

**CUSTOMER PERCEPTION ABOUT
BRANDING AND PURCHASE INTENTION
A STUDY OF SMARTPHONE PURCHASING IN THAILAND**



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entitled
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BRANDING AND PURCHASE INTENTION:
A STUDY OF SMARTPHONE PURCHASING IN THAILAND**

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M.M. (MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT)

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ABSTRACT

Rapid progress in the affordability and accessibility of technology will reshape the telecom customer worldwide. Thailand smartphone market is interesting to study because it is rapidly growth in past 2 -3 years due to the intense competition on telecom marketing. Huge demand on smartphone purchasing will affect revenue in telecom market. This study was conducted to focus on Thailand customer perception on smartphone purchasing. This paper will explore the factors that effect to customer while they making decision on smartphone purchasing. The data was collected by in-depth interview. 20 respondents are Thais in the age group of 25-40 years old.

The result from in-depth interview explain the factors that affect customer purchasing intention of Thailand smartphone user are Brand image, Brand Awareness, Brand royalty, Product quality and Product attribute accordingly, however we found that there are 3 more factors that will affect Thailand customer perception when they purchase new smartphone are Price conscious and Social reference. In the final part will be recommendation as proposed.

KEY WAORDS: Customer perception / Branding / Smartphone / Purchase intention / Thailand

53 pages

CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Objective of the Study	4
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW&FRAMWORK DEVELOPMENT	5
2.1 Theoretical Foundation	5
2.1.1 Purchase Intention	6
2.1.2 Brand Image	7
2.1.3 Brand Awareness	8
2.1.4 Brand Loyalty	9
2.1.5 Product Quality	10
2.1.6 Product Attribute	11
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY	14
3.1 Overview	14
3.2 Data Collection Methodology	15
3.3 Preliminary Finding	17

CONTENTS (cont.)

	Page
CHAPTER IV DATA ANALYSIS	19
CHAPTER V RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS	24
5.1 Recommendations	24
5.2 Conclusions	26
REFERENCES	28
APPENDICES	30
Appendix A: Interview Questions	31
Appendix B: Consent for Participation in Interview Research	33
BIOGRAPHY	53

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1 Literature review summary	12
3.1 Target Group	16
4.1 Smartphone Brand	19
4.2 Smartphone brand recognition	19
4.3 Factor that influence customer to buy smartphone	20



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.1 Smartphone & Tablet penetration in urban Thailand in year 2012-2013	2
2.1 Branding and Purchase intentions.	5
2.2 Conceptual model	6
2.3 The Awareness Pyramid	8
2.4 Pyramid of brand loyalty	9
2.5 the Aspects of Product Quality	10
2.6 Reason of Choosing SmartPhones	11



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Now a day technology was develop faster, people response to new product functions that developed for daily life style and especially when surfing and browsing internet, smartphone is the answer to everything in just one click. We cannot deny that smartphone become as essential part of our lives. Most of us couldn't go out a single day without our smartphone devices, someone believe that they will survive with nothing but smartphone. With new network technology that providing high speed internet for surfing and browsing worldwide, there is nothing in this world that is impossible for human. Our high technology-driven capability allows us to consume more information through internet on the go via smartphone, giving us a whole new experience.

Following information is the mobile growth statistic for 2013 from digital buzz;

- 91% of global population have a mobile phone
- 56% of them own a smartphone
- 50% of mobile phone users, use mobile as their primary internet source
- 80% of time on mobile is spent inside application
- 73% of tablet owners purchase online from their tablets each week
- The average age of mobile phone user is now 13 years old

(www.digitalbuzzblog.com, 2013)

In Thailand smartphone also drive retail value growth and volume sales than feature phone in 2013. There are forecast that feature phones will be less popularity, conversely smartphones will increase in Thailand. In nest few year it is expected of smartphones will gain the majority of volume sales, over taking feature phone. Feature phone price are cheaper, at less than 1,000 THB while smartphone start over 2,000 THB but the price continue to drop, the key found support this trend. First, international brands and domestic brands competed aggressively to be leader in

smartphone. Second, replacement demand moved away from feature phone towards affordable priced smartphone. Third, telecommunications operators promoted sales of smartphone intensively, such as discounting the retail price, offering free internet connectivity for unlimited time or discount on monthly fee (Euromonitor, 2014). In 2013, smartphone sales reached 9 million units out of 18 million units in the mobile phone market, and expected to reach 15 million units in 2014. The low-end smartphone price below 5,000THB is a key driver of the market according to intense competition from mobile network operators are migrating 2G customers to 3 G system, customer are buying their first smartphone to replace their one feature one (Bangkok Post, 2014).

Smartphone incredible growth between 2012 and 2013, smartphone penetration rose to 36% of total population (eMarketer.com, 2013).

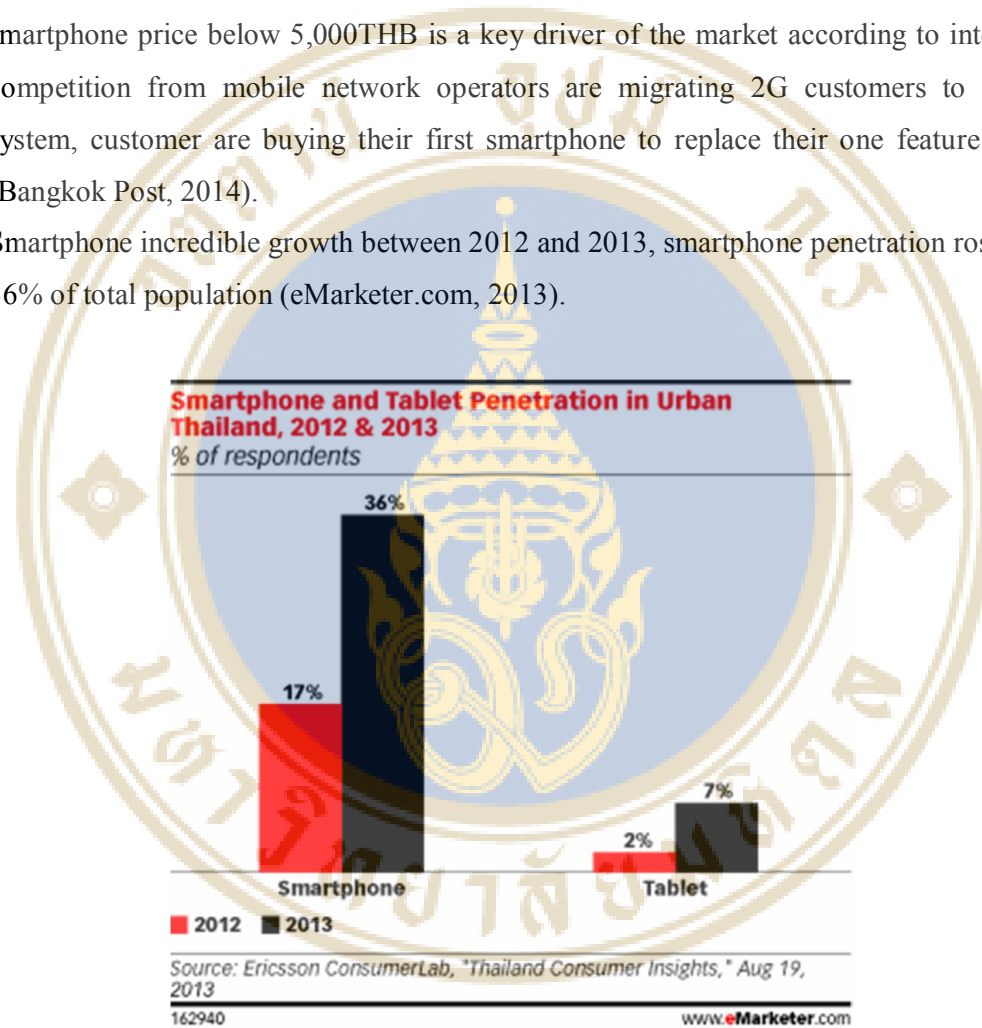


Figure 1.1 Smartphone & Tablet penetration in urban Thailand in year 2012-2013

At Q2'14, the total number of mobile subscribers in Thailand has reached 93.3MN, AIS is the market leader with 42 MN subscriber followed by dtac 28.2MN and True Move H 23.1MN respectively. Total revenue in Telecom marketing at Q2'14 is 67 billion Baht; one third of total revenue came from sales (AIS, dtac and True, 2014) so marketer need to understand customer perception on smartphone purchasing which is the second huge part that generate revenue.

1.2 Problem Statement

The marketers need to understand customer perception about branding toward purchase intention. This study will explore how branding will affect the purchase intention of mobile customer in Thailand. Which factor that will affect customer perception on smartphone purchase, will customer purchase smartphone if it has good brand image among others, if customer never heard about the brand will they try to purchase this brand. Will they remain purchase same brand that they currently use, will customer loyalty to brand on smartphone. The awareness of brand will affect perception of purchasing or not? Or the product quality and attribute will impact on perception?

The purpose of this thematic paper is to find out the factors that related between branding and purchase intention toward customer perceptions, which are brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty, product quality and product attribute. This paper helps marketer to focus on how relevant amount brand and purchasing intention. This paper provide customer's insight about smartphone purchase intention that will create updated information as research tools for marketer.

The focus of study:

- Consumer's purchase intention of smartphone in Thailand.
- Consumer Purchasing perception

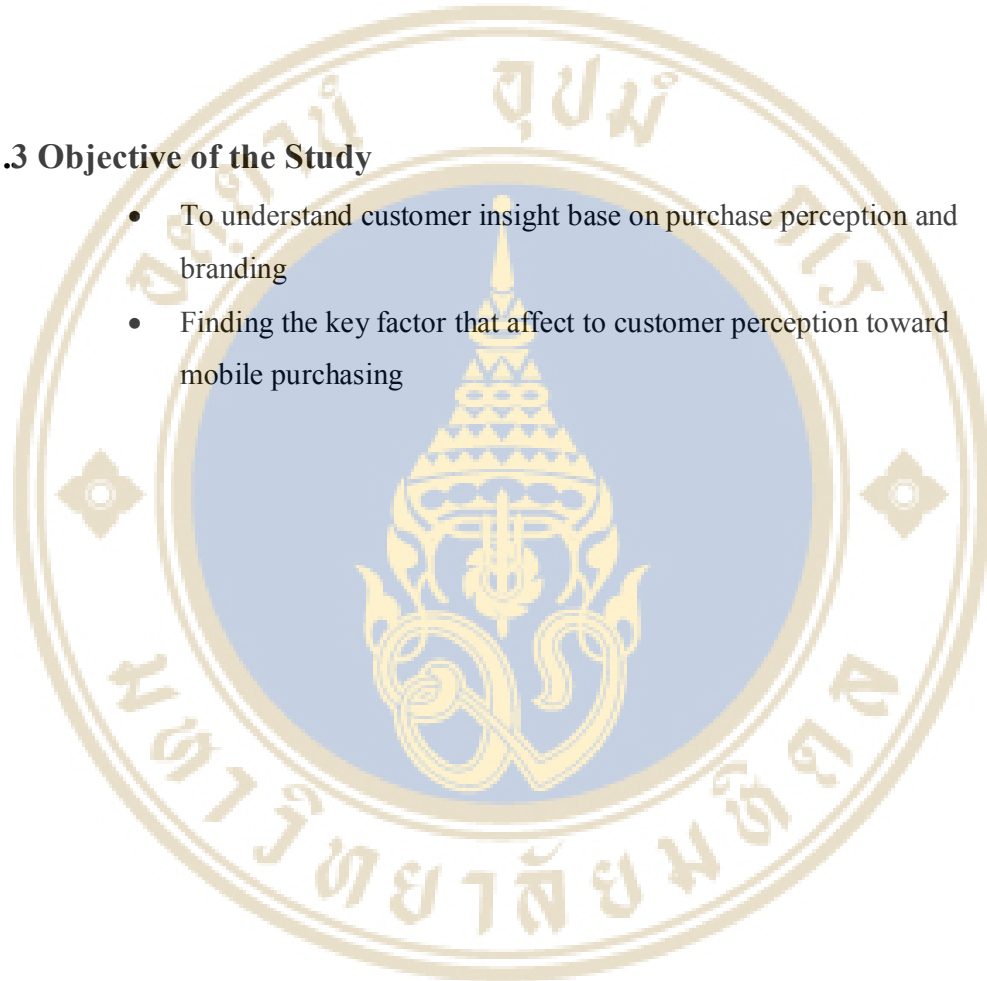
In this study, we will find the answer the following research questions;

1. What are the factors that motivate customer to purchase smartphone?
2. How Brand affect customer perception when purchasing smartphone?

I have chosen to study how customer perception about branding and purchase intention of smartphone in Thailand because there are intense competition on smartphone market in Thailand however there are a paper that study on customer perception on branding and purchase intention but they are study on others field such as cosmetics product, fast-food or FMCG but there are no paper that specific study on smartphone purchasing in Thailand.

1.3 Objective of the Study

- To understand customer insight base on purchase perception and branding
- Finding the key factor that affect to customer perception toward mobile purchasing



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

This research will show the brand factors (Brand image, Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Product Quality and Product Attributes) on purchase intentions.

Earlier research and the conceptual model

There are studies that explain how brand affects customer purchase intention (Irfan, Rafay, Musarrat & Awais, 2013) that there are 6 variables that will affect purchase intention: “Brand image”, “Product Quality”, “Product Knowledge”, “Product Involvement”, “Product Attributes”, “Brand Loyalty”. They collected data from 366 respondents through a questionnaire to find out that there is a positive and significant relationship between various dimensions of the product and purchase intention of customers in Pakistan, as summarized in the following model.

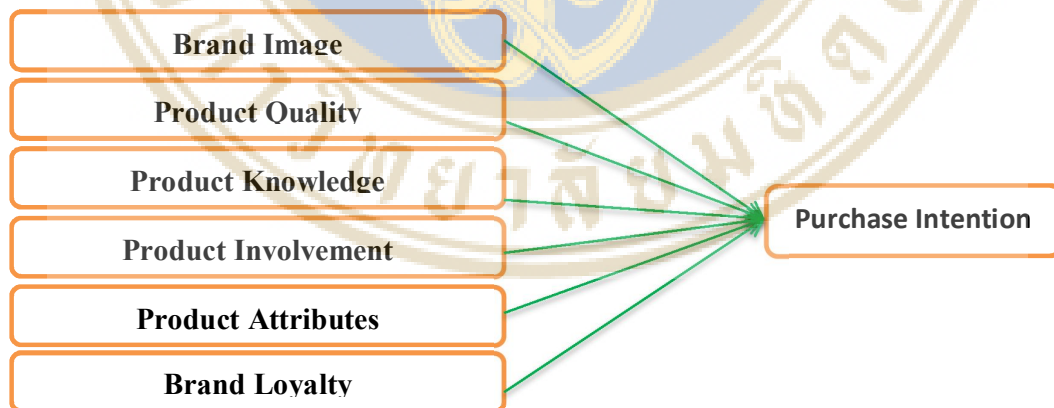


Figure 2.1 Branding and Purchase intentions. (Irfan, Rafay, Musarrat & Awais 2013)

According to another research as well from Pakistan collected from 150 respondents found that “Brand Image” and “Brand Attitude” has positive Impact on customer purchase intention.

So for smartphone purchase intention “Product Involvement” Might not relevant to purchase intention, As I summary as following conceptual Model below.

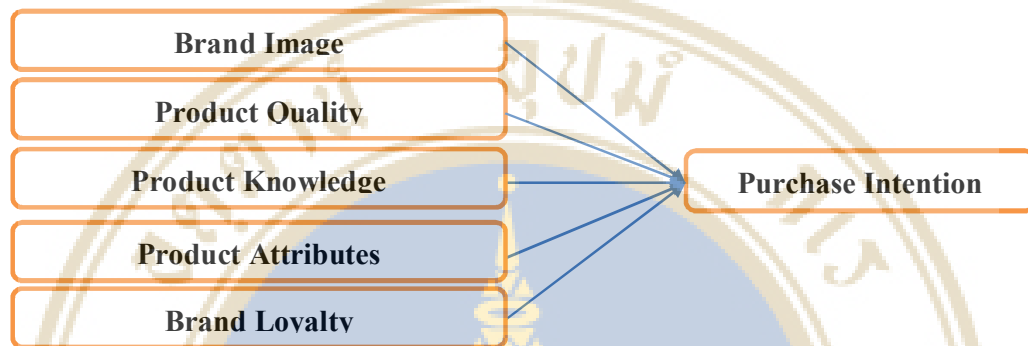


Figure 2.2 Conceptual model (Irfan, Rafay, Musarrat & Awais 2013)

The definitions of factors of this research are showing as following.

2.1.1 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention occur when customer plan to purchase a particular good or service in near future. It can be defined as individual’s intention to buy a specific brand individuals who want to buy a specific brand which they has chosen for themselves after certain evaluation; there are variables by which we can measure purchase intention for instance consider the brand for purchasing and expecting to purchase the brand in the future (Laroche, Kim and Zhou, 1996; Laroche and Sadokierski, 1994; MacKenzie and Belch, 1986). Purchase intention is the implied promise to one’s self to buy the product again whenever next trip to the market (Fandos & Flavain, 2006; Halim&Hameed, 2005) Fandos and Flavain also explain purchase intention as the customer behavior on short basis about the reputation purchase of specific product example when customer decided to buy product they will came back again to same market/shop.

It is shown that approaches toward a specific brand have great effect on brand purchase intention (Brown and Stayman, 1992; Homer, 1990), and brand

attitude has positive relation with purchase intention. It is also found that a consumer's intention is settled by attitude toward the same and other brands which are present in their consideration (Laroche and Sadokierski, 1994; Laroche and Zhou, 1996). Purchase intention is positively inclined by independent variables such as brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty, product quality and product attribute.

2.1.2 Brand Image

It's is very important aspect towards purchase intention. It propels the consumers to consume more value on the specific brand having good brand image. It helps the consumers to decide whether which brand is a better option for them and they are forced to make purchase intentions couple of times. A good brand image helps to create long term relationships between the product and ultimate users. It is very constructive way to make better brand personality in the market for the purpose to increases the sale of the product. Product attributes, brand personality, and brand benefits are the three key gears of the brand image. Higher the brand image, higher will be the purchase intention (Irfan, Rafay, Musarrat &Awais, 2013).

When consumers strongly recommend the brand, and have unique relations with a brand, that generates positive attitude toward the brand (Keller, 2003). We consider brand image as an important factor because it adds to the consumer's decision process either he should purchase the brand or not (Dolich, 1969). Brand image has a great effect on consumers' next behavior (Johnson and Puto, 1987; Fishbein, 1967), and have great contribution in the brand equity (Biel, 1992).

There are some studies the influence of brand image on customer purchase intention and found that there is positive relationship between brand image and customer purchase intention (Wu&Wu, 2011).

For this study, brand image might defined as color identity logo or event product figure such as customer might remind to Apple when they saw an apple or they will think of Samsung when they saw Korean people or K.chompoo Areeya who is Samsung Presenter in Thailand on Television programs.

2.1.3 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is defined as the extent to which how consumer can easily memorize the brand when he is going to buy a product. For the formation of brand awareness, brand image is an essential condition (Keller, 1993). To evaluate brand awareness brand recall is a tool by which we can easily measure and predict brand awareness (Franz-Rudolf Esch et al. 2006).

Brand awareness is mainly dominated in a consumer's buying decision-making process. During this process, Keller also defines Brand awareness as reflation of customer ability identifies brand identity. (Keller, 1993) It's about brand ability to be recognized and recalled as product or service as shown in Aaker, the Awareness Pyramid (Aaker, 1991)

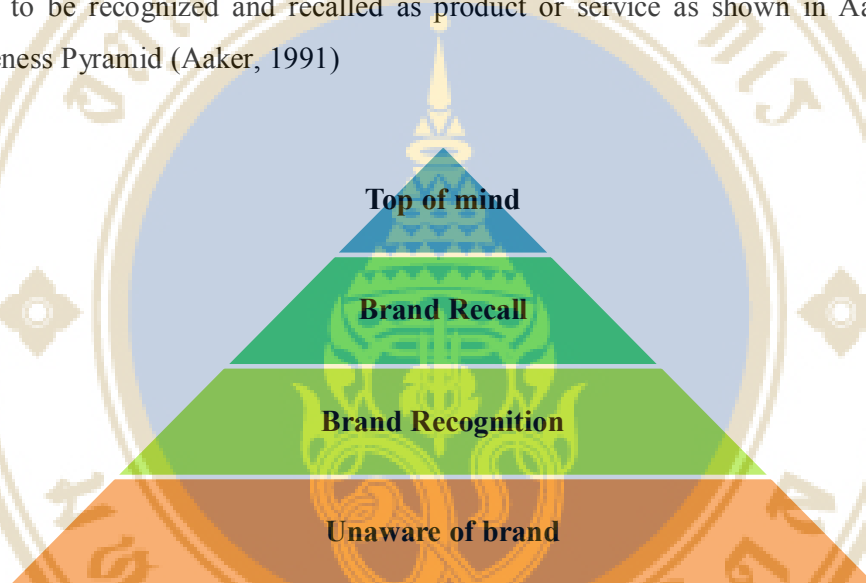


Figure 2.3 the Awareness Pyramid (Aaker, 2003)

In this study may refer to the brand that pops up on customer mind when they go to mobile shop. High level of brand lawlessness increase possibility to compete other brand on market.

2.1.4 Brand Loyalty

In Marketing, Brand loyalty consists of a customer's commitment to repurchase or continue using the brand and can be identified by repeated purchasing of that brand and also refer to positive behaviors such as word of mouth advocacy (Dick, Alan and Kunal, 1994) It's the good result of customer satisfaction, if customers are satisfied from the brand they will show strongly interest to buy the product at any cost.

If customer is not satisfied with a brand, they will most likely not be loyalty toward it but instead search for other brand (Hong-bumm, 2003). a satisfied customer will send this good message to others that the brand is accepted and successful (Aaker, 1991) this might create good image and awareness toward brand itself.

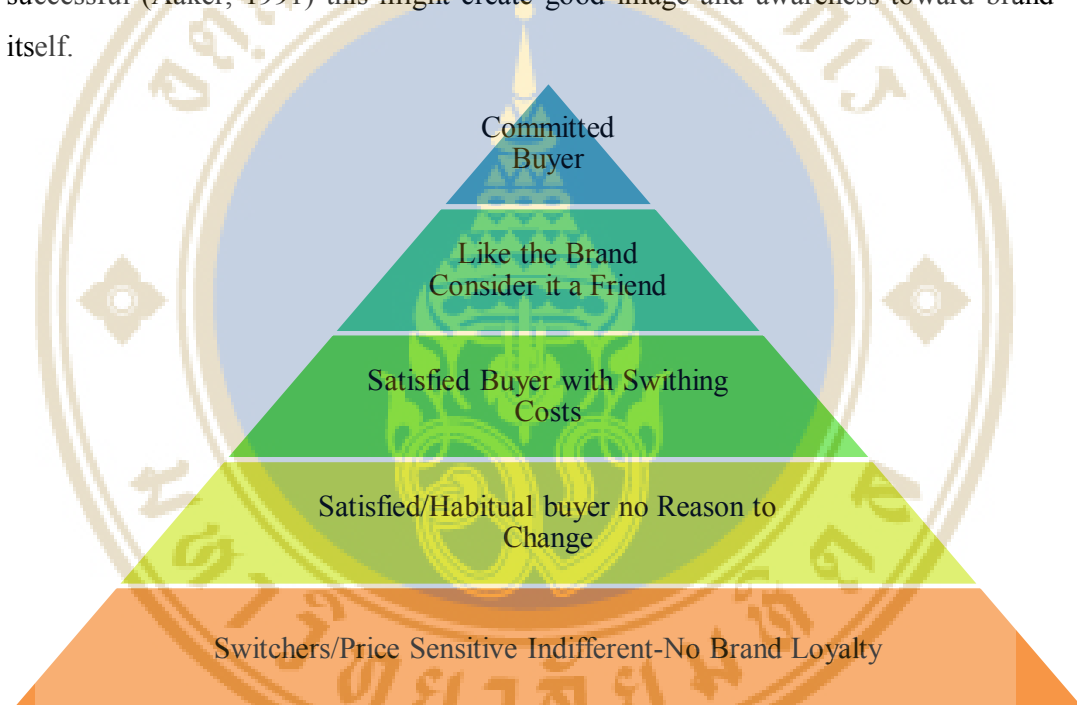


Figure 2.4 Pyramid of brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991)

Brand loyalty might influent by customer experience and also brand awareness. Ultimate brand loyalty has very positive influence on the purchase intention.

2.1.5 Product Quality

Product quality refers to the total of goodness of product. There are five aspect of product quality are depicted as listed below;

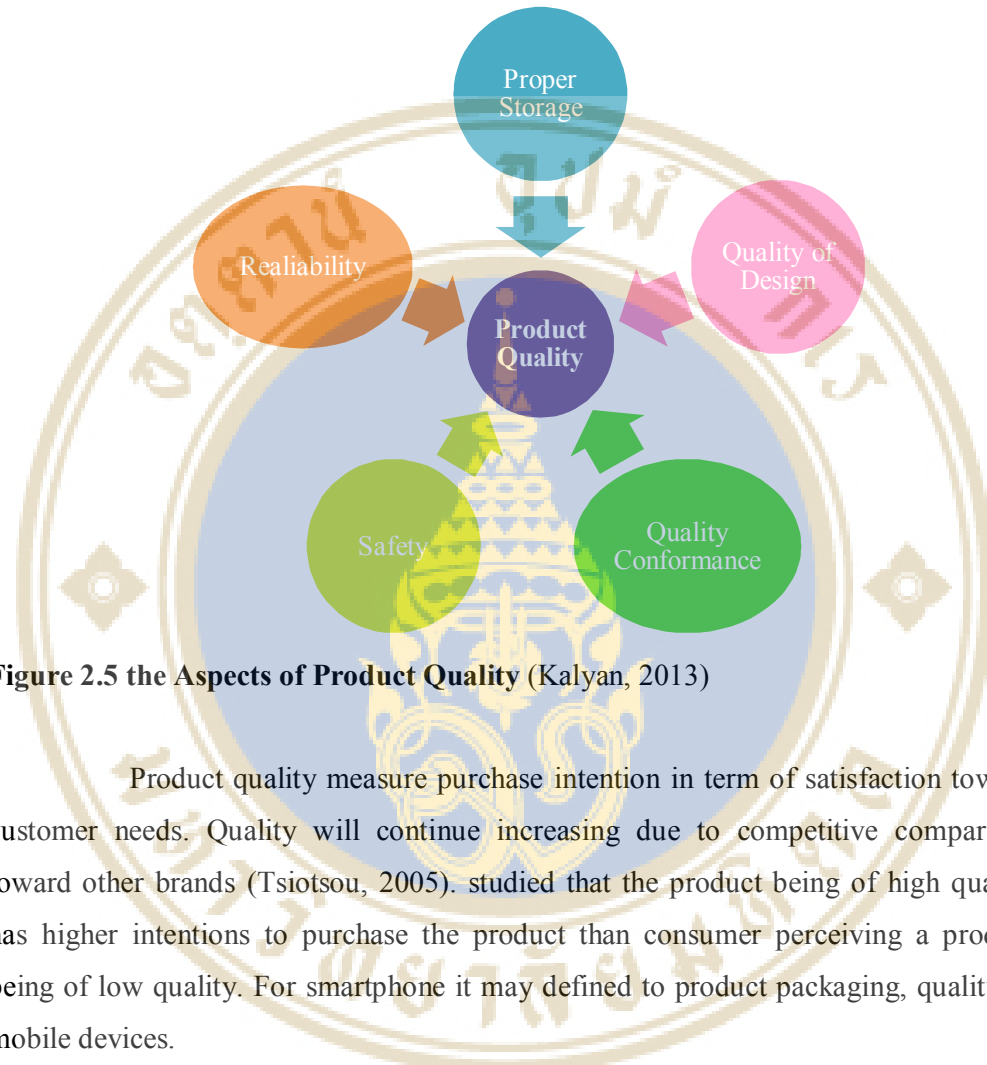


Figure 2.5 the Aspects of Product Quality (Kalyan, 2013)

Product quality measure purchase intention in term of satisfaction toward customer needs. Quality will continue increasing due to competitive comparison toward other brands (Tsiotsou, 2005). studied that the product being of high quality has higher intentions to purchase the product than consumer perceiving a product being of low quality. For smartphone it may defined to product packaging, quality of mobile devices.

For customer quality of product is also very important because they expect for best-quality product return when they pay for high price. If customer satisfied with the quality of product, this will increase good perception of that brand.

2.1.6 Product Attribute

Product Attribute is one of the characteristics that define a particular product and will affect customer purchase intention. Product attributes can be tangible or intangible. Tangible product attributes can define as size, color, weight or material. For example, when customer purchases new smartphone, they will look for large screen, light weight, high quality of operation system. Intangible attribute may refer to price, quality, social reflection or reliability for example, when customer purchase new smartphone, they will consider about social reflection so teenager might prefer iPhone more than those brand smartphone from network operator which is cheaper.

Product attributes can explain as the sensory processes of the product its cognitive features and casual properties it includes the design, technology engineering processes of the product which form the overall rating of product on the part of consumer (Abbott et al, 2009). so it shows that product attributes are those features of brand which make its position in the market which may be strong or weak and a consumer satisfaction is totally based on the product attributes.

The product attribute that worldwide customer will concern before the making purchase are shown as Figure 2.1.6 The First attributes for smartphone user is ease of use which is 16% follow by Display size and Quality & availability of applications at 14% and Speed 12% respectively.

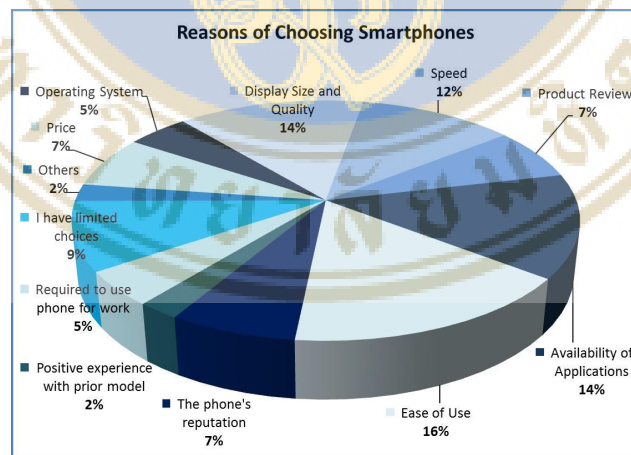


Figure 2.6: Reason of Choosing SmartPhones source (Economic Survey, 2013)

Table 2.1 Literature review summary

Theory & Concept	Logic	Main Aspect	Example of studies
Purchase Intention	Understand motivations from insight customer perception toward smartphone purchasing	Purchase intention can be defined as individual's intention to buy a specific brand individuals who want to buy a specific brand which they has chosen for themselves after certain evaluation	- Laroche , Kim and Zhou, 1996; Laroche and Sadokierski, 1994; MacKenzie and Belch, 1986 - Fandos &Flavain, 2006; Halim&Hameed, 2005 - Brown and Stayman, 1992; Homer, 1990 Laroche and Sadokierski, 1994; Laroche and Zhou, 1996
Brand Image	Clarify how brand image has effect on customer intention on purchase.	The impression in the consumers' mind of a brand's total personality (real and imaginary qualities and shortcomings).	- Irfan, Rafay, Musarrat &Awais, 2013 - Keller, 2003 - Dolich, 1969 - Johnson and Puto, 1987; Fishbein, 1967 - Biel, 1992 Wu&Wu, 2011

Table 2.1 Literature review summary (cont.)

Theory & Concept	Logic	Main Aspect	Example of studies
Brand Awareness	Clarify how brand awareness has effect on customer intention on purchase.	Brand awareness is defined as the extent to which how consumer can easily memorize the brand when he is going to buy a product. For the formation of brand awareness, brand image is an essential condition	- Keller, 1993 - Franz-Rudolf Esch el al. 2006 - Aaker, 1991
Brand Loyalty	Clarify how brand loyalty has effect on customer intention on purchase.	how much consumer actually consumes the goods or services of brand we measure it by measuring consumer purchasing frequency	- Dick, Alan and Kunal, 1994 - Hong-bumm, 2003 - Aaker, 1991
Product Quality	Clarify how product quality has effect on customer intention on purchase.	It comes from the production level and it should be recognizable. High product quality influence to high purchasing intention	- Kalyan, 2013 - Tsotsou, 2005
Product Attribute	The Attribute will lead to interest and intention of purchasing	Product Attribute is one of the characteristics that define a particular product and will affect customer purchase intention.	- Abbott et al, 2009

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

According to explore customer insight of purchase intention, this study need to acquire deeply in detail of customer need and want so qualitative researches will help to dig down which factors that affect to customer perception on branding and purchase intention the most suitable methods for this research is in- depth interview.

According to time limited and the information that we need, in-depth interview will provide as much as I need for the report to summary the customer perception on mobile purchasing in Thailand. The data that I use come from 20 respondents who willing to give their experience on mobile purchasing and what are their perception before they making purchased regarding to their perception about mobile branding and purchase intention.

The 20 respondents were selected based on convenience basic. I randomly select respondent who have smartphone and have more than 2 times purchasing their own mobile device. All respondents living in Bangkok and graduated bachelor degree, age between 25-35 years old. The respondent must have basic information base on their personal device and have trendy lifestyle and get adopted by high technology such as mobile, tablet and computer. According to Bangkok is the metropolitan of Thailand so I pick Bangkok as location base because the information I got from interview will represent Thailand nationwide. While interview I use Thai language but summary to English when I do the conclusion. Before I do the interview, I will ask sample question to screen respondent as below

- If I say “smartphone”, Can you explain the description of it?
- Which brands come to your mind?
- Which smartphone brand you currently use?

3.2 Data Collection Methodology

Why is in-depth interview? In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. I select in-depth interview which is qualitative method to analyze in this study to gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivation of Thailand customer who will purchase smartphone about perception toward smartphone branding while they making decision on purchasing. In-depth Interview would gain insight from the individual interview, and respondent can had time to develop their idea on individual point of view without being distract by the opinion of others respondents

In-Depth interview will consists of fact finding from general information that respondent giving from the question we ask thought experience from purchasing mobile themselves. Face-to-face interview will provide more feature effect from the respondent such as positive face detection while interview, body language, face expressions, mood and tone of voice while answering questions.

In-depth qualitative interviews, on the other hand, are flexible and continuous. They are not locked in stone and are often not prepared in advance (Babbie, 2001, Kvale, 1996). So for the short-period of time, in-depth interview will provide short but strong insights of factors that this study need to focus, in-depth interviews provide the structure to ensure that these conversations are both well-organized and well-suited to the purpose. While time-consuming and labor-intensive, in-depth interviews can provide rich data to inform extension programming.

Target group of respondent in this study are my colleagues who work at Young & Rubicam Company who using smart device and have more than 2 times of mobile purchasing by their own according to convenience basic. All of them adopted smartphone technology for more than 3 years at least. It is important to deeply understand on what the factor that influence this target of respondents to purchase their smartphone and what drive their perception on smartphone brands. I do screen the respondent before interview them by the question above and interview then one by one. For avoiding bias from group leading, I pick respondent from different department, background, age, gender and smartphone brands, the variety of respondent

will lead to average answer that could be represent to large populations. This will provide validity of summary conclusions.

Table 3.1 Target Group:
Demographic characteristic of respondent as following;

Characteristics		Amount	
Gender:			
Male		10	
Female		10	
Age: (years)			
25 – 30		10	
31 – 35		10	
Respondents information			
Name-Surname	Mobile brand	Age	Education
1.Ms. Wachiraphorn Thongya	Samsung	33	Bachelor Degree
2.Ms.Nion Rattnavansit	Apple	30	Master Degree
3.Ms.Arisara Chaithachawong	Apple	29	Bachelor Degree
4.Ms.Pavinee Vitchayasittakhon	Apple	24	Bachelor Degree
5.Ms. Chananut Phromdej	Samsung	35	Bachelor Degree
6.Ms.Daranee Puprasong	Samsung	35	Bachelor Degree
7.Ms.Punnapa Tantimasakul	Apple	23	Master Degree
8.Ms.Chuleeporn Changraksa	Samsung	35	Bachelor Degree
9.Ms.Panadda Ravisopitying	Apple	29	Bachelor Degree
10.Ms.Nichanan Meksuriyen	Apple	31	Master Degree

Table 3.1 Target Group (cont)

Respondents information			
Name-Surname	Mobile brand	Age	Education
1.Mr.Bernard Satos Caranto	Samsung	35	Bachelor Degree
2.Mr.Ransiman Triya	Apple	31	Bachelor Degree
3.Mr.Pholchom Iamsamang	Apple	32	Bachelor Degree
4.Mr.Parinyawat Ruaychaiudomchok	Apple	26	Master Degree
5.Mr.Kasidit Khantee	Apple	25	Bachelor Degree
6.Mr.Prat Dhiampasuk	Apple	26	Bachelor Degree
7.Mr.Dylan Timothy Clarkson	Samsung	27	Bachelor Degree
8.Mr.Veeraphat Pornchokchai	Samsung	25	Bachelor Degree
9.Mr.Pasuvoot Tananurakwong	Samsung	33	Bachelor Degree
10.Mr.Apoorua Kale	Apple	31	Master Degree

Physiographic:

- Trendy lifestyle, easy outgoing, high technology adoption, using smartphone and enjoy using internet via mobile.

3.3 Preliminary finding

From 20 respondents, we found that 8 factors that influence customer purchase intention as following Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Product Quality, Product Attributes, Price Conscious and Social Reference.

Apple got high brand preference following with Samsung, Nokia and others brands. Because customer familiar with brand image and get used to it due to other electric device such as Macbook, ipod.

Advertising is created brand image and brand awareness

Brand loyalty doesn't have high effect on Thailand purchasing due to switching easily of other competitive brand give better offer for example apple user will switch to Samsung of the retail offer better price or promotion such as buddle package with free unlimited internet or discount on monthly fee.

Customer might consider on practical of usage and new feature of smartphone device before they making purchase intention, they will search for more information before purchase new smartphone. Customer will consider price first following with social reference from close friends, colleagues at work and also review on internet. The trust resource will affect purchase intention.



CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the study reveal that when consumers buy a product, they will compare it. A product with a good brand image can make consumers have a high level satisfaction and confidence to purchase it. The higher perceived value is the higher purchase intention is. In the mention, consumer can obtain trustworthy perceived value through advertising endorser's recommendation and endorsement and a company can therefore increase its competitiveness. Smartphone user will keep continue purchase the same brand that they used to use it due to they don't want to learn new technology and functions that difference base on branding and systematic. While they compare which brand they willing to buy the impact reference source are internet and Word of mouth if some relative of buyer giving bad reputation to customer they will switch it to other brand. Another effective influence for Smartphone customer is promotion offering due to customer aware on price conscious. Customer don't want to pay more if the smartphone company or network provider offer then the promotion package that buddle with smart device they will switch from the brand they intense to buy to the cheaper brand.

From the total 20 respondent here is summary as following;

Table 4.1 Smartphone brand

Apple	Samsung	LG
12	7	1

Table 4.2 Smartphone brand recognition

Apple	Samsung	Sony
14	5	1

Table 4.3 Factor that influence customer to buy smartphone

No.	Factors	Description
1	Brand Image/ Brand Awareness	<p>Q: When you think about “mobile brand”, which brands come to you mind?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good quality and service center - I like it performance - I like brand reputation - My friend recommend this brand for me - Easy to connect with my Macbook - It's well know brand - Its' more confident while you use the popular brand more than the brand that not aware in market. - Because its Apple
2	Price Conscious	<p>Q: Why did you choose this brand?</p> <p>Q: Will you still buy this brand if other brands offer better quality with lower price?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value for money/High quality low price - Package offering/ buddle package from network operator - Give away prize from brands
3	Social Reference	<p>Q: How did you know this brand?</p> <p>Q: Does advertising affect your decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reputation on Pantip website - Review from Gadget guru on TV - Other colleagues use this brand - All my friends use this brand - I get more confident when use this brand

Table 4.3 Factor that influence customer to buy smartphone (cont.)

4	Product Attributes	<p>Q: Why did you choose this brand?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ease of usage, practical of use - Usage function
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camera (high Resolution) - Operation system (iOS, Android) - New feature, new innovation
5	Brand Loyalty	<p>Q: Why did you choose this brand?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I get use to this brands/ I familiar with this brand - I trust this brand - I love this brand - I love Steve job(Apple) - Its Asia brand(Samsung)
6	Product Quality	<p>Q: Why did you choose this brand?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convenience on handle - Strong material and save while use. - Perfect shape with elegance design - Cool design

From the interview we found that brand Image is the key influence on customer perception, there is the impact relatively between brand image and purchase intention on mobile purchasing in Thailand. Brand image is established when consumers develop ideas, feelings and expectations towards certain brands as they learn, memorize and become accustomed to them (Keller, 1993). When consumers are considering purchasing a product, their purchase intention will be determined based on the perception of its value given by its brand. When consumers have a higher opinion on the quality of a certain brand product, they are likely to have higher perception of value (Monroe, 1990). Additionally, when consumers benefit more from purchasing the brand product than the price paid, they are more likely to make the purchase (Dickson and Sawyer, 1990). Aaker and Keller's (1990) research discovers that a brand with positive image improves consumer loyalty and trust and strengthens

consumers' purchase intention. Brand image no doubt remains an important cue during the process of consumers' purchase decision making.

If the brand has a successful brand awareness it means that its products have a good reputation in the market and simply acceptable (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007). The awareness of the brand plays a significant role while purchasing a product or service and may have control on perceived risk evaluation of consumers and their level of assurance about the buying decision due to awareness with the brand and its uniqueness. In Thailand customers consider on Brand Awareness they prefer to buy product that they have known or heard before more than the new brand that just introducing to market they judge base on their reference which now mostly come from their close friends and trusted media such as blogger, mobile operator shop and also searching from the internet such as webboard and social media. This will be second factor that have high impact on customer purchase intention.

However in Thailand Brand Royalty switch easily base on price conscious and promotion offering. To counter fierce competition, brand need to often use promotions to stimulate purchase intention and increase sales. (Kotler 2000) considers that promotion is a combination of various incentives to stimulate target consumers or retailers to stir up immediate purchasing reaction toward a product within a short period of time. Promotion is different from advertisement its can stir up interest or intention among target customer to make a purchase, promotion aims to create product exposure, stimulate desires, maintain consumer loyalty and raise sales volume Consumers respond to the incentive of saving when they see products are being sold at a lower price and increase their purchase intention. Since consumers usually make an immediate purchase, when being seduced by economic incentives, the greater the promotion is, the more response it generates. (Dodson, Tybout, and Sternthal 1978) have proven that when facing various brand products with similar functions and qualities, promotional items usually end up selling better and even attract loyal consumers of other brands. This indicates promotion has great incentive values. When consumers are presented with great incentives, they are likely to choose promotional items. Price discount may attract consumers to try out different brands, consumer switch to the cheaper brand amount correct brand due to price stimulus however, after the promotion is over they might stay on purchasing new brand from the usage

experience to new brand. Price discount may also lower the purchase intention as a result of associating price discount with lower quality. To sum up, price discounts may attract consumers with economic incentives, but may expose them to inferior products with lower quality, which in the end will write off the benefit of the sales increase (Raghubir and Corfman, 1999).

For mobile purchasing in Thailand Product Attributes & Product Quality are moderate impacts to customer perception. Other environment might distract by their intention on purchase such as Sale, or POP at shelf.

So from the study 5 factors that affect to customer perception toward branding and purchase intention are “Brand Image”, “Brand Awareness”, “Brand Royalty”, “Product Attribute” and “Product Quality” we are found that it have new factors that customer concern before they making decision on purchasing which are “Price concern & Social reference”

Example1: The answer from random respondent *“Look around you people now using their smartphone, they all addicted to it, the function doesn’t matter only that smartphone are Apple you are now invite to group and if you use no-name smartphone like OPPO, Huawei they will insult you like you are nobody in office and you will be weir”* we can assume that brand image, brand awareness and social reference are the key factors that affect perception while this respondent want to buy new smartphone.

Example2: The answer from random respondent *“I like Apple I use all apple product such as iPod, Macbook, Ipad but my girlfriend keep telling me that android system is better than iOS and when I search in google and read articles from pantip for smartphone review they said Samsung is better than iPhone and it cheaper with external memories so I compare between this 2 brand s before I bought Samsung”* we can assume that Product attribute, brand awareness and social reference are the key factors that affect perception while this respondent want to buy new smartphone.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Recommendation

For Telecom Market to expanding market to smartphone market they might build Brand Image and Brand Awareness of its own brand. From the study found that it is important toward customer perception that smartphone must have brand that similar or good image that they could trust. If brand having good image toward target customer it will help motivate customer and hint them when customer making purchase decision, they will pop up the good brand image first while purchase.

Advertising will increasing Brand awareness so brand have to continue launch new product to create market excitement. Brand image will ensure the value of brand and retain customer to be royalty with the brand. Brand image will reach consumer perceptions regarding to overall personality. Thai customer perceived image includes evaluation though consider the strengths and weakness of brand. The marketing materials and advertising efforts of the brand as well as the consumer experience with the brand will help shape and refine brand image of product. The marketing should consider create advertising and also service shop to represent brand to keep brand image to be better and always re-energies brand so the brand image might not getting old as it trendy all the time. Brand ambassadors or presenter might help create terminable toward customer but as a human they can change to be old or bad all the time, we can't control the superstar to be represent as brand all the time so using presenter might need more consideration base on who are they and where are they from.

Developing Brand awareness and Brand Loyalty is a need lots of time. Marketer all over the world should actively promote and improve the brand awareness and brand loyalty of the customers to enhance their purchase intentions. These efforts are more likely to be fruitful if these practices are accompanied by communication about the brand to the targeted customers. Even from the in-depth interview found that

there are little effect of brand royalty but brand royalty represent to how close the brand are with customer so I recommend marketer to focus on increase the purchase intentions for their brand.

Marketer should continue crate brand momentum with advertising to building good brand image. After have good brand image and awareness brand have to build long-term relationship with its customer to keep brand royalty to lower affect from other variables.

We also found that brand awareness influences the purchase intention of consumer toward Smart Phone purchasing, which is justified by the consumer's relation with their telecommunications network provider built over time. We can assume that users of smartphones are familiar with this type of device, being sufficiently knowledgeable about these products, allowing them to evaluate the complexity of the category and define the functional risk inherent to the purchase. As for the social reference, we know that users believe they are judged according to their purchase option (Harrell, 1986, *cit. in* [24]); however, this reversal sign may be due to the fact that when they buy a smartphone instead of a more basic mobile phone because they concern about social perception. So for recommendation that marketing should do the marketing in digital market such as web banner, IG or blogger. As the digital marketing landscape continues to rapidly grow, customer turn to consumer advertising through on-line media this going to be great opportunity for the brand to build their own image as a high technology on new media and create WOW impact on on-line media as not much competitor in digital marketing now. Example that brand should buy google AdWords that will certify a globally recognizes as a great tools to build brand image and awareness toward online media. And the **Search engine optimization** or (SEO) is the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's "natural" or un-paid ("organic") search results. In general, the earlier (or higher ranked on the search results page), and more frequently a site appears in the search results list, the more visitors it will receive from the search engine's users. SEO may target different kinds of search, including image search, local search, video search, academic search, news search and industry-specific vertical search engines. (Beel, Jöran and Gipp, Bela and Wilde, Erik 2010).

As 2013 marketing update found that two-third of company have digital marketing plan for year 2014 now (Smartinsights, 2013)

5.2 Conclusion

RQ1: What are the factors that motivate customer to purchase mobile phone?

According to the interview and data analysis we could assume that brand image brand awareness and social reference are the key factors that influence customer on their purchase decision making in Thailand, customer will consider brand before they making purchase their new mobile. According on new technology developing social media become more dominate to people lifestyle. Facebook, Instagram, tweeter and webboard will have more influence power to customer, customer not only making purchase on their own decision but also concern to other perception base on surrounding people such a girlfriend, family, close friend and colleagues. Not only people they known but trusted media such as webboard, social media, technology GURU block, internet journey or retail shop also become more source that they looking for before they making decision. Thailand leading mobile brand tend to use Gadget GURU, celebrity and superstar to blend in their product in customer lifestyle. Customer could change purchase intention if they feel similar toward brand. Example Choompoo Areya on Samsung S5 device which become her own lifestyle with TVC advertising, YouTube Ad and also her personal social media tools such as Instagram, Samsung tie-in their product in her lifestyle to create brand awareness and good brand image toward target customer.

However in Thailand Brand Royalty switch easily base on price conscious and promotion offering by network provider such as AIS, dtac and Truemove H due to aggressive competition on acquiring new subscriber.

Thailand customer moderately concern on Product Attributes & Product Quality due to information that provide from brand is not much impacts on customer perception. The mass media advertising might help to give more information to target customer. Such as operation system and functional of smartphone device.

RQ2: How Brand affects customers' perception when buying mobile phone?

Customer will consider brand before making purchase new smartphone device based on information they got from information gathering process such as customer will concern about brand they have experience with and social reference from friends or internet then following with price comparing with product attribute such as operation system and functional then the product quality such as design and color.

Brand should keep consistency of brand awareness by create new product feature to create market excitement. And continue create momentum of brand awareness toward visibility to recall customer about brand. As mention earlier about social reference, brand could use celebrity to motivate target customer by blend in their lifestyle.

Advertising will create good brand image toward customer perception, if brand have good image toward customer, the customer will satisfied to brand and create brand loyalty so when brand got strong brand loyalty other factor such as price conscious would not affect purchase intention of customer.

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Appendix A

Interview questions:

1. When you think about “mobile brand”, which brands come to you mind?
2. Which smartphone brand do you currently use? Why did you choose this brand?
3. Did mobile brand affect your decision of purchasing?
4. How did you first become aware of the brand you currently own?
5. What’s expectations on the brand did you have, prior to your purchase?
6. Please describe the thoughts. Characteristics, symbols or images that comes to your mind when mentioning (mobile phone brands)
7. What type of advertising or information have you encountered from?
8. Does the advertising affect your decision of purchasing?
9. What does the quality mean to you in tern of mobile phone?
10. Do you satisfied with this brand? If so will you purchase for next mobile phone? Explain why.
11. Please order the mobile brands in accordance to you preferences.
12. If the others brand offer better quality and price, will you still buy this brand? Why?

13. Will you recommend other for this brand? Why?

14. What is the key factor that influences you to buy this brand?

15. What's the key factor that motivates you to buy new mobile phone?



Appendix B



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Consent for Participation in Interview Research

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Kanitta Chartpong from College of Management, Mahidol University. I understand that the project is designed to gather information for academic work namely Thematic Paper. I will be one of approximately 20 people being interviewed for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.
2. If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any questions or to end the interview.
3. Participation involves being interviewed by Kanitta Chartpong. The interview will last approximately 10-15 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audiotape of the interview and subsequent dialogue will be made. If I don't want to be taped, I will not be able to participate in the study. Also subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies, which protects the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
4. Faculty and administrators from my campus will not be present at the interview, this precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions.
5. I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Kannika Leelananyalerit, a professor at College of Management, Mahidol University. For research problems or questions regarding subjects, the College of Management, Mahidol University may be contacted through Dr. Kannika Leelananyalerit.
6. I have read and understood the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature of the Interviewer

Signature of the Interviewee

Date



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5. I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Kannika Leelapanyalert, a professor at College of Management, Mahidol University. For research problems or questions regarding subjects, the College of Management, Mahidol University may be contacted through Dr. Kannika Leelapanyalert.
6. I have read and understood the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature of the Interviewer


Signature of the Interviewee

Date _____



**COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY**
Wisdom of the Land

Consent for Participation in Interview Research

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Kanitta Charitpong from College of Management, Mahidol University. I understand that the project is designed to gather information for academic work namely Thematic Paper. I will be one of approximately 20 people being interviewed for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.
2. If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
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Signature of the Interviewer

Signature of the Interviewee

July 21, 2014
Date



COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT
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Signature of the Interviewer

Kanitta Chartpong
Signature of the Interviewee

Date



**COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT
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21 JUL 2014

Date