THE IMPACT OF BRAND IMAGE AND CUSTOMER VALUE UPON THE BUYING DECISIONS AND BRAND LOYALTY OF HOTELS IN THE THAI TOURIST INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF THE PURCHASING DECISION OF GAY MEN IN THAILAND METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS

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The Impact of Brand Image and Customer Values upon Buying Decisions and Brand Loyalty of Hotels in the Thai Tourist Industry: A Case Study of Gay Men Purchasing Decision in the Thailand Metropolitan Districts (91 pp.)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate gay niche market as demonstrated by buying decision in the hotel business industry in metropolitan cities of Thailand. This study discovers the factors that influence the decision making of gay men as well as proves that this type of buyer has a big loyalty to specific hotel brands that appear as gay-friendly to them. It shows that gay customers are most satisfied when hotels identify as being gay-friendly and provides gay comfort zone to them.

Hotels that welcome gay clients, especially in a big city like Bangkok, will enjoy remarkable business success. This can be measured through increased occupancy rates, interviews with hotel owners and managers, brand loyalty surveys, and improved annual income reports. It is not only the quality of the facilities but also high quality of service. Providing a gay-friendly environment and catering to their desirable comfort zone would help the hotel gain the competitive advantage from this particular market segment.

The subject of gay brand image will be mentioned in chapter 2 and deal with Thai cultural exception issues which are factors for business investors in Thailand. Business owners, investors, entrepreneurs, and whoever is involved with this industry

have to know the reasons why in some cultures gay niche markets are not profitable while in others they are. The information in this paper will help locate potential gay clients, identify approaches which will attract them and present how to reach out to this market type. The magic "word of mouth" in the gay community has a huge impact on the development of service businesses.

The qualitative survey instrument is based on a hard copy survey and an online version was composed and tested out with 30 samples as the pilot study. This was done to get feedback and fix some errors. Then the actual survey was launched out to four hundred gay men as the first target. Before beginning to take the survey, each respondent was clearly explained the procedures by the author. The result from all the respondents will be illustrated in statistical graphs and charts in chapter 4 then discuss on chapter 5. The final result from this study will be used to measure the influence of hotel businesses specific to the gay niche market.

Approved: _____

Signature of Advisor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ABSTRACT……..iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT……vi

LIST OF TABLES…….....x

LIST OF FIGURES……...xi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION…….…….....1

1.1 Background and Significance of the Study …..……..……1

1.2 Gay Historical Background…….…….…….…….…..5

1.3 Gay Marketing Strategy Background…….…...……..…....7

1.4 Purposes of Study (Objectives)……..…..8

1.5 Scope of Study..…….……..……9

1.6 Benefit of Study…….….……..9

1.7 Definition of Terms…….…...11

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW……...…….…….……14

2.1 Theoretical Foundation……..……..…….……..…14

2.2 Brand Image…….……...…….……..15

2.3 Gay Customer Values….…….……...……19

2.3.1 Social Value……..…..19

2.3.2 Economic Value.....……..…...20

2.3.3 Psychological Value……..……...…...21

2.4 Customer Buying Decision and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men …....24

2.5 The Relationship between Brand Image and Gay Buying Decision of Gay Men……..……..28

2.6 The Relationship between Customer Values and Buying Decision of Gay Men.....30

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW (Continued)

2.7 The Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men……31

2.8 The Relationship between Customer Values and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men ……32

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY……36

3.1 Populations……36

3.2 Sample and Sample size……37

3.3 Sample Design……38

3.4 Sample Collection Procedure……39

3.5 Survey Instrument……40

3.6 Content Validity Measurement ……41

3.7 Reliability Measurement……41

3.8 Statistical Tool……42

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS……45

4.1 Tables and Explanation……45

4.2 Demographical data analysis from the collected samples……47

4.3 The Analysis of Brand Image, Customer Values, Customer's Buying Behavior and Brand Loyalty……50

4.4 The Analytical Results for Hypothesis Testing……55

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION……56

5.1 Conclusion……62

5.2 Discussion……65

5.3 Managerial Implication……73

5.4 Recommendation for Future Research……74

BIBLIOGRAPY……75

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

APPENDIX……...……...81

BIODATA……90

LICENSE AGREEMENT OF THESIS PROJECT…….91

BANGKOK UNIVERSITY • FOUNDED 1962 •

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 1 Gay Spending Power in USA ……..……..……..….....4

Table 1.1 The Rise in Buying Power by a Diverse Group..…...…….…...…5

Table 1.2 Rating Your Brand..…….…….…….…….....….17

Table 4 The Frequency and Percentage of General Information, Nationalities……...48

Table 4.2 The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Age…….....39

Table 4.3 The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Occupation….….40

Table 4.4 The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Education……...41

Table 4.5 The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Frequency of Visits to Thailand……...…..……41

Table 5 The Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Brand Image……...…….43

Table 5.1 The Mean ($\bar{x}$)and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Customer Values; Tangible…….…...44

Table 5.2 The Mean ($\bar{x}$)and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Brand Loyalty…….…...44

Table 5.3 The Mean ($\bar{x}$)and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Buying Behavior …..….45

Table 5.4 (H1) Brand Image influence Gay Customers Buying Decision……..….46

Table 5.5 (H2) Brand Image influence Gay Customers Loyalty…….…….....…49

Table 5.6 (H3) Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customers Buying Decision....51

Table 5.7 (H4) Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customer Loyalty…….…...53

Table 5.8 Brand Image and Gay Customer Values positively influence Gay-Customer Buying Decision……...….….65

Table 5.9 Brand Image and Gay Customer Values influence Gay-Customer Loyalty…….…….…..……66

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

Figure 2 The Conceptual Framework……..…….…….…….……..……...14

Figure 2.1 The Study Hypotheses and Statistics Method Outline...…….……...15

Figure 2.3 Gay Customer Values Diagram……..…….…..…..…..21

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

One of the most remarkable niche markets, represented by the gay community, has been growing and developing around the world and has increasingly become a very strong market segment for hotel business providers to consider (Tanzella, 2010). This is because this community has developed a special identity of its own. “Gay” is an informal term referring to men who are sexually attracted to men (BusinessDictionary, 2015a). In this study, I will be specific to gay men, even though the word “gay” sometimes includes lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT), due to similar preferences and decision in purchasing. So, this target group is found everywhere.

Most recently, marketers have begun to target the gay audiences with advertising that features gay characters, uses appeals and themes unique to this minority market segment, and is placed in media targeted to gay group. The list of companies advertising in the gay media has grown to include Sony, Apple, McDonalds, Banana Republic, American Express, and the liquor brands of Carillon Importers (Absolute, Bombay, Sapphire), among others. A few adventurous companies have begun to show images suggesting same-sex relationships in advertising to general audiences in the mass media. Moreover, the recent study revealed that the gay traveler segment market has been long established even though some business segments are just coming to realize the potential of this market which generated over 64 billion dollars in the US last year (Gabel, 2013a). Nigel Phillips,

managing director of London-based OUT4YOU, the operator of the websites Travel Gay Asia and Travel Gay Europe also agreed with this analysis in another Bangkok Post article and mentioned that the gay market is very large niche market and growing rapidly, particularly in Asia (Gabel, 2013b). “The Global Report on Gay Tourism” produced by the UN World Tourism Organization further confirms the annual global gay market impact was more than $140 billion (Tanzella, 2010) and estimated at $830 billion in year 2013 (Krokus, 2013).

This report strongly shows that gay consumers patronize businesses that provide specific products and services which actually answer their needs. In a gay customer’s perspective, for example, certain well-known brands have special designs, catering to attention-seeking gay persons. Hence, these unique products or services may cost more than others, but gay customers insist on going the extra mile for such brands. In addition, in the hotel business industry, gay friendly hotels with luxury ambiance provide the most likely choice for a vacation rather than five star hotels in general.

Most of the time, being gay is not visible to others. This is especially true of gay men who are of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” type. So, they often choose to express who they are to others via the brand image. For example, they might prefer to come-out by wearing a particular perfume, glasses or jeans, or by dining at gay friendly restaurants. Without any words, it is pretty obvious to others that he is gay. It’s a universal human desire is to be accepted by the society that we live in. Even if some might need acceptance more than other, but for gay men, this desire tends to be very high. For this fact, it influences gay people to start to seek social value not

only in their own world, but also from straight society as well. The fact that gay men form a minority that is discriminated against makes it more important to gain the social value power in mutual recognition. It's like a burden that they have carried along with them since they were born. If some parents don't accept their own children for who they are, so their social value has been devalued since childhood. However, being human we all need to find a place where we belong and a society where we will fit in somehow. In spite of this, a gay person as an individual also starts to seek a group in which he will be accepted. This is what makes the whole gay community stronger and more interesting than it used to be. When we take a look at what is called "Pink Money" which is a term that applies to income generated from this group of consumers, we see that it has added huge value to the national GDP each year. "Estimated to be 5-10% of the population, gay consumer segment is gaining momentum. In the US alone, the spending power of this consumer base is estimated to be around US$750 billion per annum. Despite this, many gay oriented businesses were established with a degree of secrecy and without the financial support otherwise available to start-ups" (Sharma, 2011).

"The gay market is a big and growing market. In more developed markets we have seen more and more businesses targeting gay consumers and we believe the liberalization of developing markets will provide a significant drive for gay market going forward. At gay capital we strongly believe in impact investing in that quality businesses serving gay community, particularly in developing markets can also effect change for good" says Paul Thompson on the motivation behind starting a fund

focused on gay businesses. So how big is this market? According to Paul they have estimates based on numbers produced in the US and UK and the estimated gay population assuming the generally accepted estimate of between 5% and 10% of population. The US and UK estimates they used were 6-6.5% of the population and they applied these numbers to population and GDP using the US gay spending power/GDP as a benchmark" (Sharma, 2011). Using the success stories of the Greek Island of Mykonos and Barcelona in Spain, which now enjoy reputations as major gay tourist destinations bringing in millions of Euros each year, Phillips concludes, "There is a huge potential within Asia to do that. Destinations need to grasp that opportunity and start establishing events that bring in the travelers; it's a huge market" (Gable, 2013).

Table 1: Gay Spending Power in USA.

Projected Growth in Total Gay Buying Power, 2005-2009			
Year	Population (Thousands)	Per Capital Buying Power	Aggregate Buying Power (Million)
2009	$16,414	$45,366	$744,639
2008	16,119	43,954	708,500
2007	15,831	42,580	674,091
2006	15,549	41,246	641,333
2005	15,264	39,973	610,149

Source: The Multicultural Economy 2009, Selig Center for Economic Growth

Table1.1: The Rise in Buying Power by Diverse Groups

	1990 Buying power	**2014 Buying power (projected)**	**Increase between 1990 and 2014**
African American	$318 billion	$1.1 trillion*	246%
Hispanic	$212 billion	$1.3 trillion*	513%
Asian American	$117 billion	$696.5 billion*	495%
Native American	$19.7 billion	$82.7 billion*	320%
White	$3.8 billion	$13.1 trillion*	245%
LGBT.	Not avail.	$835 billion**	

Source: Krokus, G. (2013). *Americas LGBT 2013 Buying Power Estimated at 830 Billion* . Retrieved from http://www. curvemag.com/Curve- Magazine/ Web-Articles- 2013/Americas-LGBT-2013-Buying-Power-Estimated-at-830-Billion/.

It's not only a case of expanding the gay economic value into the business world, but also of accepting their social value. Based on the references I mentioned earlier and also evident in our real world, the gay niche market has become an important segment for business owners to target. If we take an even closer look at the gay community itself, economic or money value has blended in with personal social class or what we call "Social Value" (Gassenheimer, Houston, & Davis, 1998).

1.2 Gay Historical Background

As far back as historians can go in ancient history there are numerous examples of homosexuality and copious evidence of the existence of gay people, but such words as "gay" was not used as there are modern terms. Based on the world

famous Psychologist & Medication Doctor; Richard A. Isay has concluded that being homosexual or gay is not a sickness, but rather a human development with biological basis and yet external factors have a minor influence, but not as much as what they were born with. For example, that a mother raises her son without her husband doesn't make her son gay as was sometimes thought in the past, or that being gay was contagious. Modern science has concluded that is it something a person is born with. How soon a person realizes this fact and comes out is an individual decision. "My own history and that of my adult gay patients had convinced me that sexual orientation is inborn. My patients told me that they had been attracted to other boys or men from childhood, often when they were as young as six or seven, and that from an even earlier age they had felt different from other boys. And, as children, most of these men had not enjoyed rough-and-tumble play and many of them had preferred playing with girls more than other boys, which also suggested their inherent difference from typical boys" (Isay, 2010).

Here are just a few historical examples. Japanese Samurai were part of a warrior culture where women were thought to make men weak and only same-sex lovers were allowed (Saslaw, 1990). The world of the Japanese samurai was all male and same-sex relationships were the norm (Williams, 1986). This was also true of ancient Greek soldiers and the emperors of ancient Rome (Boswell, 1980). Even some of the emperors of China were gay (Duberman, Vicinus, & Chauncey, 1989). Throughout the Americas the "Berdaches", cross-dressing men and tribal leaders, were highly respected (Williams, 1986). Together with Old and New Testament references, these examples illustrate that gay men have always been around and form an integral part of the human condition.

The Stonewall Riots in New York City in 1969 are generally taken as the beginning of the modern gay liberation movement. These riots brought the underground gay community into the national spotlight. Gay people fought for their own civil rights, and awoke the rest of the world to the fact that "people like us" really exist everywhere and have equal rights (StonewallInnNYC, 1969). That's the beginning of a specific gay identity with unique desires, needs, and interests and since then, the gay community has gradually become an important market (Armstrong & Crage, 2006).

1.3 Gay Marketing Strategy Background.

The world that we live in today includes these gay men as a part of the universal human condition. On the other hand, anti-gay sentiments in the marketplace could also create difficulties for a business which wants to expand. "Given the generally negative attitudes toward homosexuality in mainstream American society, why would an advertiser risk alienation of a substantial portion of market share to make a differential appeal to a very small segment (5.7% of the population; Yankelovich Associates data cited in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 10, 1994) such as homosexuals? (Wardlow, 1996b).

In reality, a mainstream customer base may not result in people not liking a particular ad. They may not approve of homosexuality but still appreciate the ad and not be turned off by it. For example, in an American ad campaign it defines as "inclusive" Swedish furniture maker IKEA depicts a variety of realistic lifestyles including a couple grappling with middle age, a family with an adopted son, a gay male couple, and a divorced woman buying furniture for the first time. Images suggesting same sex relationships have also been used by companies such as Calvin

Klein, Benetton, and Banana Republic. Kmart Corporation ran a Father's Day television advertisement in 1993 which included character dialogue with many heard to imply a gay relationship between the two men depicted in the ad, although Kmart denied an intentional reference to homosexuality (Thomas, 1999).

Every hotel business should learn to accept, educate themselves and get to know that the gay market segment which can be a great advantage for a business that understands the buying decision of this community. In recent years, gay niche markets have pulled in a lot of attention from marketing practitioners. "Gays as a group are relatively well-educated, with over fifty-nine percent (59%) having a college degree. The average homosexual in America reports an annual income in excess of $55,000-much of this disposable income" (DeLozier & Rodrigue, 1996).

1.4 Purposes of Study (Objective)

The purposes of this thesis were firstly to investigate the satisfaction people in gay community through the brand image of accommodation services. Secondly, to investigate gay customer's values (social value, economic value and psychological value) that influenced their choices of using accommodation services. Thirdly, to analyze gay customers buying decision based on how they spent on hotel accommodation in Thailand only. Fourthly, to analyze the impact of brand image and gay customer's values that governed gay customer buying decision and gay loyalty customers from using hotel accommodations.

Then these quantitative results will be illustrated by the use of graphs and tables which will be further explained in chapter 4 and then concluded on chapter 5.

1.5 Scope of Study

To show that brand image and customer values acceptance are affecting gay customers buying behavior, the methodology of this study aimed for a quantitative type of research among a specific population of 200 gay men in such a popular gay cities such as Bangkok, Pattaya, ChangMai, Hua-Hin and Phuket over a period of two months. This survey was conducted from February to March, 2015 with the questionnaires distributed by hand to samples at gay venues like the Silom, Sukumvit and Boy Town Pattaya and any other popular districts and through email, Facebook, and gay website forums. This is carefully explained in chapter 3.

The variables of this study are of two types; the dependent variable and the independent variable. Brand Image and Social Value are defined as independent variables while the buying decision and brand loyalty of gay customers defined as the dependent variables.

This study includes information from the surveys with males who identify as gay are part of the resident and visiting population in gay areas of metropolitan cities of Thailand. These participants were randomly selected from all types of backgrounds, educations, ages, and occupations. The questionnaires were based on the four purposes as mentioned above.

1.6 Benefit of Study

After a long journey to the completion of this thesis, the author hopes that this study will benefit those entrepreneurs who are interested in developing their business in gay market segment. Also the author hopes that this will help marketing planners for tourism and hotel business industries to adapt their future strategies to suit the tastes of this type of customer. Finally the author hopes that even gay

customers themselves will find that this thesis provides interesting and useful knowledge. This study has come to the conclusion that understanding gay history, same-sex relationships, the gay community and the barriers that gay people face living in straight society is a useful tool for making business plans. For in reality, considering worldwide hotel business practices, smart hotels must care for all their valued customers without any type of discrimination. It gives them a competitive advantage and a key for earning higher business profits. The findings of this study are valuable in the academic world because the more that is known about any sub-group in society, the better that subgroup will be understood by the society at large.

"Today's increasingly diverse markets and competitive pressures for incremental sales, market share, and profits have pushed marketers to extend their message to a wider variety of target audiences. Marketers have long targeted group. This advertising has appeared in media targeted to selective audiences with appeals and themes that are unique to the group and presented in the appropriate language. As the racial and ethnic composition of the American population continues to diversity, more and more of this formerly selectively targeted advertising is placed in general circulation mass media. These diverse placements of ads create media crossover effects, where manner of audiences may be exposed to advertising which is designed to appeal to a particular racial or ethnic group (Wardlow, 1996a).

"The Gay Tourism niche market is a fast growing tourism sector which now has increased awareness across the global tourism industry. Since the sixties when the Gay Pride movement brought gay people out of their "closets" in North America and Europe, the Gay Community has become more and more visible running their own bars, cafes, shops, villages, and events. That acceptance of gay people and

their lifestyle grew and grew as the political situation over the past 40 years evolved from criminal actions to gay marriages" (Bömkes, 2011).

1.7 Definition of Terms

Brand image means "the impression in the consumers' mind of a brand's total personality (real and imaginary qualities and shortcomings). Brand image is developed over time through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme, and is authenticated through the consumers' direct experience" (BusinessDictionary, 2015a).

Decision making means: "the thought process of selecting a logical choice from the available options. When trying to make a good decision, a person must weigh the positives and negatives of each option, and consider all the alternatives. For effective decision making, a person must be able to forecast the outcome of each option as well, and based on all these items, determine which option is the best for that particular situation" (BusinessDictionary, 2015b).

Tourism and hospitality means: "the industry of providing customer service to travelers or strangers. Hospitality professionals generally work in administrative or management positions in a service-based environment, and they are responsible for overseeing the operations and success of an establishment, such as a hotel or restaurant. The hospitality and tourism industry is diverse, and includes many locations including RV parks, food establishments, recreational facilities, campgrounds, boarding houses and youth hostels. While the overall goal of a hospitality professional is to ensure that guests and customers have pleasurable experiences, they can also be responsible for operations, such as hiring and training new staff; supervising office and financial administration; housekeeping, maintenance, and security staff; and marketing" (Beyond, 2017).

Very often gay men will be included in the umbrella term “LGBT” which stand for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transsexual. However, this study will be specific to gay men. To make sure readers understand gay identity, the author chose to include this definition: “Gay is a person who is attracted primarily to members of the same sex. Although it can be used for any sex (e.g. gay man, gay woman, and gay person) “lesbian” is sometimes the preferred term for women who are attracted to women. Bisexual is a person who is attracted to both people of their own gender and another gender also called “bi”. Transgender: This term has many definitions. It is frequently used as an umbrella term to refer to all people who do not identify with their assigned gender at birth or the binary gender system.” (UniversityofMichigan, 2015).

Hotel: “A commercial establishment providing lodging, meals, and other guest services. In general, to be called a hotel, an establishment must have a minimum of six letting bedrooms, at least three of which must have attached private bathroom facilities. Although hotels are classified into 'Star' categories (1-Star to 5-Star), there is no standard method of assigning these ratings, and compliance with customary requirements is voluntary. A US hotel with a certain rating, for example, is may look very different from a European or Asian hotel with the same rating, and would provide a different level of amenities, range of facilities, and quality of service” (Hotel.BusinessDictionary.com, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation which is used in this thesis. The theories originate from literature reviews and an analysis of empirical studies related to the subject of brand image, gay customer values, gay customer buying decision and gay brand loyalty. The connection and correlation between each theory and frame work are also presented in this chapter.

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

This paper is focused on hotel businesses patronized by gay customers or interested in attracting gay customers. Therefore, the theoretical foundation of the conceptual framework has been created based on similar business settings for all. The four main variables, brand image, gay customer values, gay customer buying decision and gay brand loyalty have been presented in this literature review which covers concepts and measurement. Related theories and empirical works have been analyzed and selected to fit in with this study.

Hypotheses	Statistical Method
H1. Brand image influences gay customers buying behavior. **H2**. Gay customer values influence buying behavior. **H3**. Brand image influences gay brand loyalty. **H4**. Gay customer values influence Gay brand loyalty.	Multiple Regression

Figure 2.1: The Study Hypotheses and Statistic Method Outlines

This study begins with an explanation of the concept and presents definitions related to its hypotheses; how brand image and customer values affect buying decision and brand loyalty of gay men as mentioned in the outlines above. This is illustrated by a measurement instrument for rating brand image that can be used by any business. The study continues with an analysis of customer values. This is followed by an examination of the interrelationship between brand image and customer values which plays an important role in the buying decision and brand loyalty of gay customers. This chapter ends on page 21 with a detailed examination of the hypotheses of this paper.

2.2 Brand Image

Historically the term brand image dates back to the 1950's and according to research by Dobni and Zinkhan, University of Houston (1990) the term has changed a great deal over the years. To quote from this report "Gardner and Levy have been credited (Levy, 1958) with crystallizing 'brand image' in a meaningful form in their classic 1955 article…Their conception was that products had a social and psychological nature as well as a physical one, and that the sets of feelings, ideas and attitudes that consumers had about brands, their 'image' of brands, were crucial to purchase choice".

Although changes took place over the years in the definition of brand image, the conclusion has remained the same: brand image is "crucial to purchase choice" and thus has a profound effect on buying behavior. Considering the scope of the discussions of the definition of brand image, a firm definition could be very complex but the effect on buying decision is undisputed. Nevertheless, it applies to gay brand image as well when it comes to business issues.

A well known journalist, Tony Meenaghan, contends that “In an increasingly competitive marketplace, greater emphasis is being placed on brand image development as the basis for consumer discrimination. Advertising has a central role to play in developing brand image, whether at the corporate, retail or product level. It informs consumers of the functional capabilities of the brand while simultaneously imbuing the brand with symbolic values and meanings relevant to the consumer. These two functions of advertising closely parallel the informational and transformational schools of advertising effects and theories on the central and peripheral routes to consumer persuasion. Such dichotomous approaches to explanation are unlikely to represent the reality of consumer choice in that brand image is likely to be formed by the simultaneous absorption of advertising messages based on both the functional and expressive capabilities of brands” (Meenaghan, 1995).

In an article published in 2000 in the Harvard Business Review, Kevin Keller created an excellent rating system for a business to determine the quality of its brand image relative to the buying decision of its customers. This ten point “report card” is actually an internal survey to be filled out by managers and employees. The results are very useful in identifying areas for improvement within a company. Filling this out as a consumer adds to the value of this survey and it can also be used with the competition for comparison purposes. The results of such a survey will, of course, vary from one company to another.

Table 1: Rating Your Brand.

[ ] The brand excels at delivering the benefits customers truly desire.	[ ] The brand stays relevant.	[ ] The pricing strategy is based on consumers' perceptions of value.	[ ] The brand is properly positioned.	[ ] The brand is consistent.
[ ] The brand portfolio and hierarchy make sense.	[ ] The brand makes use of and coordinates a full repertoire of marketing activities to build equity.	[ ] The brand's managers understand what the brand means to consumers.	[ ] The brand is given proper support, and the support sustained over the long run.	[ ] The company monitors sources of brand equity.

Source: Keller, K. L. (2000). *The Brand Report Card, Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from http://www.aim.be/uploads/news_documents/Brand-Report.

"Brand image is the current view of the customers about a brand. It can be defined as a unique bundle of associations within the minds of target customers. It signifies what the brand presently stands for. It is a set of beliefs held about a specific brand" (Jie, 2002). "Brand image reflects consumers' perception toward a brand, and is a key driver of brand equity. Measuring brand image systematically is important for improving effectiveness of brand marketing efforts. This paper summarizes previous research into brand image, and proposes an integrated model of brand image measurement by using brand identity system as reference, then compares brand image of two toothpaste brands" (Jie, 2002).

Brand image is regarded as a very important concept in business practice as well as in academic research because marketers can gain competitive advantage through successful brands. The competitive advantage of firms that have brands with high image includes the opportunity for successful extensions, resilience against

competitors' promotional pressures, and creation of barriers to competitive entry (Farquhar, 1989). According to the article *Why A Brand Matters* written by Lois Geller in Forbes, the world class and highly respected magazine, published online on May 24, 2014 "In one sense, perhaps the most important sense, a brand is a promise. Think of some top brands and you immediately know what they promise: McDonald's, Coca Cola, Budweiser, Ford, Apple, MetLife. You know what you're going to get with a well-branded product or service. In another sense, a brand is a specific combination of logo, words, type font, design, colors, personality, price, service, etc. It's also a bundle of attributes. Think of Volvo, for instance, and your first thoughts are probably going to be something like '*well built, comfortable, Swedish*' and, most of all, '*safety*'. The promise, look, personality and attributes can eventually acquire a special patina of what I call '*me'* appeal. Buying a certain brand says something about the person who buys it" (Gellen, 2014).

"A better understanding of brand associations is needed to facilitate further theoretical development and practical measurement of the construct. Three studies were conducted to: test a protocol for developing product category specific measures of brand image; investigate the dimensionality of the brand associations construct; and explore whether the degree of dimensionality of brand associations varies depending upon a brand's familiarity. Findings confirm the efficacy of the brand image protocol and indicate that brand associations differ across brands and product categories. The latter finding supports the conclusion that brand associations for different products should be measured using different items. As predicted, dimensionality of brand associations was found to be influenced by brand familiarity" (Low & Lamb Jr., 2000).

An article in *Business Insider* bears out the premise that brand image has a major effect on buying decision specific to gay community by pointing out that gay households in the US tend to shop more often and are more likely to spend more than the average household. They are also willing to pay more for quality brands and to spread the word among friends promoting brands that they like. “This means that brands have more opportunities to reach gay consumers at retail to influence their purchase behaviors and brand preferences” (Fuller, 2013).

It is clear from all of the above references that brand image has an enormous, “crucial” effect on the buying decision of all customers, especially gay customers, and is of great importance to hotels. Although definitions and situations vary, based on these references for the purposes of this paper “brand image” will be defined as a “consumers' perception toward a brand” Jie (2002).

Brand image is regarded as a very important concept in business practice as well as in academic research because marketers can gain competitive advantage through successful brands. The competitive advantage of firms that have brands with high image includes the opportunity for successful extensions, resilience against competitor’s promotional pressures, and creation of barriers to competitive entry. This definition obviously covers all market segments including the gay niche market which is the focus of this paper. All of the above references and studies prove the first hypothesis (H1) of this study: the brand image has a major influence on gay customer buying behavior.

2.3 Gay Customer Values

The next issue for this discussion is customer values. In an article by Rob Wengrzyn he contends that “Values are different for each person. While one person

might value honesty, another might value wealth. You see, values have been defined as ideals or beliefs that a person holds desirable or undesirable. The variability in that statement is, first, what a person could value, and second, the degree to which they value it. A person can value honesty and wealth but not to the same degree. For example, a person might have to let their values towards honesty slip a little when it involves increasing their wealth" (Wengrzyn, 2015).

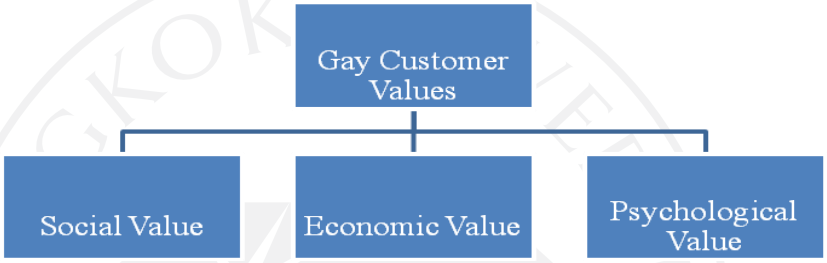

Figure 2.3: Gay Customer Values Diagram

Since this study mainly focuses on satisfaction of the gay customer as influenced by brand image, in the end this study will inform the reader how this type of customer behaves toward the services they are purchasing. So, the author would like to define "value" in a smaller scope and have it mean specifically hotel accommodations for gay men. Therefore, since it is integral to this study, the author has divided "value" into three types of values: social value, economic value and psychological value.

2.3.1 Social Value

Being accepted and recognized by the group is very important to gay men since society as a whole can be difficult and sometimes dangerous to deal with. Some persons might set social values as the most important consideration and the term "social values" here includes earning self-respect,

recognition as part of the gay group and professional excellence. These are all part of the social value that gay customers desire. How could they earn that social value? Most of the time brand image is the answer. “It is argued that (a) social identification is a perception of oneness with a group of persons; (b) social identification stems from the categorization of individuals, the distinctiveness and prestige of the group, the salience of out groups, and the factors that traditionally are associated with group formation; and (c) social identification leads to activities that are congruent with the identity, support for institutions that embody the identity, stereotypical perceptions of self and others, and outcomes that traditionally are associated with group formation, and it reinforces the antecedents of identification. This perspective is applied to organizational socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relations” (Low & Lamb Jr., 2000).

2.3.2 Economic Value

“Economic value” is a term for making decisions for buying goods or services based on monetary worth or the opportunity for investment. Money value is variable and it depends on the way in which a person measures the worth of a product or service in relation to its perceived value, such as when a person makes a buying decision at a mid-summer sale or on a hot deal hotel promotion. To conceive the highest degree of money value doesn’t always mean the goods and services have to come at a high price, but the personal satisfaction in making the purchase is a major element. In contrast, showing off with money value is another way of showing of wealth. I would like to give an example of world famous pop artist, Sir Elton John. He appears in

magazines frequenting gay advertised luxury hotels. This is telling us not only that he sets his social values as his number one priority, but also places his money value secondary by wearing something extraordinary and worth the money that he paid for it. This is an example of a situation where the brand represents the social value as well as the money value of being famous.

On the other hand, an eighty-year old grandma may walk into a grocery store and choose to buy a red apple because she thinks the price is affordable whereas the same apple cost Elton John a lot more at the hotel where he stayed with his friends. This is the same apple from the same grocery store which supplied it to the hotel. Hence, the degree of desirability is satisfied in both situations even though the price paid for the product varied. The measurement of money value is variable and depends on the person's beliefs and ideals.

2.3.3 Psychological Value

Sometimes the consumer is not confident in making buying decisions and this mysterious lack of self confidence is carried out in our buying behavior. As normal consumers, in general we feel good when we are recognized, loved and paid attention to as important. Sometimes, just to serve our psychological needs, we let gay friends input combine with what our own ideas on buying something, even though what we have in mind is insignificant or silly. But these inputs affect our buying decision a lot of time. Let's have a look at a good example of paparazzi and famous actors and pop stars that couldn't live without their social value and money value. In order to impress their fans, they have to show off as much as possible in order to serve their

own psychological satisfaction in return. The more publicity occurring in the media, the more famous they will be and the more credit or money they will earn. Their careers depend upon driving their fans nuts with passion. A good example of this would be the case of the baby boomers in 70s who went crazy for Elvis Presley and affected the same hairdo. The concert hall temperature went up anytime he was performing on the stage. The obsessive fans would even dine where he used to dine. Psychological satisfaction influences buying decision as well. How much or how little influence it has depends upon an individual's self-consciousness and psychological desire?

In terms of accommodation and services, business owners are aware of the thought processes of the human brain and the emotional aspects of consumer spending. They have already added such keys to success as special promotions, attractive ads, personal touch and welcoming ambience to draw customer attention. In the public relations field, it is common to use these methods in order to carry on brand image and serve the psychological value. More often than not, gay consumers would pay more for goods and services if they could satisfy this psychological need for adulation and the approval of others.

"Branding research has largely focused on consumer goods markets and only recently has attention been given to business markets. In many business markets the company's reputation has a strong influence on buying decisions which may differ from the more specific product related influence of the brand's image… The results indicate that the brand's image has a more specific influence on the customers' perceptions of product and service quality while

the company's reputation has a broader influence on perceptions of customer value and customer loyalty" (Cretu & Brodie, 2007).

In addition to all of the above, here is one final example to support my second hypothesis that customer values (social, economic and psychology) have a big effect on buying behavior. "Participants also reported on company practices they thought had the most influence on their purchasing decisions. They were the most likely to mention the strong influence of companies having fair employment practices (45%)—such as non-discrimination in hiring or recognition of domestic partners—as well as gay-friendly policies (42%). Participants were almost as likely to mention the strong influence of companies supporting gay political causes (37%), gay organizations or charities (34%) or gay events (29%)." The "customer values" of the gay community include a large measure of political and societal awareness and an intense willingness to lend support to causes important to the gay community (Community Marketing, 2010). The references above prove the second hypothesis (H2) of this study: gay customer values do have an influence on their buying behavior.

2.4 Customer Buying Decision and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men.

This section examines the buying of gay men and the actual decision processing that takes place before a choice is made to purchase hotel accommodation. According to world famous Economist Paul Ormerod, people are not rational. So predicting the way in which people make up their minds to buy a product or not to buy a product is just about impossible. Human thoughts keep changing as time goes on. The human mind is not always stable, but it reforms its state of thinking based on

the environment that influences it. Sometimes the lack of information could mislead or sometimes decision making is based on the limited information the person has. But this does not necessarily mean that a decision is for the best. To find “best” in this world is an infinity argument. But what is interesting is that all humans do adapt to the environment that we live in. And yet it is also about how we think, act and respond (Ormerod, 2007).

Despite this interpretation of how the human mind works with regard to making buying decisions, a great deal can be learned by looking at the relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. According to a research paper by Kandampully J and Suhartanto D. on the relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, “Customer loyalty is difficult to define. In general, there are three distinctive approaches to measure loyalty:

1.1 behavioral measurements

1.2 attitudinal measurements

1.3 composite measurements

The behavioral measurements consider consistent, repetitious purchase behavior as an indicator of loyalty. One problem with the behavioral approach is that repeat purchases are not always the result of a psychological commitment toward the brand. For example, travelers may stay at a hotel because it is the most convenient location. When a new hotel opens across the street, they switch because the new hotel offers better value. Thus, repeat purchase does not always mean commitment. Attitudinal measurements use attitudinal data to reflect the emotional and psychological attachment inherent in loyalty. The attitudinal measurements are concerned with the sense of loyalty, engagement and allegiance. There are instances

when a customer holds a favorable attitude toward a hotel, but he/she does not stay at the hotel. A guest could hold a hotel in high regard, recommend the hotel to others, but feel the hotel was too expensive for him/her to use on a regular basis. The above approaches measure loyalty uni-dimensionally. The third approach, composite measurements of loyalty, combine the first two dimensions and measure loyalty by customers' product preferences, propensity of brand-switching, frequency of purchase, regency of purchase and total amount of purchase (Pritchard and Howard, 1997; Hunter, 1998; Wong et al., 1999). The use of both attitude and behavior in a loyalty definition substantially increases the predictive power of loyalty (Pritchard and Howard, 1997). The two-dimensional composite measurement approach has been applied and supported as a valuable tool to understand customer loyalty in several fields, such as retailing, recreation, upscale hotels and airlines (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2003).

Customer buying decision is changeable, and obviously this includes gay people. This is affected by external influences such as brand image and gay customer values with regard to making buying decisions. Very often gay men are sociable people, hence, a close look at the relationship between customer loyalty (as related to brand image: hypothesis 1) and customer satisfaction among this niche group (related to customer value: hypothesis 2) explains a lot about the purchasing decision of gay men. Using brand loyalty is an effective tool to connect consumer trust with the brand image and this approach suits this study with regard to gay customer's buying decision and how to measure it. This allows some degree of prediction of their buying decision and is useful in devising marketing strategies. Since such decision is hard to predict, any feedback that measures gay customer loyalty to a particular brand is a

valuable tool in determining the effectiveness of that brand image. Sometimes a business just has to make assumptions about the market, try things out and pay close attention to customer feedback. The hardest thing for a business is not only how to set up the business, but also how to maintain brand success. It's a matter of trust from the customer's side and yet it's the responsibility of the business owners to find the ways to earn it. Nokia is one of the good examples of this type of business failure. This brand used to be huge in the cell phone market for more than decade, but yet it was knocked out of the competitive market by its deathly competitors like iPhone and Samsung. Now, Microsoft the new owner of Nokia has seen this problem and still believes in Nokia's brand loyalty and its reputation. Next round might be their turn to come back bigger with Microsoft's new technology and might even recall all of their Nokia loyalty customers and grab some of their competitor's clients.

Regarding gay friendly hotel businesses, loyalty customer programs have become real strategies that help generate huge annual income. Such loyalty programs employ many tactics such as collecting points with any purchased item then redeeming them later. Some hotels give discounts on food and beverages, free spa treatment vouchers or even free upgrades to a better room type upon arrival if there is any delay in checking in. Some businesses have joined their loyalty benefit program with those of another company based on a mutual agreement. These are only a few examples, and this aspect of this study will be explored further in chapter 4.

"The existing literature of brand loyalty has been essentially focused on the roles of perceived quality, brand reputation and especially satisfaction, due to the fact that they summarize consumers' knowledge and experiences, guiding their subsequent actions. In this context, the shifting emphasis to relational marketing has devoted a lot

of effort to analyses how other constructs such as trust predict future intention. The fact that there are conceptual connections of trust to the notion of satisfaction and loyalty, and that this effort is especially lacking in the brand-consumer relationship" (Delgado-Ballester & Luis Munuera-Alemán, 2001).

When looking more closely at the behavior of gay men, they are often well represented as high end customers when it comes to travelling and booking vacation packages. They love to brag about themselves by staying in the most popular gay venues and often in the most expensive type of hotel room. Even though some might prefer living a "don't ask don't tell" life style, they still care and want others on the community to admire them. It might be a big surprise for straight society that gay people are unique and have such strong opinions that sometimes they do buy things based on wanting to be different (Vandecasteele & Geuens, 2009). Even though customer buying decision is hard to predict, it has been proved by the studies presented above that the third and forth hypotheses (H3, H4): gay customer buying decision and gay brand loyalty do tend to change over time and still can be hypnotized by external factors (brand image and customer values) as well as word of mouth. The trust exhibited by gay customers in the repeat buying of the same products and services is a major part of their brand loyalty. Developing this degree of trust is important for the business planner.

2.5 The Relationship between Brand Image and Buying Decision of Gay Men

The relationship between the brand image and the buying of gay men is that the brand can firmly influence buyers, in their decision making. Most of the time people in general are not rational and make their purchases unconsciously. This conclusion is based on the study of Paul Ormerod 2007 as mentioned above. One of

his world famous books is called “The Death of Economics” and it presents the theory that the human mind always keeps changing and nothing seems to be able to predict human thought. This has caused dramatic economic failure in the past. “Ormerod’s aim was to provide a critique of conventional economics which was accessible to general readers. He described orthodox economics -- with its assumptions of ‘rational’ behavior in a mechanical, linear world of equilibrium -- as in many ways an empty box”. He said, “Its understanding of the world is similar to that of the physical sciences in the Middle Ages. A few insights have been obtained which will stand the test of time, but they are very few indeed, and the whole basis of conventional economics is deeply flawed”(Ormerod, 1994). “No wonder the prescriptions offered by conventional economists regarding big questions like inflation and unemployment are, according to Ormerod, at best misleading and at worst dangerously wrong. (Ormerod, 2001).

In order to grab as much as possible of a market segment, public relations has to study how the human mind works and how to use brand image to cultivate gay customers. In order to attract gay consumers, PR has to put in a lot of clever thought and represent their accommodation and services through their brand image. Just look around. Everyday new promotions feed right into your personal email account to try to tempt you. The social media is one of the most powerful tools for gaining competitive advantage. A research article by Julia Uptmoor also concluded that, “To maintain brand power, brands need to adapt to the new environment by taking on a collaborative instead of ignoring or defensive approach on consumers. Collaboration enables brands to gain insights from consumers for free and adapt those for a profitable marketing strategy. Moreover, companies are wise to engage in a proactive

approach in form of CSR as this can help companies to remain transparent and protect the brand from potential consumer attacks. Further research should be taken on which collaboration strategies are the most efficient and which social media platforms are the most effective for collaboration between brands and consumers" (Uptmoor, 2014).

Creating brand recognition is very important and can be passed on from one generation of customers to the next by interpersonal influences. Several non-gay five star hotels including the Hilton, Marriott and Sheraton brands have turned their marketing direction toward the gay community. Local examples of gay hotels in Bangkok that have become quite strong lately include Hotel Malaysia, Babylon Bed and Breakfast and the Pinnacle Hotel. Their business has rapidly increased in the last decade. Once their brand or name is recognized, they will always have repeat customers.

2.6 The Relationship between Customer Values and Buying Decision of Gay Men

To be able to gain a competitive advantage, or the owners of businesses who are interested in targeting the gay niche market must understand their customer's perspectives, ideals, beliefs, culture and common interests which will be called "values" in this paper, then apply that knowledge to product development plans. Although, from the customer's point of view, previous research has discovered that gay consumers are very interactive and share a lot of useful information among themselves. How gay men choose their accommodation service and how they know it is worth their money is shown by this study in Chapter 4. One result is that both Thai and foreign gay men cast the most votes for quality of service, cleanliness, safety, and welcoming ambiance. Previous gay visitors love to share information with their friends by recommending accommodation services by word of mouth. As time has

passed, these brands have become recognized by this market segment. This shows that gay consumers like to be welcome and look for their comfort zone at places where they are going to stay or services they are going to use. This factor makes a lot of sense and determines whether or not they would return for another visit. Psychological satisfaction is much more powerful than the physical attributes of the location. According to Woodruff's article, the customer value is the

"... measurement of customer value and how companies can use customer value information in designing their strategies makes a major contribution to marketing theory and practice. It provides an insightful synthesis of the literature on customer value and points out why and how current theory on the subject should be strengthened. It also offers suggestions for companies to foster customer value learning and incorporate it as a cornerstone of their competitive strategies" (Parasuraman, 1997). When it comes to the hotel business, gay clients are more likely to want to be pampered and enjoy a friendly and welcoming environment. This consideration should shape a lot of how hotel and service businesses approach building a customer base in the growing gay niche market.

2.7 The Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men

The relationship between the brand image and brand loyalty of gay men is that once companies understand their brand characteristics, they make strategic decisions on how to develop their brand image (Srivastava, 2012). This has an effect on gay customer's attitude toward the brand and encourages gay customer to become a loyalty customer. Then companies apply this brand image strategy across generic markets in order to gain more loyalty customers. This implies that reputation which is related to strategy selection will also relate to brand performance. "If these matters are

found to be of significance, managers should identify the kind of corporate reputation that moderates brand performance and use it as a basis for strategy selection." So, brand image and gay customer loyalty have a major effect on each other.

"Numerous studies have confirmed the effects of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty [9]. When consumers are satisfied with a brand, it's highly probable of them to advise it to others and purchase it frequently [3]. Brand loyalty is a commitment of consumer to the brand to repurchase it over and over again despite the influence of different marketing efforts of the competitors or other brands that may cause switching behavior. Brand loyalty can be classified into; attitudinal approach, behavioral approach and the composite approach [14]. Behavioral loyalty can be viewed as purchase frequency or proportion of purchases of a brand by the consumer [15]" (Saeed et al., 2013).

2.8 The Relationship between Customer Values and Brand Loyalty of Gay Men

In this study, customer value in general is divided into three parts as mentioned above. To define value related to specific gay group and their brand loyalty might take forever. To narrow things down, loyalty is separated into three parts; behavioral measurement, attitudinal measurement and composite measurement. Based on the work of Jay Kandampully and Dwi Suhartanto, "Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: the role of customer satisfaction and image" the following conclusion can be made "There are two strategies most commonly used by hotel managers in order to gain a competitive advantage; they are:

1. 1 low-cost leadership through price discounting

1. 2 developing customer loyalty by providing unique benefits to customers.

Hotels that attempt to improve their market share by discounting price, however, run the serious risk of having a negative impact on the hotel's medium and long-term profitability. As a result, it is quality of service rather than price that has become the key to a hotel's ability to differentiate itself from its competitors and to gain customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction is considered to be one of the most important outcomes of all marketing activities in a market-oriented firm. The obvious need for satisfying the firm's customers is to expand the business, to gain a higher market share, and to acquire repeat and referral business, all of which leads to improved profitability (Barsky, 1992). Studies conducted by Cronin and Taylor (1992) in service sectors such as: banking, pest control, dry cleaning and fast food; found that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on purchase intentions in all four sectors. Similarly, in the health-care sector, McAlexander et al. (1994) found that patient satisfaction and service quality have a significant effect on future purchase intentions.

Getty and Thompson (1994) studied relationships between quality of lodging, satisfaction, and the resulting effect on customers' intentions to recommend the lodging to prospective customers. Their findings suggest that customers' intentions to recommend are a function of their perception of both their satisfaction and service quality with the lodging experience. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty" (Kandampully J, Suhartanto D. 2001b).

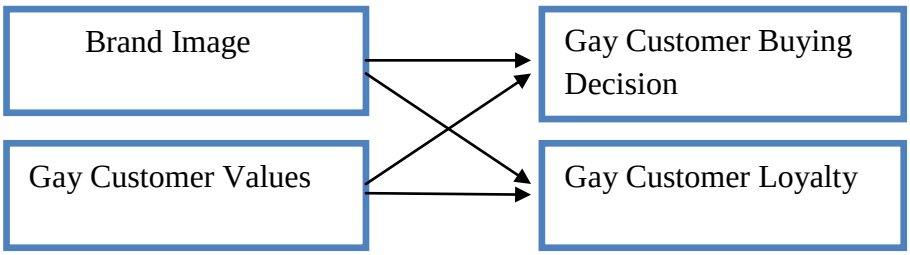

Figure 2: The conceptual frame work.

It is the conclusion of this study of the buying decision of gay men that brand image (H1) and how customer values (H2) affect customers buying decision (H3) and brand loyalty (H4) have a positive effect on each other both indirectly and directly. Would it be worth it to go out with a group of friends for beer at a 5 star hotel lounge on special occasions even though it costs more than buying some beer at a local grocery store? It really depends on brand image and the value it has to gay men in this situation. In other words, customer satisfaction does affect buying decision and customer loyalty for better or worse depending on how the brand performs on this type of customer. Gay customers are no different since all people seek happiness in life. Since social value and economic value are parts of customer satisfaction, and gay groups are big on social gatherings, new arrivals in the competitive market such as the smart phone, social media and tablet applications create an easy path to reach out to prospective gay customers worldwide. In addition, there are many mobile applications especially made for gay networking and this has become a huge market. Many newly born gay hotels have used this key to unlock the gate to their potential consumers. This is the best chance ever in history for business owners to effectively promote their brand loyalty program throughout the gay niche market worldwide.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is composed of how this research has been done and how the samples were collected. The study is based on three important elements; brand image and customer values which are set as the independent variables, followed by the dependent variables which are the customer buying decision, and brand loyalty of a specific gay target group. This chapter gives deeper details on populations and the tools that were used while conducting the survey. At the end of this chapter, the research results based on the selected samples will be illustrated statistically by charts and graphs in chapter 4.

According to the major surveys that have been done over the past several decades, the estimate of gay men to the general population ranges from 5% to 10%. The number can never be actually calculated due to the fact that this is a culturally sensitive issue and people are often not out (Robinson, 2008). Nevertheless, to get the real preferences of gay people for hotel accommodation when these samples were collected, the respondents were asked to clarify their sexual orientation.

3.1 Populations

The populations for this study are defined as gay men (men who are attracted to other men) of all nationalities, ages, and all types of occupations as long as they fit into the gay category. The research methodology consisted of distributing a survey to members of my target gay group.

3.2 Sample and Sample Size

Using the statistical equation introduced by Taro Yamane the sample size can be determined by giving 5% for assumption of normal population (error), and giving 95% as the confidence level to apply as a formula in a case where the actual population (finite population) is known. Below is Taro Yamane's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size (200)

N = Population size

e = Level of precision or Sample of Error (which is +/- 5% for this study)

In order to serve the purpose of this study, how brand image and customer values could affect on customers buying decision and customer loyalty of gay men, and since this research type is a quantitative research, the original aim of total population was to survey 400 gay men specific on hotel business in Thailand only. The author spent roughly three months trying to collect these samples. However, due to the time limit and some difficulty with the infinite population and also with the common gay attitudes of "I am not out yet" and "Don't ask don't tell" of gay society, the author determined the sample size by applying the equation proposed by Pongwichai (2009) which is also adapted from Taro Yamane (1967) method of calculation for the suitable and reliable sample size with the specific confidence level of 95% and precision levels = 0.05 which will give a suitable sample size for this study.

$$\mathbf{n} = \frac{\mathbf{1}}{\left[\frac{4e^2}{Z^2}\right]}$$

Where n = sample size

e =the level of precision (in this study the author specified the level of precision = 0.05 at the confidence level of 95 %).

Z = the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area α at the tails. The value for Z is found in statistical tables which contain the area under the normal curve. Z = 1.96 (at the confidence level of 95 %).

Applied the formula

$$\mathbf{n} = \frac{\mathbf{1}}{\left[\frac{\mathbf{4(0.05)^2}}{\mathbf{(1.96)^2}}\right]}$$

n = 385 customers

Therefore, the sample size in this study is 385 gay respondents.

3.3 Sample Design

In this study, the author employed the non-probability sampling method which includes two sub cases:

- Accidental or Convenience Sampling
- Purposive Sampling

These samples were selected based on these two methods. In this case, the author targeted gay customers even though the author and his survey team did not know these people in person. For example, the team surveyed the best known gay district of metropolitan Bangkok on Silom Street and gave out the questionnaire to any gay person who passed along. One of the first things the author and survey team did was verify that the respondent did in fact meet the criteria of being in the sample.

3.4 Sample Collecting Procedure

On the very first weekend February, 2015 the author and an assistant went directly to Silom Soi 4 where the Telephone Bar owners kindly allowed this survey of their gay customers and gay staff. The survey team started with foreign customers there and then went to Silom Soi 2 to hand out hard copies of the questionnaire to gay customers who were on their way to DJ Station which is a well known gay disco in Bangkok. At least 200 gay men were there enjoying themselves. However, it was difficult to collect data at Soi 2 since everyone was in the hurry trying to get into the disco, and not in the mood to answer the survey. At that time, the author thought that there must be some place or location where it would allow a better opportunity. Therefore, on the second, third, and fourth weeks of March, the team went to Pattaya which is well patronized by gay people. The gay beach at Jomtien is complete with the rainbow flag land marks. This particular spot is where gay people were sitting down and relaxing and that provided the best opportunity to launch the survey. The author and his survey team also walked around from bar to bar and hotel to hotel to give out the survey randomly (but our survey still only focused on hotel business). The same procedure was followed in Hua-Hin where there are only two small gay bars but quite a number of surveys were filled out there at the bar called “Guys” and “Red Indian”.

Another better, faster and more convenient way to get samples was using gay applications through a smart phone and tablet. Among many others, these are five popular gay applications for smart phone; U4Bear, Scruff, Grindr, Tumblr and the newest Chinese app by Danlan.org Company called “Blue”. All of these apps mainly target gay social network users. They allow free calls, free SMS, location sharing and

real time VDO call from both ends and it is worldwide. All of these are available for free download in the AppStore for Mac and Play Store for Android.

This is how the author launched the survey to these people. First the author had to create an online survey form using GoogleDocs which included the same details as the hard copy. Once a person online clicked on the link and completed the survey, the results were automatically stored in a personal GoogleDocs account. The GoogleDocs even allows embedding URL on a personal Facebook page or publishing it on a personal website. Based on these websites and applications, the users already have been authorized and identified themselves as gay before they log in. This tool is fabulous because it reaches anyone worldwide who has visited Thailand which is the target for this study.

3.5 Survey Instrument

The most effective tool that was used for this study was the survey form. However, to avoid bias and problems with a language barrier, every detail was translated into two versions; Thai and English with an online version available in both languages. The author discovered that the hard copy survey forms were more difficult to get filled out because people selected at random were often involved in doing other activities. Fortunately, the online version is much easier to get responses to and much faster. The survey form consists of three parts.

Part I: This part concerns the demographical data of gay participants. Multiple choice and fill in the blank types of questions were used in this part. This allows the survey team to know the background of participants at the very beginning. One additional benefit of having the survey in two languages was that the different attitudes of Thai and foreign respondents can be compared.

Part II and Part III: These two parts contain mathematical data from respondent's references related to brand image and the social values of gay men which are the independent variables and the reasons why they choose to pay for their accommodation at a certain hotel. As the dependent variable, the buying decision of gay men along with their brand loyalty as the result of the survey will be calculated and formulas and equations will be used for these two parts since this study is a quantitative thesis. The Licker Scale type of question was used here followed by the Check-Box Grid type because it gives excellent statistical results which will be illustrated later on.

3.6 Content Validity Measurement

To make sure this survey works properly, the author did the pilot study by testing it out first with a small group of respondents. The collected data of part II and part III is most important for statistical testing using the program called the SPSS Program. The resulting reliability rating of this study is 0.969%. For content validity, the author worked closely with Asst. Prof. Kasemson Pipatsirisak, D.B.A. of Bangkok University to consider the contents of this thesis along with other advice and support in our face-to-face meetings every other week.

3.7 Reliability Measurement

After the author designed the survey form, it was carefully double checked for errors. The author then gave the survey to three professors at Webster University, Thailand to check for relevancy of the questions. It was also reviewed by a few general managers of 5 star hotel brands who identify as gay. Since this survey concerns gay buying behavior, it is important to get the opinion of people most familiar with the gay tourism industry; such as gay hotel owners, managers in major

hotels and bars like Marriott, Hilton, Centara Grand, Telephone Bar, and Babylon Bed and Breakfast, Bangkok. These are the perfect places to find gay respondents even though our survey only aimed at the hotel business. Also, the advice of gay professors at Webster, known personally to the author, was extremely valuable since they have a great deal of experience. After the draft survey was finalized, the author started to create an online version in both Thai and English, and also printed out the hard copies and started to distribute them to the gay respondents mentioned earlier.

3.8 Statistical Tool

Based on the hypothesis framework, how brand image and customer values (independent variables) affect gay buying decision (dependant variable), this research processed on computer program called Statistical Package (SPSS) and analyzed this data with Multiple Regressions method which gives precise statistical results on the relationship between these two variables. Since this research is quantitative research, the calculation of Mean (sometime called average) and Standard Deviation are also used in this study to measure the central tendency of data and measure the dispersion of a set of data from its mean. These two are considered the most useful for the descriptive statistics of the collected data. All of these can be done with the same SPSS program which will be well presented in tables with explanations in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Tables and Explanation

To analyze the collected data from the previous chapter in deeper detail, this chapter is the analysis part of the research using the statistical method mentioned in Chapter 3. To provide a clearer understanding the author decided to categorize the analysis of data into three parts based on the contents of the questionnaire.

Part I: The demographic information analysis of the collected samples will be presented by using tables, graphs and percentages (%) to define the rating of the survey results.

Part II: Brand Image and Customer Values are defined as independent variables in this study. Dependent variables are defined as Gay Customer's Buying Decisions and Gay Customer Loyalty. This will be analyzed by using Median (Mdn.) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) as the statistical measurements.

Part III: The testing of overall analysis results.

<u>These are the symbols and equations that were used for this empirical study analysis</u>.

Mean.	is the Mean value from samples.
S.D.	is the Standard Deviation from samples.
n	is the number of samples.
*	indicates statistical significance at 0.05 significance level.
ß	Beta estimates statistical test on the probability error result. related to the independent variables which equal 1.00 as the standard variation.

4.2 Demographical data analysis from the collected samples

Table 4.1: The Frequency and Percentage of General Information, Nationalities

Nationality

	Frequency	Percent
American	12.00	6.00
Australian	6.00	3.00
Brazilian	2.00	1.00
British	11.00	5.50
Burmese	2.00	1.00
Canadian	3.00	1.50
Chinese	1.00	0.50
Danish	1.00	0.50
Dutch	14.00	7.00
Egyptian	1.00	0.50
French	7.00	3.50
German	10.00	5.00
Greek	1.00	0.50
Hungarian	4.00	2.00
Indian	2.00	1.00
Indonesian	3.00	1.50
Irish	3.00	1.50
Italian	4.00	2.00
Japanese	4.00	2.00
Kazakhstanis	1.00	0.50
Malaysian	2.00	1.00
Mexican	1.00	0.50
Nepalese	1.00	0.50
Nicaraguan	1.00	0.50
Norwegian	1.00	0.50
Pilipino	1.00	0.50
Russian	2.00	1.00
Serbian	2.00	1.00
Singaporean	1.00	0.50
South African	1.00	0.50
Spanish	1.00	0.50
Swedish	6.00	3.00
Swiss	2.00	1.00
Taiwan	1.00	0.50
Thai	82.00	41.00
Turkish	1.00	0.50
Vietnamese	2.00	1.00
Total	200.00	100.00

Based on Table 4.1: Most of the respondents, 82 persons (41.0%) are Thai followed by Dutch 14 persons (7.0%), American 12 persons (6.0%), British 11 persons (5.5%), German 10 persons (5.0%), French 7 persons (3.5%), Australian and Swedish each are 6 persons (3.0%), Hungarian, Italian and Japanese each are 4 persons (2.0%), Canadian, Indonesian and Irish each are 3 persons (1.5%), Brazilian, Burmese, Indian, Malaysian, Russian, Serbian, Swiss and Vietnamese each are 2 persons (1.0%), and finally Chinese, Danish, Egyptian, Greek, Kazakhstanis, Mexican, Nepalese, Nicaraguan, Norwegian, Philippine, South African, Spanish, Taiwanese and Turkish are each 1 person (0.5%) respectively.

Table 4.2: The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Age.

Age

	Frequency	Percent
18-25 years old	30	15.00
26-35 years old	68	34.00
36-45 years old	40	20.00
46-55 years old	32	16.00
Over 55 years old	30	15.00
Total	200	100.00

Table 4.2: explains the range of age of respondents. The results show that out of a total of 200 respondents, the majority are aged between 26-35 years old, which is 68 persons (calculated as 34.0%) followed by age between 36-45 years old, which is 40 persons (20.0%). This is followed by 46-55 year old numbering 32 persons (16.0%), 18-25 years old totaling 30 persons (15.0%) and over 55 years old came out to be 30 persons (16.0%).

Table 4.3: The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Occupation

Occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	1	0.50
Airport Supervisor	1	0.50
Bar Boy	5	2.50
Business owners	18	9.00
Costume Designer	1	0.50
designer & theatre director	1	0.50
Education / Academic	12	6.00
Freelancer	2	1.00
Government	3	1.50
Graphic Designer	2	1.00
Labor / Technician	37	18.50
Legal	1	0.50
Manager / Executive	28	14.00
Medical	5	2.50
Partime Teacher	1	0.50
Professional / Office	22	11.00
Retired	21	10.50
Sale / Marketing	16	8.00
Student	13	6.50
Technology / IT.	8	4.00
waiter	1	0.50
Welfare	1	0.50
Total	200	100.00

Based on table 4.3: out of a total of 200 respondents, the majority occupation is Labor/Technician 37 persons (18.50%), Manager/Executive 28 persons (14.0%), Professional/Office 22 persons (11.0%), Retired 21 persons (10.5%), Business owner 18 persons (9.0%), Sale/Marketing 16 persons (8.0%), Student 13 persons (6.5%), Education /Academic 12 persons (6%), Technology/IT. 8 persons (4.0%), Bar Boy 5 persons (2.5%), Medical 5 persons (2.5%), Government 3 persons (1.5%), Freelancer 2 persons (1.0%), Graphic & Designer 2 persons (1.0%), Agriculture 1 person (0.5%), Airport Supervisor 1 person (0.5%), Costume Designer 1 person (0.5%), Designer & Theatre Director 1 person (0.5%), Legal 1 person (0.5%), Part Time Teacher 1 person (0.5%), Waiter 1 person (0.5%), and finally Welfare 1 person (0.5%).

Table 4.4: The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Education

Education

	Frequency	Percent
Associate Degree	15	7.50
Bachelor Degree	62	31.00
Dancer school	1	0.50
Doctorate	7	3.50
High School	65	32.50
Master Degree	38	19.00
Primary School	12	6.00
Total	200	100.00

Based on table 4.4: most respondents have a high school level education which equals 65 persons (32.50%) followed by Bachelor's Degree 62 persons (31.00%), Master's Degree 38 persons, (19.00%), Associate Degree 15 persons, (7.50%), primary school 12 persons (6.00%), Doctorate 7 persons, (3.50%), dancer school/special skill 1 person (0.50%).

Table 4.5: The Frequency and Percentage of General Information; Frequency of visits to Thailand.

How Many Times Do You Travel to Thailand

	Frequency	Percent
1 time	21	10.50
2 or 3 times	88	44.00
4 to 5 times	29	14.50
More than 5 times	60	30.00
Never travel	2	1.00
Total	200	100.00

As the results show, gay men do love to travel. The table explains that out of the 200 respondents, within one year, 88 persons (44%) traveled 2 or 3 times followed by 60 persons (30%) who traveled more than 5 times per year. There are 29 persons (14.5%) who traveled 4 to 5 times per year, 21 persons (10.5%) who traveled only 1 time and 2 persons (1%) who never traveled at all and these two are Thai.

4.3 The Analysis of Brand Image, Customer Values, Customer's Buying Behavior and Brand Loyalty.

The analysis and interpretation of brand image, customer's values, customer buying behavior and brand loyalty will use the average score interpretation that was presented in chapter 3 as follows:

Average score of 4.21 – 5.00 refers to Strongly Agree.

Average score of 3.41 – 4.20 refers to Agree.

Average score of 2.61 – 3.40 refers to Neutral.

Average score of 1.81 – 2.60 refers Disagree.

Average score of 1.00 – 1.80 refers to Strongly Disagree.

All items above were rated by respondents on a five-point Likert scale. Each question was scaled from Number 1 with the statement "Strongly Disagree" to number 5 with the statement "Strongly Agree". The weight (score) is set in each level as follows;

Strongly Agree = 5 points

Agree = 4 points

Neutral = 3 points

Disagree = 2 points

Strongly Disagree = 1 point

Remarks:

- The Standard Deviation is the result of summing the squared deviations of the ratios about the mean, dividing the result by the total number of ratios minus one, and taking the positive square root.

- Mean is the result of summing the ratios and dividing the result by the total number of ratios.

Table 5: The Mean ($\bar{x}$) Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Brand Image.

Brand Image Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cleanliness of This Hotel	200	877.00	4.39	0.85
SafetyHigh Level of Security	200	857.00	4.29	0.86
Service Accuracy of This Hotel	200	855.00	4.28	0.85
Responsive Service Delivery	200	828.00	4.14	0.87
Welcoming Ambiance Gay Friendly	200	827.00	4.14	0.95
Various Products And Services Available	200	826.00	4.13	0.90
Staff With Good Problem Solving Ability	200	824.00	4.12	0.89
Staff With High Competencies of Service	200	819.00	4.10	0.94
High Quality of Services	200	806.00	4.03	0.93
Good Location & Environment	200	805.00	4.03	0.98
Modern Facilities, WiFi, Excellent Interior Decoration	200	804.00	4.02	0.95
The Price is Affordable	200	797.00	3.99	0.90
Interesting Promotions	200	794.00	3.97	0.93
Valid N (listwise)	200			
Total			**4.12**	**0.91**

From the data presented in table 5: the results of gay respondent's opinions regarding gay hotel brand image revealed that their overall attitudes are in agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.12, S.D. = 0.91). Which can be explained in detail as follows: The subject relating to the Cleanliness of The Hotel is ranked on strongly agree level with the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 4.39, S.D. = 0.85). Safety High Level of Security is ranked on the strongly agree level with the second highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 4.29, S.D. = 0.86). Service Accuracy of This Hotel is ranked on the strongly agree level with the third highest mean ($\bar{x}$= 4.28, S.D. 0.85). Responsive Service Delivery of Hotel is ranked in agree level ($\bar{x}$= 4.14, S.D. = 0.87). Welcoming Ambiance-Gay Friendly is ranked in agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.14, S.D. = 0.95). Various Products and Services Available is ranked in agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.13, S.D. = 0.90). Staff with a Good Problem Solving Ability topic is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$= 4.12, S.D. 0.89). Staff with High Competencies of Service is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.10, S.D. 0.94). High Quality of Services topic is ranked

agree ($\bar{x}$ = 4.03, S.D. = 0.93). Good Location & Environment topic is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.03, S.D. = 0.98). Modern Facilities, WiFi, Excellent Interior Decoration topic is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.02, S.D. = 0.95). The Price is Affordable topic is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.99, S.D. = 0.90). Finally, Interesting Promotions is ranked agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.97, S.D. 0.93).

Table 5.2: The Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Customer Values; Tangible.

Customer Values Descriptive Statistics			
	N	**Mean**	**td. Deviatio**
Expected High Quality of Service	200	4.31	0.74
Time Liness of Service	200	4.24	0.79
Easy Access to Use the Best Services	200	4.22	0.80
Best Opportunity to Search for Partner	200	4.12	0.96
Make Me Feel Welcome and Accepted by Other G	200	3.99	1.07
Meet Other Gay People	200	3.97	1.03
Impress Others	200	3.31	1.40
Appear More Elegant and Look Improtant	200	3.29	1.28
Valid N (listwise)	200		
Total		**3.93**	**1.01**

The data presented in table 5.2: shows the overall feedback of the respondents regarding Customer Values with a resulting agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.93, S.D. = 1.01). Which can be explained in detail as follows: The topic related to Expected High Quality of Services is ranked at the strongly agree level with the highest mean level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.31, S.D. = 0.74). Timeliness of Service is ranked on the second highest mean level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.24, S.D. = 0.79). The third highest level is the topic that relates to Easy Access to Use the Best Services ($\bar{x}$ = 4.22, S.D. = 0.80), followed by the topic relating to the Best Opportunity to Search for Partner which ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.12, S.D. = 0.96), Make Me Feel Welcome and Accepted by Other Gay Persons also ranked high ($\bar{x}$ = 3.99, S.D. = 1.07), Meet Other Gay People is also ranked at the agree

level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.97, S.D. 1.03), Impress Others is ranked at a medium level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.31, S.D. = 1.40) and the last topic Appear More Elegant and Look Important is also ranked on a medium level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29, S.D. = 1.28).

Table 5.3: The Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Be Willing to Comeback	200	811.00	4.06	0.92
I Would Recommend This Hotel to Friends and Others	200	794.00	3.97	0.92
Pround to Be Part of Gay Hotel Supporter	200	786.00	3.93	1.01
Always Book The Accommodation at This Hotel	200	780.00	3.90	1.07
Valid N (listwise)	200			
Total			**3.96**	**0.98**

From the data presented in table 5.3: the results of gay respondent's opinions regarding brand loyalty revealed their overall attitudes are at the agree level ($\bar{x}$= 3.96, S.D. = 0.98) which can be explained in detail as follows: The topic relating to Be Willing to Come Back is ranked high with the highest mean ($\bar{x}$= 4.06, S.D. = 0.92). The topic relating to I Would Recommend this Hotel to Friends and Others is ranked at the agree level with the second highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 3.97, S.D. = 0.92). The topic relating to Proud to be Part of Gay Hotel Supporter is ranked high with the third highest mean ($\bar{x}$ =3.93, S.D. = 1.01) and the topic related to Always Book the Accommodation at this Hotel is ranked high as the last topic concerning brand loyalty ($\bar{x}$= 3.90, S.D. = 1.07).

Table 5.4: The Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Buying Behavior

Buying Behavior Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Worth the Money	200	876	4.38	0.87
My Own Experience From Before	200	815	4.08	0.85
I Was Recommended by Someone Who Has Experiences with This Hotel Before	200	789	3.95	0.99
Choose This Hotel without Any Planning	200	779	3.90	0.98
Investigate The Brand Characteristics	200	757	3.79	0.99
I am Aware of This Hotel Brand Based on Own Knowledge	200	745	3.73	1.06
Consider the Business Social Responsibility	200	740	3.70	1.01
I knew this Hotel from Advertising	200	733	3.67	1.04
Follow Gay Trend by Choose this Hotel	200	699	3.50	1.21
Valid N (list wise)	200			
Total			**3.85**	**1.00**

From the data presented in table 5.4: the results of gay respondent's opinions regarding their buying behavior with respect to hotel accommodation revealed their overall attitudes are agree level. ($\bar{x}$ = 3.85, S.D. = 1.00) which can be explained in detail as follows: the first subject that relates to Worth the Money is ranked at the strongly agree level with the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 4.38, S.D. = 0.87). The subject relating to My Own Experience from Before is ranked at the agree level with second highest mean ($\bar{x}$ =4.08, S.D. = 0.85). The subject I was Recommended by Someone who has Experiences with this Hotel Before is ranked at the agree level with the second highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 3.95, S.D. = 0.99). The subject related to Choose this Hotel Without any Planning is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.90, S.D. = 0.98). The subject relating to Investigate the Brand Characteristics is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.79, S.D. = 0.99). The subject related to I am Aware of this Hotel Brand Based on Own Knowledge is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.73, S.D. = 1.06). The subject related to Consider the Business Social Responsibility is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.70, S.D. = 1.01). The subject related to I Knew this Hotel from Advertising is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.67, S.D. = 1.04). The subject related to Follow Gay Trend by Choose this Hotel is ranked at the agree level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50, S.D. = 1.21).

4.4 The Analytical Results for Hypothesis Testing

Table 5.5: (H1) Brand Image influence Gay Customers Buying Decision.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.728[a]	.529	.497	4.77107

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4764.608	13	366.508	16.101	.000[a]
	Residual	4233.947	186	22.763		
	Total	8998.555	199			

The table 5.5: above indicates a rather mild prediction power for the first hypothesis (H1) that Brand Image (Independent variable) has positively influence on Gay Customers Buying Decision (Dependent variable). The multiple regression test revealed the result of the total gay customers buying decision variance (Adjusted R^2 = 0.497, $p<.05$). The independent variable, Brand Image, meets the requirement of coefficient standard size with the well accepted significant level (df.=13, 186), (Sig = 0.00) so that means the overall regression model is significant. Therefore, the brand image is well accepted for the hypothesis 1 (H1), because of p value is lesser than 0.05 on this point.

The result also have revealed that there are four positively affected variables that found their influences which are; High Quality of Service, Welcoming Ambiance Gay Friendly, Cleanliness of This Hotel, Service Accuracy of This Hotel.

However, he remained variables do not have influence upon Gay Customer Buying Decision at the 0.05 significance level.

By using Correlations command in SPSS it can get deeper result on how these four variables with such degree to influence the Gay Customer Buying Decision (dependent variable) while the others remain haven’t relatively.

Table 5.6: (H2) Brand Image influence Gay Customers Loyalty

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.744[a]	.553	.522*	2.32997

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1251.048	13*	96.234	17.727	.000[a]
	Residual	1009.747	186*	5.429		
	Total	2260.795	199			

*Significant at .05 level

The table 5.6: above indicated the model has rather moderate prediction power 52.20% for the second hypothesis (H2) for this study stated that Brand Image (Independent variable) has positively influenced on Gay Customers Buying Loyalty (Dependent variable). The multiple regression test revealed the result of the total gay customers loyalty variance (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.522$, $p<.05$). The independent variable, Brand Image, meet the requirement of coefficient standard size with the well accept significant level (df.=13, 186), (Sig = 0.00) so that mean, overall regression model is significant. There for, the brand image is well accepted for the hypothesis 2 (H2), because of p value is still lesser than 0.05 in this point.

The result explained there are the most important four variables that have positively effect on dependent Gay Customer Loyalty or independent variables in this case, which are; The Price is Affordable (ß=.186, p=.048), Welcoming Ambiance Gay Friendly (ß=.163, p=.040), Interesting Promotions (ß=-.172, p=.031), Various Products And Services Available (ß=.153, p=.030). The remaining independent

variables (High Quality of Services, Good Location & Environment, Staff with High Competencies of Service, Staff With good Problem Solving Ability, Responsive Service Delivery, Modern Facility WiFi Excellent Interior Decoration, Safety High Level of Security, Service Accuracy of This Hotel, and Cleanliness of This Hotel) do not have influence upon Gay Customer Loyalty at the 0.05 significance level.

By using Correlations command in SPSS it can get deeper result on how these four variables with such degree to influent the Gay Customer Loyalty (dependent variable) while the others remain have no influences.

Table 5.7: (H3) Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customers Buying Decision.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.665[a]	.442	.415*	5.14193

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3975.051	9*	441.672	16.705	.000[a]
	Residual	5023.504	190*	26.439		
	Total	8998.555	199			

*Significant at .05 level

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	11.453	2.387		4.798	.000

(Continued)

Table 5.7 (Continue): (H3) Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customers Buying Decision.

Meet Other Gay People	.576	.554	.089	1.039	.300
Make Me Feel Welcome and Accept accepted by Other Gay Person	.507	.481	.081	1.054	.293
Impress Others	-.120	.487	-.025	-.247	.805
Appear More Elegant and Look Important	1.744	.516	.332	3.381	.001*
Best Opportunity to Search for Partner	.719	.549	.102	1.308	.192
Easy Access to Use the Best Services	.985	.987	.118	.999	.319
Expected High Quality of Service	-.267	.904	-.029	-.295	.768
Timeliness of Service	1.587	.988	.187	1.606	.110
High Responsibility of Staff	.201	.929	.023	.216	.829
a. Dependent Variable: Gay Customers buying decision total result					

*Significant at .05 level

The table 5.7: above indicated rather mild prediction power for the third hypothesis (H3) that Gay Customer Values (Independent variable) has positively influenced on Gay Customers Buying Decision (Dependent variable). The multiple regression test revealed the result of the total gay customers buying decision variance

(Adjusted R^2 = 0.415, p<.05). The independent variable, Gay Customer Values, meet the requirement of coefficient standard size with the well accept significant level (df.=9, 190), (Sig = 0.00) so that mean, overall regression model is significant. There for, the Gay Customer Values is well accepted for the hypothesis 3 (H3), because of p value is lesser than 0.05 in this point.

The result revealed that there is only one positive effected variable that found its influences among all which is; Appear More Elegant and Look Important.

Table 5.8: (H4) Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customer Loyalty

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.627[a]	.393	.364	2.68846

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	887.509	9	98.612	13.643	.000[a]
	Residual	1373.286	190	7.228		
	Total	2260.795	199			

*Significant at .05 level

The table 5.8: above indicated rather low prediction power for the fourth hypothesis (H4) that Gay Customer Values (Independent variable) has positively influenced on Gay Customers Loyalty (Dependent variable). The multiple regression test revealed the result of the total Gay Customer Loyalty variance (Adjusted R^2 = 0.364, p<.05). The independent variable, Gay Customer Values, meet the requirement of coefficient standard size with the well accept significant level (df.=9, 190), (Sig = 0.00) so that mean, overall regression model is significant. There for, the Gay Customer Values is well accepted for the hypothesis 4 (H4), because of the p value is lesser than 0.05 in this point.

The result revealed that there are two positive effected variables that found their influences among all which are; Appear More Elegant and Look Important (.002) and The Timeliness of Service (.021). The remaining independent variables do not have influence upon Gay Customer Loyalty at the 0.05 significance level.

In additional, the author would like to show the relationship multiple relationships of these two independent variables that have an effect on each dependent variable as useful information to the readers.

The Analytical Results for Hypothesis Testing by using Multiple Regression of SPSS Program.

Table 5.9: Brand Image and Gay Customer Values positively influence Gay Customer Buying Decision.

Independent Variable	B	Beta	t	sig.
Brand Image	.525	.485	7.808	.000*
Gay Customer Values	.383	.328	5.281	.000*
Adjust R^2 = .540	df: (2), (197)		F: 118.005	P=.000

Dependent Variable: Gay Customers Buying Decision

*Significant at 0.05, and at 95% Confidence Interval for Beta.

Results in table 1: revealed that the model has a rather moderate prediction power 54.00% (Adjusted R2=0.540, p<0.05) of total Gay Customers Buying Decision. Most important predictor variable is Gay Customer Values (Beta=0.328, p<0.05) which is positively related to Gay Customers Buying Decision. While the Brand Image (Beta=0.485) is also found to be significantly and positively related to Gay Customers Buying Decision. The two independent variables meet the requirement of multicollinearity and are statistically significant. According to H1, and

H2, The Brand Image and Customer Values influence the Gay Customers Buying Decision. Furthermore, results indicated that Gay Customer Values has higher influence than that Brand Image, which mean that gay customers do concern about their self satisfaction interm of their social value and money values when they making decision of choosing the hotel

Table 5.9: Brand Image and Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customer Loyalty

Independent Variable	B	Beta	t	sig.
Brand Image	.698	.571	9.139	.000*
Gay Customer Values	.295	.224	3.586	.000*
Adjust R^2 = .535	df: (2), (197)	F: 115.330	P=.000	
Dependent Variable: Gay Loyalty Customers				

*Significant at 0.05 and at 95% Confidence Interval for Beta.

Results in Table 2: revealed that the model has a rather moderate prediction power 53.50% (Adjusted R2=0.535, $p<0.05$) of total Gay Loyalty Customers variance. Most important predictor variable is Brand Image (Beta=0.571, $p<0.05$) which is positively related to Gay Loyalty Customers. Gay Customer Values (Beta=0.224) is found to be significantly and positively related to Gay Loyalty Customers as well. The two independent variables meet the requirement of multicollinearity and are statistically significant. According to H3 and H4 Brand Image and Gay Customers Values are positively influence Gay Customers Loyalty. Consequently, H3 and H4 are accepted because the two variables have positive influence Gay Customers Loyalty. Furthermore, results indicated that Brand Image is higher influence than Customer Values which is mean that Gay Customers do think about who well known the brand is among the gay society before they decided to become hotel’s loyalty customers.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After a long journey, now it comes to the conclusion of this study. In this final chapter, the author summarizes all the important contents and the valuable results that have been discovered. The author also adds a lengthy discussion that relates to discovered results, which is very useful for future researchers on similar topic.

As the world is now more open about gay and LGBT society, this study of 'The Impact of Brand Image and Customer Value Upon the Buying Decisions and Brand Loyalty of Hotels in the Thai Tourist Industry: A Case Study of the Purchasing Decisions of Gay Men in Thailand metropolitan Districts. This is quantitative research conducted to benefit all entrepreneurs, business investors, owners and marketing planners who specifically target the gay hospitality market segment. In order to gain competitive advantage, adapt marketing plans, and improve the quality of the hotel brand image, the results of this study could be used as a guideline to adapt businesses toward the gay world and suit the tastes of these clients.

More importantly, gay customers themselves may use this study as the map to find their own group and places where most gay men gather when they travel. In addition, the results of this study might be good for parents to understand the unique circumstances of their gay children or family members better.

The purposes of this research were firstly to investigate the satisfaction of people in the gay community with the brand image of hotel accommodations. Secondly, to investigate gay customer values (social value, economic value and

psychological value) that influence their choices of using hotel accommodations. Thirdly, to analyze gay customer buying decisions based on their reasons for selecting hotel accommodation in Thailand. Fourthly, to analyze the impact of brand image and customer values that positively influence gay customer buying decisions and the loyalty of this type of customer.

The conceptual framework of this study is to outline how brand image and customer values could draw the attention of gay traveler's decision on selecting a certain hotel and if they would return in the future. So this framework leads into four hypotheses.

H1. Brand image influences gay customer buying decisions.

H2. Brand image influences gay customer loyalty.

H3. Customer values (money value and social value) influence gay customer buying decisions.

H4. Customer values (money value and social value) influence gay customer loyalty.

Populations for this study are gay males of any nationality who have had experience coming to Thailand for any reason and have previously stayed in a hotel in Thailand. However, because of the difficulty some gay people have coming out of the closet, the author has could realistically only sample 200 persons. By applying the sample size to Taro Yamane's equation which is a universal statistical way of calculating the reliability of a sample size, the author set the confidence level at 95% and the precision level at 5% with the addition for a margin of error as a result. In order to get a clearer statistical result, the author decided to use statistical package (SPSS) as a measurement tool.

The way that the author collected the data was to use a questionnaire, both hard copy and an online version but totally identical. The questionnaire was written in Thai first and then translated into English in order to also get feedback from non-Thai respondents. Then the author tried them out as a pilot study with a small group of gay friends and a professor from Webster University Thailand who is a specialist in this field. The actual survey was conducted in a four month period, and distributed in the most well known gay districts of Thailand metropolitan cities such as: Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Hua-Hin and Chaing Mai based on convenient and accidental methods. In brief, the collected data came from 82 local Thai respondents followed by 14 Dutch, 12 American, 11 British, 10 German, 7 French, 6 Australian and 6 Swedish respondents. Hungarian, Italian and Japanese each provided 4 respondents. Canadian, Indonesian and Irish each provided 3 respondents. Brazilian, Burmese, Indian, Malaysian, Russian, Serbian, Swiss and Vietnamese each provided 2 respondents and finally Chinese, Danish, Egyptian, Greek, Kazakhstanis, Mexican, Nepalese, Nicaraguan, Norwegian, Philippine, South African, Spanish, Taiwanese and Turkish provided 1 respondent each.

The 200 collected completed questionnaires are divided into three parts. On the demographic part (part I), the results were tested by using the Descriptive Statistics Analysis method by using frequency and percentage to explain the demographics of the data

The Likert Scale type of data was used in part II and part III of the questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation value were used to compare the level of possibility of buying decisions and customer loyalty from the sample group. The

Multiple Regression method was used for testing the hypothetical results to match the purposes of this study.

5.1 Conclusion

The collected data from 200 respondents can be summarized as follows:

Part I: The analysis of demographic information of samples.

The majority of respondents are gay men from Thailand and their age ranks between 26-35 years old. They work in the labor/technician field, and their educational level is high school. Their frequency of travel is around two or three times per year.

Part II: Analysis of brand image, customer values, customer's buying behavior and brand loyalty.

To analyze this part, the author uses the average score (mean) to interpret the overall attitude level of gay respondents on each aspect. These consist of five levels; highest level, high level, medium level, low level and lowest level. According to the data of collected samples dealing with Brand Image analysis, the results reveal that the overall feedback of the respondents is ranked on a high level. To briefly summarize the details, there are three topics that ranked on the highest level and these are; Cleanliness of This Hotel (which also ranked at highest mean level), Safety High Level of Security and Service Accuracy of This Hotel. This is followed by those topics that ranked on the high level which include; Responsive Service Delivery, Welcoming Ambiance/Gay Friendly, Various Products and Services Available, Staff with Good Problem Solving Ability, Staff with High Competencies of Service, High Quality of Service, Good Location & Environment, Modern Facilities-WiFi, Excellent Interior Decoration, The Price is Affordable, and Interesting Promotions.

In Customer Values, the analyzed results reveal that the overall attitude of gay respondents is ranked on the high level. To explain further, there are three topics which are ranked on the highest level and these are; Expected High Quality of Service (which also ranked at the highest mean level) Timeliness of Service, and Easy Access to Use the Best Services. There were also three topics which rank on the high level; Best Opportunity to Search for Partner, Make Me Feel Welcome & Accepted by Other Gay Persons and Meet Other Gay people. There are two topics that ranked on the medium level of interpretation; Impress Others and Appear More Elegant & Look Important. These results demonstrate that when it comes to customer values, gay customers do expect a high quality of service in return.

Overall the attitude of gay respondents regarding the dependent variable Gay Customer Buying Decision is ranked at a high level. This can be explained further as follows; the topic relating to Worth the Money is the only one ranked on the highest level of interpretation and with the highest level of mean while the rest of the topics are ranked on the high level of interpretation, and those are; My Own Experiences From Before, I was Recommended by Someone Who has Experiences with This Hotel Before, Choose This Hotel without Any Planning, Investigate the Brand Characteristics, I am Aware of This Hotel Brand Based on Own Knowledge, Consider the Business Social Responsibility, I Knew This Hotel From Advertising, and Follow Gay Trend by Choose This Hotel. So, the result is very clear that gay people do make their buying decisions based on money worth.

Finally on the last issue regarding Gay Customer Brand Loyalty, the results revealed that the overall opinion of respondents ranked at a high level with every topic ranked at the high level, but only the topic of Be Willing to Comeback also has

the highest mean level, followed by, I Would Recommend This Hotel to Friends and Others, Proud to Be Part of Gay Hotel Supporter, and Always Book The Accommodation at This Hotel. This result shows an important highlight; gay people are willing to return to stay at the same hotel and become brand loyalty customers.

Part 3: The analytical results for hypothesis testing.

On the hypothesis 1 (H1), Brand Image influences Gay Customers' Buying Decisions, the results of this study find a great deal of influence between these two. Upon analyzing this relationship in deeper detail, out of thirteen factors (topics), there are only four factors that positively influenced gay customer buying decisions related to Brand Image which are; High Quality of Service, Welcoming Ambiance & Gay Friendly, Cleanliness of This Hotel, and Service Accuracy of This Hotel. However, the remaining factors have no influence upon Gay Customer Buying Decisions. In addition, the results show that Welcoming Ambiance & Gay Friendly is the strongest and most important factor in determining what gay people are looking for, followed by Cleanliness of This Hotel which comes in second. High Quality of Service is the third most important and the Service Accuracy of This Hotel comes in last.

On the hypothesis 2 (H2), Brand Image influences Gay Customer Loyalty shows a similar result demonstrating that there are only four out off fourteen factors which positively influence Gay Customer Loyalty relative to Brand Image. The Price is Affordable comes in as the strongest concern for gay travelers when they pick a place to stay. The remaining factors range in this order, Various Products and Services, Interesting Promotions and Welcoming Ambiance/Gay Friendly. The remaining factors do not significantly influence Gay Customer Loyalty.

The results are similar for hypothesis 3 (H3), Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customers' Buying Decisions. The results here found that there is only one factor out of nine that shows a positive influence and that is Appear More Elegant & Look Important. The eight remaining factors have no significant influence regarding how gay travelers make decisions regarding their hotel based on Gay Customer Values. In deeper detail, the Gay Customer Values is divided into two segments in this study which are Social Value and Money Value as already mentioned in Chapter 2. The results show that gay customers rated their Social Value by how they wanted to be accepted and look important within their society higher than Money Value.

On the hypothesis 4 (H4), Gay Customer Values influence Gay Customer Loyalty. Yet another powerful result is revealed. Out of a total of nine factors in this study, there are only two factors that make a difference or exert a positive influence. These are; Appear More Elegant & Look Important as the biggest concern followed by Timeliness of Service. If the results are based on the strongest score as above, it can be observed that these are similar results to those in hypothesis 3 (H3) regarding Gay Customer Values. Gay customers do make their decisions based on Social Values more than on Money Values, which is something very true about gay society as already mentioned in Chapter 2. Gay men do tend to spend a lot for how they want to be looked at or accepted. However, when it comes to the Gay Customer Loyalty issue, the Timeliness of Service becomes a strong second factor that influences their decision making at this point, but not as strong as wanting to look elegant and look important.

5.2 Discussion

The result of this research on 'The Impact of Brand Image and Customer Value Upon the Buying Decisions and Brand Loyalty of Hotels in the Thai Tourist Industry: A Case Study of the Purchasing Decisions of Gay Men in Thailand Metropolitan Districts' will be discussed in this part based on the purpose of the study and the hypothesis from Chapter 2.

1. Brand Image and Gay Customer's Buying Decisions.

The results show a significant positive influence between these two variables. In Chapter 2, the author gives good examples of prior studies related to the same issue Ormerod (2007) who studied decision making and also wrote his own book called "The Death of Economics" presenting the theory the changeability of the human mind Uptmoor (2014) who studied consumer power vs. brand power, and concluded that to maintain brand power, brands need to adapt to a new environment by taking on a collaborative approach instead a defensive approach or ignoring consumers.

However, the above authors that this study used for references have done a perfect job finding the truth and leaving the further path for this study to add some new information and confirm that these facts remain the same even after two decades specifically among gay customers. Based on the results of this study, as mentioned above, there are four factors that have a positive influence on gay customer's buying decisions which are; Welcoming Ambiance and Gay Friendly is the strongest factor to consider when making a decision, followed by, Cleanliness of This Hotel as the second concerned factor, High Quality of Service as the third most important, and the fourth factor is Service Accuracy of This Hotel. This shows that gay people do look for their comfort zone in a place where they feel welcomed. Gay people like clean

hotels with high quality and accuracy of services from the hotel staff. These four elements from the study results along with the studies of the prior referenced authors can be used for adapting a business plan.

2. Brand Image and Gay Customer Loyalty.

This study has found an important positive influence between brand image and gay customer loyalty which supports the earlier study by Srivastava (2012) who researched the Relationship between Brand Image and Brand Loyalty and concluded in his study that once a company understands their brand characteristics, they can make strategic decisions on how to develop their brand image. This has an effect on a customer's attitude toward the brand and encourages a customer to become a loyalty customer. Then a company can apply this brand image strategy across generic markets in order to gain more loyalty customers. This implies that reputation which is related to strategy selection will also relate to brand performance. Another study by Saeed et al. (2013), these authors studied the Effect of Brand Image on Brand Loyalty and the Role of Customer Satisfaction. They concluded that when customers are satisfied with a brand, it's highly probable that they will recommend it to others and purchase it frequently. Brand loyalty is the commitment of consumers to the brand to purchase it over and over again despite the influence of different marketing efforts of competitors or other brands that may cause switching behavior.

Furthermore, in this study the author carefully tested each variable and explained the results relative to the aspects of brand image. To become loyalty consumers, the biggest concerns for gay people are; Various Products and Services followed by Interesting Promotions, Welcoming Ambiance & Gay Friendly, and The Price is Affordable respectively. These four factors have a significant and positive

influence on gay loyalty. They indicate that gay people behave and/or react toward these aspects of the venue more than anything else when it comes to loyalty issues.

3. Gay Customer Values and Gay Customer's Buying Decisions.

The results demonstrate an important positive influence between gay customer values and gay customer's buying decisions which confirm some early facts from prior research of Parasuraman (1997) who researched 'Reflections on Gaining Competitive Advantage through Customer Values.' In addition, after the author analyzed each variable with reference to Parasuraman's study, the results clearly show that there is only one factor that influences gay buying decisions in these aspects of gay customer values; Appear More Elegant and Look Important. The eight remaining factors which are; Meet Other Gay People, Make Me Feel Welcome and Accepted by Other Gay Persons, Impress Others, Best Opportunity to Search for Partner, Expected High Quality of Service, Timeliness of Service, Easy Access to Use the Best Services, High Responsibility of Staff, had no influence at all on Customer Values.

However, on the Gay Customer Loyalty side, if we connect these two results (this study and Parasuraman's research), they clearly show that the owners of businesses interested in targeting gay customers must understand their customer's perspectives, ideals, and beliefs and at this point their perspective is that they want to appear more elegant and look important within their society (social value). This is a key to success in increase their hotel accommodation sales.

4. Gay Customer Values and Gay Customer Loyalty.

The results of this study show the positive relationship between gay customer values and gay customer loyalty which supports a previous study, "Customer Loyalty in the Hotel Industry; the Role of Customer Satisfaction and

Image" by Jay Kandampully and Dwi Suhartanto. Their study divided Loyalty into three parts; Behavioral Measurement, Attitudinal Measurement and Composite Measurement. Also these two authors stated that there are two very common techniques to convince customers to become loyalty customers which are:

1. Low-cost leadership through price discounting
2. Providing unique benefits to customers.

However, they concluded that service quality is more important than discount on price. For those hotels that attempt to improve their market share by discounting the price, there are some negative impacts for the business in the long run. Low prices don't make one hotel different from another. Obviously, customer satisfaction is more important than anything else. This point fits perfectly and confirms the results of this study. The only two factors that have a positive influence on gay customers to become loyalty customers are; Timeliness of Service, Appear More Elegant and Look Important, while the other seven factors have no influence at all (Meet Other Gay People, Make Me Feel Welcome and Accepted by Other Gay Persons, Impress Others, Best Opportunity to Search for Partner, Expected High Quality of Service, Easy Access to Use the Best Services, High Responsibility of Staff). Furthermore, the author would like to clarify the differences between Expected High Quality of Service and Timeliness of Service as asked in the questionnaire. Gay people don't care what way or how the hotel will deliver their services, but rather when the services will be delivered. After conducting this research, the feedback on the question of Appear Elegant & Look Important among their social class is the second most important issue with regard to customer loyalty. Another two authors continued the same topic of

research, Cronin & Taylor (1992), proved that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on future purchase intentions. We know that gay people expecting a high quality of service and that is the key to adapting a business plan for hotel owners who target this type of customer.

5.3 Managerial Implications.

The fact that the gay population keeps growing means that there are more potential customers with buying power continuing to enter the market. From a business angle, these gay clients are of greatest interest to business owners, investors, entrepreneurs, marketing planners, staff, parents, and even gay men themselves who can use the priceless results of this research to understand how gay customers behave when it comes to hotel accommodation. This information would also deliver some clues to parents who are unclear about their son at home and worry what might go wrong. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, gay people are normal human beings, not people with a disease that can spread from one to another. To gain a competitive advantage in the fast moving world of business, those persons mentioned above must understand how gay customers react and interact among their group. This study clearly shows that the brand image and customer values do have a positive influence on gay men's buying decisions and on their willingness to become loyalty customers. More importantly, this study shows the results from four hypothesis (H1, H2, H3, H4) that the key to success in attracting the attention of gay customers are; High Quality of Services, Welcoming Ambiance & Gay Friendly, Cleanliness of This Hotel, Service Accuracy of This Hotel, Various Products and Services Available, The Price is Affordable, Interesting Promotion, Appear More Elegant and Look Important, Timeliness of Service. These are the keys that matter for those who would like to

unlock the gay market and adapt a business strategy to see what works best for their hotels. After using the above list as a primary guide line, customer after service feedback also is a useful contribution from the customer's side. It will help in rearranging the above list based on what customers need the most.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The research for this study was started in 2014 and completed in 2016 and the main focus has been on how gay people decide or choose their hotel accommodation when they travel to (or within) Thailand. As the times change, the economy changes and the author believes that people's demands also change. In order to differentiate the gay hotel brand image apart from other competitors, provide more competitive advantage by enlarging the market segment to cover gay society and finally to succeed in earning higher profits, the author would like to recommend that future researchers use the results of this study as a guideline.

1. Since this study was conducted during a time in which Thailand has no law supporting gay marriage, therefore the author would like to see future researchers extend their studies toward promoting and eventually legalizing Civil Unions or Same Sex Marriage and then follow up the Pink Dollar buying power with reference to hotel accommodation in the gay niche market.

2. Due to the immigration laws of Thailand which set a limit of time for foreigners allowing them to stay for very short periods, the author is very curious to find out if gay visitors with a high potential of buying power referencing hotel accommodation would raise GDP growth if the Thai government would extend their stay. Obviously, the longer gay tourists stay the more they spend. If this proves to be true, the large income from foreigner's pink dollars is of great benefit of Thailand.

3. At the very beginning of this study the author intended to survey LGBT buying power with regard to hotel accommodation, however it became clear that the topic must be minimized and limited to gay men only. Gay men are included in LGBT society but they have very different needs with regard to their physical and mental comfort. Lesbian and transgender customers might be an interesting target group to focus on for future study.

4. The results of this study came from respondents from many cultures and countries, but the venue was limited only to Thailand. The author would like to recommend that future researchers expand their studies to other countries attractive to gay visitors and compare the results showing where most pink dollars are spent on hotel accommodations and why. Perhaps Thailand could learn from those successes especially from countries that have supported gay equal rights from three decades ago.

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APPENDIX

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GAY CUSTOMERS BUYING DECISION SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to gather valuable information for my thesis on gay men buying behavior. This survey is anonymous. No personally identifiable information is requested nor desired.Unless otherwise stated, select only one response per question. Thank you for your kind assistance.

Hatsadee Wangpimoon BA, MBA Candidate Bangkok University.

* Required

1. Document of agreement: I hereby confirm that I am willing to answer these following questions without any enforcement. *

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Demographic Information:

This section of the survey collects basic information about you that is used to analyze responses received. The more accurately you answer these questions, the more accurate the research will be.

2. Your Nationality? * ☐

3. Place of residence (Province and Country)*

☐

4. Age? *

Check all that apply.

☐ 18-25 years old

☐ 26-35 years old

☐ 36-45 years old

☐ 46-55 years old

☐ Over 55 years old

5. Occupation?

Choose the field that most closely identifies your primary occupation.

Check all that apply.

☐ Professional / Office

☐ Manager / Executive

☐ Technology / IT.

☐ Sale / Marketing

☐ Medical

☐ Legal

☐ Education / Academic

☐ Government

☐ Labor / Technician

☐ Business owners

☐ Student

☐ Retired

☐ Other:

6. Education?

Check all that apply.

☐ Primary School

☐ High School

☐ Associate Degree

☐ Bachelor Degree

☐ Master Degree

☐ Doctorate

☐ Other:

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Travel Activities, Attitudes, and Behaviors:

The following questions relate to your frequency of visiting Thailand (or inside Thailand itself for those who live in Thailand). For the purposes of these questions, "travel" is defined as a trip of more than150 miles (or 200 kilometers) from your primary residence. You may travel to that destination by car, bus, train, airplane, or any other method of transportation.

7. On average, how many times a year do you visit Thailand and stay in the hotel in Thailand?

Check all that apply.

☐ Less than 1 time

☐ 1 time

☐ 2 or 3 times

☐ 4 to 5 times

☐ More than 5 times

Gay Customer Value (Social Value & Money Value)

The following questions concern your preferences related to your social values and money values after you have stayed at the hotel mentioned from previous question. How would you describe your experience? What do you expect from using this particular hotel brand?

8. I chose this hotel because it gave me the opportunities of meeting other gay people. Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

9. This hotel makes me feel welcome and accepted by other gay persons.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

10. I impressed others whenever I chose to stay with this gay friendly hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

11. Stayed with this hotel make me appeared more elegant and looked important. Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. This is the best opportunity to search for life Partner (Mr. Right).

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

What do you expect after paying money at this gay or gay friendly hotel.

13. I do expect for high quality of services.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

14. I do expect good timeliness of services.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

15. Easy access to use the best services / Excellent communication, website, online reservation etc.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

16. I expect high responsibility of staff. *

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Brand Image: *What do you know about this particular hotel and its brand?*

17. There are various products and services available at this hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

18. This hotel has high quality of services.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

19. The price is affordable.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

20. Good location and environment

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

21. This hotel offers interesting promotions.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

22. Staff with high competencies of services

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

23. Staff with good problem solving ability.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

24. Responsive service delivery (quick and efficient).

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

25. Modern facilities & WiFi / Excellent Interior decoration

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

26. Welcoming ambiance (Gay Friendly).

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

27. This hotel provides safety & high level of security.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

28. The cleanliness of this hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

29. Service accuracy of the hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Brand Loyalty:

As it relates to your decision to use this hotel accommodation, choose how strongly you either agree or disagree with the following statements.

30. Always book the accommodations at this particular hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

31. I would recommend this hotel to friends and others.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

32. I am so proud to be part of gay hotel supporter by being their customer.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

33. I am willing to comeback and stay at this hotel again.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Buying Behavior: (Decision making)

As it relates to making a decision to use this hotel accommodations, please choose how strongly you either agree or disagree with the following statements.

34. I decide to choose this hotel without any planning.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

35. I was recommended by someone who has experience with this hotel before.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

36. I actually have my own experiences or stayed there before.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

37. I am aware of this hotel brand base on my knowledge.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

38. I knew this hotel and its brand from advertising and media.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

39. I would consider stay if the hotel is social responsible.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

40. I believe in the brand and its character for what I will get in return without any doubt.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

41. I follow the gay trends by choose to stay at this hotel.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

42. I think the accommodation is worth the money that I am about to pay for.

Mark only one check box.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

BIODATA

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