

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS BUDDY BROADBAND CALL CENTER
SERVICE

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

PARINTIP NONGBUA

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication
at Srinakharinwirot University

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AN ABSTRACT

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Chantakloi.

The objectives of this study were to measure the level of customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center and to explore the service aspects the customers consider important regarding call center service. The sampled group used in this research was 140 Buddy Broadband customers visiting the head office at Phaholyothin Building during September 2010. The questionnaire, designed by applying SERVQUAL Model, consisting of five aspects: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, was used for data collection.

The study results showed that the customers were satisfied in every aspect at high level. In sequence of means, it was found that empathy had the highest score, followed by responsiveness, assurance, reliability, and tangibles, respectively. In regard to the customers' opinions on the important aspects of Buddy Broadband Call Center service, the findings indicated that responsiveness was the most important aspect the customers concerned, followed by reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, respectively.

However, the aspect of the highest satisfaction did not correlate with the most important aspect as the customers expected.

ความพึงพอใจของลูกค้าต่อการใช้บริการบัตตี้ บรอดแบรนด์ คอลเซ็นเตอร์

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

ปริญญาโท หนองบัว

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ

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การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวัดระดับความพึงพอใจของลูกค้าที่มีต่อศูนย์บริการลูกค้าสัมพันธ์ (Call Center) ของบดดีโปรดแบรนต์ และศึกษาความสำคัญของการบริการตามความคิดเห็นของลูกค้าที่มีต่อบดดีโปรดแบรนต์คอลเซ็นเตอร์ กลุ่มตัวอย่างในงานวิจัยนี้คือ ลูกค้าที่ใช้บริการที่สำนักงานใหญ่ อาคารพหลโยธินในเดือนกันยายน 2553 จำนวน 140 คน การเก็บข้อมูลใช้แบบสอบถามซึ่งออกแบบโดยใช้ SERVQUAL Model ประกอบด้วยคุณลักษณะ 5 ด้านได้แก่ ด้านรูปลักษณ์ทางกายภาพ ด้านความน่าเชื่อถือ ด้านการตอบสนอง ด้านการสร้างความมั่นใจ และด้านการดูแลเอาใจใส่

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ลูกค้ามีความพึงพอใจในการบริการทุกๆ ด้านของศูนย์บริการลูกค้าสัมพันธ์ของบดดีโปรดแบรนต์ในระดับสูงเรียงตามลำดับค่าเฉลี่ย ดังนี้คือด้านการดูแลเอาใจใส่มีค่าเฉลี่ยสูงสุด รองลงมาคือ ด้านการตอบสนอง ด้านการสร้างความมั่นใจ ด้านความน่าเชื่อถือ และด้านรูปลักษณ์ทางกายภาพ การศึกษาด้านความคิดเห็นของลูกค้าเกี่ยวกับความสำคัญของการบริการของศูนย์บริการลูกค้าสัมพันธ์ของบดดีโปรดแบรนต์ พบว่า ด้านการตอบสนองเป็นด้านที่มีความสำคัญมากที่สุด รองลงมาคือ ด้านความน่าเชื่อถือ ด้านการสร้างความมั่นใจ ด้านการดูแลเอาใจใส่ และด้านรูปลักษณ์ทางกายภาพ ตามลำดับ

ทั้งนี้ผลการศึกษาพบว่า คุณลักษณะด้านที่ลูกค้าพึงพอใจมากที่สุดไม่สัมพันธ์กับด้านที่ลูกค้าเห็นว่ามีค่าสำคัญมากที่สุด

The master's project advisor, chair of Business English for International Communication and oral defense committee have approved this master's project *Customer Satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center Service* by Parintip Nongbua as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Business English for International Communication of Srinakharinwirot University.

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March....., 2011

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Telecommunications and information technology have been developing rapidly for several decades. Telecommunication systems play an essential role in developing a country. The most popular telecommunication technology is the communication network called the Internet, which is used more widely and frequently with each passing year. The internet rapidly links people together regardless of their physical location. Network users can find information from around the world. Understandably, this is a very competitive market with high expectations for quality service.

According to the world Internet usage and population statistics, the number of Internet users in 2009 was 1.6 billion, nearly 24% of the world population. In 2000, the number of Internet users was only 0.36 billion. The growth rate in the number of Internet users was 342.2 % between 2000 and 2009. The majority of global Internet users are from North America, where the usage rate of the Internet is 74.4%. On the contrary, Africa has the smallest proportion rate at 5.6% of the population. Interestingly, the Middle East is the fastest growing region in terms of Internet use. The rate rose 1,296% between 2000 and 2008 (Internet World Statistics, 2009).

Internet World Statistics (2009) indicated that Thailand has also experienced a rapid growth rate in Internet use. In 1991, there were a mere 30 Internet users; by the year

2000, there were 2,300,000 users. In 2008, the number of users increased to over 16 million people, a 600% increase in just eight years.

Statement of Problems

Buddy Broadband is the first Internet service provider in Thailand. It has been run by Advanced Datanetwork Communication Company (ADC) since 2005. The Head Office of Buddy Broadband Company is at Phaholyothin Place on Phayathai Road in Bangkok. Initially, Buddy Broadband had approximately 30,000 customers. In the last several years, Buddy Broadband has faced increasing competition from MaxNet, TOT and True. As a result, customers have more opportunities to switch to other Internet service providers if for some reasons they are not satisfied with the quality of service.

The Buddy Broadband management team changes its service routines to satisfy its customers' needs. This includes re-considering the quality, price and promotion of its Internet network. Furthermore, management aims to improve the service quality of the call center to offer one-stop service for checking service availability, providing data and solving problems. The call center is a vital unit because it connects the service provider with customers. Thus, management continually aims to make the call center more effective. Hence, this research aims to study the level of customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center (BBCC) and the significance of the call center in the perspective of the customers.

By researching the facts and figures regarding BBCC service, numerous customer complaints have been found. This makes a study of the aspects of service quality of BBCC and the level of customer satisfaction an interesting and valuable topic for analysis.

Objectives of the Study

1. To measure the level of customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center.
2. To explore the service aspects the customers consider important regarding Buddy Broadband Call Center.

Research Questions

1. At what level are customers satisfied with Buddy Broadband Call Center Service?
2. Which aspects of Buddy Broadband Call Center do customers consider important?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will reveal the degree of customer satisfaction with services provided by BBCC. More importantly, findings will identify which specific service aspects satisfy customers and which aspects do not gain much satisfaction, so the call center can adjust and improve its services to fulfill customer preferences and expectations.

Scope of the Study

The researcher aimed to explore the level of customer satisfaction concerning BBCC, as well as investigate the service aspects the customers consider important by using the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988). The model consists of five aspects, which are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

Based on these aspects, a questionnaire was specially designed to measure customers' satisfaction towards BBCC. The questionnaire was randomly distributed to 140 buddy broadband customers visiting the head office at Phaholyothin building during September 2010.

Definitions of Terms

The important terms in this research are defined as follows:

“Buddy Broadband Call Center” (BBCC) is a unit of the Advanced Datnetwork Communication Company (ADC), which provides service to Buddy Broadband customers by receiving customers' complaints, solving problems and giving information.

“Customers” refers to people who subscribe to Buddy Broadband for Internet services.

“Networking services” refers to Internet connectivity provided by Buddy Broadband.

“Customer satisfaction” refers to the degree of customers' positive feelings towards services delivered by Buddy Broadband and its call center.

“Factors of BBCC services” refers to all five aspects of the SERVQUAL model that influence customer satisfaction.

Academic and theoretical definitions of essential terms were given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review theories that are relevant to this study in order to identify the factors that determine customer satisfaction with the services provided by Buddy Broadband Call Center (BBCC). This chapter presents theories concerning three major aspects of this study, namely, customer satisfaction, service, and service quality, to provide a foundation for the research. In addition, important terms concerning service and the SERVQUAL model are discussed to indicate the direction and relevance of the study. Finally, findings from related research works are included to clearly depict the importance of Internet services.

Theoretical Background

1. Customer Satisfaction

The concept of customer satisfaction can be defined in many different ways. Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1993) suggested that customer satisfaction was a function of a customer's assessment of service quality, product quality and price. Oliva, Oliver and Bearden (1995) suggested that satisfaction was a function of product performance related to customer expectations. Bachelet (1995) considered satisfaction to be an emotional response to an experience with a product or service. Hill (1996) defined customer satisfaction as customers' perceptions that occur when a supplier has met or

exceeded their expectations. Jones and Sasser (1995) defined customer satisfaction by identifying four factors they believed to be influential. These factors are: (1) essential elements of a product or service that customers expect from a product or service; (2) basic support services such as customer assistance; (3) a recovery process to compensate for customer's bad experience; (4) customization, referring to the factor that meets customers' personal preferences, values or needs.

To conclude, the significance of customer satisfaction is that a satisfied customer is a positive asset of a company through repeat business and positive word of mouth, both of which contribute to increased profits. Conversely, an unsatisfied customer tells more people about their dissatisfaction or complaints to the company. If dissatisfaction is high, customers change to another company or completely withdraw their interest in the product or service (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993).

2. Service

For the last two decades, the world economy has been experiencing an extensive social and economic transformation. One of the most significant factors is the increased role of services. Service industries are leading the economy, are the hub of economic activity, and are closely linked to all sectors of the economy (Kandampully, 2000). Services are not limited to service industries; for example, a manufacturer such as IBM can be highly involved in the service business. Services can be broadly defined to include deeds, processes, performance and other intangible factors (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

Service can be clearly defined as “any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product” (Kotler, 1997). Service has four major characteristics that greatly affect the design of marketing programs: intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability (Kotler, 1997).

1. Intangibility

Services are intangible. Unlike physical products, they cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard or smelled before they are purchased. To reduce uncertainty, buyers look for evidence of service quality. They draw inferences about service quality from the place, people, equipment, communication materials, symbols and prices that they see. Therefore, a service provider’s task is to “manage the evidence,” and “make the intangible tangible.” While product marketers are challenged to add abstract ideas, service marketers are challenged to create physical evidence and imagery to supplement abstract offers.

2. Inseparability

Services are distinct from physical products because they are typically produced and consumed simultaneously. This does not apply to physical merchandise, which is manufactured, put into inventory, distributed through multiple dealers and later consumed. When a person renders a service, they are a vital part of the service. Since a client is present while a service is produced, interaction between the service provider and client is a special feature of service marketing.

3. Variability

Services are highly variable depending on who provides them and when they are provided. Buyers are aware of this high variability and frequently discuss with others before

selecting a service provider. Consequently, quality control is essential to the effective management of such variability. Service firms can take three steps toward quality control. The first step is to invest in effective selection and training of personnel. The second step is to standardize the service events and processes in the form of a flow chart to recognize potential failures. The final step is to monitor customer satisfaction through a suggestion and complaint system, customer surveys and comparison shopping so that weaknesses can be detected and corrected.

4. Perishability

Services cannot be stored. The perishability of services is not a problem when demand is steady and the staff are prepared in advance. When demand fluctuates, service firms may face serious problems. The complications of providing services depend very much on the nature of the business. Service can be people-based, equipment-based, or a combination of both. People-based services include those involving professionals (physicians, social workers) and those involving skilled and unskilled labors (housekeepers, technicians). Equipment-based services include services involving automated equipment (blood analyzers, blood pressure machines), equipment operated by relatively unskilled labor (telephone switchboards, kitchen equipment) and equipment operated by skilled labor (ultrasound, cardiac equipment) (Kotler, 1997).

Services also vary in the degree to which a client's presence is necessary. To the extent where clients must be present, the service provider has to be respectful of the clients' needs. Overall, numerous dimensions of service exist. Each plays an important role in the provision of Internet services as well.

3. Service Quality

In one survey, quality, customer satisfaction and identification of what constituted value to the customer was identified as either important or very important (Thomas, C. and Brown, 1990). Empirical analysis of the Profit Impact of Marketing Strategy (PIMS) database showed a positive relationship between perceived quality and an organization's financial performance (Buzzel and Gale, 1987). Companies that are perceived to offer high quality goods and services typically have higher market shares, higher returns on investment and more asset turnovers than companies that are perceived to offer low quality products or services.

Service quality is considered a critical determinant of competitiveness (Lewis, 1989). Attention to service quality can help an organization differentiate itself from others and help it gain long-lasting competitive advantages (Moore, 1987). High quality of service is considered an essential determinant of long-term profitability of both service and manufacturing organizations (Margolies, 1988). Service quality affects the repurchase intentions of existing and potential customers. Research has shown that customers dissatisfied with a service relate their experience to more than three other people. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that poor service reduces the potential customer base (Horovitz 1990).

Service quality has become a predominant aspect of advanced organizations' strategic plans. Increasing attention paid to service quality has resulted in greater progress and profit. To deliver quality services is an essential strategy for survival and success in

today's competitive environment. High service quality provides a competitive edge for an organization that can lead to organizational growth.

Service quality has become an important research topic in view of its significant relationship to cost (Crosby, 1979), profitability (Rust and Zahorik, 1993), customer satisfaction (Boulding et al., 1993), customer retention (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990), service guarantees (Kandampully, 2000) and financial performance (Buttle, 1996).

Research on public and private service sectors demonstrates that perceived service quality contributes to customer satisfaction, repeat visits, positive word-of-mouth and strategic benefits (Anderson & Zeithaml, 1984; Carman, 1990). Thus, understanding what constitutes quality to attract customers allows managers to provide products and services that maximize satisfaction. Analysis of the service quality of Internet providers is the focus of the present research.

3.1 Definition of Service Quality

The conceptualization of service quality in the service marketing literature centers on perceived quality, defined as a consumer's judgment concerning an entity's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml, 1987). Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified three underlying themes concerning service quality as follows:

1. Service quality is more difficult for a customer to evaluate than the quality of goods.
2. Service quality perceptions result from comparison of a consumer's expectations with actual service performances.

3. Quality evaluations are not made by simply relying on the outcome of service; they also involve evaluations of the process of service delivery.

According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), perceived service quality is defined as “global judgment, or attitude, relating to the superiority of the service.” Another definition is that service quality is the extent to which a service meets customers’ needs or expectations. Therefore, if expectations are greater than performance, perceived quality is less than satisfactory leading to customer dissatisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990).

3.2 Dimensions of Service Quality

Kandampully (2000) revealed that service quality was an essential key to the success of any service organization. As customers participate in the service process, they interact closely with various aspects of an organization. This inside knowledge gives them an opportunity to critically assess the services provided to them, particular in terms of quality. Customers assess service quality by comparing the services they receive with the services they desire. Hence, service quality plays a critical role in adding value to overall service experience. Enhancing the quality of service at all levels of service delivery has become mandatory for organization survival. To examine the determinants of quality, it is necessary to differentiate the quality associated with the process of service delivery from that associated with the outcome of service as judged by the consumer.

Gronroos (1991) argued that service quality was made up of three dimensions: the technical quality of the outcome, the functional quality of the encounter, and the company

corporate image. Lehtinen (1982) described service in terms of physical, interactive and corporate (image) qualities. Physical quality relates to tangible aspects of a service. Interactive quality involves the two-way flow that occurs between a customer and service provider. This includes both automated and animated interactions. Corporate quality refers to the public image attributed to a service provider by current and potential customers. When compared with other quality dimensions, corporate quality tends to be more stable over time.

Johnston, Silvestro, Fitzgerald and Voss (1990) identified fifteen dimensions of service quality categorized as hygiene factors, enhancing factors and dual-threshold factors. Hygiene factors are expected by customers and dissatisfaction occurs if these factors are not delivered. Enhancing factors lead to customer satisfaction unless they are delivered improperly. Failure to deliver dual-threshold factors causes dissatisfaction if they exceed a certain threshold.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) identified ten determinants of service quality that can be generalized for any type of service. The ten dimensions include:

1. **Tangibles** –physical evidence of the service, physical facilities, appearance of personnel, tools or equipment used to provide a service;
2. **Reliability** – consistency and dependability of performance;
3. **Responsiveness** – willingness or readiness of staff to provide services;
4. **Competency** –the skills and knowledge that contact personnel and operational support personnel are required to possess for performing the service;
5. **Access** – approachability and ease of contact;

6. **Courtesy** – politeness, respect, consideration and friendliness of contact personnel;
 7. **Communication** – to keep customers informed in language they understand;
 8. **Credibility** – trustworthiness, believability and honesty;
 9. **Security** – the absence of danger, risk or doubt (e.g. physical safety and confidentiality);
- and
10. **Understanding** – the attempt to understand customer's needs.

These ten dimensions were regrouped into the well known five dimensions of the SERVQUAL model. Parasuraman et al. (1988) categorized these five dimensions as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. *Tangibles* are the physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel. *Reliability* refers to the ability to perform promised services dependably and accurately. *Responsiveness* represents the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. *Assurance* includes the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to generate customer trust and confidence. It includes competence, courtesy, credibility and security. *Empathy* refers to individualized attention or care that a firm provides to its customers. It includes access, communication and understanding customers. These five dimensions of perceived quality are used in the operational level in the form of the $Q = P - E$ framework. That is, perceived quality (Q) increases as perception of service (P) exceeds expectations for the service (E) in each dimension.

3.3 Measuring Service Quality

To measure the quality of service is more difficult than the quality of products because fewer tangible cues are available when consumers purchase services (Parasuraman et al., 1985), fewer properties, but higher in experience and credence properties (Zeithaml, 1981). Service also requires higher consumer involvement in the consumption process (Gronroos, 1984).

Satisfaction is measured by comparing average evaluations to identify services that cause customers to feel that an organization is matching (=), exceeding (>) or falling short (<) of expectations. Dissatisfaction arises when services significantly fall short of customer expectations. Competitiveness is measured by comparing evaluations, averaged across customers, of now and other to identify services that cause customers to feel that an organization is matching (=), exceeding (>) or falling short (<) of its competitors (Lee and Lawton, 1995). To deliver quality service means conforming to customers' expectations on a consistent basis.

The concept of service quality refers to comparison of service expectations with perceptions of actual performance (Zeithaml et al., 1990). At the operational level, research concerning service quality relying on the SERVQUAL model is based on the so-called 'gap model.' The central idea in this model is that service quality is a function of gaps between expectations and perceptions (P-E).

3.4 Instruments to Measure Service Quality

There seems little doubt that in the past decade, the SERVQUAL model has proven to be the most popular instrument for measuring service quality. It measures perceptions of service across the five dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy as outlined above (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The model consists of two sets of 22 statements: the first set aims to determine a customer's expectations of a service. The second set seeks to ascertain a customer's perceptions towards the firm's performance. Respondents (customers) are asked to rate their expectations and perceptions toward the firm's performance on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Results from the survey are then used to identify positive and negative gaps in the firm's performance on the five service quality dimensions.

3.5 Models of Service Quality Gaps

Lewis (1987) suggested that differences between abstractions can be measured; namely, between expectations and perceptions, to determine perceived quality and level of satisfaction. This concept is quite similar to Parasuraman's (1985) service quality model described above. Lamb, Hair and McDaniel (2000), and Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) also discussed five key discrepancies that influence customer evaluations of service quality:

Gap 1: Customers' expectations versus management perceptions resulting from lack of marketing research orientation, inadequate upward communications and too many layers of management.

Gap 2: Management perceptions versus service specifications resulting from inadequate commitment to service quality, a perception of unfeasibility, inadequate task standardization and an absence of goal setting.

Gap 3: Service specifications versus service delivery resulting from role ambiguity and conflicts, poor employee-job fit and poor technology-job fit, inappropriate supervisory control systems, lack of perceived control and lack of teamwork.

Gap 4: Service delivery versus external communication, resulting from inadequate horizontal communications and propensity to make too many promises.

Gap 5: The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perception of service delivered, resulting from influences exerted from the customer side and shortfalls (gaps) on the part of the service provider. In this case, customer expectations are influenced by the extent of personal needs, word of mouth recommendations and past service experiences.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) stated that to manage service quality, it is important to manage the gaps between expectations and perceptions on the part of management, employers and customers. The most important gap (#5) is between customer's expectations of a service and perceptions of the service actually delivered. A service marketer therefore must strive to close this gap. In order to do so, they must close the four other gaps that inhibit service delivery. In the study, the researcher expects the call center to close this gap between customer expectation and perception of the service. Therefore, the researcher measures the customer satisfaction towards the call center.

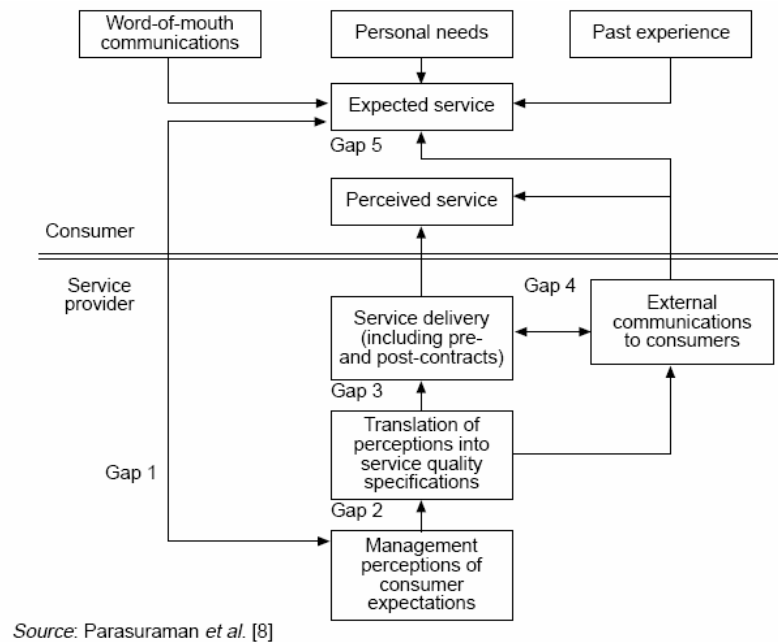


Figure 1 Gap Model of Service Quality (Parasuraman et al. 1985)

3.6 Benefits of SERVQUAL

According to many published reports, the benefits of SERVQUAL can be summarized as follows:

- 1) It is effective at eliciting the views of customers regarding service encounters, expectations and satisfaction.
- 2) It is able to alert management to consider the perceptions of both management and customers.
- 3) It addresses the service gaps which can serve as a basis for formulating strategies and tactics to ensure the fulfillment of expectations.
- 4) SERVQUAL is able to identify specific areas of excellence.

5) It is able to prioritize areas of service weakness.

6) It provides benchmarking analysis for organizations within the same industry.

7) It can trace trends of relative customer importance, expectations and perceptions if applied periodically.

Although SERVQUAL is widely used by academics and practitioners in various industries and in several countries, a number of studies have questioned its conceptual and operational basis. Specifically, doubts have been raised concerning the concept of perceived quality. Carman (1990), Finn and Lamb (1991), and Cronin and Taylor (1992) have all argued that estimation of customer perceptions may already be part of the mental process of perceptions minus expectations. In other words, respondents may already have mentally compared their perceptions to their expectations when asked to rate their perceptions toward an organization.

The second criticism pertains to dimensions of the SERVQUAL model. SERVQUAL applications in different industries reveal that the five dimensions may not cover all aspects of customer service presented in all service encounters. For example, Finn and Lamb (1991) explained that service emphasized in the evaluation of product services such as department stores are different from those in the evaluation of pure services such as banking. However, the SERVQUAL model is still valuable due to the aforementioned benefits.

Facts and Figures concerning Computer and Internet Usage

The main purpose of this section is to indicate the relative importance of computers and the Internet in modern society. These facts and figure will justify why Buddy Broadband Call Center should pay attention to customer satisfaction.

Graphic Visualization and Usability Center College of Computing (2003) analyzed the behavior of 4000 civilian World Wide Web (www) users. They found that approximately 66% of all users were male and 32% were female. 37% of respondents used the Internet more than 9 times a day while others reported using it 1-4 times daily. 34% used the Internet 10-12 hours per week, while 21% used it 21-40 hours per week. 33% of respondents used computers for entertainment 1-5 hours per week, while 23% used them 5-10 hours per week. 28% of the respondents used computers for working 20-40 hours a week, followed by those using computers more than 40 hours a week (19%).

In terms of service quality, the majority of respondents experienced delayed downloading, while other problems included slow speed, broken links, requirements for user name verification before entering certain websites, paid data, junk web sites, excessive pictures, failures in data seeking and script errors. In terms of content, e-mail was determined to be the most indispensable function of the Internet. At the same time, other features such as Java, audio, chat and video were relatively less important.

Student Operate Computing Resource (www2.uwindsor.ca/survey) studied four factors concerning Internet providers: speed, fees, signal reliability and special promotions. The researchers gathered information from 1,200 people during spring 2004. Results

indicated that two-thirds of respondents considered Internet speed to be their primary concern.

World Research Inc. (www.survey.com/ispreresults.html) analyzed consumer satisfaction and Internet problems among 3,590 people in late 2004. The outcome showed that 29% of people were quite satisfied while only 22% were highly satisfied. The remaining respondents related average to below average satisfaction. The study indicated that Internet speed was the major obstacle reported by respondents (45%), followed by unstable signal (27%), expensive fees (25%), technical problems (18%) and low LAN internet connection (15%).

The results of the study will be useful Buddy Broadband Call Center to know the customers' views and apply to improve its service quality to meet the higher level of customers' needs.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology of the research. It contains three sections: participants, instruments and procedures of the study.

Participants

An efficient method for determining sample size for research activities (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) has been applied to determine the optimum sample size for this research. To establish a proper and reliable research sample, the daily walk-in report at Buddy Broadband was carefully analyzed. The report indicated that on average 220 walk-in customers visit the head office per month. The ideal sample size, based on Krejcie and Morgan's table, is 140 participants. Accordingly, the participants in this study were 140 Buddy Broadband customers visiting the head office in the Phaholyothin building in September 2010. The researcher used convenient sampling to recruit the customers who were willing to participate in the study. Even though Buddy Broadband serves Thai and foreign customers alike, the majority are Thai. Consequently, it is most appropriate to focus the present research on the responses and experiences of Thai customers to maximize the significance of the findings to the improvement of the call center. Therefore, the participants of this study were Thai citizens including males and females of different ages who have experienced service from BBCC.

Instrument of the Study

A specially designed questionnaire was used as the primary instrument in this study. It was designed to address the research objectives by measuring the degree of customer satisfaction and the factors affecting customer satisfaction on the SERVQUAL model. The questionnaire included questions based on the Likert-scale plus an open-ended question to gather opinions, ideas and suggestions. To standardize the questionnaire, advice and approval from two research experts were sought. Feedback and suggestions from the experts were used to develop an effective and reliable questionnaire.

The first draft of the questionnaire was created by adapting five aspects of the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al.,1998). A 5-point Likert scale was employed to indicate the degree of customer satisfaction. Statistically, the respondents' answers were weighed on the following scale: 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly disagree.

The second draft of the questionnaire was pilot tested by randomly distributed to 10 walk-in customers at the head office of BBCC during a week of August 2010. Awkward questions and ambiguous wording were identified and revised for subsequent use in the final draft to be used for gathering data. The questionnaire was conducted in the Thai language, however, an English version has been included as the requirement of the project. The questionnaire consisted of three parts as follows:

Part 1: General Information of Respondents

The first section focused on general information from 140 respondents concerning gender, age, membership duration, call center service-usage time, and service-usage reasons.

Part 2: Level of Customer Satisfaction

The second section measured level of customer satisfaction. It consisted of seventeen questions concerning five aspects of the SERVQUAL model: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Parasuraman, et al., 1998). Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of satisfaction concerning each aspect of the SERVQUAL model.

Part 3: Customers' Opinions on the Importance of Buddy Broadband Call Center

The third section explored the service aspects each customer considered important regarding call center service. Participants were asked to rate the importance of each aspect based on a five-point Likert scale ranking from "very unimportant" to "very important."

Part 4: Comments and Suggestions on Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

The fourth section was designed to collect ideas, opinions and suggestions concerning service provided by BBCC. Employing an open-ended question, respondents were asked to express their ideas and perspectives concerning the service they received from Buddy Broadband.

Procedures of the study

Data Collection

Both primary data and secondary data were employed in this study. The primary data were collected from 140 Buddy Broadband customers at the head office where customers pay monthly fees, change promotions, change packages and after-sales service. The main office of BBCC was the ideal location to meet target customers to participate in the research. To gain diversity in terms of demographic characteristics, the questionnaires were randomly distributed to the target group during September 2010. From Monday to Friday, seven respondents were randomly recruited daily to participate in the study. Accordingly, by the end of the month, a total number of 140 respondents had been recruited.

Related literature and research concerning service quality were collected as the secondary data of this research project in order to benefit from existing data relevant to the research objectives. Previous research provided a theoretical basis for the study suitable for comparison to the Internet industry. The literature review is presented in chapter 2.

Data Analysis

The data derived from 140 completed questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to present the data, namely, frequency, percentage and mean. According to Pisarnbut (2007), the value of mean can be interpreted using the following range.

1.00 – 1.80 = Very Low

1.81 – 2.60 = Low

2.61 – 3.40 = Moderate

3.41 – 4.20 = High

4.21 – 5.00 = Very High

All results were analyzed in accordance with the research objectives aimed to measure the level of customer satisfaction and to study factors affecting customers' satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center. The findings, discussion and conclusion of the study were presented addressing the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings from data analysis including general information, customer satisfaction level, comments and suggestions concerning Buddy Broadband Call Center (BBCC). The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in terms of frequency (F), percentage (%) and mean (\bar{X}), followed by a descriptive analysis.

The findings are divided into four main parts consistent with the questionnaire:

Part 1: General information of respondents

Part 2: Customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

Part 3: Customers' Opinions on the Importance of Buddy Broadband Call Center

Part 4: Comments and suggestions concerning Buddy Broadband Call Center

Part 1: General Information of Respondents

The first section focuses on general information of 140 customers concerning gender, age, membership duration, amount of call center service usage and reasons for service usage. The data are summarized and presented in terms of frequency and percentage as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: General Information of Respondents

General Information	Frequency	%
Gender:		
Male	72	51.4
Female	68	48.6
Age:		
Under 25	33	23.6
25-45	89	63.6
46-60	18	12.9
Membership Duration:		
Less than 1 year	35	25.0
1 - 3 years	73	52.1
Over 3 years	32	22.9
Amount of Call Center Service Usage:		
1 time	12	8.6
2 - 3 times	71	50.7
4 - 5 times	32	22.9
Over 5 times	25	17.9
Total	140	100.0

Table 1 reveals that 51.4% of participants were male. The most common age range of participants was from 25 to 45. A majority of respondents (52.1%) reported using Buddy Broadband for the length of 1 to 3 years. Slightly more than half (50.7%) of respondents reported using the call center service 2 to 3 times within a year.

Table 2: Purpose of Using Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

Purpose	Frequency	%
Asking for solutions to problems	131	93.6
Asking for information	70	50.0
Changing promotion / package	55	39.3
Complaining or making comments	30	21.4
Others	1	.7

Note: Respondents could choose multiple answers.

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents (93.6%) called BBCC service to find solutions to their problems, meanwhile, half of them (50%) called to seek information.

Part 2: Customer Satisfaction with Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

This section presents the level of customer satisfaction towards BBCC service. It consists of 17 statements focusing five aspects of the SERVQUAL model including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Respondents rated the level of their satisfaction on a five point Likert scale, and the results are shown in Tables 3 to 8.

Table 3: Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service in Terms of Reliability

Reliability	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. The Call Center is reliable in solving problems and giving useful information.	3.79	.85	High
2. The Call Center provides quality services.	3.87	.82	High
3. The Call Center provides services that suit customer needs	3.86	.76	High
4. The services of the Call Center operate smoothly.	3.58	.91	High
Total	3.77	.74	High

The findings reveal that the majority of service customers experienced overall satisfaction with BBCC service in terms of reliability at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.77$). The highest level of satisfaction was with the quality of services at a mean score of 3.87.

Table 4: Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service in Terms of Responsiveness

Responsiveness	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. The Call Center immediately responds to customers' complaints and comments.	3.88	.92	High
2. The Call Center is willing and enthusiastic in listening to and solving customers' problems.	3.99	.86	High
3. The Call Center follows customers' requests enthusiastically.	3.89	.76	High
4. The Call Center can suggest solutions that correspond with customer needs.	3.74	.80	High
Total	3.87	.74	High

Respondents expressed overall satisfaction in terms of responsiveness at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.87$). The highest satisfaction was with the call centre staff's willingness and enthusiasm in listening to and solving customers' problems at a highly respectable mean score of 3.99.

Table 5: Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service in Terms of Assurance

Assurance	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. The customers assure that all customers' problems can be solved and complaints are handled.	3.64	.91	High
2. The Call Center is knowledgeable in providing information and service to customers.	3.93	.80	High
3. Customers feel comfortable and secure when contacting the Call Center.	3.92	.84	High
4. The Call Center provides services with high ability.	3.93	.83	High
Total	3.86	.76	High

Respondents were highly satisfied with assurance at a mean score of 3.86. The call center staff were found to be knowledgeable in providing information and service at a high level of ability ($\bar{X} = 3.93$).

Table 6: Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service in Terms of Empathy

Empathy	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. The Call Center is empathetic and service minded.	4.33	.75	Highest
2. The Call Center shows full effort in giving customers information and following up complaints.	4.16	.80	High
3. The Call Center provides the best advice.	3.79	.84	High
4. The Call Center empathizes and understands the customer needs.	4.14	.75	High
Total	4.10	.71	High

Table 6 shows respondents' high level of satisfaction with the empathy of the BBCC at a high level with a mean score of 4.10. The highest level of satisfaction ($\bar{X} = 4.33$) was with the center being empathetic and service minded.

Table 7: Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service Concerning Tangible Items

Tangible Items	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
Providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR)	3.56	.98	High

Respondents reported a high level of customer satisfaction with the innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR) provided by the call center at the high level ($\bar{X} = 3.56$).

Table 8: Summary of Customer Satisfaction towards BBCC Service

Satisfaction level towards Buddy Broadband Call Center Service	Level of Satisfaction		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. Reliability	3.77	.74	High
2. Responsiveness	3.87	.74	High
3. Assurance	3.86	.76	High
4. Empathy	4.10	.71	High
5. Tangible Items	3.56	.98	High
Total	3.83	.68	High

The majority of respondents reported a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.83$) of satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center with the mean scores ranked from 3.56 to 4.10. While the highest level ($\bar{X} = 4.10$) of satisfaction concerned empathy. The level of customer satisfaction towards BBCC service registered at a high level for all factors.

Part 3: Customers' Opinions on the Important Service Aspects of Buddy

Broadband Call Center Service

This part presents customers' opinions on the important Service Aspects of BBCC focusing on the SERVQUAL model. Participants were asked to rate the importance of each aspect based on a five-point Likert scale ranking from "very unimportant" to "very important." The results are demonstrated in Table 9.

Table 9: Customers' Opinions on the Important Service Aspects of BBCC Service

Service Aspects	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1. Reliability: reliable in solving problems and giving useful information, providing quality services and operate smoothly	4.24	.61	Very Important
2. Responsiveness: willing and enthusiastic in listening and solving customers' problems	4.32	.65	Very Important
3. Assurance: assuring that all customers' problems can be solved and complaints are handled	4.14	.58	Important
4. Empathy: showing full effort in giving customers information and following up complaints and providing the best advice	4.04	.51	Important
5. Tangibles: providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR)	3.83	.52	Important
Total	4.11	.31	Important

As shown in Table 9, the findings regarding service of BBCC that the respondents considered important are described as follows:

In terms of reliability, the findings show that respondents rated the call center reliability in solving problems and giving useful information, providing quality services and operating smooth services very important to them with a mean score of 4.24. Respondents pointed out that the call center willingness and enthusiasm in listening and solving customers' problems were very important at the highest level ($\bar{X} = 4.32$) of importance. Further, respondents stated that the assurance that all customers' problems could be solved and complaints handled ($\bar{X} = 4.14$) was important to them. The findings show that the call centers' empathy in giving customers information, following up complaints and providing the best advice was important to them with a mean score of 4.04. Finally, the study revealed that providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR) was important to them.

The mean scores for all aspects ranked from 3.83 to 4.32. The total mean score of all aspects was 4.11. Based on Pisarnbut's findings (2007), it can be interpreted that the customers considered BBCC Service to be "important" to them. One noteworthy observation is that the highest mean score was responsiveness with a mean score of 4.32.

In the fourth part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to express their comments and opinions towards BBCC. Ten comments were returned from 140 respondents. The comments can be categorized into three topics. Two topics concerned the call center service and one concerned service quality. The comments were as follows.

Three respondents commented on the working hours of the call center. They suggested that the company extend the working hours to 24 hours a day. They stated that sometimes when they encountered problems they could not get help or support from the call center because no service was available.

The second topic discussed in the customers' suggestions was that the call center should change the service level agreement of the waive process in the event of network problems. Normally, the process requires 15 working days to process. Customers would like to receive a prompter response.

Five respondents stated that the call center was perfect in terms of service quality, but the company should improve the quality of the Internet service. They sometimes experienced very low Internet speed. One respondent wrote, "Sometimes I couldn't download any movies. I checked the speed at speedtest.net and was getting lower speed than what I had applied for. At that time, I was very angry and called the call center. The staff was very nice and helpful. They calmed me down and I was happy with the service." Another customer reported, "On the weekend, when I did my homework, I got a low speed. I was not satisfied with the Internet quality."

These opinions were useful for the company to improve the quality of service accordingly. In conclusion, the findings of the study indicated that respondents had a high level of satisfaction with Buddy Broadband Call Center service.

Discussion of the major findings, conclusion of the study, limitation of the study and recommendation for further studies are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter contains four main sections: discussion of major findings, conclusions, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further studies.

Discussion of Major Findings

The following discussion presents the major findings of this research in response to the research questions of this study.

Research Question 1: At what level are customers satisfied with Buddy Broadband Call Center Service?

Results showed that the overall level of customer satisfaction was high in every aspect of the SERVQUAL Model: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. This signified that BBCC currently provides good call center services to customers. The mean scores (\bar{X}) indicated that 'Empathy' (4.10) was the aspect with which customers were most satisfied. They were most satisfied that the call center were empathetic and service minded when providing service to customers. Customers were also satisfied by the full effort of the call center in giving information and following up on complaints. It was clear that the call center was empathetic and understood customer needs.

These results are important when considering that empathy refers to individualized attention or care that a firm provides to its customers, including access, communication, and understanding customers (Parasuraman et al., 1998). Moreover, the results were consistent with the findings of Putthawithee (2003) who studied consumer satisfaction with Thai massage at Damnoensaduak Hospital using an application of the SERVQUAL instrument. Putthawithee found that most customers were satisfied with the Thai massage service at Damnoensadouk Hospital where the most important elements of satisfaction were empathy, assurance, and tangibility. Similar emphasis on empathy was determined in the research of Manthaka (2006). CallCenterHelper (www.callcenterhelper.com) stated that empathy skills involve “the capacity to know emotionally what another is experiencing from within the frame of reference of that other person, the capacity to sample the feelings of another or to put oneself in another’s shoes.”

Undoubtedly, demonstrating strong empathy skills in addition to providing customers with the information and service they require plays a key role in ensuring customer satisfaction with the call center. The research results clearly indicated that BBCC has shown empathy with customers to ensure their satisfaction.

The call center is a real-time point of contact for each customer. Although it does not offer face-to-face service, it provides prompt feedback by telephone to fulfill customer needs. In this study, responsiveness, with a mean score of $\bar{X}=3.87$, was rated the second most important aspect of customer satisfaction. As defined by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985), responsiveness represents the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. The findings indicated that BBCC was willing and enthusiastic in listening to and solving each customer’s problems.

However, the results concerning responsiveness were substantially different from the study of Rueangthanakiet (2008). He concluded that responsiveness was often identified as the least important factor in determining customer satisfaction in a fitness center. This may be because staff are not willing to provide prompt and good service to members.

Assurance was the third most satisfactory aspect among customers of the call center with a mean score of $\bar{X} = 3.86$. As Parasuraman et al. (1998) state, assurance includes the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to generate customers' trust and confidence. It included competence, courtesy, credibility and security. The results of this study showed that customers were most satisfied with the knowledge of the call center in providing information and service to customers. These results differ, once again, from Rueangthanakiet's study (2008). It was found that in hospitality, customers rank assurance as the factor of highest satisfaction. According to Carman (1990), assurance is the most significant dimension that influences customer satisfaction because service is intangible and is difficult to evaluate.

Since the customer satisfaction was rated at the high level, this indicated that the staff of BBCC had knowledge of their product and the customers felt assured that all problems could be solved properly. In this regard, the knowledge and skill on problem solving of staff at the call center can increase the level of customers' satisfaction.

The next aspect that the customer was satisfied was 'Reliability' ($\bar{X} = 3.77$). As Parasuraman et al. (1998) said reliability refers to the ability to perform promised services dependably and accurately. Wongmontha (1999) explained that reliability aspect as one of significant points of service providing if that the service provider is able to and provide an

accurate answer to the customers when they have questions about information of products and services.

According to the results, BBCC providing the quality services with the most satisfied reason, followed by BBCC providing services that suit the customer needs, reliability on solving problems and giving useful information, and the smooth operating service of the call center. This finding supported the idea of Moore (1987) that attention to service quality can help an organization differentiate itself from others and help it gain long-lasting competitive advantages. In addition, high quality service is considered an essential determinant of long term profitability of both service and manufacturing organizations (Margolies, 1988).

When comparing the result with other studies, this result was in the same line with the result of Rueangthanakiet (2008), showing that reliability aspect was placed on the 4th aspect that the customer were satisfied most. Although the result of customer satisfaction towards BBCC service in terms of reliability was high, it indicated that the quality services of BBCC could further be enhanced.

The final aspect having the means under the customer satisfaction towards BBCC services was 'Tangibles' ($\bar{X} = 3.56$). Tangibles are physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel (Parasuraman et al. 1998). Since BBCC has provided intangible service, the channel that the customers can contact the service provider was through telephone. Besides using professional communication skill, the communication facility also played a major role for this service. The only tangible item that the researcher can measure customer satisfaction by using communication skill was BBCC providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR).

When comparing the result of study on the study of fitness center (Rueangthanakiet, 2008), the assurance was most satisfied, followed by 'tangibles'. In current research, customer satisfaction on tangible aspect was also high; it meant that BBCC provided well functioned equipment in order to respond to the call of customers.

To conclude, the findings to the first research question can be summarized that the customers were satisfied with BBCC services at high level in every aspect of the SERVQUAL model. The aspects ordered by means (\bar{X}) were 'empathy', 'responsiveness', 'assurance', 'reliability', and 'tangibles'. As compared with other studies using the SERVQUAL model to measure customer satisfaction, the study of Rueangthanakiet (2008) for instance, the results on his study were at average level, the comparison result was different since the order of the highest satisfaction aspects were 'assurance', 'tangibles', 'empathy', 'reliability', and 'responsiveness' respectively. The findings of this study can support that the existing call center service of Buddy Broadband had met the satisfaction of their customers.

As suggested in this study, BBCC should maintain service quality on these five aspects because from the general information of respondents, the major number of the amount of call center service usage showed that the majority of respondents used the call center service more than one time. Therefore, the tendency that customers would contact the BBCC more often in the future.

Research Question 2: Which aspects of Buddy Broadband Call Center do customers consider most important?

As shown in the result of Question 1, the aspect that the customers were satisfied most was 'empathy'. However, when considering which aspects the customers considered most important, the result was significantly different. The followings were discussion in details.

Wongmontha (1999) stated that one of the significant points of service providing was fast and good service, including recognizing the precious time of the customers. In this study 'responsiveness' was shown as the most important aspect the customers concerned ($\bar{X} = 4.32$), while in terms of customer satisfaction, 'responsiveness' was rated the second most satisfied aspect. The result showed that the customers needed the call center to be willing and enthusiastic in listening and solving customers' problems. This result may match with the purpose of using BBCC service that 93.6% called BBCC for problem solving, followed by asking for information (50%); therefore, it implies that the customers needed quick response at real-time. However, when comparing with other study, 'responsiveness' was not the highest expectation of the arrival passengers at domestic terminal services (Yodpornpaiboon, 2009). This result can guide BBCC that there was still a room to improve their service quality in terms of responsiveness in order to meet the customer's expectation.

The second aspect the customers stated was the important service they needed from BBCC which was 'Reliability'. Boonbongkarn (2000) explained specific characteristic of services which were different from goods or products stating that service is the

materiality of 'trust' because a buyer doesn't have a chance to know exactly what he or she will get until the service is delivered. Trust, therefore, covers every step of communication, while goods may be checked from physical or sampled products. The service can only provide the explanation and experience which may not meet the customer's demand (Boonbongkarn, 2000).

According to the result, the customers wanted BBCC to provide reliable solution on problem solving and give useful information, quality services and smooth operation. The study showed that the situation that the customers called the BBCC was when there was a problem of the Internet service. The customers called BBCC and needed correct information or answer that can help them at their computer desk immediately. However, when comparing with the results of other studies, 'reliability' was placed on the fourth aspect that the arrival passengers at domestic terminal services had expected most (Yodpornpaiboon, 2009). This different result may link to different service. BBCC service was not face-to-face service, while domestic terminal service was exactly a face-to-face one.

From the result of this study, the customers were stated to assure that all customers' problems can be solved and all complaints can be handled and it was the third important aspect, next to 'reliability' aspect.

In other studies, 'assurance' was not placed on the top aspect that the customer expects. For example, Craig K.Tyran and Steven C.Ross (2006) studied the "Service Quality Expectations and Perceptions: Use of the SERVQUAL Instrument for Requirements Analysis", and their result showed that 'assurance' was rated the fourth ranked area of priority of the service quality. In contrast, among airport operation services, 'assurance'

was the first aspect the arrival passengers expected from domestic terminal services (Yodpornpaiboon, 2009). It implied that the customer assured on the safety of air transportation, whereas, BBCC service was a telephone service facility and had less concern for safety. Therefore, 'assurance' was not the highest level of importance in the customers' opinion.

The fourth aspect ranked on the importance of BBCC service was 'Empathy'. When compared with results of other studies, the results of Yodpornpaiboon's showed that 'empathy' was rated the last aspect that the customers expected for in the airport operation service. Interestingly, the result of this study showed that the level of customer satisfaction indicated that 'empathy' was rated the highest satisfied aspect. However, when considering the customer's opinion on what their important aspect was, the result was 'responsiveness', but not 'empathy'. This implied that in order to meet the customers' expectation, BBCC had to put much effort on the aspect the customers had expected most.

The last aspect that the customers considered least important when compared with other four aspects of the SERVQUAL Model was 'Tangibles' which was the same aspect the customers were least satisfied with BBCC services. When compared with other studies, Yodpornpaiboon's (2009) revealed that 'Tangibles' was rated the second aspect of the customers' expectation in the airport operation service.

Since the service is considered intangible service, the only tangible item for BBCC was related to how well BBCC provided the innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR). The customers still considered that equipment was least important because what they wanted from BBCC was how to solve their problems on the Internet

service. Therefore, the equipment supporting BBCC service was not the influential aspect. Although 'tangibles' aspect was the least important aspect, BBCC should not ignore it.

To sum up, the findings to the second research question can be summarized that the customers' opinions on the importance of BBCC services was ranked by means as follows: 'responsiveness', 'reliability', 'assurance', 'empathy', and 'tangibles', respectively. The findings may show different results from other studies using SERVQUAL model. The study results of Yodpornpaiboon (2009), for instance, found that the arrival passengers' expectations of domestic terminal services related to 'assurance', 'tangibles', 'responsiveness', 'reliability', and 'empathy', respectively. This can imply that the important aspects the customers expected can be various depending on what kind of service and for what purpose the customers use the service. Accordingly, these findings can improve the BBCC service by correctly focusing on what the customers concerned the most in order to meet the customers' expectation.

Conclusions

This study aimed to measure the level of customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center and to explore the service aspects the customer considers important regarding call center service. The SERVQUAL instrument, developed by Parasuraman (1985), was used to design the questionnaire consisting of questions based on the Likert-scale plus an open-ended question to gather opinions and suggestions. To standardize the questionnaire, advice and approval from two research experts were sought. Feedback and suggestions from the experts were used to develop an effective and reliable

questionnaire. The study was conducted then the questionnaires were administered to the participants in September 2010. The total subjects of this study were 140 Buddy Broadband customers visiting the head office in the Phaholyothin building in September 2010. Then the data were analyzed.

The results showed that customers' satisfaction in the five aspects (empathy, responsiveness, assurance, reliability, and tangibles) was at high level.

The highest level of customers' satisfaction was placed on the 'empathy' aspect followed by 'responsiveness', 'assurance' 'reliability' and 'tangibles' respectively.

In addition, the results showed that according to the customers' opinions on the importance of BBCC service, 'responsiveness' was rated the most important aspect, followed by 'reliability', 'assurance', 'empathy' and 'tangibles'.

In this study, the researcher found both strengths and weaknesses in BBCC service quality. The 'empathy' aspect showed the highest satisfaction level in customers' opinion, while the 'empathy' was ranked the fourth of important aspects under the customer's opinion. However, BBCC should maintain service quality on this aspect because from the general information of respondents, the major number of the amount of call center service usage showed that the majority of respondents used the call center service more than one time. Therefore, the tendency that customers would contact the BBCC in the future is likely to increase. Furthermore, the 'empathy' aspect, shown as the highest satisfaction aspect, indicated that the staff of BBCC has the empathy skill which gain the customers' satisfaction. This is well supported by the strength of the empathy skills emphasized in the information given by CallCenterHelper (www.callcenterhelper.com). It stated that the empathy skills is "the capacity to know emotionally what another is experiencing from within

the frame of reference of that other person, the capacity to sample the feelings of another or to put oneself in another's shoes.”

However, when participants were asked what aspect the customers thought to be the most important, the outcome was 'Responsiveness' which was rated the second rank of the most satisfied aspect. Prompt service is also an important expectation of customers who use such service, in restaurants, hotels, and fitness centers. Customers judge the service as poor when the speed of service does not meet their expectations as in the study of Rueangthanakiet (2008). In this regard, in order to achieve both the customers' expectation and satisfaction, BBCC should improve their call center service, specifically in terms of 'responsiveness'. There are several ways to enhance the responsiveness of the call center such as training the staff to have efficient and sufficient knowledge on the Internet services, and preparing FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) for the staff to be able to immediately respond to the customers. The proactive service can possibly make BBCC different from its competitors. Furthermore, responding to people promptly is the most important thing the company can do to ensure high levels of customer service.

From the study, the lowest rank of both satisfied and important aspect was 'tangibles' which concerned the equipment using in the call center, including innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR). Although 'tangible item' was at the high level of customer satisfaction, BBCC should not ignore or be careless. The equipment should be checked frequently because IVR was only the tool that BBCC could contact with the customers. If IVR or any equipment fails to serve its function, the call center would deteriorate. If it were so, it would affect the image, reputation, and reliability of BBCC.

In summary, the overall customer satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Service was at high level in every aspect of SERVQUAL Model. However, the study found that the most satisfied aspect did not correlate with the most important aspect as customer expected. Consequently, the organization should enhance their call center service in order to properly fulfill the customer's need and expectation.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Studies

Limitations of the study including recommendations for further studies are as follows:

1. The number of participants in this study was limited to 140 customers; therefore, it could not be referred to as the customers of BBCC in general. Further studies should investigate a larger number of participants, and the findings can generally represent the overall customers.

2. The general information of respondents was provided only sex, age, membership duration, and amount of call center service usage. Further studies should collect other demographic profile such as education background, occupation, and income in order to analyze whether demographic profile influences the customer satisfaction or not.

3. This study employed a close-ended and open-ended questionnaire focusing on five aspects under SERVQUAL Model: tangibles, empathy, responsiveness, reliability, and assurance. It may not provide an in-depth result because the participants were not able to express some related aspects of customer satisfaction towards BBCC service (e.g. sample situation that customers are dissatisfied) through questionnaire. Conducting a short

interview with customers would provide in-depth information about the satisfaction on the company service.

4. This study was limited with the period of time for data collection specifically in September 2010. The study results may not reflect the general customer satisfaction towards BBCC service. Hence, further research should extend a longer period of data collection or in a regularly frequent period in order to currently reflect the results.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is designed to explore customers' opinions towards the service of Buddy Broadband Call Center. The information will be used to improve the service quality.

Your kind cooperation in completing this questionnaire will be highly appreciated. The information will be used only in the study and will remain confidential.

Part I: General Information of respondents

Directions: Please mark ✓ on the appropriate answer and fill in the blank if necessary.

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age

Under 25

25-45

46-60

Over 60

3. Buddy Broadband Membership Duration

Less than 1 year

1 – 3 years

Over 3 years

4. Frequency of using BBCC service (September 2009 – September 2010)

Once a year

2 – 3 times a year

4 – 5 times a year

Over 5 times a year

5. Purpose of using Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

Asking for solutions to problems

Asking for information

Changing promotion / package

Complaining or making comments

Others (Please specify)

Part 2: Customer Satisfaction towards Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

Directions: Please mark ✓ in the to rate your satisfaction while using the call center service

Strongly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
5	4	3	2	1

Customer Satisfaction with Buddy Broadband Call Center Service	Level of Opinions				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Reliability					
1.1 The Call Center is reliable in solving problems and giving useful information.					
1.2 The Call Center provides quality services.					
1.3 The Call Center provides services that suit customer's needs					
1.4 The services of the Call Center operate smoothly.					
2. Responsiveness					
2.1 The Call Center immediately responds to customer's complaints and comments.					
2.2 The Call Center is willing and enthusiastic in listening to and solving customer's problems.					
2.3 The Call Center follows customer's requests enthusiastically.					
2.4 The Call Center can suggest solutions that correspond with customer's needs.					
3. Assurance					
3.1 The Call Center assures that all customer's problems can be solved and complaints can be handled.					
3.2 The Call Center is knowledgeable in providing information and service to customers.					
3.3 Customers feel comfortable and secure when contacting the Call Center.					
3.4 The Call Center provides services with high ability.					
4. Empathy					
4.1 The Call Center is empathetic and service minded.					
4.2 The Call Center shows full effort in giving customers information and following up complaints.					

4.3 The Call Center provides good advice.					
4.4 The Call Center empathizes and understands customer's needs.					
5. Tangibles					
5.1 Providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR)					

Part 3: Customers' Opinions Concerning the Important Service Aspects of Buddy Broadband Call Center Service

Directions: Please mark ✓ in the to rate the importance of each item.

The Importance of Service Aspects of Buddy Broadband Call Center	Level of Importance				
--	---------------------	--	--	--	--

	Very Important		Very Unimportant		
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Reliability: reliable in solving problems and giving useful information, providing quality services and operating smoothly					
2. Responsiveness: willing and enthusiastic to listen and solve customer's problems					
3. Assurance: assuring that all customer's problems can be solved and complaints are handled					
4. Empathy: shows full effort in giving customers information, following up complaints and providing good advice					
5. Tangibles: providing innovative and modern Interactive Voice Response (IVR)					

Part 4: Additional Comments Concerning the Service Provided by Buddy Broadband Call Center

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

****Thank you for your cooperation****

APPENDIX B

THAI QUESTIONNAIRE

แบบสอบถามการวิจัย

ความพึงพอใจของผู้ใช้บริการ Buddy Broadband Call Center

แบบสอบถามชุดนี้สำรวจความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับการใช้บริการของลูกค้าที่มีต่อ Buddy Broadband Call Center เพื่อนำข้อมูลไปพัฒนาและปรับปรุงการให้บริการลูกค้าให้ดียิ่งขึ้น

ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล

กรุณาทำเครื่องหมาย ✓ หน้าตัวเลือกที่เป็นคำตอบของท่านเพียงตัวเลือกเดียว (กรุณาตอบทุกข้อ)

1. เพศ

 ชาย หญิง

2. อายุ

 ต่ำกว่า 25 ปี 25-45 ปี 46-60 ปี 60 ปีขึ้นไป

3. ระยะเวลาการเป็นสมาชิก Buddy Broadband

 น้อยกว่า 1 ปี 1 – 3 ปี 3 ปีขึ้นไป

4. จำนวนครั้งที่ใช้บริการ Buddy Broadband Call Center ใน 1 ปีที่ผ่านมา (โดยประมาณ)

 1 ครั้ง 2 – 3 ครั้ง 4 – 5 ครั้ง มากกว่า 5 ครั้ง

5. ท่านใช้บริการของ Buddy Broadband Call Center ด้วยจุดประสงค์เพื่อ..... (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

 เพื่อช่วยในการแก้ไขปัญหา เพื่อสอบถามข้อมูล เพื่อเปลี่ยนโปรโมชั่น, แพคเกจ ร้องเรียนหรือติชมการให้บริการ อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ)

ส่วนที่ 2 ความพึงพอใจที่ท่านมีต่อการให้บริการของ Buddy Broadband Call Center

กรุณาทำเครื่องหมาย ✓ ในข้อคิดเห็นที่ตรงกับท่านที่สุดเพียงตัวเลือกเดียว (กรุณาตอบทุกข้อ)

เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง	เห็นด้วย	ไม่แน่ใจ	ไม่เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง
5	4	3	2	1

ความพึงพอใจของผู้ใช้บริการต่อ Buddy Broadband Call Center	ระดับความคิดเห็น				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. ด้านความเชื่อถือได้ (Reliability)					
1.1 พนักงานได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงความน่าเชื่อถือในการแก้ปัญหาและการให้ข้อมูลแก่ท่าน					
1.2 พนักงานสามารถให้บริการท่านได้อย่างมีคุณภาพ					
1.3 พนักงานสามารถให้บริการตรงตามความต้องการของท่าน					
1.4 พนักงานสามารถให้บริการได้อย่างต่อเนื่องไม่ติดขัด					
2. ด้านการตอบสนอง/ความรวดเร็ว (Responsiveness)					
2.1 เมื่อท่านมีปัญหาหรือต้องการสอบถามข้อมูลหรือต้องการร้องเรียนเกี่ยวกับบริการ พนักงานรับเรื่องเพื่อดำเนินการให้ท่านทันที					
2.2 พนักงานมีความกระตือรือร้นในการรับฟังและแก้ไข้ปัญหา					
2.3 พนักงานมีความกระตือรือร้นในการติดตามเรื่องที่ท่านได้แจ้งไว้					
2.4 พนักงานสามารถเสนอแนวทางแก้ไข้ปัญหาได้เหมาะสมตรงกับความต้องการของท่าน					
3. ด้านการรับประกัน/ความมั่นใจ (Assurance)					
3.1 ท่านมั่นใจว่าปัญหาหรือข้อมูลที่สอบถามหรือการร้องเรียนของท่านที่แจ้งผ่านพนักงานได้รับการแก้ไข้ทุกเรื่อง					
3.2 พนักงานมีความรู้และความสามารถในการให้บริการ					
3.3 ท่านรู้สึกไว้วางใจเมื่อทำการติดต่อพนักงาน					
3.4 พนักงานให้บริการท่านได้อย่างเต็มความสามารถ					
4. ด้านการเอาใจใส่ (Empathy)					
4.1 พนักงานมีความเต็มใจในการให้บริการ					
4.2 พนักงานใส่ใจในการให้ข้อมูลหรือติดตามเรื่องที่ท่านได้แจ้งไว้					
4.3 พนักงานใส่ใจในการแนะนำสิ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์สูงสุดต่อท่าน					
4.4 พนักงานใส่ใจและเข้าใจถึงความต้องการของท่าน					
5. ด้านสิ่งที่มองเห็นในการบริการ (Tangibles)					
5.1 มีระบบตอบรับโทรศัพท์อัตโนมัติ (IVR) ที่ทันสมัย					

ส่วนที่ 3 ความสำคัญในการบริการของ Buddy Broadband Call Center

กรุณาทำเครื่องหมาย ✓ ในข้อคิดเห็นที่ตรงกับท่านที่สุดเพียงตัวเลือกเดียว (กรุณาตอบทุกข้อ)

ความสำคัญของการบริการ Buddy Broadband Call Center	ระดับความสำคัญ				
	สำคัญมาก			ไม่สำคัญ	
	5	4	3	2	1
1. ด้านความเชื่อถือได้ (Reliability) ได้แก่ พนักงานได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงความน่าเชื่อถือในการแก้ปัญหาและการให้ข้อมูลแก่ท่าน รวมทั้งสามารถให้บริการท่านได้อย่างมีคุณภาพและตรงตามความต้องการของท่าน					
2. ด้านการตอบสนอง/ความรวดเร็ว (Responsiveness) ได้แก่ เมื่อท่านมีปัญหาหรือต้องการสอบถามข้อมูลหรือร้องเรียนเกี่ยวกับบริการ พนักงานรับเรื่องเพื่อดำเนินการให้ท่านทันที					
3. ด้านการรับประกัน/ความมั่นใจ (Assurance) ได้แก่ ท่านมั่นใจว่า ปัญหาหรือข้อมูลที่สอบถามหรือร้องเรียนของท่านที่แจ้งผ่านพนักงาน ได้รับการแก้ไขทุกเรื่อง					
4. ด้านการเอาใจใส่ (Empathy) ได้แก่ พนักงานมีความเต็มใจและใส่ใจในการให้บริการและติดตามเรื่องที่ท่านได้แจ้งไว้ รวมทั้งแนะนำสิ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์ต่อท่าน					
5. ด้านสิ่งที่มองเห็นในการบริการ (Tangibles) ได้แก่ มีระบบตอบรับโทรศัพท์อัตโนมัติ (IVR) ที่ทันสมัย					

ส่วนที่ 4 ข้อเสนอแนะเกี่ยวกับการให้บริการของ Buddy Broadband Call Center

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****ขอขอบคุณที่ให้ความร่วมมือในการตอบแบบสอบถาม****

APPENDIX C

KREJCIE AND MORGAN'S TABLE

Krejcie, Robert V.; & Morgan, Darlyn M. (1970, Autumn). "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities," *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. 30: 607-610.

DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

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The ever increasing demand for research has created a need for an efficiency method of determining the sample size needed to be representative of a given population. In the article "Small Sample Technique." The research division of the National Education Association has published a formula for determining sample size. Regrettably a table has not been available for ready easy reference which could have been constructed using the following formula.

$$S = \frac{X^2NP(1-P)}{d^2(n-1)} + X^2P(1-P)$$

S = required sample size

X² = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level

N = the population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

No calculations are needed to use Table 1. For example, one may wish to know the sample size required to be representative of the opinion of 9000 high school teachers relative to merit pay increase. To obtain the required sample size enter Table 1 at N = 9000. The sample size representative of the teachers in this example is 368. Table 1 is applicable to any defined population.

Table 1
Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	2500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

VITAE

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