

**HOW SMALL SCALE MEDIA SERVICES CAN INCREASE  
ITS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH  
UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SMALL SCALE  
E-COMMERCE RETAILERS**



**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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Thematic paper  
entitled  
**HOW SMALL SCALE MEDIA SERVICES CAN INCREASE  
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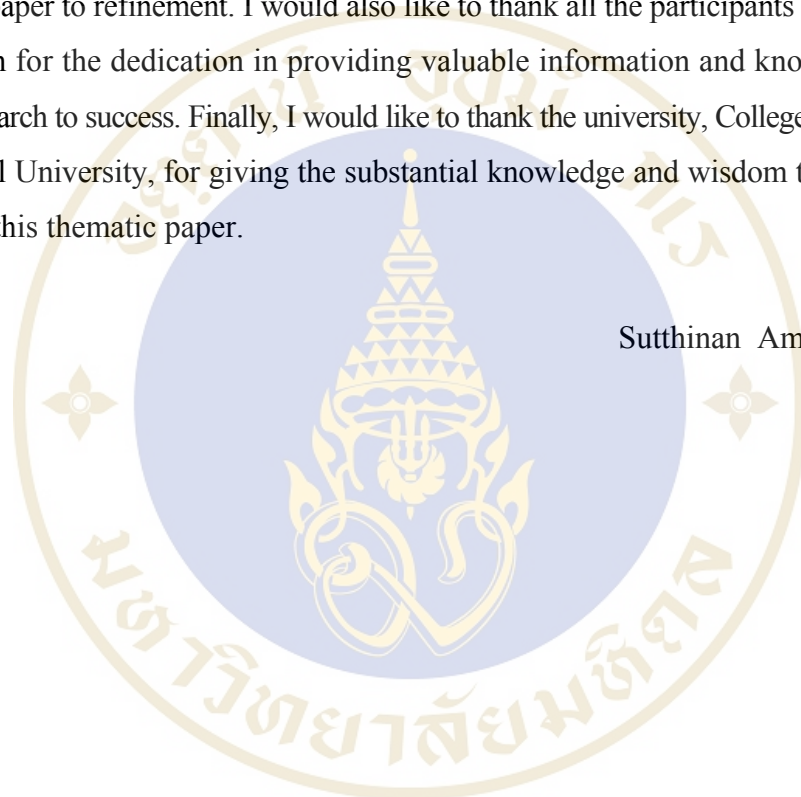
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**HOW SMALL SCALE MEDIA SERVICES CAN INCREASE ITS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SMALL SCALE E-COMMERCE RETAILERS**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the weight of importance and the in depth perspective of the weight of importance small scale e-commerce gives to quality video and photography representation of the product and services to better understand so that the small scale media services can respond to business opportunities accordingly. The effort of this research is to provide insight and the positioning these small scale businesses have towards videography and photography, in order for the media industry to spot business potential opportunities to cater to this small scale e-commerce more efficiently. Ultimately, this research aims to improve and encourage business actions between of small scale ecommerce and photography and videography production service by understanding the motivation to buy and nature of the process of the small scale online businesses.

**KEY WORDS:** Small Scale E-Commerce Retailer/ Business Traction/ Videographers/  
Photographers 24 Pages

21 pages

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In recent years, it is undeniable that the world has seen a significant growth in the online ecommerce business. In Thailand alone, The Statistics Portal for Market Data reported that the Thai e-commerce business has generated 2.9 Billion US dollars with a projection of 14.5% growth per year, making Thailand one of the largest e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia (Nanji, 2017). This is a result from the available modern marketing technology and the excellence in the social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, and user friendly software that gives new entrepreneurs the ease to begin their online e-commerce regardless of the competition with large businesses. This carves a pathway for other businesses to improve as well such as logistics, application development, and other e-commerce related businesses.

With the significant growth of the online business, one key component that leads to success of these small scale e-commerce is the representation of their products and services and online presence. With the lack of the physical store experience, excellence in videography and photography can greatly enhance customer traction. For instance, an example case study of a small e-commerce shop has used analytics to measure the impact of using video on product pages and the company has found that the conversion of pages with video was 160% higher than normal, which leads to the business that uses media to generate more traffic and revenue. Furthermore, 40% of shoppers are more likely to make a mobile purchase if they have access to product videos (Hall, 2017). Through qualitative research, this will help the videography and photography business to understand the insights, pain points, and needs of these small scale ecommerce

## 1.2 Research Question

How can we encourage more business traction between small scale media services and small scale online businesses to respond to the exponential growth of online business opportunities?



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 E-Commerce Promotes New Job Opportunities

To respond to the current exponential growth of the e-commerce scene, digital marketing through social networking undeniably has changed the way people do business and it plays a significant role in the rate of success of an online store. Currently, online social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook has recognized the growing use of personal digital marketing and has adopted various simplified, user friendly system such as Facebook Ads Manager and Google Adverts. Currently, the main platform that drives Thailand's social commerce is Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Line. It is through these platforms that various online sellers establish online business stores for their product sales (MoneyHub, 2015). The main activity in driving sales are photo and video posts along with online marketing. According Statista's market analysis of Thailand's 2017 e-commerce landscape, Thailand is considered to be the largest social commerce with more than 50% of customers making purchases through social network (Nanji, 2017). The following statistic shows Thailand's E-commerce ranking in the year 2016:

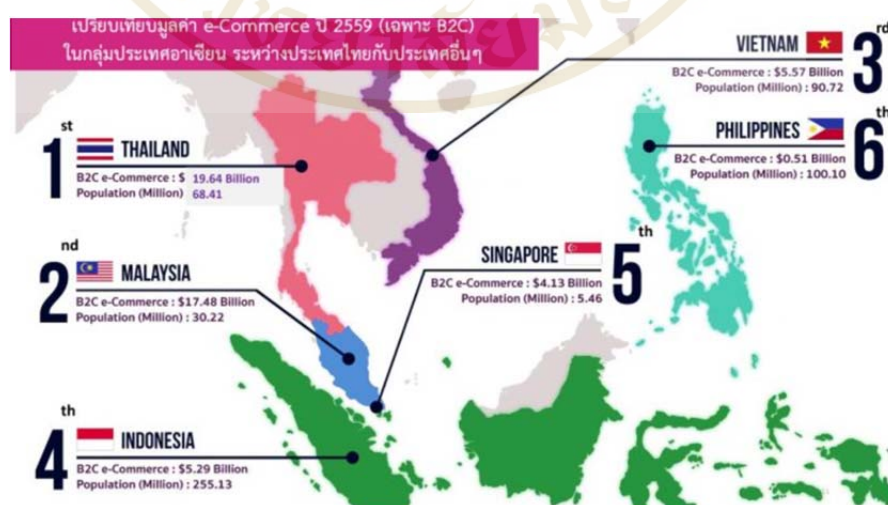


Figure 2.1 Info graphics portraying the Asian e-commerce landscape in 2016

This demonstrates the substantial business activities that is currently happening in Thailand's e-commerce landscape, which proposes various job opportunities as well as opportunities for new entries. This development is to support individual digital marketing to help online stores reach their targeted customers despite having a physical store. Small scale businesses no longer require the assistance of traditional big scale companies such as advertising agencies or large scale web developers to grow their business. The modern technology makes it possible to scale down and also control media through their own management. This is also known as the Multichannel Network Model, which is a new media phenomenon, in which business entities can partner with content creators or can directly produce their own distinctive content to cater to their own business needs (Gardener, 2016). It is time efficient and proves to be low investment due to the fact that no professional individuals are required to exercise the task and the risk free environment of the free entry of the online platform. Furthermore, the reports and feedback given from the advertising performance can easily be interpreted, which allow individuals to continue to improve their marketing performance and efforts.

This is a motivation for online sellers to continue to use digital market to improve their business. A case study conducted by Jacob Gardner and Kevin Lehnert has highlighted "...the rapid proliferation of digital and online marketing and how new content being created online is becoming the single fastest-growing category, outstripping TV, radio, and other more traditional media formats" (Gardner, 2016). This supports the importance of media services even more because it is the sole factor for digital marketing. The rise of Multi-Channel Network model has encouraged new media, thus result in an increased for content creation. This encourages the growing need for media services. This paves the way for new job creations, especially for small players such as photography and videography freelancers to enter as well as benefiting from the e-commerce business.

Once small scale businesses start to practice digital marketing more efficiently, the stores began to have traction and begin to generate revenue, which lead to the continuation to invest in media production more consistently. According to data collected from Web Marketing Video Council's recent study, video marketing statistics demonstrates that high quality video content has a positive impact on sales and ROI (Cardona, 2016). 60% of online brands are now currently exercising the use of video on social networks. It has stated that, "73% of users who watch a video tend to purchase one of the related

products and 1 in 4 buyers confirmed having used YouTube to look up video on a product they are thinking of purchasing (Cardona, 2016).” Furthermore, the analysis shows that in 2019 alone, 80% of all traffic will be video content based.

Once they begin to succeed, this leads to other jobs opportunities such as logistics, media services, improvements of social media platforms, as well as creating new job categories. This transition promotes new job opportunities for small scale businesses when investments are lower and can take action quickly upon the online platform. Digital marketing is an important factor in running the cycle to create new jobs because it enhances revenue to the store, thus leading to new job creation. Furthermore, new job creation creates healthy competition, which leads to other business types to scale themselves as well.

## **2.2 Benefits of Videography and Photography for E-commerce**

As we begin to define the growing potentials and opportunities within Thailand’s e-commerce setting, it is beneficiary to define the benefits that media services propose to social commerce and online businesses. With the real-time communication benefits of social commerce platforms, online sellers are able to reach its customers efficiently. This leads to a fast growth of their businesses. Therefore, the ease of entry and simplified business model of online stores allows small scale businesses to establish their stores and enter the competition. For instance, Twitter has seen the importance of video marketing and has evolved its application to include an in-app access to the mobile phone’s camera to increase engagement through video content (Carmody, 2017). As the competition becomes fierce, small scale retailers must find ways to differentiate themselves.

Better representation and efficient information of products and services can aid to higher level of purchases as well as help build a trustworthy presence for online stores. This becomes beneficial for online sellers, which good quality photography and videography plays a part in defining the success of digital marketing. Despite the high level of entry of online store proposing a high rate of job opportunities, one limitation is the low level of investment of the online sellers. But this can be viewed as an advantage for small scale media services because online sellers will consider using small scale

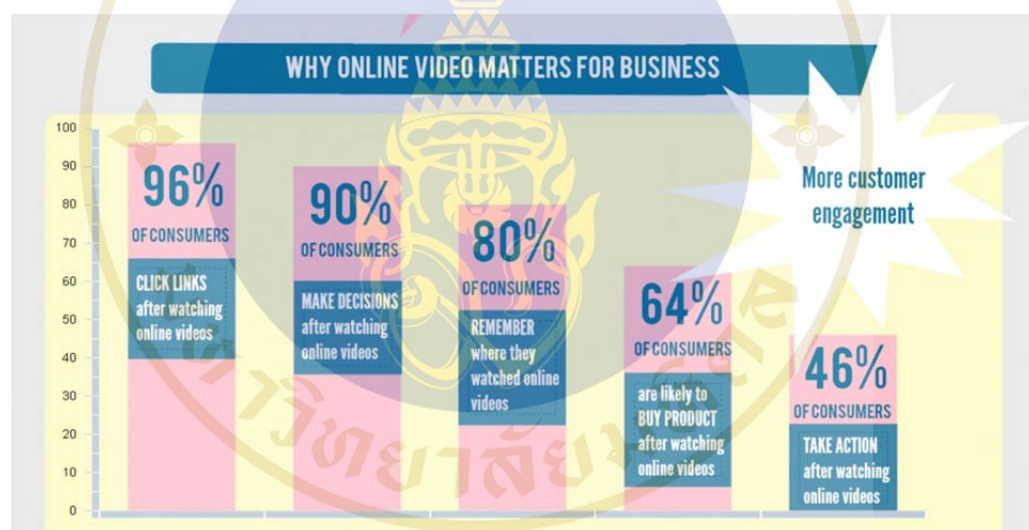
businesses rather than large companies. The benefits of using small scale media services such as photographer and videographer freelancers for online stores proposes new opportunities. One benefit is that the agreement between online sellers and small scale media services can be made on individual terms, where prices can be negotiated upon the satisfaction of both parties. Furthermore, small scale business of online store's requirements can easily be matched with a smaller sized team, which is ideal for individual freelancers and small media service teams. This flexible terms, high adaptability, and high variety of choices is one of the many advantage small scale online e-commerce can benefit from the use of small scale media services. From Bill Carmody's research on how to leverage with social media marketing, he has stated that video marketing is the best way to create engagement through social media platforms. He believes that individual online business can evolve and integrate their own unique strategies through various tools that is provided on social media platforms. (Carmody, 2017).

### **2.3 Professional Representation in Marketing through Media.**

Media representation of an online brand with professionalism is considered a crucial factor in the success of a business. According to DIPT, posts that is portrayed with professional quality media along with captivating content and images will enhance the motivation to visit the link (DIPT, 2015). As online stores began to get traction and capture the behavior of it's audiences, they can better improve their media to correspond to needs of their customers. With this appeal existing in the market, media services can take this advantage to create new business opportunities.

Another key success factor of an online store is consistency and intensive post engagement. The process from the internet being always available through the use of smart phones and other technological devices, e-commerce stores can always reach its customers in all occasions. The high number of online stores proposes a high level of competition for media space, therefore, it is crucial to be intensive in posting new content and frequently updating new products in order to retain and keep customers engaged in a store. This again signifies the need for existing and new media content creators.

The next factor is the post should propose a certain value to the audience. The value can be presented in various forms such as clear information, inspiration, or valuable content that appeals to the targeted customers. This is the key gaining interest of the customers give their valuable time to the certain online post. Statistics from DIPT reveals that 80% of audiences would engage in a post if it is unrelated to marketing, while only 20% of audiences would engage in marketing related posts. The 80% is referred to interesting and captivating content that is presented by the e-commerce stores to their target audience. A Ph.D. Principal Analyst from Forrester Research has conducted a research and found that 96% of consumers will engage with an online store and services after watching online videos and 46% of consumers will make take action after watching videos. As data shows, video does have a high conversion rate for online businesses (Mcquivey, 2016).



**Figure 2.2 Bar Chart expressing the customer engagement relative to the use of online video advertisement**

Furthermore, research findings from DIPT reveals that creating satisfaction by offering interesting and captivating content encourages social media sharing at a fast rate as well as enhancing brand creditability. As a result, this proposes another opportunity for small scale businesses to invest in media services to create captivating content for their skills and professionalism in the field.

## 2.4 Hypotheses Development

As seen from prior research, the fact shows that investing in quality photography and videography for online business can generate greater sales and retention. For instance, a marketing director of a medium sized online store, reveals that shoppers are 144% more likely to add a product to their cart if they've watched the product video than if they haven't (Romis, 2017). Due to this success, the company pays a flat monthly fee to video production companies for professional video content and to host videos. From this practice, McManus reveals that the business is “close to getting a 10 to 1 return on investment.” It is evident that many similar Western businesses give similar importance to quality videography and photography and have seen positive returns.

On the contrary, does the Thai ecommerce have the same mindset in this type of investment in professional media services? For this reason, it is worthwhile to explore successful Thai online ecommerce retail stores as well to see if their success partially linked to the use of photography and videography.

This study would aim to explore the current perspective and behavior of the sellers of online ecommerce in Thailand towards investment in videography and photography. Furthermore, the exploration will continue to explore the intensity level of how much small scale ecommerce is willing to invest in this area in the future if there is an efficient and cost friendly videography and photography production service that caters especially for small scale online ecommerce to ultimately spot the variables that promotes more business actions between media services and small scale online businesses.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research method that will be conducted to support the hypotheses is qualitative research in order to acquire in-depth insight and to better understand this industry in Thailand. The end goal is to reveal the scope of opportunities, as well as potential limitations and barriers that videography and photography production services and freelancers have in this industry. This will allow the media industry to spot the voided areas where they can improve in order to further encourage more business traction with the small scale ecommerce in Thailand.

The criteria for the candidate of this research methodology would be small scale e-commerce retailers within Thailand that focus their business model in online sales channels with minimal to non in physical retail focus. The reason for this focus is due to the significant growing number of entry of new small scale e-commerce retailers within Thailand, therefore, the information retrieved could benefit the media industry in the vast amount of potential customers. Furthermore, these small scale e-commerce retailers with no physical stores would rely heavily on videography and photography due to their high focus on the appearance of their online presence and the representation of their product and services, which would be highly relevant to the intention of this research.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Research**

The qualitative research section of this research will solely be dedicated to the gain in-depth understanding of the current mindset and perspective of small scale e-commerce retailers towards the use of videography and photography relative to their business.

The qualitative questions will intend to acknowledge the weight of importance the small scale e-commerce gives towards investing in the use of professional media. The success of the retrieval of this information will let us understand how attractive it is for the media services to target this group of online retailers before continuing to further explore the prices and design of the business model. Furthermore, this methodology will also provide an in-depth understanding of the different types of factors that influences or motivates their business decisions. This will significantly reveal valuable information that media industry can exercise to attract and respond to the small scale e-commerce retailer's business needs.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS**

After conducting the qualitative data collection, the following analysis will aim to analyze the following variables:

1. The life cycle of small scale online stores and the timing of entry for photography and videography services
2. The types of available opportunities in budget and time wise for videography and photography
3. The effectiveness of professional videography and photography on the sales of online stores in online seller's perspective
4. The current concerns and issues online sellers have towards photography and videography services

This analysis would aim to interpret the online seller's perspectives and reasoning through the data collected in order to see the potential ways media services could present themselves to become more attractive in the business context.

#### **4.1 The Life Cycle of Small Scale Online Stores and the Timing of Entry for Photography and Videography Services**

In the early stages of opening an online store, seven out of ten shops shows a similar to identical growth patterns in concerns of media creation. All the online stores that is based on social media platforms will only resort to in house amateur photography at the start of their business. The reasons behind this decision is due to small scale online shops are more focused on their products investment and the willingness to spend on media remains a secondary factor.

Furthermore, in the low risk environment of opening an online shop that is free of charge to set up their online store account, sellers have the perception to see how

their store will perform in the early stages before the decision to invest fully into growing their shop into a steady and long term business.

The qualitative research shows that after their store begin to gain more recognition and begin to generate steady revenue, it is when they begin to become more concerned about quality photography and videography. Established stores that has been open in the range of four to five years reveals that the turning point for the decision to use professional photography is when the competition is increased and the online stores becomes saturated. Initially, the store that used to be market leaders of the online store before the fierce competition of the current situation reveals that amateur in house photography performed efficient enough to attract buyers online. But as the competition of online stores selling similar products grew, these established store must begin to find ways to stay ahead of the competition as well as sustaining relevance by increasing differentiation done through media content creation and digital marketing. The approximate budget for stores that are opened for three to five years are in the range of 10,000 – 20,000 THB for a full day shoot with a maximum to invest once a month.

For the stores with the age of one to three years that have entered later in the industry and whose scale are relatively smaller than online stores a three to five years, the numbers signify that they have less penetration on launching new collections of products with less budget. The approximate budget for these younger stores are 0 - 7,000 baht for a full day shoot with the willingness to invest in media the maximum of four times per year.

The following graph demonstrates the information in a simplified graph:

**Table 4.1 Info obtained by the respondents from their average business spendings per year.**

<b>Store Age expressed in years of operation</b>	<b>Maximum willingness to spend expressed in months per year</b>	<b>Budget per one time spending</b>
0 – 3 years	4	0 – 7,000 THB
3 – 5 years	12	10,000 – 20,000 THB

## 4.2 The Types of Available Opportunities Budget and Time Wise for Videography and Photography

From the information provide, we can analyze that as the store becomes more established through the time invested in expanding their business, there will be an increase both budget wise and the intensity of the number to times media is used in a year. This information can benefit photographers and videographers to pin point the suitable target through the number of years the considered store is established.

The times per year the stores use professional photography can be divided into two groups. Five out of ten retail stores mentioned that the marketing strategy for their stores are to include two main types of collection in a year. The small collection refers to the monthly arrival of new designs to give their stores a variety of product to keep their customers on revisiting their stores and make steady repurchases. The big collection refers to the global fashion seasons, which can be divided to the following: Spring-Summer and Autumn-Winter collection. Eight out of ten stores show to consistently practice in including the big collection with the principle that the big collection will feature specialty products that can generate high revenue in the smaller amount of time. The weight of importance between the big and small collection is demonstrated in the graph below. This particular graph offers the difference in the store's budgeting of the different types of collection.

1. Big Collection: Seasonal Items Releases
2. Small Collection: Monthly New Releases

**Table 4.2 Info obtained by the respondents from their average business spendings defined by two main categories**

Collection Type	Times Per Year	Budget	Media Service Type
<b>Big Collection</b>	2 – 3 times per year	25,000 – 60,000 THB	Full Service Team (5 – 6 Employees)
<b>Small Collection</b>	Once every month	5,000 – 10,000 THB	Photographer Freelancers (1 – 2 Employee)

It is evident that the willingness to spend on the monthly collection are far less than the seasonal collection. This can be concluded that the perception of online stores who follow the two collection types in their marketing strategy expects a higher quality of photography and videography for the seasonal collection release due to the budgeting strategies. This data can be beneficial for videographers and photographers to analyze their strengths and positions themselves on which type of work is an appropriate target. Options for photographers and videographers can be factors such as whether to aim for providing high quality work with bigger budget, but less work flow or to aim for volume with less income. Furthermore, the number of times the online stores practice each type of collection can also be used to estimate the number of job opportunities and income for the for videographers and photographers in an estimated time frame.

### **4.3 The Effectiveness of Professional Videography and Photography on the Sales of Online Stores in Online Seller's Perspective**

Understanding online seller's perception towards the effectiveness of professional videography and photography services towards their online business is a crucial aspect of this case study. It can help to the media industry to spot the possibilities and opportunities of entering this segment in response to the value perceived by the different types of online sellers.

Seven out of ten online stores from the qualitative research believed that the use of professional media services has significantly improved their business. One small-scale sporting equipment online store has stated that by shifting from the use of amateur photos to the use of professional photos, the business had seen a growth of over 300% in the span of the first quarter. Furthermore, another online jewelry business stated that they are 100% positive that quality and good aesthetic photography is directly linked to the performance of sales. The jewelry store has given a real life example of where the most aesthetically pleasing photo in their opinion are responsible to the best sales of a particular product.

On the contrary, two stores that practice professional media service believe that professional photography of the products is only part of the equation for their success. A small scale clothing business has commented that marketing and exposure is more

important if not equally important to professional photography. This segment of online sellers are willing to invest less on quality media when compared to the investment of boosting paid post on social media. Another apparel store has stated that although good photography can help with customer's decision making by providing good detailed representation of the product, it will only come hand in hand with the right marketing strategy. In an example case, this store owner believes that a casual photo representation of the product being worn by the store owner taken with a smart phone also helps her customers to see the product in a more realistic aspect.

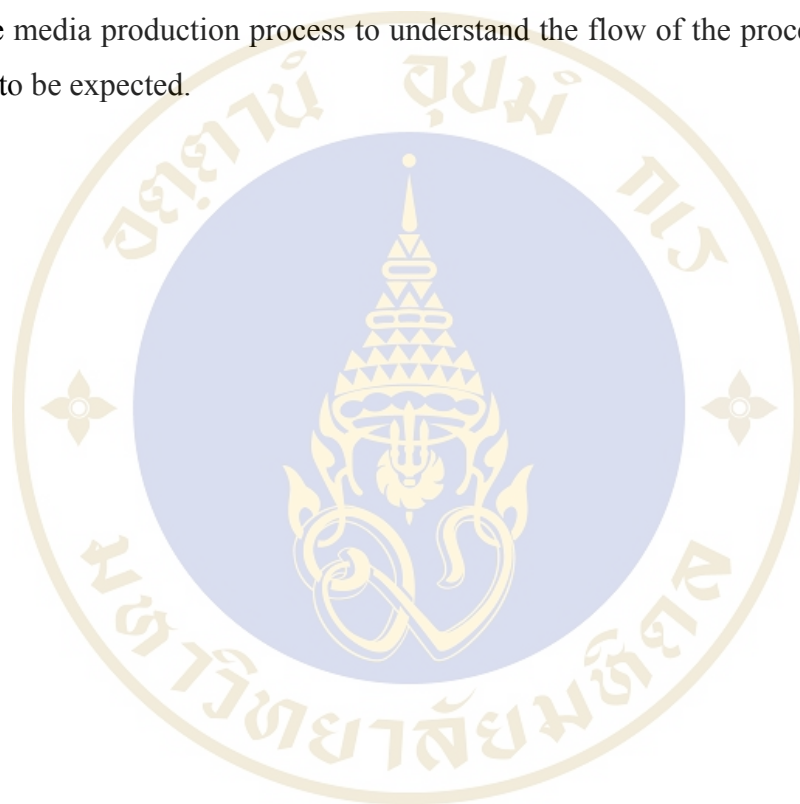
From this information, we can come to a realization that the more established stores with a longer life time in the industry considers both casual amateur photos to be effective as well. On the contrary, in the perspective from the younger online stores, the weight of importance given to professional photos are higher even with their limitations of budget for their business in spending in the media content.

#### **4.4 The Current Concerns and Issues Online Sellers Have Towards Photography and Videography Services**

The topics of current concerns and issues that online sellers have towards the use of media services can also helps us understand the different types of factors that prevent online sellers to use the services. By understanding these factors, the media services can use this information to improve their current process in order to attract and retain more activity with existing online sellers. Seven out of ten stores from the qualitative interview has shown different types of factors they wish photographer and videographers could improve in their services. Three stores have raised the issue to the fast delivery of the media. They have mentioned that the issues of working process of retouching photos or the photographer's artistic process contributed to a prolonged time of delivering timely work. The reason being is derived from online store's first priorities, which is to begin releasing and selling their products as fast as they can to beat their competitors who are selling the same products. One online clothing store have expressed that the objective of the online sellers versus the freelancer photographers are sometimes not aligned. While photographer's creativity aspects are concerned about the aesthetics of every photo which is a cause of delayed process, the sellers are more concerned

about executing the shooting fast in order to cover all the products that needs to be shot in one shooting day.

Eight out of ten stores that have expressed no particular concerns have mentioned that the key to not having issues is to be clear on the initial job briefing stage of the process. This can translate to possibly the desire of these online stores to have a clear understanding of both sides on what exactly will be executed in a clear and measurable process. This insight could be an encouragement for existing media services and freelancers in the industry to create a clear production plan that allows individuals with low familiarity with the media production process to understand the flow of the process and aware of what is to be expected.





## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

From research findings, it is evident that Thailand shows an exponential growth in the purchasing activities in the social e-commerce by ranking top in Southeast Asia by year. This proposes a promising prospect for existing and new businesses to enter and benefit from this opportunity. Research findings also shows that the use of digital marketing in videography and photography are highly active and will become a norm in all online businesses for the time to come. The bars are being raised higher with the growing competition, therefore, a need for a higher standard of media shows a promising prospect as well. With the one key component that leads to success of these small scale e-commerce is the representation of products, services and online presence, understanding the perspectives of the online sellers, existing media services and freelancers can use this information to improve their current process in order to attract and retain more activity with existing online sellers in the e-commerce business. Furthermore, this insight can also be a motivation for new job creation and innovation in order to fill the void of current issues and concerns the e-commerce business has in regards of media services. The data findings reveal the following key factors that media services can take into account in order to seek new opportunities and present themselves to become more attractive in the business context in this Thailand's growing e-commerce landscape, thus leading the small players in the media service to excel in this ever growing industry.

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## Appendix A: Interview Reference

### Qualitative Research – Interview Questions

1. Please explain your business and the number of years since you first started.
2. How many channels are you currently selling in?
  - a. Online only? Or Offline as well?
3. If you have to compare between the sells of Retail store vs. Online Stores, which generate higher revenue?
4. What sources of photography and videography are you currently using for your business? (*possible answers: freelancers, DIY, Agencies, small scale media production*)
5. How much are you currently paying for these services?
6. How important and effective do you think the use of photos and video is to your business?
7. How many times a month or year do you create video and photo contents for your business?
8. Please compare the photography use with celebrity reviews, which is more effective.
9. What was the turning point that makes you use professional service?
10. What types of issues does your business have regarding photography and videography?
11. If your business does not currently use professional services?
  - a. Do you think with professional photography and videography will help your business scale?
  - b. If so, how willing are you to invest in this area.
  - c. What is the maximum price you are willing to invest per month/year in this area?

## BIOGRAPHY

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## **HOW SMALL SCALE MEDIA SERVICES CAN INCREASE ITS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SMALL SCALE E-COMMERCE RETAILERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the weight of importance and the in depth perspective of the weight of importance small scale e-commerce gives to quality video and photography representation of the product and services to better understand so that the small scale media services can respond to business opportunities accordingly. The effort of this research is to provide insight and the positioning these small scale businesses have towards videography and photography, in order for the media industry to spot business potential opportunities to cater to this small scale e-commerce more efficiently. Ultimately, this research aims to improve and encourage business actions between of small scale ecommerce and photography and videography production service by understanding the motivation to buy and nature of the process of the small scale online businesses.

**KEY WORDS:** Small Scale E-Commerce Retailer/ Business Traction/ Videographers/  
Photographers 24 Pages

21 pages

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In recent years, it is undeniable that the world has seen a significant growth in the online ecommerce business. In Thailand alone, The Statistics Portal for Market Data reported that the Thai e-commerce business has generated 2.9 Billion US dollars with a projection of 14.5% growth per year, making Thailand one of the largest e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia (Nanji, 2017). This is a result from the available modern marketing technology and the excellence in the social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, and user friendly software that gives new entrepreneurs the ease to begin their online e-commerce regardless of the competition with large businesses. This carves a pathway for other businesses to improve as well such as logistics, application development, and other e-commerce related businesses.

With the significant growth of the online business, one key component that leads to success of these small scale e-commerce is the representation of their products and services and online presence. With the lack of the physical store experience, excellence in videography and photography can greatly enhance customer traction. For instance, an example case study of a small e-commerce shop has used analytics to measure the impact of using video on product pages and the company has found that the conversion of pages with video was 160% higher than normal, which leads to the business that uses media to generate more traffic and revenue. Furthermore, 40% of shoppers are more likely to make a mobile purchase if they have access to product videos (Hall, 2017). Through qualitative research, this will help the videography and photography business to understand the insights, pain points, and needs of these small scale ecommerce

## 1.2 Research Question

How can we encourage more business traction between small scale media services and small scale online businesses to respond to the exponential growth of online business opportunities?



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 E-Commerce Promotes New Job Opportunities

To respond to the current exponential growth of the e-commerce scene, digital marketing through social networking undeniably has changed the way people do business and it plays a significant role in the rate of success of an online store. Currently, online social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook has recognized the growing use of personal digital marketing and has adopted various simplified, user friendly system such as Facebook Ads Manager and Google Adverts. Currently, the main platform that drives Thailand's social commerce is Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Line. It is through these platforms that various online sellers establish online business stores for their product sales (MoneyHub, 2015). The main activity in driving sales are photo and video posts along with online marketing. According Statista's market analysis of Thailand's 2017 e-commerce landscape, Thailand is considered to be the largest social commerce with more than 50% of customers making purchases through social network (Nanji, 2017). The following statistic shows Thailand's E-commerce ranking in the year 2016:

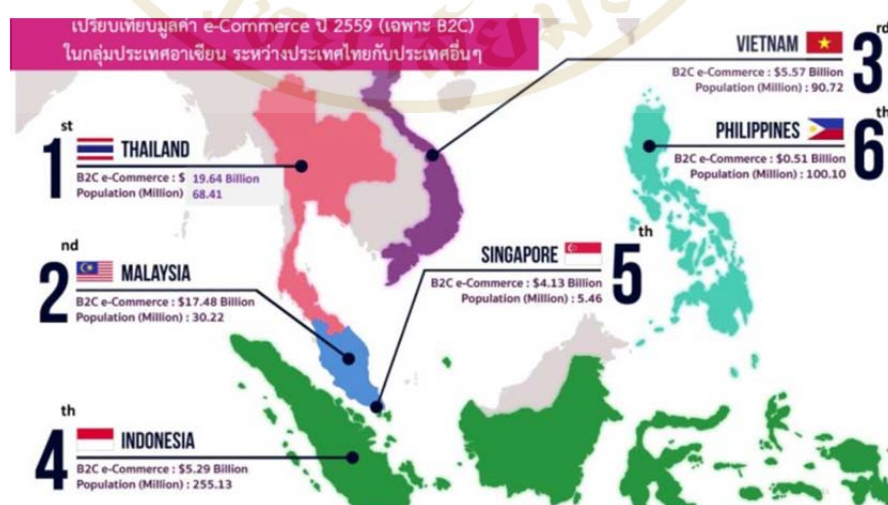


Figure 2.1 Info graphics portraying the Asian e-commerce landscape in 2016

This demonstrates the substantial business activities that is currently happening in Thailand's e-commerce landscape, which proposes various job opportunities as well as opportunities for new entries. This development is to support individual digital marketing to help online stores reach their targeted customers despite having a physical store. Small scale businesses no longer require the assistance of traditional big scale companies such as advertising agencies or large scale web developers to grow their business. The modern technology makes it possible to scale down and also control media through their own management. This is also known as the Multichannel Network Model, which is a new media phenomenon, in which business entities can partner with content creators or can directly produce their own distinctive content to cater to their own business needs (Gardener, 2016). It is time efficient and proves to be low investment due to the fact that no professional individuals are required to exercise the task and the risk free environment of the free entry of the online platform. Furthermore, the reports and feedback given from the advertising performance can easily be interpreted, which allow individuals to continue to improve their marketing performance and efforts.

This is a motivation for online sellers to continue to use digital market to improve their business. A case study conducted by Jacob Gardner and Kevin Lehnert has highlighted "...the rapid proliferation of digital and online marketing and how new content being created online is becoming the single fastest-growing category, outstripping TV, radio, and other more traditional media formats" (Gardner, 2016). This supports the importance of media services even more because it is the sole factor for digital marketing. The rise of Multi-Channel Network model has encouraged new media, thus result in an increased for content creation. This encourages the growing need for media services. This paves the way for new job creations, especially for small players such as photography and videography freelancers to enter as well as benefiting from the e-commerce business.

Once small scale businesses start to practice digital marketing more efficiently, the stores began to have traction and begin to generate revenue, which lead to the continuation to invest in media production more consistently. According to data collected from Web Marketing Video Council's recent study, video marketing statistics demonstrates that high quality video content has a positive impact on sales and ROI (Cardona, 2016). 60% of online brands are now currently exercising the use of video on social networks. It has stated that, "73% of users who watch a video tend to purchase one of the related

products and 1 in 4 buyers confirmed having used YouTube to look up video on a product they are thinking of purchasing (Cardona, 2016).” Furthermore, the analysis shows that in 2019 alone, 80% of all traffic will be video content based.

Once they begin to succeed, this leads to other jobs opportunities such as logistics, media services, improvements of social media platforms, as well as creating new job categories. This transition promotes new job opportunities for small scale businesses when investments are lower and can take action quickly upon the online platform. Digital marketing is an important factor in running the cycle to create new jobs because it enhances revenue to the store, thus leading to new job creation. Furthermore, new job creation creates healthy competition, which leads to other business types to scale themselves as well.

## **2.2 Benefits of Videography and Photography for E-commerce**

As we begin to define the growing potentials and opportunities within Thailand’s e-commerce setting, it is beneficiary to define the benefits that media services propose to social commerce and online businesses. With the real-time communication benefits of social commerce platforms, online sellers are able to reach its customers efficiently. This leads to a fast growth of their businesses. Therefore, the ease of entry and simplified business model of online stores allows small scale businesses to establish their stores and enter the competition. For instance, Twitter has seen the importance of video marketing and has evolved its application to include an in-app access to the mobile phone’s camera to increase engagement through video content (Carmody, 2017). As the competition becomes fierce, small scale retailers must find ways to differentiate themselves.

Better representation and efficient information of products and services can aid to higher level of purchases as well as help build a trustworthy presence for online stores. This becomes beneficial for online sellers, which good quality photography and videography plays a part in defining the success of digital marketing. Despite the high level of entry of online store proposing a high rate of job opportunities, one limitation is the low level of investment of the online sellers. But this can be viewed as an advantage for small scale media services because online sellers will consider using small scale

businesses rather than large companies. The benefits of using small scale media services such as photographer and videographer freelancers for online stores proposes new opportunities. One benefit is that the agreement between online sellers and small scale media services can be made on individual terms, where prices can be negotiated upon the satisfaction of both parties. Furthermore, small scale business of online store's requirements can easily be matched with a smaller sized team, which is ideal for individual freelancers and small media service teams. This flexible terms, high adaptability, and high variety of choices is one of the many advantage small scale online e-commerce can benefit from the use of small scale media services. From Bill Carmody's research on how to leverage with social media marketing, he has stated that video marketing is the best way to create engagement through social media platforms. He believes that individual online business can evolve and integrate their own unique strategies through various tools that is provided on social media platforms. (Carmody, 2017).

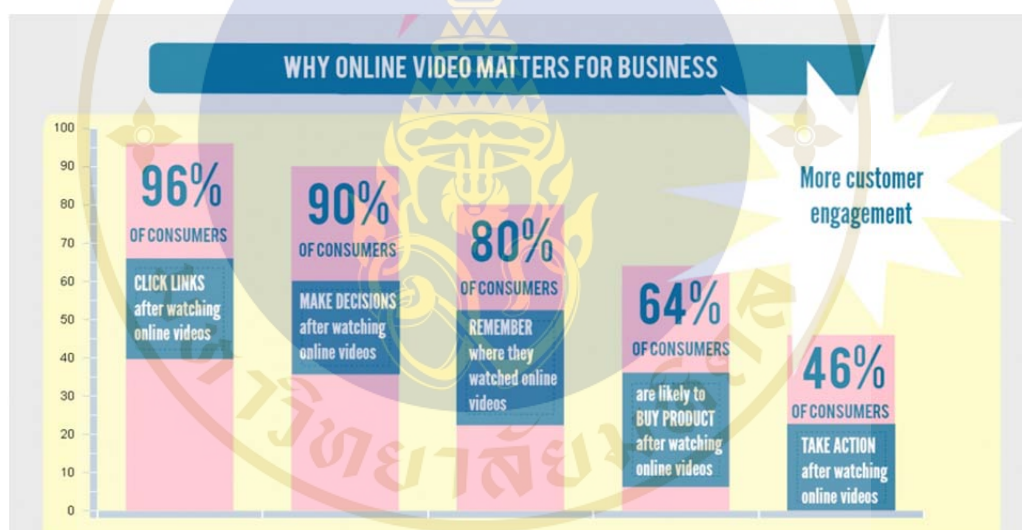
### **2.3 Professional Representation in Marketing through Media.**

Media representation of an online brand with professionalism is considered a crucial factor in the success of a business. According to DIPT, posts that is portrayed with professional quality media along with captivating content and images will enhance the motivation to visit the link (DIPT, 2015). As online stores began to get traction and capture the behavior of it's audiences, they can better improve their media to correspond to needs of their customers. With this appeal existing in the market, media services can take this advantage to create new business opportunities.

Another key success factor of an online store is consistency and intensive post engagement. The process from the internet being always available through the use of smart phones and other technological devices, e-commerce stores can always reach its customers in all occasions. The high number of online stores proposes a high level of competition for media space, therefore, it is crucial to be intensive in posting new content and frequently updating new products in order to retain and keep customers engaged in a store. This again signifies the need for existing and new media content creators.



The next factor is the post should propose a certain value to the audience. The value can be presented in various forms such as clear information, inspiration, or valuable content that appeals to the targeted customers. This is the key gaining interest of the customers give their valuable time to the certain online post. Statistics from DIPT reveals that 80% of audiences would engage in a post if it is unrelated to marketing, while only 20% of audiences would engage in marketing related posts. The 80% is referred to interesting and captivating content that is presented by the e-commerce stores to their target audience. A Ph.D. Principal Analyst from Forrester Research has conducted a research and found that 96% of consumers will engage with an online store and services after watching online videos and 46% of consumers will make take action after watching videos. As data shows, video does have a high conversion rate for online businesses (Mcquivey, 2016).



**Figure 2.2 Bar Chart expressing the customer engagement relative to the use of online video advertisement**

Furthermore, research findings from DIPT reveals that creating satisfaction by offering interesting and captivating content encourages social media sharing at a fast rate as well as enhancing brand creditability. As a result, this proposes another opportunity for small scale businesses to invest in media services to create captivating content for their skills and professionalism in the field.

## 2.4 Hypotheses Development

As seen from prior research, the fact shows that investing in quality photography and videography for online business can generate greater sales and retention. For instance, a marketing director of a medium sized online store, reveals that shoppers are 144% more likely to add a product to their cart if they've watched the product video than if they haven't (Romis, 2017). Due to this success, the company pays a flat monthly fee to video production companies for professional video content and to host videos. From this practice, McManus reveals that the business is “close to getting a 10 to 1 return on investment.” It is evident that many similar Western businesses give similar importance to quality videography and photography and have seen positive returns.

On the contrary, does the Thai ecommerce have the same mindset in this type of investment in professional media services? For this reason, it is worthwhile to explore successful Thai online ecommerce retail stores as well to see if their success partially linked to the use of photography and videography.

This study would aim to explore the current perspective and behavior of the sellers of online ecommerce in Thailand towards investment in videography and photography. Furthermore, the exploration will continue to explore the intensity level of how much small scale ecommerce is willing to invest in this area in the future if there is an efficient and cost friendly videography and photography production service that caters especially for small scale online ecommerce to ultimately spot the variables that promotes more business actions between media services and small scale online businesses.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research method that will be conducted to support the hypotheses is qualitative research in order to acquire in-depth insight and to better understand this industry in Thailand. The end goal is to reveal the scope of opportunities, as well as potential limitations and barriers that videography and photography production services and freelancers have in this industry. This will allow the media industry to spot the voided areas where they can improve in order to further encourage more business traction with the small scale ecommerce in Thailand.

The criteria for the candidate of this research methodology would be small scale e-commerce retailers within Thailand that focus their business model in online sales channels with minimal to non in physical retail focus. The reason for this focus is due to the significant growing number of entry of new small scale e-commerce retailers within Thailand, therefore, the information retrieved could benefit the media industry in the vast amount of potential customers. Furthermore, these small scale e-commerce retailers with no physical stores would rely heavily on videography and photography due to their high focus on the appearance of their online presence and the representation of their product and services, which would be highly relevant to the intention of this research.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Research**

The qualitative research section of this research will solely be dedicated to the gain in-depth understanding of the current mindset and perspective of small scale e-commerce retailers towards the use of videography and photography relative to their business.

The qualitative questions will intend to acknowledge the weight of importance the small scale e-commerce gives towards investing in the use of professional media. The success of the retrieval of this information will let us understand how attractive it is for the media services to target this group of online retailers before continuing to further explore the prices and design of the business model. Furthermore, this methodology will also provide an in-depth understanding of the different types of factors that influences or motivates their business decisions. This will significantly reveal valuable information that media industry can exercise to attract and respond to the small scale e-commerce retailer's business needs.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS**

After conducting the qualitative data collection, the following analysis will aim to analyze the following variables:

1. The life cycle of small scale online stores and the timing of entry for photography and videography services
2. The types of available opportunities in budget and time wise for videography and photography
3. The effectiveness of professional videography and photography on the sales of online stores in online seller's perspective
4. The current concerns and issues online sellers have towards photography and videography services

This analysis would aim to interpret the online seller's perspectives and reasoning through the data collected in order to see the potential ways media services could present themselves to become more attractive in the business context.

#### **4.1 The Life Cycle of Small Scale Online Stores and the Timing of Entry for Photography and Videography Services**

In the early stages of opening an online store, seven out of ten shops shows a similar to identical growth patterns in concerns of media creation. All the online stores that is based on social media platforms will only resort to in house amateur photography at the start of their business. The reasons behind this decision is due to small scale online shops are more focused on their products investment and the willingness to spend on media remains a secondary factor.

Furthermore, in the low risk environment of opening an online shop that is free of charge to set up their online store account, sellers have the perception to see how

their store will perform in the early stages before the decision to invest fully into growing their shop into a steady and long term business.

The qualitative research shows that after their store begin to gain more recognition and begin to generate steady revenue, it is when they begin to become more concerned about quality photography and videography. Established stores that has been open in the range of four to five years reveals that the turning point for the decision to use professional photography is when the competition is increased and the online stores becomes saturated. Initially, the store that used to be market leaders of the online store before the fierce competition of the current situation reveals that amateur in house photography performed efficient enough to attract buyers online. But as the competition of online stores selling similar products grew, these established store must begin to find ways to stay ahead of the competition as well as sustaining relevance by increasing differentiation done through media content creation and digital marketing. The approximate budget for stores that are opened for three to five years are in the range of 10,000 – 20,000 THB for a full day shoot with a maximum to invest once a month.

For the stores with the age of one to three years that have entered later in the industry and whose scale are relatively smaller than online stores a three to five years, the numbers signify that they have less penetration on launching new collections of products with less budget. The approximate budget for these younger stores are 0 - 7,000 baht for a full day shoot with the willingness to invest in media the maximum of four times per year.

The following graph demonstrates the information in a simplified graph:

**Table 4.1 Info obtained by the respondents from their average business spendings per year.**

<b>Store Age expressed in years of operation</b>	<b>Maximum willingness to spend expressed in months per year</b>	<b>Budget per one time spending</b>
0 – 3 years	4	0 – 7,000 THB
3 – 5 years	12	10,000 – 20,000 THB

## 4.2 The Types of Available Opportunities Budget and Time Wise for Videography and Photography

From the information provide, we can analyze that as the store becomes more established through the time invested in expanding their business, there will be an increase both budget wise and the intensity of the number to times media is used in a year. This information can benefit photographers and videographers to pin point the suitable target through the number of years the considered store is established.

The times per year the stores use professional photography can be divided into two groups. Five out of ten retail stores mentioned that the marketing strategy for their stores are to include two main types of collection in a year. The small collection refers to the monthly arrival of new designs to give their stores a variety of product to keep their customers on revisiting their stores and make steady repurchases. The big collection refers to the global fashion seasons, which can be divided to the following: Spring-Summer and Autumn-Winter collection. Eight out of ten stores show to consistently practice in including the big collection with the principle that the big collection will feature specialty products that can generate high revenue in the smaller amount of time. The weight of importance between the big and small collection is demonstrated in the graph below. This particular graph offers the difference in the store's budgeting of the different types of collection.

1. Big Collection: Seasonal Items Releases
2. Small Collection: Monthly New Releases

**Table 4.2 Info obtained by the respondents from their average business spendings defined by two main categories**

Collection Type	Times Per Year	Budget	Media Service Type
<b>Big Collection</b>	2 – 3 times per year	25,000 – 60,000 THB	Full Service Team (5 – 6 Employees)
<b>Small Collection</b>	Once every month	5,000 – 10,000 THB	Photographer Freelancers (1 – 2 Employee)

It is evident that the willingness to spend on the monthly collection are far less than the seasonal collection. This can be concluded that the perception of online stores who follow the two collection types in their marketing strategy expects a higher quality of photography and videography for the seasonal collection release due to the budgeting strategies. This data can be beneficial for videographers and photographers to analyze their strengths and positions themselves on which type of work is an appropriate target. Options for photographers and videographers can be factors such as whether to aim for providing high quality work with bigger budget, but less work flow or to aim for volume with less income. Furthermore, the number of times the online stores practice each type of collection can also be used to estimate the number of job opportunities and income for the for videographers and photographers in an estimated time frame.

### **4.3 The Effectiveness of Professional Videography and Photography on the Sales of Online Stores in Online Seller's Perspective**

Understanding online seller's perception towards the effectiveness of professional videography and photography services towards their online business is a crucial aspect of this case study. It can help to the media industry to spot the possibilities and opportunities of entering this segment in response to the value perceived by the different types of online sellers.

Seven out of ten online stores from the qualitative research believed that the use of professional media services has significantly improved their business. One small-scale sporting equipment online store has stated that by shifting from the use of amateur photos to the use of professional photos, the business had seen a growth of over 300% in the span of the first quarter. Furthermore, another online jewelry business stated that they are 100% positive that quality and good aesthetic photography is directly linked to the performance of sales. The jewelry store has given a real life example of where the most aesthetically pleasing photo in their opinion are responsible to the best sales of a particular product.

On the contrary, two stores that practice professional media service believe that professional photography of the products is only part of the equation for their success. A small scale clothing business has commented that marketing and exposure is more



important if not equally important to professional photography. This segment of online sellers are willing to invest less on quality media when compared to the investment of boosting paid post on social media. Another apparel store has stated that although good photography can help with customer's decision making by providing good detailed representation of the product, it will only come hand in hand with the right marketing strategy. In an example case, this store owner believes that a casual photo representation of the product being worn by the store owner taken with a smart phone also helps her customers to see the product in a more realistic aspect.

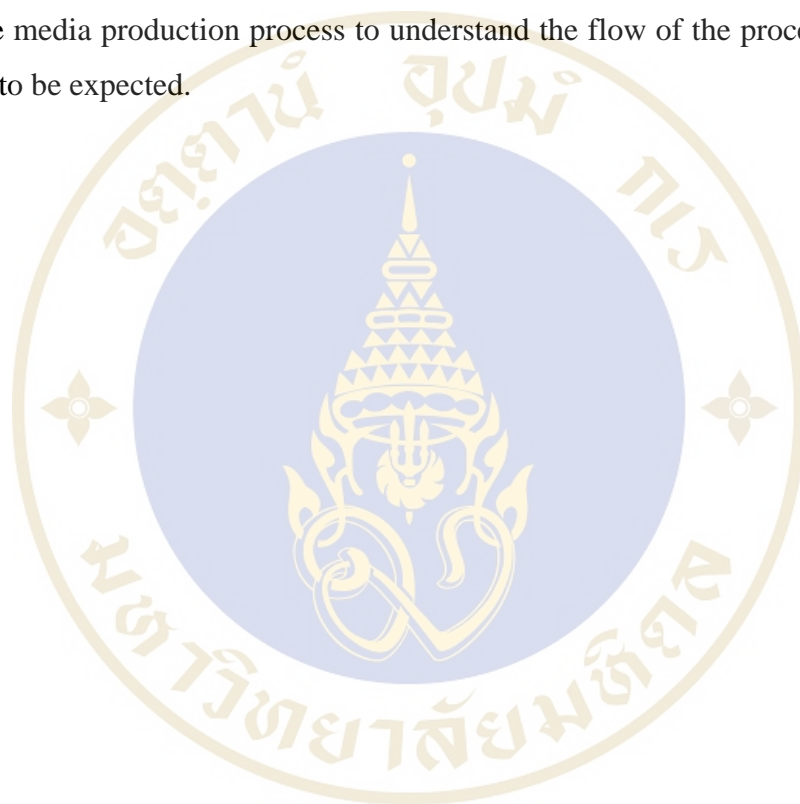
From this information, we can come to a realization that the more established stores with a longer life time in the industry considers both casual amateur photos to be effective as well. On the contrary, in the perspective from the younger online stores, the weight of importance given to professional photos are higher even with their limitations of budget for their business in spending in the media content.

#### **4.4 The Current Concerns and Issues Online Sellers Have Towards Photography and Videography Services**

The topics of current concerns and issues that online sellers have towards the use of media services can also helps us understand the different types of factors that prevent online sellers to use the services. By understanding these factors, the media services can use this information to improve their current process in order to attract and retain more activity with existing online sellers. Seven out of ten stores from the qualitative interview has shown different types of factors they wish photographer and videographers could improve in their services. Three stores have raised the issue to the fast delivery of the media. They have mentioned that the issues of working process of retouching photos or the photographer's artistic process contributed to a prolonged time of delivering timely work. The reason being is derived from online store's first priorities, which is to begin releasing and selling their products as fast as they can to beat their competitors who are selling the same products. One online clothing store have expressed that the objective of the online sellers versus the freelancer photographers are sometimes not aligned. While photographer's creativity aspects are concerned about the aesthetics of every photo which is a cause of delayed process, the sellers are more concerned

about executing the shooting fast in order to cover all the products that needs to be shot in one shooting day.

Eight out of ten stores that have expressed no particular concerns have mentioned that the key to not having issues is to be clear on the initial job briefing stage of the process. This can translate to possibly the desire of these online stores to have a clear understanding of both sides on what exactly will be executed in a clear and measurable process. This insight could be an encouragement for existing media services and freelancers in the industry to create a clear production plan that allows individuals with low familiarity with the media production process to understand the flow of the process and aware of what is to be expected.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

From research findings, it is evident that Thailand shows an exponential growth in the purchasing activities in the social e-commerce by ranking top in Southeast Asia by year. This proposes a promising prospect for existing and new businesses to enter and benefit from this opportunity. Research findings also shows that the use of digital marketing in videography and photography are highly active and will become a norm in all online businesses for the time to come. The bars are being raised higher with the growing competition, therefore, a need for a higher standard of media shows a promising prospect as well. With the one key component that leads to success of these small scale e-commerce is the representation of products, services and online presence, understanding the perspectives of the online sellers, existing media services and freelancers can use this information to improve their current process in order to attract and retain more activity with existing online sellers in the e-commerce business. Furthermore, this insight can also be a motivation for new job creation and innovation in order to fill the void of current issues and concerns the e-commerce business has in regards of media services. The data findings reveal the following key factors that media services can take into account in order to seek new opportunities and present themselves to become more attractive in the business context in this Thailand's growing e-commerce landscape, thus leading the small players in the media service to excel in this ever growing industry.

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## Appendix A: Interview Reference

### Qualitative Research – Interview Questions

1. Please explain your business and the number of years since you first started.
2. How many channels are you currently selling in?
  - a. Online only? Or Offline as well?
3. If you have to compare between the sells of Retail store vs. Online Stores, which generate higher revenue?
4. What sources of photography and videography are you currently using for your business? (*possible answers: freelancers, DIY, Agencies, small scale media production*)
5. How much are you currently paying for these services?
6. How important and effective do you think the use of photos and video is to your business?
7. How many times a month or year do you create video and photo contents for your business?
8. Please compare the photography use with celebrity reviews, which is more effective.
9. What was the turning point that makes you use professional service?
10. What types of issues does your business have regarding photography and videography?
11. If your business does not currently use professional services?
  - a. Do you think with professional photography and videography will help your business scale?
  - b. If so, how willing are you to invest in this area.
  - c. What is the maximum price you are willing to invest per month/year in this area?