Factors Affecting Consumer-Initiated Online Brand Community

Commitment and Brand Loyalty:

Case Study of www.yaris-club.net

Naphajira Sangjindavong

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FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER-INITIATED ONLINE BRAND COMMUNITY

COMMITMENT AND BRAND LOYALTY: CASE STUDY OF www.yaris-club.net (37 pp.)

Independent of Study: Wuthichai Sittimalakorn, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken with the objectives: (1) to examine the factors that affecting the

community commitment of members of consumer-initiated online brand community, focusing on

members of yaris-club.net; (2) to examine whether community commitment of members of yaris-

club.net affect their loyalty toward Yaris car.

This research analysis is based on qualified 400 questionnaires that were collected from members

of yaris-club.net through email and Google docs.

Implications of the result suggests that interaction and reward for activities have positively effect

on community commitment of yaris-club.net members, while another two characteristics (quality

of information and quality of system) have no positive effect on community commitment of yaris-

club.net members. This research also presented that high community commitment lead to brand

loyalty.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

The continuously development of internet has led to various types of online communication. People can express themselves and share their information with others. This benefits consumers in easily achieving required or useful information from the internet without searching from tradition off-line sources. This phenomenon has brought to emerging of many kinds of online brand communities (Jang et al., 2008).

Statement of Problem

Jung et al. (2009) has suggested that online brand community commitment has effects on community members' intention to continue their participation, collaboration of brand production and other brand's word-of-mouth activities.

The consumer-initiated online brand community, according to Jang et at. (2008), can effects other consumers in terms of information, experiences, advantages and disadvantages of particular products without concern of affecting other consumers' attitude and behavior toward that particular products. The study of McAlexander et al. (2003) as cited in Zhang (2008) suggested that "the possible outcome from a brand community is always increasing brand loyalty as consumers act as brand advocates" McAlexander et al. (2003) suggested that an online brand community can affects consumer loyalty. Thus, understanding of factors that have effects on consumer-initiated online community commitment will help the companies who run brands to understand how to encourage consumers' brand loyalty in order to build up the brand's business.

Objective of Study

According to problems stated above, the objectives of this study are;

1. To examine how characters of consumer-initiated online brand community effect the community commitment of www.yaris-club.net

2. To examine how characters of consumer-initiated online brand community effect on the brand loyalty of www.yaris-club.net members

Scope of Study

The main variables of this study are measured by Jang et al. (2008) which is adapted to fit the case. The variables in this study include information quality, system quality, interaction, and reward that may effect community commitment, including effect of community commitment on brand loyalty.

Community type variable was removed as this study focuses only on consumer-initiated type of online brand community, which in this case, is www.yaris-club.net. The findings of this study cannot be generalized beyond the mentioned above.

Major Research Questions

The discussion and objective mentioned above have led to the following research questions;

1. Do information quality, system quality, interaction, and reward of www.yaris-club.net have effect on its members' community commitment?

2. Does community commitment of members of www.yaris-club.net have effect on their brand loyalty to Yaris model?

Assumptions

The assumptions of this study are as follows;

1. Characteristics of a consumer-initiated online brand community, which is www.yaris-club.net in this study, have effect on members' commitment to this community.

2. Level of members' commitment to www.yaris-club.net has effect on the members' loyalty to brand loyalty, which is Yaris model in this case.

Significance of the Study

As suggested by Jang et al. on effect of consumer-initiated online brand community to the product (2008), it is because of limitation of detailed information and specification of the products each member has, and due to uncontrollable information sharing, then, a consumer-initiated online brand community tends to provides negative effect to the brand.

Developing insight understanding of factors which have effect on consumer-initiated online brand community commitment and brand loyalty is benefited for managers who in charge of brand management in term of considering negative effect prevention and positive effect encouragement of consumer-initiated online brand community to the brand.

Limitations of Research

As this study focuses only on consumer-initiated type of online brand community, which in this case, is www.yaris-club.net. The findings of this study cannot be generalized beyond the scope of study mentioned above.

Definition of Terms

A Brand

Kotler (1991) viewed a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors"

Online Community

Hagel and Armstrong (1997) stated that an online community is a consolidation of people who have same interest and these people communicate using electronics media such as chat rooms, internet user groups or any other computer-based mechanism.

Online Brand Community

According to Muniz et al. (2000), an online brand community refers to "a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand".

Consumer-Initiated Online Brand Community

Referred to Jang et al (2008), a consumer-initiated online brand community is an online brand community that voluntarily built and managed by the community members.

Online Community Commitment

Walther (1996), as cited in Kim et al. (2008), suggested that "online communities exhibit stronger social ties and greater mutually beneficial relationships than both brand and consumption communities. These interpersonal ties influence members to commit to community goals"

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty, referred to Farrell & Hartline (2008), is "a positive attitude toward a brand that causes customers to have a consistent preference for that brand over all other competing brands in a product category"
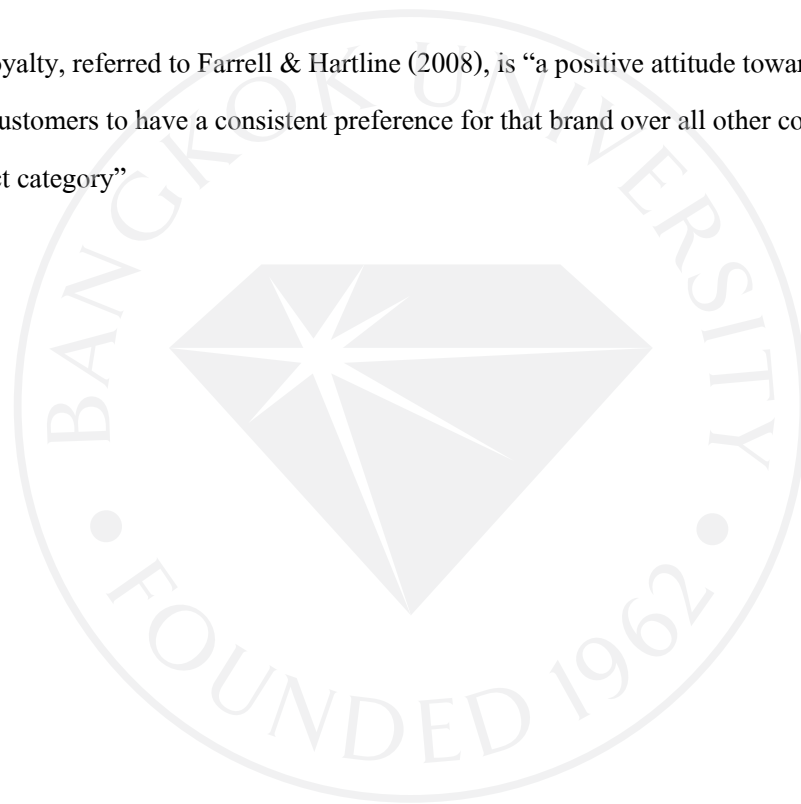
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of existing literature on online community, brand community, online brand community, consumer-initiated online brand community, commitment, and loyalty. The relationship between community characters and community commitment, and relationship between consumer-initiated online brand community commitment and brand loyalty are presented.

Related Literature and Previous Study

Community

According to Hillery (1955), community consists of three major factors, which are locality, social interaction, and bond. Locality is a region the community base on and that different from other communities. Social interaction is the way community members communicate and build relationship among them. Bond refers to result of sense of belonging and feeling of comfort that each member gives to other members in the community (Sampson, 1991).

Etzioni and Etzioni (1999) suggested that there are two attributes of a community, which are, members' affect-laden relationships, and commitment to a shared historical identity, meaning, and a set of shared value. The three elements of community as stated by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) are, first, an intrinsic connection which community members feel different compared to others who are not in the same community, second, the existing of shared traditions and rituals that continuously exist represented in the community's culture and consciousness, and third, a

sense of responsibility, moral, and obligation to other members in the community and to the community entirely. Deci & Ryan (1985) as cited in Shen and Khalifa (2008), suggested that "community participation has been considered as a goal-oriented behavior that can be explained by motivational theory".

Pavlin (2006) suggested 5 factors of a community, which are, relationships between the community members both personally and institutionally, members' interaction, the gradual and continuously development of individual identities and collective identities, the community atmosphere, and space for meeting which can be physical space or virtual space. Rothaermel and Sugiyama (2001), as cited in Jang et al. (2008), in brief, defined a community as "an organization of individuals or small groups that have an intention to get together and a sense of mutual responsibility"

Online Community

Conversations through bulletin board, newsgroups, or other form of communication imitatively created to replace some characters of face-to-face communication (McWilliams, 2000). Baalen et al. (2005) viewed online community as a social network which knowledge is shared and collaboration is supported through electronic network. It is also a structure of social exchange by its members' self define of how the network will be manipulated and how they interaction using resources that flow among members. Wasko and Farai (2000) suggested that people have joined a social network with different reasons and motivation. As suggested by Subramani and Peddibhotla (2003), reasons of people's motivation for online participation are they want to do useful things for others and people do this to each other back and forth.

According to Kozinets (2002), online communities are important to marketing strategy development because online communities crated around consumption topics that are interested by consumers, for example, entertainment, beauty, leisure, and others.

From a marketing standpoint, online communities have three important implications for the development of marketing strategy. Online communities formed around consumption-related topics such as leisure, entertainment, beauty, and nurture are thought of as important sources of information for marketing research (Kozinets, 2002).

Face-to-face meeting and other forms of off-line interaction may promote the strength of cohesion among community members (Fulk et al., 1990). Referred to Koh et al. (2007), in the social presence theory, activities in online community can be influenced by existing of cohesion among community members in form of off-line interaction, which play an important role in helping online community members in their understanding each others, promote trust, and make activities in online community more intense. Continuously and actively contribution of community members considered as one of important factors for online community success (Leimeister et al., 2004).

Brand Community and Online Brand Community

Kim et al. (2008) defined a community that organized and run around a particular product or brand as a brand community, for example, Harley motorcycle club). A brand community starts by the brand itself, and further developed by enhancing relationship among the brand's members who are interested in that brand (Jang et al 2008). According to Anderson (2005), not only provide the company another channel for communication, brand community also provides possibility to establish connection between the company and its customers.

Online brand community, as viewed by McWilliams (2000) is a virtual community that provides benefits to those who wants to get advantage and also suggested that a company can create strong relationship with its customers using online communities for its brands, both directly and indirectly hosting.

Jang et al (2008) stated that, briefly, online brand communities, by considering people who host them, can be divided into two types. First is consumer-initiated community which founded and manipulated by voluntary members of the community. Second is company-initiated community

which is created by a company who owns a particular brand, aimed at developing relationship between the brand and its customers and try to maintain its customer base. By considering the way of founding and relationship between the online brand community and it member, Constance (2004) suggested in the same way as Jang, that is, online brand community can be grouped into member-initiated communities, and organization-sponsored communities.

Consumer-Initiated online brand community

Jang et al (2008) suggested that consumer-initiated online brand community, which established by customers, established around the admired brand, has benefits in terms of providing useful information of a particular product or brand, customer experiences, including advantages and disadvantages of the brand or products without intention to persuading other consumers to buy that products. While considering detail specifications of the product, this type of online brand may be limited to provide such information due to limitation of information sources, while compared to another type; company-initiated online brand community, this type of community can provides more information in detailed to its customers. On the other hand, since this type of community is manipulated by a company, thus negative opinion or undesired information such as disadvantages of the product, and negative experiences of customers are tend to be prevented.

Community Commitment

By definition of Bettencourt (1997), community commitment is the edge of psychological attachment of community members to an online community and the value they put on that relationship. Moorman et al. (1992) defined commitment as the "enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship" but Berry and Parasuraman (1991) argued that relationship, instead, based on the developing of "mutual commitment". As stated by Kim et al (2008), "One direct outcome of the social interaction and communication among community members is the development of a common language, the establishment of community structure and status relationships, and the development of commitment to members of the community". In developing on-going long-term relationship, commitment is needed condition (Berry and Parasumaran, 1991). So, in order to

make existing of online community, the community members have to commit to that online community (Kim et al., 2008).

Brauer et al. (1995) suggested that the important thing in order to create community commitment is that the community needs to communicate to its members continuously and needs to share common beliefs repeatedly, these cause attitudes and behaviors consistence among community members. According to Kozinets (1999), attempt of community leaders in order to change the way others think will ensure community conformity and their expression as supporter of that shared interest will lead members of community to adapt their preference and behavior.

From a study of Kim et al. (2008), findings pointed that, some specific characters of online community play important roles in developing online community commitment. The study also revealed that community commitment "does not necessarily require commitment to a brand". Shankar et al. (2003) suggested that community members who strongly committed to the community tend to have interaction with other members as the way of sharing values and goals of the community. Community members' self extensive with other members in the community leads to development of confidence and trust and as a result, causes community commitment and relationship in long run.

Information Quality

Shih and Fang (2006) suggested that information quality is an attribute of network quality. They also stated that "Since the Internet has become a major area for marketing and transactions, individuals would expect accuracy in the information they receive on the Internet". Zhang (2008) suggested that information quality is more important in online brand community compared to other normal type of community because of in forming of online brand community is based on "the communal admiration of the brand and members' expectation are clear to gain more knowledge about the brand or the consumption activity".

System Quality

Lee and Kim (2005) defined system quality as convenience of searching and speed of searching for information in a community. Lin and Lee (2006) suggested that system quality is one of important predators of user's intention and satisfaction in using online community. When system quality is improved, then members' intention to use that online community will increase and members' satisfaction in using that online community will increase as well.

Interaction

Jang et al (2008) suggested that "interactivity involves the degree of information exchange among community members and between community members and the host of the community". McWilliam (2000) stated that when people interact freely in an online brand community, more of their interaction, then stronger in their community bond. However, people's non-face interaction may found attractive to some, while it may found unattractive to others. McWilliam also referred to a study made in Stanford University which reported that "all interaction with computers is rich in its ability to convey personality, because users essentially treat computers as social actors". McConnell (2000) as cited in Browne (2003), stated that "intimacy and emotion are key components in online discussion (p. 87) and identifies different patterns of interaction in dialogues between male and female participants in electronically mediated groups".

Reward

Sheth and Atul (1995) defined reward as monetary or psychological provided to an individual for that individual's action. Harter (1981) noted that there are two kinds of reward; intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic reward refers to reward for "task performance for its own sake", while extrinsic reward refers to "reward that the task is a means to an end for an extrinsic reward".

Brand Loyalty

Oliver (1999) defined brand loyalty as "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronise a preferred product/service consistently in the future". According to Elena & Jose (2001), loyalty can be considered as "one of the ways in which a consumer expresses his/her satisfaction with the performance of a product or service". Companies benefit from brand loyalty in terms of (1) create barrier to enter for competitors, (2) enhance the firm's ability to survive among competitive threats, (3) getting more sale revenue, and (4) marketing efforts of competitors tend to have less effect to the firm's customers.

Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) suggested that "strong brand community can lead to a socially embedded and entrenched loyalty, brand commitment". Reichheld and Schefter (2000), as cited in Zhang (2008) suggested that "brand community is a good way to engage with customers and create brand loyalty". According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), "commitment may favor the development of brand loyalty".

Worthington et al. (2010), explained three dimensions of loyalty, that are, cognitive loyalty (I think), emotional loyalty (I feel), and Behavioral loyalty (I do). Loyalty can be viewed as "attitudinal or behavioral". Russell-Bennett et al. (2007) suggested that attitudinal brand loyalty is "consumer psychological commitment to repurchasing the brand, whereas behavioral brand loyalty is concerned with the action of repurchase.

According to Kim et al. (2008), brand commitment is influenced by online community commitment. A study of Kim et al. (2008) also suggested that, comparing between community members who are brand users with community members who are not brand users, even though those who are not the brand users are still favor the brand.

Hypothesises

The hypothesises of this study are as follows;

H1. Characteristics of a consumer-initiated online brand community positively affect consumer-initiated online brand community commitment.

> H1-1.   Higher quality of information in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment.

> H1-2.   Higher quality of system in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment.

> H1-3.   Higher level of interaction in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment.

> H1-4.   Higher level of reward in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment.

H2. Higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment leads to higher brand loyalty.

According to definitions of variables shown in the hypothesizes in this study, based on previous studies of Lee et al. (2005), Zeithaml et al. (1996), McWilliam (2000), Muniz and O'Guinn (2001), and Sheth and Atul (1995), as cited in Jang et al. (2008), information quality refers to "quality of information provided through the community" and system quality is defined as "speedy and convenient search for information in the community". Level of interaction refers to "degree of information exchange among community members and between community members and the host of the community", while level of reward is viewed as "the degree of monetary or psychological reward for proactive members in the brand community". Online brand community commitment refers to "strong and positive feelings among members toward the community".

Brand loyalty, as suggested by Farrell and Hartline (2008), is defined as "a positive attitude toward a brand that causes customers to have a consistence preference for that brand over all other competing brands in a product category".

Theoretical Framework

The framework of this study shown as follows;

Figure 2.1: Theoretical framework
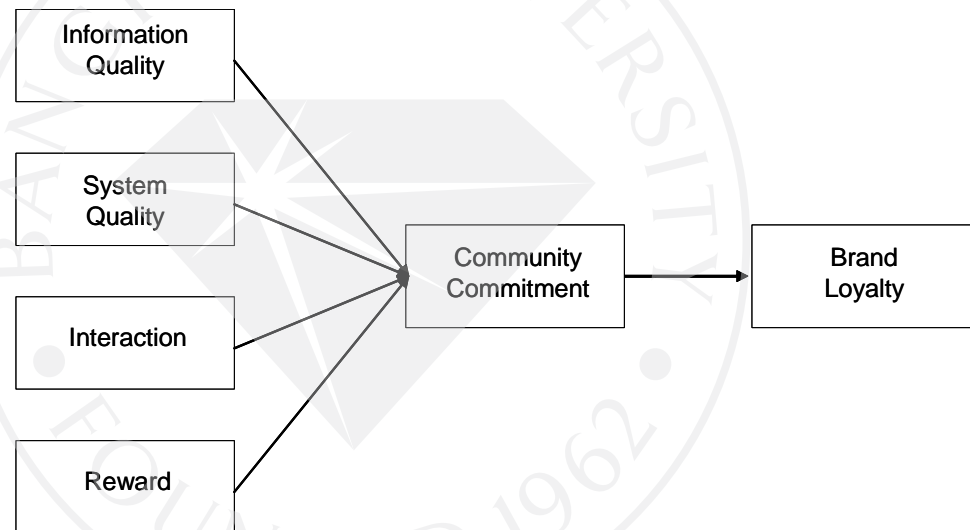
Adapted from Jang et al. (2008)

Chapter 3

Methodology

The previous chapters introduced about the literature review and previous findings of community, online community, brand community and online brand community, consumer-initiated online brand community, community commitment, and brand loyalty. In this chapter, the research design and methodology are presented. The population and sample selection, the research instrument, the instrument pretest, the procedure of data collection, and the summary of demographic data will be provided.

Research Design

The research design uses in this study is analytic cross-sectional survey at a given period of time, in order to study the influence of variables toward the expected outcome of the study among the reference population. This research occurs in April 2010 (18 days for data collection period). The respondents will be asked to respond to the questions in the context of their behavior, experiences, and attitude toward the website and the brand.

Population and Sample Selection

Reference population in this study is Thai citizen members of the website (www.yaris-club.net), which include both active members (members who visit the website in last six-month period before data collection) and inactive member (members who did not visit the website in last six-month period before data collection). As of end February 28th, 2010, www.yaris-club.net has registered 24,764 members. A sample size of 400 is predicted at a statistically confidence level at 95%, referred to published determine sample size table by Yamane (1967) as cited in Israel (2009) as illustrated in table 3.1.

Table 3.1   Sample size for ±3%, ±5%, ±7% and ±10% Precision Levels

Where Confidence Level is 95% and P=.5

Size of Population	Sample Size (n) for Precision (e) of:			
	±3%	±5%	±7%	±10%
500	a	222	145	83
600	a	240	152	86
700	a	255	158	88
800	a	267	163	89
900	a	277	166	90
1,000	a	286	169	91
2,000	714	333	185	95
3,000	811	353	191	97
4,000	870	364	194	98
5,000	909	370	196	98
6,000	938	375	197	98
7,000	959	378	198	99
8,000	976	381	199	99
9,000	989	383	200	99
10,000	1,000	385	200	99
15,000	1,034	390	201	99
20,000	1,053	392	204	100
25,000	1,064	394	204	100
50,000	1,087	397	204	100
100,000	1,099	398	204	100
>100,000	1,111	400	204	100

This study uses systematic sampling, that is, selects members who register number of 20th, 40th, 80th, 100th, until 24,760[th]. Total number of selected members for sending questionnaire is 1,238 persons.

Research Instrument

This research uses the questionnaire data to describe community's members' experiences, attitude toward the website, and attitude toward the brand. The questionnaire is divided into three parts as follows:

Demographic and socioeconomic data, which assessed based on the respondent's gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, personal monthly income, and respondent's experience in using internet.

Respondent's behavioral data, which is assessed based on the respondent's behavior in visiting frequency to the website, duration of each visiting to the website, timing in visiting the website, website membership, and purpose of use of the website.

Respondent's experience and attitude toward the website, asking the respondents to report their overall satisfaction in visiting the website and attitude toward the website using Likert Scale. This part contained sixteen items, where five-point scale accompanied each item.

Instrument Pretest

Before collecting data in this study, the first version of 30 questionnaires were sent via email to website contributors, writers, administrator team, and some members of www.yaris-club.net in order to get feedback and examine the reliability and validity of the instrument. Furthermore, the understanding of vocabulary, statements, and wordings were tested to simplicity in the general internet users' mindset. The researcher used SPSS for Windows version 16 in order to analyze Cronbach's Alpha or reliability index of the instrument, which is the questionnaire. The Croncach's Alpha that higher than 0.7 is acceptable. The result of the first version of questionnaire pretest is as shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.2   Reliability of questionnaire (Cronbach's Alpha)

	Cronbach's Alpha Score
Information Quality	0.78
System Quality	0.89
Interaction	0.75
Reward for activities	0.76
Community commitment	0.81
Brand loyalty	0.83

Source: Field research and data analysis results, 2010

Even though the pretest revealed acceptable level of reliability, but the validity of the questionnaire was also considered. Thus, correction of words, phrases, and right understanding to the questionnaire, including the convenience for respondents was made according to suggestions from website contributors, writers, administrator team, and some members of yaris-club.net, and then resulted in high reliability and validity level of questionnaire for this study.

Data Collection Procedure

With kindness and assistance of the website founder and owner, Mr. Thaya Pounnavatr, questionnaire was sent to list selected website's member email addresses. The survey objectives and guidelines were also posted on www.yaris-club.net. Out of 1,238 questionnaires sent; it took 18 days for gathering 400 respondents using convenience sample by e-mail. After receiving 400 respondents, the rest respondents came afterward were ignored.

Each answer will be rechecked and verified by conditions prior set in "Google docs" where the researcher posted the questionnaire on. This study does not determine the "Yaris" ownership of the respondents.

Summary of Demographic Data

The first of this analysis focuses on personal data of web's members. Table 3.3 shows the profile of the respondents. Table 3.2 shows that about 84.5% of the respondents are male which may suggest that this segment has been tapped by yaris-club.net. the result shows that about 49.25% of yaris-club.net were in age group of 26-33 year, mostly are single. Majority of them have Bachelor degree. Around half of them or 54.25% are in private sector and 35% of them earn 10,001 – 20,000 Baht per month.

Table 3.3 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Summary

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	338	84.50
Female	62	15.50
Total	400	100.00
Age (years)	**Frequency**	**Percent**
< 18	0	0.00
18-25	91	22.75
26-33	197	49.25
34-41	101	25.25
> 42	11	2.75
Total	400	100.00
Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Single	311	77.75
Married	89	22.25
Separated	0	0.00
Total	400	100.00
Education	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Grade 9	5	1.25
High School or equal	53	13.25
High Diploma	0	0.00
Bachelor	310	77.50
Master	32	8.00
Total	400	100.00
Occupation	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Business Owner	101	25.25
Students	25	6.25
Private Employee	217	54.25
Government Employee	28	7.00
Others	29	7.25
Total	400	100.00
Income (Baht per month)	**Frequency**	**Percent**
< 10,000	3	0.75
10,001 – 20,000	140	35.00
20,001 – 30,000	83	20.75
30,001 – 40,000	72	18.00
40,001 – 50,000	26	6.50
> 50,001	76	19.00
Total	400	100.00

Source: Field research and data analysis results, 2010

The respondents' internet using experience and behavior in visiting yaris-club.net show in table 3.4 which majority of the respondents have 5-10 years experience in internet surfing or 41%. Most of them or 70% has been visit yaris-club.net daily and spend around 15-30 minutes in yaris-club.net. 49.75% of the respondents visit the website at night, 8 pm – 0 am. The majority of them or 60% visit yaris-club.net for information searching.

Table 3.4 Descriptive Statistics of Internet Using Experience and Behavior

Internet Using Experience (year)	Frequency	Percent
< 1	0	0.00
1-3	19	4.75
3-5	79	19.75
5-10	164	41.00
> 10	138	34.50
Total	400	100.00
Average Frequency of visiting www.yaris-club.net	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Daily	283	70.75
1-5 times per week	65	16.25
1 time per week	13	3.25
1-2 times per month	17	4.25
Once every 2 months	1	0.25
Less than 5 times per year	21	5.25
Total	400	100.00
Average Duration of visiting www.yaris-club.net	**Frequency**	**Percent**
< 15 minutes	3	0.75
15-30 minutes	150	37.50
30 minutes – 1 hour	97	24.25
1-2 hours	91	22.75
3-4 hours	15	3.75
> 4 hours	44	11.00
Total	400	100.00
Period of time of visiting www.yaris-club.net	**Frequency**	**Percent**
08.01am - 12.00 pm	52	13.00
00.01 pm - 04.00 pm	50	12.50
04.01 pm - 08.00 pm	48	12.00
08.01 pm - 00.00 am	99	49.75
00.01 am - 04.00 am	51	12.75
04.01am - 08.00 am	0	0.00
Total	300	100.00
Major Purpose of Visiting www.yaris-club.net	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Information searching	240	60.00
Chatroom	114	28.50
Link to other websites	0	0.00
Posting questions / answers	39	9.75
PR for goods / services	0	0.00
Others	7	1.75
Total	400	100.00

Source: Field research and data analysis results, 2010

Chapter 4

Findings

The sampling units used in this study were 400 members of www.yaris-club.net. This research was conducted in April 2010. The data was collected using email and Google docs as medium. The model of this research was based on and adapted from a previous study in South Korea of Jang et al. (2008). Hypothesis 1 focused on the relationship between 4 characters of online community and online brand community commitment. Hypothesis 2 tested on the relationship between community commitment and brand loyalty.

Findings of the Study

Factor Analysis

Table 4.1 below describes factor analysis of studied variables. In component analysis, the researcher found that value of the components is less than 0.7, while Eigen values are above 1.0 in every factor. This result presents that this factors analysis can well indicates variance of the group variable in every factor. Moreover, factor 1 can indicates 14.478% variance of group variable, factor 2 indicates 9.471% variance of group variable, factor 3 indicates 9.311% variance of group variable, and factor 4 indicates 8.646. In total, factor 1, 2, 3, and 4 indicate 41.907% variance of group variable. Factor 5 indicates 23.226% variance of group variable, factor 6 indicates 14.859% variance of group variable. In total, factor 5 and 6 indicate 38.085% variance of group variable.

Table 4.1 Factor Analysis of Studied Variables

Scale Item	Component			
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Quality of Information 1	0.302	-0.541	0.277	-0.243
Quality of Information 2	0.344	-0.253	-0.174	0.545
Quality of Information 3	0.378	-0.318	0.13	0.07
Quality of Information 4	0.276	0.371	0.26	0.426
Reward for Activity 1	0.477	0.487	-0.452	-0.117
Reward for Activity 2	0.516	0.432	-0.498	-0.317
Reward for Activity 3	0.543	-0.381	-0.353	0.358
Interaction 1	0.459	-0.269	0.089	0.197
Interaction 2	0.376	0.23	0.281	-0.374
Interaction 3	0.461	-0.21	0.008	-0.105
Quality of System 1	0.391	0.239	-0.082	0.296
Quality of System 2	0.331	0.177	0.295	-0.402
Quality of System 3	0.274	0.366	0.511	0.162
Elgen value	1.882	1.231	1.21	1.124
% of Variance	14.478	9.471	9.311	8.646
Cumulative %	14.478	23.949	33.26	41.907

Table 4.1 Factor Analysis of Studied Variables (continued)

Scale Item	Component	
	Factor 5	Factor 6
Community Commitment 1	0.55	0.347
Community Commitment 2	0.487	0.553
Community Commitment 3	0.55	-0.351
Community Commitment 4	0.491	-0.529
Community Commitment 5	0.449	0.236
Brand Loyaity 1	0.337	0.166
Brand Loyaity 2	0.477	-0.356
Elgen value	1.626	1.04
% of Variance	23.226	14.859
Cumulative %	23.226	38.085

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2 is an analyzing of relationship of 4 independent variables, that are, quality of information, quality of system, level of interaction, and reward for activity, the condition of this analysis is each independent variable must not show high relationship among them in order to avoid multicollinearity. The relationship between each pair of independent variable should not higher than 0.75 (Lomax, 1992). From analyzing for Pearson correlation coefficient between each pair of independent variable, no pair of independent variable that indicates correlation coefficient higher than 0.75, thus the researcher can use regression analysis without multicollinearity problem.

In considering relationship of each variable, the researcher found that there is no significant statistical relationship between brand loyalty and three of independent variables, which are, quality of information, quality of system, and interaction, while some of pairs show significant statistical relationship at 0.05.

Table 4.2 Correlation Analysis

	M	SD	Quality of Information	Quality of System	Interaction	Reward for Activity	Community Commitment
Quality of Information	3.956	1.668					
Quality of System	3.725	1.823	.120*				
Interaction	4.076	1.443	.255**	.176*			
Reward for Activity	3.667	1.679	.156**	.102*	.196**		
Community Commitment	4.239	2.229	.109*	.179**	.167**	.285**	
Brand Loyalty	3.973	1.418	0.097	0.035	0.064	.180**	.214**

$* p < 0.05, \quad ** p < 0.01$

Regression Analysis

From the regression analysis between four independent variables, which are quality of information, quality of system, interaction, and reward for activity, and the dependent variable, which is community commitment, the researcher found that two of independent variables (quality of information and quality of system) have no significant statistical relationship with community commitment. The statistical analysis shows low beta value of 0.032 and 0.086 for quality of information and quality of system respectively.

Two of independent variables, which are interaction and reward for activity have significant relationship at level of .01 with community commitment, that is, higher respondents' score of interaction and reward, then higher level of commitment. On the other hand, for respondents who reflected lower score of interaction and reward, then lower level of commitment. When consider beta that identify relationship between each independent variable and community commitment, the researcher found that interaction indicates beta value of 13.4%, and reward for activity indicates beta value at 24.9%.

Table 4.3 Regression Analysis

Regression Model Suitability			Coefficient		
R	R^2	F	Independent Variables	B	t
0.336	0.113	12.552 (0.000)	Quality of Information	0.032	0.638
			Quality of System	0.086	1.715
			Interaction	0.134**	2.772
			Reward for Activity	0.249**	5.118

** $p < 0.01$

The relationship between community commitment and brand loyalty shows in table 4.4.
Regression analysis reveals that both variables have significant statistical relationship at 0.01, that
is, for those respondents who pointed high level of community commitment are also presented
high level of brand loyalty. The beta value indicates 21.4% relationship with brand loyalty.

Table 4.4 Regression Analysis between Brand Loyalty and Community Commitment

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	B	t	R	F
Brand Loyaity	Community Commitment	0.214	29.809	0.214	19.123**

** $p < 0.01$
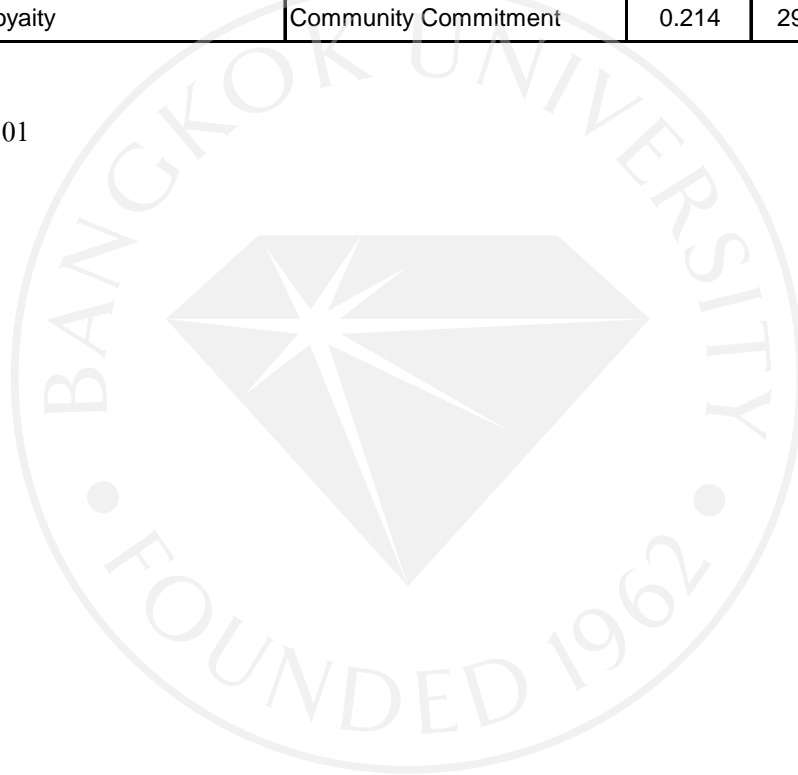
Results of the Hypothesis Testing

The result of this dissertation shows in regression analysis above (table 4.3, and 4.4). Thus, in hypothesis testing, it can be concluded in the table 4.5 as follows;

Table 4.5 Result of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Descriptive	Result
H1-1	Higher quality of information in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment	Reject
H1-2	Higher quality of system in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment	Reject
H1-3	Higher level of interaction in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment	Accept
H1-4	Higher level of reward in a consumer-initiated online brand community leads to higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment	Accept
H2	Higher consumer-initiated online brand community commitment leads to higher brand loyalty	Accept

Source: Field research and data analysis results, 2010

Conclusion

The result of this dissertation shows that there are two independent variables, which are interaction, and reward for activity, that have significant relationship with community commitment, while another two independent variables, which are quality of information and quality of system have no significant relationship with community commitment. In addition, this study also finds that there is significant relationship between community commitment and brand loyalty.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter summarizes the study, reports its discussions, recommends the application, and recommends for further research in the future.

Hypothesis Summary

This study has been conducted on information stemming from 400 samples of www.yaris-club.net members. The objectives of this study are, first, to determine the relationship between four major characteristics of online brand community (quality of information, quality of system, interaction, and reward for activity). From four of characters, there are only 2 of them, which are, interaction and reward for activity, which indicate significantly positive relationship with community commitment. The second objective of this study is to examine the relationship between community commitment and brand loyalty. Referred to data analysis in chapter 4, regression analysis shows significantly positive relationship between community commitment and brand loyalty.

Discussion

In the study of www.yaris-club.net, one of a consumer-initiated online brand community build around users' shared interest on yaris car, interaction among community members leads to large amount of information provided on the website. The large amount of information in the website is by-product of members' interaction. The way that community members search for information help them to get pleasant content that reward them for their activities, psychologically. Moreover, monetary or other forms of tangible reward also have been provided to community members by website's sponsors, for members' contribution in community's activities. Then it is obvious that

interaction and reward are important positive stimulants to community commitment. On the other hand, regarding the system quality, it is because of the system quality is quite high in Bangkok and in other major provinces using internet hi-speed broadband facility. Thus, both quality of information and quality of system are not tending to affect community commitment.

The result of this study is unlike the previous studies. That are, first, a study of Jang et at. (2008) conducted in Korea found that "members of consumer-initiated communities perceived both information quality and system quality as more important in enhancing member commitment than did members of company-initiated communities". Second is a study of Koh and Om (2006) about two types of communities of practice. Koh and Om suggested that in a pure voluntary community of practice, community characteristics including information quality, system quality, interaction, leadership, reward, and offline activities are all strongly stimulate members' community commitment. This discrepancy of result may be because of the level of support or intervention from the community sponsors of yaris-club.net, which may cause its members to focus more in interaction and reward for both online and offline activities rather than on information quality or system quality, but this discrepancy is need to be more investigated deeply on the cause and effect toward the community commitment.

This study also found that high community commitment lead to brand loyalty, which is similar to previous studies. Jang et al. (2008) and Kang (2004) stated that "community commitment increase brand loyalty". Similarly, Kim et al. (2008) also suggest positive relationship between role of online community and the brand commitment.

Recommendation for Further Application

This study found that interaction and reward for activities leads to community commitment, and that high community commitment leads to brand loyalty. It comes to suggestion that, first, by providing more various topics of information, it may leads to higher level of interaction among members. Second, by increasing level of interaction among community members, and / or focusing more on reward to community members, the community leaders may be able to bring

more community commitment of their members. And third, brand managers can provide more support in form of tangible reward to the consumer-initiated online brand community, in order to increase community commitment and then provide positive effect to brand loyalty finally.

Recommendation for Further Research

In term of respondent group in this survey, out of 400 first community members who responded to the request email, majority of them are men (84.5%), and the main age range is between 26-33 year-old, which is a weakness of this study that too lean on some specific group of population. Therefore, the future research is needed to balance the samples in order to make the survey to represents more overall population.

According to factors that affect community commitment studied in this research, which consist of information quality, system quality, interaction, and reward for activities, may not be entirely explain reasons of community commitment. Further research could expand to other possible factors that may involve. In addition, this study has focused only on a community – www.yaris-club.net, which may represent only the city car product, and may not be applied to other types of products or industries because of uniqueness or specific characteristics of each product category may vary the result of study. Thus, further research should be done on across various product categories in order to generalize the knowledge of consumer-initiated online brand community commitment and brand loyalty. Moreover, among consumer-initiated online brand communities, there are vary in level of support from brand companies, the different levels of company support may vary the result of study, so examining on different level of company support in consumer-initiated online brand communities should be investigated as well.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear Members of www.yaris-club.net

I am a master degree student of Bangkok University. I'm currently conducting a research to fulfill my MBA degree. I would like to get some information about your behavior and attitude toward the website: www.yaris-club.net. I would be grateful if you fill in the questionnaire in order to complete the research process. Please click to answer the entire questionnaire below.

Section 1: Your general information

1. Your gender
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male

2. Your age
   - ☐ Under 18
   - ☐ 18-25 years
   - ☐ 26-33 years
   - ☐ 34-41 years
   - ☐ Over 42 years

3. Marital Status
   - ☐ Single
   - ☐ Married
   - ☐ Divorced

4. Education
   - ☐ Grade 9
   - ☐ High School or equal
   - ☐ Bachelor
   - ☐ Master
   - ☐ Doctoral
   - ☐ Other

5. Occupation
   - ☐ Business Owner
   - ☐ Students
   - ☐ Private Employee
   - ☐ Government Employee
   - ☐ Others

6. Monthly Income (Baht)
   - ☐ Less than 10,000
   - ☐ 10,001 – 20,000
   - ☐ 20,001 – 30,000
   - ☐ 30,001 – 40,000
   - ☐ 40,001 – 50,000
   - ☐ More than 50,001

7. Duration of your internet using experience (year)
   - ☐ Less than 1 year
   - ☐ 1-3 years
   - ☐ 3-5 years
   - ☐ 5-10 years
   - ☐ More than 10 years

8. Your average frequency of visiting www.yaris-club.net
   - ☐ Daily
   - ☐ 1-5 times per week
   - ☐ 1 time per week
   - ☐ 1-2 times per month
   - ☐ Once every 2 months
   - ☐ Less than 5 times per year

9. Your average duration of visiting www.yaris-club.net
   - ☐ Less than 15 minutes
   - ☐ 15-30 minutes
   - ☐ 30 minutes – 1 hour
   - ☐ 1-2 hours
   - ☐ 3-4 hours
   - ☐ More than 4 hours

10. Period of time that you usually visit www.yaris-club.net
    - ☐ 08.01am - 12.00 pm
    - ☐ 00.01 pm - 04.00 pm
    - ☐ 04.01 pm - 08.00 pm
    - ☐ 08.01 pm - 00.00 am
    - ☐ 00.01 am - 04.00 am
    - ☐ 04.01am - 08.00 am

11. Your major purpose of visiting www.yaris-club.net
    - ☐ Information searching
    - ☐ Chat
    - ☐ Link to other websites
    - ☐ Posting questions / answers
    - ☐ PR for goods / services
    - ☐ Others

Section 2: Your attitude toward www.yaris-club.net

Please click in the blank cells that best describes your perception and attitude with the following statements.

	Your Perception and Attitude toward www.yaris-club.net	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Likely disagree	Disagree
Quality of Information	You think that quality of information provided on the website is excellent					
	You think that quality of information provided on the website is affluent					
	You think that information provided on the website is up-to-date					
	You think that quality of information provided on the website is credible					
Quality of System	You think that the web design is excellent					
	You think that you can navigating through information conveniently					
	You always can access the system, never get problem on the website stability					
Interaction	You think that there is high degree of information exchange and interpersonal exchange on the website					
	You think that there's always quick response for your inquiry					
	You think that there is high degree of exchange between the website administrator and members					
Reward for Activities	You think that the website provides gifts, presents, or other reward to members					
	You think that you have pleasure in visiting the website					
	You think that the website provides privileges to members who join the website's activities or contribute to the website					
Community Commitment	You feel that you are a part of this website					
	You feel emotionally attach to the website					
	You trust to the website					
	You are satisfied with the website					
	You need to participate in the website's activities					
Brand Loy	You will recommend Yaris car to others					

	You tend to purchase Yaris or other products related to Yaris in the future					

Section 3: Your comments and suggestion to www.yaris-club.net (if any)

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แบบสอบถาม

ปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อ Community Commitment และ Brand Loyalty

เรียนท่านสมาชิก www.yaris-club.net

ดิฉันเป็นนักศึกษาปริญญาโท มหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพ กำลังศึกษาวิชาการศึกษาเฉพาะบุคคลเกี่ยวกับทัศนติที่สมาชิก
มีต่อเว็บไซท์ www.yaris-club.net ในการนี้ดิฉันขอความกรุณาให้ท่านช่วยตอบแบบสอบถามนี้ โดยคลิ๊กเลือก
คำตอบที่ตรงกับตัวท่านมากที่สุด

<u>ส่วนที่ 1</u>: ข้อมูลส่วนตัวของท่าน

1. เพศ
   - ☐ หญิง
   - ☐ ชาย

2. อายุ
   - ☐ ต่ำกว่า 18 ปี
   - ☐ 18-25 ปี
   - ☐ 26-33 ปี
   - ☐ 34-41 ปี
   - ☐ มากกว่า 42 ปี

3. สถานภาพการสมรส
   - ☐ โสด
   - ☐ แต่งงาน
   - ☐ หย่าร้าง

4. ระดับการศึกษา
   - ☐ มัธยมต้น
   - ☐ มัธยมปลายหรือเทียบเท่า
   - ☐ ปริญญาตรี
   - ☐ ปริญญาโท
   - ☐ ปริญญาเอก
   - ☐ อื่นๆ

5. อาชีพ
   ☐ ธุรกิจส่วนตัว
   ☐ นักเรียน นักศึกษา
   ☐ พนักงานบริษัทเอกชน
   ☐ ข้าราชการ
   ☐ อื่นๆ

6. รายได้ต่อเดือน
   ☐ น้อยกว่า 10,000 บาท
   ☐ 10,001 – 20,000 บาท
   ☐ 20,001 – 30,000 บาท
   ☐ 30,001 – 40,000 บาท
   ☐ 40,001 – 50,000 บาท
   ☐ มากกว่า 50,000 บาท

7. ท่านใช้อินเทอร์เน็ตมาเป็นระยะเวลา (ปี)
   ☐ น้อยกว่า 1 ปี
   ☐ 1-3 ปี
   ☐ 3-5 ปี
   ☐ 5-10 ปี
   ☐ มากกว่า 10 ปี

8. ความถี่โดยเฉลี่ยที่ท่านเข้าใช้บริการเว็บไซท์ yaris-club.net
   ☐ ทุกวัน
   ☐ 1-5 ครั้งต่อสัปดาห์
   ☐ สัปดาห์ละครั้ง
   ☐ 1-2 ครั้งต่อเดือน
   ☐ 1ครั้งต่อสองเดือน
   ☐ น้อยกว่า 5 ครั้งต่อปี

9. ระยะเวลาต่อครั้งโดยเฉลี่ย ที่ท่านเข้าใช้บริการเว็บไซท์ yaris-club.net
   ☐ น้อยกว่า 15 นาที
   ☐ 15-30 นาที
   ☐ 30 นาที – 1 ชั่วโมง

☐ 1-2 ชั่วโมง

☐ 3-4 ชั่วโมง

☐ มากกว่า 4 ชั่วโมง

10. ช่วงเวลาที่ท่านมักจะเข้าใช้บริการเว็บไซท์ yaris-club.net

☐ 8.00 – 12.00 น.

☐ 13.00 – 16.00 น.

☐ 16.00 – 20.00 น.

☐ 20.00 – เที่ยงคืน

☐ เที่ยงคืน – 04.00 น.

☐ 04.00 – 08.00 น.

11. วัตถุประสงค์หลักของท่านในการใช้บริการเว็บไซท์ yaris-club.net

☐ หาข้อมูล

☐ แช็ต

☐ ลิ้งค์ไปยังหน้าเว็บไซท์อื่นๆ

☐ โพสต์คำถาม - คำตอบ

☐ ประชาสัมพันธ์สินค้า - บริการ

☐ อื่นๆ

<u>ส่วนที่ 2</u>: ทัศนคติของท่านที่มีต่อเว็บไซท์ www.yaris-club.net

โปรดคลิ๊กเลือกคำตอบที่ตรงกับท่านมากที่สุด

ทัศนคติที่ท่านมีต่อเว็บไซท์ **www.yaris-club.net**		เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง	เห็นด้วย	เฉยๆ	ไม่ค่อยเห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง
คุณภาพของข้อมูล	ท่านคิดว่าข้อมูลในเว็บไซท์เป็นข้อมูลที่มีคุณภาพ					
	ท่านคิดว่าข้อมูลในเว็บไซต์มีความหลากหลาย ครบถ้วน					
	ท่านคิดว่าข้อมูลในเว็บไซต์มีความทันสมัย					
	ท่านคิดว่าข้อมูลในเว็บไซต์น่าเชื่อถือ					
คุณภาพของระบบ	ท่านคิดว่าการออกแบบเว็บไซต์เหมาะสม ทำให้ง่ายต่อการใช้งาน					
	ท่านสามารถการค้นหาข้อมูลต่างๆ ได้อย่างสะดวกรวดเร็ว					
	ท่านคิดว่าเว็บไซต์มีความเสถียร ท่านสามารถเข้าสู่เว็บไซต์ได้เสมอ					
การให้บริการ ถาม - ตอบ	ท่านคิดว่าในเว็บไซต์มีการแลกเปลี่ยนข้อมูลและการปฏิสัมพันธ์กันระหว่างสมาชิกกันอย่างหลากหลายและกว้างขวาง					
	ท่านคิดว่าในเว็บไซต์มีการถาม-ตอบเรื่องต่างๆ กันอย่างรวดเร็ว					
	ท่านคิดว่าผู้ดูแลเว็บไซต์มีการแลกเปลี่ยนข้อมูลกับสมาชิกของเว็บไซต์					
ของรางวัลแก่ผู้ใช้บริการ	ท่านพอใจกับของรางวัลที่เว็บไซต์มอบให้สมาชิก					
	ท่านได้รับความสนุกสนานเพลิดเพลินจากการเข้าใช้บริการเว็บไซต์					
	ทางเว็บไซต์มีการมอบสิทธิพิเศษแก่สมาชิกที่เข้าเยี่ยมชมเว็บไซต์อย่างสม่ำเสมอ					
ข้อตัดเห็น	ท่านรู้สึกว่าเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net					
	ท่านรู้สึกผูกพันกับเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net					
	ท่านรู้สึกไว้วางใจเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net					

		เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง	เห็นด้วย	เฉยๆ	ไม่ค่อยเห็นด้วย	ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง
	ท่านรู้สึกพึงพอใจเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net					
	ท่านรู้สึกอยากมีส่วนร่วมกับเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net					
ทัศนคติที่ท่านมีต่อเว็บไซท์ www.yaris-club.net						
ความจงรักภักดีต่อผลิตภัณฑ์	ท่านจะแนะนำรถรุ่น Yaris ให้ผู้อื่น					
	ท่านมีแนวโน้มจะตัดสินใจซื้อรถรุ่น Yaris หรือสินค้าที่เกี่ยวข้องกับรถรุ่น Yaris เมื่อมีโอกาส					

<u>ส่วนที่ 3</u>: ข้อเสนอแนะอื่น ๆ ที่ท่านมีต่อเว็บไซต์ yaris-club.net

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Biodata

Naphajira Sangjindavong is a student of Master of Business Administration, Bangkok University. She earned Bachelor degree in Mass Communication, majored in advertising from Chulalongkorn University. Her research interest include role of communication on branding and marketing management.