

# **Strengthening Knowledge of Using “Digital TV coupon” through AD and PR Media of People in Chiang Mai, Thailand**

Suphanit Chansong<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Dept. of Communication Arts, Faculty of Management Science,

Chiang Mai Rajabhat University

E-mail: suphanit\_cha@cmru.ac.th

## **Abstract**

This research aimed 1) to evaluate an understanding of the availability and usage of "Digital TV coupon" through advertising and public relations media of people in Chiang Mai and 2) to evaluate problems and develop solutions with the use of "Digital TV coupon" through advertising and public relations media of people in Chiang Mai. The selected sample consisted of 400 household hosts, who were directly provided the coupon, which costs 690 Baht or about 20 USD, from the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission (NBTC), and who live in the city of Chiang Mai. The questionnaires were administered to collect data that, in turn, were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The research concluded that more than half of the sample group understood the availability and usage of "Digital TV coupon" through advertising and public relations media, mostly via television, newspaper, and NBTC Facebook page. However, as these types of media are rather about new technology, the rest of the participants suggested that the NBTC should be encouraging people to have a greater understanding via the alternative medium, such as Digital TV manual.

**Keywords— strengthening, knowledge, digital TV coupon, advertising, public relations**

## **Introduction**

Broadcasting business is important to the economy and society in Thailand, in particular, terrestrial television or free TV that public can access. It is highly influential thought and behavior, both economy and society which affects the quality of citizens'

life and national development. Additionally, Thailand and all other ASEAN nations have together agreed to apply the Second Generation Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting System (DVB-T2) as a standard digital television of the region (The transition to digital television, 2013), and are expected to completely switch-off analog broadcasts by 2015 (ASEAN picks DVB-T as common TV standard, 2006).

On June 2008, participants of the 6th ASEAN Digital Broadcast Meeting from seven South-east Asian countries, including Thailand, agreed to finalize the specifications of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTTV) set-top-box (STB) for use within ASEAN (Ministry of Information, 2008).

The National Broadcastings and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) cooperatively organized NBTC/ITU National Seminar on Thailand Digital Terrestrial TV Broadcasting Roll Out, which was held on 4th December 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand, in order to share knowledge about the transition from analog to digital terrestrial TV broadcasting (Committed to connecting the world, 2016). Afterward, the NBTC has formulated the Broadcasting Master Plan to switch-off analog signal for a period of five years (2012-2016). The Broadcast Commission (BC) under the NBTC announced the last quarter of 2013 that it planned to provide DTTV license through open auction within December 2013, before the trial period which began in early April 2014 (The transition to digital television, 2013).

Digital TV is launched for the public in Thailand in 2014, 24 new digital commercial channels took to airwaves, instead of the existing six free-analog TV channels (channels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and Thai PBS) and this also includes cable and satellite (Fernquest, 2014). During the initial stage, people in four pilot provinces; Bangkok, Songkhla, Nakhonrajsima, and Chiang Mai, will be able to watch both analog and digital TV channels while the transmission will expand to other provinces very soon after (Fernquest, 2014). As Thailand has been postponed digital terrestrial television for 12 years, analog signals will be switched off on December 31, 2019. Nevertheless, it is hopefully expected that 95 percent of total households who have television sets should be fully migrated to the digital platform by 2017.

Before getting access to these new services, Thais must purchase an integrated digital TV set (iDTV, a television set with built-in TV tuner) or digital STB to convert from analog to digital signal (Thongtep, 2014). However, the NBTC tried to promote awareness and understanding about the transition from analog to the digital signal

through a variety of media channels, especially advertising and public relations.

Furthermore, the NBTC provided a support in the form of the coupon, value 690 Baht, in order to ease the public's difficulty for the changing of analog to digital (Siripunyawit, 2014). The coupon was distributed in order to support all Thais in every household in the transition from analog to digital signal. The coupon can be used as a discount for purchasing digital converter boxes, in another word digital STB, or discounting on the purchase of a new digital TV, with the digital tuner. (Post Reporters, 2017). Therefore, every household countrywide will be directly received coupons via post which can be used to purchase either a new TV set or an STB to enable them to switch to the digital platform. Subsequently, it is very important that Thai citizens must know, understand, and adapt themselves to coming up digital era and how to use digital TV coupon as in the near future all equipment and TV sets used for analog broadcasts will no longer be sold (Thongtep, 2014).

### **Literature reviews**

Communication can help increase knowledge, raise awareness and change attitude and/or behavior. An information campaign can make individuals respond to their responsibility for the environment and generate a compact base for situation policy in the community. Education, additionally, can encourage the learning development and help children and people in overall to make environmentally responsible behavior part of their everyday lives (Gomis and Hesselink, 1995).

Obviously, advertising or AD and public relations or PR media are one of the main strategies in communications. The principal object here is to review the relevant literature of the awareness toward the existence of "Digital TV coupon" via communication theories, cognitive theory, and the influences of the digital TV era, especially in Thailand.

The conception of PR is a very significant promotion tool for the business organizations as positive relations built with the community can, directly and indirectly, affect the organization's business activities. PR is the progression of building good relations with the firm's various publics by gaining favorable promotional, building up a good corporate image, and handling or heading off unfavorable gossips, stories, and events (ZainBooks.com, 2011, cited in Vakil, 2012).

Valjak and Draskovic (2000, p.251) elucidated that PR is a multifaceted discipline

with no standardized definition. It is the discipline, which looks after organizations status, with the purpose of making understanding and support and influencing opinion and behavior. Besides its use for commercial and political purposes, PR also plays an important role in the context of the public communication activities.

Furthermore, PR also suggests many controversies. Academics from diverse areas cannot agree whether PR belongs to marketing or is a separate management area. From the traditional marketing point of view, PR is considered as a part of the promotional mix, together with advertising, sales promotion, personal selling and direct marketing (Valjak and Draskovic, 2000, p.252). Consequently, PR could also be definite as a marketing program that encourages purchase and customers gratification through trustworthy communication of impressions and information (Harris, 1991, cited in Valjak and Draskovic, 2000, p.252).

The marketing mix is now very liquefied, with every discipline overlapping and becoming progressively dependent and it is this integrated approach, which is a need in order to truly develop and organization's voice. Sittiyakron (2015) found in his study that factors that affected the customers made the decision to purchase CTH Digital TV Set-Top-Box (STB) in Bangkok were marketing mix factors, which are the product, pricing, place, and promotion. It could be seen that PR shares the same goal with all other elements of the marketing mix to build awareness of the brand, change people's attitudes towards it, and ultimately, sell the products (Aspectus, 08 December 2010).

On the other hand, AD could be considered as a media for placing PR messages. In this framework, PR uses AD as a device to approach wider community through mass media by controlling the content, placing, and timing. Although AD characteristically falls under the category or profitable goods or services marketing, it is not merely reserved for it. PR can use AD as part of the communication determination with the external public in order to improve corporate image, confrontation some environmental issue, and encourage volunteers (Broom, 2007, cited in Valjak and Draskovic, 2000, p.252).

The role of AD and consumption in the social change is a very productive topic. Sociology has examined how advertising affects opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals and social groups (Moingeon, 1993, cited in Corvi and Bonera, 2010).

Communication in general and AD, in particular, were treated by psychologists starting from the motivations of recipients, which occupy a central position in the analysis. This is because of their influence on the awareness of the receiver (Mittelstaedt,

1990). They believed that the motivations determine consumer behavior. Therefore, the purpose of the AD creator is to identify the reasons of consumer behavior, in order to categorize the most effective AD message or to remove the communication barriers (Corvi and Bonera, 2010).

The psychological methodology has the benefit to measure the effectiveness of AD with reference to the recipient of the message, principally to the consumers' characteristics. Instead, the approach does not provide complete answers, not exploring the exact causes that lead the recipient of the message publicity to expose themselves voluntarily to the message, decode it, to store and, eventually, to make the purchase. So it is not taken into account the entire communication process, and, in particular, the external factors, especially those related to the environment, that may play a crucial role in determining the behavior of the recipient (Corvi and Bonera, 2010). It could be seen that factors affecting audiences viewing behavior on international film in Bangkok by Suwanthamma (2009), for example, revealed that the AD and PR on electronic media were made audiences' viewing decision to watch the international film mostly especially the trailers at the cinema and on the television.

Furthermore, a research by Vasinsunthon (2015) found that findings consisted of two major situations that can be explained problems and policy recommendations to media exposure and satisfaction in the situations changing with digital TV. Firstly, the NBTC lacked good PR plan in terms of the transition to the digital signal which most people lacked knowledge and understanding about how to switch over to digital TV and how to use coupons correctly. Secondly, the majority of people were satisfied with the transition to digital TV. However, the public has not been satisfied with the coupons procedure because they did not understand how to use the coupons, as they should.

Since the time of digital age, the digital TV transition, also called the digital switchover or analog switch-off, is the process in which analog TV broadcasting is converted to and replaced by digital TV. This primarily involves analog cable transformation to digital cable, as well as analog to digital satellite.

Digital TV broadcasting by satellite, cable, and terrestrial network concepts was currently an area of intensive development and standardization activities, particularly in North America and Europe since the 1990s. From these applications, technically the most challenging one is terrestrial broadcasting, due to the presence of strong echoes, which characterize the propagation medium. What makes the problem even more difficult is the objective in Europe of deploying single-frequency networks in order to

increase the number of TV channels in the allocated frequency bandwidth (Sari, Karam and Jeanclaude, 1995).

In many countries, a broadcast service is operated where a broadcast is made available to viewers in both analog and digital at the same time. As digitally becomes more widespread, it is possible that the current analog services will be removed. In some cases, this has already happened, where a broadcaster has offered motivations to viewers to encourage them to change to digital.

In other cases, government policies have been announced to encourage or strength the switchover procedure, specifically with regard to terrestrial broadcasts. Government involvement generally contains providing some funding for broadcasters and, in some cases financial help to viewers, to enable a switchover to happen by a given deadline.

## **Methodology**

According to Burns and Grove (1997, p.225), the design of a study is the outcome of a series of decisions made by the researcher regarding how the study will be conducted. The proposal is closely associated with the framework of the study and guides planning for applying the study. Leedy and Ormrod (2001, p.94) said, "Research is a viable approach to a problem only when there are data to support it". Therefore, this qualitative research focuses on awareness, knowledge, and understanding usage of "Digital TV coupon" of Chiang Mai citizens through advertising and public relations media. Furthermore, this research design gives the researcher the opportunity to interact with the participants.

Nesbary (2000, p.10), additionally, describes survey research as "the process of collecting representative sample data from a larger population and using the sample to infer attributes of the population". This quantitative research focuses on awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the usage of "Digital TV coupon" via advertising and public relations media. The main purpose of this method, using questionnaires, is to estimate, with significant precision, the percentage of the population that has a specific attribute by collecting data from a small portion of the total population (Dillman, 2000; Wallen and Fraenkel, 2001).

Data collection was the process by which the researcher collected the information needed to answer the research questions. Participants were able to reveal relevant information in a natural way and have the opportunity to qualify their answers and

explain the underlying meaning of their responses in detail (Polit and Hungler (1995, p.252).

As Chiang Mai is one-in-four pilot provinces that included in the NBTC's master plan during the trial period, Chiang Mai citizens were chosen as participants. In addition to the purpose of the study and population size, three criteria usually will need to be specified to determine the appropriate sample size (Miaoulis and Michener, 1976).

According to the registration database, there are 751,765 households in Chiang Mai (Official Statistics Registration Systems, 2013). The population in this study was people who live in Chiang Mai that the NBTC delivered digital TV coupons via post, one coupon per household. The researcher randomly assigned in a systematic way using Taro Yamane (1973) formula to determine the size of the sample population. In a normal distribution, approximately 95% of the sample values are within two standard deviations of the true population value (Isarel, 1992, p.1). Finally, 400 convenience samplings were randomly chosen.

The reliability of the questionnaires was at 79 percent ( $r=.79$ ). As the five response categories are often believed to represent an Interval level of measurement, the data involved rating scales of one kind of another and virtually all rating scales involve variants on the 5 points Likert scale, which are 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly disagree (Likert, 1932, p.55). This research used descriptive statistics to describe the data and used multiple linear regression analysis to examine knowledge and understanding usage of "Digital TV coupon" among people in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

## **Results**

The sample consisted of 400 household hosts, who were directly provided coupon from the Office of The NBTC, and who live in the city of Chiang Mai. The questionnaires were administered to collect data that, in turn, were analyzed using frequency and percentage. Then, the mean and standard deviation should be calculated for the variable.

Table 1 shows that the awareness levels usage of "Digital TV coupon" of people in Chiang Mai, Thailand, through advertising and public relations media is moderate ( $\bar{x}=3.33$ , S.D.=0.76). It can be ordered with the 3 highest orders, which are 1) the sample knew that if the price of STB exceed 690 baht, they may have to pay the rest ( $\bar{x}=3.98$ ,

S.D.=0.77) 2) the sample realized that they will receive the coupon from the NBTC via post ( $\bar{x}$ =3.98, S.D.=0.77) 3) the sample people knew that only people who elect to receive the coupon must be named as host of each household ( $\bar{x}$ =3.87, S.D.=0.96).

However, it can be ordered with the 3 lowest orders, which are 1) during trial, the sample knew that only 21 pilot provinces have rights to get the digital TV coupon ( $\bar{x}$ =2.45, S.D.=0.68) 2) the sample knew that the suppliers must provide part of the coupon sticker attached to the device as a 2-year warranty ( $\bar{x}$ =2.65, S.D.=0.79) 3) the sample realized that if the device is defective, they can claim a new one within 30 days or repair it for free within two years warranty by using the coupon's stub ( $\bar{x}$ =2.78, S.D.=0.62).

**Table 1 Awareness Levels Usage of “Digital TV coupon” via Advertising and Public Relations Media of People in Chiang Mai, Thailand.**

Awareness Levels Usage of “Digital TV coupon”	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	results
1. documents that used to redeem digital TV coupon	3.46	0.88	average
2. the valid date that cannot redeem the coupon	3.26	0.68	average
3. you are able to purchase digital TV by using the coupon	2.87	0.59	average
4. the point of services that can use to redeem digital TV coupon	3.26	0.86	average
5. the process of redeeming the digital TV coupon	3.54	0.97	above average
6. digital TV antenna used only for digital TV	3.12	0.65	average
7. if the device is defective, you can claim a new one within 30 days or repair it for free within two years warranty by using the coupon's stub	2.78	0.62	average
8. in case of redeeming discount, you can notice the NBTC sticker symbol	3.36	0.44	average
9. the suppliers must provide part of the coupon sticker attached to the device as a 2-year warranty	2.65	0.79	average



10. you will receive the coupon from the NBTC via post	3.87	0.77	above average
11. digital TV coupon can use to redeem digital TV antenna	3.53	0.97	above average
12. digital TV coupon cannot change to be cash or traded	3.45	0.65	average
13. if you do not want to use the coupon, you can return it to the NBTC	2.98	0.88	average
14. people who elect to receive the coupon must be named as host of each household	3.87	0.96	above average
15. you can determine whether the coupon is delivered to your house by call hotline 1200 and press 8	3.56	0.87	above average
16. in case that you give family members permission, you know what documents that used to redeem digital TV coupon	3.44	0.78	average
17. during trial, only 21 pilot provinces have right to get the digital TV coupon	2.45	0.68	below average
18. if the price of STB exceed 690 baht, you may have to pay the rest yourself	3.98	0.77	above average
19. the coupon cannot be exchanged for cash or curtailed or another form of payment	3.98	0.77	above average
20. if the coupon was found defective, it cannot be accepted	3.44	0.78	average
Total	3.33	0.76	average

### Recommendations

It could be seen that some of the samples could not access the online media, for

example, NBTC Facebook page and NBTC's website. Therefore, the NBTC should advertise and publish more through newspapers or television media. Community leaders should be fully trained in order to educate and communicate with people in the community. Additionally, the NBTC should be encouraging people to have a greater understanding via alternative media medium, such as Digital TV manual.

### **Acknowledgment**

This research paper was supported by Chiang Mai Rajabhat University Research Fund. I would like to thank you for the director all staff members from Research and Development Institute of Chiang Mai Rajabhat University who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted the research.

I would like to thank you Faculty of Management Sciences for assistance with all supports and comments that greatly improved the manuscript.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all supporting staff members and friends who have been a constant source of encouragement for successful completion of the project.

### **References**

- Aspectus. (2010). *PR is spreading its wings within the marketing mix*. Date of access: 13/04/2016. <https://www.aspectuspr.com/news-insight/2010-12-08/pr-is-spreading-its-wings-within-the-marketing-mix/>.
- Burns, N. and Grove, S.K. (1997). *The practice of nursing research: Conduct, critique and utilization*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: Saunders.
- Committed to connecting the world. (2016). Date of access: 15/12/2015. <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Pages/Events/2014/December-DTTB-Thailand/home.aspx>.
- Corvi, E. and Bonera, M. (2010). The effectiveness of advertising: a literature review. In *The Global Conference on Business and Economics* (pp. 15-16).
- Dillman, D.A. (2000). *Mail and internet surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Fernquest, J. (2014). *Digital TV: What do I need to know?*. Bangkok Post, 24 March.
- Gomis, A. and Hesselink, F. (1995). Communication: an instrument of environmental. *Planning education to care for the earth*.

- Israle, G.D. (1992). *Determining sample size*. University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, EDIS.
- Leedy, P. and Ormrod, J. (2001). *Practical research: Planning and design*. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Likert, R. (1932). *A technique for the measurement of attitudes*. Arch Psychology.
- Miaoulis, G. and Michener, R.D. (1976). *An Introduction to Sampling*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Ministry of Information. (2008). *Asean Broadcasters Prepare For Digital Broadcasting*. Date of access: 14/11/2015. [http://www.moi.gov.my/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1570&Itemid=109](http://www.moi.gov.my/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1570&Itemid=109).
- Mittelstaedt, R.A. (1990). *Economics, Psychology, and the Literature of the Subdiscipline of Consumer Behavior*. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 18, 4.
- Nesbary, D. (2000). *Survey Research and World Wide Web*. Barnes & Nobel.
- Official Statistics Registration Systems. (2013). Date of access: 25/12/2015. <http://stat.dopa.go.th/stat/statnew/statTDD/views/showDistrictData.php?rcode=50&statType=1&year=58>.
- Polit, D.F. and Hungler, B.P. (1995). *Nursing research: Principles and methods*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott.
- Post Reporters. (2017). *NBTC disburses TV coupons*. Bangkok Post, 1 February 2017. Date of access: 5/9/2017. <http://www.bangkokpost.com/tech/local-news/1190409/nbtc-disburses-tv-coupons>.
- Sari, H., Karam, G. and Jeanclaude, I. (1995). Transmission techniques for digital terrestrial TV broadcasting. *IEEE communications magazine*, 33(2), pp.100-109.