

**DISNEY PARKS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FROM
THE PERSPECTIVE OF THAI TOURISTS**



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ABSTRACT

It all began in 1955, when the very first Disney Parks called Disneylandia, and later changed to Disneyland, located in Anaheim, California, opened its gates to the public; it has always been one of the world's most popular theme parks ever since that covers more than 85 acres with five different theming areas and the iconic Sleeping Beauty Castle. At the present, there are six Disney Parks around the world which are Disneyland California, Walt Disney World in Orlando, Tokyo Disneyland in Japan, Disneyland Paris in France, Hongkong Disneyland and the latest one Shanghai Disneyland opened in 2016.

As claimed by DisneyNews, there are over 150 million visitors to Disney Park in 2017 and the attendance rates keep on rising each year (Smith, 2020). Year after year, the number of guests visiting Disneyland around the world continued to grow despite there being plenty of other themed parks operated throughout the world such as Universal Studios, SeaWorld or Legoland despite the non-stop escalation of the Disney's Park ticket each year. The inelasticity has shown that no matter how much the price increases or how many theme parks in the same area, there is no substitution for Disney's magic, and it will not affect the quantity demanded.

This paper will dive into the reason to find out how and why Disney Parks become more than just an amusement park that becomes important for Thai dreamers as the destinations that they are willing and must visit once in a lifetime. I would like to discover more in which the main key success factors for Disney Parks use that could allure Thai tourists to spend a lot of time and money to be at Disney Parks.

KEY WORDS: Consumer behavior / Customer satisfaction / Repurchase intention / Subjective norm / Market segmentation / Entrepreneurial opportunity recognition / Price inelasticity

34 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

I am interested in Disney Parks and personally dream of visiting all of Disneyland and Walt Disney World around the world. Of all the 6 cities around the world that Disney Parks are located in, the only two Disneylands that I have not visited yet are Shanghai and Paris. Regarding to my passion and curiosity, I would like to know from a Thai tourist's perspective the reason why and how Disney always is the top world-ranking themed park they would like to visit once in their life. Why do people spend so much just to visit this place?

The story that I will tell and find out is how and why Disney Parks become more than just an amusement park but a dreamer destination that is so successful especially for Thai tourists. I would like to discover more in which the main key success factors for Disney Parks use that could allure Thai tourists to spend a lot of time and money to be at Disney Parks. It is the place where everything changes randomly and normally confuses the tourists who do not follow the news in Disney Parks much. It needs a clear plan set up to make the trip perfect, a knowledge and informative booking and reservation in every step to enter this happiest place on earth. It is always known and said that it takes a lot of work and time to plan a Disney trip. So, I would like to know which elements that keep motivating Thai tourists to visit. Is it the physical or intrinsic motivation? Is it the man-made construction of the themed park or the people who work there? Is it about showing off or truly collecting moments and enjoying this magical utopia world?

1.2 Motivation for research

The primary motivation for this research paper came from my own doubtfulness that initially came from the moment that I was a former Disney's Cast Member. I had worked at Walt Disney World located in Orlando, Florida, USA for almost 2 years. Walt Disney World is the second Disney Parks, and it is one of the largest entertainment complexes in terms of area and most-visited amusement park in terms of attendance according to Themed Entertainment Association. I was always proud to be part of the most magical place on Earth, it is the biggest Disney Parks where the attraction features 4 themed parks including Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios and Disney's Animal Kingdom Park, 2 water parks, more than 30 themed hotels and resorts, several golf courses, plenty of stores and restaurants and many other recreation options which cover everything you would want to enjoy on a vacation in a similar size of San Francisco city that offers magical experience and unlimited imagination for all ages at the same time.

During my time there, I have met and talked with so many Thai tourists, I found that most of them were staying in Disney's property for weeks and have planned for the Disney trip alone for months. Many Thai tourists even hired an agency to plan for the whole Disney's trip and paid extra money to make the trip possible with the expectation to enjoy Disney Parks which cost a lot and surprisingly, knowing that most Thai tourists are willing to spend a big amount of money before going to Disney Parks. To my surprise, especially during the summertime or Songkran holidays, I was overwhelmed because I met more than twenty Thai couples and families at Walt Disney World and for some, I even met twice a year. Even during my holidays, I went to Disneyland California and Hongkong Disneyland. It cannot be denied that I have met so many Thai tourists as well. Therefore, the main aim is to understand the factors affecting satisfaction and repurchase intention among Thai tourists despite the higher price. With this research, we will be able to understand the motivation and factors behind the success of Disney Parks.

1.3 Value of the research

This paper is mainly focused on Disney Parks and their success among Thai tourists that would be beneficial for many businesses. This paper provides several dimensions of the key factors affecting consumer behavior that will be useful for all businesses where customer service is being set as a priority to make the business grow and gain more revenue with the higher standard similar to Disney's reputation as the world leading customer service company. The research will focus on the main factor and motivation that makes Thai people pay a lot of money and time to amusement parks abroad. The reason and element behind their success could be transmitted to the people who visit and will visit Disney Parks from the point of view of Thai tourists, not from the news, employees, or the board of committee that we usually hear from the news publication. The key vision, mission and value from the consumer perspective that could be adapted and practiced in this industry. The benefits of this paper are to learn from the world recognizes customer service, the relevant business could use their framework to adapt in the company and be able to understand factors influencing customers' buying and spending behavior.

1.4 Research objective

The objective paper is to find out key factors or the reason behind their success that have a positive impact on customer behavior and customer service that led to success of Disney parks. Learning from the world-leading quality customer service from the perspective of Thai tourists. Making these clear will benefit Thai entertainment industry to adapt their strategies by offering consumers the right experience matching with customer preferences which also benefit customers. Understand the main vision, mission, and value to growing their customer base on a deeper level of consumer behavior and customer service among Thai tourists.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Consumer behavior

Regarding the marketing strategies and tactics, knowing the consumer behavior can be an important competitive advantage and help the business to survive in the competitive environment. Generally, consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society (Hawkins, 2013). Many studies reveal how interaction rituals can be disrupted and offer insight as to how firms can balance key tensions in creating social atmospheres to enhance customer experiences, customer loyalty, and communal place attachments. Atmospheres are experiences of place involving transformations of consumers' behaviors and emotions. Existing marketing research reveals how atmospheric stimuli, service performances, and ritual place-making enhance place experiences and create value for firms (Hill, 2022).

The action of buying, having, and being depends on the study of consumer behavior into an investigation of how having or not having certain products and services effects on consumer lives (Solomon, 2017). Travelers create consumption audio-portraits and self-explanations through their purchases and use of travel-related services. Their configurations of destinations, accommodations, travel modes, destination activities, meal choices, attractions visited, and their travel companions inform others and themselves about who they are. Most tourists are identifiable by who they are and what they know about where they have been and what they have done via their summaries of their trips. These understandings of self through travel are statements of being. In summary, it can be concluded that Thai tourists portray themselves through where they have been and what they have done tells themselves and others who they are (Alain, 2017).

2.2 Customer satisfaction

Nowadays, the competitive business environment encourages business owners and leading management teams to pay more attention to customer expectations to be able to implement strategies and take actions to meet the demand for customer satisfaction. Researchers claim that factors affecting the satisfaction and level of satisfaction vary in different industries. Customer satisfaction is the conclusion of all tasks performed during the process of purchase and consumption at the post-purchase stage (Ismael, 2010). The assessment is highly personal and could be affected by one's expectation such as how significant or impactful the product is and therefore, how the demand is met might not solely depend on the products or services but value added beyond that (Anwar & Gulzar, 2011).

Though customer satisfaction is one of the definite goals that all organizations aim to achieve, it is also one of the most challenging aspects. The subsequent evaluative opinion reveals areas that needs improvement, forcing the organization to adapt to changes and pursue long term goals to achieve highest possible outcomes for the company and among competitive rivalries (Zairi, 2000). Customer satisfaction also represents a sustained competitive advantage. Apart from the great impact it has toward a company's profitability, it is also a core to strengthen the relationship between customers and the organization (Tripathi, 2018). The impression customers have towards the organization and past experience with the organization is one of the most important attributes that lead to repurchase, customer loyalty, and positive word of mouth (Ahmadinejad, 2019). In this research, we will be focusing on customer satisfaction toward Disney Parks along with the entire purchasing experience from the initial stage of receiving information, to the selection of products, and finally to the post purchase phase.

2.3 Repurchase intention

In general, repurchase intention defines the behavior of an individual willing to buy and use again, a certain good or service over time based on the positive judgment of the first purchase. The belief of a superior quality of the product and the consequential post-shopping satisfaction is the factor that triggers this behavior (Suryadi, 2020). In a

different study has found a very strong positive correlation between satisfaction and repurchase intention. The element that can connect satisfaction and repurchase intention and it is trust, as stated from Abhigyan (2020). In his paper this specific consumer behavior has been studied in relation to trust and customer relationship management. It has been found that trust is a connecting link between satisfaction and repurchase. Another element associated with repurchase intention is brand loyalty. The paper explained how loyalty is one of the main variables related to this behavioral element and can further develop an ongoing interest in repurchasing a product or a brand. The same study concluded that brand loyalty plays as a mediator variable between brand awareness and repurchase intention which represent the outcome variable. In other words, the more a consumer is loyal to the brand the higher is the likelihood for him/her to repurchase the product. Repurchase is an extremely important factor for most businesses because they set the basis for customer loyalty (Suryadi, 2020). Despite being most customers one-time buyers the real value in customers lies in repeating customers and those consumers are the real source of profit for companies (Liping Yang, 2021). It is for this reason that it is very interesting to explore the factors that shift the behavior of consumers from on-time traders to repeat customers.

The meaning of repurchase is an extremely significant factor for most businesses because they set the basis for customer loyalty and determine the level of success of the company. The belief of a superior quality of the product and the consequential post-shopping satisfaction is the factor that triggers consumer behavior. (Suryadi, 2020) The main focus in order to maintain the old customers and also focus on grabbing new customer's segment from the increase of the repetitive buying intention, the company should show deep commitment and stemming the brand loyalty to the existing customers that could expand their word of mouth or positive comments to other new coming customers and willing to continue buying from this company the next time. It all depends on the company's performance and process to go above and beyond in their products and services that leads to customer's willingness and engagement in future purchase intention and probability to spread good reviews and positive experience.

The attitude of consumers is a result of different factors working together toward shaping the behavior of the consumer. In conclusion we can say that repurchase

intention is a consequence of a process in which there are three starting elements: brand awareness, product quality and brand association. Those three elements combined can lead to brand loyalty, which is also associated with trust, and ultimately results in repurchase intention. The intention could be motivated by subjective norms, attitude toward purchasing products and positive value perceived from the customer's point of view. (Heryana, 2020) This means that the product provider or the company needs to reach their satisfaction from the first impression of seeing the advertisement, promotion, product information and positive reviews with the feeling of gaining benefits and quality that are able to meet customer's expectations. (Ilyas, 2020)

Repurchase intention strategy is applied in many economic sectors, including the tourism and hospitality industry; however, consumer reactions to dynamic pricing in the theme park industry have not been examined. This study assessed consumers' trust, perceived value, and brand loyalty under different pricing strategies using six hypothetical pricing scenarios. The results indicated that theme park visitors had the best positive attitudes and loyalty when they paid less and knew that they paid less. Theme Park visitors' reaction toward paying price premiums does not change substantially when they know that they pay more for charitable causes or sustainable practices (Milman, 2021).

2.4 Subjective norm

Subjective norm is an important factor in which an individual's perception toward an object, product, service or a behavioral intention that is impacted and influenced by the expectation of the society, in particular their surrounding people such as friends, family, colleagues and significant others (Charoenpanich, 2018). One's decision to do or not to do something could depend on both internal and external influences and motivations like cultural norms in the family or workplace, past experience, personal interest, living environment and social pressure under different backgrounds and circumstances (Ngoc, 2019). Especially in collective countries like Thailand where there is high social interaction, people tend to follow certain behavior as they are committed to the member group and do not want to be the odd one out.

There are 2 dimensions of subjective norms-normative belief and motivation to comply. Normative beliefs point out whether one's thought is related to another or the group. While motivation to obey focuses on influencing others to be obedient (Amijaya, 2021). All in all, the term subjective norms point out how other people's beliefs and perceptions toward a particular person could have a significant effect on that person's decision making, thoughts and behavior. It is normal that people want to be a part of the inner group, therefore tend to perform certain activities following what most people are doing.

2.5 Market segmentation

Market segmentation is the process of dividing the markets into groups of potential customers who are likely to display similar needs, characteristics and purchasing behavior. It emerges as a key marketing planning tool and the foundation for effective strategy which is commonly used by many companies around the world. The objective of market segmentation is to analyze markets, find niche opportunities, and capitalize on a superior competitive position. Consequently, the marketing challenge is to efficiently match the right products to the right customers' desires and stay one step ahead of the competitive competitors. There are many alternative methods for segmenting the markets regarding the variety of consumer behavior and their decision making in purchasing goods and services impacted by rational and emotional factors such as demographics, geographics, social benefits, psychological motivations, needs and purchasing habits and lifestyles (Art, 2004).

In the modern business world, marketing techniques and strategies in industrialized countries cannot be implemented without segmentation of the potential market. Products and services are no longer produced and sold without a significant consideration of customer needs and behaviors combined with a recognition that these needs are heterogeneous. Market segmentation has become a central topic to both the theory and practice of marketing which help in understanding and guiding consumer behavior strategy in order to make a decision on what people will want to buy in the context of their everyday lifestyle rather than a glimpse of the detailed preference from the marketplace or company (Michel, 2000).

2.6 Entrepreneurial opportunity recognition

Entrepreneurial opportunity recognition involves finding a new means-end relationship that can be utilized for profit or potential value derived from the entrepreneurs' internal knowledge, and also on how entrepreneurs search for the creation of opportunities. The entrepreneurs have to introduce their interest, willingness to search for new ideas and contents by gathering, interpreting and applying information to recognize opportunities for their prospective businesses. In this vein, access to relevant information plays an important role in entrepreneurial opportunity recognition social media applications have dramatically changed the way entrepreneurs interact with stakeholders (Ceptureanu, 2020).

In the present, social media has become another significant part of daily routine which comprises technologies that allow the generation of user-created communication, information, and support user interaction. The increasing use of social media applications makes social media a necessary platform for entrepreneurs to build up their own social networks. Social media may enable entrepreneurial opportunities recognition by facilitating entrepreneurs' interactions with followers and subscribers. The effect of social network strength on entrepreneurial opportunity recognition is mediated by the need for knowledge capturing an individual's belief, opinion, attitude, intention and passion, not just by technological knowledge. Generally, opportunities develop as individuals shape elemental ideas involving entrepreneurs' creative work into full-blown business plans. The creation of successful businesses follows a successful opportunity development process, social media directly and positively influences entrepreneurial opportunity recognition while entrepreneurial internal approach of alertness, optimism and self-efficacy, creativity and passion and also social networks partially mediates its indirect effects on entrepreneurial opportunity recognition (Ceptureanu, 2020) (Ardichvili, 2003).

In this research paper, according to the selected interviewees, the entrepreneurial opportunity recognition also shows the element of entrepreneurial passion which includes the intense positive feelings originating from engagement in entrepreneurial activities and self-identity in Disney Parks. Entrepreneurial passion had a remarkable impact on opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial behaviors. Therefore, entrepreneurial opportunity recognition noticeably arbitrated from the

relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial behaviors. Entrepreneurs with entrepreneurial passion are more likely to gain opportunities, experiences, and ability to create new ventures more than others. (Bao, 2017)



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper will focus on qualitative research techniques as a means to draw our findings, this research methodology will enable the reader to understand the in-depth meaning and realistic information from the interviewee's perspective. More importantly, it is the best way to collect data and understand information from the people who are really into this topic or research.

3.1 Data collection

In this qualitative research, an interview option has been selected to gain insight on how Disney Parks could actually become more than just an amusement park but a dreamer's destination that is worldly recognized especially for Thai tourists. The main objective is to understand on a deeper level of consumer behavior and customer service among Thai tourists and Disney Parks would be an interesting place to learn from the world recognizes customer service with the world reputation. In total, 2 Thai Disney Parks experts were selected for the one-on-one interviews which are the founder of Disney Thailand Fanclub Facebook page and the creator of the famous Instagram account of "Mickeywafflesuk". I chose these two because they are the two people who Thai people are gathering information, turning to and discussing with when some Thai tourists are planning to travel to Disney Parks. These two will set up the Clubhouse to help brainstorm, discuss and plan the trip to Disney Parks. I, personally, join Clubhouse with them as well since I am a former Cast Member who worked at Walt Disney World for almost two years, so sometimes when someone wants in-depth information regarding Disney Parks in the USA, I usually give a hand. I found these two people as Disney Parks experts who have some much information from many dimensions and perspectives as well. Interviewing these two would be similarly to interviewing the majority of Disney dreamers in Thailand.

3.2 Selected Interviewees 1

Interview date: June 11, 2022

Location: Starbucks at Central Westgate

Duration: 2 hours (11.00 - 13.00)

Personal information: Khun Moo, the founder of “Disney Thailand Fanclub” Facebook page with more than 50,000 followers. He has opened the page since 2017. The main reason why he created this official Facebook page is to show the love and passion in Disney Parks. He said that it is the only theme park in the world that includes all in one experience, playing with childhood nostalgia and the place where people come to collect and keep their heritage of memory. I chose to interview Khun Moo because he is the one to turn to and discuss with when a Thai tourist would like to make a plan and travel to Disney Parks.

3.3 Selected Interviewees 2

Interview date: June 15, 2022

Location: On Zoom

Duration: 1.30 hours (21.00 - 22.30)

Personal information: Khun Bank, the famous Disney’s Parks and Disney’s Cruise content creator of an Instagram account named “Mickeywafflesuk”. The reason why I have to interview him online is because he is recently working in the UK as brand manager in one of the famous cosmetics companies. I actually interviewed him after he landed in the UK from a holiday trip at Disneyland Paris. With the time difference I have to interview quite late in Bangkok regarding the interview time because it is in the afternoon in the UK. He started his Instagram account for more than 2 years, posting only the Disney Parks and also Disney Cruise Line contents. At first for keeping the memories only but after so many followers, he has been invited to many events and being a guest speaker regarding Disney Parks’ magic and customer service as well.

3.4 Interview questions

The interview questions were developed to probe questions to obtain specific answers toward the framework discussed in the literature review's section. At the same time, most of the questions were designed as open-ended questions were chosen and created to allow interviewees to freely express their opinions and share their personal experiences along with the interview questions about Disney Parks and the consumer behavior among Thai tourists.

Interviewee's Background

1. Can you please share your background? How long have you been running the Facebook page/Instagram? How did you begin?
2. Why Disney's Parks content? Is it the most liked when posting about Disney Parks?
3. How many Disney Parks have you visited?
4. Which Disney's Parks are your favorite? Why?

Motivation and Key successful factors

5. What is the main factor and motivation that makes Thai people pay a lot of money and time to amusement parks abroad?
6. Which channel do you use to follow the news and updates from Disney Parks?
7. How is Disney Parks different from other theme parks?
8. What do you think about Disney's culture and rules? Have you ever joined any subculture activities?
9. Why do they have to need your help to make the plan before visiting Disney Parks?
10. What is the main purpose of visiting Disney parks multiple times?
11. What are the magical elements you are looking for when visiting Disney Parks?
12. What is more important, getting magical moments from cast members or enjoying the rides and shows?
13. Do you ever feel frustrated or disappointed at the end of the day, or do you generally feel happy and satisfied?

14. Do you generally have a feeling of achieving something after a Disney Parks trip?

15. Do you think is the main key success of Disney Parks? What do you think when people say Disney is all about impulsive buying and nostalgic marketing?

Consumer behavior and customer service

16. What do you think about Disney customer services? How could they become the world's leading customer service standard? Do you think they deserve this title?

17. What skills should a great customer service representative have? Any experience with Cast members in Disney Parks? How is it different from other theme parks?

Expert's perspective

18. Why do Thai tourists need to go to Disney Parks?

19. What makes them become so successful even though there's lots of change and the ticket seems to be going up non-stop?

20. What makes Thai tourists willing to pay just to visit Disney Parks?

21. What should Thai Tourists expect when visiting Disney Parks?

3.5 Secondary data

The secondary data used for this research mainly came from my own experience working at Walt Disney World for almost two years as a merchandiser and later as a park greeter. Furthermore, the insight information about other Disney Parks were collected from my friends around the world working at the Walt Disney World, Hongkong Disneyland performers and from the head office and also Disneyland California headquarter. The descriptive and statistical data are from the news, journals and articles retrieved from Disney official accounts and also the E-Journals from the Mahidol University E-library and E-databases.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS ANALYSIS

This chapter illustrates an in-depth analysis of the interview sessions mentioned in the previous chapter, in the ability to help identify factors or elements that help to understand more from the perspective of the Thai experts who are fond of Disney Parks. After interview sessions, there are many interesting points that have been explained, clarified, and discussed in order to find out the factors that significantly affect the success of Disney Parks among Thai tourists. Below is the key theme or the analysis that gathers from the interview sessions and also the research to find the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors that could affect Thai tourist's consumer behavior that is related to the key to success of Disney Parks.

4.1 Key Themes

4.1.1 Nostalgia marketing

Disney Parks use the concept of nostalgia marketing as the strategy of tapping into positive senses and interplay with the emotional hook and intrinsic motivation. It is a place of freedom with no gender and age barrier. Everyone has a chance and their own way to make their own memories and enjoy the magical moments in the parks, chasing their dream and collecting happiness like Walt Disney said that "Here you leave today and enter the world of yesterday, tomorrow and fantasy." For instance, the concept of this place fulfilled with the atmospherics in retailing are the controllable, man-made elements in the retail space that encourage customers' perception and sensation to come into that particular place, to encourage customers to stay long and purchase for specific products and services. Disney Parks try their best to use appropriate and unique atmospherics to identify their brand target, set clear brand personality and higher up the standard to be able to compete with other competitors. The

main elements of this environmental psychology are the appeal in scent, sight, sound, taste and touch with the main purpose to make the place attractive and to welcome the customers with the inviting environment to purchase some product or service. Each themed land in each Disney Parks were using different scent, lighting, music to create a different mood and tone. The products selling in each Disney Parks were different. There are Disney Parks exclusive merchandise that allure tourists around the world to collect and keep as memorable souvenirs regardless of the price or promotion. It also has the element of timeless and nostalgia that could bring back good old memories like a movie that could go back and watch for many times without boredom. Every single detail counts, even the scent in Disney's theme park that the smell will match with the theme of each land you step in. That is how Disney became the branding in the world of entertainment that creates happiness to people of all ages and gets full commitment from people around the world. To conclude for the Disney company and the Disney bounding subculture, customers are willing to be a part of Disney magic and be the marketing by dressing from the inspiration of Disney in every aspect and "customers will continue to return time and time again if they are satisfied with the experience that Disney has offered." (Schnoor, 2020)

Regarding Khun Bank who has been to Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World for more than five times, he said that the sight appealing done amazingly fulfills with detail and theming. Every space is well plan especially in the architecture that purposefully created and fits into the appropriate theme of each section; for example, a metal palm tree in Tomorrowland, the combination of a princess color scheme in a Fantasyland such as pink, purple, blue and the costume of each cast member that fit in each zone such as a pastel yellow and white costume with a chef hat costume at the Main Street Bakery store. The scent appeal in each zone especially at the Main Street Bakery store or Confectionery smells out to entice customers with the scent of sugar and peanut, making you crave for some sweets even if you just had a big breakfast. And there are sounds from the music pipe in every location that purposefully match the soundtrack to each zone, for example, in Fantasyland, you could hear "Someday My Prince Will Come," or "Be Our Guest" songs which are the soundtrack from Cinderella and Beauty and the Beast. It is quite successful in influencing the customer behavior

because many people love to hear their favorite soundtrack from their favorite Disney movie in the park and filming themselves singing along through social media channels. According to the interviewees, unlike other theme parks such as Legoland that focus mainly on toys merchandise and child friendly rides, Universal has famous features in amazing extreme rides inspired from their film production and movies. For Disney Parks, Khun Moo and Khun Bank both agree that it is the place that covers all experience for all ages and gender and also the place that becomes a culture for most families to visit, passing through family generations. Khun Moo said that Disney Parks is the only themed park that everyone could enjoy since the park includes all shows, rides, historical moments interplay with the childhood nostalgia and also forming new memories that will continue passing through family generations. Surprisingly, some Thai tourists even wrote down on their testament as a will after they have passed away to another world. They have left some amount of money for the family to go to Disney Parks to enjoy after they passed away, hoping to make their family members recognize the moment they had together and not be sad. This could be concluded that this market segmentation of nostalgia marketing is the development of unique marketing strategies including the above and beyond customer service differentiation and customer's emotional concentration.

Personally, I feel like Disney Parks have done an excellent job. The experiences available are truly above and beyond in quality that fit the purpose of an amusement park of making people happy dealing with people sensitivity, memory and emotion from the top rate performances, nightly fireworks spectacles, beautifully organized parades, amazing rides and attractions and also memorable dining experience with your favorite Disney characters surrounded by their favorite people who come to enjoy the magic together. The positive and delightful vibe gives the feeling of happiness since your first step inside the magical land like walking into another world where dreams come true, which are the main reason why they are in the world top ranking amusement park that is hardly compete and copy from other competitors and clearly influencing many people to visit once in a lifetime.

4.1.2 New subculture

Disney is quite different from other brands because their marketing team could just sit still and let the Disney's characters and people who love that character promote itself because each character has their own brand identity with its own potential to sell itself from the strong brand features in storytelling that Disney put in for each character. Disney has become a powerful way to build a brand and communication because each Disney's character could match and affect emotionally for each individual consumer behavior that approaches everyone in the family and friends of all ages and gender. This is the reason why the "Disneybound" subculture has emerged. Since Disney parks visitors are not allowed to get in if they wear the same costumes that could confuse the cast members and children into thinking you were one of the park characters. So, instead of dressing the same as their favorite Disney's character, people use every day outfits to mock the color theming and decoration similarly to Disney's character called Disneybound. Nowadays, Disneybounding has become a subjective norm, trend and subculture for Disney's fans around the world especially when visiting Disney Parks.

The reason that makes Disneybounding become popular and powerful is because the Disney fans are quite passionate to become a part of Disney, which is a well-known entertainment industry worldwide that everyone has been familiar with for a long time could join this Disneybounding subculture. It is the way of dressing that makes people feel happy, enjoy, fun and able to share the magical moments together. Disneybound uses Disney's characters as the main theme to be able to reach a broader audience since an individual has at least one favorite Disney's character. Disneybounding is also considered as a consumer benefit since many people gain popularity and career out of it, especially for the tailors and costume designers that could make a dreamy Disney's inspiration dress for sale. In addition, the emotional benefit from the shared value could obviously be seen in the example of Disneybounding and many other subcultures that people got inspiration from Disney. It encourages people's sense of belongingness and self-fulfillment. It was Walt Disney who once said that "when you believe in a thing, believe in it all the way, implicitly and unquestionably." The way people are very passionate about dressing like Disney's character is to embrace the full commitment that Disney company has given.

Both of the interviewees said that they have to plan for the outfits for months to match with the Disney Parks' events such as Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party, EPCOT International Flower and Garden Festival, Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party. Many Thai people who follow their accounts also ask for the idea and inspiration or even copy their dress code and cosplay for a character in their own style to dress up at Disney Parks as well. They both seem to be a Disney's consultant before Thai tourists would like to make an entrance to Disney Parks. This evidence of the new Disneybound subculture, shows another key successful factor of Disney, when people want to be a part of something in their everyday life. Even if they are not visiting Disney Parks, dressing up by using Disney's character as a reference can be done in everyday life since there are many Thai clothing brands and Thai celebrities using Disney's character as the main style to dress up in daily routine.

4.1.3 Make the career out of it

Both interviewees are working in the managerial position of a well-known company which training new employees and being the role model especially in customer service are included in their job description. They were both also hired to be a guest speaker in many companies which shows the entrepreneurial opportunity they have given from their popularity on their social media and the inclusive information from their own passion in Disney. The significant thing that they have got from Disney Parks are not just the joy and happy moments but also the observation and experience in customer service from the employee or we called cast member who work in Disney Parks. Khun Bank said that the Parks alone could not make an interaction with the Disney guests, but it is the service from cast members who make the Disney Parks alive and the one who fulfill the moments for the guests. He said that Disney's cast members are not the same with other theme parks because the conversation is quite natural and not so much scripted except the one who has to keep the character. He said that he was not pressured and felt comfortable when he needed help for direction or advice from the cast member. Personally, he noticed that even the smiles of the Disney's cast members are more sincere and not look like it is being forced compared to other theme parks that he could tell from his observation and experience. Khun Bank uses Disney's smile and extraordinary service of being true and sincere, willing to help as the main concept to

train his employees. It can be said that a simple thing like a smile or using the simple word but impactful like “Have a magical day” or even “Thank you for visiting us today” could be very powerful for a customer. He is using the experiences gained from Disney Parks and implementing world reputation customer service into their own real-life career.

Furthermore, from Khun Moo's side, even during the pandemic outbreak, he could earn more than 2,000 baht each from Thai followers just by giving information about Disney Parks. Many Thai tourists paid for the Disney Parks planning and gained insight information of the park's details, tips, and tricks from Khun Moo in accordance with their lifestyle, favorite Disney's character, dining experience, must-see shows and also rides that they want to experience. Khun Moo said that some are quite specific and in need of the expert to help in planning Disney trips depending on the members they are going with because some are an elderly, so they usually have limited food choice like where in Disney Parks that they could buy Halal food or vegetarian or people with health conditions and also the budget they have, which normally after the trip, they were all said that the budget always go above and beyond. It shows that visiting Disney Parks not only give people happiness and let them enjoy the dream come true moments but also give many people a career in real life.

4.1.4 A therapy from reality

For the consumers benefit in a way of escapism through the entertainment that Disney provides in many forms, not only Disney's theme parks but also Disney's stores around the world, Disney movies and animation, Disney's resort, and Disney's cruise line. Disney Parks is a special place that many researchers say is not just an escapism space but a reassurance. A visit to one of the Disney Parks reassures us that things will be okay. Here, everything works smoothly, places can be clean, people around you can be nice, and the pace of the world feels right. Imagineers Marty Sklar and John Hench have described the urban design for Disneyland as the “architecture of reassurance.” “Disneyland offered an enriched version of the real world, not just an escapist or an unreal version. We program out all the negative, unwanted elements and program in the positive elements. We've taken and purified the statement, so it says what it was intended to.” (Gennawey, 2021)

“Walt wanted all the details to be correct,” that is the main reason why Disney Parks has provided escape to the ultimate level. They contain the element of an invisible border shut off the outside world incorporating two essential elements to enliven the spirits of individuals: brand messaging and purposeful goals. Utilizing familiar figures and meanings to assist people in feeling both renewed and assisting others which is something you cannot find very often in other theme parks. For example, you will not see the castle from the entrance but wait until you step inside, passing through the entrance, walking on the Main Street, the castle will be at the end of the walkway. No matter what reality holds that keeps hitting us with tribulations, be it based on personal loss, economic situation, natural disaster, or any other factor, we must always find time to take a deep breath and find a safe, healthy avenue for escaping those hassles. Luckily for us, in all forms of our culture, the magic of Disney Parks is forever present. (Nachman,2013) I could conclude this key theme with one sentence that Disney Parks is a therapy from reality.

Khun Moo said that a first Disney Park trip will be all about having fun, collecting all the rides and shows under the pressure of time and making content for their social media but after that it will turn into a passion and mission. Rather than following the mainstream, going on the rides and queuing for a photograph with your favorite princess. Thai tourists normally go for collecting and sharing moments, walking at a slower pace, looking for a hidden mickey spot and taking time to enjoy the people and moment around in their second or third-time visiting Disney Parks. This means the majority of Thai tourists did not go to one Disney Parks only once but multiple times to collect all the Park's detail, interest in each land's concept, history and background. It is a place where people could never get bored easily as there will be something new happening in Disney Parks every time they visit once again. This means that Disney is quite successful in terms of gaining customer satisfaction and leads to limitless repurchase intention.

Khun Bank said that Disney Park is the only company that gives a total immersive experience by giving the money and time worthiness, feeling like entering into another world that is ageless, timeless, no responsibility required, no worry and lets you forget the real-life stress for a while. Not just yourself but Seeing others living the magical moment that makes your heart feel better from the reality. Seeing little children

enjoying a conversation with their beloved Disney's princess or a family enjoying their time together on the rides. The cast members giving out Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary buttons to celebrate a special day at Disney Parks were priceless. He said that everyone who visits Disney Parks will walk out with memories. Even though you might feel so tired to be in Disney Parks all day and sometimes he feels that he needs a holiday after a holiday at Disney Parks. But every moment at Disney Parks makes every attempt worth the tiredness. Both of the interviewees also describe Disney Parks with the same word such as positivity, memory, wonderment and magical moments.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The company concept might symbolize all things nostalgic, but it also needs some technological magics plus creativity and a little bit of pixie dust to maintain flawless park experiences and elevate life in the park. For instance, Magical Wristband, a digital wristband that facilitates guests with all advance reservations, provides clients with all information about services, collects photos taken in the parks and even acts as payment tool and key to Disney's hotel doors. The innovative device not only fulfills personal guests' needs but also makes sure everything runs smoothly from entrance through exit, thus creating remarkable memories for each individual guest. Moreover, Disney Parks constantly has plan for the new construction projects going featuring for new zones, shows and rides using interesting technological advancements to make magic happen in the park. Some examples are the Hybrid A1000 Animatronics which bring guest's favorite characters to life, robots can talk, move, and walk as if they are real, the Stuntronic technology which makes animatronics fly through the air while performing and the Interactive shadows innovation which capture guest's shadow to be projected on the wall in real-time. This makes Thai tourists willing to make a repurchase and revisit Disney Parks again and again.

The interesting point that I have learnt from digging deeper into the consumer behavior is that even during the pandemic outbreak is the pricing inelasticity of Disney Parks's tickets, even the price is getting higher every year or Disney Parks cut out the old system of free Fast pass and changed it into Genie Plus right after the covid pandemic is getting better. Genie Plus is a paid service that lets the guest use a Lightning Lane entrance to bypass the standby line on selected attractions and must-see shows, which allow guests to pay to skip the line on up to two high-demand attractions. Majority of Thai tourists are willing to pay for the extra charge to enjoy Disney experiences as much as possible. From the research, the significant demand consequently causes the demand curve to shift upward which results in higher admission

fees, from the original price of USD\$3.50 to USD\$109 in the present day. As stated by AllEars, the number represents a 392 percent change (Lavingia, 2016). Not only the attractions and entertainments that persistently capture guests' interest to visit, but also the curious storytelling, fascinating rides, spectacular shows and parades that unceasingly generate customer demand. Beside guests around the world that marked Disney Parks as their top list of destinations they have to visit, cast members are also the main function that keeps the park alive and become a very loyal customer. Their main approach is to serve guests at all age ranges, different nationalities and is also disabled-friendly, the company ensures seamless delivery to all types of guests (Frog, 2019). As a result, guests are willing to pay for park visits regardless of the yearly increase in ticket prices and create budget constraints to ensure they have enough to spend on products and services that bring them pleasure and satisfaction during their visit. The company also implemented a loyalty program like seasonal pass for Disney lovers to be able to visit the park multiple times a year (Levy, 2016). This confirms the inelastic pricing spending at Disney Parks where the price goes up every year but Disney's consumers' buying habits stay the same, and when the price goes down, consumers' buying habits also remain unchanged (Investopeida, 2020).

Great brands and great businesses need to be great storytellers with authentic stories, because to build lifelong relations with people and build on people's trust link stories with unique character, music and background related to emotional bonds in real life. This is the reason why Disney could maintain and meet the higher expectations of customer service and customer experience.

In conclusion, Disney Parks provides limitless nostalgia and magical moments that are unsubstitutable experiences, leading to more demand from new customers and visit after visit of returning guests which secure a long run profit for their favorite second home. In return, the company and cast members also ensure to continue supplying magical moments that exceed above and beyond the individual's expectation. Disney has proven that an ideal client isn't price sensitive; they'll happily pay for experience and service (Fogelman, n.d.).

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Six Disneyland/DisneyWorld in the world

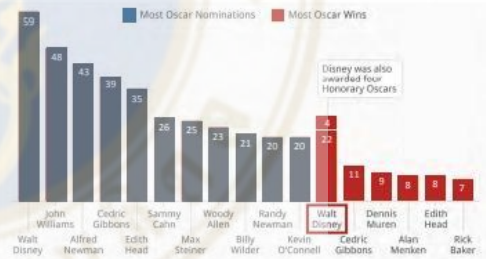


California	Orlando	Tokyo	Paris	Hong Kong	Shanghai
1955/7/17	1971/10/1	1983/4/15	1992/4/12	2005/9/12	2016/6/16
509 acre	30,216 acre	496acre	4,821 acre	311 acre	1,729 acre
2 Theme parks	6 Theme parks	2 Theme parks	2 Theme parks	1 Theme park	1 Theme park
3 Hotels	24 Hotels	4 Hotels	7 Hotels	3 Hotels	2 Hotels
1 Shopping Mall	1 Shopping Mall	1 Shopping Mall	1 Shopping Mall	/	1 Shopping Mall

Europe's Most Visited Theme Parks
Number of visitors in 2016



Nobody Comes Close to Walt Disney For Oscar Wins
Nominations and wins by individuals at the Academy Awards



Data from <https://www.statista.com/chart/10228/europes-most-visited-theme-park/>

Data from <https://www.statista.com/chart/1349/nominations-and-wins-at-the-academy-awards/>

TOP 10 THEME PARK GROUPS WORLDWIDE

RANK	GROUP	% CHANGE	ATTENDANCE 2015	ATTENDANCE 2014
1	WALT DISNEY ATTRACTIONS	2.7%	137,902,000	134,330,000
2	MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS GROUP	0.2%	62,900,000	62,800,000
3	UNIVERSAL PARKS AND RESORTS	11.8%	44,884,000	40,162,000
4	DCT PARKS CHINA	7.8%	30,180,000	27,990,000
5	SIX FLAGS INC.	11.4%	28,557,000	25,638,000
6	CEDAR FAIR ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY	4.9%	24,448,000	23,305,000
7	CHIMELONG GROUP	26.4%	23,587,000	18,659,000
8	FANTAWILD (NEW)	77.4%	23,093,000	13,020,000
9	SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT	0.3%	22,471,000	22,399,000
10	SONGCHENG WORLDWIDE	53.4%	22,338,000	14,560,000
TOP 10 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2015			420,360,000	387,853,000
TOP 10 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2014			392,039,000	

TOP 25 AMUSEMENT/ THEME PARKS WORLDWIDE

RANK	PARK Location	% CHANGE	ATTENDANCE 2015	ATTENDANCE 2014	RANK	PARK Location	% CHANGE	ATTENDANCE 2015	ATTENDANCE 2014
1	MAGIC KINGDOM at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, U.S.	6.0%	20,482,000	19,322,000	14	EVERLAND Incheon, South Korea	0.6%	7,429,000	7,381,000
2	DISNEYLAND Anaheim, CA, U.S.	9.0%	18,278,000	16,769,000	15	OCEAN PARK Hong Kong SAR	-5.5%	7,387,000	7,792,000
3	TOKYO DISNEYLAND Tokyo, Japan	-4.8%	16,600,000	17,300,000	16	LOTTE WORLD Seoul, South Korea	-9.9%	7,210,000	7,606,000
4	UNIVERSAL STUDIOS JAPAN Osaka, Japan	17.8%	13,800,000	11,800,000	17	HANGZHOU SONGCHENG PARK Hangzhou, China	25.5%	7,285,000	5,800,000
5	TOKYO DISNEY SEA Tokyo, Japan	-3.5%	13,600,000	14,100,000	18	UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD Universal City CA, U.S.	4.0%	7,097,000	6,924,000
6	EPCOT at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, U.S.	3.0%	11,788,000	11,454,000	19	HONG KONG DISNEYLAND Hong Kong SAR	8.3%	6,800,000	7,500,000
7	DISNEY'S ANIMAL KINGDOM at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, U.S.	5.0%	11,922,000	11,402,000	20	MISASHIMA SPA LAND Kawasaki, Japan	4.3%	5,970,000	5,930,000
8	DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, U.S.	5.0%	11,878,000	11,312,000	21	EUROPA PARK Rust, Germany	10.0%	5,500,000	5,000,000
9	DISNEYLAND PARK AT DISNEYLAND PARIS Marne-la-Vallée, France	4.2%	10,380,000	9,940,000	22	SEAWORLD FL Orlando, FL, U.S.	2.0%	4,777,000	4,683,000
10	UNIVERSAL STUDIOS at Universal Orlando, FL, U.S.	16.0%	9,585,000	8,253,000	23	TIVOLI GARDENS Copenhagen, Denmark	5.7%	4,733,000	4,478,000
11	DISNEY'S CA ADVENTURE Anaheim, CA, U.S.	7.0%	9,383,000	8,780,000	24	DE EFTELING Assendelfen, The Netherlands	6.4%	4,680,000	4,400,000
12	ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE at Universal Orlando, FL, U.S.	8.0%	8,792,000	8,140,000	25	SONGCHENG LUJANG ROMANCE PARK Lijiang, China	170.4%	4,678,000	1,700,000
13	CHIMELONG OCEAN KINGDOM Ningbo, China	36.8%	7,488,000	5,504,000	TOP 25 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2015			256,586,000	228,000,000
TOP 25 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2014			222,450,000		TOP 25 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2014			222,450,000	