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ANALYZING THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF INFORMATION THAT
IS PRESENTED IN THAI TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies

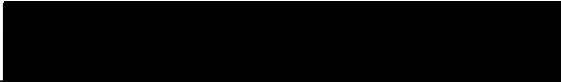
by
Oranee Supthawechaikul
December 2002

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Approved by:


Mary Fong/ Chair/ Communication

11/26/02
Date


Nabil Y. Razzouk, Marketing


Mo Bahk, Communication

ABSTRACT

The advertisement's message takes on the role of imparting information about the benefits, price, safety, uses, and availability of services and products in order to persuade and introduce products to consumers. "The evidence on consumer attitudes toward advertising shows that consumers prefer advertising that helps in decision making" (Zanot, 1984, p. 4).

On the other hand, the informational advertisement doesn't work very well when the product and service information is too much for a consumer to handle.

The amount of information contained in advertising is an important issue to researchers, critics, and users of advertising. "Almost 60 studies have used a procedure introduced in 1977 by Resnik and Stern to measure the information content of advertising" (Abernethy & Franke, 1996, p. 1). This widely used method of measuring information involves content analysis to determine which types of information are presented in an advertisement.

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First of all, I would like to dedicate this project to my parents, Mr. Kraivudh and Mrs Prapatsorn Supthawechaikul, who gave me the opportunity to compete for the Master degree, and also to thank them personally for all their effort and support throughout my college years. Without their help and especially their support, it is questionable whether I could be in a position to reach up to this point.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my committee chair, Professor Mary Fong, and my committee members, Dr. Nabil Razzouk, and Professor Mo Bahk, who have guided me through the desired outcome.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

An average consumer may think that the purpose of advertisement is to create consumer need for a product or a service; however, "the American association of advertisers holds that advertising is a communication activity" (Rehman, Aw, & Kenna, 1999, p. 347). By itself, the advertisement's message takes on the role of imparting information about the benefits, price, safety, uses, and availability of services and products in order to persuade and introduce products to consumers. "The evidence on consumer attitudes toward advertising shows that consumers prefer advertising that helps in decision making" (Zanot, 1984, p. 4). Beside this, "providing information that differentiates a brand from its competitors tend to increase commercial recall, comprehension, and persuasion" (Stewart & Furse, 1986, p. 23). "A detailed review of audiences' perceptions of commercials reveals the informative/effective factor to be the best predictor of advertising likeability and brand attitudes" (Aaker & Stayman, 1990, p. 7). On the other hand, the informational advertisement doesn't work very well when the product and service information is too much for a consumer to handle.

The amount of information contained in advertising is an important issue to researchers, critics, and users of advertising. "Almost 60 studies have used a procedure introduced in 1977 by Resnik and Stern to measure the information content of advertising" (Abernethy & Franke, 1996, p. 1). This widely used method of measuring information involves content analysis to determine which types of information are presented in an advertisement. "Informational cues in advertising are generally understood to relate to pieces of information relating to the product or service that is being offered" (Resnick & Stern, 1977, p. 50). Resnick and Stern hold that TV advertising may be considered to be informative if it contains at least one informational cue. For example, Price Value, Quality, Special Offers. More informational categories or cues are listed in appendix A

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"Researchers in such fields as advertising, marketing, journalism, and international business have reported their findings in U.S. and international journals, in national and regional conference proceedings, and in unpublished theses and working papers" (Fay & Currier, 1994, p. 20). However, the results reported are diverse because the studies' findings are found to depend on several factors. For example, "product durability or product categories influence measured information level. Besides this, different media type and countries are major factors that influence information level in an advertising.

"The advertising messages change as a product or service moves through the four stages of its life-cycle. At the introduction stage, the advertising message provides the information about the benefits of a new product or a new service" (Rehman, Aw, & Kenna, 1999, p. 348). However, at the decline stage, the advertising message emphasizes lower prices and availability.

Furthermore, the product category being advertised can have a major influence on the objective informational

content. For example, "consumers tend to search more information for durable goods, which often cause high performance and financial risks to consumer and generally considered to be high involvement goods" (Engel, Blackwell, & Minard, 1995), more than nondurable goods. Abernethy and Franke (1996) found that advertisements for durable goods, such as cars, furniture/home furnishings, and electronic contains 35% more information cues than those for nondurable goods, such as food/alcohol/tobacco, and household goods on average. Moreover, this study found that services and institutional advertising tended to contain low amounts of information.

However, it was interesting when Rehman, Aw, and Kennan (1999) found that all TV advertising for cosmetic products, nondurable goods, concerts and exhibition, and real estate in Singapore contained at least one informational cue, while 77 % of TV advertising for durable goods contained at least one cue. The author noted that several of the advertising in the sample were for new products or services; therefore, information content is generally high in advertising in the introductory stage of a product. Also food and beverage, and cosmetic were highly competitive, so these advertising included a great

deal of information regarding price and benefit differentiation.

Also, the medium carrying the advertisement plays a major role in presenting the different levels of information in advertising. "Print media allow almost unlimited message length and processing time, both of which are constrained in the broadcast media by fixed exposure durations" (Abernethy & Franke, 1996, p. 3) Therefore, there is general agreement that print advertisements are able to present more information than broadcast advertisements do. Abernethy & Franke (1996) revealed that outdoor and television advertising contained the least amount of information (1.42 and 1.41 cues, respectively) of the five major media. Newspaper (2.60 cues) and magazine (2.38 cues) advertising average the most information, followed by radio (2.24 cues). Moreover, the type of information differed between advertising media. "Newspapers had the most price, warranty, safety, and new idea information. Magazines led in quality, performance, nutrition, packaging, and research information. Radio led in providing information on components and special offers. Outdoor gave the most information on availability and taste. Television did not lead in any category" (Abernethy & Franke, 1996, p. 10).

Moreover, many studies show differences on the total amount and the types of information presented in advertisement among countries. Differences in information levels may have causes from cultural influences, advertising regulation, and level of economic in each country (Abernethy & Franke, 1996, P. 3). Such difference can be related to Hall's (1976) high context/low context concepts. If counting the informational cues present in advertising, a large number of informational cues may suggest a low context society, whereas a low number of informational cues would possibly suggest a high context culture. However, the number of informational cues may equally be related to uncertainly avoidance that in a largely risk averse culture the consumer may want to have more information about a product than in a less risk averse culture, as suggested by Usunier (1996).

Resnik and Stern (1977) found nearly half of the television advertising on U.S. networks to be informative. Dowling (1980) found 14% of the television advertising in Australia to be informative. While Keown et al. (1992) reported that in 1988, 92% of the commercial in China were informative, but the number dropped to 53% in 1993. Rehman, Aw, and Kenna (1999), examining the informational content of television advertising in Singapore, found that

77% of TV commercials had at least one informational cue. Because Singapore consumers have not had as much exposure to advertising, the Singaporeans are more comfortable with facts and factual information than emotional/lifestyle type message. Moreover, the consumers in Singapore, in general, are price conscious, thus the information about special offers in TV advertising is the most predominant type of information. Enriques (1997) found that almost all Spanish magazines included at least one informational cue (98.7%), while U.S. magazines with at least one criterion accounted for 75%.

If considering from the level of economic development in each country, Abernethy and Franke (1996) found that developed and developing countries had relatively similar numbers of cues on average, 2.08 and 1.92, respectively. The type of information most commonly presented is performance (43%), component (33%), price (25%), quality (19%), and special offer (13%). Developing countries averaged somewhat more advertising information on quality, availability, and independent or company research.

Nowadays, there are several companies that try to market their products to the new target countries in order to sell the products over larger markets. Therefore, there is no doubt that global marketing and advertising are

becoming very important today. However, "these major companies should invest more resource in research because consumers in every country are somewhat different from each other, with different habits, and preferences" (Batra, Myers, & Aaker, 1995, p. 713), so that the marketing and advertising strategy that works in one market may not work in another. "Since advertising attempts to communicate the literal and symbolic meaning attached to a brand, and since cultures differ in the ways in which they construe and communicate meaning, successful advertising obviously requires a thorough understanding of the culture within which that advertising message is communicated" (Batra, Myers, & Aaker, 1995, p. 715).

"Many studies have shown that advertisers in different countries vary in the difference for creating advertising that uses a rational or an informative approach, versus a "softer-sell" emotional or imaged-based approach" (Batra, Myers, & Aaker, 1995, p. 724) because of cultural difference and other factor mentioned above in these countries. For example, "Japanese advertisements tend to be more "indirect," less "pushy," more laden with symbolism, more emotional, more humorous, and less comparative, than advertising in the United State" (Benedetto, Tamate, & Chandran, 1992, p. 45).

Whereas, "French print advertising tends to use less information and more sex appeals (and more humor and emotion), than print advertising in U.S." (Biswas, Olsen, & Carlet, 1992, p. 78). Also, "German advertisements tend to be relatively more direct and factual, using more information" (Graham, Kamins, & Oetome, 1993, p. 11). According to copy-testing research, "Rational advertisements tend to be less attention-getting and less persuasive than emotional and humorous advertisements in the U.K. and France because Europeans are relatively more likely than Americans to view their local advertising as entertaining" (Batra, Myers, & Aaker, 1995, p. 724). Other research has attempted to measure the information content of advertisements in various countries and conclude that "in general, U.S. advertising is less informative than that in Asia, but is more so than that in Europe" (Zandpour, Chang, & Catalano, 1992, p. 32).

Because of such differences in national character and preferences, "it is not surprising that most global companies tend to modify their local advertising to suit these local needs" (Synodinos, Kepwn, & Jacobs, 1989, p. 45) by using the same positioning or theme or creative idea across local markets, but then give the advertising execution or message tactic differently in each local.

Television Advertising in Thailand

Currently, there are seven television station operators in Thailand; six stations of these are free-TV and one is pay-TV called United Broadcasting Corporation Public Company Limited (UBC). Three free-TV stations are privately owned and operated, while Channel 5, 9, and 11 are owned and operated by the military or the state agencies. All stations, except Channel 11 and UBC, are allowed to sell timeslots for advertisements.

For the advertising market, the value and growth rate of the advertising market depends largely on the country's economic condition. After the economic crisis in 1997, the advertising market has sharply declined. However, starting in 1999, there has been an upward trend in advertising spending due to some confidence in the economic recovery. Many companies have budgeted for more advertisements in order to increase their sales and service revenues. According to AC Nielsen, "Thailand's advertising expenditure in 1999 was about 42 billion Baht (Thai currency). The advertising expenditure was increased by 22.72%, or 51 billion Baht in 2000. Advertisement expenditure during the first and third quarter of 2000 had increased by 25% over the same period in 1999, while the growth in the fourth quarter alone was 18%, indicating a

turnaround of the overall market" (Bangkok Post, 2001). The surge in media spending reflected an improvement in the country's economy with higher consumption and brighter prospects in the advertising industry.

Moreover, "in 2000, AC Nielsen found that TV advertising amounted to 30 billion Baht, a 17% increase from 26 billion Baht in 1999, and commanded the largest share, 60%, of the total advertising market. This was due to the fact that this media reaches all target groups in all households" (Bangkok Post, 2001). As a result, television advertising hold the leading position in the advertising market, far ahead of newspaper, magazine, radio, cinema, outdoor, and transit.

On the other hand, we can assume that in a foreign advertiser's point of view, television advertising in Thailand is the most important communication way for them to advertise his/her product to major Thai consumers.

Research Goals

This study explores the message tactic currently used in Thai television advertising in order to better understand and reach Thai consumers through Thai TV advertising. Moreover, the subject about informational TV advertising in Thailand has not been broadly researched;

therefore, this thesis may open up new insight for further study and improvement.

Furthermore, this thesis may well be useful to foreign advertisers seeking to better understand and be informed about current TV commercials in Thailand. Also, this study will be useful to determine a possible future advertising strategy for advertisers seeking to enter the Thai market, or enhance their present understanding of advertising.

Thai TV advertising will be analyzed in how information in TV advertising are informed in each type of product by focusing more narrowly on informational content, and determine the communication patterns used in Thai TV advertising.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The framework and research methodology employed for this study are described in the following sections:

Design

This study is a quantitative research by using content analysis in order to analyze informational TV advertising in Thailand. Content analysis is a research method for "analyzing the symbolic content of any communication" (Singleton et al. 1988,p. 347). The methodology applied in this study follows the guidelines used by previous research studies; specifically, those conducted by Madden, Caballero, and Matsukubo (1986) and Razzouk and Al- khatib (1993) who utilized Resnik, Krugman, & Stern's 1977 Model of Classification of Information Cues (see in appendix B).

In a previous study, Resnik, Krugman, and Stern (1977) the television will be considered informative if it contains at least one informational cue. The amount and the type of information will be analyzed, and will be compared among product types.

Sample

Five hundred TV advertising from four major channels, which are Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 7, and Channel 9 on the network in Thailand were recorded and analyzed between March and May, 2002. To reflect the universality of advertising content with regards to days, times, and channels on each randomly selected day, the TV commercials were recorded at randomly selected times between daytime and nighttime. See Table 1

However, commercials exclusively for a special event and contest were excluded because they are not shown, as often in Thai TV advertising; therefore, the finding will come from the advertising generally shown in Thailand. Since the purpose of the study was to analyze the informational content and not advertising recall and retention, repeated ads were excluded from the study in order to avoid distorting the results.

Table 1. Number of Commercial Per Television Channel

Channel	# of commercial	% of Total
Channel 3	140	28
Channel 5	130	26
Channel 7	125	25
Channel 9	105	21
Total	500	100

Procedure

This type of study is far more limited in its approach, as it is more concerned with the product attributes that are displayed, rather than the entire message. However, it is quite useful in order to evaluate the directness of Thai TV commercial. In order to analyze the results in statistical terms, the data will be coded, and entered into the computer for analysis by using the statistical software program, SPSS for windows.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

In the sample of 500 TV commercials, 166 (33.2%) advertised food and beverages are the most commonly advertised product type on Thai Television. Personal care is the second most common type of Thai TV commercial (23.2%), and automotive/auto care are the third most commonly advertised (8%) on television. Also, 36 (7.2%) advertised manufacturer as institutional advertising. On the other hand, hardware, real estate, and telecommunication (0.4%) seemed to have very little preference among advertisers. The various types of products, services, and institutional advertising categories advertised on Thai television are shown in Table 2.

Moreover, another area, which is interested in this study, was to analyze Thai TV advertising in general. In the sample of 500, the study found that the nature of the commercial in Thailand were most likely to be non-comparative (96.4%). Whereas, very little of the Thai TV Commercials are implied comparative (2.0%), and superlative (1.6%) in the order. See table 3

Table 2. Category of Product, Service, and Institutional Advertising by Television Commercial

Category of product	Frequency	Percent
automotive/auto care	40	8.0
clothing/accessories	10	2.0
electronics	16	3.2
food/beverage	166	33.2
hardware	2	0.4
home appliance/furnishings	4	0.8
laundry and household	32	6.4
medicine	10	2.0
personal care	116	23.2
real estate	2	0.4
Category of Service	Frequency	Percent
banking/finance	10	2.0
education	4	0.8
entertainment	12	2.4
non-profit organization	8	1.6
restaurant	4	0.8
telecommunication	2	0.4
Category of Institutional Advertising	Frequency	Percent
manufacturer	36	7.2
retailer	16	3.2
service	10	2.0
Total	500	100.0

Table 3. Nature of Commercial

	Frequency	Percent
implied comparative	10	2.0
non-comparative	482	96.4
superlative	8	1.6
Total	500	100.0

Table 4 shows that advertising of the product and service usually is noncomparative advertising. There are a few numbers of personnel care commercials (8), and laundry and household commercials (2) using implied comparative strategy. For example, the commercials do not tell the competition names or brands, which are mentioned in the commercial, or the advertised products are mentioned as superlative. Moreover, the superlative strategy is used in personnel care and laundry and household (2) TV commercials as well.

Table 4. Nature of Television Commercial by Category of Product, Service, and Institutional Advertising

	implied comparative	non-comparative	Superlative
Category of product			
automotive/auto care		40	
clothing/accessories		10	
electronics		16	
food/beverage		166	
hardware		2	
home appliance/furnishings		4	
laundry and household	2	28	2
medicine		10	
personal care	8	102	6
real estate	1	2	
Category of Service			
banking/finance		10	
education		4	
entertainment		12	
non-profit organization		8	
restaurant		4	
telecommunication		2	
Category of Institutional Advertising			
manufacturer		36	
retailer		16	
service		10	
Total	10	482	8

Furthermore, most of the Thai TV commercials are likely to use Thai characters, Thai language, and Thai music (83.6%) in order to introduce the products. However, it was found that 9.2% of the advertising sample use Western Characters, but have Thai language in the commercials to gain the customers' attention (See table5). For example, there are 12 advertising in Food/beverage, 10 advertising in personal care, and 8 advertising in automotive/auto care category using western character in Thai language in order to generate the product image as a quality product in a customer perception (see Table 6).

Table 5. Kinds of Characters, Language, or Music used in Thai Television Commercial

	Frequency	Percent
western characters-thai language	46	9.2
japanese characters-thai language	10	2.0
thai characters-thai language- thai music	418	83.6
thai characters-thai language-english music	22	4.4
thai characters-thai language-japanese music	2	0.4
thai characters-thai language-chinese music	2	0.4
Total	500	100.0

Table 6. Kinds of Characters, Language, or Music used in Thai Television Commercial by Category of Product, Service, and Institutional Advertising

Category of Product	Kinds of Characters, Language, or Music						total
	Western character -Thai language	Japanese character -Thai language	Thai character -Thai language - Thai music	Thai character -Thai language -English music	Thai character -Thai language -Japanese music	Thai character -Thai language -Chinese music	
automotive/ auto care	8		24	6	2		40
clothing/ accessories	2		8				10
electronics			16				16
food/ beverage	12	6	144	4			166
hardware	2						2
home appliance/ furnishings			4				4
laundry and household	2		28			2	32
medicine			10				10
personal care	10	2	102	2			116
real estate			2				2
Category of Service							
banking/ finance			6	4			10
education			4				4
Entertainment			8	4			12
non-profit organization			8				8
restaurant	2		2				4
telecommunication			2				2
Category of Institutional Advertising							
Manufacturer	8	2	26				36
retailer			16				16
service			8	2			10
Total	46	10	418	22	2	2	500

Moreover, some of the TV commercial sample uses Japanese Characters in the food and beverage category (6), and Personnel care (2), which have teenagers as the target group. The results of this study is shown in table 6

Another area that was studied involved the analysis of the spokesperson in Thai TV advertising. A significant number of advertising (73.2%) is self-promoted (i.e., the TV commercial does not have an identifiable spokesperson), as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. A Spoke Person in the Commercial

	Frequency	Percent
male parent/grand parent	2	.4
female parent/grand parent	12	2.4
children	42	8.4
non-family expert	10	2.0
self-promoted	366	73.2
endorser/male	26	5.2
endorser/female	28	5.6
celebrity	8	1.6
other	6	1.2
Total	500	100.0

Moreover, the study found that using an endorser (i.e., modeling, movie star) (10.8%) and children (8.4%) as a spokesperson are likely to have a major role in Thai TV commercials. Also, the study found that the number of

male endorser, and female endorser used does not have a major difference in TV commercial.

However, female parent/grandparent is used in the ads (2.4%) more than male parent/grandparent (0.4%).

Even though, family relationships in Thailand likely to have a major role in Thai consumer decision making, but not in advertisers mind because, as a result in table 8, the study found that 88% of the sample does not involve a family scene.

Table 8. Commercial Involve a Family Scene

	Frequency	Percent
yes	60	12.0
no	440	88.0
Total	500	100.0

Another area of interest in this study is to identify how woman was presented in Thai TV commercial. Table 9 shows a large number of ads (63.60%) having women involved in the commercial. 22.40% of this, woman was presented in a non-traditional activity (i.e., Making buying decision, having activities outside the home, and playing sports). Whereas, another 14.8% of woman involved in the commercial was presented as a housewife. Some females (14.4%) was presented as a sex object.

The main objective of this research is to understand the nature and type of information in Thai TV advertising. Among the 500 commercials that were analyzed, 12 commercials (2.4%) did not contain any informational cues. The remaining 488 (97.6%) commercials had at least one informational cue. More than one informational cue was carried in 448 (89.6%). Informational content of the commercials is presented in Table 10.

Table 9. How a Woman is Presented in Thai Television Commercial

	Frequency	Percent
dependency	10	2.0
housewife	74	14.8
a woman as a sex object	72	14.4
a woman in non traditional activities	112	22.4
career oriented	12	2.4
a woman shown as equal to man	36	7.2
other	2	.4
Not presented	182	36.4
Total	500	100.0

Table 10. Number of Cues

	Frequency	Percent
no cue	12	2.4
one cue	40	8.0
two cues	68	13.6
three cues	114	22.8
four cues or more	266	53.2
Total	500	100.0

Table 11 illustrates the frequency of appearance of the fourteen information criteria.

The most predominant type of information in television commercials in Thailand is "packaging". Four hundred and twenty four (84.8%) of the TV commercials illustrates about shape and packaging of the product. The second most frequently offered information was about the "quality" (63.2%) of the product or service. Two hundred and eighty two (56.4%) of TV commercials presented information about the "performance" of the product and service, followed by "component or content" (40.8%), "taste" (20.8%), "availability" (19.8%), and "new idea" (19.2%). Some of the criteria with the lowest frequencies are: "safety" (8.4%), "guarantees or warranties" (6.0%), "company research" (2.8%), and "independent research" (0.4%)

Table 11. Frequency of Appearance of the Fourteen Criteria

Rank	Criteria	# of Ads	%
1	Packaging or shape	424	84.8%
2	Quality	316	63.2%
3	Performance	282	56.4%
4	Component or content	204	40.8%
5	Taste	104	20.8%
6	Availability	98	19.8%
7	New ideas	96	19.2%
8	Price	84	16.8%
9	Special offers	66	13.2%
10	Nutrition	56	11.2%
11	Safety	42	8.4%
12	Guarantees or warranties	30	6.0%
13	Company Research	14	2.8%
14	Independent Research	2	0.4%

It is interesting to note that various product and service commercial in Thailand usually contained at least one informational cue. Information for product and service type is presented in table 12.

However, the study found that 25% of nonprofit organization advertising did not contain any type of information. Moreover, the study found that only 40% of institutional advertising in service contained at least one informational cue.

Table 12. Information by Product Type

Category of Product	no cue	One cue	Two cue	Three cue	Four cues or more	No. of TV Ads.	% of ads with info. cues	% of ads with no cues
automotive/ auto care			4	6	30	40	100%	0%
clothing/accessories			2	2	6	10	100%	0%
electronics			4	4	8	16	100%	0%
food/beverage		8	18	52	88	166	100%	0%
hardware			2			2	100%	0%
home appliance/furnishings					4	4	100%	0%
laundry and household			8	8	16	32	100%	0%
medicine			6		4	10	100%	0%
personal care		2	4	20	90	116	100%	0%
real estate				2		2	100%	0%
Category of Service								
banking/finance		2	2	2	4	10	100%	0%
education				2	2	4	100%	0%
entertainment		4		2	6	12	100%	0%
non-profit organization	2	2	2	2		8	75%	25%
restaurant					4	4	100%	0%
telecommunication				2		2	100%	0%
Category of Institutional Advertising								
manufacturer	2	18	14	2		36	94.45%	5.55%
retailer	2	2	2	6	4	16	87.5%	12.5%
service	6	2		2		10	40%	60%

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

In this study, Thai TV advertising was found to be highly informative. Highly informative in Thai TV commercials may be contributed to some factors. Several of the advertising in the sample were for new products or services. Information content is generally high in advertising in the introduction stage of a product. In the sample advertising for food and beverage, personnel care were highly competitive and included a great deal of information regarding packaging, quality, and performance.

The customers in Thailand, in general, have not had as much exposure to advertising as Americans do. Consequently, Thai customers are more comfortable with facts and factual information than emotional/ lifestyle type messages.

Moreover, because of Thailand's low per capita income, Thai consumers purchase products that represent a high portion of his/her income. Thai consumers therefore need to be very careful in their purchases, and tend to be more involved in buying products than people in developed countries. Thorelli and Sentell (1982) found that the number of information needed before purchasing a major

product is much higher in Thailand than in the more developed countries.

From the analyzed study "packaging and shape" are the most frequent information cues used, followed by "quality" and "performance". Whereas, information cues as "independent research", "company research," and "guarantees or warranties" are lower than 10.0%.

From the result, it is possible to assume that the information about packaging, quality, and performance are important for Thai consumers in order to help them make a buying decision, or to obtain their informational need.

In Thailand, consumers tend to be attracted by prestigious, known brands. "They are more likely to prefer "quality" or established brand names and high-priced item to functionally equivalent items with unknown brand names or lower prices" (Madden, 1998,p. 30).

Because the low level of technological development in Thailand entails heavy reliance on imported technology from developed countries, mainly the United States and Japan. Thai people tend to regard products from a developed country as superior in technology, quality, and image to products that are made locally, and are willing to pay a higher price for them. This may be the reason why

the information about price was used only 16.8% in Thai TV commercials.

Although, "Money-back guarantees are one of the most credible advertising claims to U.S. citizens" (Madden, 1988, p. 56), most Thai people simply do not believe them. Instead, they are influenced by claims that the brand is official product of sports group or an event. Therefore, guarantees or warranties are rarely used in TV advertising.

In the case of American television advertising, Stern and Resnik (1977) reported that food, personal care products, and institutional advertising accounted for 69% of the TV advertising, which is almost the same as in Thailand. Because this study found that these categories represent 68.8% of Thai TV advertising.

The type of health information in personal care product advertisements generally focused on identifying nutrients (e.g.; vitaminE) that were added to a personal hygiene product (e.g.; shampoo), stating that a product (e.g.; lotion, soap) would heal and/or nourish skin, or indicating the product would reduce the incidents of dental caries (e.g.; toothpaste)

Another interesting result found is about the nature of the TV commercial in Thailand. In the analysis, it was

found that most of Thai TV commercials (96.4%) are noncomparative advertising.

Although Comparative advertisements have been widely used in the United States, especially since their use was encouraged in a FTC ruling in the early 1970s. "Estimates suggest that about 30 to 40% of all advertising are comparative" (Donthu, 1992, p. 45). However, in Thailand comparative advertising has been illegal and hence is rarely used.

Moreover, the attitude toward advertising varies according to culture, and in some countries, regulation by the government. The issue of cross-cultural differences in comparative advertising effectiveness is very important. Although Donthu and Naveen (1998) found that recall of comparative advertising was high, consumer attitudes toward comparative advertising was not very positive, especially in countries where comparative advertising are not widely used or are used rarely. Therefore, comparative advertising should be targeted at other countries with caution.

Apparently no one has examined cross-cultural differences in comparative advertising effectiveness. Yet the internationalization of American companies and the trend toward building global products make such

differences very important. As American companies are increasingly advertising their products in other countries, they need to take a critical look at comparative advertising whether comparative advertising can be used in other countries as easily as they are used in the United States or not. Moreover, another important issue is how the customers in other countries react to comparative advertising.

Another result found that in this study is characters, language, or music used in Thai TV commercial, usually TV commercials in Thailand use Thai characters, Thai language, and Thai music. However, some of the advertising using western music, western characters, Japanese music, and Japanese Characters in order to make that advertising to be more impressive or recognized.

During today, Thai teenagers' lives are influenced from Japanese teenagers. They tend to dress alike, they are very similar in the things they find enjoyable. Therefore, some marketers used Japanese characters in order to increase flavor in the product advertised among Thai teenagers.

Some of the advertising shown in Thailand is the same as shown in other countries, such as Pepsi ads, CoCa Cola ads. The only differences are through language translation

and simple, colloquial expressions. Some companies' adept standardized campaigns in order to save money and maximizes profits. "Standardization involves treating the world as one market, ignoring any apparent regional, cultural or national differences, and promoting the firm's output in exactly the same way in all states" (Keegan, 1989).

Standardized marketing can achieve "economy of scale, message consistency, and the ability to attract common, cross-national market segments" (Keegan, 1989).

Moreover, Thai commercials usually do not have an identifiable spokesperson as called self-promoted (73.2%). However, some advertisements use male and female endorsers (10.8%) to persuade the consumers to buy the product. Consequently, Thai viewers tend to be influenced by an endorser's expertise cues because Thai people are more likely to rely on suggestions from personal source of information that will reduce the risk in purchasing products.

In Thailand, the role of families is critically important. Families and obligations often extend to cousins, nieces, nephews, and beyond. One has the responsibilities to one's parent, grandparents, and even ancestors that must be fulfilled. Clearly, marketers need

to understand the role of families in the cultures they serve. For example, in Thailand, compared to the United States, adolescents are much more likely to seek parental advice or to respond positively to advertising with parental figures in the purchase of items.

Moreover, The role of women is changing and expanding throughout much of the world. However, while the study analyzed show more portrayals of women in "non-traditional" roles (22.4%), there is still a strong concern by critics that women are treated as a "sex object" (14.4%) in many advertising.

This thesis may well be useful to advertisers seeking to better understand and be informed about current TV commercials in Thailand. Also, this study will be useful to determine a possible future strategy for advertisers of other countries seeking to enter the Thai market, or enhance their present advertising and understanding.

The globalization of the marketplace is arguably the most important challenge facing companies today. Globalization affects consumer behavior and attitudes in many ways, in that they transcend national borders. Thus, a major challenge facing international marketer is to identify global market segments and reach them with

products, marketing programs, and advertising message that meet the common needs of the consumers.

APPENDIX A
INFORMATION CATEGORIES IN
TELEVISION ADVERTISING

Information Categories in TV Ads

1. Price: cost of the product; value-retention capability
2. Quality: Object evaluation of workmanship; engineering; durability, excellence of materials; structure superiority; superiority of personnel; attention to detail; special services.
3. Performance: function of the product; how well it does.
4. Components/ Contents: ingredients; composition; ancillary items.
5. Availability: place of purchase; when available; contact phone number.
6. Special Offer: limited time non-price and price deal.
7. Taste: superiority of taste in a test by a sample of potential customers.
8. Nutrition: specific data of nutritional content
9. Packaging: package more desirable than alternatives.
10. Guarantes/Warranties: post-purchase assurance.
11. Safety: safety features.
12. Independent Research: research conducted by independent research firm.
13. Company Research: research done by the advertiser/manufacturer.
14. New Ideas: new product concepts.

Source: Resnik& Stern (1977)

APPENDIX B
INFORMATION CONTENT ANALYSIS
FORM

INFORMATION CONTENT ANALYSIS FORM

General Data

Number _____
Channel _____

1. Brand Name _____

Product:

- Automotive/Auto care
- Clothing/Accessories
- Electronics
- Food/Beverage
- Hardware
- Home Appliance/ Furnishings
- Laundry and Household
- Medicine
- Personal Care
- Pet Food
- Real estate
- Telecommunication

Service:

- Banking/Finance
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Non-profit Organization
- Restaurant
- Telecommunication

Institutional advertising:

- Manufacturer
- Retailer
- Service
- Other, please specify _____

2. Nature of Commercials:
- Strictly Comparative
 - Implied Comparative
 - Non- Comparative
 - Superlative
3. Nature of Comparison:
- Competition named
 - Competition shown
 - Competition named and shown
 - Competition implied
 - Superlatives
4. Number of Product Compared:
- None
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4 or more
5. What kinds of characters, language, or music are used in the commercial?
- Western Characters - Thai Language
 - Western Characters - English Language
 - Japanese Characters - Thai Language
 - Thai Characters - Thai Language - Thai Music
 - Thai Characters - Thai Language - English Music
 - Thai Characters - Thai Language - Japanese Music
 - Thai Characters - Thai Language - Chinese Music
6. Does Commercial Involve a Family Scene?
- Yes
 - No
7. Who is the spoke person in the commercial?
- Male Parent/ Grand Parent
 - Female Parent/ Grand Parent
 - Children
 - Non-Family Experts
 - Other, Please Specify _____

8. Is a woman in the commercial?

Yes

No

9. If yes, how is a woman presented?

Dependency (e.g., need male's protection, need support)

Housewife

A woman as a sex object:

A woman in Non Traditional Activities (e.g., making buying decision, having activities outside the home, playing sport)

Career Oriented

A woman shown as equal to man

Other, please specify _____

Criteria of Evaluation

10. Price Value: Is the product cost presented?
 Yes
 No
11. Does the commercial show the product's value retention capability?
 Yes, please specify _____
 No
12. Does the commercial show the need satisfaction capability/Baht?
 Yes, please specify _____
 No
13. Quality: Distinguishing quality characteristics from other products (Workmanship, Excellence of Material, Structural Superiority, Superiority of Personnel, Attention to Detail, or Special Services)
 Yes, please specify _____
 No
14. Special Offers: Is there a limited-time/ non-price deals available with a particular purchase?
 Yes, Specify _____
 No
15. Taste: Is evidence presented from an independent source that the taste of the product is superior to others?
 Yes
 No
16. Nutrition: Is there a specific data given concerning nutritional value of the product?
 Yes
 No
17. Is a direct specific comparison made with other products?
 Yes
 No

18. Performance: Is the product's function presented?
- Yes
 No
19. How well does it do what it is designed to do in comparison to alternative products?
- Yes
 No
20. Components/Contents: Does the commercial show what the product composed of?
- Yes
 No
21. Does the commercial show what ingredients it contains?
- Yes
 No
22. Does the commercial show which ancillary items are included with the product?
- Yes
 No
23. Availability: Does the commercial tell where the product can be purchased?
- Yes
 No
24. Does the commercial show when the product will be available for purchase?
- Yes
 No
25. Packaging or Shape: Does the commercial show what packages or shapes product available is in?
- Yes
 No

26. Is there a direct comparison of package or shape with other products?
 Yes
 No
27. Guarantees/Warranties: Does the commercial accompany the product by having post-purchase assurances?
 Yes
 No
28. Safety: Does the commercial show what safety features are available on the product compared to alternative choices?
 Yes
 No
29. Does the commercial show what the energy consumption of the product is compared with alternatives?
 Yes
 No
30. Independent Research: Are results of research gathered by an "independent" firm presented?
 Yes
 No
31. Company Research: Are data gathered by the company to compare its products with a competitor presented?
 Yes
 No
32. New Ideas: Is a totally new concept introduced?
 Yes
 No
33. Are the advantages of a new concept presented?
 Yes
 No

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