

รายงานสืบเนื่องจาก ครั้งที่ การประชุมวิชาการระดับชาติ งานวิจัยและงานสร้างสรรค์ ทางนิเทศศาสตร์ 10



รายชื่อผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิ
อภิปรายงานวิจัย

- รศ. อวยพร พาณิช
- รศ. ถิรนนท์ อนุวัชศิริวงศ์
- รศ. ดร.กฤษณ์ ทองเลิศ
- รศ. ดร.กฤษิตา ธรรมวิวัฒน์
- ผศ. ดร. กาญจนา มีศิลป์วิภักย์
- ผศ. ดร.องอาจ สิงห์ลำพอง
- ผศ. รัตนา ทิมเมื่อง
- ผศ. ดร.กฤษณ์ คำนนท์
- ผศ. วรวุฒิ อ่อนน่วม

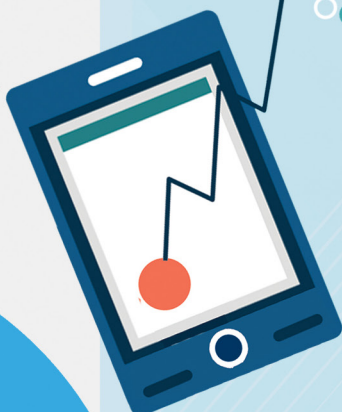
The Proceedings of the 10th Academic Conference
on Communication Research and Creative Works

วันศุกร์ที่ 10 กรกฎาคม 2563
เวลา 08.30 น. - 16.30 น.

นำเสนอผลงานบนระบบออนไลน์
ผ่านแอปพลิเคชัน ZOOM



2020





กลุ่ม 3: ผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิร่วมอภิปราย

รศ.ดร.กฤษณ์ทองเลิศ, รศ.ดร.กุลธิดา ธรรมวิวัฒน์

ผศ. ดร.องอาจ สิ่งล้ำพอง

การวิพากษ์ตีความบทแนวจินตสสาระ ผลงานภาพถ่ายชุด The Anatomy 101 ของ ทอม โพรธิลิตี และ สุรชัย แสงสุวรรณ	
• เวทิต ทองจันทร์	237
Omani Consumer Online Shopping Behavior	
• Alhuda Chanitphattana, Chutimun Luangtongkum and Manaskarn Insang	258
งานสร้างสรรค์ภาพถ่ายภาชนะแก้วชุด “OUT LINE”	
• นริศ พิเชษฐพันธ์	267
การสร้างสรรค์ภาพถ่ายกลางคืน	
• ณัฐวุฒิ สิ่งหนองสง และจารุณี วรรณศิริกุล	277
นวัตกรรมการสื่อสารเพื่อสร้างความภักดีต่อแบรนด์ผ่านรูปแบบเกมมิฟิเคชั่น	
• เมธาพร มุสิกปาละ และกันยารัตน์ วรรณัตร	288
กลยุทธ์การรณรงค์การสื่อสารการตลาดโดยใช้จุดจูงใจด้านสิ่งแวดล้อม ที่ส่งผลต่อการรับรู้ทัศนคติ และการจูงใจให้เกิดพฤติกรรม ของผู้บริโภคกลุ่มเจนเอเรชั่นวาย	
• สุวดี อรุณเรือ	302
การวิเคราะห์สัมพันธบทของซีรี่ส์เกาหลี “รอรักโรงแรมพันปี”	
• เจตน์จันทร์ เกิดสุข และลัทธสิทธิ ทวีสุข	314
เมตาในสตอปโมชัน: กรณีศึกษาของ ‘Komaneko’s First Step’	
• ศักรา ไพบูลย์	320
การบริหารประสบการณ์ลูกค้า : ความท้าทายบนระยะห่างในการเปลี่ยนผ่านสู่ฐานวิถีชีวิตใหม่	
• อีรวัฒน์ โอภาสบุตร และพลอยชนก แสนอาทิตย์	327
การวิเคราะห์เรื่องราวจากภาพยนตร์เรื่องธอร์ เทพเจ้าสายฟ้า โดยใช้ทฤษฎีโครงสร้างนิทานของวลาดิเมียร์ พรอพพ์	
• สมเกียรติ ศรีเพชร และศิริชัย ศิริกายะ	338

Omani Consumer Online Shopping Behavior

AlhudaChanitphattana *

Chutimun Luangtongkum *

Manaskarn Insang *

Abstract

Thailand and the Sultanate of Oman have established their international and trading relations since the 1980's. Even though Thai government has been supporting Thai trade into this region, however there is still a lack of knowledge and research of the international marketing communication between the two countries. In order to plan our international marketing communication we have to understand our target country base on these six elements; Demographic Characteristics, Economic Factors, Political & Legal Environment, Culture Environment and Communication Characteristics. In this article the authors focus on (1) The knowledge of the key elements of international marketing communication theory and (2) Social media exposure and online shopping behavior of Omani consumers, in order that Thai entrepreneur would be able to plan their international marketing communication and expand their businesses to this region.

The result shows that social media and online shopping have played a big role of the national income in Oman. Forty – five percent of Oman population purchase their products via Online websites, which made Oman raked the second place among the Middle East countries in term of online products purchasing. The most popular categories that Omani consumers buy online are groceries, fashion, cosmetics and electronic devices. The authors also found that the most well known platforms that Omani consumers buy their products from are Amazon and Alibaba.

Keywords : International Marketing Communication, Omani Consumer Social Media Exposure, Omani Consumer Online Shopping Behavior

Introduction

Sultanate of Oman is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Councils or the GCC. The GCC has six members which are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman. These countries are considered as rich and well developed countries, comparing to other countries in the Middle East. The main income of the six members mostly come from oil and gas, which are important resources in this region. However, recently Omani government has announced to develop other business industries such as trade, technology, tourism, agricultural, fishery and etc., in order not to rely on a sole income from oil and gas which may gradually be replaced by other sources of energy in the near future. Moreover, Omani government also supports new foreign investors to settle their businesses in Oman and see Oman as a gateway to other Middle East and African countries (Thansetthakij, 2017).

Oman is actually not a new market for Thailand because the two countries have established their international and trading relations since the 1980's, and the trade between the two countries have been increasing each years. Accordingly to the suggestions of the Ministry of Commerce report (2010), Thai government would like to encourage the private sectors from Thailand and Oman to have more cooperation and would like to increase the export rate of various kind of products from Thailand to Oman. This can start by sharing the business information and import – export regulations, in order to facilitate an international trade between the two countries. Even though, Thailand and Oman have a long history together, Thai entrepreneurs find that there is the lack of research and knowledge about doing business in Oman. Especially, in the era of marketing 4.0 where social media exposure and online shopping behavior are one of the most important factors in order penetrate the market.

Thus, the objectives of this article are; Firstly to deliver the knowledge of the key elements of international marketing communication theory, in order to apply with the Omani Market and Secondly to analyze the social media exposure and online shopping behavior of Omani consumers, to deliver a n update data of how Thai entrepreneur should plan their international marketing communication in order to expand their businesses to this region.

Getting to Know the Sultanate of Oman

Oman is a country in the Middle Eastern region with the population of 5.1 million (Worldometers, 2020). The area of the country is not large comparing to Thailand with the area of 309,500 Square Kilometers, its capital called “Muscat” (or Muskat). The most population are Muslim and the main language used in the country is Arabic, however English is widely spoken by the Omani especially the new generation who speak quite fluent English. The most effective way to communicate in English is to use the short and easy words or sentences. The topics that we should avoid to mention are the political and religious topics. We can also see that Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects are used by other residents as well. Moreover, making jokes sarcastically, mockingly, ironically, and rudely could be considered as inappropriate behavior.

The currency which is used in Oman is called “Omani Riyal” (OMR), one Omani riyal equals to eighty Thai Baht (June, 2020).

To understand the basic value of the Arabs, first we need to know that it is essential for the Arabs to try to make people satisfied and feel good about them. They also see that honor, prestige and reputation are very important. People in other region are familiar with the wealth of the Arabic people and see them as a top spender of expensive products. As the Arabs mostly live together with their family, they see that loving their family is more important than personal preference. Some countries in the Arab region are seen as modernized and opened countries such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain, however there are still a conservative traits appear in the region, especially in Oman where social norms and morals must be maintained. Social status and family background, personality, and life achievement are very important factors which define the individual’s status respectively. This trait is not only appeared in the relationship between family and friends, but also in business relationship as well.

The Arab people, especially the Omani, which are known as the kindest people in this region, may treat their business partners as one of their family members, often times they may ask their business partners to visit their houses and meet their family. Being simple, honest, loyal, a good friend, and creating trust are the keys for everyone who would like to do the business with the Arabs.

Recently, the World Bank forecasted the economic growth of the Sultanate at 3 percent by 2019. Also the Business Insider (2018) released the best ranking of the countries that investors opt to invest in 2019, Oman is ranked the tenth, this draws a massive attention from the investors all around the World to Oman. Moreover, in Oman itself, there are several mega projects to develop the infrastructure of the city such as the expansion of the new port, expressway construction, national railway construction and etc, these creates a lot of job vacancies, so there are a great population labour and workers from around the World moving to Oman.

Since 2018, Qatar was boycotted by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE, due to the political issues. This caused the withdrawal of Qatari companies and investment to another countries which are Iran and the Sultanate of Oman. It turned out to be that, the political issues between Qatar and other GCC countries have a positive effects and benefits on Oman economy, as Muscat and Salalah city are the new hubs for Qatar imported goods. Recently, luxury products are becoming more popular, as there are more investors from Qatar visiting the country

Important Elements of International Marketing Communication

International marketing communication is defined as a category of communication in which the senders communicate about marketing with the receivers that are located in other countries. The goal of this type of communication is to conduct international marketing communication for the achievement of business aims with regard to the export of both products and services (Ongkrutaraksa, 2010: 70). There are five principle aspects as follows:

(1) Demographic Characteristics

A study of the characteristics of the population in the target countries is necessary for marketers, as it will provide them with the ability to identify the services or products that should be offered for sale in those countries. Marketers should examine four main factors, including: 1) the Size of the Market, 2) the Growth of the Population, 3) the Distribution of the Population, and 4) Education.

(2) Economic Factors

Another of the most useful aspects that marketers also need to comprehend is the economic factors, so that they can obtain information about the expenditures of the population and take note of the future trends in the economy of the target country. The four economic factors that marketers must understand are: 1) the Distribution of Income (GDP), 2) the Gross National Product (GNP), 3) the Per Capita Income, and 4) Urbanization.

(3) Political Environment & Legal System

The political environment and the legal system in the target country have a direct impact on the international marketing strategies. In those countries that are instable, both the international communication and investment will be strongly affected by the political environment. Thus, the laws and political environment of the two countries that will import and export services and products should be studied by marketers.

(4) Geographic Characteristics

The geographic characteristics are regarded as independent factors that humans cannot control. Consumer behavior, logistics, and product distribution are directly affected by these factors. Countries that experience extreme temperatures during winter or summer involve an understanding of these geographic characteristics that will also be concerned with the process of designing the product packaging. Therefore, marketers must study the main factors, which are: 1) the Environment, 2) the Natural Resources, and (3) the Temperature and other weather-related data (ibid: 20).

(5) Cultural Environment

The definition of 'culture' that was provided by Taylor (1871) is the combination of the customs, knowledge, laws, norms, and traditions that have been inherited by a group of people from their ancestors. Furthermore, it was stated by Hall (1959) that people are not able to exit from their own culture because it remains as a part of their sub-conscious mind. As

a result, even though a person may move to live in another country with a different culture, they will still retain their original identity from their native culture. The main cultural factors that should be studied by marketers consist of: 1) Consumption Patterns, 2) Customs, 3) Ethical Standards, 4) Morals, 5) Needs, 6) Religion, 7) Values, 8) Verbal Language, and 9) Nonverbal Language.

Moreover, in the article “International Marketing Communication: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”, it was proposed by Chaitphattana (2017) that “Communication Characteristics” is another significant factor that marketers should have knowledge of (see Figure 1). In the current digital age, communication technology is swiftly changing; therefore, the ways that technology has an effect on the target group’s behavior is a subject that marketers must understand. This point leads to the next important part of this study that will provide an understanding of the use of social media and the online shopping behavior of Omani consumers for the international marketing plans of Thai entrepreneurs in the future.

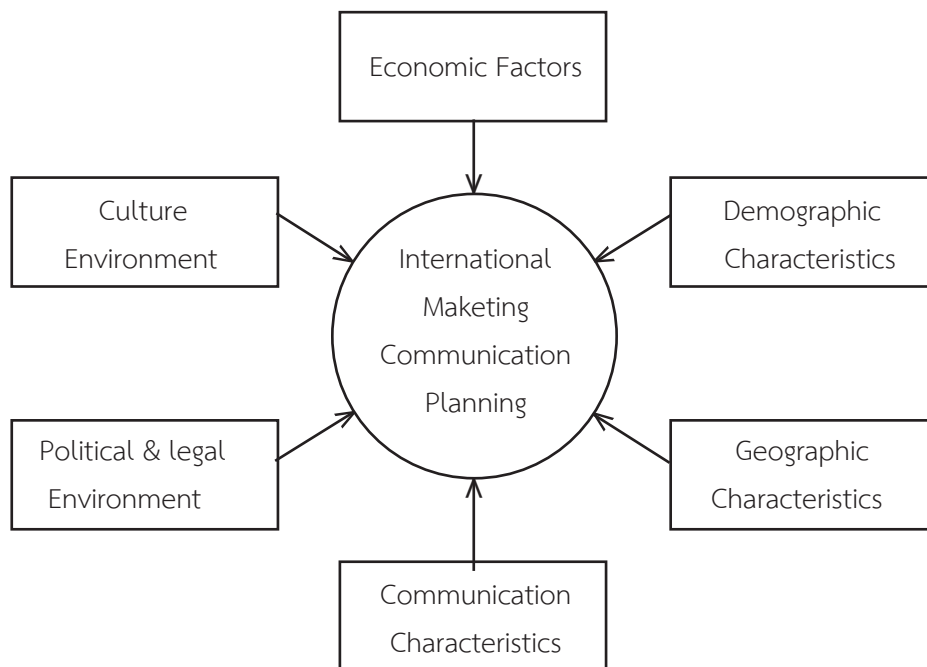


Figure 1: International Marketing Communication Elements

Source: Modified from “Introduction to International Marketing Communication” (Ongkuttharaksa, 2013: 70)

Omani Consumer Social Media Exposure & Online Shopping Behavior

Online communication or the usage of social media in Middle East has become a part of a life of Arabs. Arab Social Media Report (2015) reports that social media was like food, water, and the residence of Arabs. In addition, social media is like “magic wand” which is like a world on the finger tip for Arabs.

Arabs social media users believe that social media is like “life enhancer” which revive liveliness and excitement to them. Their existences become real (ibid). Moreover, Arab Social Media Report (2015) also indicates that social media extremely influence as a marketing tool which drives business and are widely used via several channels.

Accordingly to the study of Stat Counter from May 2019 – May 2020 (Figure 2), we can see that Facebook ranked the first place as the mostly used social media application in Oman. The rate of users who own Facebook accounts is at 56.19%, follows by Youtube 26.27%, Twitter 6.9%, Pinterest 5.57%, Instagram 2.99% and LinkedIn 1.87%. However, this statistics of Stat Counter has not mention the rate of using WhatsApp and Snapchat Applications which are also widely used in Oman, this research will also explore other new social media applications which are now the latest trend of the communication in Oman.

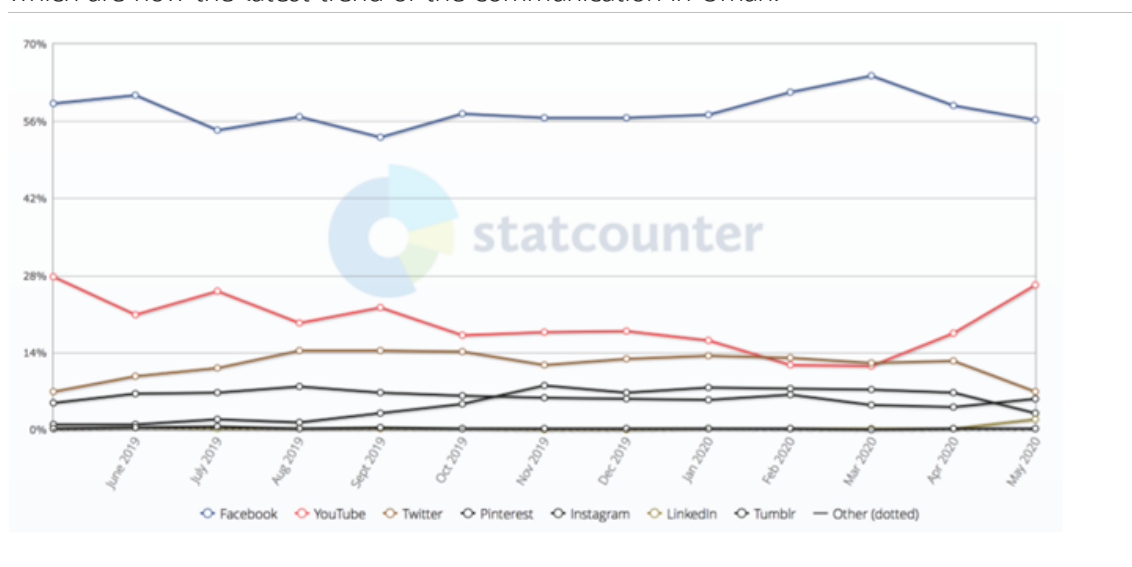


Figure 2: Social Media Stats in Oman Source: Stat Counter (2018)

Accordingly to the report of Times of Oman newspaper in 2019, we can see that Oman ranked the second place in the Middle East in term of online purchasing. Forty – five percent of Oman population are buying products online. From the research of Consumers International Organization (2019) also states that Omani make an online purchasing at least once a month, most products that Omani consumers bought online are groceries and around one out of four people still buying from foreign websites such as Amazon and Alibaba. Ugwire (2020) reports that online shopping trend in Oman has significantly risen. Top ten online shopping website in Oman are as follows;

Table 1 : Top ten online shopping website in Oman
Source :Ugwire (2020)

No.	Website	Product Categories & Website
1	Amazon	Miscellaneous https://www.amazon.com
2	Ali Express	Miscellaneous https://www.aliexpress.com
3	Namshi Online Fashion Store	Fashion https://ar-oman.namshi.com
4	Ourshopee	Miscellaneous https://www.oman.ourshopee.com
5	Ubuy	Miscellaneous https://www.ubuy.om/en/
6	Jazp Store	Mobiles, Electronics, and many more https://oman.jazp.com/om-en/
7	Next	Fashion and children's clothing https://www.next.om/en
8	Roumaan	Miscellaneous https://roumaan.com
9	Openkart	Miscellaneous https://oman.openkart.com
10	Cleopatra	Miscellaneous https://cleopatraweb.com

Oman's Market through the lens of International Marketing Communication

In the analysis of all of the factors involved in international marketing communication, the authors realize that the market size of Oman is not very large, especially in comparison to the total population of Saudi Arabia. However, there is a great potential to begin a penetration of the Omani market by communicating through the use of social media and online shopping websites as marketing tools.

In terms of Oman's economy, it can be clearly seen that the growth of luxury products purchasing and online shopping has risen. The first reason for this is that Oman is known as the Switzerland of the Middle East, and while other countries have suspended their relations with Qatar, Oman welcomes Qatari entrepreneurs to start up and conduct their businesses. Thus, many high spending Qataris have often been seen in Oman during these past few years.

The second reason results from the variety of the online shopping channels that are available to Omani consumers and their ability to access the internet with a trustworthy and reliable online shopping and payment system, which have both accelerated the sales of the Omani E-Commerce.

Regarding the political aspect, Oman has a very high degree of political stability, as the former Leader Sultan Qaboos bin Said, who passed away during the beginning of 2020, and the present Sultan Haitham bin Tariq have both received a high level of respect and popularity from their citizens. The country's neutral role in international relations is another of the major highlights that draws foreign investors to enter Oman's business sectors in several industries. Furthermore, as there are many megaprojects that are undergoing the process of development in Oman, numerous expats and foreign workers are moving to Oman to live and work there. Additionally, in 2020, the population of Oman reached 5.1 million, which may enhance the online shopping rate as well.

The geographic characteristics of Oman are unlike other countries in the GCC, where there are only two seasons, namely summer and winter, while Oman has four seasons. Summer lasts from June to August, Autumn is from September to November, Winter is from December to February and Spring occurs from March to May. The authors have also seen that the harsh summer, during which the temperature can reach up to 50 degrees Celsius, may play a somewhat significant role in online shopping behavior as people go outside of their houses less often and opt to buy products online.

It can be seen that the product categories that are popular for the online shopping behavior of Omanis are groceries, fashion, cosmetics and electronic devices. The conservative role of Oman as an Islamic country may also have some influence on the online shopping behavior of female Omani consumers. Similar to other Muslim ladies, known as "Muslimah" in many conservative Muslim countries, they do not go to work outside, and their role in the family is to take care of their husbands, children and households. Most of the Muslimah still stay inside their houses, and they receive their income from their husbands. This may also have an impact on their online shopping behavior as it was noted that the top product categories are likely to be groceries, fashion and cosmetics.

Lastly, we need to understand their social media behavior. Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are the top social media used by Omanis. However, if you are selling your products online you may choose to advertise on Facebook or Instagram. For online messenger platforms, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger are widely used. If you are a Thai entrepreneur who is going to Oman, please note that the LINE application is blocked, and therefore, you may not be able to send messages or make any calls via this application. The easiest way to contact your business partners is through WhatsApp. The authors also found that the most well-known platforms that Omani consumers buy their products from are Amazon and Alibaba.

Reference

Book

- Chanitphattana, A. (2017). *International Marketing Communication: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates (Doctoral dissertation, National Institute of Development Administration, 2017)*. Bangkok: National Institute of Development Administration.
- Onkuttharaksa, W. (2013). *Fundamental International Marketing Communication*. Bangkok: 21th Century.

Online

- Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai (2012, September). *The Sultanate of Oman*. Retrieved May 20, 2020, from http://www.ditp.go.th/contents_attach/76669/76669.pdf
- Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai (2015, June). *Trading Situation Between Thailand and Oman Report*. Retrieved May 27, 2020, from http://www.ditp.go.th/contents_attach/95825/95825.pdf
- Department of Trade Negotiations (2010, February). *Trade Data Thai - Oman*. Retrieved June 4, 2020, from https://www.dtn.go.th/files/42/Oman_trade52.pdf
- Oman: New Gateway for Thai Business to the Middle East. (2017, May 7). *Thanset takij*. Retrieved June 10, 2020, from <http://www.thansettakij.com/content/146648>
- Ray, N. (2018, March). *New \$1.8b Muscat airport opens*. Retrieved May 3, 2020, from <https://gulfnnews.com/news/gulf/oman/new-1-8b-muscat-airport-opens-1.2190319>
- StatsCounterGlobalStats (2018, October). *Social Media Stats Oman*. Retrieved May 3, 2020, from <http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/oman>
- The Heritage Foundation (2018). *Oman Economy*. Retrieved June 1, 2020, from <https://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2018/countries/oman.pdf>
- UGWIRE, (2020). *Top 10 Online Shopping Sites In Oman 2020 Best Websites*. Retrieved June 1, 2020, from <https://ugwire.com/top-10-online-shopping-sites-in-oman/>
- Worldometers, (2020). *Population of Oman (LIVE)*. Retrieved May 7, 2020, from <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/oman-population/>
- Akbar, R. (2018), *5 Best Websites For Online Shopping In Oman*. Retrieved May 20, 2020, from <http://omanmagazine.com/lifestyle/5-best-websites-for-online-shopping>