

CUSTOMER AND POTENTIAL CUSTOMER ATTITUDES
TOWARD MISTINE COSMETICS

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

PAEMALA UDOMPHAIBOONWONG

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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The purposes of this study were to determine what customer and potential customer attitudes toward each of the 4Ps in Mistine's marketing mix were and which factors most influenced decisions of customers and potential customers to purchase, or not purchase, Mistine cosmetics. A questionnaire was employed to survey 50 female respondents residing in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area. The 50 respondents were divided equally into two groups categorized by their income ranges set by Mistine as the defining limits of their customer bases: 25 Group B respondents (potential customers) with earned incomes between 20,001 and 40,000 baht per month and 25 Group C respondents (customers) with earned incomes of 20,000 baht per month or less.

The findings showed that both Group B (potential customers) and Group C (customers) respondents had positive attitudes toward Mistine's marketing mix. The reasonable price was the most important factor influencing both Group B and Group C respondents' decisions to purchase Mistine cosmetics. The product quality was the primary factor that influenced both Group B and Group C respondents' decisions not to purchase Mistine cosmetics.

เจตคติที่มีต่อเครื่องสำอางมีสกินของลูกค้า และลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมาย

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

แพมมาลา อุดมไพบุลย์วงศ์

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ

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มร. ลีรอย เอ คิวค.

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาเจตคติของลูกค้าและลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมายที่มีต่อกลยุทธ์ทางการตลาด (4Ps) ของมิสทิน และเพื่อศึกษาปัจจัยที่มีอิทธิพลมากที่สุดในการตัดสินใจซื้อหรือไม่ซื้อสินค้ามิสทินของลูกค้าและลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมาย โดยใช้แบบสอบถามเพื่อสำรวจข้อมูลกับผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามเพศหญิงที่อาศัยอยู่บริเวณกรุงเทพมหานคร และปริมาณผลจำนวน 50 คน ซึ่งผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามถูกจำแนกเป็น 2 กลุ่มเท่าๆ กัน ตามรายได้ ซึ่งมิสทินเป็นผู้กำหนดพื้นฐานขอบเขตของรายได้ของลูกค้าและลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมาย โดยกลุ่มที่ 1 เป็นลูกค้ากลุ่มบี (ลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมาย) จำนวน 25 คน มีรายได้ต่อเดือนระหว่าง 20,001 ถึง 40,000 บาท และกลุ่มที่ 2 เป็นลูกค้ากลุ่มซี (ลูกค้า) จำนวน 25 คน มีรายได้ต่อเดือน 20,000 บาท หรือน้อยกว่า

ผลการวิจัยพบว่าลูกค้ากลุ่มบี (ลูกค้ากลุ่มเป้าหมาย) และลูกค้ากลุ่มซี (ลูกค้า) มีเจตคติต่อกลยุทธ์ทางการตลาดของมิสทินในเชิงบวก ปัจจัยที่สำคัญที่สุดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อเครื่องสำอางมิสทินของลูกค้ากลุ่มบี และลูกค้ากลุ่มซี คือราคาที่สมเหตุสมผล และปัจจัยอันดับแรกที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจไม่ซื้อเครื่องสำอางมิสทินของลูกค้ากลุ่มบี และลูกค้ากลุ่มซี คือคุณสมบัติของสินค้า

The Master's Project Advisor, Chair of Business English for International Communication, and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project *Customer and Potential Customer Attitudes Toward MISTINE Cosmetics* by "Paemala Udomphaiboonwong" 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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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Superbrands Volume I (2004) found that in 2004, Thailand's cosmetic market was valued at more than 25 billion baht and continued to grow at a rate of five to ten percent annually. Distribution channels varied from factories to single retail outlets, major department stores, supermarkets and beauty parlors and included direct sales systems: single-level and multi-level marketing (Superbrands Volume I, 2004, p. 84). Mistine is a Thai cosmetic brand distributed primarily through direct sales and has a 60 percent market share in single-level marketing (Post Today, 2007, p. B3). In 2007, its revenues were 6.7 billion baht (Bangkok Post, 2008, p. B10).

Because of the size and growth of the Thai cosmetic market and Mistine's important place in that market, it is interesting to examine Mistine's present market position in some detail as well as Mistine's future prospects.

Better Way (Thailand) Co., Ltd. is the exclusive distributor of the Mistine brand worldwide. Mistine cosmetics are sold through Mistine catalogs by 600,000 sales representatives throughout Thailand (Mistine History, 2008). The company offers more than 5,000 cosmetic items to its customers (Welcome to Mistine and Friday Family, 2007, p. 3). Mistine cosmetics are divided into 4 categories: make-up, skin care, fragrance, and personal care (Yenbumruang, Hitopakorn, & Sudjaritprapakorn, 2005, p. 36).

Pakdeesukanan (2003) found that Mistine customers had positive attitudes (favorable inner feelings) toward Mistine cosmetics. These attitudes influenced customers' purchasing decisions with regard to Mistine cosmetics. Yenbumruang, et al. (2005) found that Mistine's "Marketing Mix", commonly referred to as the "4Ps", (product, price, place, and promotion) was an important factor that influenced customers to purchase Mistine cosmetics. Mistine customers were satisfied with the qualities of the products. They also believed that the prices were appropriate, the products were distributed in a convenient manner, and sales promotions and advertisements were attractive and well targeted (pp. 61-67).

Mistine's target market has traditionally been primarily Thai and female with monthly incomes below 20,001 baht. In an interview, Jatura Dheppratum, Better Way

(Thailand) Co., Ltd., Art Director explained that Mistine refers to its customers in this income range as “Group C” customers (Dhepratum, Interviewed, November 26, 2007).

In 2007, Mistine announced a new strategy to move “up-market” and focus on “Group B” customers (Post Today, 2007, p. B3). Dhepratum defined “Group B” customers, the target or potential customers of Mistine’s new strategy, as those with monthly incomes of 20,001-40,000 baht. “Group A” customers, those with monthly incomes above 40,000 baht, were not targeted by Mistine in its 2007 strategy (Dhepratum, Interviewed, November 26, 2007).

For Mistine to successfully implement the new strategy, Mistine must carefully determine the attitudes of “Group B” and “Group C” customers toward Mistine and its products. Only then will Mistine be able to adjust its marketing mix to exert maximum impact on the two target groups: “Group C” customers; women with monthly incomes of less than 20,001 baht who presently may or may not be purchasing and using Mistine cosmetics, and “Group B” customers; women with monthly incomes between 20,001 baht and 40,000 baht who presently may or may not be purchasing and using Mistine cosmetics. The present and future attitudes, and resulting purchasing decisions, of these two customer groups will impact on the position of Mistine cosmetics in the Thai cosmetics market.

This situation leads directly to the two research questions proposed for this study.

Research Questions

This research project seeks to answer the two following research questions:

1. What are customer and potential customer attitudes toward each of the 4Ps in Mistine's marketing mix?
2. Which factors most influence decisions of customers and potential customers to purchase, or not purchase, Mistine cosmetics?

Significance of the Study

This study provides useful information for individuals concerned with the cosmetics business. Mistine marketers and sales personnel will better understand the attitudes and marketing factors that influence "Group B" and "Group C" customer purchasing decisions with regard to Mistine and its cosmetic products. They also will be able to better focus Mistine's marketing mix in order to increase sales volume. Other individuals and/or groups interested in the cosmetics industry, or marketing and sales issues in general, can learn

much from the Mistine case. Consumers will gain insights into how cosmetic products are marketed.

Methodology of the Study

A questionnaire was used to collect the primary data in the study. The questionnaire was prepared first in English to satisfy university research requirements. (See Appendix A.) It was then translated into Thai to insure clear communication with respondents. (See Appendix B.)

The questionnaire was used to survey respondents in the Central Department Store, Ladprao Branch where it was easy to find respondents in the "Group B" and "Group C" income ranges. The primary data was collected on Saturday, October 18 and on Saturday, October 25, 2008.

The data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (percentages and means). The findings are reported, conclusions drawn, limitations identified and recommendations for further study made hereinafter.

Scope of the Study

Fifty residents in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area were included in the study. All respondents were female (the principle users of Mistine products) and familiar with Mistine products and those of Mistine's most important competitors (Amway, Avon, Cute Press, Giffarine, and U-Star). Customer familiarity with Mistine and its direct competitors in the market is important because customer attitudes, and their resulting purchasing decisions, are largely formed by comparing competing products and brands.

Customers shopping for low-cost transportation do not consider and compare brands such as Toyota or Honda with Mercedes-Benz or Volvo; customers shopping for low-cost cosmetics do not consider and compare brands such as Mistine or Giffarine with Christian Dior or Lancôme. Twenty-five Group B respondents (with monthly incomes of 20,001-40,000 baht) and 25 Group C respondents (with monthly incomes less than 20,001 baht) were included in the survey. Group B customers are the potential customers that Mistine seeks in order to move up market and Group C customers are the traditional customers that Mistine seeks to retain and enlarge in number.

Expected Outcomes

The study identifies the attitudes of “Group B” and “Group C” customers toward Mistine and its products as well as the factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

Definition of Terms

The following terms, employed throughout this study, are defined below.

Attitudes	Favorable or unfavorable inner feelings of people toward products or services which can change over time and which influence customers’ purchasing decisions
Marketing Mix or the 4Ps	A blend of product, price, place and promotion variables that firms use to create strategies to satisfy target market groups and thereby sell their products

Customers

Women who presently purchase and use Mistine cosmetics, largely Group C Customers: women residing in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area with incomes of 20,000 baht or less per month and familiar with Mistine cosmetic products and those of its most important competitors

Potential Customers

Women who may purchase and use Mistine cosmetics in the future, largely Group B Customers: women residing in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area with incomes between 20,001 baht and 40,000 baht per month and familiar with Mistine cosmetic products and those of its most important competitors

CHAPTER 2

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter defines attitudes and the marketing mix as applied in this study, and includes related research on purchasing decisions with regard to cosmetics.

Attitudes

Chantarasathit (1997) stated that an attitude is a psychological construct functioning to regulate a person's behavior. Attitudes can be formed and changed throughout a person's life via communication within social interactions (p. 12). Children raised in a family using a particular product and brand, for example a laundry soap, are likely to continue buying that product and brand after they achieve independence and move away from home. They may have no reason to change their purchasing behavior vis-à-vis the familiar laundry soap. Their attitudes toward the product and brand regulate their purchasing behaviors. However, as they interact with other independent young people and pay more attention to laundry soap advertisements and promotions independent of family

influences, they may change their attitudes and behaviors and purchase a different product or brand. The same would be true of cosmetics and other products.

Zimbardo, Ebbesen, & Maslach (1977) added that attitudes consist of satisfactions and dissatisfactions. They are the core of people's likes or dislikes for certain people, groups, situations, objects, and intangible ideas (p. 20). People who try new products, cosmetics or other, experience different levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with those products. Repeated satisfaction with a product leads to a positive attitude and repurchases of the product. Dissatisfaction with a product leads to a negative attitude and no further purchases.

Assael (1995) stated that attitudes are a part of a hierarchy of effects that lead to a purchase decision. Attitudes develop over time through a learning process affected by family influences, peer group influences, information, experience, and personality (pp. 273-274). Cosmetics are daily-use personal products that individuals decide to purchase and use. When these products, whether originally purchased by the product user or received as a gift or part of a promotion, are consumed, they are replaced. The decision to repurchase the same product or try a different one not only depends on the user's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product, but also on information about the product and competing

products received by the product user and the influences on the user of family, friends, peers and other respected individuals. Respected individuals include experts and celebrities often employed by advertisers to promote their products. Personality also influences attitudes. A certain personality type might be expected to purchase deep red lipstick. A different personality type might be expected to purchase more subdued tones.

Schiffman & Kanuk (1997) described attitudes as “the expression of inner feelings that reflect whether a person is favorably or unfavorably predisposed to some objects. An attitude is a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object” (pp. 234-235). In their sense, objects refer to both products and services offered to consumers. Once individuals have developed favorable inner feelings toward the products they use, they tend not to change products or brands easily, overtime they develop a certain brand loyalty. Brand loyalty is an attitude that marketers seek to develop in as many product users as possible.

In brief, attitudes are the favorable or unfavorable inner feelings of people toward products or services and influence customers' purchasing decisions. Attitudes can change over time because of external influences and changing personal needs. Attitudes also reflect individuals' personality. Customers who have positive attitudes toward products or

services tend to purchase and repurchase them rather than try new products or new services. The continued repurchase of products and services leads to brand loyalty; the resistance of customers to try new products or services. Inversely, customers who have negative attitudes toward products or services will not purchase them or stop purchasing them and try new products or services.

In the context of this study, the challenges facing Mistine are, first, to determine the positive attitudes that keep existing “Group C” customers loyal to Mistine and its products and might influence “Group B” potential customers to purchase Mistine cosmetic products; second, to define the negative attitudes of “Group C” customers toward Mistine that keep them from not purchase Mistine cosmetics; and finally to uncover the positive and negative attitudes of “Group B” potential customers that might influence them to purchase or not purchase Mistine’s cosmetic products as Mistine implements its announced strategy to move up-market into the 20,001 to 40,000 baht per month income market.

The marketing mix provides the framework in which positive and negative customer attitudes can be measured. The marketing mix is presented in the following section.

Marketing Mix

The “marketing mix” concept first emerged in the 1950s and has been revised and adapted by business and marketing experts as market conditions evolved (“Marketing Mix”, 2008). Kotler (1994) defined the marketing mix as the set of marketing tools that firms use to pursue their marketing objectives in a target market (p. 98). Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel (2004) described the marketing mix as a unique blend of product, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies designed to produce mutually satisfying exchanges with a target market (p. 42). Perreault & McCarthy (1996) explained that “the marketing mix includes the controllable variables companies put together in various ways to satisfy target groups” (p. 48). The marketing mix is commonly referred to as the 4Ps, the 4Ps being: product, price, place, and promotion. Each “P” is discussed briefly below.

A product is that which a company offers for sale to a target market (a group of potential customers the firm believes is susceptible to purchase the product). “A product is a physical good, a service, or a blend of both designed to satisfy customer needs” (Perreault & McCarthy, 1996, p. 50).

A physical product is a tangible product that customers use for particular purposes such as hair shampoos or lip sticks. A service product is an intangible product that firms

and/or individuals offer to satisfy customer needs such as haircuts or manicures. A blend product is a product offering both tangible and intangible characteristics, for example, a visit to a beauty salon might result in a new hair style (service product) and the purchase of a hair care product (physical product) to maintain the new hair style until the next visit to the salon.

Mistine offers more than 5,000 tangible products to customers such as foundation powders, lipsticks, eye-shadows, brush-ons, and mascaras. Intangible products also are offered to satisfy customer needs; for example, Mistine offers a "Toll-Free Call Center" for customers to call to resolve customer problems with unsatisfactory, defective, and/or undelivered products (Mistine Talk, 2008).

A price is the amount of money customers must pay for a product. The price must cover the all of the costs related to introducing a product and maintaining it in a market and must be competitive and attractive to customers (Perreault & McCarthy, 1996).

Mistine prices are published in catalogs, leaflets, and the Mistine website and are revised regularly. Discount prices are also offered to attract customers.

Place is the whole process of getting products to customers. The product should be available when and where customers want it. The product must reach customers

through any one or more of the various available channels of distribution (Perreault & McCarthy, 1996).

In general, distribution channels in the cosmetic business are via major department stores and convenience stores and via direct sales. Customers can purchase cosmetic products at convenient times and places. Most cosmetic firms choose one distribution channel or the other; Garnier, Olay, and Pond distribute their products exclusively in department stores and convenience stores, while Amway, Avon, and Giffarine use the direct sales channel exclusively. Mistine uses both channels. Mistine distributes its products in department stores and convenience stores and also offers door to door distribution throughout Thailand include providing a Mistine cosmetic parlor for walk-in customers (Dhepratum, Interviewed, November 26, 2007).

Promotion is a combination of all of the possible ways of informing customers about products. Promotion consists primarily of personal selling, mass selling, and sales promotion. Personal selling involves direct communication between sellers and potential customers. This most commonly takes the form of face to face or telephone sales. Mass selling is communication with large numbers of customers at the same time. A main form of mass selling is advertising. Sales promotion includes all the activities designed to

stimulate interest, trial, or purchase of products by customers. Sales promotion regularly involves the use of coupons, samples, signs, catalogs, novelties, circulars, and point of purchase materials (Perreault & McCarthy, 1996).

In personal selling, Mistine provides representatives to communicate with customers. The 600,000 Mistine representatives in Thailand use face to face and telephone communication to keep in contact and sell products to customers. In mass selling, Mistine uses advertising through TV, catalogs, and leaflets as the most important tools to sell its products (Mistine History, 2008). In sales promotion, Mistine offers a wide range of sales promotions to attract customers. Mistine catalogs and leaflets are important tools that Mistine uses to introduce products and offer competitive prices to customers. Coupon redemption campaigns are regularly used to increase sales volumes (Mistine Talk, 2008).

Each of the broad 4Ps is composed of a number of variables that marketers can use to influence customers in their target markets. Kotler (1994) outlined the marketing variables in each of the 4Ps.

These are presented in Figure 1 and discussed below.



Figure 1: Marketing mix variables (Kotler, 1994, p. 98)

Kotler (1994) stated that “Product” consists of ten variables, “Price” consists of five variables, “Place” consists of six variables, and “Promotion” consists of five variables.

Product consists of the following variables: 1. product variety (the number of types of products and the number of products of each type, e.g. 25 lipsticks, 5 shampoos, or 3

facial creams); 2. quality (the product standard that must be easily recognizable to customers to distinguish a product from competing products and must be maintained to insure customers' satisfaction); 3. and 4. design and features (the appearance and functions, including safety of the product); 5. brand name (the name of the company, brand or product that customers associate with the product; brand image); 6. packaging (the material used to contain the product, protect it during delivery to the customer and facilitate customer use of the product); 7. sizes (the sizes of the product that respond to customer needs, e.g. S, M, L, XL clothing or travel size, family size or salon size shampoo bottles); 8. services (the intangible products (services) associated with a physical product such as toll-free call centers or after sales services); 9. warranties (written guarantees in which firms promise to compensate customers if products are unsatisfactory and/or defective); and 10. returns (a policy in which companies offer customers the right to return products without penalty if products are unsatisfactory and/or defective).

Price consists of: 1. list price (the price offered in advertisements, catalogs or leaflets, or printed on the product or its packaging); 2. discounts (price reductions from the list price to attract customers, such as a discount, on one item or a volume discount if many items are bought); 3. allowances (special price reductions from list prices or catalogs, e.g.

firms may offer price reductions for customers who turn in an old product when buying a new one, e.g. a used Toyota for a new one); 4. payment period (periods of time that firms offer customers to pay for products, e.g. payment within 7 days, 30 days, or 60 days); and 5. credit terms (a variety of credit variables such lower interest rates for long-term loyal customers, price reductions if payment is made by a certain credit card or improved credit terms if customers give a certain number of potential customer references or if one or more of the referred customers actually makes a purchase).

Place variables are: 1. channels (the types of outlets through which firms distribute their products, e.g. department stores, convenience stores or beauty parlors); 2. coverage (the areas in which products are made available to customers and the number of outlets in each area, e.g. provinces, cities or villages); 3. assortments (the variety of outlets offering products to customers, e.g. department stores only or department stores and convenience stores or any other combination of outlets); 4. locations (the geographic areas of product distribution points, e.g. in stores near major transportation hubs, in suburban shopping areas or, in the case of direct sales, in the customers' homes); 5. inventory (the stock of products available in warehouses for distribution to sales points to insure no interruption of

supply to customers) and 6. transport (the means of getting products from warehouses to points of sale).

Promotion consists of the following variables: 1. sales promotions (sales activities that firms use to attract customers, e.g. "Buy 1 Get 1 Free" campaigns or coupon redemptions); 2. advertising (paid for communication in print or broadcast media to influence customers to purchase the firm's products); 3. salesforce (sales staff presented by the firm to provide service and sell products to customers); 4. public relations (activities undertaken to influence customers and strengthen the firm's or product's brand image but without control of the exact marketing message communicated to consumers, e.g. new product launch parties, press conferences or sponsorships of special events like the local high schools "Sports Day" or the Olympic Games); and 5. direct marketing (all forms of selling by means of direct contact between the firm and customers via mail, telephone, the internet or face-to-face communication).

In short, the market mix, or the 4Ps, is a blend of product, price, place and promotion variables that firms use to create strategies to satisfy target market groups and thereby sell their products.

The variables of the 4Ps of the marketing mix are used as the framework of this study in which positive and negative customer attitudes can be measured.

Related Research on Attitudes, the Marketing Mix and Purchasing Decisions with

Regard to Cosmetics

A number of studies on customer attitudes toward cosmetic products and brands and the marketing mix and their influences on cosmetic purchasing decisions in Bangkok have been conducted. A selection of these studies is presented below.

Pakdeesukanan (2003) studied “Factors Affecting Attitudes and Decisions in Purchasing ‘Mistine’, Direct Sales Cosmetics”. The purpose of this study was to study the relationship among the marketing mix, attitudes and decisions to purchase Mistine cosmetics. Four hundred female high school students in Bangkok were surveyed by means of a questionnaire. The research found that respondents had positive attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics and were influenced to purchase Mistine cosmetics by experience, families, friends and the mass media. The firm’s marketing mix was an important factor affecting the respondents’ attitudes and purchasing decisions with regard to Mistine

cosmetics. The respondents believed that Mistine cosmetics were suited to people who earned low incomes.

Yenbumruang, Hitopakorn, & Sudjaritprapakorn (2005) studied “Factors Affecting Brand Awareness Toward Thai Brand Image: a Case Study of Better Way Co., Ltd. (Mistine)”. This study focused on studying attitudes of Mistine customers toward Mistine cosmetics. Questionnaires were given to 100 respondents in Bangkok to acquire the primary data. The research found that the respondents were satisfied with the brand and marketing strategies. The strategies affected brand awareness of the Mistine brand. The respondents believed that Mistine product quality was inferior to foreign products.

Na-Songkhla (2003) conducted “A Survey on Factors Relating to Skin Care Cosmetics Purchasing of Consumers in Bangkok”. To survey the variables of the marketing mix’s influence on purchasing skin care cosmetics of consumers in Bangkok was the main purpose of the study. A sample group was used in this study comprised of 400 respondents. Questionnaires were the main tool of data collection. The study found that product quality was the most important factor influencing the respondents’ purchasing decisions on skin care cosmetics. Price, place, and promotion were less influential.

Sithidumrong (2004) studied “The Relationship Between Factors of Marketing Mix and Buying Behaviors of Working Women in Buying Cosmetics for Facial Skin Care in Bangkok Area”. The purpose of the research was to study working women’s buying behaviors with regard to facial skin care products in Bangkok. The study group included 400 respondents. The main tool used to collect data was a questionnaire. The study found that the marketing mix was related to the respondents’ buying behaviors. The respondents were most concerned with quality and safety of products. The respondents believed that prices must be reasonable and diversified, distribution must cover target areas well and in reputable outlets, and promotion via frequent advertisements and co-promotions with department stores were attractive to the respondents.

Khonta (2006) conducted a study on “Consumers’ Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Buying Facial Skin Care Cream of Working Women in Bangkok Metropolitan Area”. The research focused on studying consumers’ attitudes and behaviors when buying facial skin care cream. The population for this research was 400 respondents. The researcher used a questionnaire as the main tool to gather data. The research found that buying behaviors of cosmetics were influenced by the respondents’ attitudes. The respondents’ attitudes with

regard to benefits of products and quality assurance were at a very good level.

Respondents preferred to buy the Oil of Olay and Pond brands. Product quality was the most important factor.

Amnuychai (2007) studied "Product and Integrated Marketing Communication Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviors Toward Olay Facial Skin Care in Bangkok Metropolitan Area". The purpose of the research was to study products and integrated marketing communication factors influencing consumer buying behaviors toward Olay facial skin cream in Bangkok. A questionnaire was used as the tool to collect primary data from 400 respondents. The effectiveness of the product was found to be the most important factor that influenced the respondents who bought the product. In terms of integrated marketing communication factors; the promotion, "Buy 1 Get 1 Free" was the most important factor influencing the respondents' buying decisions, and TV advertisements were most perceived by the respondents.

In summary, related research shows that customer attitudes and the marketing mix influenced consumers' purchasing decisions toward cosmetics. Product quality was the most important factor that consumers took into consideration when making purchasing decisions.

Product safety was another factor that influenced consumers' decisions on purchasing cosmetics. Price was also a factor influencing consumers' purchasing decisions with regard to cosmetic products.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the method employed to answer the research questions and is divided into four parts: participants, research tool, data collection and data analysis.

Participants

The participants in this study were 50 Thai women residing in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area. They were selected by the purposive method based on their familiarity with Mistine and competing cosmetic brands and their monthly incomes. The participants were later divided into two groups: 25 respondents who corresponded to Mistine's "Group C" customers with monthly incomes of 20,000 baht or less (Mistine traditional customers) and 25 respondents who corresponded to Mistine's "Group B" customers with monthly incomes of 20,001-40,000 baht (Mistine target customers).

Research Tool

A questionnaire was used to collect the primary data for this study. Related research questionnaires were used as models to prepare the questionnaire for this study: 1. a questionnaire on factors affecting attitudes and decisions in purchasing “Mistine”, direct sales cosmetics by Pakdeesukanan (2003, pp.106-108); 2. a questionnaire for a survey on factors relating to skin care cosmetic purchasing of consumers in Bangkok by Na-Songkhla (2003, pp. 84-88); 3. a questionnaire on factors of acknowledgement in Thai brand cosmetics: case study of Better Way (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (Mistine) by Yenbumruang, et al. (2005, pp.100-103); 4. a questionnaire on relationships between factors of the marketing mix and buying behaviors of working women in buying cosmetics for facial skin care in Bangkok by Sithidumrong (2004, p. 80); and 5. a questionnaire for a study of the influences of television advertising on decisions by Thai adolescents to purchase whitening products by Junsri (2004, pp. 36-39).

The English questionnaire, required by university graduate school policy, is presented in Appendix A. The Thai questionnaire, which was employed to survey the respondents, is presented in Appendix B. The questionnaire is divided into three parts:

Part I: Personal Data, Part II: Attitudes Toward Mistine Cosmetics, and Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices. These are described below.

Part I: Personal Data

Three questions were included in the Personal Data part of the questionnaire.

Question one established that the female respondents resided in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area. This was a qualification for inclusion in the study.

Question two classified each respondent into one of the two monthly income ranges which were the focus of this study. For inclusion in this study, each respondent was required to fit into one of the two income ranges.

Question three defined the respondents' familiarity with Mistine and five of its major competitors. To be included in the study, each respondent was required to be "Familiar" with Mistine cosmetics and at least two competing cosmetic brands.

Part II: Attitudes Toward Mistine Cosmetics

This part of the questionnaire revealed the attitudes of the respondents toward each of the variables of the marketing mix, as described by Kotler (1994). These variables are used by marketers to influence customers in their target markets.

Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices

Part three of the questionnaire allowed the respondents to offer their own opinions on which factors most influenced them to purchase or not purchase Mistine cosmetics.

Data Collection

Approximately 100 women who conveniently passed the survey site were asked for a few minutes of their time to complete the questionnaires. The first 50 women who were residents of the greater Bangkok metropolitan area, fit into the survey income ranges and were sufficiently familiar with the survey cosmetic brands were retained in the survey population.

To save time and encourage participation, the researcher marked the questionnaires on the respondents' behalf taking care not to influence their responses. The survey was conducted in the Central Department Store, Ladproh Branch where it was easy to find respondents in the "Group B" and "Group C" income ranges. The primary data was collected on Saturday, October 18 and on Saturday, October 25, 2008 between the hours

of 11.00 and 17.00. These dates and times were convenient for working women in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area, including the researcher.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (percentages and means). The attitudes of Group B and Group C respondents toward each of the variables of the marketing mix were measured by use of the weighting method employed by Eakphaphan (2008, p. 41) based on the work of Taweerat (2000, pp. 107-108) as follows:

4 = Strongly Agree

3 = Agree

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

Since all statements in Part II of the questionnaire were positively worded, strong agreement with a statement would imply a highly positive attitude toward the statement, and inversely, strong disagreement with a statement would imply a highly negative attitude.

In each of the tables 3-10, the number of respondent choices of their levels of agreement/disagreement with the statements are multiplied by the weightings indicated above, then the scores are divided by the total number of responses. This results in the mean scores are presented in the right column in each table.

Eakphaphan (2008, p. 41) and Taweerat (2000) noted that final mean scores were unlikely to be either a perfect 4.0 (strong agreement with the statement) or 1.0 (strong disagreement with the statement) as all respondents would be unlikely to unanimously agree/disagree at both ends of the weighting scale. As a result, mean scores are described herein as follows:

3.51-4.00 = Strongly Agree

2.51-3.50 = Agree

1.51-2.50 = Disagree

1.00-1.50 = Strongly Disagree

As respondent agreement strengths to statements relates to attitudes toward the statements, the mean scores hereinafter are described as follows: mean scores between 3.51 and 4.00 indicate that the respondents felt strong agreement with a marketing mix variable statement and hold a "highly positive attitude" toward it. Mean scores between

2.51 and 3.50 indicate that the respondents felt agreement with a marketing mix variable statement and hold a “positive attitude” toward it. Mean scores between 1.51 and 2.50 indicate respondent disagreement with a statement and hold a “negative attitude” toward it. Mean scores between 1.00 and 1.50 indicate strong disagreement and hold a “highly negative attitude” toward it.

The findings, conclusions, limitations, and suggestions for further study are reported in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the attitudes of “Group B” and “Group C” customers toward Mistine and its products as well as the factors that influenced their purchasing decisions.

The questionnaire employed to collect the data in this research was divided into three parts as follows:

Part I: Personal Data

Part II: Attitudes Toward Mistine Cosmetics

Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices

The data collected from the 50 questionnaires were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (percentages and means) and are presented below in tables followed by brief descriptions.

Part I: Personal Data

All 50 respondents in this study were pre-qualified by three questions concerning their personal profiles: their residence in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area, monthly income ranges, and their familiarity with cosmetic brands.

Question one of the questionnaire required that all respondents reside in the Bangkok metropolitan area. All 50 respondents were residing in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area at the time of the survey.

Question two of the questionnaire was used to classify the 50 respondents into one of the two income ranges pre-set by Mistine as target ranges for their present and potential customers. Twenty-five Group B respondents earned incomes between 20,001 and 40,000 baht per month and 25 Group C respondents earned incomes of 20,000 baht per month or less.

Question three of the questionnaire required all respondents to be familiar with Mistine cosmetics and at least two other cosmetic brands. Tables 1 and 2 below show the levels of familiarity with cosmetic brands for the 25 Group B respondents and 25 Group C respondents respectively.

TABLE 1 Familiarity with cosmetic brands of Group B respondents

Brand	Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Familiar	Un-Familiar	Total
1. Amway	3	4	15	3	25
2. Avon	0	2	15	8	25
3. Cute Press	1	3	14	7	25
4. Giffarine	1	1	16	7	25
5. Mistine	3	5	17	0	25
6. U-Star	0	2	8	15	25

Table 1 shows that the Mistine cosmetic brand was the brand most familiar to Group B respondents (potential Mistine cosmetic customers with monthly incomes between 20,001 and 40,000 baht). All 25 Group B respondents (100%) reported that they were “familiar”, “quite familiar” or “very familiar” with the Mistine cosmetic brand. Amway was the second most familiar cosmetic brand to the Group B respondents, followed by Cute Press, Giffarine, Avon and U-Star.

TABLE 2 Familiarity with cosmetic brands of Group C respondents

Brand	Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Familiar	Un-Familiar	Total
1. Amway	1	10	14	0	25
2. Avon	0	6	13	6	25
3. Cute Press	0	6	12	7	25
4. Giffarine	1	7	13	4	25
5. Mistine	4	9	12	0	25
6. U-Star	2	1	10	12	25

Table 2 shows that Amway and Mistine were the cosmetic brands most familiar to Group C respondents (the present customer base for Mistine cosmetics with monthly incomes of 20,000 baht or less). Giffarine, Avon, Cute Press and U-Star followed in descending order of familiarity.

In general, the 25 Group B respondents (100% of the Group) appeared to be more familiar with the Mistine cosmetic brand than other cosmetic brands. Table 1 shows that three Group B respondents (12% of the Group) were “very familiar” with the Mistine cosmetic brand, five Group B respondents (20% of the Group) were “quite familiar” with the Mistine cosmetic brand, and 17 Group B respondents (68% of the Group) were “familiar”

with the Mistine cosmetic brand. All 25 Group B respondents (100% of the Group) were at least “familiar” with the Mistine cosmetic brand. No other cosmetic brand demonstrated such a high level of familiarity.

All 25 Group C respondents (100% of the Group) claimed to be at least “familiar” with both Amway and Mistine cosmetic brands. However, only one Group C respondent (4% of the Group) was “very familiar” with the Amway cosmetic brand while four Group C respondents (16% of the Group) were “very familiar” with the Mistine cosmetic brand.

Based on the sample of 50 respondents, the Mistine brand seemed to be the most familiar brand to respondents in both Group B and C, but closely followed by the Amway brand.

The personal profiles of the respondents also imply that all 25 Group B respondents and all 25 Group C respondents were largely familiar with direct sale cosmetic brands in Thailand.

Part II: Attitudes toward Mistine Cosmetics

Part II of the questionnaire provided data on the attitudes of the respondents toward each of the variables of the marketing mix: product, price, place, and promotion, as described by Kotler (1994). Tables 3-6 show the attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics of Group B respondents (potential customers). Tables 7-10 reveal the attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics of Group C respondents (customers).

As described in Chapter 3, mean scores between 3.51 and 4.00, Strongly Agree, relates to a “highly positive attitude”; mean scores between 2.51 and 3.50, Agree, relates to a “positive attitude”; mean scores between 1.51 and 2.50, Disagree, relates to a “negative attitude”; and mean scores between 1.00 and 1.50, Strongly Disagree, relates to a “highly negative attitude”.

To facilitate understanding of Tables 3-10, the right column in each table indicates the following annotations:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the level of agreement/disagreement of Group B respondents

toward the product variable statements.

TABLE 3 Attitudes toward the product variables of Group B respondents

1. Product	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
1.1 Mistine offers a full range of products for my needs.	7	18	0	0	3.28	A
1.2 Mistine offers high quality products.	0	23	2	0	2.92	A
1.3 Mistine products are beautifully designed and easy to use.	1	22	2	0	2.96	A
1.4 Mistine offers safe products.	1	24	0	0	3.04	A
1.5 Mistine is a reputable brand.	8	17	0	0	3.32	A
1.6 Mistine packaging is effective, practical and attractive.	2	20	3	0	2.96	A
1.7 Mistine products come in a variety of sizes that satisfy my needs.	3	20	2	0	3.04	A
1.8 Mistine provides good support services.	2	19	4	0	2.92	A
1.9 Mistine products have good warranties.	1	19	5	0	2.84	A
1.10 Unsatisfactory or defective Mistine products can be easily returned and/or exchanged.	1	15	9	0	2.68	A
Overall	26	197	27	0	3.00	A

Table 3 shows that Group B respondents agreed with the ten statements about Mistine products with an overall mean score of 3.00. This reveals a positive attitude toward Mistine products. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s reputable brand received the highest level of agreement (3.32). This was followed by agreement with the statements about Mistine’s full range of products (3.28); and product safety and package sizes (3.04 each). Mistine’s product return and/or exchange policy received the lowest level of agreement (2.68).

Table 4 below shows the level of agreement of Group B respondents toward the price variables.

TABLE 4 Attitudes toward the price variables of Group B respondents

2. Price	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
2.1 Mistine offers reasonable prices for its products.	6	19	0	0	3.24	A
2.2 Mistine offers attractive discounts.	4	18	3	0	3.04	A
2.3 Mistine offers a variety of payment plans.	1	20	4	0	2.88	A
2.4 Mistine offers attractive credit terms for Mistine customers.	1	22	2	0	2.96	A
Overall	12	79	9	0	3.03	A

Table 4 shows that Group B respondents agreed with the four statements about Mistine prices with an overall mean score of 3.03. This shows a positive attitude toward Mistine prices. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s reasonable prices received in the highest level of agreement (3.24). Mistine payment plans gained the lowest level of agreement (2.88).

Table 5 shows the level of agreement of Group B respondents toward the place variables.

TABLE 5 Attitudes toward the place variables of Group B respondents

3. Place	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
3.1 Mistine products are available where and when I want.	4	12	9	0	2.80	A
3.2 Mistine products are easy to purchase.	3	16	5	1	2.84	A
3.3 Mistine products are available in convenient locations.	5	13	6	1	2.88	A
3.4 Mistine products are never out of stock.	2	17	6	0	2.84	A
3.5 Mistine products are never damaged in delivery.	3	19	3	0	3.00	A
Overall	17	77	29	2	2.87	A

Table 5 reveals that Group B respondents agreed with the five statements about Mistine distribution with an overall mean score of 2.87. This shows a positive attitude toward the Mistine place variables. All mean scores were in the "Agree" range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine's undamaged products in delivery received the highest

level of agreement (3.00). The other four statements about Mistine distribution received a narrow range of mean scores between 2.80 and 2.88; Mistine's convenient locations (2.88), easy-purchasing procedures (2.84), stock of product (2.84), and time and place of product availability (2.80).

Table 6 shows the level of agreement of Group B respondents toward the promotion variables.

TABLE 6 Attitudes toward the promotion variables of Group B respondents

4. Promotion	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
4.1 Mistine offers a variety of attractive promotions.	3	19	3	0	3.00	A
4.2 Mistine advertisements are beautiful and attract me to purchase Mistine products.	7	17	1	0	3.24	A
4.3 Mistine has many service-minded representatives.	2	19	4	0	2.92	A
4.4 Mistine public relations activities confirm my image of the brand.	8	15	2	0	3.24	A
4.5 Mistine provides catalogs and leaflets directly to me.	1	12	8	4	2.40	D
Overall	21	82	18	4	2.96	A

Table 6 reveals that Group B respondents agreed with the majority of statements about Mistine promotions with an overall mean score of 2.96 which was in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The overall mean score shows a positive attitude toward Mistine promotions. The statements about Mistine’s advertisements and public relations received the highest level of agreement (3.24 each). Only one statement about Mistine’s catalogs and leaflets received a low mean score of 2.40 which was in the “Disagree” range of 1.51 to 2.50.

In brief, Group B respondents were Mistine potential customers who earned incomes between 20,001 and 40,000 bath per month. Group B respondents (potential customers) showed the most favorable attitude toward the price variables with the highest overall mean score of 3.03 followed by the product variables (3.00), the promotion variables (2.96), and the place variables (2.87).

The statement about Mistine’s reputable brand in the product variables received the highest mean score of 3.32 which was in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50 while the statement about Mistine’s catalogs and leaflets in the promotion variables received the lowest mean score of 2.40 which was in the “Disagree” range of 1.51 to 2.50.

Overall, Group B respondents (potential customers) had positive attitudes toward Mistine's marketing mix (4Ps; product, price, place, and promotion).

Tables 7-10 reveal the attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics of the Group C respondents. The variables of the marketing mix: product, price, place, and promotion, are presented in tables 7-10 respectively.

Table 7 indicates the level of agreements of Group C respondent attitudes toward the product variables.

TABLE 7 Attitudes toward the product variables of Group C respondents

1. Product	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
1.1 Mistine offers a full range of products for my needs.	7	18	0	0	3.28	A
1.2 Mistine offers high quality products.	2	20	3	0	2.96	A
1.3 Mistine products are beautifully designed and easy to use.	3	19	3	0	3.00	A
1.4 Mistine offers safe products.	2	17	6	0	2.84	A
1.5 Mistine is a reputable brand.	8	17	0	0	3.32	A
1.6 Mistine packaging is effective, practical and attractive.	5	14	6	0	2.96	A
1.7 Mistine products come in a variety of sizes that satisfy my needs.	2	20	3	0	2.96	A
1.8 Mistine provides good support services.	3	19	3	0	3.00	A
1.9 Mistine products have good warranties.	1	20	4	0	2.88	A
1.10 Unsatisfactory or defective Mistine products can be easily returned and/or exchanged.	4	17	4	0	3.00	A
Overall	37	181	32	0	3.02	A

Table 7 shows that Group C respondents agreed with the ten statements about Mistine products with an overall mean score of 3.02. This reveals a positive attitude toward Mistine products. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s reputable brand received the highest level of agreement (3.32). This was followed by agreement with the statements about Mistine’s full range of products (3.28); and beautiful design, good services, and easy return and/or exchange policy (3.00 each). Mistine’s product safety received the lowest level of agreement (2.84).

Table 8 shows the level of agreement of Group C respondents toward the price variables.

TABLE 8 Attitudes toward the price variables of Group C respondents

2. Price	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
2.1 Mistine offers reasonable prices for its products.	5	19	1	0	3.16	A
2.2 Mistine offers attractive discounts.	4	20	1	0	3.12	A
2.3 Mistine offers a variety of payment plans.	5	17	3	0	3.08	A
2.4 Mistine offers attractive credit terms for Mistine customers.	1	24	0	0	3.04	A
Overall	15	80	5	0	3.10	A

Table 8 illustrates that Group C respondents agreed with the four statements about Mistine prices with an overall mean score of 3.10. Overall, this shows a positive attitude toward Mistine prices. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s reasonable prices received the highest level of agreement (3.16) then followed by agreement with the statements about Mistine’s attractive discounts (3.12), payment plans (3.08), and attractive credit terms (3.04).

Table 9 reveals the level of agreement of Group C respondents toward the place variables.

TABLE 9 Attitudes toward the place variables of Group C respondents

3. Place	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
3.1 Mistine products are available where and when I want.	4	15	6	0	2.92	A
3.2 Mistine products are easy to purchase.	4	18	3	0	3.04	A
3.3 Mistine products are available in convenient locations.	5	15	5	0	3.00	A
3.4 Mistine products are never out of stock.	4	14	7	0	2.88	A
3.5 Mistine products are never damaged in delivery.	3	17	5	0	2.92	A
Overall	20	79	26	0	2.95	A

Table 9 illustrates that Group C respondents agreed with the five statements about Mistine distribution with an overall mean score of 2.95. The overall mean score shows a positive attitude toward Mistine distribution. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s easy-purchasing policy gained the highest

level of agreement (3.04) followed by Mistine's convenient locations (3.00), and product availability and undamaged products in delivery (2.92 each).

Table 10 shows the level of agreement of Group C respondents toward the promotion variables.

TABLE 10 Attitudes toward the promotion variables of Group C respondents

4. Promotion	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean Score	Level of Agreement
4.1 Mistine offers a variety of attractive promotions.	4	18	3	0	3.04	A
4.2 Mistine advertisements are beautiful and attract me to purchase Mistine products.	6	18	0	1	3.16	A
4.3 Mistine has many service-minded representatives.	4	14	7	0	2.88	A
4.4 Mistine public relations activities confirm my image of the brand.	7	16	2	0	3.20	A
4.5 Mistine provides catalogs and leaflets directly to me.	3	16	6	0	2.88	A
Overall	24	82	18	1	3.03	A

Table 10 shows that Group C respondents agreed with the five statements about Mistine promotions with an overall mean score of 3.03. Overall, this shows a positive attitude toward Mistine promotions. All mean scores were in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50. The statement about Mistine’s public relations gained the highest level of agreement (3.20) followed by Mistine’s advertisements (3.16). Mistine’s catalogs and leaflets were in the lowest level of agreement (2.88).

In brief, Group C respondents (customers who earned incomes of 20,000 baht per month or less) showed the most favorable attitude toward the price variables with the highest overall mean score of 3.10 followed by the promotion variables (3.03), the product variables (3.02), and the place variables (2.95).

The statement about Mistine’s reputable brand in the product variables received the highest mean score of 3.32 which was in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50 while the statement about Mistine’s product safety in the product variables received the lowest mean score of 2.84 which was in the “Agree” range of 2.51 to 3.50.

Overall, Group C respondents had positive attitudes toward Mistine’s marketing mix (4Ps; product, price, place, and promotion).

Table 11 shows the level of agreement between Group B and Group C respondents toward Mistine's marketing mix (the 4Ps).

TABLE 11 Overall mean scores of attitudes toward Mistine's marketing mix (the 4Ps) between Group B and Group C respondents

Mistine's marketing mix (the 4Ps)	Overall mean scores	
	Group B respondents	Group C respondents
1. Product variables	3.00	3.02
2. Price variables	3.03	3.10
3. Place variables	2.87	2.95
4. Promotion variables	2.96	3.03

Table 11 reveals that Group B and Group C respondents agreed with Mistine's marketing mix with all overall mean scores in the "Agree" range of 2.51 to 3.50, thus showing an overall positive attitude. Group B (potential customers) and Group C respondents (customers) shared the most favorable attitude toward Mistine's price variables; 3.03 (Group B respondents) and 3.10 (Group C respondents), with a slight difference of mean scores of only 0.07. The place variables received the lowest mean scores of both Group B and Group C respondents; 2.87 (Group B respondents) and 2.95

(Group C respondents) also with only a slight difference of mean scores of 0.08. These mean scores remained in the positive attitude range.

In summary, Group B (potential customers) and Group C (customers) respondents had attitudes toward Mistine's marketing mix in the positive range. Group B and Group C respondents exhibited the most positive attitudes toward the price variables and the least positive attitudes toward the place variables. Group B and Group C respondents also rated the statement about Mistine's reputable brand in the product variables as the statement toward which all respondents had the most positive attitudes. The statement about Mistine's catalogs and leaflets in the promotion variables showed the lowest positive attitude level among Group B respondents, while the statement about Mistine's product safety in the product variables showed the lowest positive attitude level among Group C respondents.

Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices

Part III of the questionnaire asked the 50 respondents whether or not they purchased and used Mistine cosmetics at the time of the survey and allowed them to offer

their own opinions on which factors most influenced them to purchase and use or not

purchase and use Mistine cosmetics.

Table 12 presents the findings with regard to the purchase and use of Mistine cosmetics by the 50 respondents.

TABLE 12 Group B and Group C respondent purchase and use of Mistine cosmetics

Customer status	Group B Respondents	Group C Respondents	Total	Percent
1. Presently purchase and use Mistine cosmetics	15	14	29	58
2. Presently do not purchase and use Mistine cosmetics	10	11	21	42
Total	25	25	50	100

Table 12 shows that 58% of all respondents purchased and used Mistine cosmetics at the time of the survey, while 42% did not.

The table also illustrates that 15 Group B respondents, respondents identified by Mistine as “potential customers” (60% of the Group), purchased and used Mistine cosmetics while 10 Group B respondents (40% of the Group) did not purchase and use Mistine

cosmetics. Fourteen Group C respondents, respondents identified by Mistine as the group of “customers” they wanted to retain and expand (56% of the Group), responded that they purchased and used Mistine cosmetics at the time of the survey while 11 Group C respondents (44% of the Group) revealed that they did not purchase and use Mistine cosmetics at that time. Slightly more of the “potential customers” group purchased and used Mistine cosmetics than did the “customer” group.

The three most frequently mentioned reasons to purchase and use Mistine cosmetics cited by the 15 Group B “purchaser/user” respondents were in descending order: reasonable prices (12), product quality (9), and advertising (3).

The three most frequently listed reasons not to purchase and use Mistine cosmetics cited by the 10 Group B “non-purchaser/user” respondents were in descending order: product quality (6), unavailability of purchasing places (5), and other more attractive cosmetic brands (3).

The three most common reasons to purchase and use Mistine cosmetics mentioned by the 14 Group C “purchaser/user” respondents were in descending order: reasonable prices (7), product quality (5), and availability of purchasing places (3).

The three most frequently listed reasons not to purchase Mistine cosmetics cited by the 11 Group C “non-purchaser/user” respondents were in descending order: product quality (6), other more attractive cosmetic brands (4), and delivery problems (3).

The majority of Group B and Group C respondents (58%) purchased and used Mistine cosmetics at the time of the study. The most frequently cited reason to purchase and use Mistine cosmetics by both Group B and Group C respondents was the reasonable prices. The most frequently offered reason not to purchase Mistine cosmetics by both Group B and Group C respondents was the product quality.

In summary, the Mistine and Amway cosmetic brands were the most familiar brands to both Group B and Group C respondents. Group B and Group C respondents agreed with the statements about the variables of Mistine’s marketing mix thus demonstrating positive attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics. In descending order, Group B respondents (potential customers) showed the most favorable attitudes toward: 1) the price variables, 2) the product variables, 3) the promotion variables, and 4) the place variables, while Group C respondents (customers) showed the most favorable attitudes toward: 1) the price variables, 2) the promotion variables, 3) the product variables, and 4) the place variables. Both groups ranked price and place variables highest and lowest, and inverted

product and promotion variables in mid-positions in terms of the respondents' favorable attitudes.

Slightly more Group B respondents reported purchasing and using Mistine cosmetics than did Group C respondents and cited "price" most frequently as the reason. Group C respondents also cited "price" as the primary reason for purchasing and using Mistine products.

With regard to the reasons for not purchasing and using Mistine cosmetics, Group B respondents offered "product quality" most often as the primary factor for not purchasing and using Mistine products. Slightly more of Group C respondents also reported "product quality" as the factor mentioned most often for not purchasing and using Mistine cosmetics.

Conclusions, discussion, limitations of the study and recommendations for further study are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the conclusions, discussion, limitations of the study and recommendations for further study.

Conclusions

The findings of this study reveal the answers to the two research questions.

The first research question was, “What are customer and potential customer attitudes toward each of the 4Ps in Mistine’s marketing mix?”

Overall, all Group B “potential customers” and Group C “customers” respondents had attitudes toward Mistine’s marketing mix in the positive range. The overall mean scores for each variable in Mistine’s marketing mix were in the “Agree”/“Positive Attitude” range of 2.51 to 3.50.

The Group B “potential customers” respondents reported that their most favorable attitude was toward the price variables followed by the product variables, the promotion

variables, and the place variables in Mistine's marketing mix. The Group C "customers" respondents also responded that their most favorable attitude was toward the price variables then followed by the promotion variables, the product variables, and the place variables in Mistine's marketing mix.

The second research question was, "Which factors most influence decisions of customers and potential customers to purchase, or not purchase, Mistine cosmetics?"

Overall, all Group B "potential customers" and Group C "customers" respondents agreed that Mistine's reasonable prices were the most important factor that influenced the respondents' decisions to purchase Mistine cosmetics. Both Group B and Group C respondents also reported that Mistine's product quality was the primary factor that most influenced them not to purchase Mistine cosmetics.

Discussion

Overall, the Group B "potential customers" and Group C "customers" respondents had positive attitudes toward each of the four elements in Mistine's marketing mix, but the Group C respondent attitudes were only slightly higher vis-à-vis each element than were those of the Group B respondents. Each of the four elements in Mistine's marketing mix is

discussed below in the following order: the product variables, the price variables, the place variables, and the promotion variables.

The fact that the overall mean score of the product variables of the Group C respondents was only slightly higher than the overall mean score of the Group B respondents reveals that the Group C respondents held only slightly more positive attitudes toward the product variables than did the Group B respondents. The reason was, that overall, the Group C respondents were more satisfied with the statements about the product variables than the Group B respondents, especially in the statement about Mistine's easy return and/or exchange of unsatisfactory or defective products. This appeared to be more important to the lower income Group C respondents. This also implies that Mistine should consider its return/exchange policy in order to be more attractive to Group B respondents.

The price variables of Mistine's marketing mix received the highest overall mean scores from both Group B and Group C respondents, showing that the price variables were the most important variables that influenced both Group B and Group C respondent attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics. However once again, the overall mean score of Group C respondents was only slightly higher than the overall mean score of Group B respondents. Mistine's discount prices, payment plans, and credit terms were more

satisfying to lower income Group C respondents than to higher income Group B respondents. The findings with regard to the price variables imply that they should be adjusted to better suit the distinctive needs of both groups of Mistine customers and potential customers.

Although the place variables received the lowest overall mean scores in Mistine's marketing mix from both Group B and Group C respondents, the place variables remained in the positive attitude ranges for both groups of respondents. The overall mean score of the Group C respondents was again, only somewhat higher than the overall mean score of the Group B respondents. Again, this suggests that the Group C respondents had slightly more positive attitudes toward the place variables than did the Group B respondents.

Group B respondents reported the negative impact of Mistine's products not being available at the times and places they wanted to purchase them, and Group C respondents gave low scores to ruptures or shortages in stock. These findings imply that Mistine's distribution system was better suited to Group C respondents' needs than to Group B respondents' needs, and Group C respondents were negatively influenced when Mistine products were unavailable. The latter might be because higher income customers may have the financial ability to maintain a reserve of product stock, while lower income customers tend to

purchase and consume directly. As a result, Mistine should consider the variety of distribution channels and sales locations that respond to the different needs of Group B and Group C respondents, and insure that cosmetic product inventories are adequate at all times through all distribution channels.

As with the first three elements of the marketing mix, the overall mean score of the promotion variables of Group C respondents was only narrowly higher than the overall mean score of Group B respondents; the Group C respondents had a slightly more positive attitude toward the promotion variables than did the Group B respondents. The single most important reason for this was that the Group B respondents disagreed with the positive statement about Mistine's catalogs and leaflets. The Group B respondents had negative attitudes toward the statement while the Group C respondents had positive attitudes toward it. This implies that Mistine's catalogs and leaflets were more satisfying to Group C respondents than to Group B respondents. However, although the Group C respondents had more positive attitudes toward the statement about Mistine's catalogs and leaflets than the Group B respondents, the Group C respondents reported the least favorable attitude toward Mistine's catalogs and leaflets of all promotion variables. This suggests that Mistine's traditional promotion method of directly distributed catalogs and leaflets may not

be as effective as it once was with traditional customers (Group C). This also strongly suggests that this form of marketing communication may not be well suited to the needs, tastes and habits of new potential customers (Group B). Mistine should review the promotional alternatives available to identify those most effective in influencing Mistine's two target groups of customers; Group B and Group C customers.

In all four elements of the marketing mix, the Group C respondents indicated only slightly higher positive attitudes than did Group B respondents. Very little, or no distinction can be drawn between the attitudes of the two groups toward Mistine's products, prices, distribution and promotion methods. Kotler (1994) argued that marketers should use various mixtures of the 4Ps to form customer attitudes and influence them to purchase the products offered. This study indicates that the "up-market" customers (Group B) targeted by Mistine's new strategy in 2007 have much the same attitudes toward Mistine as do Mistine's existing or traditional customers (Group C). What remains unclear is why Mistine would target "up-market" customers with higher incomes than existing customers and who have virtually indistinguishable positive attitudes toward Mistine.

Perreault & McCarthy (1996) defined market segmentation as the process of identifying "a (relatively) homogeneous group of customers", the target market, "who will

respond to a marketing mix in a similar way” (p. 92). Mistine identified Group B customers as the new target market, yet that market segment appears to be responding to the same marketing mix as the existing customers. Group B customers responded almost as positively to the marketing mix as did the existing Group C customers. There appears to be little or no difference in the attitudes of Group B and Group C customers toward Mistine’s marketing mix and no difference in Mistine’s marketing mix for Group B and Group C customers.

As noted above, adjustments to a number of the variables of each marketing mix element could be made to distinguish the Group B marketing mix from the Group C marketing mix and thereby improve the effectiveness of each on their respective markets.

This study also revealed that the Mistine cosmetic brand was the most familiar brand to both Group B and Group C respondents. This implies that both Group B and Group C respondents were familiar with direct-sales cosmetic brands in Thailand. However, during the data collection process, approximately 50 Thai females were excluded from the study because they were unfamiliar with the Mistine cosmetic brand. Many of those also reported that they preferred other cosmetic brands. This should further indicate that Mistine could refine its marketing mixes, especially in the area of promotion to generate customer

awareness, interest and desire to purchase Mistine cosmetic products. In this way, Mistine can expand its customer and potential customer bases.

The findings also revealed that the number of the Group B and Group C respondents who purchased and used Mistine cosmetics was only slightly larger than the number of the Group B and Group C respondents who did not purchase and use Mistine cosmetics. This indicates a potential for strong growth in both Group B and Group C markets. The most important factor that influenced 58% of both Group B and Group C respondents who did purchase and use Mistine cosmetics was product price. The most important factor that influenced 42% of both Group B and Group C respondents who did not purchase and use Mistine cosmetics was product quality. At the time of the study, both groups gave slightly more precedence to price over quality. This, of course, can change over time and the gap is narrow. Price is a market strength for Mistine, but quality is a challenge to be considered in both Group B and Group C markets.

In conclusion, the attitudes of both Group B and Group C respondents were positive toward Mistine and its marketing mix, but opportunities may exist to raise the already positive attitudes of the two groups by adjusting some of the variables in each element of the marketing mix to better satisfy the specific needs of Group B customers and,

separately, the specific needs of Group C customers. Of particular importance are the elements of price and product which had the strongest positive and negative influences on respondent purchasing decisions respectively.

Limitations of the Study

Because of limited resources, this study had the following limitations:

1. Only 50 respondents were included in the survey.
2. The sampling of respondents in this study was limited to the greater Bangkok metropolitan area.
3. The sampling of respondents in this study was conducted only in the Central Department Store, Ladprow Branch which may have further restricted the geographic scope of the survey.

Recommendations for Further Study

As follow up to the present study, the following studies are recommended:

1. Studies about customer and potential customer attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics with larger groups of cosmetic customers in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area and in Thailand in general would be useful to more completely reveal the attitudes toward cosmetic brands and factors that influence customers' purchasing decisions.
2. A future study of potential Mistine cosmetic customers (Group B customers) should be conducted to determine if their attitudes toward Mistine cosmetics have changed as a result of Mistine's new strategy.
3. A future study of Mistine traditional cosmetic customers (Group C customers) should be made to determine if their purchasing behaviors toward Mistine cosmetics have changed as a result of Mistine's marketing strategy.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

English Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed for a research project for a Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication at Srinakharinwirot University.

Your assistance is much appreciated. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and used for this study only. Thank you very much.

The questionnaire consists of the following parts:

Part I: Personal Data

Part II: Attitudes Toward Mistine Cosmetics

Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices

Part I: Personal Data

1. Do you reside in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area?

.....Yes

.....No

2. What is your monthly income?

.....20,000 baht/month or less

.....20,001 to 40,000 baht/month

3. How familiar are you with each of the following cosmetic brands? For each brand, mark (✓) your level of familiarity.

Brand	Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Familiar	Unfamiliar
1. Amway				
2. Avon				
3. Cute Press				
4. Giffarine				
5. Mistine				
6. U-Star				

Part II: Attitudes toward Mistine Cosmetics

Put a tick (✓) in the box beside each statement that best describes your agreement/ disagreement with the statement.

1. Product	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.1 Mistine offers a full range of products for my needs.				
1.2 Mistine offers high quality products.				

1. Product (Continued)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.3 Mistine products are beautifully designed and easy to use.				
1.4 Mistine offers safe products.				
1.5 Mistine is a reputable brand.				
1.6 Mistine packaging is effective, practical and attractive.				
1.7 Mistine products come in a variety of sizes that satisfy my needs.				
1.8 Mistine provides good support services.				
1.9 Mistine products have good warranties.				
1.10 Unsatisfactory or defective Mistine products can be easily returned and/or exchanged.				

2. Price	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.1 Mistine offers reasonable prices for its products.				
2.2 Mistine offers attractive discounts.				
2.3 Mistine offers a variety of payment plans.				
2.4 Mistine offers attractive credit terms for Mistine customers.				

3. Place	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.1 Mistine products are available where and when I want.				
3.2 Mistine products are easy to purchase.				
3.3 Mistine products are available in convenient locations.				

3. Place (Continued)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.4 Mistine products are never out of stock.				
3.5 Mistine products are never damaged in delivery.				

4. Promotion	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.1 Mistine offers a variety of attractive promotions.				
4.2 Mistine advertisements are beautiful and attract me to purchase Mistine products.				
4.3 Mistine has many service-minded representatives.				
4.4 Mistine public relations activities confirm my image of the brand.				
4.5 Mistine provides catalogs and leaflets directly to me.				

Part III: Reasons for Cosmetic Brand Choices

1. If you presently purchase and use Mistine cosmetics, list the three factors that most influence you to do so.

1.1.....

1.2.....

1.3.....

2. If you presently do not purchase and use Mistine cosmetics, list the three factors that most influence you not to do so.

2.1.....

2.2.....

2.3.....

APPENDIX B

Thai Questionnaire

แบบสอบถาม

แบบสอบถามนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาระดับปริญญาโท หลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ ผู้จัดทำงานวิจัยขอขอบคุณที่ท่านสละเวลาตอบแบบสอบถาม โดยข้อมูลที่ได้จากแบบสอบถามนี้จะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับ และใช้เพื่องานวิจัยเท่านั้น

แบบสอบถามนี้มี 3 ส่วนดังต่อไปนี้

- ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไป
- ส่วนที่ 2 เจตคติที่มีต่อเครื่องสำอางมีสทิน
- ส่วนที่ 3 เหตุผลที่เลือกซื้อเครื่องสำอาง

ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไป

1. คุณอาศัยอยู่ในเขตกรุงเทพและปริมณฑลหรือไม่

.....ใช่ ไม่ใช่

2. รายได้เฉลี่ยต่อเดือน

.....น้อยกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 20,000 บาท

.....20,001 - 40,000 บาท

3. คุณคุ้นเคยสินค้ายี่ห้อใดบ้าง โปรดใส่เครื่องหมาย (✓) ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความเห็นของคุณ

ยี่ห้อ	คุ้นเคย ดีมาก	คุ้นเคยดี	คุ้นเคย	ไม่คุ้นเคย
1. แอมเวย์ (Amway)				
2. เอวอน (Avon)				
3. คิวท์เพรส (Cute Press)				
4. กิฟฟารีน (Giffarine)				
5. มิสทิน (Mistine)				
6. ยู สตาร์ (U-Star)				

ส่วนที่ 2 เจตคติที่มีต่อเครื่องสำอางมิสทิน

โปรดใส่เครื่องหมาย (✓) ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความเห็นของคุณ

1. ด้านผลิตภัณฑ์	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
1.1 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินมีให้เลือกมากมายตาม ความต้องการ				
1.2 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินมีคุณภาพดี				
1.3 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินมีรูปแบบสวยงาม และ สะดวกต่อการใช้				
1.4 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินเป็นสินค้าที่ปลอดภัย				

1. ด้านผลิตภัณฑ์ (ต่อ)	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
1.5 เครื่องสำอางมีสกินมีชื่อเสียงเป็นที่รู้จัก				
1.6 บรรจุภัณฑ์เครื่องสำอางมีสกินใช้งานได้สะดวก และมีความน่าสนใจ				
1.7 เครื่องสำอางมีสกินมีหลายขนาดให้เลือกใช้ตามความต้องการ				
1.8 มีสกินมีการบริการที่ดี				
1.9 มีสกินมีการรับประกันคุณภาพสินค้าที่ดี				
1.10 เครื่องสำอางมีสกินที่ซำรุด หรือที่ไม่พึงพอใจสามารถเปลี่ยนหรือคืนได้อย่างสะดวก				

2. ด้านราคา	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
2.1 เครื่องสำอางมีสกินมีราคาที่เหมาะสม				
2.2 ส่วนลดของเครื่องสำอางมีสกินน่าดึงดูดใจ				
2.3 สามารถชำระเงินค่าเครื่องสำอางมีสกินได้หลากหลายวิธี				
2.4 มีสกินมีระยะเวลาการชำระเงินที่เหมาะสม				

3. ด้านช่องทางการจัดจำหน่าย	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
3.1 สามารถหาซื้อเครื่องสำอางมิสทินได้ทุกที่ ทุกเวลาที่ต้องการ				
3.2 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินหาซื้อง่าย				
3.3 เครื่องสำอางมิสทินหาซื้อได้ในหลายๆ สถานที่				
3.4 เมื่อสั่งซื้อเครื่องสำอางมิสทิน จะได้รับ เครื่องสำอางที่ต้องการครบทุกครั้งี่สั่ง				
3.5 ไม่เคยได้รับเครื่องสำอางมิสทินที่ชำรุดจาก การจัดส่งสินค้า				

4. ด้านการส่งเสริมการขาย	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
4.1 มิสทินมีกิจกรรมส่งเสริมการขายที่น่าสนใจ ให้เลือกหลากหลาย				
4.2 โฆษณาเครื่องสำอางมิสทินมีความสวยงาม และน่าสนใจ จนทำให้ตัดสินใจซื้อเครื่องสำอาง มิสทิน				
4.3 ตัวแทนจำหน่ายเครื่องสำอางมิสทินมีการ บริการที่ดี				

4. ด้านการส่งเสริมการขาย (ต่อ)	เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก	เห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็น ด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วย อย่างมาก
4.4 การประชาสัมพันธ์เครื่องสำอางมิสทินทาง สื่อต่างๆ สร้างความรู้สึกว่ามิสทินเป็นยี่ห้อที่ดี				
4.5 มิสทินส่งแคตตาล็อกและใบปลิวต่างๆ มา ให้เสมอ				

ส่วนที่ 3 เหตุผลที่เลือกซื้อเครื่องสำอาง

1. ถ้าปัจจุบันนี้คุณซื้อและใช้เครื่องสำอางมิสทิน กรุณาระบุเหตุผลที่เลือกซื้อ และเลือกใช้ 3 ข้อ
ตามลำดับความสำคัญ

1.1.....

1.2.....

1.3.....

2. ถ้าปัจจุบันนี้คุณไม่ได้ซื้อและไม่ได้อใช้เครื่องสำอางมิสทิน กรุณาระบุเหตุผลที่ไม่เลือกซื้อ และ
ไม่เลือกใช้ 3 ข้อ ตามลำดับความสำคัญ

2.1.....

2.2.....

2.3.....

VITAE

VITAE

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