights, and environment (Hofstede, 2001, p. 279).

Uncertainty Avoidance is the value, which shows a level of particular people regarding the acceptance of uncertainty or ambiguity toward them. (Hofstede, 2001, p. 145). It is relevant to people’s looking for the truth in order to make them feel more comfortable with unprepared situations. The extension of high uncertainty avoiding societies can possibly notice through the strictness of the laws, rules, safety, beliefs behind the truth (Hofstede, 1991, p. 113).
Long-term orientation and Short-term orientation is the term describing the relationship value toward counterparts in different cultural origins, which basically can be distinguished into Eastern and Western. Long-term orientation represents the Eastern background and natures of persistence, ordering relationships based on status, thrift, and a sense of shame. A short-term orientation involves focusing on personal steadiness, stability, face protection, respect or tradition, and reciprocation of praising such as greetings favors and gifts (Hofstede, 2001, p. 351).

Individualism entails a strong sense of personal identity, loose ties of interconnection and more independence, whilst Collectivism is the criteria to display the high interdependency and stronger bond and activity links shared by counterparts in those particular groups (Hofstede, 2001, p. 209).

Hofstede’s cultural theory is widely used especially the cross-culture topics, his work was also raised as a criticizing topic by many researchers (Jones, 2007, p. 3). For more details of the summary of criticism and limitation of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory, see in appendix I.

The relationships between collectivism and social network marketing effectiveness will be studied in order to raise the level of understanding. Thus, the interrelations of the previous two issues will be further developed to identify the relationships between collectivism and the behaviors of social network, in the next section.

2.2 Individualism and Collectivism

Individualism is considered by Hofstede to be one side of a coin between individualism and collectivism. Individualism reflects the concept of the people who do not rely on the groups or organizational frameworks. In other words, collectivism reflects the emotional dependence of the people with respect to groups (Hofstede & Mooij, 2010).

In individualistic societies, looking after oneself and self-assertiveness are important. The dominant characteristic of individualistic people is universalistic in that their ideals are valid for the whole world. On the other hand, group-assertiveness and avoiding loss of face are important in collectivist societies. The dependence on the social popular trends is a dominant characteristic of collectivistic people. Different nations have a different expression based on each culture (Masaaki et al., 1988). The differences between individualism and collectivism not only reflect on the culture and people but also reflect on many dimensions such as communication, business, political and other considerations. In the communication dimension, most collectivistic people always use a nonverbal communication such as physical communication while individualistic people prefer to use direct verbal communication. In the business dimension, it’s important for the business in collectivistic societies to build a relationship between each other before doing business but most business in individualistic prefers to hit the important point very fast when dealing with each other (Masaaki et al., 1988).
2.3 Collectivism and individualism, and social network usage

According to Li & Bernoff (2008, p. 40), social behavior is the critical components for the company on social networks. In order to understand the relationships between the individualism and collectivism in cultural different and social network usage in the following section, the authors would like to compare the different cultural background and social network usage patterns.

2.3.1 Collectivism and social network usage

Collectivists commonly have a certain set of behaviors regarding the nationality. They tend to reserve individual desires for the goods of the groups, to which they are belonged (Hofstede, 1980). Collectivistic members avoid exposing any information, which may lead to threats of information leaking. Therefore, collectivists tend to expose fewer individuals idea communicating to the public (Hofstede, 1980). Limanto’s (2008) study shows that people in high collectivism nation like Thailand still keep their feeling or opinion inside and do not express them outside. His further interview also explained that most Thai students use social networks for their lighter topics like entertainment and chatting and Thai culture still constrains the user's actions in online society.

2.3.2 Individualism and social network usage

Unlike collectivist, individualists are more authentic and straightforward to each individual’s ideas. They are likely to look after their nuclear families and show high rates of geographical mobility (Hofstede, 1980). For example, the people in a high individualistic like America are used to interacting and communicating with strangers. They are not shy to approach other people to gain or search for information (Hofstede, 1980). Americans show high percentage of social network users, the statistics shows that 43% of American social networkers follow companies using social networks, and they account about 25% of all network users. The result shows that one fourth of American samples implement social networks for business purposes; nonetheless, 72% of the respondents claimed that social networks do not impact on their decisions (Baer, 2011).

The research of Nielsen (2011) on Australian customer usage behavior regarding social media and social network was referred since the source of information is surely reliable and Australia is considered as the second highest individualism nation claimed by Hofstede (Hofstede, 1980).

The Nielsen Company is international information and measurement company specialized in marketing and measuring consumer behaviors and media.

This result of this research pointed out that the ownership of smart phone sharply increased from 43% to 65%, whereas the mobile internet browsing rose from 29 percent to 52 percent during 2009, of overall media consumption. Moreover, the Australian internet users spend about 4 hours more over the year average, from 17 to 21 online hours per week (Nielsen, 2011).
In addition, social networking sites become crucial communicating channels for younger Australian generations, and the Australian youths greatly familiar with social networks. The revolutions of social media platforms increase the number of methods for marketers to approach the customers. The result showed that up to 41 percent of the Australian customer connects to brand and organization through social media (Nielsen, 2011).

The customer providing and reading reviews and attitudes on social media are the first most common things among Australian online users accounting for 73 percent. Furthermore, customers discussing brands and products online are highly growing and Facebook is the significant social networking channel among them (Nielsen, 2011).

The main activity of 5,886 Australian online users indicates that sharing link of photo or sharing photos is one of the most common activities conducted via social networks, accounting for 72%. In term of business intentions, Australian online users approach products, organization, and brands accounting for 53%. Last but not least, the Australian customer’s purposes of advertising and commercial checking is accounting for 27% (Nielsen, 2011).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

In this section, the authors aim to clarify the framework, which will guide this thesis. After reviewing the data and defining the theory that the authors have already mentioned earlier in the previous section, the authors end up constructing the conceptual framework shown in this figure 3.

This conceptual model reflects the combination of theory and concept in this research. The framework contains four variables, with each having interrelations toward the others. These four variables are the collectivism variable, the consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable, the...
organizational aspect on social network marketing variable, and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable.

2.4.1 Collectivism variable

Collectivism reflects the emotional dependence of the people with respect to groups (Hofstede & Mooij, 2010). According to Masaaki (1988), Collectivism plays an important role for driving people for interacting to impulses. In contrast the marketer aims to stimulate the customer by using the marketing (Evans et al., 2009). According to Li & Bernoff (2008, p. 40), it’s important for the company to understand social behaviors of customers. According to this figure 1, collectivism is the factor that influences the consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable, and the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable.

2.4.2 Consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable

Consumer is one of the most important factors for the business in conducting social network marketing (Li & Bernoff, 2008, p. 42). Consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable represent how consumers in collectivism culture responds and participate in social network marketing. It is important for the company to understand its consumer behaviors that responds or interacts with social network marketing. The organizational aspect is also relevant as the consumer interacts and responds to the launched activities or campaigns on the social network. According to the collectivism, the social network usage behaviors of consumer in each country are varied depending on the response and interaction of consumers to social network marketing. However, the consumer interaction and response might not be the same as the organization hopes due to the collectivism limit (Li & Bernoff, 2008, p. 66).

2.4.3 Organizational aspect on social network marketing variable

Organizational aspect on social network marketing variable represents how organization observes and pores over consumer behaviors for matching with their strategy. According to Li & Bernoff (2008, p. 200), the organizational aspect on social network marketing covers the desire from consumer to interact along with the aim of the marketing strategy. The organizational aspect on social network marketing in this framework will reflect the company point of views concerning cultural issue like collectivism in social network marketing.

2.4.4 The effectiveness of social network marketing variable

The effectiveness of social network marketing variable represents success or failure of the implementation of social media marketing. The effectiveness in marketing refers to the engagement, awareness, and response from customer (Evans et al., 2009). To craft the effectiveness of social network marketing variable, consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable and the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable play an important role for judging the effectiveness of social network marketing (Li & Bernoff, 2008, p. 209).
3. Methodology

This chapter aims to present the operational process of conceptual framework, which covers how the authors define the particular methods under which the primary and secondary data are gathered, and the analysis that are conducted.

3.1 Research approaches

The authors conducted quantitative and qualitative research for this study. Quantitative research mainly generates the numerical data for statistics usage or analysis, whereas the qualitative research is mainly to explore and generate the explanation (Fisher, 2007, p. 211). According to this purpose, the interrelations between social network marketing effectiveness in Thailand and the collectivistic behaviors among Thais has to be defined.

The qualitative research was conducted by interviewing two representatives from Thai clothing retailers, who are specialized in social network marketing. The purpose of the qualitative research is to understand the interrelations between the social network marketing effectiveness and the collectivism as their companies had experienced it while implementing social network marketing in Thailand - a country with a strong characteristic of collectivism.

In quantitative research, it was conducted by launching the questionnaire to the scoped samples. The aim of this research is to investigate how collectivistic people respond to social network marketing.

3.2 Scope and limitation

Due to the time constraint and the lack of accessibility to gather data in Thailand i.e. the geographical constraint, this study was unable to make it into an extended and comprehensive research. The investigation conducted for this thesis on the collectivism in Thai culture that influences the effectiveness of social network marketing is unable to cover the entire Thai nation. To overcome these limitations, a certain group of Thai people was chosen for investigation. Instead, Thai university students who live in Bangkok were chosen. Since they are a potential group with a high level of education and also have a capability to access the Internet in Thailand. In order to create the controllably environmental investigation and deal with uncontrollable factors that might be considered as threats in the experiment, Bangkok was selected to be the area for this research. Bangkok has high comfortable fundamental facilities such as Internet and communication. The detailed scope of this research will be deal with in the later topic.

3.3 Data collection

To operationalize this research, the authors decided to use both primary data and secondary data. The primary data was obtained through data collection and analysis by using the conceptual framework. However, the secondary data was used for comparison with the final result of the primary data analysis. The
comparison of two results will lead to the initial perspectives toward one another.

3.3.1 Primary data

In order to identify the interrelations between the social network marketing in Thailand and the collectivistic behaviors among Thais, it is important to direct this research at the people who can provide the right information according to Fisher (2007, p. 158). To access to the right source of information, the interviewing with two Thai clothing retail representatives, specialized in social network marketing, was done. Moreover, the launching of questionnaire through the scoped Thai consumers was also conducted for obtaining the primary data.

3.3.1.1 Interview

As the authors mention before in the introduction chapter, the clothing retail business in Thailand was chosen to investigate in this thesis. To access to the valuable information, the interviews with the representatives from Thai clothing retailers that specialized in social network marketing is required. The two representatives are as follows:

- Ms. Thunsuda Limsiripothong, the manager of “social network marketing” project of siamsquare.co.th.
- The social media manager of a successful e-commerce business. According to the interviewee’s organizational policy, the authors can’t disclose the source of this information.

In order to investigate in this particular field, the semi-structured interview was chosen for this interview. The semi-structured interview helps the authors to manage and control the sequence and the content of the interview (Fisher, 2007, p. 159). Moreover it also allows the authors to ask the interviewee open topic questions (Fisher, 2007, p. 159). According to the semi-structured interview, the authors handed in the scope of interview questions in English to both representatives. Before sending the interview questions, the authors asked a native Thai international student to read and proof the content to avoid misunderstanding between the interviewees and interviewers.

The interview with Ms. Thunsuda Limsiripothong was conducted on 27th April 2012 around 12.00 – 12.30, Swedish time, and the interview with the name withheld social media manager was conducted on 29th April 2012 around 17.30 – 18.00, Swedish time. In order to prevent misunderstanding between the interviewer and interviewee, the interview was conducted via VOIP (voice over Internet protocol) by Skype in Thai language and summarized in English language. To confirm the reliability and credibility of the summary of interview, the authors asked the afore-said native Thai international student to compare the summary note of interview with the interview’s voice record.
The interview question

In this part the authors would like to present the questions that operationalize the conceptual framework for this research. According to this table 1, it shows how each question operationalizes the conceptual framework (figure 1) for this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Kinds of questions</th>
<th>Clarifying</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The fact that Thai consumers apparently follow the majority’s trend, does this aspect impacts the effectiveness of the company social network marketing?</td>
<td>Collectivism variable and the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 8 of appendix III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What does the organization expect from implementing social network marketing?</td>
<td>The organizational aspect on social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 4 of appendix III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How important does the company prioritizes social network marketing among all of the company marketing strategies?</td>
<td>Consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable, and the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 5 of appendix III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Is it worth including social network marketing in the company’s marketing strategy? How and Why?</td>
<td>The effectiveness of social network marketing</td>
<td>Question no. 6 of appendix III</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 The operationalization of interview questions

Source The authors's table

In order to understand the collectivism variable that influence to the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable, the authors decide to introduce question no.1 in the table 1. The purpose of this question is to observe how collectivism affects the organizational aspect on social network marketing according to the interviewees’ opinions. In addition, it is also presented in question no. 8 of appendix III.

To understand the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable, the authors decide to apply question no. 2 in the table 1. The answers from this question will be used to clarify the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable according to the conceptual framework (figure 1). In addition, it is also presented in question no. 4 of appendix III.

In order to understand the interrelations between the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable and consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable, the authors decide to apply question no.3 in the table 1. The answer from this question will be used to clarify the interrelations between the organizational aspect on social network marketing variable and consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable according to the conceptual framework (figure 1). In addition, it is also presented in question no. 4 and 5 of appendix III.
To understand the effectiveness of social network marketing variable from the companies' point of view, the authors decide to apply question no.4 in the table 1. The purpose of this question is to extract the value of the interviewees on the effectiveness of social network marketing. In addition, it is presented in question no.6 of appendix III.

3.3.1.2 Survey

In order to understand consumer attitude and response to social network marketing, the survey of selected Thai consumer was required. According to the scope and limitation of this thesis, the authors mainly focus on investigating collectivism among Thai university students in Bangkok. Selected Thai university students are not only capable of accessing the Internet and knowledgeable, but they also have a high possibility of experiencing social network and marketing. According to the 2010 report of National Statistical Office of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology of Thailand, the age range of the university students is the highest range group of the internet consumption in Thailand. In order to define the population and sample for this survey, this research has to identify the scope of the survey which mostly includes place, time, topic and the characteristic of population and sample(Cohen et al., 2007).

The scope of sample in this survey:

- **Place**: Bangkok, Thailand
- **Time**: 1st April 2012 – 29th April 2012
- **Topic**: Thai university students's response and participation on social network marketing.
- **Characteristic of population**: Thai university students.

According to the time limitation, this survey was conducted by convenience sampling method, which is one of the non-probability sampling survey techniques that the surveyor does not concern on the probability of selection (Cohen et al., 2007). However, the outcome from this kind of technique can't be referred as the whole population. To obtain the result within the time limitation, the 160 samples are the proper amount of this survey.

Due to the accessing limitation, this survey was managed on Free online survey web service that was subscribed. This service provides the convenience method for the surveyor to collect the questionnaire from the samples that are in a different area. However, this method cannot guarantee the reliability of the sample. To avoid this issue, the authors decided to send more than 300 questionnaires in English by email and social networks to the students who study in Assumption University, Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University and Thammasat University. Moreover, in the first part of the questionnaire, it also had the confirmation question to screen the out of scope respondents. Before sending the questionnaire, it was checked by 5 Thai international students to confirm the understanding of the questionnaire question.
The survey question

In this part the authors would like to present the questions that operationalize the conceptual framework of this research. According to this table 2, it shows how each of the questions operationalizes the conceptual framework for this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Kinds of questions</th>
<th>Clarifying</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How often have you shared or passed online content to your friends?</td>
<td>Collectivism variable</td>
<td>Question no. 10 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How often do you express your feelings in public area via social networks?</td>
<td>Collectivism variable</td>
<td>Question no. 11 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How many communities or groups in social networks are you a member of?</td>
<td>Collectivism variable</td>
<td>Question no. 12 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How authentic would you express your feelings toward brands or products on social networks?</td>
<td>Collectivism variable, the consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 20 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What is your attitude toward advertising or persuasive information such as invitation, special offers, or new products via social networks?</td>
<td>The consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 16 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>What is the reason behind your attitude?</td>
<td>The consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 17 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>How often do you interact, such as clicking “Like”, “Share”, or giving comments on information and invitations?</td>
<td>The consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable</td>
<td>Question no. 18 of appendix IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 The operationalization of survey questions

Source The authors's table

In this thesis, the survey question was divided into 4 parts, which represents the screening part, the demography of samples part, the Internet consumption part and the social network marketing part.
The first part of this survey was used to screen the respondents who are not university students to be excluded from this survey.

The second part of this survey starting from question no.2 – no.4 of this appendix IV was used to describe the sample demography. The next part starting from question no.5 – no.9 of the appendix IV was used to describe the Internet consumption by this sample. The purpose of these two parts of questions is to provide with the reliability and credibility of the source and the demography of the sample and the benefit for conducting further study.

The last part of this survey is about the social network marketing in clothing retailer. In this part, 3 variables will be measured from the conceptual framework (figure 1) including collectivism variable, the consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable.

In order to measure collectivism variable, which represents in the sample's behavior, the authors decided to ask the questions from no.1 to no. 4 in the table 2. The answers to these questions will clarify the characteristic of the sample showing tendency toward collectivism or individualism. Moreover the results from these questions will be used in the correlation analysis to determine the interrelations between collectivism variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing. In addition, this is also presented in question no.10, 11, 12 and 20 of appendix IV.

To measure the consumer response and participation on social network marketing variable, the authors decided to ask questions no.4 till no.7 in the table 2. The answers to these questions represent the respondents' views toward the organizational aspect on social network marketing in accordance with the conceptual framework (figure 1).In addition, this is also presented in question no.16, 17, 18 and 20 of appendix IV.

In order to measure the effectiveness of social network marketing variable from the consumer feedback and participation on social network marketing campaign, the authors decided to apply questions no.5 and 7 in the table 2. The answers shall determine the effectiveness of social network marketing from the consumer response and participation on social network marketing. In addition, this is also presented in question no. 16 and 18 of appendix IV.

3.3.2 Secondary data

The source of secondary data is from the Nielsen (2011) Company, the global leader in measurement and information. Nielsen (2011) conducted the Australian online consumer landscape research. Australia is one of the high individualism that has high quality of fundamental facilities (Hofstede, 1980). The aim is to compare the participation of social network marketing in the high collectivistic nation like Thailand with the high individualistic nation like Australia. The comparison result will give the other point of view for this research.
3.4 Methods to analyze data

3.4.1 Analysis of primary data

Interview

The raw interview data were translated and summarized into academic texts and the summaries were analyzed based on the conceptual framework that developed from Hofstede’s theory and literatures. The solely relevant and outstanding information was chosen for analysis, plus, the manager’s outstanding suggestions were put in recommendation part.

Questionnaire

The data was summarized and illustrated into three figures in the finding chapter. The first figure (figure 2) was conducted based on the respondent’s answers to questions 10th to 12th in appendix IV and categorizing sample groups based on the degree of collectivism.

- Question 10th of appendix IV, “How often do you share or pass the online information such as a link of a website, video, music, etc. to your friend? (Times per month)”, determines the frequency of sharing and passing the online information. Whenever the respondents choose the answer more than five times per month, it will be categorized as collectivists. And when the answer is less than five times, it will be grouped as individualists.

- Question 11th of appendix IV, “How often do you express your feelings in public area via social networks? (Times per month)”, determines the frequency of expressing feeling in public area via social networks. Whenever the respondents choose the answer less than six times per month, it will be categorized as collectivists. And when the answer is less than five, it will be grouped as individualists.

- Question 12th of appendix IV, “How many communities or groups in social networks are you a member of? (Such as Facebook)”, determines the amount of community and group participation in social network. Whenever the respondents choose the answer more than four groups, it will be categorized as collectivists. And when the answer is less than five, it will be grouped as individualists.

- The respondents will be grouped as two following based on degree of collectivism measured by answers from question 10th to 12th of appendix IV. Those whose answers fall only in individualistic ranges are categorized as purely individualists and respondents whose major answers partly fall in collectivistic will be categorized as mainly collectivists.

The next figure (figure 3) was conducted by using the respondents’ answers to questions 14th to 20th in appendix IV to determine grouping based on degree of
collectivism. The questions 14\textsuperscript{th} to 20\textsuperscript{th} in appendix IV are partly used for primary analysis regarding customer's interest, expectation, experience, and interaction with social network marketing. These aspects may factorize the social network marketing effectiveness among users as follows:

- The experience in social network marketing among samples was indicated by the 14\textsuperscript{th} question in appendix IV, “Have you ever received any advertising or persuasive information, such as invitation, special offers, or new products, regarding clothing, brands and retailers via social networks?”, shows the numbers of samples who ever received advertising or persuasive information via social networks and those who answer ‘yes’ will be the feasible respondents and selected as qualified samples for this research.

- Question number 15\textsuperscript{th} in appendix IV, “How often do you receive those information and advertising? (Times per month)”, determines the frequency of receiving advertising or persuasive information. Those who receive social network marketing contents less than six times per month will show the lack of interest in using social network and it also shows the sign of disadvantages toward the effectiveness of social network marketing implementation. On the other hand, the question checking interaction and participation more than two times per month displays the benefit from higher in customer interests and raises the effectiveness in making use of social network marketing.

- For question number 16\textsuperscript{th} in appendix IV, “What is your attitude toward those information and advertising?”, represents the attitude toward social network marketing and question number 20\textsuperscript{th} in appendix IV, “How authentic would you express your feelings toward brands or products on social networks?”, determines the authentic level of attitude expression toward brands, were conducted by implementing Likert's Scale. The minimum number is one, which stands for the minimum point and five stands for maximum point. Moreover, when the digit numbers are less than 0.5, the number will be positively rounded up and vice versa. For example, 2.5 will be rounded up to 3 and 2.49 will be considered as 2.

- Question number 19\textsuperscript{th} in appendix IV, “What is the main trigger that is able to make you respond to those invitations?”, determines the main, most impulsive, trigger of responding to advertising and persuasive information, whether it is price, special offers, information catching, trend following, brand or product following, gifts and vouchers etc. This mostly selected one will be considered as a motivating factor for social network marketing implementation.

The last figure (figure 4) in the finding chapter is a correlation graph of 3 correlation values. It is conducted for illustrating the interrelationships among crucial variables, and consisted of degree of collectivism and effectiveness in social network marketing. The feasible result is shown in term of number where more than zero means a positive relationship and less than zero indicate a
negative relationship between variables. Moreover, less than -0.5 or more than 0.5 indicate strong interrelationships, -0.49 to -0.1 and 0.1 to 0.49 are the range of poor interrelationships and between -0.09 to 0.09 are the range of no interrelationship shown.

• The first value shows the correlations and interrelationships between the frequency of interacting with advertising and persuasive information, question number eighteen, and the frequency of sharing and passing the online contents, question number ten. This result shows whether the collectivism, contributed from 10th question of appendix IV, and effectiveness of social network marketing, contributed from 18th question of appendix IV, has positive or negative interrelationships toward one another.

• The second value shows the correlations and interrelationships between the amount of community and group participation in social network, question number 12 of appendix IV, and the frequency of interacting with advertising and persuasive information, question number 18 of appendix IV. This result shows whether the collectivism, contributed from 12th question, and the effectiveness of social network marketing, contributed from 18th question, have positive or negative interrelationships toward one another.

• The third value shows the correlations and interrelationships between the frequency of expressing feeling in public area via social networks, question number 11 of appendix IV, and the frequency of interacting with advertising and persuasive information, question number 18 of appendix IV. This result shows whether the collectivism, contributed from 11th question, and the effectiveness of social network marketing, contributed from 18th question, have positive or negative interrelationships toward one another.

3.4.2 Analysis of secondary data

In order to illustrate more preciously, another study result was selected for comparison with the results processed from this thesis. The effectiveness of implementing social network marketing in a collectivism nation was compared with the result from an individualism nation.

The first concern is what will be the main purpose of a general use of social network in those two nations.

The second concern is to find out how important the social network marketing is if it puts into operation to serve commercial purposes in those two nations.

The third concern is to find out how important the social network marketing is if it is used for information gathering purposes in those two nations.
4. Finding

This chapter will show the results from the operationalization process as mentioned in the previous chapter by means of interview, survey, and secondary data.

4.1 Summary results from the interview

4.1.1 Company overview

The authors requested and had opportunities to interview two expert marketers employed by leading online clothing companies in Thailand. They are Siamsquare.co.th and one online fashion and footwear shop.

Siamsquare.co.th, founded in 2009, is considered as one of the leading online clothing retails in Thailand. Its merchandise comprises many products from Thai fashion designers. The purpose of Siamsquare.co.th is to be a clothing company acting as producer cum buyer. The company buys products from new promising Thai fashion designers and inspires them to be more visionary with their products by organizing seasonal fashion design competitions. The participants have to come up with unique ideas and creative designs to win the competition, the winner’s designed cloth will be produced and sold later on. Its merchandise covers all fashion line such as clothing, accessories, and etc. (Siamsquare.co.th, 2012).

As for the second interview, according to the company policy, the authors cannot reveal the company’s name. It is an international fashion and footwear company selling their products online for local and international consumers. The company is well known in Asia and also has many branches, such as in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, etc. The purpose of this Thailand branch company is to be a shop that stocks and offers new lines of fashion from many premium brands for both male and female clients.

4.1.2 The reasons why the companies choose to implement social network marketing in Thailand.

Both companies mainly rely on social networks for their marketing channel due to their business model. The type, size and product are the primarily factors of the business model that influence companies to implement social network marketing. Moreover, social networks enable the companies and their customers to conduct two ways communication and also let the companies track, monitor their service to their customers.

4.1.3 The Implementation of social network marketing.

Both companies also state that Facebook is their first priority for social network marketing. Since Facebook is the most popular social network in Thailand. However, they also use other types of social networks such as Instagram and Twitter. Even though Facebook has enforced new regulations affecting on line business. Facebook will still be important for on line business. These two
companies also apply any possible feature of social network for their marketing campaigns so that they can keep contact and encourage their customers to participate in their campaigns.

4.1.4 The expectation of implementing social network marketing.

Making use of social network for their services to customers, these two companies aim to increase engagement with, instill awareness of, and receive feedbacks from customers via social networks. Moreover, social networks also reduce the gap between the business and customers for they can communicate with each other. To achieve their aims, these two companies also launch their marketing campaign to encourage customer participation by giving rewards or gifts to customers for their participation.

4.1.5 The importance of social network marketing

These two companies claim that social networking is an important channel, especially Facebook as most customers know their business via the companies Facebook. Moreover, these two companies stated earlier that in Thailand, Facebook is the most popular social network. However these two companies also agree that this channel alone cannot fulfill their expectation on interaction and connecting with their customers. They also point out that most Thai people still rely on the traditional channel like T.V., billboards, or magazines. They do not use only social networks for marketing but also use traditional channels to connect with offline people, the people who rely on traditional channels.

4.1.6 The value of implementing social network marketing.

These two companies, both, agree that in Thailand social network marketing might not be successful like in the U.S.A. However it is worth the investment in implementing social network marketing. They point out that social network marketing does help increase customer, sales and business growth. Thus, social network marketing in Thailand is worth the investment. So far, Thai social network marketing is at the developing stage. It might take some times to be developed to become successful like in the U.S.A. Most Thai people usually welcome new technology and trends from overseas. However, the booming areas are limited to some particular zones or groups of people that are well educated.

4.1.7 The feasible constraint of the effectiveness of implementing social network marketing.

From this viewpoint, even though they share certain opinions, these two companies also have some different notions. The similar idea they share is that level of education is the possible element that influences the success of social network marketing usage. Although many Thai people use smart phone or any IT device, most Thais still lack knowledge of technology leads to misconceptions about the unreliability and safety of online communication and IT system. This is the reason why most Thais are not relying on online financial transactions such as online payment. One of the companies thinks that Thai IT infrastructures and internet facilities are not ready for introducing social
network marketing usage. In Thailand, certain areas still can't access the internet or even electricity. This limit prevents some Thais from accessing the online world. Whereas, the other company thinks differently. This company thinks that the lack of a feasibility study for social network marketing implementation is a weakness. The lack of proper understanding among company and customer might lead social network marketing implementation in a wrong way.

4.1.8 Thai collectivism and the effectiveness of social network marketing

As for collectivism in Thai culture, these two companies have a different point of view. One of them claims that collectivism in Thai culture affects considerably on the effectiveness of social network marketing. This company claims that Thais hardly ever give explicit or genuine comments online comparing with foreigners. The reason behind the popularity of Facebook in Thailand is that Thai users always appear to make pleasing comments even though most of the comments on Facebook are fragmented, trivial and superficial. However the other company points out that the culture factor does not have much impact on the effectiveness of social network marketing. On the contrary, this company claims that the huge differences are depending on the brands. The more well-known the brands are the higher number the participants turn out. In this company's idea, the only way in which the cultural topic might affect the effectiveness of social network marketing is that Thais sometimes misunderstand and misuse social media. Some just use it as the trash board to express their overwhelmingly emotions such as envy and jealousy.

4.1.9 Recommendation in implementing social network marketing

Both companies also have the similar suggestions on implementing social network marketing. The important thing for implementing social network marketing is that the company should know itself and its customers before developing and introducing social network marketing. Since then the company will be able to choose the proper means that suit the company and its customers. Moreover for Thailand, they suggest that it should develop the fundamental IT facilities and educate the public about IT so that Thailand can keep pace with the world trends.

In order to read the full text of the interviews, please check out the appendix V and VI.
4.2 Summary result from the survey

The categorization of samples is measured by analysis of questions 10\textsuperscript{th} to 12\textsuperscript{th} of appendix IV. The 10\textsuperscript{th} question involves the frequency of sharing behaviors on cyber spaces in the period of one month. The collectivistic group is the one who shares online contents six or more times per month. The 11\textsuperscript{th} question deals with the frequency that the samples express their feeling on line. Naturally, if the samples express their feeling less than six times per month, they will be grouped as collectivist. The 12\textsuperscript{th} question involves the numbers of social network groups that the samples associated with. When the samples associated with four or more groups in social networks, they will be grouped as collectivists and vice versa. The respondents who chose major collectivistic answers are mainly collectivists. Those who selected all individualistic answers are pure individualists. In this figure 2, it shows the groups of samples divided by the degree of collectivism.

![Degree of collectivism](image)

**Figure 2 Degree of collectivism among samples**

*Source The authors's figure*

The answer replied by 160 selected respondents displays that most of them are more of collectivistic behaviors, accounting to 95 percent of mainly collectivism and 5 percent of purely individualism.
This figure 3 shows the comparisons of experiences, expectation, expression, and interactions among groups of selected samples consisted of collectivistic and individualistic ones.

![Comparison chart]

**Figure 3 Comparison of experiences, expectation, expression and interactions among groups of samples**

Source The authors’s figure

The result shows that the major motivation that triggers the interaction among samples in social network marketing, in retail clothing persuasive advertising, from the pure individualistic group 33.33% and the mainly collectivistic group 28.57% is to get the special prices and special offerings. The attitude toward social network marketing from all groups resulting ‘moderate’, rate by using Likert’s Scale. One stands for the least and five is the most. More than 2.5 is classified as moderate. The authentic level of attitude expression toward brands turns out to be ‘less’ in the pure individualistic group, and ‘moderate’ in mainly collectivistic ones. Frequency of interacting indicates by clicking ‘like’ or ‘respond’ to the persuasive invitations on social networks twice or more times per month. The pure individualist shows 16.67%, the main collectivist shows 49.2%, and the total shows 48%. The frequencies of receiving offerings via social networks and the indicator are six times per month. The pure individualistic group shows 100% interacting less than six times per month, whereas the mainly collectivistic group shows 69.84%.

This figure 4 shows the correlations between the collectivism variable which based on the frequency of online sharing in social network, the frequency of
publicizing inner feeling in social networks and amount of group association in social network, and the frequency of interacting per month in social network marketing.

This graph illustrates the interrelationships between two main variables, which are the collectivism variable and the effectiveness of social network marketing variable of the survey launched among Thai university students. In order to present the interrelationship of two variables, the testing was conducted to identify the correlations among them.

The first variable, collectivism, was represented by the three following indicators. The first one is the frequency of publicizing inner feeling in social networks and the higher the frequency is, the lesser is the degree of collectivism (more likely to be individualism).

The second indicator is the frequency of online sharing in social networks and the higher the frequency is, the more is the degree of collectivism (less individualism).

The third one is the amount of group association in social networks and the more groups they associate with, the more they become collectivist (less individualist).
Another variable, the effectiveness of social network marketing, was represented by the frequency of interacting per month in social network marketing and the higher the frequency is, the more effective social networks indicate.

All three lines illustrate the interrelationship of collectivism effects on social network marketing effectiveness.

The red line shows the frequency of publicizing inner feeling in social network as the collectivism variable interrelating with frequency of interacting per month in social network marketing as the effectiveness of social network marketing variable. It shows neutral relationship or almost no correlation. Since the numerical correlation between them is 0.07.

The blue line shows the frequency of online sharing in social network as the collectivism variable interrelating with frequency of interacting per month in social network marketing as the effectiveness of social network marketing variable. It shows slightly positive relationship. Since the numerical correlation result between them is 0.18.

The green line shows the amount of group association in social network as collectivism variable interrelating with frequency of interacting per month in social network marketing as the effectiveness of social network marketing variable. It shows slightly positive relationship. Since the numerical correlation result between them is 0.17.

In order to read the full result of the survey, please check out the appendix VII.

4.3 Summary of secondary data

In this table 5, it shows the summary of Australia and social network marketing of Nielsen (2011) Australian research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main activity</th>
<th>Sharing photos (72%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business purpose</strong></td>
<td>Engage products, org. Brand (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Checking information</strong></td>
<td>Ads and commercial (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Australia and social network marketing (Nielsen, 2011)

Source The author's table

According to this table 5, the study of Nielsen (2011) Australian aged range 16 or more and population of 3,326 respondents shows that one of the most common social media activities, proportionally covering about 72 percent, among Australian online samples is the photo sharing by posting and link sharing. The second most general activity associating with business proposes among Australian samples is the acts of engaging or connecting with organizations, brands, or product, accounting for 53 percent. For information checking, it
covered about 27 percent of the Australian samples who used social network for the purpose of Ads and commercial checking.
5. Analysis

This chapter illustrates the analysis of the data gathered as mentioned in the previous chapter based on the conceptual framework and comparing it with another study result as shown in another nation to accomplish the purpose of this thesis.

In order to make it convenient for the audiences, the 4th table, “The salient questionnaire results” is compiled as the summary of essential primary data gathered from the questionnaire results, shown in figure 2 and 3 from the previous chapter (finding chapter). This table will be vitally used for analysis chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Characteristic</th>
<th>95% of all samples are collectivism.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience in social network marketing contents</td>
<td>82.89% of mainly collectivistic samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive social network marketing contents &lt;6 times per month</td>
<td>69.84% of mainly collectivistic samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward social network marketing contents</td>
<td>Most of samples’ attitude are moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in social network marketing</td>
<td>48.9% of mainly collectivistic samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main motivation in social network marketing</td>
<td>To get the special price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic level of attitude expression toward brands or product in social network</td>
<td>Most of samples’ attitude are moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 The vital questionnaire result

Source The author’s table

5.1 Collectivism and consumer response and participation on social network marketing

The result shows that majority of Thais selected samples show collectivistic attitudes and being defined as mainly collectivists, which is similar to the Hofstede’s cultural dimensional study that Thai is collectivism, as a homogenous unit. The first row in table 4, the sample characteristic, responds to the 10th to 12th questions. The proportion of individualists is distinctively smaller comparing with the majority of collectivists.

According to figure 12-14 in appendix VII, the samples who answered more than six times of sharing to the 10th question of appendix IV accounting for 33.1
percent. The high frequency of sharing links or files via social networks shows the sample’s behaviors responding to the collectivistic habit, sharing. The samples, who answered less than six times per month, account for 65.7 percent of expressing their feeling in public area in the 11th question of appendix IV. According to Hofstede, collectivists are commonly avoiding expressing their individual ideas to the public and unknown people. For the result of 12th question in appendix IV, it accounts for 66.3% of the samples who associated themselves with four or more groups of the social networks. Another nature of collectivists is that they are likely to associate with plenty of groups. Estimating through the percentage and tendency of the results in each question, the mixing group is defined as mainly or high collectivism.

5.2 Collectivism and the organizational aspect on social network marketing

Even though Thai collectivism is not the major concern of the retail clothing business for social network marketing usage, the business still pays attention to it. The information gained through the interviews points out that because of Thai collectivism, Thais hardly give explicit or true comments online compared with individualistic foreigners. Most of the comments are fragmented, superficial and quite general in nature. However, this is not much of a concern to the business, the major concern relating to Thai collectivism is that Thai people love to share a frank idea or an interesting subject among friends in social networks. The explicit or frank comments are useful for the business to get the real feelings from their customers. However, increase in customer relations is more important than getting frank feedbacks or comments. Since generating growth and income is the top priority of most businesses and that is the main reason why the business needs to turn to social networks. As the authors got the information from the interviews, for Thai social network marketing, the business tries to apply the awareness of Thai collectivism within its campaign for social network marketing to increase the frequency of participation and amount of information sharing among customer's social network.

However, Thai collectivism is not the only factor that impacts the retail clothing business when introducing social network marketing. Level of education and brand awareness are the other important factors that have many effects on social network marketing. The information that the authors got from interview shows that Thai users are misunderstanding and misusing social media due to the lack of proper IT education. Most of them use social networks to express their overwhelmingly emotions such as envy and jealousy. Moreover most Thai people are brand conscious and the more the brands are known, the higher number the participants and the respondent turn out.

In summary, even though Thai collectivism does not have much impact on the organizational aspect of the retail clothing business, Thai collectivism is one of the organizational concerns when using social network marketing.

5.3 Consumer response and participation on social network marketing

The results show that the higher is the degree of collectivism among samples, the higher are the chances involving fan pages and offering, as they are supported by
the numerical outcome shown in the second row of the table 4, Experience in social network marketing contents, where 82.89% accounting for the mainly collectivistic group does, whilst the purely individualistic group accounting for 75%.

The result shows that Thai respondents are mainly using social network for private proposes rather than commercial ones. The conduct of marketing via social networks is still in the stage of developing. Moreover, the individualistic samples seem to spend less time and interest in responding to or coming into contact with social network marketing, comparing with the mainly collectivistic samples. The purely individualistic group, with the result of 100% encountering social network marketing less than six times per month, accounts for 16.67% in interacting and responding to this marketing, whilst the purely collectivistic group, with the result of 57.14% experiencing the receipt of this marketing, accounts for 92.85% in interacting and responding to this kind of marketing as pointed out in the 3rd row, Receiving social network marketing contents <6 times per month, in table 4.

Collectivism among Thais could be the reason why the majority expresses their attitudes in general terms. They avoid expressing strong feelings in public zones in order not to offend or face any kinds of risks regarding information sharing, which shown as concrete results in the 4th row, attitude toward social network marketing contents, of table 4.

Collectivism seems to be a supplementary stimulator for social network effectiveness. The result in the 5th row, Interest in social network marketing, of table 4 showing the trends of frequent interacting for twice or more times per month seems to be positively related to the experiences of receiving persuasive social network marketing. The collectivistic samples account for 48.9% and the individualistic samples for 16.67%.

In Thai retail clothing business, the most effective mean for social network marketing seems to be the most tangible advantage which is a special price offered as shown in the 6th row, Main motivation in social network marketing, of table 4. Its effects are highly influential for boosting the level of participation among samples.

According to Hofstede’s study, individualists are supposed to be people who verbally or substantially express their idea authentically. However, the result shown in 7th row, authentic level of attitude expression toward brands or product in social network, of table 4 indicates that authentic expression among samples is contradicting with Hofstede’s work as shown in previous studies. The individualistic samples may possibly not be interested in using social network marketing for commercial purpose of clothing and brands.

5.4 Organizational aspect on social network marketing

According to the information that the authors got from the interviews, social network marketing is the important channel for the online retail clothing business in Thailand. The main reason behind this is that social network allows
online business to reach out to would be online customers and their networks. Online customers are the main target group of online business. Moreover social network marketing gets along fine with the online business model.

The highly important aspect of using social network marketing for the retail clothing business in Thailand is that these companies wish to have engagement with, awareness of, perception of and feedback from customers. At this point Thai collectivism is one of the conditions affecting social network marketing usage. As the authors have mentioned earlier, business tries to apply the positive notion of Thai collectivism within its campaign to increase frequent participation from and amount of information sharing among customers’ networks. Business hopes that with Thai collectivism, its message will rapidly spread among each customer and his or her networks. Pushing more and more messages is one of its strategies to make customers become aware of and share the sent message. Even though business realizes that the comments and feedbacks received from customers are fragmented, superficial and quite general, it still needs the feedbacks from customers to improve their products and service. To overcome this issue and to stimulate customers, business tries to offer special promotion, gifts or vouchers for customers who join business’s campaign or give useful feedbacks and information, like, on product or service review.

However from the Thai organizational aspect, social network is not able to include all targeted customers due to the statement from the interview information that high level of education and IT facilities do not cover entire Thailand. Because of this shortfall, most Thai people still rely on traditional channels like magazine and T.V. for information. Business tries to connect the offline society with the online society of social network by using magazine or T.V. to promote its page in social networks.

In summary, even if, social network is one of the important communication channels from the aspect of retail clothing business, it’s not enough to use only social network in Thailand to promote and generate business growth due to the afore-said shortfall. However, the collectivism approach employed in social network marketing by expert marketers can partly help their business in Thailand to achieve their goals.

5.5 The achievement in implementing social network marketing strategy

Even though Thai collectivism is not the main concern of social network marketing usage for the retail clothing business, business entrepreneurs still pay attention to it. Thais hardly express their true inner or authentic feelings, like a straight opinion, for fear that it might offend others, but it is not an important factor that strongly affects the achievement of social network marketing. The increase in number of customers and income, as opposed to gaining useful feedbacks or information from the customers, are the main business objectives. On the contrary, Thai collectivism is a useful factor for motivating business to gain a wider customer base since Thais love to share. Moreover, the information provided by the interviewees illustrates that social network marketing in Thailand is relatively successful and worth the investment. One factor that might
impede the full success of social network marketing in Thailand may be education shortfall and IT facilities limit.

The first correlative value, 0.18, of the correlative table, indicates that the more collectivism the samples are, the higher are the chance to increase in social network marketing effectiveness. The result of 0.07 might be technical error due to the convenient sampling conducted with the sample that was too small, but the authors can consider it as the trend. The number of 0.17 indicates that Thai collectivism might be a source for boosting social network marketing effectiveness in Thailand since the number of group association in social network shows positive relationship toward frequency of interacting among samples.

5.6 Comparison of the effectiveness of social network marketing

In this part, the authors aim to compare and contrast the testing data from the Thai expertise interviews and questionnaire of Thai students with Nielsen's research of consumer behavior in 2011 with Australian samples and naturally, Australia ranks the world second highest individualism score in Hofstede's study (Hofstede, 1980).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Network Usage</th>
<th>Australia (IND)</th>
<th>Thailand (COL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main activity</td>
<td>Sharing photos (72%)</td>
<td>Entertainment (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business purpose</td>
<td>Engage products, org. Brand (53%)</td>
<td>Interacting with ads and invitation (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking information</td>
<td>Ads and commercial (27%)</td>
<td>Products and trends (39.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. The effectiveness of social network marketing comparison between Australia and Thailand

Source The authors's figure

The result shows that 72 percentages of Australians use social networks to “post photos or post links to photos” which show individualistic behavior of sharing themselves, but there are only 53 percentages of the total respondents that “engage organization, brands, and products” via social network. Comparing to the overall samples, it is not much. Moreover, it is only 27 percentages of the respondents who use social network for checking the online ads and commercial (Nielsen, 2011).

The survey result shows that the collectivistic degree shows slightly positive relationship that raises the chances of sample participation via social network marketing and ads. The main purpose of using social network among Thai samples is for entertainment, accounting for 50%. There are 48% of the total Thai samples that interact with social networks more than two times per month. The survey result shows that the main purpose of 39.7% of Thai samples is to update information and trends for products and brands.
The trend shows that 41 percent of the Australians use social media to fully connect with brands and organizations. This shows that social network is a crucial channel among Australians (Nielsen, 2011).
6. Conclusion

This chapter will contain the summary of the final result of this dissertation and accentuate the result of this research.

After gathering the information on the social network marketing, an experienced consultant in social network marketing stated that collectivism in Thailand might be the key for successful social network implementation in Thailand. Thus, the authors intended to clarify this assumption by conducting online convenient sampling of Thai students along with the distant interviews of two Thai social network marketing managers for the analysis and concluding the results as follows:

According to the analysis, the results show that Thai collectivism is not the sole factor that influentially has an impact on Thai behavior in social network usage. The correlative values between Thai collectivism and the social network effectiveness shows ‘slightly positive’ relationship, 0.18, toward each other. Another ‘slightly positive’ relationship, 0.17, also considered to be more degree of collectivism as indicated by the number of group association in social network, to some extent, boost the effectiveness in social network marketing.

The other feasible factors involve the variation of educational levels among Thais and in-depth knowledge of using social networks among Thais, which supports Thai users’ effectiveness in utilizing social network in the cyber world. Moreover, the unique characteristic of social network misuses among Thais is another indisputable factor shown in this research. In order to focus more on social network marketing, collectivism is not the only decisive factor that impedes the achievement for social network marketing implementation. However, the other technological factor i.e. internet coverage or accessibility also plays an important role in providing an opportunity for users to interact with social networks. Some groups of people or some areas in Thailand do not have access to social networks due to the limit of Internet facilities. Thai collectivism to some extent also plays an important part for the reason behind the aloofness or the habit of withholding straightforward speech or opinion for Thais when making any online comment. Despite growing numbers of social network users in Thailand, this could well impede the effectiveness of social network marketing. Thai collectivism can also guide Thais to follow the latest social trends, like overly response to the use of social networks or smart phones, and other IT gadgets especially among new generations. Despite the fact that many Thais are now using social networks and eventually they are becoming crucial to everyday life for Thais. Yet the most important means for mass communication are the traditional channels such as T.V. ads, billboards, which still have influence over the majority of Thai people.

Even though most of the survey result supports the expert marketer’s view that Thai social network marketing is in early developing stage due to the limits of internet facilities, Thai collectivism, education background, and IT and social network technology knowledge, both expert marketers point out that social network marketing is worth the investment in Thailand. Social network marketing helps their company to generate growth and, with no doubt, is a
cutting edge and a channel to increase customers’ awareness about their existence, products and service as well as generates more profit.
7. Recommendations

This chapter aims to provide suggestions for the marketer who would like to implement or to improve the social network marketing and the researchers who are interested in this research topic.

7.1 Recommendations for implementing social network marketing in Thailand.

According to this research, most of samples feel uncomfortable with their experience of social network marketing content. The fact that the organization pushes too much content to the customer plays an important role in this uncomfortable feeling. To prevent this issue, the Thai marketer could avoid pushing too much content to users. Thai marketers should create innovative and persuasive ideas to entice their customers instead of pushing too much content toward their clients.

However, concerning some issues that are uncontrollable and cannot be corrected by the marketer, the research results also show that the IT educational standard and IT facilities might be the main threats in implementing social network marketing. Thai marketers should keep these points in mind and try not to overlook these points.

7.2 Recommendations for further research

According to this research, it also has many possible topics for further studies. Increased accuracy of the survey data would state clearer and more accurate results as well as reduce the deviations and errors. Using probabilities sampling with a high amount of samples is the proper solution for increasing the accuracy of the survey data. Moreover, investigating other businesses and products would provide wider views of social network marketing in Thailand.

In order to cover all aspects of the collectivism variable, investigating high individualism is needed to complete the other part of the cultural dimension, individualism. This further study would give a clearer and broader picture of the relationship between collectivism and individualism cultural dimensions and the effectiveness of social network marketing.

According to these research results, the other factors, such as IT facilities and the standard of IT education might be the important factors that influence the effectiveness of social network marketing. To ensure that point, the further study of these factors and the effectiveness of social network marketing is important.
References


Appendices

Appendix I: Social networks

Defining social networks

Social networks have been available in most parts of the world. In each part of the world, people try to give the definition for social networks. In communities and local government (2008, p.10-11) report, some definitions appeared in the report, which were taken from Boyd (2007), and Goad and Mooney (2007). Boyd (2007) defined its meaning as follows: the social media has been included in the web service that lets people to make their own profiles, to participate with other people for sharing an interest and to journey into the list of their friends connection. It is also the same meaning as Goad and Mooney (2007) who had also given the definition as follows: social networks, which has been normally offered a various function for supporting member participating in the societies, are online societies of member who shares an interest or find other member interest. Due to these definitions, we can translate the purposes of social networks in the following manners:

- To support member in the online community (chatting, sharing, exchanging and etc.)
- To allow member to create their own profiles, interest and connection
- To let member participating in the online community (chatting, sharing, exchanging and etc.)

Categorizing social networks

In communities and local government (2008, p.12-14) report, social networks have been divided into 9 categories, which are as follows:

Profile-based social network

Member has been allowed to create his or her own ‘web space’, like a personal webpage. In individual web space, member can post a text, link or embedded content such as video, web page or image. Moreover, member can manage or customize his or her own web space according to his or her wish. (Communities and local government, 2008, p.12)

Example: Facebook (www.facebook.com), Bebo (www.bebo.com), MySpace (www.myspace.com) and etc.
Content-based social networks

Member has been allowed to share the content, which can be video, image or etc. Moreover, the network has allowed members to post comment or suggestion. However this kind of network is important for profile-based social networks because it lets member customize the connection of contents. (Communities and local goverment, 2008, p.12)

Example: Photo sharing site Flickr (www.flickr.com), video sharing site YouTube (www.youtube.com) and etc.

White-label social networks

This kind of network has provided a chance for people to develop their own ‘mini-Myspace’ or attend other societies. Member can generate or edit the contents, which are his or her own or shared with other member. (Communities and local goverment, 2008, p. 12)

Example: WetPaint (www.wetpaint.com), Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) and etc.

Multi-User Virtual Environments

Mostly this network has played an important role in online gaming area, which allows player, experiencing the virtual world. The virtual world has let players to communicate with one another via avatars, which represents player’s personality. (Communities and local goverment, 2008, p. 13)

Example: Gaming: Second Life (www.secondlife.com), Runescape (www.runescape.com)

Mobile social networks

To extend their limits, most of social networks have provided a new solution to support member via the smart phones such as Blackberry, iPhone, Android. (Communities and local goverment, 2008, p. 13)

Example: Facebook application, Google+ application, etc.

Micro-blogging/Presence updates

Micro-blogging/Presence updates have allowed users to post their updated status for broadcasting their feeling to other users who attend the same society. (Communities and local goverment, 2008, p. 13)

Example: Twitter (www.twitter.com), Wayn (www.wayn.com), etc.
Social Search

Social Search has been created to provide searching result by exploring through various public profiles. This network has provided people with the search engine to find their needed information such as name or interest on profiles. (Communities and local government, 2008, p. 13)

Example: Wink (www.wink.com), Spokeo (www.spokeo.com)

Local Forums

Local Forums has allowed a localized template of social networking to connect between online and offline activity. (Communities and local government, 2008, p. 13)

Example: Eastserve (www.eastserve.com), Onsnet (www.onsnetnuenen.nl) and etc.

Thematic Websites

Thematic Websites has been used in the common areas of interest to develop a society which allows people to share the same interests. This network has let people share ideas, information or contents being relevant with the common area of interest of a society. (Communities and local government, 2008, p. 14)

Example: Netmums (www.netmums.com)

Corporate use of social media

Business uses this social media to create a buzz among customers so that customer will, in turn, develop interest and loyalty in its brand. (Burson-Marsteller Asia-Pacific, 2011)
Appendix II: The summary of criticism and limitation of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory

The essential issues, raised by many researchers, are relevancy, cultural homogeneity, national divisions, political influences, one company approach, outdated, too few dimensions and statistical integrity. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**Relevancy**

Culture is a sensitive topic. However many researchers claims that their work did not use a suitable instrument for measuring a sensitive value like culture. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**Cultural Homogeneity**

In his work, Hofstede claims that the whole population in the same country is a homogenous but many critics point out that the whole population should consist of various groups, which is then not homogenous. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**National Divisions**

Many critics point out that nation is not a proper factor of analysis for bounds. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**Political Influences**

Many researchers claim that in the course of their research, Europe, Asia and Africa were not in the right timing. The surveys were conducted during the cold war period or the communist insurgence. Thus, the data collected might not be accurate. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**One Company Approach**

According to his research, Hofstede's survey based on only one company that many critics claim that it might not possibly reflect the whole population. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**Out-dated**

Many researchers point that their data are too old and might not possibly reflect the future. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)

**Too Few Dimensions**

As for the sensitive topic like culture, many researchers point that four or five dimensions are not sufficient for measuring. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)
Statistical integrity

Some researchers argue that Hofstede used the same question on more than one purpose and some statistical used might not be of integrity. (Jones, 2007, p. 5)
Appendix III: Interview questions

1. We would like you to briefly introduce yourself (example, name, position etc.) and your organization (name, products etc.)
2. Do the company applies any social network marketing (such as on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) if yes, why the company chooses to do?
3. How does the organization implements social network marketing? What kinds of social networks do you use?
4. What does the organization expected from implementing social network marketing? And what does the company expected feedback from respondents?
5. How important does the company prioritizes social network marketing among all of the company marketing strategies? (Campaign, event, billboard, TV commercial etc.). Also, as a marketer, how important do you prioritize social network marketing.
6. Is it worth including social network marketing for the company marketing strategy? How and Why? (Any results or researches to support your ideas)
7. In your opinion, what are the main factors that impact the effectiveness of implementing social network marketing of the company?
8. The fact that Thai consumers apparently follow the majority’s trend, does this aspect impacts the effectiveness of the company social network marketing?
9. Do you have any recommendation in implementing social network marketing in Thailand?
Appendix IV: Questionnaire questions

Social networks marketing in Thailand survey

This questionnaire is a part of the research for a master thesis and dissertation about the social network marketing in Thailand. The results of this survey will be totally used for academic purposes. This survey is anonymous and does not require any personal details. This questionnaire consists of 21 questions and the approximate time of completion is 5-7 minutes. The research team greatly appreciates your help and support with this research and kindly thank you for your valuable contribution. Each survey submission will increase the charitable fund for the social and religious institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Are you currently study in university or collage?</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<th>2) Your Gender</th>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<th>3) Area of your study</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and Humanities</td>
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<td>Business</td>
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<td>Doctor</td>
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<td>Social sciences</td>
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<td>Vet</td>
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<td>Other (Please Specify):</td>
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4) Your average income per month

- < 10,000 THB
- 10,000 - 15,000 THB
- 15,001 - 20,000 THB
- > 20,000 THB

5) How many hours do you approximately use the internet per day?

- < 1 hour
- 1 - 2 hours
- 3 - 4 hours
- > 4 hours

6) What is the main activity that you use the internet for?

- Commerce
- Communication
- Entertainment
- Education
- Information Searching
- Other (Please Specify):

7) Have you ever used social networks?

- Yes
- No
8) Please choose your most important social network services based on the frequency of usage and time spending?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
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<td>YouTube</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
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<td>Instagram</td>
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<td>Blog</td>
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<td>Google+</td>
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<td>Myspace</td>
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<td>Flikr</td>
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<td>LinkedIn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Please Specify):</td>
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</table>

9) How many hours have you spent with social networks in average hours per day?

- < 1 hour |   |
- 1 - 2 hours |   |
- 2 - 4 hours |   |
- > 4 hours |   |

10) How often do you shared or passed the online contents regarding link of the website, video, music, etc. to your friends? (Times per month)

- < 1 time |   |
- 1 - 5 times |   |
- 6 - 10 times |   |
- > 10 times |   |

11) How often do you express your feelings in public area via social networks? (Times per month)

- < 1 time |   |
- 1 - 5 times |   |
- 6 - 10 times |   |
- > 10 times |   |
12) How many communities or groups in social networks are you a member of? (such as Facebook)

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<td>1 - 2 groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 - 4 groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; 4 groups</td>
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13) Have you ever seen any pages or profiles representing clothing brands on social networks?

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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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14) Have you ever received any advertising or persuasive information, such as invitation, special offers, or new products, regarding clothing, brands and retailers via social networks?

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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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15) How often do you receive those information and advertising? (Times per month)

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<td>1 - 5 times</td>
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<td>6 - 10 times</td>
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<td>&gt; 10 times</td>
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16) What is your attitude toward those information and advertising?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your attitude toward those information and advertising</th>
<th>Terribly Dislike</th>
<th>Dislike</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Like</th>
<th>Very Like</th>
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17) What is the reason behind your attitude in question no.16?
18) How often do you interact, such as clicking “Like”, “Share”, or giving comment on those information and invitation? (Times per month)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 time</td>
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<td>1 - 2 times</td>
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<td>3 - 4 times</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; 4 times</td>
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19) What is the main trigger that is able to make you respond to those invitations?

- To get special price offer for product and service.
- To attend the special activity, such as meet and greet with celebrity.
- To get gifts, presents or vouchers.
- To catch the trends.
- To follow the brands.
- Other (Please Specify):

20) How authentic would you express your feelings toward brands or products on social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authenticity</th>
<th>Very Less</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>More</th>
<th>Most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressing your feelings toward brands or products on social networks</td>
<td></td>
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21) Do you have recommendation to improve how to use social networks for advertising and communication channel? (If yes, please provide the recommendation.)
Appendix V: Interview with Ms. Thunsuda Limsiripothong (May)

Interview with: Ms. Thunsuda Limsiripothong (May), Project Manager, siamsquare.co.th

Performed by: Phanugorn Poo-im (PPM11001)
              Sangkan Savaikiat (SST11005)

Date: 27th April 2011
Time: 12:00-12:30 (Swedish Time)
Place: Call via Skype

Self-Introduction
Name: Thunsuda Limsiripothong (May)
Position: Project Manager

The reasons why the company chooses to implement social network marketing.

She claimed that social networks are the most important channel for the company since they define themselves as a small company. They emphasize on below the line and social media marketing to minimize the costs. The most effective channel for the company is Facebook.

The implementation of social network marketing.

Due to constant changes in Facebook regulations, implementation of social network marketing is more complicated to conduct. Social networking campaigns which drive customers to directly click “Like” are forbidden. Facebook has an advance plagiarism program that can detect users who misconduct against the rules and will be suspended from logging in for 48 hours. Instead of using the text, the interviewee sometimes uses pictures and indirect or external links to avoid those risks. Nowadays, this company uses Facebook as a communicative channel to convey messages to their target customers as well as receiving real time feedbacks.

The expectation of implementing social network marketing.

Firstly, she has to say that her company uses the “Cloud sourcing model” which is still new and required two ways communication. From these reasons, social media suits her organization’s requirements well. She aims to increase brand awareness by spreading it through social media to target customers. This company also uses social media to maintain the customer relationship and boost satisfaction by flexibly responding to the customers. The real time
communication via social network is very effective and reduces the length of communication process between the company and the customers.

**The importance of social network marketing**

She claimed that social network is the most important channel for her company, especially Facebook. About 80 percent of the customers know about this company via Facebook. Moreover, she also mentioned conveying messages to other channels, such as fashion magazines and fashion news, using public relations and celebrities to boost the arrival of new products. These implementations will increase the awareness by bringing the topics, which have currently been publicized in the magazines or news, up in the cyber world to create word-of-mouth and heating up the discussion in social networks.

**The value of implementing social network marketing**

She claimed that it is worth the implementation and the numbers of respondents are constantly increasing and will be growing for sure. Nowadays, the company has approximately 80,000 respondents and the average growth is about 600 to 700 new members per week. She said that the growth of the Siam square web page is up to expectations, even though it is not claimed to be high comparing with the other pages that she is currently supervising on.

**The feasible constraint of the effectiveness of implementing social network marketing**

Among the external factors that might impact the growth of implementing social media marketing would be the internet availability and the growth of the smart phone industry. Moreover, she mentioned the lack of education in technological usage especially smart phones and software systems. Most Thais know only the basic function of the social network and still live in the offline world more than the online one. The real online transaction level is still low. From her perspective, she claimed that the growth of effective implementation of social network in business is going to strongly grow in about one or two years from now judging from the debuting of Coupon, Rain Rocket, and Zalora. The real impact on her is the customer behavior itself that stimulates growth can be identified by generation.

**Thai collectivism and the effectiveness social network marketing**

She said that the differences between eastern and western cultures in term of sharing information to their groups are not that extreme. However, it is a different story when Thais express their ideas online like giving comments and writing blogs. Thais hardly ever give explicit or straightforward comments online, comparing with foreigners. The reason behind the popularity of Facebook is the friendly function for users to give comments even though most of the comments on Facebook are kind of fragmented, superficial and dispassionate.
Recommendation in implementing social network marketing

She said that even though Facebook is very popular and very trendy channel, social network marketing is not really a new way of marketing. But it is an effective channel of communication to convey news and information to the target customers provided that it must be the right one. In her case it is Facebook. To optimize successful outcomes from social network marketing, it depends on the marketing strategy and goals of a company. The marketer should know the company's real position, find the content that supports the method and urge all the efforts moving to the same direction.
Appendix VI: Interview with the social network manager

Interview with: The social network manager,
Successful e-commerce business

Performed by: Phanugorn Poo-im (PPM11001)
Sangkan Savaikiat (SST11005)

Date: 29th April 2011
Time: 17:30-18:00 (Swedish Time)
Place: Call via Skype

The reasons why the company chooses to implement social network marketing.

In his point of view, he claimed that the main reason is that his company is an E-commerce business and its business model is focus on online consumer. In order to connect effectively with online consumer, social network is an important channel to interact with consumer.

The Implementation of social network marketing.

He also implements YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook for his company; however Facebook is the first priority because Facebook is the most popular in Thailand. In order to connect Facebook with consumer, his company also applies all functions of Facebook such as posting video or picture content to connect with campaigns (such as create questions, or event to let consumer participate). Even though Facebook has changed its regulations affecting social network marketing, it’s not an obstacle for the business. It is possible that it might be an obstacle at the early stage however it’s normal that businesses have to adjust to such changes.

The expectation of implementing social network marketing.

His company desires to gain consumer engagement, awareness, perception and feedback via social network marketing. In return for the said useful information and interaction from consumer, his company uses marketing campaigns to reward customer participation. Some campaigns are exclusive for participation in social networks only.

The importance of social network marketing

In his point of view, he claimed that social network marketing is very important for his business in Thailand; however, it’s not enough to use only social network. Due to the fact that most of Thai people still rely on the offline transactions more
than online transactions, his company also uses the traditional channels of marketing communications. However if he has to prioritize the channel of marketing, he prioritizes into three following ranks. The first one is the search engine marketing that will adjust his business website to appear in a higher ranking in any search engine result (such as Google AdWords) because his company pay the most attention to the persons who are buying or paying an attention to online products. The second one is the social media marketing such as Facebook and Twitter. Because the social media marketing leads the business to online consumer which is the main target for his company. It’s very convenient to introduce a product via a blog or other online content which already discusses that kind of product. This solution helps the business to reach out to the right consumer. The last one is T.V commercials, as mentioned earlier, most Thai people still rely on the offline transactions more than online transactions.

The value of implementing social network marketing.

In his point of view, social network marketing in Thailand might not be successful like in the U.S.A. or Europe. However, in his company case, it's worth the investment because it helps his company to generate business growth. In Thailand, social network marketing is at developing stage. Most of Thai people welcome new technology, trends, etc. from overseas. However, social network marketing is thriving mainly for some particular areas or among a group of well-educated people.

The feasible constraint for the effectiveness of implementing social network marketing.

In his point of view, he claimed that the feasible constraint for the effectiveness of implementing social network marketing might be the understanding on consumer behaviors. Based on different culture, characteristic and so on, consumer behaves differently in a different country for a different product. Moreover, in Thailand, most Thai people also do not dare to use an online payment due to the question of reliability and credibility of the brands and the IT system.

Thai collectivism and the effectiveness social network marketing

In his point of view, he claimed that the culture factor does not affect the effectiveness of social network marketing that much. On the contrary, he thinks that the huge differences are depending on the brands. The more the brands are well known, the higher the participants and the respondent turn out. However, in Thai culture, people sometimes misunderstand and misuse social media. Some just use it as the trash board to express their overwhelmingly emotions such as envy, jealousy, etc.
Recommendation in implementing social network marketing

In order to improve the effectiveness of social network marketing, the Thai government should focus on developing the fundamental facilities, such as internet and IT infrastructure, on education and so on.

To implement social network marketing, first you have to know yourself, such as your target group, your product, your capability and etc. Second, you must be able to choose the proper channel that fit in with your company’s business.
Appendix VII: The result of the survey

Survey condition question:

1) Are you currently studying in university or college?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>160 (89.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19 (10.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5 Educational status of sample

Source The authors’s figure

The first question is to see the educational status of the samples, the result shows that 89.4% are currently educating and 10.6% are not currently educating.

Demographic questions:

2) Your Gender

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>123 (76.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6 Gender of sample

Source The authors’s figure

The second question shows the proportion of the sample’s gender. The result shows that 23.1% are male and the rest 76.9% are female.

3) Area of your study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of study</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>16 (10.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>81 (50.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>4 (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4 (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>7 (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>4 (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>11 (6.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Political</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4 (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>1 (0.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 Area of sample study

Source The authors’s figure
The third question is composed to categorize the area of study among samples. There are 50.6%, 10%, 6.9%, 4.4%, 2.5%, 2.5%, 2.5%, 1.3%, and 0.6%, which study in Business, Arts and Humanities, Information Technology, Engineer, doctor, math, health science, law, and physical science.

![Figure 8 Average income per month](source)

The fourth question shows the allowance per month of the samples indicated that majority of the samples have income less than 10,000 baht accounting for 57.3%, whereas 28.7% are those who have allowance between 10,000 to 15,000 baht, 9.6% have allowance of 15,001 to 20,000, and only 4.5% of samples who have monthly allowance more than 20,000 baht.

![Figure 9 Internet consumption of sample](source)

The result shows the amount of Internet consumption indicated by the hours the samples spend on Internet. Majority of the samples spend more than four hours using the Internet per day, accounting for 37.6%. The second highest range is three to four hours accounting for 36.9%, and 22.3% for those who spend one to two hours per day on the Internet.
6) What are the main activity that you use the internet for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>60 (31.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>58 (60.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11 (6.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Searching</td>
<td>13 (8.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 10 Main internet activity of sample**

Source: The author's figure

This question is to identify the main actives that each samples use the Internet with. The majority of the samples, accounting for 50%, use the Internet for entertainment, whereas 31.3% use it for communication, 8.1% for information searching, 6% for educational purposes, 2.5% for commerce, and 1.3% for other.

7) Have you ever used social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>180 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11 Social network usage of sample**

Source: The author's figure

This question is to see whether the samples have ever experienced or used any social network or not. The result shows that 100% of the samples have already experienced the social network.
8) Please choose your most important social network services based on the frequency of usage and time spending?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Network</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtube</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myspace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 12 Most popular social network services**

Source: The authors's figure

According to the survey result, it shows that Facebook score the highest coverage with about 40 percentages of the overall samples. The second highest accounting for 23.7 percent is YouTube. The third highest is Instagram which gains 13.4 percent. These are followed by Twitter, Google plus, and blog accounting for 9.7, 8.4, and 1.8 percentages.

9) How many hours have you spent with social networks in average hours per day?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 hour</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 hours</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4 hours</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 4 hours</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 13 Times spending on social network**

Source: The authors’s figure

Most people spend time with the social networks approximately about one to two hours per day is up to 41.9 percentages. The second highest range, accounting for 31.9 percentages, are those who spending two to four hours with the social media. The third place is the range of people who live more than four hours on the cyber world, extreme social network users, accounting for 21.3 percentages. In last place are people who spend less than an hour with social network accounting for only 5 percentages.
The survey result shows that the highest average of time(s) per month that people share data via social network are “one to five times per month” with the percentages of 52.9 percent. More than ten times per month accounts for 17.2 percentages of responses. The third one is the one that range between six to ten times of monthly information sharing, accounting for 15.9 percentages. The lowest group is the group that never or rarely sends accounting 14.0 percentages.

The frequency of expressing emotion among Thai users via social networks shows that the highest rate is one to five time(s) per month accounting for 49.4 percentages. The second highest one is those who use the social networks as emotional sharing channels or more than ten times per month accounting for 19.4 percentages. The third group is those who rarely express their feeling via social networks accounting for 16.3 percentages. The lowest one is the six to ten times per month accounting for 15 percentages.
12) How many communities or groups in social networks are you a member of? (such as Facebook)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 groups</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4 groups</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 4 groups</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16 Amount of community or group participation in social network

Source The authors's figure

The participation as community members or group members of the samples shows that 66.3 percentages of overall are associated with five or more groups. Also, it accounts for 18.1 percentages for those users who join three to four social groups. Also, the result shows that 13.8 percentages are those who are members or fans in only one to two social groups. There is only 1.9 percent of the sample that never joins any groups on social networks.

13) Have you ever seen any pages or profiles representing clothing brands on social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17 Experience with clothing brand on social network

Source The authors's figure

The outcome show that up to 96.3 percentages have seen pages associated with clothing brands on social networks, whereas 3.8 percentages have never seen.

14) Have you ever received any advertising or persuasive information, such as invitation, special offers, or new products, regarding clothing, brands and retailers via social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18 Experience with social network marketing content of clothing business

Source The authors's figure

There are about 82.5 percentages of the sample that have seen an online message regarding clothing advertising, campaigns, and those persuasive offers displaying on social networks, whiles the rest 17.5 percentages never receive these kinds of messages.
15) How often do you receive those information and advertising? (Times per month)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1 time</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 5 times</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10 times</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 times</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 19 Amount of experience with social network marketing content of clothing business**

Source: The authors' figure

According to Figure 17, 62.9% of the whole sample receives advertising or persuasive information about 1 – 5 times. Moreover, the samples that receive that information more than 10 times have only 18.2%. However, 8.53% of this sample never receives this kind of information before.

16) What is your attitude toward those information and advertising?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tend not dislike</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Like</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Score</td>
<td>2.78 / 5</td>
<td>85.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 20 Attitude toward social network marketing content**

Source: The authors' figure

In the attitude toward advertising or persuasive information topic that the authors show in this Figure 18, 62.88% of this sample feels moderate on this kind of information. Moreover, 17.42% of this sample feels dislike with this kind of information. Furthermore, only 10.61% of this sample likes this kind of information.
According to this figure 19, most of sample (62.86%) says that the reason for their answer in the attitude toward advertising or persuasive information topic is that advertising and persuasive information is annoying. Only 22.86% of this sample thinks that this information is really useful.

According to Figure 20, 36.4% of this sample has interacted with advertising or persuasive information more than four times. However, most of sample (63.6%) has interacted with that information under four times.
19) What are the main trigger that are able to make you respond to those invitations and such?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trigger</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To get special price offer for product and service.</td>
<td>29 (28.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To attend the special activity, such as meet and greet with celebrity.</td>
<td>17 (16.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get gifts, presents or vouchers.</td>
<td>24 (22.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To catch the trends.</td>
<td>29 (27.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To follow the brands.</td>
<td>29 (27.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 23** Main trigger behind interacting with social network marketing

Source The author's figure

According to Figure 21, 28.2% of this sample claims that getting a special price or offer make them respond to advertising or persuasive information but 22.1% of the sample agrees that to follow the brands is the main motivator to make them respond to such information.

20) How authentic would you express your feelings toward brands or products on social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling Level</th>
<th>Very Less</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>More</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressing your feelings toward brands or products on social networks</td>
<td>2 (5.06%)</td>
<td>19 (14.39%)</td>
<td>76 (57.58%)</td>
<td>27 (20.45%)</td>
<td>2 (1.52%)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>2.97 / 5 (59.40%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 24** Expressing the feeling toward clothing brands or products on social networks

Source The author's figure

In expressing feeling toward brands or products on social network topic as the authors show in this figure 22, most of sample (57.58%) is moderately expressing their feeling toward brands or products on social networks. However 21.97% of this sample frequently expressing their feeling toward brands or products on social network.