

PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES AND CONSUMERS' RE-PURCHASE DECISION ON FROZEN READY TO EAT MEALS: A STUDY ON CONSUMERS IN SELECTED HYPERMARKETS IN BANGKOK

Richard Dean Lovell

College of Internet Distance Education, Assumption University

Abstract

The main purpose of this research was to examine selected product attributes and demographic variables that affected consumer re-purchase decision on frozen ready to eat meals. The data was received for four hundred respondents from five locations around Bangkok Metropolis. From the findings, all independent variables which dealt with product attributes had a direct relationship with re-purchase decision on which 'taste' was the strongest independent variable from the set. Next in order were, convenience, packaging, price, brand and preparation time. Moreover, there were relationships between re-purchase decision and demographics.

INTRODUCTION

Frozen Prepared meals were originally designed to be consumed by people too busy, unwilling or even unable to prepare their own food. Over the past 50 years worldwide and the last 20 years in respect of Thailand, peoples' way of life has changed dramatically, especially in regards to purchase behavior of products such as frozen food. From only 20 years ago to now, Frozen and Chilled RTE meals have taken off and grown in current value terms by 17% (2.6 Billion Thai Baht in 2008) (Euromonitor, Thailand, 2008). Thai consumers lead the world as the most frequent buyers of ready-to-eat (RTE) meals, with 75 percent claiming they have no time to prepare proper meals from scratch (A Global AC Nielsen Report. December 2006). The total market sector is expected to continue to grow in most countries due to increasing demand for convenience with more working couples and consumers spending less time on food preparation. Future growth is expected to be steady, rather than dramatic, as most consumer demand in the major markets is already being satisfied. (<http://th.nielsen.com/news/frozenfood>, Retrieved September 21, 2010).

However, in the drive for greater convenience, the ambient meal concept continues to open up opportunities for improvements in ingredients and quality, especially in markets where refrigerated storage

is at a premium. According to the A.C. Nielsen survey, three quarters of Thai consumers, agree that RTE meals come in handy when there is no time to prepare a meal from scratch, and they are in good company with 87% of consumers around the world agreeing that convenience is the biggest purchase driver. Beyond convenience, 40% of Thai consumers cited it was cheaper than buying all the ingredients and preparing from scratch as their second reason for purchasing ready to eat meals. Frozen RTE Meals are certain to remain a lifestyle choice of people in Bangkok and will very much grow and expand into other provinces as soon as lifestyles start to change there as well.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the relationship between frozen RTE product attributes and consumer Re-Purchase Decision on frozen RTE meals.
2. To study the differences in consumer demographic factors and consumer Re-Purchase Decision on frozen RTE meals.