



# A Strategic Marketing Plan for "Ing-Nature" Toiletries & Spa Products

by

Ms. Ratchanee Panichayanont

A Final Report of the Three-Credit Course  
CE 6998 Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science  
in Computer and Engineering Management  
Assumption University

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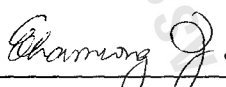
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The Graduate School of Assumption University has approved this final report of the three-credit course, CE 6998 PROJECT, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Computer and Engineering Management.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Project**

In the midst of the economic problem in Thailand, the country has a debt of foreign currency about 92 thousand million US \$ or 38,640,000 bahts. This debt is owed by the government, commercial banks and huge businesses. Therefore, debt organizations have to restructure for survival. For example, minimize the size of organization to reduce the number of employees and undergoing privatization, because they were unable to burden the cost of production and the series of loss. Government organizations had to reduce a lot of civil servants and limited employing new employees. Students, who graduate during the bubble economy results in a total of 3 million each year, resulting in joblessness. Other than this, commercial banks refuse to provide private sector because banks are afraid of NPL debt, which further devastates the problems.

SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) are small and medium size businesses, comprising of businesses with various skills that include producing goods and servicing sector. The production process is flexible and corresponds to the livelihood of the communities and to the demand of the world market. They utilize local materials and do not depend on factory or huge business with minimum cost of spending or spending not over the limit of fund that finance institution can accept. They also use local labor that is located near the manufacture. Therefore SMEs businesses were able to survive in the turmoil of economic crisis beside the experience of manufacturing and using local resources. It is the important key to the success for small manufacturing which initially starts with a low cost, with less debt, with manufacturing skill, using local material and resource. They have flexibility to adapt and are able to adjust the process in production

corresponding to the customer's order and the important thing is to have it's own market too.

From the past situation in Thailand, production of small and medium size business can produce goods for local consumption and can export the big quantity to other countries without brand name. This income is equal to foreigners who employ local labor or just receive orders and then the brand owner will label their brand later. When the cost of production and labor cost in Thailand are higher, manufacturers move the base of manufacturing to other countries, where there is lower cost. The result affects the manufacturing sector heavily. When the market is in the turmoil, the brand owner is able to sell his or her own brand. Because consumers not only require the physical product, but also the mental value, which the brand value can bring to the consumer's mind. So, it is important to have the brand name, which the marketer cannot overlook. Hence, building a brand name is the strategy to operate and is related to the fundamental of every department of the organization. To build a brand is not only limited to the marketing department, but the brand also always provide the product value, which is defined by the customer. It has to create a continuous relationship, with both user and buyer, with can always change. But this is the duty of the company to maintain it, and continuously adjust for effectiveness and efficiency.

Randall (1997) has defined the duty of the product brand that it has to show a clear identity. Therefore, name, legal, protection, and the component of the design would be important things. Brand must have a shorthand summary. Brand identity should show all information of the brand, which can stimulate the mind of the customer. In addition, the brand must provide security of customer's expected value. Brand must add value to the product and offer more than ordinary goods.

The role of the brand has different levels of importance according to the situation. However, brand must have all four factors. For example, in the situation of high risk buying, the security factor has the most important role in buying decision-making. Or in case the difference of the products is minimal, the most important factor is added value.

When we talk about toiletries & spa market in Thailand, which is one kind of SMEs business, it has been driven by widening and more complex array of influences. The main reason comes from consumers who are leading increasingly diverse and demanding lifestyles, because technology, economy, social, and environment have changed and consumers are more open to receive foreign culture. Moreover, today's consumers are progressively looking forward to internal as well as external well-being, hence the growth of the natural and therapeutic trend. Aromatherapy has been a key area of growth.

## **1.2 Background of the Company**

Ing-Nature was established in July 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand. The company's business is to market toiletries & spa products under the brand "Ing-Nature". The name "Ing- Nature" has an oriental sound to the touch of nature and generates an image of flourishing, freshening and relaxing.

Ing-Nature stands for Rita, Lar, Nui, Muay, Tuk (London) and Tuk (Mally), close friends and co-founders of the company. The six ladies first met at Saint Joseph Convent School as students. When challenged with the task of creating a new business, amidst a whirlpool of ideas, the six agreed upon an entrepreneurial venture because they strongly believe that the business about beauty and women has much potential to succeed so they establish a line of toiletries & spa products as "Ing-Nature" brand.

Ing-Nature is a small business which focuses on bath, skincare, aromatherapy and spa products. The products emphasize on attractive packaging and effective use of

graphic design and material that would make the products more appealing to customers. Moreover, the raw materials come from nature, because it has been observed that the rising trend nowadays is toward “life & nature”, when people increasingly consume organic foods and nurture themselves via natural methods such as vegetarian food and yoga.

Ing-Nature entered the market in October 2003, which is the introduction stage. It's brand positioning is toiletries & spa products in the middle level. The emphasis is on the strategy in differentiating from other brands in the market, which the consumers can perceive from the attractive packaging, design, color and high quality which correspond to teenagers and first jobbers who are the main target. However, Ing-Nature has just entered the market and the brand is not well known yet. The main reason is that there are many competitors such as The Body Shop (which is the brand leader and an international brand), Oriental Princess, Beauty café, Thann and Harnn, LifeFord Vivian and Boots, which have been in the market for a long time before us. So, we need to build a brand differentiating from others in the market by adding value to the brand which influences the consumer in making a decision in buying our brand.

Ing-Nature will start to plan the strategic marketing for building the brand. In effective marketing planning, we cannot use only tool in communicating the brand but we will use the tool in Integrated Marketing Communications concept (IMC) for building the brand “Ing-Nature” and planning the strategic marketing.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Project**

Based on the project, the IMC plan was formed. A marketing objective was to increase the current sales by 10% within the year. The three marketing communication objectives are:

- (1) To increase brand awareness
- (2) To generate positive brand image
- (3) To encourage brand usage among the target

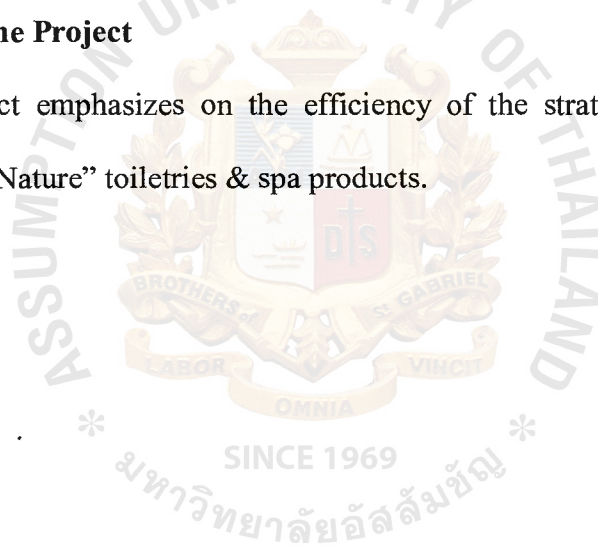
The marketing communication tools used consistently were advertising, sponsorship, sales promotion, event marketing and public relations under the proposed budget of 200,000 bahts.

#### **1.4 Problem Source**

How should the brand “Ing-Nature” have the strategic marketing planning in building the brand to correspond and satisfy the target customers?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Project**

This project emphasizes on the efficiency of the strategic marketing planning project for “Ing-Nature” toiletries & spa products.





## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic marketing planning project for “Ing-Nature” toiletries & spa products is in the introduction stage and is concerned with the following concepts and theories:

- (1) Branding
- (2) Consumer’s Perception and Attitude
- (3) Consumer’s Involvement and Buying Behavior
- (4) Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communications

### 2.1 Branding

To be the one in hundreds of products in the customer’s mind, it is necessary that the brand owner has to differentiate the product by building the brand. Branding is a major issue in product strategy. It is the most important factor that can stimulate the customer to make a decision to buy the product because of familiarity or loyalty. It seems like brand is the link between value and trustworthiness of the consumer and brand owner, which can bring to the feeling of like or dislike of the brand and results in different response in consuming.

To succeed in building a brand it is necessary to use a combination of tactics and strategies because products in the market are not quite different. A brand can make the product different from others. Nowadays, consumer behavior is changing, because the economy and the power of buying is better including the fact that consumers are smarter and more concerned with quality so that they decrease their loyalty in brand. So brand is very important to make the consumer more confident and marketer should emphasize on added value by not only differentiating the physical product but also adding value to the brand.

The study of the importance of brand is necessary to understand the difference between product and brand. Keller (1998) defined the meaning of the product as the thing that is produced from the factory with the same physical feature and ready for distribution to the market. It must be tangible and touchable, while brand is the value that is tangible and intangible from consuming and experiencing the product. These include all assets of identity of the brand owner. For example; brand name, design, advertising the product or service, distribution channel, reputation, etc. (Gilmore, 1999)

D. Aaker (1991) defined the meaning of brand as the combination of name or symbol such as logo, trademark and packaging, which have the objective in differentiating or identifying the brand owner of product or service and make the product different from the competitors. This meaning is related to American Marketing Association's definition of brand that is the condition, name, term, feature, symbol, signs or design, which can differentiate the product from the competitors or the combination of the above factors for identifying what is the goods or service of the seller, and how it is different from the competitor's product. (Kotler, 2000)

Brand is all elements that goods or service have such as personality, shared experience, reliability, confidence, status and relationship, by which brand can increase the satisfaction of the consumer both physical and mental. (Kasem, 2003)

From the above definition, we can conclude that brand is the asset that can identify the uniqueness of the brand owner. It needs to spend time to build and develop the brand in the customer's mind that can be meaningful for tangible and intangible value, which can differentiate itself among competitor products in the market.

It seems to be that product can satisfy the need of consumer only in term of its benefit, but brand can satisfy both benefit and emotional, which is the most important thing that can motivate the customer to buy the product. Brand can balance the

satisfaction both rational and emotional. Therefore, the marketer should pay attention to building the brand into the customer's mind. To be successful in branding, it must have many factors, which act as tools in communicating with the customer's mind. For example, product name, logo, slogan, jingle, etc. All of these are key factors to create brand identity, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

### 2.1.1 Brand Elements

Brand elements are very important for building a brand because they are tools to create the identity and make the product different. The important elements are Brand Name, Logos and Symbols, Characters, Slogans, Jingles and Packaging.

The decision of choosing the element depends on the type of the product and marketing plan, which aims to build the product identity as much as possible. These elements can be representative of the product identity that can differentiate to the brand. To measure the effectiveness of the brand is to see whether the consumer can recognize the brand or not, when they only see some elements of the brands such as brand name, logo, symbol, packaging or just listen to the jingle. (Keller, 1998)

#### The Main Elements of Brand

##### *Brand Name*

Brand Name is one of the brand elements that can be read such as Sony, Avon, Toyota, Mama, etc. Brand name is the most important element because it can make the customer understand the communication in a short time, while advertising requires more time to make the customer understand it. Brand name is the element, which the marketer hopes the customer to recognize and get into the customer's mind quickly. So the marketer should not constantly change the brand name, when brand name already gets into the customer's mind.

### *Logos and Symbols*

Although the brand name is an important element in building brand, the element that consumer can see or visualize is also important too, especially in building brand awareness. Logos and symbols can indicate the source, the ownership and the name of the product too. The company with a logo has more brand awareness than others because logos and symbols are visualized. So it is easier to recognize and identify the product. Logos and symbols can be simply changed or adjusted to make it compatible with particular period. When compared with the brand name, which should not be changed but the logos and symbols can be changed because they are only pictures or symbols. (Keller, 1998)

### *Characters*

Character is one of the brand elements that can determine the style of brand in the form of human being or any living thing. Brand character can be different such as the picture of animals like Tony tiger on Kellogg's breakfast cereal, which represents strength or the Cowboy on Marlboro cigarette, which represents the gentlemen. (Keller, 1998)

Brand characters can create brand value because of using beautiful, outstanding color and are full of imagination. It makes the consumers more interested, which leads to brand awareness. However, creating brand characters can also confuse because the consumer may pay attention only to the cartoon character and not on the information or brand in the advertising. In some cases, the consumer may confuse our brand with the competitors' brand like the Bunny Rabbit of Energizer and Duracell.

### *Slogan*

Slogan is a short message that represents the uniqueness of the product to the consumer. Slogan may be on the advertising or other media and also on the packaging.



Slogan is another element to build brand, the same as brand name, which is short so that the customer can understand it quickly. Other than this, slogan is the reinforcer to the brand positioning to be easier to understand. Pepsi's slogan "Taste for new generation" can be immediately understood that Pepsi is the beverage for the new generation, which is fashionable and modernized. In brief, the important role of the slogan is to create the unity of advertisings of the brand, and helps the consumer to recognize the brand too. The customer cannot remember all messages in the advertising but they can remember at least the slogan of that brand.

### *Jingles*

Jingle is the detail of the advertising, which is written as a song. Jingle is a special song, which is composed for that product only. Jingle can make the consumer recognize the brand easily. The texts of the song usually tell the feature, character, and benefit or the use of the product such as Coffee-mate. Listening to the jingle many times can make the customer recognize the product easily because it is the tool which can communicate to the customer in an entertaining and friendly way.

### *Packaging*

Packaging is aimed to identify the brand to let the consumer know the brand of each product. It can also show the description in communication and persuasive information and facilitate product transportation and protection. For example, boxes of milk are not only packaging but also prevent the milk inside too. Nevertheless, it can show the details to aid product consumption that bringst the news and information of the product to consumer such as ingredients, raw materials, direction of use, etc.

Using attractive and beautiful packaging can attract the customer, create relationship with the product and add value to the product too. For example, when asking the customers about Heineken Beer, the first thing that they can think of is the

green bottle. Moreover packaging can create brand recognition and the information on the packaging can create brand association too. For example, the color can show image of the product such as black color can represent luxury and high class. (Keller, 1998)

As mentioned above, each element of brand can differentiate the product. They have their own pros and cons; therefore, marketers need to mix and match brand elements to have better effectiveness in building brand equity.

### 2.1.2 Brand Positioning

Brand positioning is very important to bring the brand into the customer's mind, so that it can be the choice for them. Since the customer would buy only famous brands, brand positioning can add opportunity and distinctive position in the mind of the target market.

D. Aaker (1996) defined brand positioning as positioning the product in the market to differentiate itself from the competitors. In automobile market, many brands are in different positions such as Mercedes Benz positions itself as luxury, high price car, while Volvo positions itself as safety car.

Beside this, brand positioning is part of brand identity, which can clearly communicate to the target consumer and can identify the outstanding benefit of brand among the competitors in the market. In term of art and science, identification of the product in one or many parts of the market has different meaning towards consumers compared to competitors. (Belch & Belch, 1990) This relates to Kotler (2000) who defined brand positioning as the activity of designing the product and image of the company to be different in position that is meaningful to the target customer. The offer that is different from competitors, must have substantial value, for which the brand owner needs to use the following criteria.

- (1) Important: the different offers have to reach the expected benefits of the consumers.
- (2) Distinctive: the different offers need to have a special feature that other products never claim before.
- (3) Superior: it must be a superior offer than the competitors.
- (4) Preemptive: the offer should not be easy to copy or imitate.
- (5) Affordable: the consumer is able to afford the different product.
- (6) Profitable: the offer can create profit to the company.

The brand owner should realize the importance of brand positioning. A clear brand positioning will show the good points and reasons that customers need to buy the product. Most companies have single major benefit positioning for consumer to recognize easily, such as best quality, best performance, most reliable, most durable, safest, best value for the money, least expensive, most prestigious, best designed, easiest to use, most convenient, etc. (Kotler, 1999)

The example of brand positioning in automobile market such as Mercedes Benze has the brand positioning as most prestigious. Volvo has the brand positioning as best driving performance. Hyundai has the brand positioning as least expensive and Volvo has the brand positioning as safest. Volvo has the brand positioning as safest in the market, but there are some consumers who do not pay attention to safest as the first choice. So Volvo has added another brand positioning as most durable car for responding to consumers who are concerned with durability. Now Volvo starts to have the brand positioning as most durable in Mexico. (Kotler, 1999)

From this, we can consider identifying an appropriate brand positioning for each product. To identify the brand positioning, brand owners want to position their brand in

the consumers' mind. Kotler (1999) has defined the concept in brand positioning as follows;

#### *Attribute Positioning*

Producers can position their brands from the outstanding feature of their products. For example, beer manufacture may claim they are the oldest beer brand. A hotel claims that they have the highest tower in town. However, attribute positioning is not the best choice because it does not show other product benefits.

#### *Benefit Positioning*

Some producers position the brand by using the benefit of the product. For example, Volvo claims that Volvo car is the safest car. Tide detergent claims that Tide is the cleanest wash.

#### *Use/Application Positioning*

How and when to use the product can be applied to be the brand positioning tactic. It is to position the product from the use or application of that product. For instance, candy manufacture positions itself as after meal candy. Nike position its shoes as the best running shoes while Nike has many different types of shoes such as basketball shoes, aerobic shoes, etc. Use/application positioning is usually used in case that the company wants to create new market opportunity. (Batra, Myers & D. Aaker, 1996)

#### *Competitor Positioning*

A producer positions itself by comparing with the competitors. Most of the companies use superiority or differences of the product to compare with others. For example, Avis rental car claims that they try harder than other competitors. Seven up claims that it is uncola soft drink.



### *User Positioning*

Products may use the strategy in positioning the user of the products. They may define their target customer of the product. For example, Apple computer may position itself as the computer that is suitable for graphic designers. Energy drink positions itself as athletic beverage. (Batra, Myers & Aaker, 1996)

### *Category positioning*

Producers claim that their product is the leader or representative among the same product type. For example, Kodak means film, Xerox means copying machine.

### *Quality Positioning*

This is positioning the product by using the level of product quality, such as Louis Vuitton positions itself as high price and high quality bag. The product is higher in price than the competitors because of the high cost of production and raw material. Moreover, Louis Vuitton wants to communicate that it is high quality product. In the opposite way, some products are lower price but they try to communicate that they are high quality product and does not differ from high price product. However, this kind of communication is quite difficult for customers to understand because they perceive that high price is high quality, and vice versa. (Batra, Myers & Aaker, 1996)

From the above, brand positioning methods can help the marketers plan how to position and match the product with the target consumer efficiently.

Eventhough one product should have one position, but to be a single benefit positioning is not the best position. In some cases, positioning the product by double benefit positioning can be efficient. But this method involves risk of trustworthiness and specific product positioning and may lead to confusion.

There are many kinds of confusion as follows;

### *Underpositioning*

The target may not be clear about the product or have little knowledge about the product. They may perceive that this product is just another brand in the market but they do not feel the difference or importance of the feature of the product.

### *Overpositioning*

The perception of the target is too narrow; for example, the customer may feel that diamond rings at Tiffany at \$5,000, which is too expensive, and they cannot afford it. But actually, Tiffany now offers diamond rings starting at \$1,000, which the customer can afford.

### *Confused Positioning*

The target is confused with the image of the brand because the brand of the product may be positioned by showing too many product features or brand positioning may changed too frequently.

### *Doubtful Positioning*

The target may not believe the position of the brand when comparing the product's features, price or manufacturer. (Kolter, 2000)

When the marketer can position their brand it means that they can build the difference between their products and competitors by which they can know where the position of their product is in the market and what type of their product is. And the next important thing to make the product differentiate is brand personality, which is the relationship between consumer and brand.

Since the brand has a personality the same as human beings, who are different from each other. This personality will effect the buying decision of the consumer because they usually buy the product allied to their personality. If the brand has a clear

personality, it will make the difference which will continue to add value to the products.

### 2.1.3 Brand Personality

The relationship between consumer and brand in terms of identification of brand personality is to be in line with consumers' personality. The reason is that consumers need not only physical benefits but also value and meaning, which is hidden in the brand. Brand personality can correspond to the consumers' personality. Therefore, brand personality is one element to create the difference of the brand in the customers' mind. Brand personality will happen after brand positioning. Upshaw (1995) said that creating an effective brand personality needs to combine with appropriate brand positioning, so that it will catch the attention of the consumers' mind.

Assael (1998) defined the meaning of personality as the unique identification of each person that makes one person different from others. Personality comes from traits. And the assumption of trait theory said that every person has shared their personality but each person shows different levels of personality so that each person has their unique personality.

Brand personality means creating brand personality that is unique and different from the competitors obviously. D. Aaker (1996) said that brand personality is to define personality of the brand by using human personality such as age, gender, social status, and personality, which can relate relationship with the product. Additionally, Keller (1998) defined that brand personality is the group of human personality that is combined in the brand and it will appear in the customers' mind. For example, Virginia Slim cigarette has a sweet lady personality when compared with Marlboro cigarette, which has a strong gentlemen personality. So, brand personality tends to satisfy the

customer in terms of symbolic consumption or the need that consumer wants to show the uniqueness of the consumer than the product benefits and quality. (Keller, 1998)

#### The Importance of Brand Personality

D. Aaker (1996) explained the importance of brand personality that is part of the brand structure. It can make the customer understand and have a good attitude toward the brand, because of clear brand personality in advertising. Creating brand personality is one tactic to make it differ from the competitors and communicate more efficiently, while advertising is communicating with a large number of consumers, which is difficult to make them understand in the same way. Hence, clear identification of brand personality in advertising can create uniqueness of the product. Brand personality is important for building brand equity and is the factor to influence the brand value into consumers' mind. (D. Aaker, 1996)

To create brand awareness, it is necessary to study the difference in psychological theory such as self-concept theory that helps to communicate more efficiently. To classify the group of customer which is based on concept of ourselves in each group, will interact with the customer more efficiently. (Mehta, 1999) Thus, the more marketers can create brand personality like the human being, the more customers prefer the product. (Maholita, 1988) This concept of oneself can explain the personality of each person in buying behavior as follows;

- (1) A person has a tendency to buy the product that has a personality related to actual self-image to feel comfortable.
- (2) A person has a tendency to buy the product that has a personality related to ideal self-image to feel good.
- (3) A person has a tendency to buy the product that has a personality related to social self-image.



(4) A person has a tendency to buy the product that has a personality related to ideal social self-image.

Most of the consumers try to keep their good self-image and try to find ways to support or add their self-image. Consumers always buy the product that can support and is related to their personality and refuse the products that are not suitable for them (Mehta, 1999). Therefore, to communicate with these kinds of consumer expect to show good product image, and can make them realize that the product can satisfy their need and support their personality. (Drake, Spoone, & Greenwald, 1992)

However, to create brand personality is not only finding the definition or word that can explain the product feature but also realize the suitability of the product, feature, price and the target customer. Brand personality relies on its rule which D. Aaker (1996) explained that brand personality can use meaningful words that demonstrate human personality at the same time as brand personality too. There are 3 types of brand personality; 1) Demographic such as age, gender, social status, nationality; 2) Lifestyle such as activities, interest, opinion; 3) Human personality traits such as aggressive, open-minded, reliable, etc.

Eventhough human personality and brand personality may have the same concept, they have different build up patterns. Human personality is based on each person's behavior including psychological, attitude, trust, and demographic, while brand personality is built from direct and indirect communication of consumer and brand, (J. Aaker, 1997) It is not always necessary that the customer will be satisfied with the brand that can reflect their own personality.

J. Aaker (1997) assumed that brand personality may consist of different units of trait the same as human personality. Therefore, J.Aaker developed a brand personality scale (BPS) to group personality based on consumption that brand personality in

customer perception is related to human personality, which is the concept for marketer to create brand personality that goes together with customer satisfaction. Brand personality based on customer perception can be classified into 5 types; Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness. Each type consists of outstanding personality traits that combine 15 characters, which make brand personality obvious.

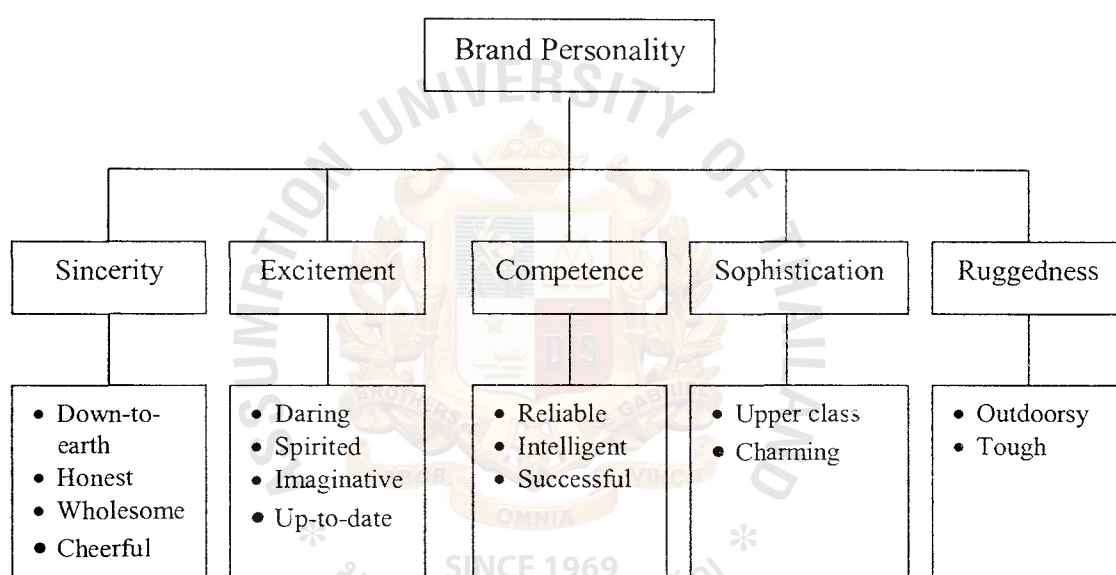


Figure 2.1. Brand Personality Framework. (J. Aaker, 1997).

J. Aaker (1997) said that customers are satisfied with a brand personality that matches with their actual self-image and will be reflected as sincerity, excitement and competence, which are parts of original human personality. For the customer who has satisfaction not related to their actual self-image, which is the personality that a person wants but not necessary to have will be reflected in terms of sophistication and ruggedness.

Sincerity is suitable for familiar products and daily products such as tea, coffee, soap, shampoo, etc. Excitement is suitable for products like sport equipment, car, cosmetic, fashion product, etc. Competence is suitable for products that show trust, leadership, achievement, etc such as credit card, mobile phone, etc. Sophistication is suitable for premium products that show social status such as car, expensive ornament, etc. Ruggedness is suitable for products that show strength, freedom, etc such as motorcycle, jeans, cigarette, etc. (J. Aaker, 1997)

Creating brand personality is based on identification of personality, which goes together with the consumer's personality and the characteristic that customer wants to be along with the brand personality. Moreover, it is necessary to realize product-related characteristic such as the type of product, product qualification, packaging, price, etc. These characteristics can indicate brand personality to the consumer (Keller, 1998) such as expensive ornaments. They always set high price and luxury packaging to indicate luxury personality and status of the consumer.

Beside this, non-product-related characteristics are also being realized because they may affect consumer-buying process. For example, company image, advertising, celebrity presenter, product price etc. These factors can all create personality to the brand such as by using Britney Spear, American super star, as the presenter of Pepsi. This can identify the personality of Pepsi as having the characteristic of being beautiful, smart, and full of capability and to be the representative of the new generation. Therefore, to create power of the brand by efficiently using brand personality that goes together with the consumer personality can help the brand to be outstanding and different from the competitors. Product qualification can be copied or imitated easily but the personality that is related to the brand has the uniqueness that cannot be imitated and will be in the customer's mind permanently. To have obvious brand personality will

be beneficial for communication strategies of marketer and advertising people beginning from product, price, place, to promotion (4P's) that can make unity of the communication.

To create brand personality, we must also think of culture differences, which may affect different perception, and attitude of the consumer to the brand personality. For instance, individualist cultures will not rely on others, or are free to rule themselves and give value to the uniqueness. These consumers tend to use the brand for showing that they are different from other members in their group. In the opposite way, in collectivist cultures where people stress values such as self-discipline in life and accept more on a uniform concept. (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) Consumers tend to use a brand to prove that they are one of the group. Therefore, to communicate the brand marketers must be concerned of different cultures to create the brand personality, which goes together with each culture in the most efficient way.

After studying and understanding brand personality, it is seen that indicating the brand personality which goes with consumer is an important strategy in creating a brand that can be in the consumers' mind. Moreover, brand equity is the consequence of communication to market consumer. Brand equity can convince the consumer to make a decision in buying. The important thing is the quality that consumer can perceive and relate to brand can increase satisfaction of the consumer and be impressed in using the product too.

#### 2.1.4 Brand Equity

For two decades, many technical experts and marketers have been interested in the concept of brand equity and have tried to define and measure brand equity through various methods and the result in creating a powerful brand. (D. Aaker & Biel, 1993) Many ideas and concepts depend on the purpose of the study. The consequence is that



different perceptions and attitudes are dispersed and confused. However, most of the marketers have similar perception that brand equity means the effect of the market that results from uniqueness of the brand and the value added to the product which comes from market investment for building the brand. (Keller, 1998)

### Meaning of Brand Equity

Many marketers have become steadily interested in the concept of brand equity and have started to concentrate studying seriously since 1988. This concept is to pay attention to brand in planning marketing strategy by creating relationship between brand and consumer, including paying attention to management and research that are concerned with brand. (Keller, 1998) This can show how businesses adjust themselves from paying attention to collecting sales shift to paying attention to build and keep the customer, and also change from short-term profit to long-term profit. Moreover, they change from paying attention only to selling to paying more attention to price and brand loyalty. (Feldwick, 1996)

Marketing Science Institute of America defined brand equity as a group of consumer's relationship and behavior for brand. Distribution channel and the company can make sales and profits which can make a strong and constant brand that can different from the competitors. (Keller, 1998)

Hamilton (2000) gives the meaning of brand equity as the perception of the brand or the belief about brand that is in the consumers' mind. And Knapp (2000) gives the meaning of brand equity as the overall perception of the consumer about brand through the relation between product qualities, monetary status, customer loyalty and company stakeholder that can affect the brand. At the same time, Assael (1998) gives the meaning of brand equity as the quality of the brand in the customer's mind, which is the added value above the actual qualification of the product or service.

We can conclude that brand equity means added value to the brand on the product. This value added can be perceived from firm's, trade's and consumer's perspective. (Farquhar, 1989)

#### *Firm's Perspective*

For firm's perspective, brand equity is a kind of company asset that can be value as cash in the budget and also include the asset that can be bought and sold. Brand equity is an incremental cash flow, which is the result from the product with brand. The factors that affect the increment are the increasing of market share, product price and reducing of promotional expenses. (Farquhar, 1989)

#### *Trade's Perspective*

For trade's perspective, brand equity is the superior power of the brand on other products in the market. A reputable brand can be managed and dealt more easily with the stores. And it can increase distribution channels, which can bring power over the middlemen. (Farquhar, 1989) Moreover, brand equity can create large store image and also increase constant sales and reduces the risk of place on the shelf space in stores. (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995)

#### *Consumer's Perspective*

Seree Wongmontha (1997) said that customer-based brand equity is the value that the customers think and feel about the brand when compared with other competitors during their buying decision-making. Brand equity will be a value to the customers when they can perceive in a positive different way. This value will happen when the consumer is familiar with the brand, keeping it in their mind and recognizing the brand.

Brand equity in the consumer's perspective is very important because firm's and trade's perspective will happen only when the consumers think this particular brand is a value for them. (Crimmins, 1992, cited Farquhar, 1989) This makes most of the studies

on brand equity emphasize on consumer's perspective. This also is an important reason why we need to study brand equity in the consumer's perspective including the change of feeling toward brand that can transform into buying behavior. (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu, 1995)

D. Aaker, (1991) has developed the Model of Brand Equity, which consists of 5 elements;

#### *Brand Loyalty*

Brand Loyalty is to measure the relationship of the consumer toward the brand. Consumer brand loyalty is an important element because it will reflect the probability that the consumer will change to other brands. Therefore, we can conclude that satisfaction of the consumer will influence other consumers to use the brand, which is the greatest success in building a brand.

#### *Brand Name Awareness*

In order to know the name of the brand is the recognition and retrieving capability of the consumer about brand and symbols. This is the factor in building brand equity for the customer to be familiar with the brand. The relationship between the company and the customer will lead to buying decision-making of that particular brand. The brand that is in the customer's mind will be the brand that the customer trusts in its quality and they usually buy this familiar brand more than other unfamiliar brands.

#### *Perceived Quality*

One brand is perceived in overall quality that it is superior than other brands by considering from the objective in using or the product qualification. This will influence buying decision-making and brand loyalty. The reason is that it can make the consumer feel differently. Perceiving quality and product positioning makes the consumer buy that product reasonably. This is also an important element so that businesses should try

to communicate the quality that is suitable for each customer that has different measurements.

### *Brand Association*

Brand Association means the relation that can link the brand with the memory of the consumer. This relation will create a positive attitude toward the brand. When the brand links with the consumer, it will generate value to the brand by helping consumer to easily retrieve the news and information about the brand from the consumer's mind, and also making brand differentiation. It can be the reason for the consumer decision-making too. We can see that brand association such as Colonel Sanders with KFC can help the consumer in the information process about the brand product.

### *Other Proprietary Brand Assets*

Proprietary Brand Assets are patent, trademark, copyright, the uniqueness and the relation with the distribution channel. These can increase confirmation to the customer in buying decision-making or when they are confused in the world of business with a variety of choices at present. This can make consumer feel warmer, reduce risk and build confidence in buying the product.

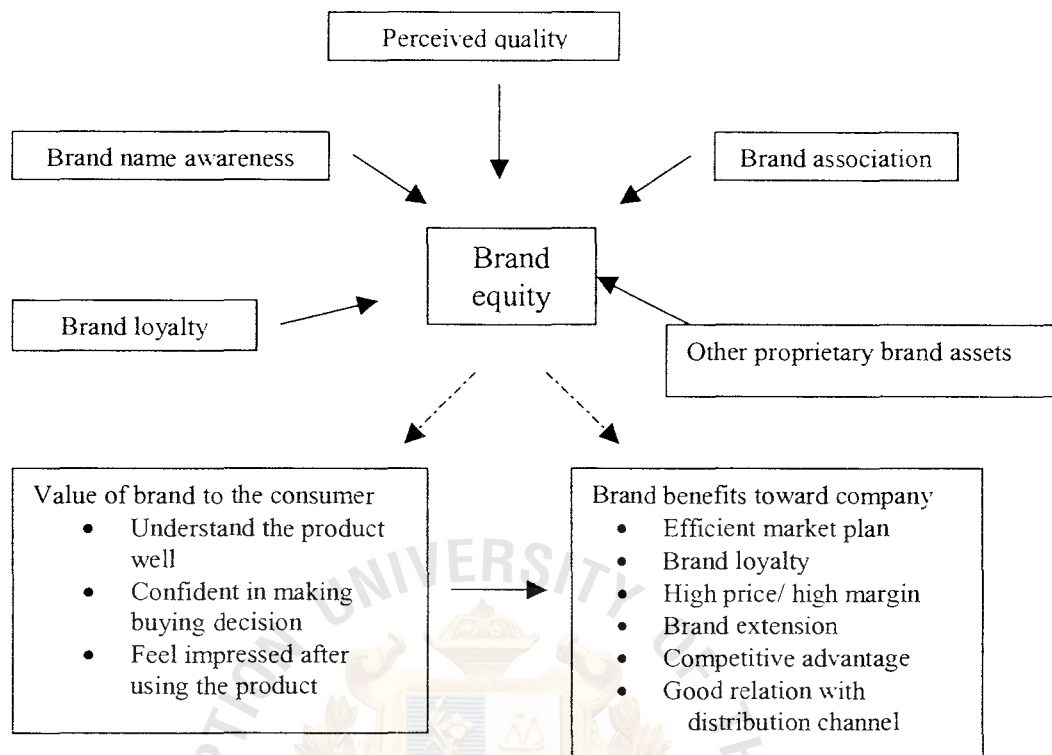


Figure 2.2. Model of the Brand Equity Element. (D. Aaker, 1991).

We can see that brand can benefit both consumer and brand owner. Consumer benefit is brand equity, which can give the meaning, collecting and keeping the information about the brand in the consumer's memory. Consumer will feel sure in buying the product. In addition, the important things are the perceived quality and brand association which can increase the level of satisfaction of consumer. For brand owner, the benefit is brand loyalty from the customer. They can set high price, which will bring high margin to the company, and increase the distribution channels for selling the products. These can be the competitive advantages. (Batra, Myer & Aaker, 1996)

Brand equity concept can be summarized as the added value that comes up in the customer's mind toward the brand. Brand equity is also the most important in brand



concept because the actual value of the brand is created by the feeling of the customer toward the brand and this can bring value to the company and other distribution channels.

## **2.2 Consumer's Perception and Attitude**

To be successful in creating brand, it is necessary to study and understand consumer behavior, perception process, and the thought of the consumer. These will benefit us in effectively planning market communication strategy to create brand. The important concepts are consumer's perception and attitude concept.

### **2.2.1 Perception Concept**

In market operation, one important factor in bringing the product to the market successfully among competitors' products is to develop the product to match with customer's need and want. Together with market communication tools, it makes the consumer aware, and become interested and purchases the product instead of the competitors' products. Consumer's perception process is a necessary process that marketers need to study and understand.

Consumer's perception means the process by which a person opens the mind and receives the information, intend to receive that information and decode it. In the step of opening to the information, the consumer will receive the information through sensations. In the step of intending to receive the information, consumer will concentrate and be interested that in information. In the last step, decoding, consumer will organize and translate that information for understanding. (Mowen & Minor, 1998)

Assael (1998) defined perception as the process that the consumer selects to receive, arrange the elements and translate the stimuli in a meaningful way for understanding. Consumer selects to open and receive the stimuli and choose to perceive the advertisement to be in line with their beliefs and experiences. In contrast, the

consumer tends to ignore or not pay attention to the stimulation or advertising that conflicts with their beliefs and experiences. The important reason that the consumer may accept or ignore the stimulation or advertising is because they try to keep their psychological equilibrium. They will not accept and avoid opening and receiving the information that conflicts with their thoughts and beliefs.

Marketers classify consumer behavior into 2 groups. They are environment stimuli and marketing stimuli.

#### *Environment Stimuli*

They are stimuli such as social and culture influences. Consumer behavior is based on his/her environment such as family, reference group, and culture pattern. Mowen and Minor (1998) said that the belief of behavior and attitude of reference group would be the direction for any person's behavior. While Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) said that culture is the belief that is generated from learning, value, culture and custom, which will control the behavior of consumer as a member in the society.

#### *Marketing Stimuli*

They are stimuli such as physical stimuli or communication stimuli that marketers design to directly influence the consumer. There are 2 types;

- (1) *Primary or Intrinsic Stimuli*: such as product and elements of product like packages, product characteristics and other physical product elements.
- (2) *Secondary or Extrinsic Stimuli*: such as stimuli that are produced by communication in many different media. These stimuli can influence consumer behavior that will show through words, pictures, symbols, songs and other stimuli that are related to the product such as price, distribution stores, salesperson, etc.

Consumers will select, arrange and decode the meaning of the stimuli. The process begins from the stimuli which arouses a person's sensation. For example, advertising

that consists of light, color, picture, etc. will stimulate the consumer to perceive what is in the advertising. If the advertising is interesting, they will respond to it such as by buying or trying the product.

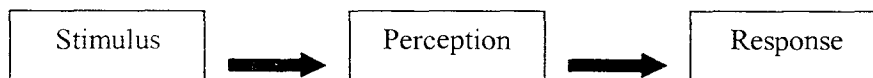


Figure 2.3. Perceptual Process. (Solomon, 1999).

There are 3 Elements of Perception (Assael, 1998), which are selection, organization, and interpretation. Consumer selects to open and receive the stimuli and systematically organize the data for easy understanding. Then they interpret the meaning of those stimuli by using their knowledge and experiences. Each element has different processes and criteria as follows;

#### *Selection*

Selection is when the consumer opens and become interested in the stimuli in the market by selecting for their need which matches with their attitude. For example, a person who is going to buy a house will be interested in the information or the advertising about houses. Some persons who are interested in fashion will pay attention to clothing advertising, etc. The selection process can be classified into 3 steps. (Assael, 1998)

- (1) Exposure: happens when the consumer opens to the stimulus relying on their interest and relation. If they are not interested, they will avoid opening to those stimuli.

(2) Attention: happens when the consumer intends to receive the information at one period of time. Advertisers must try to attract the customer's attention such as by positioning or size of the advertisement, the picture in the advertisement or how to use the medias at the point of purchase, etc.

(3) Selective perception: happens all the time of the perception process. Consumer may perceive different stimuli depending on needs, attitudes, experiences and the characteristics of the receivers. For example, two persons may receive the message from the same advertising, but they perceive the meaning differently.

When the consumer opens to the interested stimuli, the next step the consumer will do is to collect the data by organizing it for understanding those stimuli.

#### *Organization*

Organization is when the consumer organizes and combines the data from many sources for more understanding and showing accurate responding behavior. (Assael, 1998) The basic of organization is integration. Integration means that the consumer perceives the overall stimuli and does not look at separate stimuli. This is related to the psychology of Gestalt, who said that overall is more important than the combination of many separate stimuli. Gestalt's theory about the combination for perceiving is;

(1) Closure: means consumer tends to perceive incomplete picture to complete picture. The consumer can comprehend the incomplete picture by using their summary, attitudes and beliefs from the past experiences such as filling words in the blanks by using knowledge and past experience. This reason can explain why a person can read incomplete news with some words missing. Marketers use this method in planning strategic marketing that can stimulate the customer in concentrating and becoming interested in the news.

(2) Grouping: means grouping the information or perceiving much incomplete information then chunking and grouping. This may help the consumer to evaluate the brand based on many characteristics. Consumer's grouping can be of many forms; *Proximity* means one object will relate to another object because of their proximity. *Similarity* is when consumer organizes the information on the similarity together. *Continuity* is when the consumer can recognize or retrieve one group of information when they receive another group of information since these two groups are continuous.

(3) Context: consumer tends to perceive an object on the characteristics of its context. Advertising's layout in the good or weak media will influence different product's perceptions. Similar advertisings that are advertised in a more famous magazine will receive more trustworthiness than advertising in a less famous magazine. It also includes environment of the stimuli that can make the consumer understand the message in the advertising more such as layout, media selection, etc.

When the consumer organizes the information based on the above criteria, it is easier to understand the stimuli. In the next step, consumers will interpret the stimuli by using the existing information.

### *Interpretation*

Interpretation is the process how the consumer understands the received stimuli. To interpret those stimuli, consumers must use the information, knowledge, and experience gathered from the past in their memories. However, tendency or personal bias may distort the meaning of the sender. Two basics that help the consumer to interpret marketing information are categorization and inference.



(1) *Categorization* is the process of internal organization for helping consumer in understanding easily. This can be explained by Schema. Schema means cell of thoughts, ideas, symbols of the stimuli or cell of information that the consumer receives. The consumer will keep these cells in their long-term memory. When information is added, it will be kept in the memory and then continued gathering and developing. For example, Schema of Coca-Cola has details about red color, dark-color water, freshness, etc. If any information about Coca-Cola is added, it will be kept in the long-term memory, which is Coca-Cola's Schema such as Polar bear.

(2) *Inference* is a development of relation between 2 stimuli. The development comes from past learning and experiences. This is the step when the consumer discovers the conclusion about the product, price, store and the manufacturer. This conclusion is the belief of the consumer toward the product that comes from the past relation. For instance, when we think about Louis Vuitton bag, consumer will think of durability and high price. The conclusion of the consumer may come from the information, advertising or word of mouth, etc. (Assael, 1998)

The three elements above are related to the explanation of Engel, Blackwell & Miniard (1995). They conclude consumer information processing as related to exposure, attention, comprehension, acceptance and retention. Consumers must be exposed to the stimuli and the consumer must select and intend that stimuli, then understand or comprehend, accept and retain it.

### *Exposure*

Exposure is the disclosure of the message from many sources. For example, they select one from many channels from the television, or buy one product from many brands in the market. This is the reason for advertisers who try to create outstanding

advertisement by using many techniques such as picture, color, light, and sound to make consumer exposed to it.

#### *Attention*

Attention is the selection and intention to receive the message from advertising. There are many advertisements, but the consumer has a short time to remember them. If the messages are not interesting, the consumer will just know it and let it go. In contrast, if there are any messages that match with their beliefs, interests, or desires, they will pay attention to it.

#### *Comprehension*

Comprehension is interpreting the messages based on the consumer's interest and belief from their past experience, and will make them understand that messages correctly.

#### *Acceptance*

After consumers understand the message, and if they agree with those stimuli, they will accept it. In contrast, if they do not agree, they will not accept it.

#### *Retention*

Retention is the selecting to remember the messages that the consumer is interested in and forget what they are not interested in. Therefore, it is necessary to repeat the advertising to make the consumer remember or recognize the advertising or messages, which will benefit the selling of the particular brand. (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995)

After studying the consumer's perception processing, we will know about internal factors of consumer such as stimuli-response, expose-comprehension, retention, etc. These are parts of consumer information processing, and are important causes that make

consumer behave. There is another concept like attitude concept that makes the consumer behave.

### 2.2.2 Attitude Concept

Attitude is the psychological element that the marketer pays more attention to, since it is the variable that indicates character or tendency toward the products or objects. Therefore understanding consumer attitude is an important basis for a good marketing plan. There are many different definitions for attitude such as;

Assael (1998) said that attitude means the tendency that comes from consumer's response in learning one thing or the other with consistency in like or dislike. For example, consumer's attitude toward brand means tendency of the consumer, which comes from learning experience about brand and can evaluate that they will constantly like or dislike that brand. Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) give the meaning of attitude as the tendency from learning, which relates behavior in a favorable or unfavorable way with respect to anything such as brand, service, etc. Whereas Petty, Wegener & Fabriger (1997) said that attitude is the way we think, feel, and act toward some aspect of our environment.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) said that attitude is a situation that has a tendency of response behavior to learn to create consistent positive or negative behavior in anything. Sherif and Sherif (1967) defined attitude as coming from learning and experiences of a person perceived from the external environment, and not coming from birth and not coming from physical drive. Therefore, attitude is a group or kind of thought that people apply in evaluating the stimuli. This attitude originates from social learning and it influences the feelings of like or dislike toward the stimuli.

The definitions above can explain the important characteristics of attitude, as attitude is the feeling or thought that is obtained from learning, and not born with. But

experiences like direct experience such as trying the product and not satisfied with it, will create a bad attitude toward that brand. Or indirect experience like positive or negative word of mouth will influence the person's attitude. In addition, attitude is the tendency or the situation that is prompt in responding to anything, but not the behavior. For instance, consumer tends to like or need to buy one particular product than other products. This attitude is stable, and cannot change easily. However, attitude can be changed, but the changing process is very slow and needs a long time. Especially, when a person is older, attitude becomes more stable and hard to change. (Assael, 1998)

Attitude represents the relationship between person and object that can be people, group of people, organization, product, society or anything. These are important relationships because attitude cannot happen by itself. These relations will show the direction of like or dislike by themselves. For example, consumers have positive attitude toward one brand and have negative attitude toward another brand.

We can conclude that attitude is a person's thought, feeling or tendency toward something such as attitude in fashion product, attitude in stores or attitude in television programs, etc. Attitude will show how a person feels about things, in a positive or negative way, like or dislike, good or bad, etc.

Attitude is a series that happens in a person. It organizes the thought, belief, habits and motivator of the object. These organizations are combined after the evaluation, which shows the shape of tendency. Since everybody has different motivation and emotional characteristics, Loudon and Della Bitta (1993) give the opinion of the Source of the Attitude that comes from these elements as follows:

#### *Personal experience*

In the daily lifestyle, it is necessary for people to contact with surrounding things; therefore, they will be evaluating old and new things repeatedly. The evaluation process

leads to learning and development of attitude toward things. For instance, direct personal experience of salesperson, product, service and stores. Nevertheless, there are other factors that directly influence the evaluation of the market's objects.

(1) *Needs*: since a person's needs are changing all the time from birth till death, this changes the attitude too. The same object may be evaluated differently at different times. It means that attitude towards one object may be different or change in a different year of age.

(2) *Self-concept*: is the result of all the thoughts and feelings how a person perceives themselves and what they want to be in the future, which can influence their behavior. This means that a person will organize only the interesting stimuli and interpret it based on their thought. Therefore to estimate how they feel toward one object depends on their self-concept.

(3) *Personality*: a person's personality will influence the evaluation of the object and each person has a different personality such as active, joyful, aggressive, sluggish, isolated, discloser, etc. All of these are effects in creating the attitude of each person.

#### *Group Associations*

Everybody always receives the influences from society, especially influences on attitude. Our attitude toward anything is influenced by the group in which we are the member or the group that we want to be a member. If a member in this group has any value or belief it will convince a person to go along the same way. For example, group of friends, family or college have direct influence on a person's attitude.

#### *Influential Others*

To become the attitude of a person not only comes from the above sources but also comes from or change when the person deals with people that they accept and have



faith in such as the person that they respect, who is an expert, professional, specialist, etc. These people have more influence on consumer's attitude and buying behavior. (Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993)

### Attitude Components

There are 2 thoughts of elements of attitude, of which the first thought is the tripartite view of attitude and the second thought is the unidimensionalist view of attitude. The details of these 2 thoughts are as follows:

#### *Tripartite View of Attitude*

This thought is a combination of cognitive, effective and behavioral components. (Hawkins, Best, & Coney, 1998)

(1) *Cognitive Component*: means the thought or rational that results from a person's beliefs, and past experience that he/she can conclude into one's tendency. For example, we believe that Diet Coke is a beverage that has almost no calorie, which is produced by the giant company, or that Potato Chips have high calorie. These beliefs do not need to be true or not.

(2) *Affective Component*: means the reaction of feeling or emotional reactions toward an object. In the same meaning is the positive or negative feeling toward the object, which can show the level of like or dislike. (Bovee, Houston, & Thill, 1995) For example, I like Diet Coke, I like coffee, etc.

(3) *Behavioral Component*: is one's tendency to respond in a certain manner toward an object or activity. It means the component that results from the cognitive and affective component. It may involve both good and bad behavior when it is exposed through stimuli. It can show the probability of consumer behavior of attitude toward an object or activity. It may be the intention in buying such as the decision-making in buying or not buying Diet Coke.

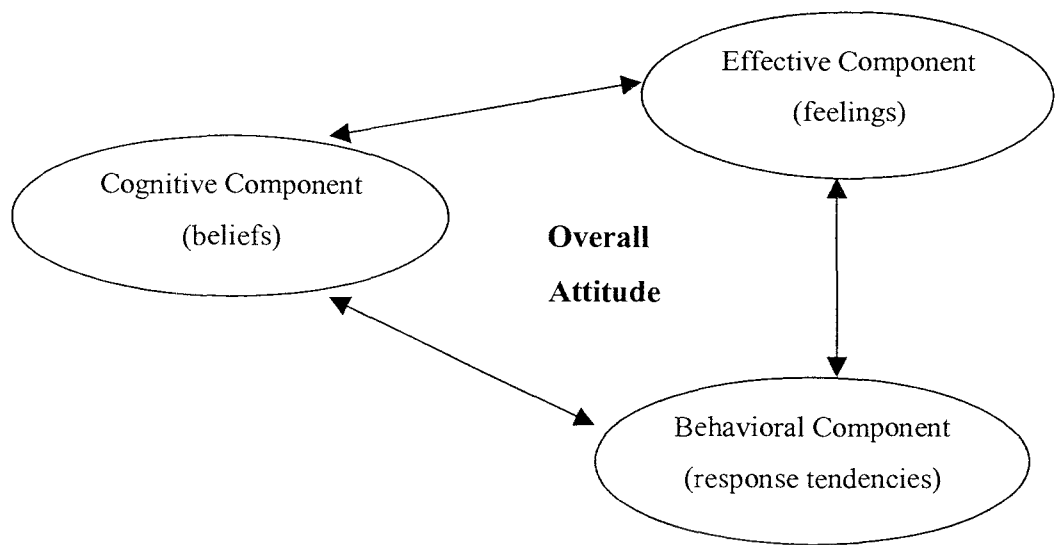


Figure 2.4. Attitude Component Consistency. (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1998).

All 3 attitude components tend to be consistent. (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1998)  
 All attitudes must include all 3 components because they can make attitude complete either less or more. (Lutz, 1991) Moreover, all 3 attitude components also consistently respond in like or dislike of anything. In the same way, if consumers believe that any brand offers benefits to them, they will be expected to favor that brand. And they may have the desire and intention to buy that brand in the future.

However, to measure the attitude that consists of 3 components usually is not successful because they cannot measure all 3 components. Most of the measurement can measure only the effective component, while it may not be able to measure the cognitive and behavioral components at all. (Lutz, 1991)

#### *Unidimensionalist View of Attitude*

This thought perceive that attitude has only one component, which is the affective component. This component represents the level of satisfaction and unsatisfaction

toward anything. The cognitive and behavioral components are not the component of the attitude, but they are the antecedents and consequences of attitudes. (Fishbien & Ajzen, 1975, cited in Lutz, 1991)



Figure 2.5. The Unidimensionalist View of Attitude. (Lutz, 1991).

From figure 2.4 it is seen that belief will lead to attitude, which then results in intention while behavior is the result that is separate from attitude. It means that if consumer learns something about the new brand, this learning is the belief that leads to attitude and this will affect the intention in buying or not buying the product of that brand.

Assael (1998) supported this idea and explained that effective component can represent overall consumer's evaluation. In fact, brand evaluation will be related to brand attitude in the form of tendency of brand evaluation in the way that consumer is satisfied or unsatisfied.

Since attitude is about human's affect. Creating an attitude needs input from one or many sources. If the inputs come from many sources, it will make that attitude more consistent and put it in the deepest mind.

However, the density of attitude depends on the complexity of the person's attitude. Many aspects of knowledge and beliefs mostly support the complexity of attitudes. The more complex the attitude is, the more difficult it is to change. Simple

attitudes mostly have only one aspect of belief, which is easier to change. (Assael, 1998)

We can bring the concept and theory of attitude to be the basis of the study of target consumer. If we understand the elements or factors that create attitude and we control some parts of those elements. This will make the consumer have good attitude toward the brand, which can lead to sales and good image of the product.

### **2.3 Consumer's Involvement and Buying Behavior**

After studying the concept of attitude which is an important component of consumer behavior, there are still other concepts, which are important and should be studied further such as consumer's involvement and buying behavior. Marketers, who study about the behavior of consumers, mostly separate the buying behavior of consumer by using product involvement method. So, before understanding the behavior of decision-making in buying a product, it is necessary to evaluate and understand the concept of product involvement.

#### **2.3.1 Product Involvement**

Normally, product involvement is the interest that consumers have for the product in a long-term relation. The interest will be more or less depending on the importance of the product toward the value. The need or self-image of the consumer and the level of product involvement that the consumers have for each product is different. (Houston & Rothchild, 1978)

Assael (1998) defined involvement as the involvement of each consumer toward each product, which is less or more depending on each person.

We can conclude that the more level of product involvement, the more importance the consumer will pay in buying. Assael (1998) separated involvement into 2 groups;

### *Situational Involvement*

Situational involvement means the consumers pay attention to or are interested in one particular product when they are in a situation that they need to use that product. Normally they do not pay attention to a product, but in this situation, they will search for information about that product and give the importance in buying that product. This is said to be a temporary involvement. They will not be interested in that product, if they have already bought it. For example, a person who has never bought a car before, will search for car information when they need to use it. They will search for information of many cars for consideration and evaluation, which helps them to make a decision. In this period, the consumer will extraordinarily pay attention and interest about cars. After they made a decision and bought it already, interest in cars will be terminated.

### *Enduring Involvement*

Enduring involvement means the consumer continually gives importance or pay attention to any particular thing for a period of the time and becomes long-term relation. Consumer will always pay attention to it which becomes their personal interest. For example, a person who likes to dress will always pay attention to fashion, or a person who likes car, will pay attention to and be interested in cars all the time, even though they do not need to use the car.

Furthermore, Engel, Blackwell & Miniard (1995) studied about level of product involvement that can be separated into 2 levels, which are high-involvement product and low-involvement product. These involvements are important to the characteristic of consumer's buying decision-making.



### *High-Involvement Product*

High-involvement product is the product that is important to and interested by the consumer. This usually is a high price product which has specific use or application. It is involved with emotion and social value. Each buying decision-making involves high risk; therefore, consumer has to find information about the product before they buy it. Then they will evaluate the choices and the product characteristic. This will be a very complex decision. Examples of high-involvement products are cars, computer, clothing, etc. (Assael, 1998)

### *Low-Involvement Product*

The consumer will feel the importance or involvement of the product at a low level since the product is low or not so important for life and each buying decision-making involves low-risk. The consumer does not need to find much information. They look for limited information, which comes from personal experience of product trial. It is not necessary to find external information such as asking from friends, or finding the information from the media or advertising. Consumer will buy the product immediately without consideration of product qualification. Low-involvement product may be a product that we never like before, but may like it after trial or using it. To buy a product may come from familiarity to it, and not from satisfaction of the product. Personality and lifestyle may not be concerned with buying behavior because a low-involvement product does not have close relation with the beliefs of the consumer. Reference group has very low influence because the product does not involve the norm or value of the reference group. Examples of low-involvement products are tissue paper, shampoo, soap, sugar, etc. (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1995)

Different levels of involvement will differently effect buying decision and different types of buying influencer. However, in each culture the consumer's

involvement in the product is different. For example, the bicycling is very popular in China, so Chinese people are involved with bicycling more than in other countries. (Assael, 1998)

So, the pattern of consumer involvement with the product will influence the decision buying process.

### 2.3.2 Consumer's Buying Behavior

The decision buying process of consumer will be different depending on the type of product and the level of product involvement. Assael (1998) separated buying behavior of consumer into 4 types based on the consumer's involvement.

#### *Complex Decision Making*

This usually happens in high-involvement products and there are complex decision-making processes such as the buying decision-making in car or house. The consumer will find out lots of news and information for evaluating and determining the choices before buying. There is high-risk involved in this buying decision-making, so the consumer must carefully choose or select the choice. The process of decision-making consists of belief, evaluation and behavior. The best theory that can explain this buying behavior is cognitive learning. This theory emphasized on representing the information or benefits of the product, which consumer can use for the process of buying decision-making.

#### *Brand Loyalty*

This is the pattern of buying behavior of the consumer who is loyal to the product. This will happen in high-involvement products. The consumer has a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize the preferred product or service in the future, from their past experiences. They use less time in buying decision-making, even though it is the high-involvement product. They can immediately buy the preferred product or

service by using the past experiences or their loyalty in decision. This process may overcome the buying process of beliefs and evaluation through behavior. The best theory that can explain this kind of buying is instrumental conditioning. This theory explains that the positive force that is based on brand satisfaction will lead to repeat behavior. Therefore, when the consumer is satisfied with the product, they will repeat buying that product.

#### *Limited Decision Making*

This usually happens in low-involvement products. But the consumers need to have a careful decision-making because the product is new, or not familiar with or never used before. For example, Biore's pore peel, which is a small sheet with glue that brings out small pimples on the nose. Consumers have to spend time to find the information, and evaluate and compare to trial the product. This process of decision-making consists of beliefs, behavior and then evaluation, which are related to passive learning theory. This theory explains that consumer will find the information about the product but they are not active or sluggish. For example, consumers look at the advertising and then keep it in their mind. When they meet that product or that brand in the store, they will retrieve the information about that.

#### *Inertia*

This is the behavior of the consumer who is involved in low-involvement products and there is not much difference in the products. For example, salt. Consumers buy salt of the old brand. This behavior is not the result from brand loyalty, but they buy the old brand because of familiarity with that brand. They do not create strong attitude toward the brand but they re-buy because they are familiar to it. After buying, they do not evaluate that product.

Therefore, a low-involvement product has the process of decision-making starting from beliefs, which come from inertia, followed by buying decision. This process consists of beliefs, behavior and evaluation, which may have or not have evaluation in this buying behavior. The best theory that can explain this buying behavior is classical conditioning. Assael (1998) said that the consumer has low-involvement product. Creating a stimuli for stimulating the consumer, such as using media at the point of purchase, can motivate them more easily than using repeat advertising because of consumer inertia.



	High-Involvement	Low-Involvement
<b>Decision-Making</b>	<b><u>Decision Process</u></b>	<b><u>Decision Process</u></b>
	Complex Decision Making	Limited Decision Making
	<b><u>Hierarchy of Effects</u></b>	<b><u>Hierarchy of Effects</u></b>
	Beliefs	Beliefs
	Evaluation	Behavior
<b>Habit</b>	Behavior	Evaluation
	<b><u>Theory</u></b>	<b><u>Theory</u></b>
	Cognitive Learning	Passive Learning
	<b><u>Decision Process</u></b>	<b><u>Decision Process</u></b>
	Brand Loyalty	Inertia
	<b><u>Hierarchy of Effects</u></b>	<b><u>Hierarchy of Effects</u></b>
	(Beliefs)	Beliefs
	(Evaluation)	Behavior
	Behavior	(Evaluation)
	<b><u>Theory</u></b>	<b><u>Theory</u></b>
	Instrumental Conditioning	Classical Conditioning

Figure 2.6. Four Types of Consumer Behavior. (Assael, 1998).

Beside consumer's involvement and buying behavior, it is necessary to study the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which can help us understand how consumer evaluates the information for both high and low involvement.

## Elaboration Likelihood Model

Elaboration Likelihood Model or ELM is invented by Petty and Cacioppo (1993). This theory classified persuasion of communication strategy into 2 types;

### *Persuasion of Central Route*

This emphasizes on the way in presenting and qualification of the product. When the consumer has a high-involvement product or the main purpose of the consumer is a utilitarian need, they will evaluate the information by emphasizing on the core benefit, eventhough anyone will support or not. For example, the consumer will decide on buying the computer. They will make the decision in buying the computer based on its PC, system and capabilities of the unit.

### *Persuasion of Peripheral Route*

Persuasion of Peripheral Route is the external factor besides information and qualification of the product such as picture, music or presenter, etc. that persuade the consumer who has a low-involvement product or prefers the product that is based on hedonic need rather than benefit. This type of consumer will pay more attention on the advertising that uses peripheral routes or external factors such as beautiful pictures, nice song, colorful shade, famous presenter, or a celebrity to grab the consumer's attention, in order to make the consumer have a good attitude and want to try the product sample. For example, advertisement of fashionable items such as clothing and accessories, for which the consumer will make the decision to buy based on their emotion and satisfaction rather than considering the pros and cons of the products. (Assael, 1998)

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) can be summarized into high-involvement products, for which consumer will be concerned on the information of the products or services and take time in considering the information by using intention in evaluating the pros and cons of the products, especially if it is an important thing for the consumer.



Therefore, an appropriate and most effective strategic marketing that motivates the consumer in buying is persuasion of central routes. In contrast, buying a low-involvement product will be more effective, if we use persuasion of peripheral routes because this kind of consumer will have passive learning which agree with Petty & Cacioppo theory (1993). The consumer who has a tendency of high-involvement products will evaluate the product's qualification, while the consumer who has a tendency of low-involvement products will use a simple criteria in decision making. They will make a prompt buying without going to the evaluation process, because the product is not important, and has low-risk in routine buying.

After studying the concept of consumer's involvement and buying behavior, this concept can be applied for planning strategic communication marketing in order to have an efficient approach to the target group. Therefore, the study of marketing and marketing mix communication is an important study, which will be mentioned in the next session.

## **2.4 Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communications**

### **2.4.1 Marketing**

Marketing has changed a lot recently, and this is because of increasing competitors force from global corporations in Thai market. Evolution regarding social, economic, culture, and environment means harder decisions for marketers. In addition, new technologies will help shorten both distance and time in communication. For example, for launching a new product into the market, the product will rapidly expand into the new market and be distributed worldwide within a short period of time. This is partly due to the variety in communication media that frequently come in many types and channels.

In this changing era, consumers also adapt to convenience and save time by using product catalog, and ordering the product via computer or phone. Consumers can search for car information regarding the best price via Internet. Consumers can check banking information via phone as well as Internet, the purchasing of insurance and financial transactions without the use of third party or middlemen. Consumers don't have to leave their house for purchasing groceries or food since they can order products by using delivery service. They do not need to buy newspapers, since they can search for news via Internet.

In the period of information technology, consumers have changed their behavior in finding information from passive learning to active learning. Consumer can search information of each brand in the market via Internet. Nowadays, the role of consumers in buying products is wide, and they can select the shop that can offer the best product, the best price, or the best service, which can most satisfy their need. From the situation mentioned above, it causes changes in economic power. In the past, the power is with the seller, but now it has switched to the consumer. Therefore, it is very important for the seller or brand owners to plan strategic marketing in order to induce the consumer to buy their products.

Marketing is a series of thoughts that come from careful planning, which originate from researches and studies that relate to brand product in order to know and understand the current and future customer's need and want. This includes market segmentation to satisfy a particular target group in the way that is better than the competitor's. In addition, strategic marketing planning and marketing mix help in evaluating and developing the plan for the future.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, every marketing corporation has to adjust their businesses because of the changes in many aspects. Firstly, the pressure of worldwide competitors

affects every business and lifestyle. The process of production emphasizes on reducing cost and to economize as much as possible. Next, constantly changing technology creates new things for consumers such as cloning, development of digital technology that can be used at home, technology in cars, etc. We are in the beginning of a technology era in which technology can replace manpower. Lastly, there is motivation toward free trade for reducing some trade barriers.

The changes that are mentioned above will impact traditional marketing theories, which focus mainly on advertising and public relation. Today marketers must use marketing communication mix and integrated marketing communications to achieve their communications aim in order to cover most of the target market.

When marketers study about the changes of market situation and understand the changing of consumer behavior, they will be able to utilize their knowledges in market management. For example, the analysis of market opportunities, looking for consumer's need and want, selecting the target market, including the use of appropriate marketing mix they will be able to develop and find the right strategy that consumers want.

### Marketing Mix

Marketing mix is the mix of controllable marketing variables that the firm uses to pursue the desired level of sales in the target market. Marketing mix is probably the most famous phrase in marketing. Optimization of marketing mix is achieved by assigning the amount of marketing budget to be spent on each element of marketing mix so as to maximize total contribution to the firm. Contribution may be measured in terms of sales or profits or in terms of any other organizational goals. The most common classification of these factors is the four-factor classification called the "Four Ps"; product, price, place and promotion, (or distribution).

### *Product*

Product defines the characteristics of the product or service that meets the needs of customers. The corporation's product is launched into the market regarding product variety, quality, design, feature, characters, brand name, packaging, and size including services such as warranty, repair & maintenance.

### *Price*

Price is the expense of consumer who pays in exchange for the product or service. Moreover, it involves the setting price of retail, wholesale, discount, allowance, and payment period or credit term. It must be a reasonable price and worthy to the consumers, so that they will not switch to use the competitor's product.

### *Place*

Place is also known as channel, distribution, or intermediary. It is the mechanism through which goods and/or services are moved from the manufacturer or service provider to the user or consumer.

### *Promotion*

Promotion is the communication activities or sales promotion to the consumer including employment, training how to use the product, motivating the sales person, dividend or promotional tools such as advertising, sales force, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, public relation, etc.

However, the 4Ps represent the sellers' view of marketing tools available for influencing buyers. From the buyer's point of view, each marketing tool is designed to deliver customer benefit. The sellers' 4Ps correspond to the customers' 4Cs as follows:

**4Ps**

Product

Price

Place

Promotion

**4Cs**

Customer Solution

Customer Cost

Convenience

Communication

It can be explained that marketers look at the marketing mix, as they are the sellers, whereas the consumers look at it differently. For example, in terms of product, manufacturer will look at only selling the product to the customer, but customer will think about their need whether the product can satisfy them or whether the product is worth the buying value. In terms of price, marketers will look at it as price of product, while customer must pay the cost for product. In terms of place, marketers will look at it only as the channel or location that they can sell their product, but consumers want convenience such as ease in finding and buying the product or service, or whether the store has enough stock. Lastly, is promotion, which marketers will look at it as only the strategy that can help in increasing sale such as discount, free gift, trial sample, etc. However, consumers want to be communicated by the brand owner in terms of two-way communication. So marketers should try to understand the marketing mix concept from the consumer's point of view, in order to plan the strategic marketing in line with the consumer's needs. (Kotler, 1999)

We can conclude that a good marketing management will be one that can meet customer needs. In other words, product is what the customer wants, price is at a level that pleases the customer or is economical, place is located where the customer can reach easily or conveniently, and lastly the effective promotion can communicate to the customer about the advantage and value of the product.

After studying about marketing and marketing mix, we can understand the definition and properties of each tool. This can be used in marketing planning in order to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of the plan. It is important for marketers to know which product life-cycle their products fit in. Therefore, it is necessary to study the theory of product life-cycle different cycle needs different strategy to support, the details of which are discussed below.

### Product Life-Cycle (PLC)

Product Life-cycle or PLC means the demand changes as the product passes through each life-cycle stage, which reflects increasing sale and revenue of the product. Most explanations about product life-cycle confirm that the product has a life-cycle. Product has a limited life. Product sales pass through distinct stages, each posing different challenges, opportunities, and problems to the seller. Profits rise and fall at different stages of the product life-cycle. Products require different marketing, financial, manufacturing, purchasing, and human resources strategies in each life-cycle stage. But in the real business world, product will not go exactly according to the details of every stage of the product life-cycle. Therefore, before consideration of different processes in detail, we must understand that it is not necessary for every product to pass through all these 4 steps.

In reality very few products follow such a prescriptive cycle. The length of each stage varies enormously. The decisions of marketers can change the stage, for example from maturity to decline by price-cutting. Not all products go through each stage. Some go from introduction to decline. It is not easy to tell which stage the product is in. Sometimes many kinds of product may be able to not pass the introduction stage or the first step of product life-cycle, and the period or the length of time at a certain product in each step of product life-cycle may be different from others. For example, some



product like fashionable product, which will gain an attention in a period of time and then go out of popularity, always pass through the product life-cycle in a few weeks. In case of other types of products such as beer, whiskey and cigarette, all are examples of product in maturity stage, which take times for many years and slow to reach this stage. (Burnett & Moriarty, 1998)

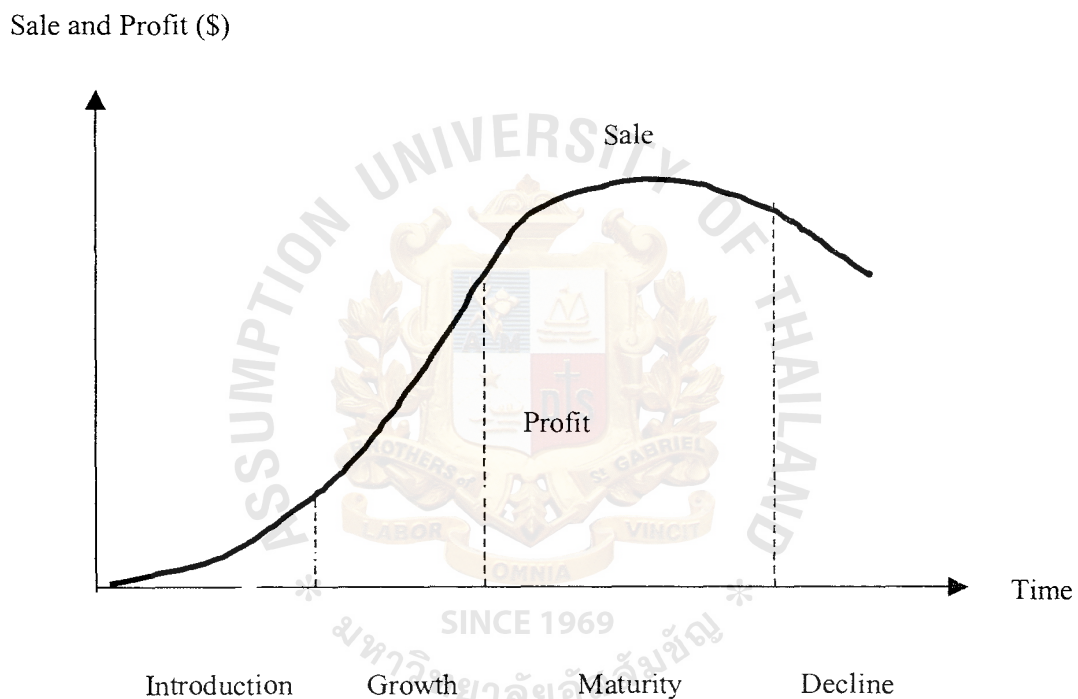


Figure 2.7. Product Life-Cycle. (Kotler, 2000).

## Strategies for differing stages of PLC

### *Introduction*

At the Introduction (or development) Stage market size and growth is slight. It is possible that substantial research and development costs have been incurred in getting the product to this stage. In addition, marketing costs may be high in order to test the

market, undergo launch promotion and set up distribution channels. It is highly unlikely that companies will make profits on products at the Introduction Stage. The need for immediate profit is not a pressure. The product is promoted to create awareness. If the product has no or few competitors, a skimming price strategy is employed. Limited numbers of product are available in few channels of distribution. Products at this stage have to be carefully monitored to ensure that they start to grow. Otherwise, the best option may be to withdraw or end the product.

Therefore, we can conclude that in the introduction stage, the firm seeks to build product awareness and develop a market for the product. The impact on the marketing mix is as follows;

Product branding and quality level is established, and intellectual property protection such as patents and trademarks are obtained.

Pricing may be low penetration pricing to build market share rapidly, or high skim pricing to recover development costs.

Place or distribution is selective until consumers show acceptance of the product.

Promotion is aimed at innovators and early adopters. Marketing communications seek to build product awareness and to educate potential consumers about the product.

### *Growth*

The Growth Stage is characterized by rapid growth in sales and profits. Profits arise due to an increase in output (economies of scale) and possibly better prices. At this stage, it is cheaper for businesses to invest in increasing their market share as well as enjoying the overall growth of the market. Accordingly, significant promotional resources are traditionally invested in products that are firmly in the Growth Stage. Competitors are attracted into the market with very similar offerings. Products become more profitable and companies form alliances, joint ventures and take each other over.

Advertising spend is high and focuses upon building brand. Market share tends to stabilize.

Therefore, we can conclude that in the growth stage, the firm seeks to build brand preference and increase market share. The impact on the marketing mix is as follows;

Product quality is maintained and additional features and support services may be added.

Pricing is maintained as the firm enjoys increasing demand with little competition.

Place or distribution channels are added as demand increases and customers accept the product.

Promotion is aimed at a broader audience.

### *Maturity*

The Maturity Stage is, perhaps, the most common stage for all markets. It is in this stage that competition is most intense as companies fight to maintain their market share. Here, both marketing and finance become key activities. Marketing spend has to be monitored carefully, since any significant moves are likely to be copied by competitors. The Maturity Stage is the time when most profits are earned by the market as a whole. Any expenditure on research and development is likely to be restricted to product modification and improvement and perhaps to improve production efficiency and quality. Those products that survive the earlier stages tend to spend longest in this phase. Sales grow at a decreasing rate and then stabilize. Producers attempt to differentiate products and brands are key to this. Price wars and intense competition occur. At this point the market reaches saturation. Producers begin to leave the market due to poor margins. Promotion becomes more widespread and uses a greater variety of media.

Therefore, we can conclude that in the maturity stage, the strong growth in sales diminishes. Competition may appear with similar products. The primary objective at this point is to defend market share while maximizing profit. The impact on the marketing mix is as follows;

Product features may be enhanced to differentiate the product from that of competitors.

Pricing may be lower because of the new competition.

Place or distribution becomes more intensive and incentives may be offered to encourage preference over competing products.

Promotion emphasizes product differentiation.

#### *Decline*

In the Decline Stage, the market is shrinking, reducing the overall amount of profit that can be shared amongst the remaining competitors. At this stage, great care has to be taken to manage the product carefully. It may be possible to take out some production cost, to transfer production to a cheaper facility, sell the product into other cheaper markets. Care should be taken to control the amount of stocks of the product. Ultimately, depending on whether the product remains profitable, a company may decide to end the product. At this point there is a downturn in the market. For example more innovative products are introduced or consumer tastes have changed. There is intense price-cutting and many more products are withdrawn from the market. Profits can be improved by reducing marketing spend and cost cutting.

Therefore, we can conclude that in the decline stage, the firm has several options; Maintain the product, possibly rejuvenating it by adding new features and finding new uses. Harvest the product – reduce costs and continue to offer it, possibly to a loyal

niche segment. Discontinue the product, liquidating remaining another firm that is willing to continue the product.

The marketing mix decision in the decline phase will strategy. For example, the product may be changed if it is being rejuvenated, or left unchanged if it is being harvested or liquidated. The price may be maintained if the product is harvested, or reduced drastically if liquidated.

We can see that the product life-cycle concept is important. It helps interpret product and market dynamics. It can be used for planning and controlling the marketing plan. Marketers should understand and know what stage the product is in, for finding and planning appropriate strategies marketing in each life-cycle stage.

#### 2.4.2 Integrated Marketing Communications

Under a cruel competition situation in business nowadays, the use of only one or two communication tools cannot achieve further communication aims. Because there is the same types of product of me-too products, which have the same target market and use familiar communications. This causes confusion and there is no difference in the product. It is boring to receive crammed information from the media. Furthermore, the market situation now is always divided into smaller and smaller segments. The use of marketing communication tools in order to approach the consumers is more complex. So traditional marketing communication tools such as advertising and public relation are not enough to achieve communications aims.

Today marketers try to discover the new patterns of communication such as personal selling, decorated shelves, packaging, and other activities, to differentiate the product or service together with creating the most frequency of seeing the product. The purpose can make the brand product approach the consumer's mind, which will affect creating the value of the product in the long-term. Burnett & Moriarty (1998) said that

the use of all communication tools is greater than the sum of the parts. The combination of communication tools under the same concept will increase the good attitude toward the product and also help to create the value of the brand product too. (Anantachart, 1999)

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is an important strategy that marketers and advertisers nowadays must realize and should use in planning the strategic marketing plan. Although the concept of integrated marketing communication was only created in 1990, it developed from the many communication tools that have been used from the past until now little by little with changes in technology. (Cornelissen & Lork, 2000) This concept is very popular and widespread in the short time. There are different concepts regarding IMC, such as American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) gave the definition of integrated marketing communications as the concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan. Such a plan evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines such as general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations, and combines these as an integration of discrete messages. (Kotler, 1997)

Schultz (1993) gave the definition of integrated marketing communications as the process in management of all the information sources that are related to the product and service, which consumer or target market will be open to. This will lead to the buying behavior and maintain the loyalty of brand product in consumers. Whereas, Shimp (1997) gave the definition of integrated marketing communications as the process of continuous development in marketing communication, which must use varied communications to persuade the target market. Integrated marketing communication is the planning process designed to assure that all brand contacts received by a customer or



prospect for a product, service, or organization are relevant to that person and consistent over time.

From the above definition, it can be concluded that IMC is the process of planning and developing various communication tools to convince the target customer's mind. Its objective is to influence or directly affect the receiver's behavior. IMC process starts from the consideration of the potential customer which will be changed to decision making of finding a suitable method and organizing the communication pattern in order to persuade that customer. (Shimp, 1997) Many researches indicate that marketers realize the importance of IMC concept since it can make the company's communication plan effectively successful, and save cost and has a superior advantage. Therefore, marketers and advertisers need to study IMC concept and summarize the marketing communication plan's concept for further study.

#### The Integrated Marketing Communications Concept

Most integrated marketing communications are used for increasing market efficiency, market sales promotion and reduce cost of market. However, to operate effectively, marketing communication needs to have a good combination of various tools that are related to each other, bringing patterns of market communication to use continuously with the target market. Shimp (1997) said that there must be a study of target customer first, and then develop the result to set up the pattern of communication that can convince the target. Seree Vongmontha (1997) classified 4 criteria of IMC, which are;

- (1) *IMC is all communication tools that are suitable for consumers under a single plan and objective.* Since IMC realizes that a person always collects information and this information will affect their buying behavior. Therefore, it should be a direct method to give them the information. For example, advertising,

direct personal selling, sales promotion, public relation, direct marketing, special event or communication devices. These methods need to relate to 4Ps under the single plan and objective. (Burnett & Moriarty, 1998)

(2) *IMC starts from customer and not the product.* The starting point of product communication is to find ways to communicate the benefits to the target market. It will start from the thought of consumer. To create value in the consumers' mind, we need to toward the back about product qualification, brand and organization (Russell & Lane, 1999). The next step is to identify the message structure that communicates with the target market.

(3) *IMC tries to find out how to get to the target market as much as possible.* Each consumer has their own uniqueness; therefore, it needs to satisfy consumers with a communication that shows uniqueness personality. We can classify the message received into 3 groups based on how the consumer thinks about brand networks, which are loyal brand users, competitive users and swing users. Marketers need to find a communication method that lets consumers get most brand contacts. By this information, marketers will start to set up the objective for each type of consumer, then use the most suitable communication method.

(4) *IMC is a two-way communication, both media and non-media.* IMC will include receiving and giving information to the consumer, which can pass through media or non-media; media such as advertising, and non-media such as communication between people. Nowadays, non-media communication is more important because of the change in lifestyle. Consumers have more activities outside their houses; therefore, non-media communication can better reach the target market. Non-media communication can differentiate the offering and the cost is cheaper than advertising. (Kotler, 2000)

IMC planning uses the rule of outside planning. The important topics are to use the target information to make the decision, and grouping the target group must be based on consumer behavior. The communication objective not only makes the target know or receive the information and make them remember, but also change their thought. The important thing is market communication needs to use various suitable communication tools that can go together in the same way (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn, 1992). Outside planning not only pays attention to the consumer, but also keeps the current customer. Segmenting consumer market is based on consumer behavioral segmentation such as occasions, benefit, user status, usage rate, loyalty status, buyer-readiness stage, and attitude; which are concerned mainly greater than demographic segmentation such as age, gender, occupation, income, education, religion, and psychographic segmentation such as lifestyle, personality, values. Sirgy (1998) said that characteristic of IMC campaign can be explained in 2 ways;

#### *Campaign Continuity*

Campaign continuity means all messages that send through media and IMC tools must relate to each other and concern with the market on physical and psychological continuity.

- (1) *Physical Continuity*: means the component of innovative continuity in all market communication. It can be the same slogan, tangling in all pieces of advertising or any communication media.
- (2) *Psychological Continuity*: means to have constant attitude toward company or product brand. It is consumer perception of the company and the message that is communicated by the company, which can succeed by using a theme, image or tone that relates to each advertising and all kinds of marketing communication. For example, Marlboro uses a smart and strong cowboy in every type of marketing

communication or Calvin Kline represents sexiness in every advertising and marketing communication.

### *Strategic Orientation*

IMC is designed to achieve the company objectives that are to generate sales, market shares and profits. In order to satisfy the company objective, creating an advertising is not only for consumer to have fun, or for contest. These kinds of advertising do not directly satisfy the company strategy in order to generate sales, market share or profits. Therefore, IMC campaign is to emphasize on company strategy to achieve its objectives.

We can see that the communication can be successful in the company's objective, so that marketers can determine or generate the marketing plan to be of the same objective in both characteristics of IMC. However, selection of marketing communication tools is also important, since each tool has both advantages and disadvantages so we must choose the tools appropriate with the company's objectives.

### *Integrated Marketing Communication Tools*

With high competition in marketing communication, to use only one particular tool for IMC will not work anymore. Since there are many sellers or message senders that try to deliver messages to the same consumer group, it is necessary for marketers and advertisers to make consumers aware of the brand as much as possible. IMC needs to generate various communication tools for achievement of the target market and most brand contact to most customers. Popular tools depend on each marketer's innovativeness, because this concept does not have a fixed strategy.

There are many Popular Tools such as;

### *Advertising*

Advertising is the marketing activity that is used to communicate the information of product, brand and company to the consumer. To create image, belief, and attitude or to stimulate the buying behavior, it needs to have continuous relation between brand and consumer. Advertising principle is to quickly create difference among brands, which needs to spend money and present it through the media and have a specific sponsor. (Kotler, 2000) Therefore, we can conclude that advertising is a paid form of communication. It is used to develop attitudes, create awareness, and transmit information in order to gain a response from the target market. There are many advertising media such as newspapers (local, national, free, trade), magazines and journals, television (local, national, terrestrial, satellite), cinema, outdoor advertising (such as posters, bus sides).

### *Personal Selling*

Personal selling is the communication tool to contact the customer directly. This is an efficient communication to stimulate the consumer since it is a two-way communication. Personal selling is an effective way to manage personal customer relationships. The salesperson acts on behalf of the organization. They tend to be well trained in the approaches and techniques of personal selling. However, sales people are very expensive and should only be used where there is a genuine return on investment. For example, salesperson is often used to sell cars or home improvements where the margin is high. To use personal selling is suitable for products such as special product that a salesperson needs to have good knowledge about the product. Since it is a complex product, it cannot be sold through the media. In case that the product needs good service, it needs to have service people to support the selling. The salesperson will be the service provider, who suggests, installs and repairs the product. Personal selling

is suitable for businesses that want to create good relationship between buyer and seller. (Kotler, 2000)

### *Sales Promotion*

Sales promotion is the activity and tools to convince consumer to buy the product. It is a two-way communication that offers discount, free gift, etc. to stimulate buying behavior at that time. Sales promotion has short-run effects (Kotler, 2000) necessary to create product trail for new customer. (Russell & Lane, 1999) It can reduce risk in buying new products by discount, or free sample. Beside this, it can keep the current customer in case that competitors launch a new product; the customer may be interested and want to try that new product. Therefore, it is necessary to use sales promotion such as increase the quantity but the same price. When the consumer hesitates in buying the new brand that they are not familiar with, sales promotion will lead to comparison between the 2 brands.

Sales promotion tends to be thought of as being all promotions apart from advertising, personal selling, and public relations. For example; the BOGOF promotion or Buy One Get One Free. Others include couponing, money-off promotions, competitions, free accessories such as free blades with a new razor, introductory offers such as buy a digital TV and get free installation, and so on. Each sales promotion should be carefully costed and compared with the next best alternative.

Sales promotion also motivate current customer to buy in a large quantity, which will increase consumption rate. For example, bonus plan for airlines that can collect mileage so that customer will continuously fly with the airline in order to get free air ticket, or credit card's bonus plan to collect points which can be transformed to a gift. Sales promotion may be used when the company wants to upgrade the customer by adding more value, increase the size or upgrade quality; for example, trade in an old



model car for a new one, or reduce the price of business class ticket for motivating economic class passengers to travel business class instead. Lastly, sales promotion is used for supporting brand advertising. When we launch the advertising, we should have market support such as poster, brochure, leaflet, flyer, etc. This will lead to shelf advantage and capture consumer's interest.

### *Public Relations*

Burnett & Moriarty (1998) said that public relation is the communication tool of the company to communicate message or information to the consumer or the stakeholder. It will create good relation and image of the company or the organization and brand. Public relation can represent a superior brand or product image over the competitors'. If other product qualifications are equal public relation is the way that can different the product from competitors. Public relation is usually used for giving product knowledge to the customer because whether some products will succeed or not depends on the level of product knowledge that consumers have. Public relation may be used when too much information is put into the advertising or to bring value added to the product, so it can be in the form of news, article, brochure, exhibition, etc. Therefore, public relations is defined as a deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its public. It is relatively cheap, but certainly not cheap. Successful strategies tend to be long-term plan for all eventualities.

### *Direct Marketing*

Currently market trend pays more attention to direct marketing. The characteristic of direct marketing is to have immediate response. For example, telemarketing, catalog sales, direct mail, mail order, Internet marketing, etc.

### *Event Marketing*

Event marketing includes contest, competition, celebration, launching, etc. Event marketing can attract people to join and create innovative activities. If these activities are worth enough for announcing to public, they will be announced by the media, and can be publicized without paying.

### *Display*

Display is used to attract the customer to the point of sale. It is the tool for maintaining brand consistency, especially, new product which always uses display to introduce the product and to make it outstanding. Display is to show or introduce product by using poster, sticker or shelf talker, which is the contact point.

### *Merchandising*

Merchandising is to produce the merchandise with product information, which maybe logo, brand, or jingle. These merchandises may be the transit media that can create brand awareness. Popular merchandising includes pen, cap, key chain, glass, T-shirt, brooch, etc.

### *Transit Media*

Transit media is the media on the company's vehicles. They are logo, brand name, slogan, and picture of the product or packaging on the car. This transit media can increase the frequency of brand contact.

### *Packaging*

Nowadays, packaging can be media since the products provide product information, and product positioning and increase slogan awareness on the package. In addition, it can create value added to the product or differentiate the brand and give information about the ingredients and use of product.

### *Employee*

Employee is the best public relation; therefore, if we want to create value to the brand, we have to train employees about the company's sales promotion. Organizing good human resource will make the employees loyal to the company and willing to support the company's product.

### *Service*

Service is an important communication. If good services are provided to the customer, they will be impressed with the company and brand product.

### *Exhibition*

Some products can impress the customers by demonstration, since media communication cannot give a clear understanding.

### *Manual*

Manuals always go together with the product as it is the marketing communication that makes the consumer understand how to use the product.

### *Showroom*

Using showroom is both one and two-communication such as the place where consumers can go to ask for product information or to buy the product.

The details of each tool explained above are some parts to communicate the brand to the consumer. There are new tools that are developed from innovative ideas of marketers and advertisers to get into the target market efficiently and effectively. Setting an effective communication strategy is necessary to combine or integrate the related tools and each tool must have a single strategic plan. Eventhough, each tool has different marketing roles, the main objective of marketing communication is to create value to the brand. (Keller, 1998) Especially, in a high competition market, marketing strategy is very important because we need to find ways in order to make our brand

survive. Therefore, integrated marketing communication (IMC) is a strategy marketing tool that marketers cannot ignore. (Low, 2000)

We can see that integrated marketing communication (IMC) is an important marketing tool to create brand value by using marketing activities to communicate to the consumer. The continuity and long-term communication process must have related communication method that can bring the brand into consumer's mind easily and affect the consumer's buying decision-making the most.



### III. SITUATIONS ANALYSIS OF TOILETRIES & SPA PRODUCTS IN THE MARKET

#### 3.1 Market Analysis and Consumer Trends

##### *Global Cosmetics and Toiletries Market*

The global cosmetics and toiletries market, including skincare, fragrance, hair care, personal hygiene and makeup, was valued at \$123.7 billion in 2000. The majority of growth was derived from the emerging nations, especially the giant consumer goods markets of China, Brazil and Russia. The UK and U.S. have led growth, but other market prospects are becoming increasingly limited due to price pressures, rising competition, and saturation. In Asia/Pacific cosmetics was valued at \$36.4 billion in 2000. (Glenn, 2001)

The personal-care industry has been driven by a widening and more complex array of influences. Consumers are leading increasingly diverse and demanding lifestyles. Marketers and retailers must keep up with consumers if they are to successfully meet changing expectations. Today's customers are progressively looking toward internal as well as external well-being, hence the growth of the natural and therapeutic trend. Aromatherapy has been a key area of growth.

However, the debate continues over what constitutes a "natural" product due to the lack of a legal definition, which risks confusing many consumers. Time pressure also is driving the growth of convenient "time solutions" that fit into modern lifestyles, while marketers are using fun and interactivity to add stimulation and interest to certain occasions and to target youth.

Additionally, product and ingredient innovation somewhat has blurred the boundaries between categories. Traditional methods of market segmentation appear

outdated, and it has become more relevant to analyze on the basis of trend and occasion. Beauty has been, and is likely to remain, the most important influence in new product development, as manufacturers constantly strive to develop products that improve consumers' cosmetic appearance and are linked to prevailing fashion trends.

The four key consumer trends are beauty, therapeutic, fun and interactivity, and convenience--varies by country. It is expected to have the greatest influence over future innovation, more so than beauty. In recent years, there has been an explosion of interest in marketing to younger consumers such as children, youths, first jobbers and male. This is forcing marketers and retailers to look for new product, consumer, and retailing opportunities to drive growth.

Changing lifestyles are influencing the type of products consumers use in the bathroom. Most people lead busy and stressful lives and look for products that offer relaxation and a respite from stress, but are also quick and convenient to use. This has led to an increase in sales of shower gels, body washes, and liquid soaps, while bar soaps and bath additives have become less popular. This important market sector continues to grow with the development of affordable new products, which reflect advanced skin-care technology, innovative packaging, and focused marketing themes. Bath products tend to be perceived almost as luxury items, as busy lifestyles leave little time for leisurely baths.

#### *Thailand Cosmetics and Toiletries Market*

Thailand was one of the fastest growing economies in the world during the last two decades. The standard of living improved steadily, and consumer spending increased dramatically, especially for high quality product. Today's consumers consider health and cosmetic products to be necessities rather than luxury products. The use of natural products has remarkably increased and become part of everyday Thai life.



Changing lifestyles is a key influence of both product innovation and consumer demand.

Today, we live in a society with modern comfort, but also filled with hectic pressure, and environmental hazards. Life is getting busier and more complicated than ever. Consumers today are widely looking for products that can offer multifunctional benefits to save time & effort, protection and pampering care, mood enhancing or stress relieving solutions, feeling of indulgence and extra sensory benefits, natural-led benefits and convenience of use. Health & beauty and well-being concern become key essentials to motivate activities and product purchases. Therapies from aromatherapy, yoga, and meditation to reflexology are on the uprising trend along with the consumption of natural products. Demand for holistic and well-being products, promising to treat mind and body is booming. Consequently spa and aromatherapy is very popular now.

Bath market, including bar soap and liquid soap was valued at 4,864 million bahts this year. Liquid soap market was valued at 1,300 million bahts and tends to grow at 1,355 million bahts. Consumers have changed to consume liquid soap higher from 23% in 2001 to 26% and 28% in 2002 and 2003 respectively (Bangkok Business, 2004).

Nowadays, skincare market is valued at 6,000 million bahts, which has an average continuous growth of 20% - 25% per year (Post Today, 2004). The main reason is skincare has started to become an important part in the lifestyle and have increased everyday. Many Thais now use lotion all year round, as they believe that skincare products are an everyday essential. Consumers are willing and ready to try various means to improve or to maintain their skin beauty. A product with skincare claim gives a caring and premium feeling to consumers.

In light of the market analysis, Ing-Nature proudly introduces toiletries & spa products that will satisfy the needs of people who are serious about taking care of their

health, beauty and well-being in a natural way with high product quality, the use of natural ingredients, and appearance in attractive packaging design under the brand name “Ing-Nature”.

### **3.2 Product Analysis**

Ing-Nature products focus on bath, skincare, aromatherapy and spa products which put emphasis on quality, use of natural ingredients such as essential oils and plant extracts, and attractive color and packaging. These conform to the main target market, which is teenagers and first jobbers who are 18 - 28 years old.

Ing-Nature was established in July 2003 and first entered the market in October 2003 at Trendy Season Zone in Seacon Square department store. This zone has a concept like Siam Square which is the zone for fashion and teenagers. After that another branch was opened at Robinson Sriracha in February 2004 and joined all branches on Valentine’s Day Festival.

Ing-Nature has been in the market for about 4 months, so “Ing-Nature” brand name is new to customers and is not well known in the market.

Under the brand name of “Ing-Nature”, the products are grouped into two categories:

- (1) Toiletries products: bubble bath gel, body lotion, massage oil and dry shower.
- (2) Spa products: aroma oil, lotion scrub, facemask, seawater spray and mud.

The major features and benefits of Ing-Nature products are natural ingredient, colorful, various scents and rejuvenation of the mind through aroma products. We analyzed the market trends of oversea products, web sites, magazines and brainstorming to invent and innovate products which match our main target.

Price of the product is not expensive but is reasonable when compared with the competitors'. The prices start at 55 bahts to 550 bahts per unit. So the price is compatible to the main target.

Nowadays Ing-Nature products are provided at Seacon Square and Robinson department store.

For the new opening shop at Seacon Square, there was a 10% discount promotion for the period of October to November 2003. There were gift sets and special packages for special occasions such as Christmas, New Year and Valentine's.

### **3.3 Competitive Analysis**

Competition in toiletries & spa products is furious, as companies compete not only against imported brands but also against locally produced brands. There are both direct and indirect competitors such as The Body Shop, Oriental Princess, Boots, L'Occitane, Thann, LifeFord Vivian and Beauty Café.

#### **3.3.1 Direct Competitors**

##### *International Brand*

##### *The Body Shop*

The Body Shop is the biggest competitor from England. It operates in 50 countries with over 1,900 outlets, spanning 25 languages and 12 time zones. The Body Shop is famous for creating a niche market sector for naturally inspired skin and hair care products. The Body Shop introduced a generation of consumers to the benefits of a wide range of best sellers from Vitamin E Moisture Cream to the Tea Tree Oil range, Seaweed, Aloe Vera and Jojoba ingredients.

In Thailand, there are 28 branches, 14 retail stores and 14 corners in the department stores in Bangkok, Chiangmai, Phuket, Hat Yai, Udonthanee and Pattaya.

The main product lines, which may compete with the products of Ing-Nature, are body wash, body lotion, body scrub, massage oil, aroma oil, and mud. The Body Shop was supplied raw materials from more than 40 communities in 25 countries over the world. The Body Shop has concepts such as the materials are natural, against animal testing, support community trade, activate self esteem, defend human rights and protect the planet.

The Body Shop price is high which focuses on middle to high-income customers, partly due to the trade barriers. Taxes are major import barriers for cosmetics to Thailand, because cosmetics are classified as luxury products and are subject to heavy-duty rates.

Last year, the Body Shop focused on the new target of low to medium-income customers, by discounting the price 10% - 40% off. (Thanseththakij, 2003) Moreover, the Body Shop has the promotion "Better Value" every 2 month, which offers about 10 items as bestseller products of the month discounted 20% - 50%. (Prachachart Business, 2003) These promotion consequences from the sale and the market share of the Body Shop has decreased including new competitors have increased every year.

#### *Domestic Brand*

##### *Oriental Princess*

Oriental Princess is a Thailand based pioneer of manufacturing, developing and distributing a full range of beauty and health care products partly extracted from natural floral plants and herbs since April 1990. Its target customer is age 20 up to 45 years old. Oriental Princess' price is not very high since it focuses on middle-income customers. The market share of cosmetic from natural extract was valued at 2 billion bahts and Oriental Princess has 30% of market share.

The products are about 25% to 30% cheaper than international brands. The stores are typically located in high traffic areas, shopping area sor retail areas with standard interior and exterior signage and graphics. Small corners are typically located in the department stores.

Moreover, on its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Oriental Princess changed its logo and renovated all its outlets at the cost of 500,000 to 600,000 bahts per branch. The company added to its range of hair care, facial products, as well as introduce aromatherapy products.

With the main competitor like The Body Shop, new competitors from domestic and oversea is higher. Last year Oriental Princess needs to maintain the leader market and expand the customer base by developing the quality of the product and building brand loyalty. Oriental Princess established the Beauty Institute in cooperation with Japan, USA, France and Italy to develop the product and research for new products for increasing sales to 700 billion bahts at the end of year 2003. (Manager, 2003)

### 3.3.2 Indirect Competitors

*Herbal skin care products produced by local community groups:* such as Phu Fa, the herbal shop and local housewife associations. Since there are plenty of raw materials together with the Thai local wisdom and government support, Thai herbal cosmetic products can be produced at a low cost. However, the existing Thai herbal products from local producers still have disadvantages barring them from becoming world class products, especially in terms of packaging design, customer service, store location and marketing technique. Almost all the products are now scattered around the country in local small shops and not focused on selling as luxury cosmetics or souvenirs representing the country.

*Herbal skin care products existing in the foreign market:* such as Aveda, which is a total body approach to care, using plant-based products and treatments. Aveda's products also include salon and spa. Its target is to a niche group, who are concerned with beauty and environmental concern. It focuses on treatment quality more than positioning as a luxurious souvenir. The product design is quite simple. However, the products have not been introduced to Thail market.

*Non-herbal skin care products:*

(1) Imports of well-known, top of the line, expensive brands: such as Estee Lauder, Shiseido, Lancome, Clinique, La Parie, Bobbi Brown, Havana Cosmetics, L'Occitane, Boots and H2O. Some of these brands occasionally launch cosmetics with natural ingredients, but normally not pure extracts.

(2) Local manufacturing of products of Thai brand names: such as Thann, LifeFord Vivian and Beauty Café. Only a few of them manufacture for export. Raw materials used in make-up production are largely imported from the USA and France.

Mistine and U-Star is marketed by direct sales. Its products are locally manufactured. Prices are reasonable and correspond with market expansion. The target is low to middle-income customer group.

(2) Local manufacturing of foreign patented brand concessions: such as AVON, Ponds, Oil of Olay, Nevia, Johnson & Johnson, Citra, Vaseline, Lux, Shokubutsu and Dove are mass market and self service products sold through supermarkets. The target groups are low to medium-income customers.



### 3.4 “Ing-Nature” SWOT Analysis

#### *Strengths*

- (1) Our company emphasizes on quality product and use of natural ingredients such as mineral rich mud from the Dead Sea, and we use pure mud which is different from the competitors’.
- (2) Committed to product innovation and development such as seawater spray, which helps in relaxing, and refreshing with non-alcoholic herbal mists. It contains deep-sea mineral ingredients in order to activate skin cells and help heal dry or rough skin.
- (3) Attractive colorful packaging and effective use of graphic design make the products modern and more appealing to the target group.
- (4) We offer many scents of products in order to match the customers’ preferences, which continuously changes all the time, such as we have the concept of bath and lotion as “7 colors & 7 fruity fragrances” for 7 days each. We have 7 bubble bath gels and lotions, which have 7 colors and 7 scents; strawberry, citrus, cherry, green apple, peach, blueberry and grape. For aroma oil, we have eucalyptus, relax, slimming, lemongrass and tea tree oil.
- (5) Reasonable price when compared to the competitors’.

#### *Weaknesses*

- (1) There are many companies in this industry, which have been established for many years. These companies are well known and have high reputation. This totally affects the company because we are new entrance in this business.
- (2) Ing-Nature is a new brand name and newcomer in this industry, so there is lack of brand awareness and lack of experience in this field of business.
- (3) The company has limited investment, so

- (a) we do not have enough funds to invest in all production processes. We have to do outsourcing for some processes in production.
- (b) we can order low production and have no power to make the manufacture committed in only our brand.
- (c) high production cost because of low production.
- (d) we face the problem of expanding the distribution channel. It is an important factor that can make the customer know us very well.
- (e) There is no serious and continuous communication to the market.

#### *Opportunities*

- (1) The government has many policies to support SMEs such as establishing Financial Consulting Center for SMEs, reducing interest of loan, which makes people interested in SMEs, etc.
- (2) Because the economy in Thailand is better now, the standard of living has improved steadily, and consumers have more power of buying.
- (3) According to secondary data, now the skincare and spa market have increasingly more value than the last few years.
- (4) Today's customers have become more health and beauty conscious. They are progressively looking toward internal as well as external well-being, hence the growth of the natural and therapeutic trend. Aromatherapy has been a key area of growth. This has developed in the Western countries for a long time ago.
- (5) Teenagers and first jobbers are more interested in cosmetics, skincare products and spa, so our products can satisfy their wants.

### *Threats*

- (1) In this market, there are many competitors, both locally produced brands and imported brands, who are furious, who have large budgets and good support from their mother company.
- (2) Customers might compare brands from abroad with domestic brands. They might perceive that imported brands have better quality than domestic brands.
- (3) Most teenagers and first jobbers in skincare and toiletries market don't have brand loyalty and together with many new products in the market they can try and switch to other brands easily.



## **IV. ING-NATURE MARKETING PLANS**

In planning strategic marketing of Ing-Nature, we have the objective to increase sales by 10% within 1 year. This will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2004 until the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2005. Because our brand is a new comer in this business coupled with a lot of competitors, the sales is still low and the brand is not well known in the market. So we must increase sales, which is the key importance for Ing-Nature to continue existence in the market.

### **4.1 Marketing Strategy**

After setting the marketing objective to increase sales by 10% within 1 year, the next step is planning strategic marketing to achieve our objective. So, strategic marketing planning project for “Ing-Nature” bath & spa products from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2004 until the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2005 is as follows:

#### **4.1.1 Product Strategy**

Product is the first and most important element of marketing mix. From many concepts of marketing mix the product is not only the good that can be offered to a market to satisfy a want or need but it also includes physical goods, qualities, features and characteristics of good, including brands, packages and services such as distribution, repairs or guarantee of lost or defect. Production and development of products should consider the elements that influence decision-making and satisfaction of the consumer.

#### **Product Description & Differentiation**

Ing-Nature comprises of many products which can be grouped into two categories as toiletries & spa products.

### *Toiletries Products*

We provide Bubble Bath Gel and Body Lotion with the concept of “7 colors & 7 fruity fragrances” for 7 days each for various wants of consumers. Moreover, the color matches the day in the week. Teenagers and first jobbers who are the main target can choose and enjoy the various scents of bubble bath gel and body lotion. Most competitors have only a few scents of fragrance.

*Bubble Bath Gel* is a light foaming body wash combined with suspended, emollient-rich Vitamin E beads. It refreshes the skin with extracts of fruits.

Ing-nature *Body Lotion* is a luxurious way to nourish the skin while smoothing away dryness. We combine a cool, uplifting fruity fragrance with natural moisturizers to keep the skin soft and moisturized.

*Massage Oil* - is a passionate and sensual blend, and consumers can enjoy the warm oil which leaves the skin soft and silky smooth. There are many scents such as tea tree massage oil, peach massage oil, etc. This scented massage oil makes the consumer's natural beauty radiate. The ingredients used are Mineral oil, Moisturizer, Vitamin E, Essential oil, and Macadamia oil, which are high quality and natural oils.

With the nail fashion of today, women like to paint their nails and always change the color or the decorative design. This leads to fragile or weak nails which become an ugly yellow color; so, they must paint it to cover their ugly nails. There are not many nail treatment products and consumers do not have much choice. Most products are like hand lotion or foot lotion but not specific for nail treatment.

*Nail Treatment* is our product which can nourish the nails. The moisturizer is blended with jojoba glaze<sup>R</sup> which penetrates and conditions fingernails, as well as providing glaze and build to the nails.

And the last one is *Refreshing Gel* which is a new innovation product. When in a rush, consumers can use refreshing gel in order to wipe out germs and sweat when they have no time or cannot take a bath. The special benefit is it can kill germs in 30 seconds with a lightly scented refreshing gel. The consumer can refresh and clean their skin in the simplest way. The moisturizer keeps the skin soft and smooth, too. In the market, there is only hand gel without water.

### *Spa Products*

*Pure Dead Sea Mud* - The mineral rich mud from the Dead Sea will enhance consumer's bathing with healthy mineralizing, revitalizing, energizing, detoxifying and stimulating properties for the body and soul. We use Pure Dead Sea Mud 100% with positive effects of essential minerals found in the richest mineral mud on planet. This is the great benefit for the consumer, because no chemicals are used.

*Sea Water Spray* – This product is energy refreshing and relaxing with non-alcoholic herbal mists. It contains deep-sea mineral ingredients to activate skin cells and help heal dry or rough skin. There are other similar products like this such as mineral water spray but with our product, deep-sea extract which has many more beneficial minerals than just mineral water is used.

*Face Mask* – With this product, consumer's do not need to go to a spa outside, and pay a high cost for their face mask. They can buy our product and can do it easily at home by themselves. With organic silt, it is rich in nourishing minerals and vitamins, which help skin to be hydrated and nourished. Most facemask products are imported brand, which are expensive.

*Lotion Scrub* is a combination of lotion and scrub. It is a unique blend of natural rich emollient oil which banishes dry, rough skin, leaving the skin soft, silky, and smooth, with a fresh scent.



For *Aroma Oil*, we provide 4 scents of oil. First scent is *Eucalyptus*; which is distilled from the leaves of trees grown in Spain. Eucalyptus is fresh, stimulating and clearing. Therefore, it is useful in massage blends for muscular fatigue, and helps to soothe, and reduce inflammation, promoting healthy circulation and healing and reducing pain. Eucalyptus scent is also good for cold, coughing, poor circulation, scars/wound/stretch marks, and antibacterial. The second scent is *Relax* which promotes relaxation and a sense of peace after a stressful day. This beautiful essential oil has been used to reduce depression, anxiety, stress and insomnia. The third scent is *Lemon grass* which hydrates the skin with deep moisturizing oil with added delight of a lasting fragrance. This lemongrass sage is a refreshing blend of uplifting lemongrass and vitalizing sage. This scent can be used for cheering, and energizing, as well as an insect repellant. And the last scent is *Slimming*. This special formula is specially formulated, for diminishing cellulite and stimulating the skin to a firming figure. The whole body will benefit from this individual formulated formula. For all the scents of aroma oil, natural ingredients such as Mineral Oil, Moisturizer, Vitamin E, Essential oil, and Macadamia oil are used.

#### Brand Positioning

Brand positioning of Ing-Nature product is used in terms of natural ingredients. The name “Ing- Nature” has an oriental sound to the touch of nature and generates an image of flourishing, refreshing and relaxing. “Ing” stands for “inner natural glow” meaning ones who are healthy and have a natural beauty, that enhances “beauty within the mind and soul”. And all of these are the characteristics which are strongly represented in our brand position. Our products are for the one, who cares for beauty, wealth and nature.

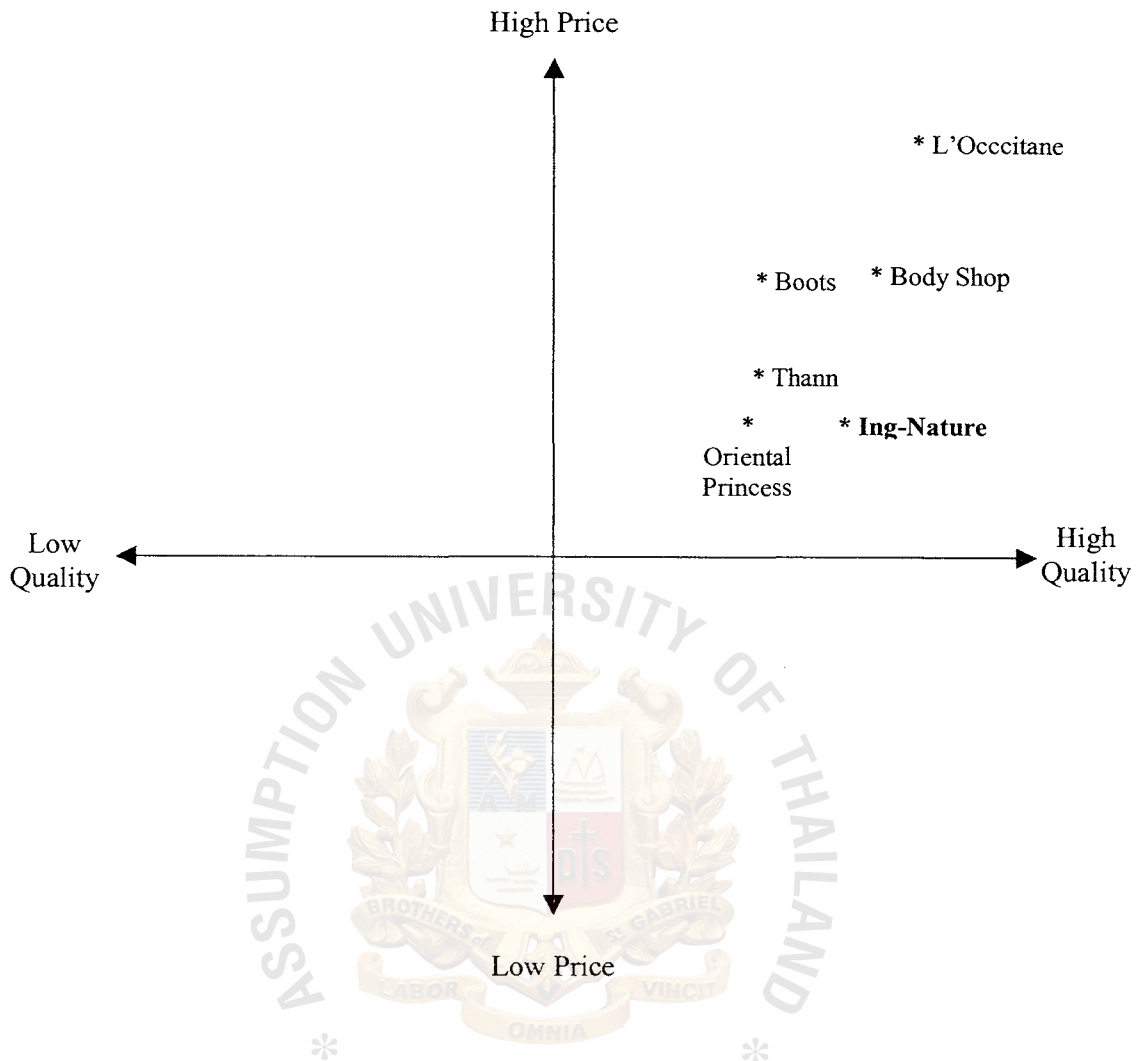


Figure 2.8. Positioning Map.

### Brand Personality

Colorful and attractive packaging and effective use of graphic design and material make the products cool and fashionable which is a e rising trend nowadays. These elements match the personality of the main target group, teenagers and first jobbers most of whom like beauty, trend and fashion. Maholta (1998) had the idea that the more we can build brand personality same or similar to the customer's personality, the more customers like to buy the products which match them.

However, brand positioning and brand personality have effects to the product such as the design, color, feature, and other brand elements. In addition, communication must always have the same direction to build brand identity and have physical powerful which can help the customer's perception and can remind them.

From the strategies that are mentioned above, it is seen that Ing-Nature is developing proper products and can build the most satisfaction of the customer. These are the same as the concept of product life cycle that a product which is in the introduction stage is always developing for the most benefit to the customers.

#### 4.1.2 Price Strategy

We use the going-rate pricing strategy. The company based the price largely on competitors' prices, which might be the same or less than major competitors. Because the main target is teenagers and first jobbers, we cannot charge a high price. Table 4.1 shows Ing-Nature's price compared with the competitors' price.

Table 4.1. Ing- Nature Price Compared With The Competitors' Price.

No.	Brands	Bath		Lotion		Massage Oil		Aroma Oil		Mud		Body Scrub	
		Baht	ml	Baht	ml	Baht	ml	Baht	ml	Baht	ml	Baht	ml
1.	Beauty Café	220, 240	200	220	130	900	250	900	250	-	-	900	250
2.	Body Shop	320	250	490	250	450, 590	150, 200	480	15	1,390	320	1,390	320
3.	Boots												
	-Botanics	350	250	280	250	-	-	-	-	450	500	495	400
	-Natural Collection	180	250	180	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	350	400
	-The Spa	200	200	200	200	-	-	-	-	495	325	495	455
*4.	Ing-Nature	150	250	170	250	290	250	350	100	550	220	350	220
5.	Life Ford Vivian	150	250	250	250	600	250	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	L'Occitane	875	250	1000	250	1000	250	-	-	-	-	1,850	400
7.	Oriental Princess	135	250	165	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.	Thann	290	330	390	330	450	310	-	-	-	-	795	500

#### 4.1.3 Place Strategy (Channel Distribution)

The objectives of place strategy in this project are as follows;

- (1) We will distribute more channels by focusing on department stores such as The Emporium, Central and Robinson where there is high potential of purchasing.
- (2) We will provide personal selling in charge of introducing and suggesting our products, taking care of customers, cultivating client relationships and increasing customer satisfaction.
- (3) We will provide channels to salons and spa shops where they have the same target like our products. Salons and spas are other channels where hair maker and therapist are potential influencers and introducers of the product. Ing-Nature aims to place the shelf for selling the products in salons and spa shops especially at Siam Square. So this is a channel distribution, which can direct more to our target and consumers.
- (4) We will provide new shelves in order to differentiate from other brands. Because the competitors have the products and packages, we aim to have our space and special shelves with a basin. Customers can try our products that can make them feel nourished, soft, refreshed, relaxed, etc. We will provide our shelves to every distribution channel. These can be channels of distribution and also be channels of communication.

#### 4.1.4 Promotion Strategy

We use the pull strategy and the IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) strategy as tools to communicate with the customer in the same direction. These can create brand awareness. Marketing communication tools used consistently are advertising, sponsorship, sales promotion, event marketing and public relations under the proposed budget of 200,000 bahts.

## Advertising

### *Magazine*

Magazine is the advertising medium that can build brand awareness and good image for the main target group. This media is chosen because it is the most effective in reaching the specified target market. It does not only capture their attention once, but several times. And may not only capture one reader, but several readers too. Magazine can also give full information on benefits of the product. Magazine is divided into many segments and each segment has its own target group. The magazine that we select is a popular magazine and well known among our target market. So we choose to advertise in Cleo magazine with full page/four color in June 2004. The advertising rate is 37,800 bahts. Cleo magazine's issue dates is at the beginning of the month with the number of circulation (including members) at 120,000 issues.

### *Promotion Catalog*

We will advertise in the promotion catalog of the department stores, Robinson and Seacon Square, where they have Ing-Nature products. This promotion catalog can create brand awareness and increase the sales of Ing-Nature especially on special occasions. This advertisement has no cost, so we can advertise on every occasion such as Summer festival, Winter festival, Christmas, New Year, Valentine festival and Anniversary festival. There is no cost for this media because it is the promotion of the department store.

### *Sponsorship*

### *Television*

Television is the mass media and it has high penetration rate at 93% of Thai households. Most of them use their free time in front of television. It is a high medium that combines sign, sound and all movements to easily demonstrate to the customer. We



will be the sponsorship of Ing-Nature products by focusing on Samakom Chomdao Program on channel 3, which has Ms. Cathreeya McIntorch (Mam) and Mrs. Surivipa Kultangwattana (Mam) to be the master of ceremonies. They will be honored guests of Ing-Nature products and say thanks to Ing-Nature sponsorship.

And we also will be the sponsor on Channel V program on UBC channel 48, which has teenagers like Ms. Nadia Nimitvanich and others to be masters of ceremonies. Ing-Nature product will be used as a reward for the game period. And master of ceremonies such as Nadia will say thanks to Ing-Nature in order to be the sponsorship.

We will be the sponsorship on Samakom Chomdao Program and Channel V program from June 2004 till May 2005. There is no cost of advertising because there is no advertising posters, or pictures. We are only the sponsorship of Ing-Nature products, which has a value of not less than 1,000 bahts per set per month. The budget for this project is 9,600 baht (cost of product only).

#### *Magazine*

We will be the sponsorship of Ing-Nature products on Cleo and Cosmopolitan magazine. Cleo magazine has a column by giving opportunities for the readers to play games or mail back the answer of the monthly question, which has various games and the winner will get the prize. The column will identify the prize of the month, and have the picture of the products too. We will be the sponsor from June 2004 till May 2005. There is no cost of advertising because we are only the sponsorship of Ing-Nature products, which has a value of not less than 1,000 bahts per set per month. The budget is 9,600 bahts (cost of product only).

### *Dutchie Boy and Girl Contest*

In October of every year, the Dutchie Company has the Dutchie Boy and Girl Contest for searching new presenters of Dutchie product. We will be the sponsorship of Ing-Nature product in October 2004. This contest is for teenagers who are aged not more than 20 years and they are our target group. There is a live show in the last round of contest on TV, which is a way in communicating to a large main target group simultaneously. We will offer Ing-Nature products valued at 2,000 bahts each to the winner Dutchie Boy and Girl. The cost of this project is 1,600 bahts (cost of product only). This project will create brand awareness and good image of Ing-Nature brand to the main target.

### *Sales Promotion*

#### *Gift Set*

For sales promotion, we have gift sets for special occasions such as Mother's day, Christmas, New Year or Valentine festival. On special occasions, customers like to give gifts to their lover, friend or family. We will offer gift sets with special packaging for special occasions at a special price. Consumers prefer to buy gift sets because of beautiful packaging and lower price when compared with buying one item only. We will provide gift sets in August 2004 (Mother's day), November – December 2004 (Christmas and New Year festival) and February 2005 (Valentine festival). The budget for special packages of gift set is 15,000 bahts.

#### *Membership Card*

When customers buy 1,000 bahts worth of the product, they can apply for Ing-Nature membership. They will receive a membership card for 5% discount for the next buying. From the back of the card has 10 circles, which customers will get 1 stamp for 300 bahts buying. When they collect 10 stamps within 1 year, they can redeem one set

of Ing-Nature Bubble Bath Gel & Body Lotion 250ml free. This membership card & collecting card will help to increase sales and influence continuous buying and create customers brand loyalty. The period for this project is 1 year (June 2004 – May 2005) with a budget of 8,000 bahts (cost of card and product).

## Public Relations

### *Magazine*

We will use public relations by advertising in Cleo and Cosmopolitan magazine. These magazines have many columns, which focus on fashion, health, and beauty. There are buying guide column, beauty suggestion column, best gets column, etc, which will introduce the products and where to buy. There is no cost for this media. We just send the products to the magazine every month, June 2004 – May 2005, and they will introduce in a suitable column with a picture of the product and Ing-Nature brand name. The budget of this project is 6,000 bahts (cost of product only). This media can create brand awareness, good image of brand and influence the main target in buying our products.

## Event Marketing

### *Workshop*

We will provide “Ing-Nature Beauty & Spa Workshop” for educating about beauty and spa at the point of sale, where the personal selling will introduce our products, educate the use of product and beauty to customers. When the customers come to the booth, the personal seller will educate and demonstrate the direction of use and introduce special tips of beauty to the main target group. We will provide the workshop on Sundays of June, and November 2004 and April 2005, which totals 12 times with a budget of 24,000 bahts. This workshop will increase sales and give the

right information about the products including creating good relationship with the brand product and the customer too.

#### *Packaging Design Contest*

We will prepare “Ing-Nature Packaging Design Contest” for Valentine gift set. We will give the contest information on the website of Ing-Nature and will distribute the flyer at Siam Square and the point of sale. Interested people can send the packaging design to the point of sale at the department store. The winner will get a scholarship worth 10,000 bahts, and the packaging design will be used for Valentine gift set festival in February 2005 with the winner’s name on it. The period of this contest starts from August to October 2004, and the winner will be announced on 15 November 2004. The budget of this project is 15,000 bahts. This project can create brand awareness and good image of brand and can also create good relationship with the brand owner and the customer too.

#### *Product Manuals*

We will make product manuals such as leaflet, postcard, poster, flyer or brochure to identify the product description, directions to use or the benefits of the main ingredients. This tool can influence the customer in order to try our products. This will be available at the point of sale. The budget of product manuals is 15,900 bahts.

#### *Internet*

We will have the website [www.ing-nature.net](http://www.ing-nature.net). Website is a world wide program that everyone knows and can reach. This website is one of channel of distribution for communicating to the main target easily and promptly. It can create brand awareness and persuade buying too. Our website provides all information about Ing-Nature such as company profile, products descriptions, new product, benefits for users, tips for skincare, hot new collection, special promotion, CRM, activate information for

membership, What's news in Ing-Nature and comment ideas of customers. We will continuously update information and picture of new products and special event or promotion to our customers who leave their e-mail address. We provide customer attraction in games, which is a way to recruit new customers. The website will be launched in June 2004. The budget of this project is 7,500 bahts, with is the cost of website at 1,500 bahts per year. This does not include web design cost because we can do it by ourselves, and the budget of activities such as games is 6,000 bahts.

Moreover, we will link our website with [www.sanook.com](http://www.sanook.com) and [www.siam2u.com](http://www.siam2u.com), which are popular websites in Thailand, for advertising our product. The cost of this link is 12,500 bahts per website per month. We will link in June - July 2004, so the total cost of this media is 50,000 bahts.



Table 4.2. Promotion Strategy For June 2004 – May 2005.

Promotion Strategy	Activities	2004								2005				
		Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	
Advertising	1. Cleo Magazine	↕												
	2. Promotion Catalog of Department Store	↕											↕	
	3. www.sanook.com and www.siam2u.com	↕	↕											
Website	4. www.ing-nature.net	↕											↕	
	5. Samakom Chomdao and Channel V	↕											↕	
Sponsorship	6. Cleo and Cosmopolitan Magazine	↕											↕	
	7. Dutchie Boy & Girl Contest					↕								
Sale Promotion	8. Gift Set			↕				↕			↕			
	9. Membership card and collecting card	↕											↕	
Public Relation	10. Cleo and Cosmopolitan Magazine	↕											↕	
Event Marketing	11. Ing-Nature Beauty & Spa Workshop	↕						↕	↕			↕		
	12. Ing-Nature Packaging Design Contest			↕										
Product Manual	13. Leaflet, postcard, brochure	↕											↕	



## 4.2 Budget Allocation

The strategic marketing communication tools for planning the project for “Ing-Nature” toiletries & spa products can be allocated as advertising 43.90%, website 3.75%, sponsorship 10.40%, sale promotion 11.50%, public relation 3%, event marketing 19.50% and others 7.95%, the details of which are as follow:

### Advertising

• Cleo Magazine	37,800
• Promotion Catalog of Department Store	0
• www.sanook.com website	25,000
• www.siam2u.com website	<u>25,000</u>
Total cost for advertising	<u>87,800</u>

### Website

• www.ing-nature.net website	1,500
• Budget for activities in website	<u>6,000</u>
Total cost for website	<u>7,500</u>

### Sponsorship

• Samakom Chomdao Program	4,800
• Channel V Program	4,800
• Cleo Magazine	4,800
• Cosmopolitan Magazine	4,800
• Dutchie Boy & Girl Contest	<u>1,600</u>
Total cost for sponsorship	<u>20,800</u>

**Sale Promotion**

• Gift Set & special packaging	15,000
• Membership card	<u>8,000</u>
Total cost for sale promotion	<u>23,000</u>

**Public Relation**

• Cleo and Magazine	3,000
• Cosmopolitan Magazine	<u>3,000</u>
Total cost for public relation	<u>6,000</u>

**Event Marketing**

• Ing-Nature Beauty & Spa Workshop	24,000
• Ing-Nature Packaging Design Contest	<u>15,000</u>
Total cost for public relation	<u>39,000</u>

**Others**

• Product manuals	<u>15,900</u>
Total cost for others	<u>15,000</u>

<b>Grand Total Cost</b>	<b><u>200,000</u></b>
-------------------------	-----------------------

### 4.3 Evaluation of Marketing Plans

In the marketing planning project for “Ing-Nature” toiletries & spa products, we utilize several marketing communication tools, which can be called as integrated marketing communications (IMC). These consist of advertising, sponsorship, sales promotion, event marketing, public relation, personal selling and product manual. Therefore, it must evaluate the effectiveness of the project, whether it can achieve the company’s objective in order to increase current sales by 10% within next year (June 2004 – May 2005) or not.

#### The Objective of Marketing Communication Planning Project

- (1) To create brand awareness for Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products.
- (2) To generate positive brand image for Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products.
- (3) To encourage more brand usage among target market of Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products.

#### Evaluation Methods

In evaluation of the marketing planning project for Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products, there are 2 methods:

##### *Pre-Test*

This test will be used for evaluating the project briefly, by evaluating the understanding of the consumer on how they understand the marketing communications planning project such as brand positioning, and the concept of product. All of these are for studying how the consumers accept and understand the product concept or not. This can reduce the risk of problems in marketing process. The tools that are used in pre-test are such as focus group, which will be provided on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2004 at Anna’s Café, Saladaeng branch. The representatives of our target are about 15 – 20 persons, which will be divided into 2 groups. We will interview and explain the concept of the

marketing communication planning project broadly. Then, we will evaluate the understanding and listen for suggestions, in order to improve the project most efficiently and effectively.

### *Post-Test*

After we carry out the work according to the marketing planning project, we need to evaluate for the achievement of the project. The tools are used in post-test are such as;

- (1) Evaluating the total sales of the past operating year in order to see whether the sales have increased up to 10% or not. This will be evaluated after the plan finishes on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2005.
- (2) Observing from the place of selling both a Seacon Square and Robinson in order to see whether more target consumers come to buy our product or not.
- (3) Evaluating from the amount of consumers who enter the website [www.ing-nature.net](http://www.ing-nature.net) and the number of e-mails by which consumers give suggestions or ideas. This will be checked and evaluated every month.

Furthermore, we will do a survey research, by using a questionnaires as a tool in research with the target market, in order to evaluate the level of brand awareness, and whether the number of target usage has increased or not, the consumers' behavior, attitude, knowledge, beliefs, the consumers' preferences and the satisfaction media exposures, the consumers' purchasing and usage behavior. This research will be done in June 2005.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

This strategic marketing planning project for Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products is planned in order to create brand awareness and to generate positive brand image for “Ing-Nature” brand, including encouraging more brand usage among the target market, which is teenagers and first jobbers who are 18 - 28 years old.

In this project, literature review on branding, which is a major issue in product strategy is first studied. Our brand positioning is the attribute positioning in terms of natural ingredients. We use colorful and attractive packaging, which has brand personality in order to correspond to our target’s personality. This will make the consumer understand and have good attitude toward our brand. Consumer’s perception, attitude, involvement and buying behavior concept, which are the necessary components are studied in order to understand the consumer’s behavior.

Marketing communication tools used in this project are advertising such as magazine and promotion catalog of the department store. This communication objective is to create brand awareness. Other tools used are sales promotion such as gift set for special occasions, which can rapidly stimulate buying decision-making, and membership card and collecting card, which can influence continuous buying and create customer brand loyalty. Event marketing such as workshop and contest, which can make good relationship between consumer and brand product, is also used. Personal selling can introduce and suggest the product to customer and the product manual, which identified the details and use of the product, for stimulating the consumer to try more of our product. Furthermore, Internet and website is the other communication that can be the distribution channel to reach our target market more.

The strategic marketing planning project for Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products was aimed to develop an integrated marketing communications (IMC) plan for Ing-Nature brand. Based on the study results, the IMC plan was formed. A marketing objective was to increase current sales by 10% within next year. Furthermore, the whole marketing plan was planned, which goes together with effective communication tools under the proposed budget of 200,000 Baht.

## **5.2 Limitations of the Study**

In studying the consumers' behavior of target market and the market situation, we use only secondary data such as publications, magazine, news, and the Internet, which may not enough for the research. We did not emphasize on the consumer's attitudes, so that each aspect cannot be specified.

## **5.3 Recommendations for Further Study**

From the limitations above, this project emphasizes mainly on the marketing plan, and we did not emphasize on the consumers' behavior and the consumers' attitude. So we may not know the behavior, attitude, or feeling of the consumer exactly. For example, whether the target consumers will prefer to use our product or not, or the target consumers' behavior in watching television, reading magazines or listening to the radio and the consumer will have a good attitude toward that media or not.

So, we should have a marketing research such as questionnaires, to collect primary data, in order to evaluate the consumers' knowledge, behavior, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, satisfaction media exposures, purchasing and usage behavior. In addition, we should have a qualitative research such as focus group in order to encourage free and easy discussion, hoping the target group will reveal deep feelings and thoughts so as to understand the consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. The results can be analyzed in order to improve the product and the project.



For the marketing planning project of Ing-Nature toiletries & spa products, this is just a short-term planning or a 1-year planning. So we should have a long-term plan and a back up plan in case this plan does not work.

Marketers can use this plan as a guideline and adapt it for planning strategic marketing for other products as well.



## APPENDIX A

ING-NATURE LOGO, PRODUCTS & SHOP



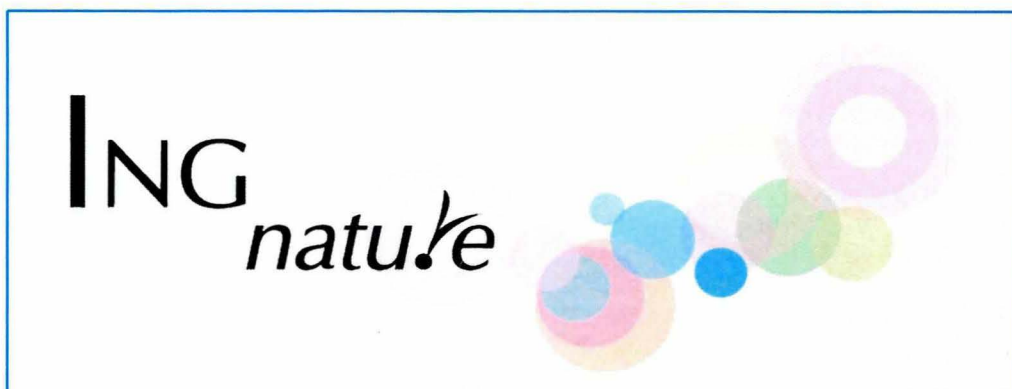


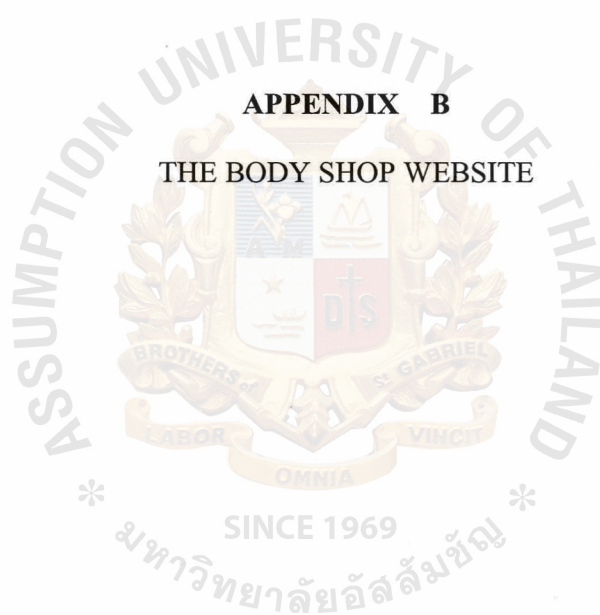
Figure A.1. Ing-Nature Logo.



Figure A.2. Ing-Nature Products.



Figure A.3. Ing-Nature Shop at Seacon Square.



## APPENDIX B

### THE BODY SHOP WEBSITE

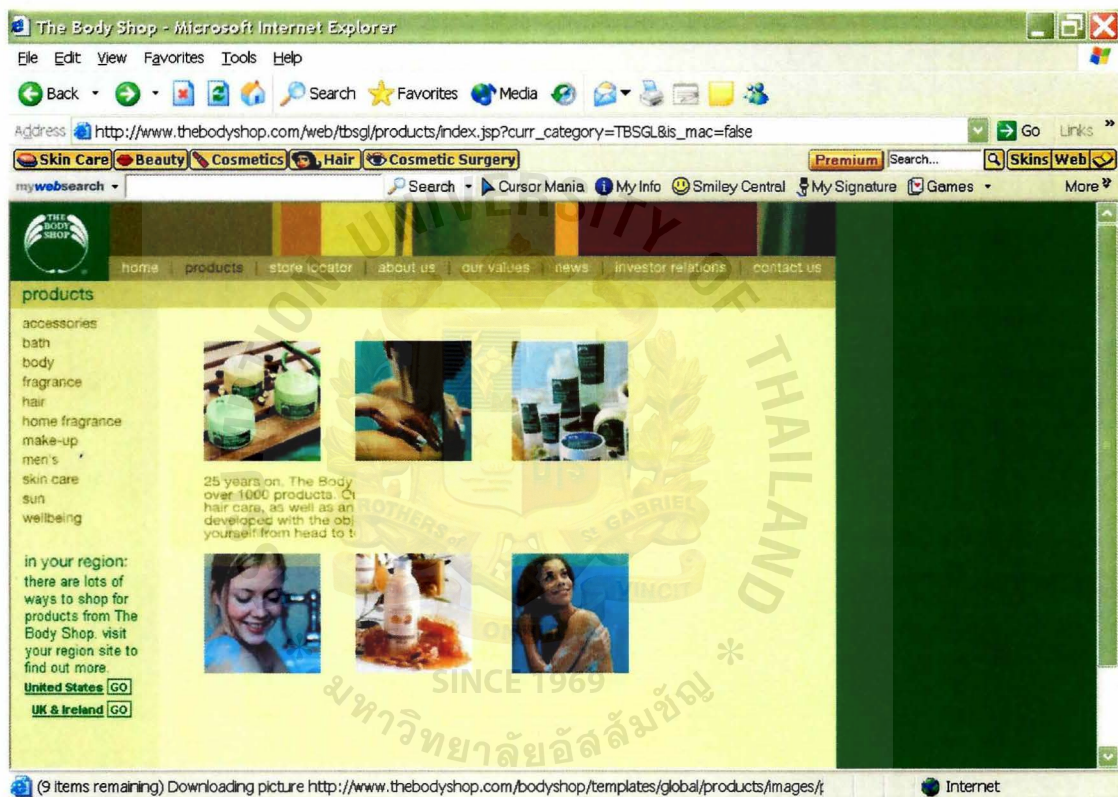


Figure B.1. The Body Shop Website.



**APPENDIX C**

**ORIENTAL PRINCESS WEBSITE**



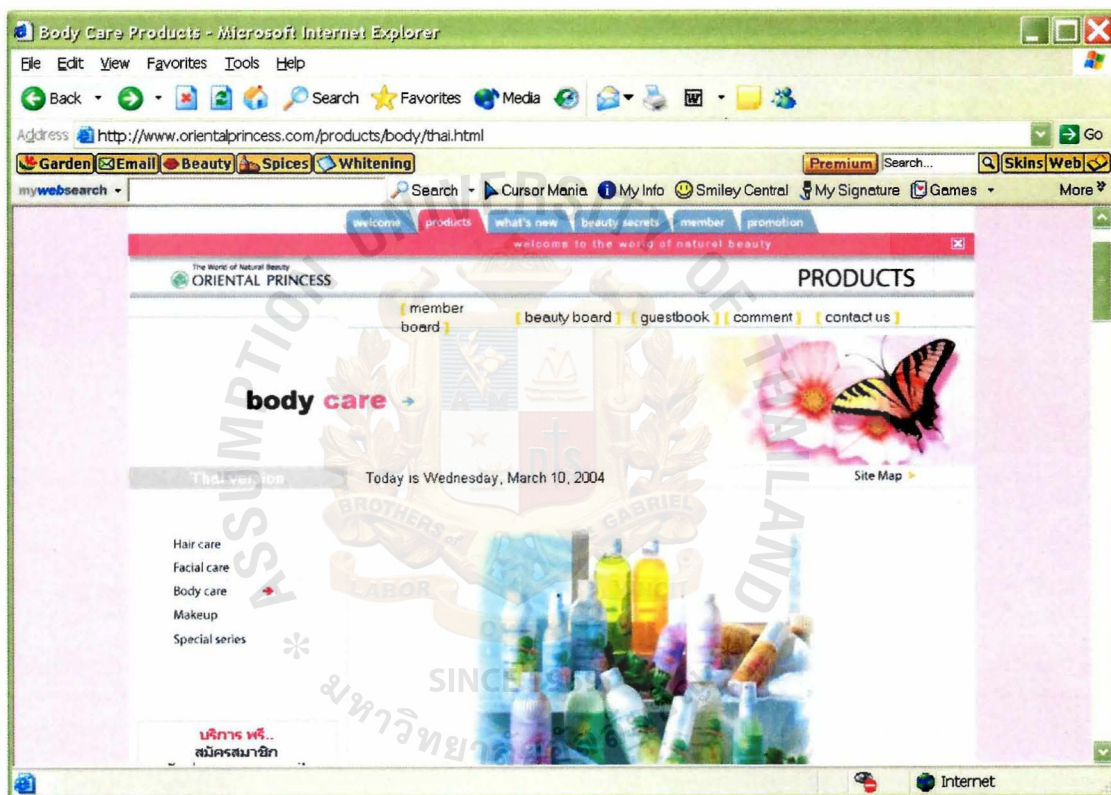


Figure C.1. Oriental Princess Website.



## APPENDIX D

THANN WEBSITE

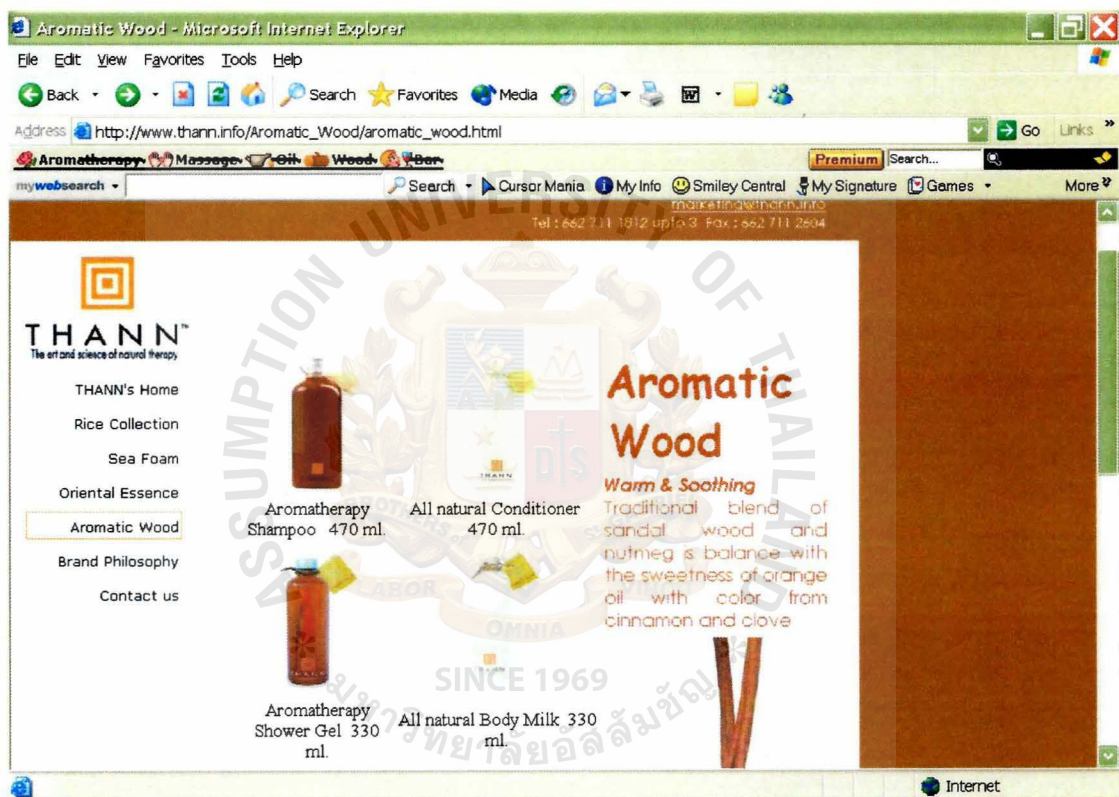


Figure D.1. Thann Website.

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