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## MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE PRODUCT: A CASE STUDY OF ORGANIC RICE AND CHEMICAL-FREE VEGETABLES FROM BAAN-CHANODE COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE IN KLONG YONG-LAN TAK FAH SUB-DISTRICT, NAKHONPATHOM PROVINCE

KANYANANT ANANMANA<sup>1</sup> AND PANIDA NINAROON

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research article is: (1) to study customer behaviour in purchasing organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand; and (2) to study marketing factors that affected purchasing decision of organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. This study was a quantitative research study which utilised a questionnaire as a research instrument. The sample consisted of 400 people who purchased organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. The data was analysed by a statistical package and presented in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The outcome of this study was the marketing plan guidelines which were designed to help communities and community enterprise products to become more recognisable to customers and eventually became an important part promoting competitive advantage and sustainability.

**Keywords:** marketing plan, community enterprise, organic rice, chemical-free vegetables

### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, people are becoming more health conscious – they are looking for products that are healthier and safer from chemicals and toxins. That is why there is a tremendous demand for organic products worldwide. In 2012, the global consumption of organic products was approximately 64 billion US\$, while Thailand exported organic products to the value of around 94 million US\$. On other words, it had a market share of about 0.15 percent in the global marketplace (Noisopha, 2015). Hence, there are enormous opportunities for Thai entrepreneurs in the market if they could create proper and thorough marketing plans – they certainly could acquire a huge market share.

The community enterprise initially arose from the concept of the “Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy” of King Bhumibol Adulyadej Rama IX of Thailand. This concept was developed steadily and systematically and finally resulted in the creation of a new economy that was based on the reality of the community. His Majesty King Rama IX stated that strong communities were like piles of building blocks; they made the country survive. In the past, the domestic economy was like a building that was constructed with narrow bases and if the bases were not strong enough, the building fell down. Thus, the community enterprise is the key to a solid base for the country. By stimulating the economy at the grassroots level, it is possible to strengthen and diversify livelihood opportunities in order to create jobs, generate revenues, reduce the public costs of the country and allow people to become more self-reliant (Tanaisri, 2011).

Baan-Chanode community enterprises is located on the land of the Klong Yong cooperative. It has an area of 1,800 hectares, covering three villages of Klong Yong sub-district

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<sup>1</sup> Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Innovation and Management College, Thailand. E-mail: kanyanant.an@ssru.ac.th

and one village of Lan Tak Fah sub-district, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. This was the first community land area of the country which a group of local people aimed to develop into an agricultural area for long-term sustainability. They then started planting organic rice and chemical-free vegetables in order to develop this area into a 100% chemical-free farm and targeted themselves as a market of organic rice and chemical-free vegetables for the city people. The production of rice was in the form of the rice thrown by using local species of rice and turned to chemical-free farming for the better quality of life of both farmers and consumers. Furthermore, this community enterprise set up a “community bank of rice seed” which provided lending and borrowing services of various rice seeds to the subscriber farmers and established a “community mill” to support members in the community to consume rice and mill organic brown rice for sale by partnering with several organisations, including the Khaokwan Foundation, the Sustainable Agriculture Foundation Thailand, BioThai Foundation, and the Thai green market-Suan Nguen Mee Ma, in order to drive a steady path of organic to the sustainability.

Therefore, the researchers aimed to develop a marketing plan for community products that could be one important aspect helping to form a strong and sustainable community enterprise and self-reliance of the community. The researchers selected Baan-Chanode community enterprise because it was one of the most interesting community enterprises in terms of their outstanding products and the organisation itself. Furthermore, Baan-Chanode community enterprise had been evaluated at a good level in term of the quality of the enterprise by the Secretariat Office of Community Enterprise Promotion Board (June 8, 2016). Lastly, this study aimed to enhance the knowledge and understanding of consumer behaviour and marketing factors to people in this community enterprise to drive community products to able to successfully compete in the marketplace sustainably and increase their capacity and competitiveness in the domestic market.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Objectives**

- To study customer behaviour in purchasing organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand.
- To study marketing factors that affected purchasing decisions relating to organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand.

### **Population and Sampling Procedure**

The studied sample group was general customers more than 15 years old who purchase organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand for retail purposes only. Since it was not possible to identify an exact number for the population, the researchers utilised the formula of W.G. Cochran and set the confidence level at 95 and the statistical significance level of 0.05. The number of samples from the formula was 385. However, to prevent incomplete questionnaires, the researchers added 4 percent of the sample size, equalling to 15 respondents. In total, sample size in this study was 400 people. Then the researchers utilised a convenience sampling method.

### **Research Instruments**

A questionnaire was used as a research instrument for this study. The researchers applied undisguised structured questionnaire in order to achieve the objectives of this study. The

questionnaire comprised four main sections, including questions that identify individual factors and questions about the marketing factors. The first section concentrated on generating a demographic profile of the respondents. The second section focused on customer behaviour. The third section determined customer's opinions and the fourth section was an open-ended one.

### Data Collection

The data were distributed and collected from November 2016 to January 2017 using the questionnaire. At the time of distributing the questionnaire, the researchers prepared a brief explanation of the study for the researcher team. The questionnaire was hand-delivered by the researchers and the teams, who waited until the respondents had answered all the questions. In order to minimise possible bias, it was communicated to participants that their opinions were voluntary and anonymous (the data would strictly use in academic purposes only) and they were encouraged to state their own personal opinion as truthfully as possible. As a result, 400 completed questionnaires were retained and used for subsequent data analysis.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

The authors determined the class interval in order to apply for an interpretation using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Class interval} &= \frac{\text{Highest Value} - \text{Lowest Value}}{\text{Number of classes}} \\ &= \frac{5-1}{5} \\ &= 0.8 \end{aligned}$$

Class interval	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	highest level of opinion
3.41 – 4.20	high level of opinion
2.61 – 3.40	moderate level of opinion
1.81 – 2.60	low level of opinion
1.00 – 1.80	lowest level of opinion

## FINDINGS

After the data obtained from 400 general customers more than 15 years old who purchase organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand.

First, the researchers analysed the demographic factors of respondents using descriptive statistics; these covered frequency and percentage to describe the personal data of respondents, including gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, and income per month. The details are as follows:

The majority of 55% of the respondents were females aged 41–60 years old (27%) and more than 60 years old (22%). Most of the respondents were married (59%). The majority had an average income of between 10,000 of 30,000 Baht per month (43%). Most of respondents were merchants (28%). With regard to educational background, 45% of the respondents had under Bachelor degree.

To examine the research objectives, the survey results showed:

1. Customer behaviour in purchasing organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand

The majority (57%) of the respondents purchased organic rice and chemical-free vegetables for the purpose of consuming them at home followed by purchase for a souvenir purpose (29%). Mostly, the respondents purchased Khao Hom Nakhon Chai Sri (65%). The majority recognised Baan-Chanode community enterprise from online media (31%). The main reason for purchasing organic rice and chemical-free vegetables was because the products were health-friendly and free from chemical and toxins; 59% of the respondents purchased the products two to three times per month and spent between 50 and 100 Baht per time.

2. Marketing factors that affected purchasing decisions relating to organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand

Data was collected on the opinions of respondents towards the marketing mix of organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. The researchers applied a rating scale method – the Likert scale – and then used mean and standard deviation to measure the opinion of customers. The details of four dimensions of marketing factors were described in summary as follows:

**Table 1:** Summary of marketing mix factors

Marketing Mix Factors	Mean	S.D.	Level of opinion
Product	4.69	0.74	Highest
Price	4.10	0.87	High
Place	4.57	0.97	Highest
Integrated Marketing Communication	4.17	0.95	High
Average Score	4.42	0.85	Highest

In conclusion, as shown in Table 1 above, the overall opinion of general customers towards all four marketing mix factors was at the highest level. In detail, two marketing dimensions, which were the product and integrated marketing communication factors, had the highest level of importance, while two marketing dimensions, which were the price and place factors, had the high level of importance.

The authors then tested for multiple regression analysis. As Table 2 illustrates, the four variables of the marketing mix had a positive relationship with the purchasing decisions of organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. When combining the best variables of this set it could be inferred that marketing mix factors had a positive effect on the purchasing decision of customers at 69.75% at the statistical significance level of 0.05. The degree of importance of each factor could be listed as follows: product ( $\beta=0.312$ ), place ( $\beta=0.289$ ), integrated marketing communication ( $\beta=0.242$ ) and price ( $\beta=0.171$ ).

**Table 2:** Multiple regression analysis

X	B	$\beta$	t	sig
Constant	1.432		4.564	0.000
Product (X1)	0.268	0.312	3.115	0.000
Price (X2)	0.238	0.171	4.377	0.000
Place (X3)	0.116	0.289	0.445	0.000
Integrated Marketing Communication (X4)	0.192	0.242	3.243	0.002
$R^2 = 0.568$ Adjust $R^2 = 0.6975$ $P < 0.05$ $F = 73.844$				

## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study demonstrated that overall marketing mix factors had a positive effect on the purchasing decisions relating to organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand. The highest importance marketing factor was the product dimension of price. It complied with the study of Thun Chaitorn (2017), who noted that product factor was the most significant factor. Also, the price and integrated marketing communication was at the high level of importance, which agreed with the study of Warunee Jeensorn (2011), who studied factors affecting consumers' purchasing decision towards non-toxic vegetables in Bangkok.

## SUGGESTIONS

In summary, the researchers would like to purpose the marketing plan for organic rice and chemical-free vegetables from Baan-Chanode community enterprise in Klong Yong-Lan Tak Fah Sub-District, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand as follows:

### Customer Behaviour

Baan-Chanode community enterprise should focus on advertising through online media, especially social media, such as Facebook and Instagram etc. Khao Hom Nakhon Chai Sri should be presented first since it was the most popular product from Baan-Chanode and should focus on the attributes of the product that are good for health.

### Marketing Factors

- Reinforce the strengths: Baan-Chanode community enterprise should strengthen their strong points. For example, according to the study, the highest score was the product itself. Thus, the community enterprise should consistently focus on about the quality of the organic rice and chemical-free vegetables, and the attractiveness of the products as well as packaging. The team members should also continue learning about the new technology of the organic agricultures not only in the production process but also the management in organisation. Baan-Chanode community enterprise should focus on pursuing the organic agriculture accreditation both domestically, including Organic Agriculture Certification Thailand – ACT, National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards – ACFS, and etc. and internationally, such as Bioagricert, Ecocert, and IMOO-Control, etc. Also, the packaging and branding should be developed in a way that would attract a group of target

customers who were female, aged between 41 and 60 years old, married, had an average income between 10,000 and 30,000 Baht per month, were merchants, and had under Bachelor degree.

- Improve the weaknesses: on the other hand, the entrepreneurs should focus on improving their weak points. For example, according to the study, the least score was the price factor. Thus, Baan-Chanode community enterprise should do promotional pricing with pricing incentives generally intended to bring in customers, drive revenue and cash flow and turn over inventory, such as giving coupons, point-of-sales discounts, and volume purchasing discount for frequency shopper or buy bulk purchaser.

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