

Editorial

Dear Reader,

Welcome to Volume 5, Number 2 (2018) of the ASEAN Journal of Management and Innovation. This issue reflects an unusually high number of contributions focusing on marketing and consumer behavior. Perhaps that is a natural outgrowth of rapidly expanding local and regional economies and the emergence of both variety and competitiveness in the ASEAN region and the heightened chase the consumer dollar.

One of our authors provides a research justification for what we have intuitively known. Sutapat Kongkird reminds us, based on research on e-purchasing among consumers in Thailand, that strong product performance and an effective website will build consumer trust and repeat business. Without trust in the website there will be no growth. Apparently, that goes for governments as well. Without building trust among website users, governments risk destroying goodwill and creating a citizen army of cynics. A trust-based web presence is essential for immediate impact but more importantly, for long-term impact. See: “Model Development Through an Exploratory Factor Analysis of Online Shopping in Thailand.”

Another unsurprising, but now an authoritatively researched-based finding about what we suspected, Pistawan Kahachote and Mayuree Aryupong found that, “status seeking is used as an initial driver for luxury goods consumption, mediated by snob and bandwagon effects.” This is particularly strong in an expanding consumer society where brand consciousness is high and frequent changes in fashion is a strong driver to keep up with (and occasionally get ahead of) the proverbial Joneses, or in the case of Thailand, Siriporns and Somchais. The article says a lot more, though. Perhaps most importantly, the authors point out several “distinguishing points where national luxury brands could combat the global luxury fashion brands;” and that would be quite valuable to help local brands develop an advantage. See: “Conspicuous Consumption: Global and National Luxury Fashion Brands Purchase Intention.”

Turning to the value of corporate social responsibility and eco-purchasing decision making among consumers, several articles inform our strategic thinking about an important and growing sector of the economies in the region. David Van Brecht, Anastasia Maga, Kristian Luciani, Danuch Sahakijpicharn, and Anna Semmerling explored the “link between Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) disclosure and market value of the firm: evidence from Thai listed companies” and discovered that indeed, it makes good sense to take the high road in corporate communications by pre-empting regulators and advocacy groups. In their words, as with many markets around the globe, “...the Thai market also responds favorably to ESG disclosure.” Thus, making a conscious effort to meet the growing societal expectations for trustworthy reporting on key dimensions of what we have come to include in the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) actually pays off.

Turning to the consumer side of social responsibility, researchers have looked at the willingness to pay for solar power to electrify their homes and for other eco-friendly products that carry a premium in the early stages of the new product development lifecycle. Suthathip Suanmali Sirindhorn, Kanokbhorn Kokuenkan, Nutchai Lohananthachai Lohananthachai, Nichayakul Kumpung, and Thanaphat Suwatanapornchai looked at the question of solar power systems and found “factors that influence willingness to pay are income, energy consumption

behavior, prior experience with renewable energy, environmental awareness, and trust.” For further details, see their article: “Factors Affecting the Willingness to Pay for Solar Home Systems: An Empirical Study in Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, and Samut Prakan Provinces, Thailand.”

Similarly, Maneenart Srisakulpanich found that “income, global warming awareness, eco-friendly product awareness, and environmental attitudes significantly affects the decision to choose eco-friendly products.” These findings are quite similar to those that influence buyer behavior when it comes to solar power systems. It is good to see the consistency in this research. Businesses can surmise next steps in their strategy to enlarge the area of positive consumer action in this segment. See “The Factors Affecting The Decision to Choose Eco-Friendly Products Among Thai Customers In the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.”

Two more articles follow this theme of eco-friendliness and the rising segment of early adopters now demanding socially responsible companies and are willing to pay for the products and services that reflect this value. The first is by Pongsakorn Pitchayadol, “Farmer’s Adoption Intention towards Eco-Innovation in Thailand.” So, how can eco-innovation be widely adopted by major consumers in the agricultural sector? Several factors set the stage: when consumers have a high value-belief-norm (supporting current practice or resistance to change), the bandwagon effect (deciding to join the growing number of people taking up the practice) and the effect of government policy on the products (making it easier or cheaper to use). The author examined a way to break through the barriers to accelerate adoption and enhance the engagement of organic products in the agricultural sector of Thailand. See the article for complete details.

The second article by Suthathip Suanmali, “Determinants of a Customer’s Willingness to Pay (WTP) for Green Hotels: An Empirical Study of Generation Y in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area” also sheds light on consumer behavior to pay a premium for a value-related purchase. According to the author, it seems, “...monthly income, attitude, and green behaviors affect the probability of a person’s willingness to pay for green hotels.”

As you can see by these introductory comments this is a marketing/consumer behavior-rich issue, but there is much more in addressing issues in public service quality, human resource management, effective pitching for venture capital, transportation routes, labor specialization in turnaround situations, fair value accounting and financial statement analysis, employee motivation to use e-training, managing the media during a crisis and school management for effective staff motivation. There is something for almost everyone and we at AJMI hope that you enjoy reading the articles as much as we have enjoyed bring them to you.

Sincerely,

John Nirenberg, Ph.D.
Editor.