

THE INFLUENCE OF CRITICS AND CRITICAL REVIEWS
ON MOVIEGOERS

A MASTER'S PROJECT
BY
MISS KULNATEE PRAPASRISUK

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication
at Srinakharinwirot University

January 2006

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AN ABSTRACT

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The purposes of this study were 1) to study the impact of critical review on Thai moviegoers, and 2) to investigate how critical review influences consumers' purchasing decision. This research used questionnaires to collect data from one hundred Major Cineplex customers, both male and female between 20-30 years of age. The finding revealed that a critic and a critical review influenced the decision to choose a particular movie. Reader got a critical review both before and after seeing a movie. Critical review reader believed in both a critic and a critical review, although a critical review was considered exaggerating and was used as a kind of advertising. Thus, it is finally found that a positive review has more influence than a negative review.

อิทธิพลของนักวิจารณ์และบทวิจารณ์ต่อผู้ชมภาพยนตร์

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาว กุลนที ประภาศรีสุข

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

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สารนิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาถึงผลกระทบของบทวิจารณ์ที่มีต่อผู้ชมภาพยนตร์

และเพื่อสำรวจว่าบทวิจารณ์มีอิทธิพลต่อการเลือกชมภาพยนตร์อย่างไร วิธีการสำรวจ โดยเก็บรวบรวม

ข้อมูลด้วยแบบสอบถามจากลูกค้า โรงภาพยนตร์ เมเจอร์ ซีเนเพล็กซ์ จำนวน 100 คน ทั้งชายและหญิง

อายุระหว่าง 20 -30 ปี ผลการศึกษาพบว่า นักวิจารณ์และบทวิจารณ์มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจเลือกชม

ภาพยนตร์เรื่องใดเรื่องหนึ่ง ผู้อ่านบทวิจารณ์จะรับบทวิจารณ์ทั้งก่อนและหลังดูภาพยนตร์ ผู้อ่านบท

วิจารณ์เชื่อทั้งในตัวนักวิจารณ์และบทวิจารณ์ ถึงแม้ว่าจะยอมรับว่าบทวิจารณ์กล่าวเกินจริงและเป็น

ส่วนหนึ่งของการโฆษณา นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่า บทวิจารณ์ด้านบวก จะมีผลอิทธิพลต่อผู้อ่านมากกว่าบท

วิจารณ์ด้านลบอีกด้วย

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The Master's Project Advisor, Chair of Business English for International Communication Program, and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication of Srinakharinwirot University.

Project Advisor

.....

(Assistant Professor Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok)

Chair of Business English for International Communication Program

.....

(Assistant Professor Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok)

Oral Defense Committee

..... Chair

(Assistant Professor Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok)

..... Committee

(Dr. Saengchan Hemchua)

..... Committee

(Ms. Sopin Chantakloi)

This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication of Srinakharinwirot University

..... Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

(Assistant Professor Chaleosri Pibulchol)

January, 2006

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

“Time is Money”, this slogan is accepted to be true in this difficulty era. People work harder and longer in order to make more money. Besides working harder, people still face the pressure environment in their working place. Stress, depression and disillusionment are known as the diseases of modern society that leave us yearning for a solution. That tough working environment makes people have less leisure time than in the past. More and more people are trying to find the solution to reduce their stress. Although people are willing to take a break from their work, they still have the limitation of time. Due to long working hours, people do not have many choices for relaxation. According to their needs and limitation, seeing a movie is one of the most popular alternatives for relaxation. Just 2-3 hours, people can leave their work behind and travel with the movie.

Movie industry is growing dramatically every year. In 2004, 360 movies were screened in Thailand. Movies distributors estimated the value Thai movie industry in 2004 at approximately 3,899 million baht. About 80% of the total industry value comes from Bangkok and its vicinity. The remaining 20% comes from the provinces which used a sole agent system. The majority of audience in movie industry is 20 - 29 years old teenagers (see graph below). The 55% of movie audience is male, while the rest 45% is female

(Cinema. 2001 : Online). Seeing movie is not only use as a way to relax, but also use as the center points of meeting, both families and friends.

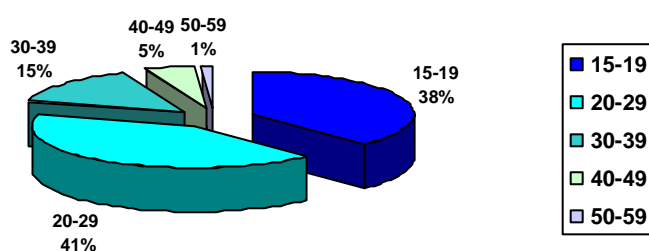


Figure 1 Cinema Audience Profiles (Age)

Source : Initiative. (2005, 19-22 June). I-Connect. Thansektakit. p. 24.

Every week, at least 3-4 new movies are launched. Thailand's theatre industry is in a situation that numbers of movies are more than numbers of screen, resulting in short screening period on average of 1-2 weeks per movie. In the USA, the screening period is on average 4-6 weeks (Major Cineplex. 2005 : Online). To avoid this short screening period, each movie distributor spends a lot of budget in advertising to persuade consumers to see the movie. If a movie gains high popularity and high revenue, theatres are willing to extend the screening period.

One of the strategies that movie companies use for promoting their movies is movie critical review. Movie critical reviews can be used as an advertising tool. Movie companies use critical reviews to persuade consumer to go to see a movie. Reinstein and Snyder (2004 : Online) mentioned that after a positive review, a movie distributor may

choose to redouble its marketing efforts, highlighting the positive review in its advertisements. A positive review may influence one consumer to view the movie, who then influences others to view the movie through word of mouth. Eliashberg and Shugan (1999 : Online) explained that there are three main reasons in citation of critics' quotation. First, the quotations persuade movie goers to see the film. Second, the quotations help the publicist gain favor with critics because each quotation helps boost the critic's reputation. Finally, quoting encourages critics to make favorable comments to get their name in movie advertisements.

Critics play an important role in the movie industry. They act as opinion leaders, informally offer advice or information about a specific product (Kotler. 2000 : 165). According to the movie industry jargon, the term "critics" refers to the persons usually employed by newspapers, television stations or other media who screen newly released movies and provide their subjective views and comments on the movie for the public's information (Cones. 1992 : 43). As well as other industries, movie critics or movie opinion leaders are believed to have more expertise than their followers. People read their critical review before going to see a movie and trust their opinion.

Movie industry is a huge and competitive industry. Critical reviews are one of the effective alternatives that help to increase box office. But does a consumer read and trust in the critical reviews? And does a critical review play an important role in consumers' purchasing decision? This study will answer these questions.

Objectives of the Study

- 1.To study the impact of critical review on Thai moviegoers.
- 2.To investigate how critical review influences consumers' purchasing decision.

Research Questions

- 1.Does a consumer read critical reviews and is inspired by them?
- 2.In what way does critical review influence consumers' decision about seeing movies?

Significance of the Study

Palmgreen; et.al. (1988 : 15) remarked that movie critics have the potential to shape the box offices. It is consistent with the Wall Street Journal's viewpoint proclaiming that: "A Thumbs Up' Pulls in the Audience". It cites a survey showing that many people see movies because of favorable reviews by critics. The Wall Street Journal concludes that one third of movie-goers surveyed chose films because of a favorable review. Therefore, it is apparent that critics have some influence over some movie-goers (Eliashberg; & Shugan. 1999 : Online).

Most previous researches only are focused on one topic : a critic or movie magazine. This research studies on the correlation of critical review and moviegoer's decision making. An identifying, reaching and influencing opinion leader is a major challenge for companies

(Berkowitz; & et. al. 1989 : 103). If movie companies can reach movie critics and are aware of the impact of critical review on consumers' decision making, they will know how to promote their marketing strategy. As consumers, movie companies use critical reviews as an advertising tool to persuade us. We must understand the process of persuasion to make better decisions and to protect ourselves from unscrupulous sales effects (Ross. 1994 : 5).

Scope of the Study

This research aims to study the impact of critical reviews on Thai moviegoers and to investigate how critical review influences them and their choice of a particular movie. The source of primary data comes from Major Cineplex's customers both male and female aged between 20 – 30 years old. The 100 copies of questionnaire will be distributed to the sample groups who come to see the movie at four branches of Major Cineplex.

Expected Outcome

1. To create awareness of movie marketing strategies
2. To increase product and market knowledge
3. To understand the role of critic and critical review on consumers' purchase

decision

Definition of Terms

1. A critic - one who specializes especially professionally in the evaluation and appreciation of literary or artistic works: a film critic; a dance critic.
2. Critical Review - an essay or article that gives a critical evaluation of something (as of a book or play)
3. Opinion Leader – people whose position, expertise or knowledge renders them particularly important sources of relevant and credible information and their opinions influence others in society.
4. Testimonial – advertising which makes use of famous or qualified people, or satisfied customers to endorse a product.
5. Source Credibility – the level of expertise and trustworthiness consumers attribute to the source of the message.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is an overview of the related literature including (1) Consumer Decision Making Process, (2) Opinion Leader Characteristics, (3) The Transmission of Personal Influence: The Two-Step Flow, (4) Marketing Strategies and Opinion Leader and (5) Persuasion.

1. Consumer Decision Making Process

There are five steps of the consumer buying decision-making process (see figure 1). This model implies that customers pass through all stages in every purchase. However, in more routine purchases, customers often skip or reverse some of the stages.

Stage 1: The consumer recognizes a want, need, desire or force that entices him or her to seek out purchasing alternatives.

Stage 2: The consumer searches for information, internally and externally.

Stage 3: The consumer evaluates alternatives. Evoked sets, attitudes and values and cognitive maps explain how an individual evaluates various choices.

Stage 4: The consumer makes the purchase.

Stage 5: The consumer looks for affirmation that a quality purchasing decision was reached.

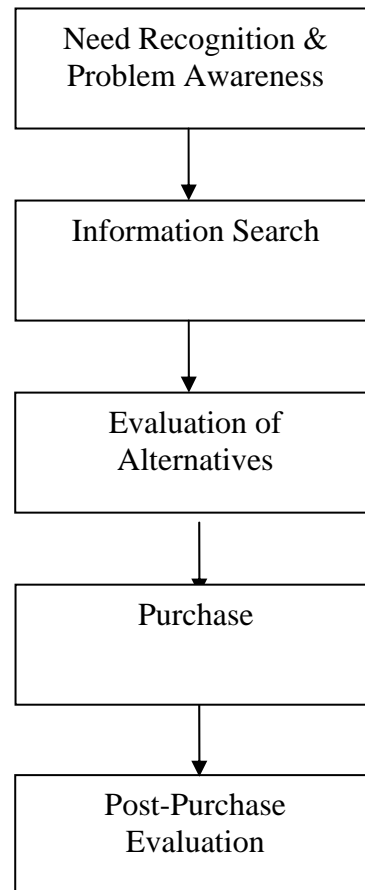


Figure 2 Consumer Decision Making Process

Source: Clow, Kenneth E.; Baack, Donald. (2002). *Integrated Advertising, Promotion, and Marketing Communications*. p. 147

From the consumer decision making process, movie critics and critical reviews have a significant role on Stage Two, Stage Three, and Stage Five. On Stage Two and Three, consumers find the information of each movie and evaluate each movie. Consumers often find it desirable to turn to other people as sources of

information. They may do so because they recognize the bias and incomplete nature of advertising and in-store presentations (Robertson; et.al. 1984 : 397).

Moreover, it is an easy and effective way to find the information. Movie reviews are the important source for gaining information. Consumers trust in movie critic's opinion, because they believe that critics have more knowledge and trustworthiness.

Stage Five, sometimes after purchasing, consumers still doubt about their buying decision. They still find more information to confirm their decision. After seeing a movie, some moviegoers read critical reviews to extend their understanding of that movie.

2. Opinion-Leader Characteristics

Information is the primary tool that marketers use to influence consumer behavior. While an individual ultimately processes information, in a substantial number of cases one or more group members filter, interpret or provide the information for the individual. The person who performs this task or role is known as an opinion leader (Hawkins; Best; & Coney. 2001 : 240). Hoyer and MacInnis (1997 : 393) also defined that opinion leaders are people whose position, expertise, or knowledge renders them particularly important sources of relevant and credible information. Opinion leaders develop firsthand experience with products or services in the market and communicate their reactions to consumer.

Everett M. Rogers (1983 : 281 - 284) has summarized opinion – leader characteristics across hundreds of research studies in a number of fields – rural sociology, education, medicine and marketing. Four key generalizations are offered.

- Opinion leaders have greater exposure to external communication. This suggests more exposure to relevant mass media and a more cosmopolitan orientation than for followers.
- Opinion leaders have greater social participation than followers. This seems to increase the opportunities for personal influence.
- Opinion leaders have “somewhat” higher social status than followers. Influence is still transmitted at the peer-group level.
- Opinion leaders are “more innovative” than their followers, but they are not the “innovators”.

Research conducted by Jacoby and Hoyer (1980 : 301) seems to confirm that opinion leaders are indeed more knowledgeable. The consumers prefer a source who is knowledgeable in seeking information process, but not very much knowledgeable than themselves. A major gap in expertise can actually make communication difficult.

Movie critics act as opinion leaders, informally offer advice or information about movie. Movie critics have the highest affect on launching a new movie.

3. The Transmission of Personal Influence: The Two-Step Flow

This model was originally derived in research during the course of the 1940 presidential election campaign, in which the influence of people was documented as the main factor in voting decisions. It implies that the mass media (1) influence “opinion leaders,” who in turn (2) influence a set of followers.

The importance of the two –step flow is its stress on the informal peer group as the transmitter of most influence, rather than on a high-status source. People look to their peers (people of their own status) and not higher social class referents (Robertson; et.al. 1984 : 402).

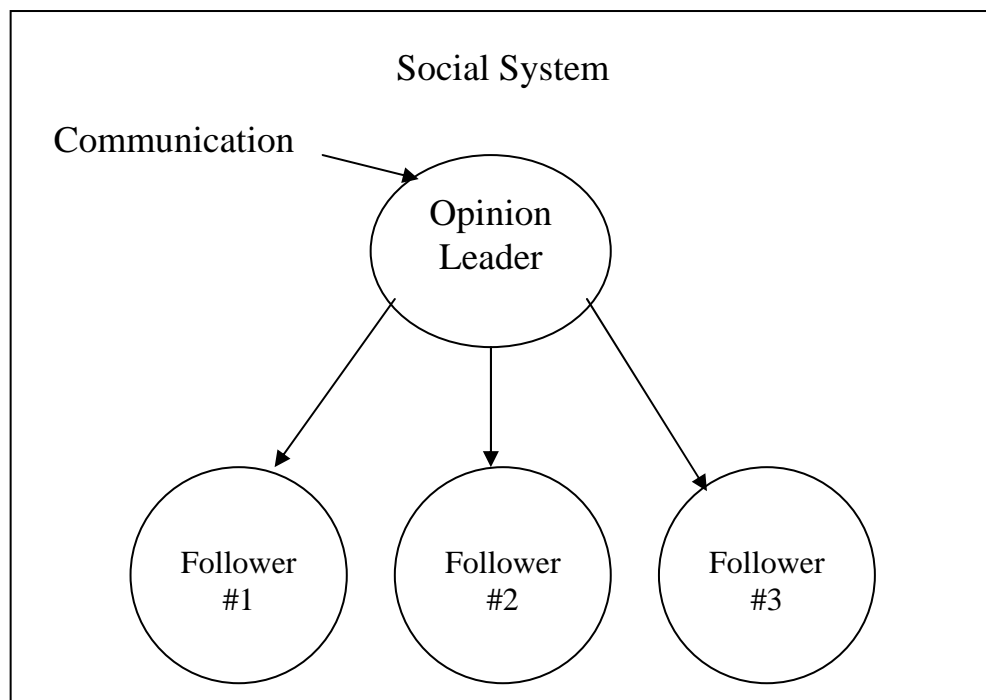


Figure 3 The Two-Step Flow of Personal Influence

Source: Robertson, Thomas S.; et.al. (1984). *Consumer Behavior*. p.403

4. Marketing Strategies and Opinion Leader

Opinion leaders have the most direct and powerful persuasive effect on people in the social system. Marketers are well advised to tailor their messages and use marketing strategies to influence opinion leaders.

4.1 Sampling : for movie case, movie distributors always use product sampling. Sampling - sending a sample of a product to a group of potential consumers – is an effective means of generating interpersonal communications concerning the product. However, instead of using a random sample, marketers should attempt to send the samples to individuals likely to be opinion leader (Hawkins; Best; & Coney. 2001 : 240). If the opinion leaders can be identified, providing free samples of the product to them may predispose them to influence other consumers on behalf of the manufacturer (Mullen; & Johnson. 1990 : 131). Movie companies invite movie critics to see their movie preview, and expect the critics to write a positive review about their movies and encourage the audiences to see their movies.

4.2 Testimonial: Movie companies also use testimonial technique. The positive critical review is placed on ads to make more credible. Most consumers believe what others say about a company more than they do what a company says about itself. Thus, testimonials by someone else offer greater credibility than self-proclamations.

5. Persuasion

Persuasion, defined as the process of trying to alter or modify the values, wants, beliefs and actions of others, is a major focus for marketing (Shaughnessy & Shaughnessy. 2004 : 23).

Persuasion is becoming more important in advertising. A major reason is that competition is finding it easier to erode any functional or price advantage attached to a product.

As movie critical reviews can be used as an advertising tool. Movie companies use critical reviews to persuade consumer to go to see a movie. Critical reviews have many factors that can use to persuade consumer.

5.1 Source Credibility

A source's credibility is determined by the receivers' perceptions and attitudes of trust and confidence, which are based in part on their beliefs about the intent, position in society, knowledge and sincerity of the speaker (Ross. 1994 : 94).

Belch and Belch (1999 : 169) also mentioned that credibility means the recipient sees the source as having relevant knowledge, skill or experience and trusts the source to give unbiased, objective information.

There are two components of credibility : expertness and trustworthiness. A person who is perceived as sincere and as showing no intention to persuade is likely seen as trustworthy, while a person seen as skilled, informed and technically qualified is likely to be judged as expert.

The communicator's credibility is very important. The low credibility communicators will gain inattentiveness, even though their message might be quiet convincing, it may never receive an adequate hearing. In contrast, the positive communicator who gives an unacceptable message will probably have the audience's attention, at least during the initial part of his presentation (Hovland; Janis; & Kelley. 1953 : 46).

5.2 Persuasive Language

"The general goals of a persuasive message are to convince people to believe something, convince them to do something, and stimulate them to a higher level of enthusiasm and devotion." (Ross. 1994 : 168).

Mulholland (1994 : Introduction) mentioned that language is influential because of the many powers it has: it can represent any single thing in many different way; it can vary the mental representations of matters in the world to suit people's beliefs; it can mention or omit things, or repeat them till they are accepted as normal; and hence can construct matters in a way which suits the user's purposed. So language can influence thought itself and can also be used to offer

opinion, state facts, suggest attitudes, create moods, attack or defend views and so on, any of which could be persuasively used for some purpose.

Humor and active messages make more persuasive than dull, boring ones. Communication skills are also important for persuasion. Using appropriate language: verb tenses, adjectives, adverbs and connectives are perceived as more credible. Moreover, the both sides messages that give both positive and negative points of the product seem to be more effective in influencing attitudes than one side messages. Both-sided persuasion has the appeal of objective rational evaluation. It is a subtle and honest appeal to fair play. Both-sided persuasion not only helps insulate the receivers against counterarguments, but also forces the source to be more audience-oriented.

In Thai society today, critical review is a kind of advertising. In finding movie's information process, consumers trust in critic's opinion because the critic is considered knowledgeable and credible. Moreover, it seems that the critic has no apparent vested interests in the product's success.

Critics write a movie review in order to encourage people to see a movie. Normally, they will rate quality scales from one to ten, either in number of stars. Some critics write only about their favorite movie and provide only a positive review in order to avoid the conflict. Subjectivity is part of any film criticism because so much of this form of writing has to deal with one's personal interpretations and

preferences. Subjectivity is more than just a declarative judgment; subjectivity expresses an opinion, suggests and impression (Moscowitz. 2000 : 11-12). After consumer read the critical reviews, they are unconsciously influenced to agree with the critics.

There are the examples of the persuasive critical review (see full article in appendices A, B and C).

1. Star wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith ★★ ★ (Kong Rithdee. 2005 : 6)

You'll enjoy everything you expect to enjoy in this, the final chapter of George Lucas' space opera. It's a thrilling, head- spinning, eye-dazzling series of cosmic battles at interplanetary locations inhabited by the most bizarre of species which, most importantly, ...

The film expresses itself, at best, in the grandiloquence of its battle scenes, which perhaps surpass anything we've seen before in space movies, ...

There's only one way to find out: Go see it first.

2. Rahtree Returns (Anchalee Chaiworaporn. 2005 : Online)

I have always praised director Yuthlert Sippapak as Thailand's most interesting commercial filmmaker. He knows how to captivate audiences, but does not hesitate to say what he thinks. I love his honesty. He is a master of all genres, from comedy to romance, horror and beyond ...

Yuthlert's casting of the famous 1980s comedy group Den-Der-Du-Dee is a failure ...

Are they now out of date? I am not sure. I think the script's lack of sharp gags is the real problem.

3. Live and Learn at The Tin Mine (Sorradihep Supachanya. 2005 : Online)

... To me, this is the film's weakest point. Condensing everything that has happened in the span of four years into 120 minutes of choppily edited footage results in a movie that moves too quickly and skips essential parts that enrich characters' backgrounds and motivations ...

In conclusion, go see The Tin Mine. For those who have not gone to college, this film will open your horizon. For those who have, this film will remind you of your university life, where there is plenty of laughter and excessive booze, where lifelong friendships are forged, and where saying goodbye is always tearful. The Tin Mine is no Harvard, but it is still worth your money.

From the first review, the writer gives only his positive review about the movie.

He said this movie is worth to see: good story and good production. Explaining the scenes of the movie not only makes reader imagine the fantastic scene, but also motivates them to see the real scene in theater. Before closing, he still motivates a reader to see to prove his analysis.

The second review and the third review, both writers use a both side persuasion. They give both the weaknesses and the strengths of the movies.

Writers make the reviews more realistic analysis and more credible. They show that the movies are not perfect but they are worth taking a risk.

In summary, this research has five related theories. First theory is consumer decision making process which consists of five steps : Need Recognition & Problem Awareness, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase and Post-Purchase Evaluation. Movie critics and movie critical reviews have influence on stage two, three and five. Second, movie critics act as opinion leader, informally offer advice and information about movie. Although critics are believed to have more expertise and knowledge, they are still in the same peer group. Third, the Two-Step Flow can be explained that critics receive the information from the companies and then influence the followers' view. Fourth, movie companies use sampling and testimonial to encourage the positive reviews and to increase the box office. The fifth theory is persuasion. As critical reviews are used as an advertising tool, movie critical reviews have two factors that can persuade the moviegoers: source credibility and persuasive language.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology of the current research. It contains five sections; Method of Research Used, Data Sources, Data Collection Technique, Instrument for Collecting Data and Data Analysis. Details will be explained as follows.

Method of Research Used

The data was collected by the questionnaire survey method. The English questionnaire translated into Thai was distributed to the sampling unit.

Data Sources

The source of primary data came from Major Cineplex's customers both male and female aged between 20 – 30 years old which are the main target of the movie industry. The 100 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the sample groups who came to see the movies at four branches of Major Cineplex. Major Cineplex is the leader company in this industry. In Bangkok, Major Cineplex have 51% market share in movie business (Initiative. 2005 : 24). The four selected branches have different target groups. Major Central World Plaza and Major Sukhumvit are located in business area. Their target groups are the office persons. In contrast, Major Rama II and Major Rangsit are located in new developing zone.

Their target groups are persons who work in the industrial zone. Therefore, distributing the questionnaires to these four branches made the sampling diversify.

Data Collection Technique

The 100 questionnaires were distributed during August – September 2005 to customers who saw the movie at four main branches of Major Cineplex by dividing as follows:

1. Major Cental World Plaza - 25 Thai questionnaires
2. Major Sukhumvit - 25 Thai questionnaires
3. Major Rama II - 25 Thai questionnaires
4. Major Rangsit - 25 Thai questionnaires

Instrument for Collecting Data

Instrument for collecting data in this research consisted of questionnaires with closed questions. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts.

Part 1 – General information of respondents: gender, education and occupation. Difference in gender, educational background, and occupation had different effect on behavior and attitude to critics and critical reviews.

Part 2 – The behavior in getting critical review; they read critical review or not, which media they get the critical reviews from and how often they get them.

Part 3 – Attitude towards critical reviews: their attitudes toward critics and critical reviews and how much critical reviews influence their decision making.

See appendices for the samples of questionnaires

Data Analysis

The data collected by the questionnaire survey method was analyzed. Percentage was used for calculating and analyzing the data. The table charts were used to illustrate the scores and rating of respondent's answers. All results were analyzed in accordance with the research problems and theory.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis, consisting of narrative and tables. Three main sections are divided to present: 1) general information of respondents, 2) the behavior in getting critical reviews and 3) attitudes towards critical reviews.

Part 1 : General information of respondents

One hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed to the sample groups who came to see the movies at 4 branches of Major Cineplex during August – September 2005.

The respondents' information was collected in Table 1.

Table 1 General information of respondents

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
a) Female	54	54
b) Male	46	46
Education Background		
a) Undergraduate	65	65
b) High School / Vocational School	24	24
c) Higher Undergraduate	10	10
d) Under High School	1	1

Table 1 (continued)

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation		
a) Student	65	65
b) Private Officer	25	25
c) Business Owner	4	4
d) Government Officer	4	4
e) Unemployed	2	2
f) Others	0	0

As seen in Table 1, there were 46 males and 54 females. Their educational levels were categorized as undergraduate (65%), high school or vocational school (24%), higher undergraduate (10%) and under high school (1%), They were students (65%), private officers (25%), business owners (4%), government officers (4%) and unemployed (2%).

Part 2 : The behavior in getting critical reviews

This part presents a behavior in getting critical reviews and the other factors that make a respondent choose a particular movie. Details of this part are shown in Table 2 to

Table 11.

Table 2 Percentage and amount of respondents who got or not got a critical review.

Items	Frequency	Percentage
No	51	51
Yes	49	49

As shown in Table 2, it was found that 49% of respondents listened to / read a critical review, while the rest of them (51%) said that they did not listen to / read a critical review.

Table 3 Reason for not listen to / read a critical review

Items	Frequency	Percentage
No available time	20	39.22
Not interesting	14	27.45
Boredom	5	9.80
Useless	5	9.80
Hard to find	5	9.80
Less credibility	5	9.80

According to Table 3, the respondents did not listen to / read a critical review because they did not have time (39.22%), followed by not interesting (14%), boredom (5%) and uselessness (5%).

Table 4 Sources of movie information

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Trailer	38	74.51
Television Ads	21	41.18
Friend	20	39.22
Movie Poster	9	17.65
Internet	7	13.73
Radio Ads	1	1.96

Mostly, non critical review readers used trailer as a source of movie information (74.51%), television ads (41.18%), friend (39.22%), movie poster (17.65%), Internet (13.73%) and radio ads (1.96%) respectively.

Table 5 Criterion for choosing a particular movie

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Story	46	90.20
Actor / Actress	29	56.86
Director	5	9.80
Budget	2	3.92

As seen in Table 5, the results indicated that story (90.20%) and actor / actress (56.86%) had high influence on the consumer's decision making. Director (9.80%) and Budget (3.92%) also had some influence on decision making process.

Table 6 Reason for reading a critical review

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Reading movie's information	34	69.39
Extending movie's understanding	34	69.39
Entertainment	9	18.37
Comparing with own analysis	8	16.33

Main reasons for reading a critical review were reading movie's information (69.39%) and extending movie's understanding (69.39%). Some respondents read a critical review for entertainment (18.37%) and comparing with their own analysis (16.33%). In other words, respondents read a critical review both before and after seeing a movie.

Table 7 Source of critical review

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Television	39	79.59
Internet	23	46.94
Magazine	21	42.86
Newspaper	21	42.86
Radio	4	8.16

Referring to Table 7, respondent listened to / read a critical review from many media: television (79.59%), Internet (46.94%), magazine (42.86%), newspaper (42.86%) and radio (8.16%).

Table 8 Frequency of reading a critical review

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Twice a week	21	42.86
Once a week	14	28.57
Twice a month	6	12.24
Once a month	5	10.20
Everyday	2	4.08

From the result reported in Table 8, it was shown that 42.86% of respondents got a critical review twice a week, 28.57% got once a week, 12.24% got twice a month, 10.20% got once a month and 4.08% got everyday respectively.

Table 9 Number of critical review's source for one movie

Items	Frequency	Percentage
2 - 3 sources	37	75.51
1 source	11	22.45
6 sources or more than 6 sources	1	2.04
4 - 5 sources	0	0.00

Table 9 demonstrates that critical review readers used 2-3 sources of review (75.51%) for gathering one particular movie's information , followed by 1 source (22.45%) and 6 sources or more than 6 sources (2.04%).

Table 10 Frequency of using a critical review in decision making

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes	26	53.06
Always	20	40.82
Few	3	6.12
Rarely	0	0.00

The highest percentage of respondents (53.06%) agreed that sometimes critical review had influence on their decision making, while 40.82% said that critical review always had some influence and 6.12% said that critical review had a little influence.

Table 11 Type of critical review that has more influence

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Positive review	45	91.84
Negative review	4	8.16

As seen in Table 11, the results indicated that a positive review (91.84%) had more potential than a negative one (8.16%) to shape a reader's decision.

Part 3 : Attitudes towards critical reviews

This part showed the attitude of respondents toward a critic and a critical review.

The results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12 Attitudes towards critical reviews

Items	Extremely High	High	Medium	Low	Extremely Low
1. Since critics are credible, you believe their opinions.	0.00	16.33	77.55	4.08	2.04
2. You believe in a critical review	0.00	12.24	73.47	14.29	0.00
3. Critical review is a kind of advertising	14.29	57.14	26.53	2.04	0.00
4. Critical review always exaggerates	4.08	30.61	51.02	14.29	0.00
5. Critical review is an alternative that helps you choose a movie.	14.29	42.86	32.65	10.20	0.00
6. Although you don't want to see a movie, sometimes a positive review can change your mind.	2.04	38.78	36.73	18.37	4.08
7. Although you want to see a movie, sometimes a negative review can change your mind.	6.12	22.45	51.02	14.29	6.12

As seen from Table 12, 77.55% of critical reviews readers viewed that critics were partly credible, 16.33% viewed that critics were highly credible and readers believed their opinions, 4.08% and 2.04% thought critics had low credibility and extremely low credibility respectively. For critical reviews, 73.47% of readers quite believed them, 14.49% thought a critical review was less credible and 12.24% highly believed in critical reviews. From item 3, the highest percent of respondents (57.14%) agreed that a critical review was a kind of advertising, 26.53% thought a critical review may be a part of advertising and 14.29% highly believed that a critical review was a kind of advertising. According to Item 4, 51.02% of respondents believed that a critical review sometimes exaggerated, 30.61% believed critical reviews always exaggerated and 14.29% said that critical reviews did not exaggerate. As for Item 5, it was found that the highest percentage of the respondents agreed with the statement at "High" level of 42.86%, the second highest ratings was "Medium" at 32.65% and the third was "Extremely High" at 14.29%. The result reveals that most of the respondents believed that a critical review was an alternative that helps them choose a movie. Item 6, the first two highest percentages of respondents (38.78% and 36.73%) agreed that although they do not want to see a movie, positive reviews could change their mind, while 18.37% said positive reviews had less influence on them. As for the last item, 51.02% of critical review readers agreed that sometimes negative reviews could change their mind, 22.45% accepted that negative reviews had high influence on their decision and 14.29% accepted they had little influence.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the study as well as a discussion and conclusion of the results. In addition, recommendations for further studies are also provided.

Conclusion

Nowadays, movies became a popular alternative for relaxation. Almost everyone watches movies. Viewed in theaters or seen on television, motion pictures are a part of contemporary life. Plenty of movies are showed in theater, people face a dilemma in front of the box office when finding which movie is worth their money and their time. When the quality of a product is unknown prior to consumption, product reviews by experts or other consumers can play an important role in shaping demand (Sorensen; & Rasmussen. 2004 : Online).

Due to this limitation, a critical review was chosen to solve a problem. Therefore, this study was undertaken to investigate the influence of critical reviews on Thai moviegoers. The finding revealed that 49% of respondents get a critical review. The main reason that respondents read the critical review was to get information and understand the movie of their choice. The typical media that they get a critical review from was television, followed by Internet, magazine and newspaper. Respondents got critical reviews on the average of

twice a week from 2-3 sources per one particular movie. The high percentage of respondents believed in both a critic and a critical review, although they accepted that critical reviews exaggerated and used as a kind of advertising. Critical review readers usually used a critical review in decision making process and positive reviews had more influence than negative review.

Discussion

Since this study aimed to expose the influence of critical reviews on Thai moviegoers, it was found that half of the respondents (49%) used critical reviews in their decision making process. They got critical review both in information search stage, when finding movie's information, and in post-purchase evolution stage, when extending their movie's knowledge. In other words, movie critical reviews were not only a part of the entertainment but also a source of knowledge. Consumers often use other people as sources of information because it is an easy and effective way to find the information. Movie reviews are the important source for gaining information. Moreover, critics use a active and lively message to persuade and entertain readers at the same time.

Television was a top media source that respondents got the critical review from, followed by Internet, magazine, newspaper and radio. The result revealed that television was a media that has high potential to reach the customers. If movie companies want to promote their movie or increase their ticket-sales, they should focus on this media.

Nowadays, movie companies use many strategies in television media. Movie companies not only promote their movies by reviewing in movie programs, but also hire critics or celebrities to talk a positive opinion about their movies.

93.88% of the respondents believed in critics and 85.71% of the respondents believed in critical reviews. This result showed that the respondents believed in critical reviews because they thought that a critic was considered knowledgeable and credible. Although critical reviews were considered exaggerating and were used as an advertising tool, reading a review could help the review readers find movie information and somewhat extend their knowledge. The critic's credibility is very important. As Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953 : 46) mentioned that the low credibility communicators will gain inattentiveness, even though their message might be quiet convincing, it may never receive an adequate hearing. In contrast, the positive communicator who gives an unacceptable message will probably have the audience's attention, at least during the initial part of his presentation.

In summary, a critical review has some influence on consumers' decision making. That is why movie makers use a critical review as an advertising tool. In the launching period, reviewers may have their greatest potential for influence because little or no word-of-mouth information is available (Eliashberg; & Shugan. 1999 : Online). Movie companies should know how to use a critical review to increase sales and use word of mouth to spread the positive review.

Recommendations

1. The present study was carried out in only one group of movie audience, teenager. Thus, it is suggested that a parallel study should be conducted to reveal the influence of critics and critical reviews on other groups. The information will help movie companies to know how respondents' age and education effect to their attitude to critics and critical reviews, moreover, the companies can design their appropriate marketing strategies.

2. Due to a critical review has some influence on consumers' decision-making, further research should focus on bribery, because film industries will have an incentive for critics to write a positive review.

3. Critical reviews can be positive and negative. For further research, the researcher should make a comparison of the effect of positive and negative reviews.

4. Although a review has some influence on the consumer decision process, sometimes audiences choose films based on other factors such as trailers, advertising and word-of-mouth from a familiar or credible source. Further research should explore in these factors or make a comparison of the effect of each factor.

5. Movie companies not only use a critical review as an advertising tool, but also use others advertising tools; sidewalk, trailer, bill board, testimonial and word of mouth.

Further research should analyze the strategies in promoting the movies. This information will help movie companies know how to promote their marketing strategies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A : Star wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith ★★ ★ (Kong Rithdee. 2005 : 6)

You'll enjoy everything you expect to enjoy in this, the final chapter of George Lucas' space opera. It's a thrilling, head-spinning, eye-dazzling series of cosmic battles at interplanetary locations inhabited by the most bizarre of species which, most importantly, features the transformation of young Anakin Skywalker (Christensen) from hot-headed jedi warrior to Darth Vader.

But after all the hullabaloo dies down, after this 30-year-old "legend" reaches its long-awaited orgasm, it becomes apparent that the *Star Wars* audience of Lucas the myth-maker, who has harvested some magnificent digital technology to satisfy the hunger of his fans. The film expresses itself, at best, in the grandiloquence of its battle scenes, which perhaps surpass anything we've seen before in space movies, but its delivery gets staccato human characters; the treatment of the latter is jaded in the extreme. But does it matter? Will its shortfalls prevent this trilogy-closer from becoming a legend in itself? Well, a lot will depend on whether you're in the I-care of the I-don't camp. There's only one way to find out: Go see it first.

Appendix B : Rahtree Returns (Anchalee Chaiworaporn. 2005 : Online)

I have always praised director Yuthlert Sippapak as Thailand's most interesting commercial filmmaker. He knows how to captivate audiences, but does not hesitate to say what he thinks. I love his honesty. He is a master of all genres, from comedy to romance, horror and beyond. Box office receipts for his films have always made his producers smile, yet his works never lack his signature – cameo appearances of famous stars, send-ups of real-life film people as well as his own previous movies, a subtle but sharp wit, and, most importantly, a good mix of genres. The comic parts make you laugh until you drop; the horror parts always have you hiding your eyes in terror. His fifth film *Rahtree Returns*, the sequel to *Flower of the Night* (2004), however, maintains only glimpses of these elements, and then I can't feel that this is only the rest-taking work.

Set in the same Oscar apartment as its precursor, *Rahtree Returns* follows the afterlives of the two ghosts, Buppha and Akekapon, who still haunt room 609 of the otherwise-deserted apartment block. Chaos returns when the place is selected as a refuge by two groups of losers. A gang of bank robbers foolishly pick it as their hideout, while a young blind woman unable to find money for an eye operation decides to kill herself there. Their fates become intertwined when the stolen money is accidentally left in room 609.

Rahtree Returns tries to demonstrate the same sense of humour and horror, but somehow it just doesn't work this time. It is not funny and not scary. Gone are the sharp gags previously found in Yuthlert's work. Gone also is the horror atmosphere found in the

first story, as well as Yuthlert's cinematic experimentation. Throughout the film, there is only one sequence in which he really demonstrates his cinematic vision: in the battle between Buppha and the exorcist, the whole scene is enveloped in red water. At first, it signifies the evil world – or even the dirty world – according to the exorcist who thinks it is the world of women's menstrual periods. But this evil world can finally get rid of Buppha.

Yuthlert's casting of the famous 1980s comedy group Den-Der-Du-Dee is a failure. I really don't know why. This is a group that I used to watch during my coming-of-age. They were polite and did not make cheap jokes about women or transvestites as seen on the present comedy shows. Are they now out of date? I am not sure. I think the script's lack of sharp gags is the real problem.

The only worthwhile thing to see in *Rahtree Returns* is the performance of famous director-cum-producer Adirek Wattaleela, better known as Uncle. As a ghost-phobic policeman, Uncle proves himself to be a good comedian with a strong sense of humor, and, most importantly, a good singer. This is the best thing I took from *Rahtree Returns*.

Appendix C : .Live and Learn at *The Tin Mine* (Sorradihep Supachanya. 2005 : Online)

For many people, college is the best four years of their lives. For 22-year-old Archin Panjabhan, expulsion from college is the best thing that has ever happened to him

In 1949, an expelled engineering student Archin Panjabhan was sent to work in a tin mine at a backward town, where rains never stopped pouring and alcohol never ran dry.

There, he learned what no universities could provide—life’s most important lessons of determination, respect, honesty, and friendship.

The Tin Mine is Jira Malikul’s sophomore directorial effort. It stays true to Archin’s collection of over 140 short stories about his three-year-and-eleven-month experience there by dividing up the narration into four parts, one for each “year” in this tin mine university.

To me, this is the film’s weakest point. Condensing everything that has happened in the span of four years into 120 minutes of choppily edited footage results in a movie that moves too quickly and skips essential parts that enrich characters’ backgrounds and motivations. By covering too many events, *The Tin Mine* loses its potential to be one of the best screen adaptations of one of the best Thai literary works.

For example, why “You Are My Sunshine” holds a special place in the Australian boss’s heart is never revealed in the film. How Archin’s ghost encounter helps him bond with his new “classmates” needs further explorations. And, apart from a few scenes where Archin chokes on his own cooking, I am still not convinced how a scrawny middle-class

Bangkok-born boy who probably has never worked in his life learns to survive in a depressing, asthma-causing environment working as a manual worker for minimum wage.

It also baffles me that Jira again chooses to cast mostly new actors for *The Tin Mine* like he has done for his first movie, *Mekhong Full Moon Party* (2002). Archin is such a pivotal character in the film that should be played by a more experienced actor. While I must commend wide-eyed Pichaya Watchitapant for good effort in undertaking such a herculean task of portraying national legend Archin, his acting still comes across as mostly robotic. Likewise, Anthony Howard Gould's performance as the mine's good-hearted and frequently inebriated owner is monotonous, and Dolaya Mudcha's portrayal of the mesmerizing muse is somnolent. However, Pichaya has a wonderful on-screen chemistry with absent-minded but loyal sidekick Kai, charmingly played by Sontaya Chitmanee.

Even with these flaws, *The Tin Mine* is still worth seeing, particularly for its meticulous art direction and beautiful cinematography. A silhouette of the tin dredger at sunset remains one of the film's most memorable moments. Furthermore, every visually rich scene is augmented by appropriately placed majestic orchestral score. A tin mine never looks more romantic.

The Tin Mine is also worth seeing for another reason—its theme. In a country such as Thailand where an alarming number of 17-year-olds commit suicides as a shortsighted way to deal with failing college examinations, Archin's account demonstrates that the

university cannot provide all the life's most important lessons. Learning is a life-long process that only stops at one's death.

In conclusion, go see *The Tin Mine*. For those who have not gone to college, this film will open your horizon. For those who have, this film will remind you of your university life, where there is plenty of laughter and excessive booze, where lifelong friendships are forged, and where saying goodbye is always tearful. *The Tin Mine* is no Harvard, but it is still worth your money.

Questionnaire

The main objective of this questionnaire is to study the impact of critical reviews on a moviegoers and to investigate how critical reviews influence consumers to choose a particular movie. Your answers are very helpful in this project. Thank you for your co-operation.

This questionnaire is divided into 3 parts.

Part 1 General information

Part 2 The behavior in getting critical reviews

Part 3 Attitude towards critical reviews

Directions : Please mark (X) on the best answer that matches with your information

Part 1 General information

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Education Background

Under High School

High School/ Vocational School

Undergraduate

Higher Undergraduate

3. Occupation

Student

Private Officer

Unemployed

Business Owner

Government Officer

Others (please specify).....

Part 2 The behavior in getting critical reviews

4. Before seeing movies, did you listen to/read a critical review?

- Yes (answer question no. 8 - 20) No (answer question no. 5 – 7)

Question no. 5 –7, for non-critical review reader

5. Why do you intend not to listen to/read the critical review? (You may answer more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boredom | <input type="checkbox"/> Useless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to find | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interesting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less credibility | <input type="checkbox"/> No available time |

6. Which sources of information on movies do you use before seeing a movie? (You may answer more than one)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trailer | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio Ads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Movie Poster | <input type="checkbox"/> Television Ads |

7. What is your criterion for choosing a particular movie? (You may answer more than one)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Story | <input type="checkbox"/> Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Actor/Actress |

Question no. 8 – 20, for critical review reader

8. Why do you read critical reviews? (You may answer more than one)
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Comparing with own analysis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading movie's information | <input type="checkbox"/> Extending movie's understanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please specify)..... | |
9. Where do you get critical reviews from? (You may answer more than one)
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | |
10. How often do you read critical reviews?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twice a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twice a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please specify) |
11. How many sources of critical reviews do you listen to/read for one movie?
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 source | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – 3 sources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 sources | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 sources or more than 6 sources |
12. How often do you use critical reviews to help you in making decision?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always | <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely |
13. What kind of critical review has more influence on your decision about seeing a movie?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Positive review | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative review |
|--|--|

Part 3 Attitude towards critical reviews

Questions	Extremely High	High	Medium	Low	Extremely Low
14. Since critics are credible, you believe their opinions.					
15. You believe in a critical review					
16. Critical review is a kind of advertising					
17. Critical review always exaggerates					
18. Critical review is an alternative that helps you choose a movie					
19. Although you don't want to see a movie, sometimes a positive review can change your mind					
20. Although you want to see a movie, sometimes a negative review can change your mind					

VITAE

VITAE

Name : Miss Kulnatee Prapasrisuk
Date of Birth : 21 April 1980
Place of Birth : Bangkok
Address : 3/63 Wutthakat 53 Road, Jomthong, Bangkok 10150

Education Background

2006 Master of Arts (Business English for International
Communication), Department of Western Languages,
Srinakharinwirot University

2001 Bachelor of Arts (Chinese) , Faculty of Liberal Arts,
Thammasat University

1997 Saint Joseph Convent School