



# กลยุทธ์การสื่อสารการตลาดภายในเพื่อเสริมสร้างความไว้วางใจ และความผูกพันในตราโรงเรม\*

นักชีหัพย์ เดอะระกุล<sup>1</sup>  
ปริญ ลักษิตามาศ<sup>2</sup>

## บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ดังนี้ 1) เพื่อศึกษาองค์ประกอบสำคัญของระบบการสื่อสารการตลาดภายในโรงเรม (Internal marketing communication) ความมั่นใจในความสามารถของตน (Self efficacy) ความไว้วางใจ (Trust) และความผูกพัน (Commitment) ของพนักงานที่มีต่อตราโรงเรม 2) เพื่อวิเคราะห์ความสัมพันธ์ของการสื่อสารการตลาดภายใน และความเชื่อมั่นในความสามารถของตน ที่มีผลให้พนักงานเกิดความไว้วางใจและผูกพันกับตราโรงเรม 3) เพื่อกำหนดรูปแบบกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารการตลาดภายในที่มีประสิทธิผลต่อโรงเรมในการสร้างให้พนักงานมีความไว้วางใจและผูกพันกับตราโรงเรม กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ศึกษาคือ พนักงานโรงเรม จำนวน 1,001 คน ในจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ ซึ่งเป็นจังหวัดที่มีการขยายตัวของธุรกิจโรงเรมค่อนข้างสูง และเป็นจังหวัดที่มีอัตราการขยายตัวของนักท่องเที่ยวมากที่สุด การเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลดำเนินการระหว่างเดือนตุลาคม – พฤศจิกายน 2555 วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยการแจกแจงความถี่ ค่าร้อยละ ค่าสถิติ Chi-square และโมเดลสมการโครงสร้าง (Structural Equation Model)

## ผลการวิจัย พบว่า

กลยุทธ์การสื่อสารการตลาดภายใน เพื่อเสริมสร้างความไว้วางใจ และความผูกพันในตราโรงเรม ที่พัฒนาขึ้น มีความเหมาะสม อันเนื่องจากตัวแบบที่พัฒนาขึ้น มีความสอดคล้องกับข้อมูลเชิงประจักษ์ เนื่องจากการทดสอบค่าไชร์ แสควร์ (Chi-square) ไม่มีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ 0.05 ( $P \geq 0.05$ ) ค่าดัชนีทุกตัวได้แก่ GFI, AGFI, NFI, IFI, CFI ผ่านเกณฑ์ที่กำหนดตั้งแต่ 0.90 ขึ้นไป ส่วนดัชนีที่กำหนดไว้ที่ระดับน้อยกว่า 0.05 พบว่า ดัชนี RMR, RMSEA ผ่านเกณฑ์ที่กำหนดไว้เช่นเดียวกัน นอกจากนั้นดัชนี CMIN/df น้อยกว่า 2 ผ่านเกณฑ์ที่กำหนดไว้เช่นเดียวกัน อีกทั้งในแต่ละองค์ประกอบของแบบจำลองมีความเที่ยงตรง (Validity) เมื่อจากมีค่าน้ำหนักปัจจัย (Factor loading) มีค่าตั้งแต่ 0.30 ขึ้นไป นั่นแสดงถึงผลการศึกษาสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้เพื่อพัฒนาโรงเรมและใช้ในการเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพการบริหารการตลาดของโรงเรม โดยผู้บริหารหรือผู้ประกอบการต้องมีการสร้างให้พนักงานมีความไว้วางใจและมีความผูกพันกับตราโรงเรมก่อน โดยผ่านกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารการตลาดภายในร่วมกับการเสริมสร้างให้พนักงานมีความมั่นใจในความสามารถของตน

**คำสำคัญ:** การสื่อสารการตลาดภายใน, ความมั่นใจในความสามารถของตน, ความไว้วางใจ, ความผูกพัน, พนักงาน

\* วิทยานิพนธ์บริหารธุรกิจดูยีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการตลาด มหาวิทยาลัยสยาม พ.ศ.2556

<sup>1</sup> นักศึกษาหลักสูตรบริหารธุรกิจดูยีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการตลาด มหาวิทยาลัยสยาม

<sup>2</sup> อาจารย์, สาขาวิชาการตลาด มหาวิทยาลัยสยาม (ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์)



## The Internal Marketing Communication Strategy Enhancing Trust and Commitment for Hotel Branding\*

*Nuthathai Thaotrakool<sup>1</sup>*

*Prin Laksitamas<sup>2</sup>*

### Abstracts

The objectives of this study were to 1) study the important elements of internal marketing communication systems, the self-efficacy, the trust, and the commitment which the employees have towards the hotel branding, 2) analyze the relationship of internal marketing communication and the confidence in self-efficacy which have effects on the employees' trust and the commitment on the hotel branding and 3) set up a strategic format for internal marketing communication which have effects on the hotel and build employees' trust and commitment on the hotel branding. The subjects were 1,001 hotel employees in Chiang Mai which is a city with the high expansion of hotel business as well as a city with the high growth rate of tourists. The period of study was from October to November 2012. The statistics used to analyze the data were frequency, percentage, chi-square and the structural equation model.

It was found that the improved strategy used for internal marketing communication to enhance trust and commitment on the hotel branding was suitable due to the model was in accordance with the evident data. This is because the test of chi-square had no statistical significance at 0.05 ( $P \geq 0.05$ ) The values of all indexes like GFI, AGFI, NFI, IFI and CFI were higher than the criteria of 0.90. For the values of the indexes set lower than 0.05, RMR and RMSEA also were within the criteria. In addition, the index CMIN/df which was lower than 2 was within the criteria too. Moreover, each element of the model had validity since the value of factor loading was from 0.30 up. This means that the results of the study can be applied to develop the hotel and enhance the proficiency of marketing administration by the administrator or the entrepreneurs should first enhance employees' trust and commitment to the hotel by using the strategic internal marketing communication to build up employees' confidence.

**Keywords:** Internal marketing communication, Self efficacy, Trust, Commitment, Employee

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<sup>1</sup> Student in Doctor of Business Administration Program in Marketing, Faculty of Business Administration, Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand

<sup>2</sup> Lecturer, Program in Marketing, Program at Siam University (Thesis Advisor)



### **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Hotel business is an important foundation factor to support tourism growth and plays a role in developing northern economy. This can be seen in the third quarter of 2011 when the northern hotel business grew dramatically. There was also an increase in the room rates during the high season to suit the growth of both Thai and International tourists. This can be seen from the 11.6% growth of the number of passengers at the northern airports in the same period last year. The most growth was at Chiang Mai International Airport and Phitsanuloke Airports at 11.9% and 79.5% respectively. (Bank of Thailand, 2011) In addition, the number of hotel growth in Chiang Mai in 2011 shows that there were 447 hotels in all and this was an increase from year 2010 of 37 hotels. This number also shows an increase from year 2001 of 231 hotels. (Office of National Statistics, 2011)

There are two types of big and small hotel management in Chiang Mai. They are independent hotel and hotel chain. For the independent hotel, the owner runs the hotel by himself/herself. For the hotel chain, there are Thai hotel chain and international hotel chain. The latter is to administer all hotels together under similar or the same system. From 2007, more international chain hotel has expanded their its business in Thailand including Chiang Mai. The majority of the Thai owners are only the investors and they let the international chain run the hotel. This is because they can not operate the hotels by themselves due to the more intense competition in all aspects. The international chain hotel uses its strong network marketing to strengthen its hotel and lure more tourists to stay in the hotel. For the independent hotel or the Thai chain hotel, it can be said that the network is not as strong as that of the international hotel chain. Majority of international tourists or overseas tour companies do not know the standard of each Thai hotels. As a result, they mostly choose to stay at the international chain hotels. This has effects on both Thai chain hotels and independent hotels for fear of the expansion of international chain hotels. Another concern is the oversupply of rooms in Chiang Mai. All these result Chiang Mai entrepreneurs to plan and adapt their hotels to be more international. This is a way to counterpart the influx of international chain hotel. (Thai hotels change to counterpart international chain hotel, 2008)

Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the marketing units of Chiang Mai hotels which were run both by Thai chain hotel and independent hotels. The researcher focused on the effects on internal marketing communication on internal branding to strengthen the hotel through employees



who play a role in bringing success or failure to the hotel. The researcher put an emphasis on employees' trust and commitment that can motivate them to work more effectively. The study of Zeffane, Tupu & Ryan (2011) states that most research focus on the relationship between two variables: communication and trust or trust and commitment and communication and commitment. There are a few studies studying the relationship among the three variables – communication, trust and commitment. Therefore, the researcher was interested to study and develop the relationship among these three variables. Moreover, the self-efficacy is a philosophy developed by Bandura (1997) believing that the factors which have effects on work proficiency depend on the acknowledgement of one's ability in that situation and one's own confidence as well as the prediction of the work outcome rather than relying on the past outcome. This means that the belief in one's ability is related to the efficiency in providing services to customers. Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the importance of having confidence on one's own abilities, the communication system, trust and commitment to find out the relationship among these variables whether they have direct or indirect effects. Another goal was to summarize these variables' relationship to develop marketing strategy for each type of hotels and for entrepreneurs to operate their hotels efficiently by relying on their internal strength.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the important elements of internal marketing communication system, the self efficacy, the trust, and the commitment which the employees have towards the hotel branding
2. To analyze the relationship of internal marketing communication and the confidence in self-efficacy which have effects on the employees' trust and the commitment on the hotel branding.
3. To set up a strategic format for internal marketing communication which have effects on the hotel and build employees' trust and commitment on the hotel branding.

### **HYPOTHESES**

H1: Internal marketing communication is correlated to employee's trust in hotel branding.

H2: Internal marketing communication is correlated to employee's commitment to hotel branding.

H3: Self-efficacy on service provision is correlated to employee's trust in hotel branding.



H4: Self-efficacy on service provision is correlated to employee's commitment to hotel branding.

H5: Internal marketing communication is correlated to employee's self-efficacy on service provision.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Internal marketing communication is the first thing that an organization must realize its importance to manage their internal branding permanently (Zucker, 2002). The present organization management gives the importance on both external customers and internal customers or employees, as well as the internal communication systems to let the outsiders know the same information as what the employees understand (Dolphin, 2005).

Hotel business and service provision are inseparable. The hotel that serves customers to their satisfaction will have better impacts on their organization than that which does not respond to customers' needs. To provide good services, the hotel should consist of ready facilities, devices and technology as well as a communication system to mobilize strategy and all internal and external administrating activities to reach the goals. However, for the hotel to progress and advance quickly, there should be a foundation of effective internal communication system and have employees as important assets to operate the whole operation. For a hotel which is unable to administer the communication among employees in the same direction, the administrating pattern leading to customers will be different and will eventually have negative impacts on the hotel (Proctor & Doukakis, 2003).

Moreover, trust is the basis of all relationship (Baruch, 1998) as it will have effects on commitment. When employees have trust in their brand or the logo of the hotel, they usually have commitment and this brand trust becomes part of their personality and how they live their life. This results in the promise from the hotel extended to its employees. For the commitment which the employees make to the hotel, it is a good indicator for the hotel proficiency as the hotel employees have high commitment to their hotel. They will continue to be with the hotel to fulfill the work they are responsible for as well as to improve the hotel to be better. On the contrary, when the employees feel that they are not looked after or they do not have positive feeling towards their organization, they will be bored with their work and lack enthusiasm to work which eventually lead to resignation. This includes



the employees who do not have commitment towards their workplace but continue to stay which will have both short term and long term effects on their organization (Mowday, Porte & Dubin, 1974).

In addition, the results of Judge & Bono's study (2001) indicate the importance of having self-efficacy, internal locus of control and self-esteem. These factors play important roles on work results. Bandura (1988) believes that having one's own self-efficacy is essential and will have effects on his/her work. Two workers may have the same ability but may have different ways of showing their abilities and in different quality levels. The important part is that each employee may work to show his/her own abilities differently in different situations. This shows that one's own ability is flexible and can be adapted according to the circumstances. Therefore, what can be an indicator for each efficient work and how employees perform the work mean the understanding of employees own abilities upon each situation. For example, if an employee understands one work and has confidence in his/her own ability, he/she will best show what he/she can do with attempts and never gives up until the task is accomplished.

## ***METHODOLOGY***

### **Population and Samples**

The population and samples for this study were employees working in the Thai hotel chain and independent hotels in Chiang Mai. The researcher divided the subjects into two groups. The first group which the researcher had in-depth interviews were 6 executives working in both kinds of hotels. The second group by given questionnaires were 1,001 employees in each division working in both Thai hotel chain and independent hotels in Chiang Mai. The total number of the whole subjects was 1,001 people. This sample was appropriate for using in this research as it was in accordance with Tabachnick's and Fidell's philosophy (1996). They state that to set the appropriate sample size to be used with the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM), the number should be from 100-200. When a researcher would like to have more confidence in the study, the sample size should be around 300. This is in accordance with Hair et al., (2006) who used the ratio of the population and sample size of at least 10-20 times of the variables. For this research, the researcher set the population and sample size at 15 times and there were 57 items on the questionnaires. Therefore, the number of the population and sample size was at least  $(15 \times 57) = 855$  samples.



## Research Methods

This research used the combination of quantitative and qualitative research by starting on literature review of relevant studies as well as interviews on hotel executives to gather data before using it for writing questionnaires items. After that, the outline of the questionnaires was tested for their validity, and IOC (Index of item objective congruence) which their values is higher than 0.5. Another test was to test its reliability which should be higher than 0.7 (Kanlaya Wanichbancha, 2006). The output from the analysis was at 0.871 which is acceptable. Then, 40 questionnaires were used as pre-test before they were used to collect data from October – November, 2012.

The data analysis for this research was SPSS for window and AMOS program. The statistics were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation. The utilized analysis was confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM).

## RESULTS

For the analysis on internal marketing communication within the hotels, the self-efficacy, the trust in the hotel branding and the commitment to the hotel branding, it was found that the employees from independent hotels had high level of satisfaction (at  $X=3.53$ ) on the overall image of the management of information through hotel channels in distributing information. For the acknowledgement and understanding the hotel marketing information, the level of satisfaction was high (at  $X = 3.88$ ). For the communication climate about the relationship between employees, satisfaction was at high level ( $X = 4.02$ ). The quality and the reliability of the information were at high level ( $X=3.97$ ). For the motivation to work, the satisfaction was at high level ( $X= 3.85$ ) and the same is true for the employees' opinions on the overall aspect of their own self-efficacy at  $X= 4.01$ . Both the trust in the hotel branding and the commitment to the hotel branding were at high levels of  $X = 3.92$  and  $X= 3.91$  respectively.

For the analysis on Thai chain hotel, it was found that the employees had opinions on overall communication system of the hotel, managing information and channels that hotels used to communicate with employees at high level ( $X= 3.84$ ). For the acknowledgement and understanding the hotel marketing information, the satisfaction was at high level ( $X= 4.00$ ). For the communication climate about the relationship among employees, the level was high ( $X= 4.02$ ). The quality and the reliability of the information were at high level ( $X= 4.10$ ). For the motivation to work, the satisfaction was at high level ( $X= 3.96$ ) and the same is true for the employees' opinions on the overall aspect of their own self-efficacy at



$X = 3.94$ . Both the trust in the hotel branding and the commitment to the hotel branding were at high levels of  $X = 3.53$  and  $3.94$  respectively.

When the Multicollinearity was tested for the relationship among the independent variables like internal marketing communication, self-efficacy, trust and commitment on hotel branding in this study, it was found that all these independent variables did not show high relationship ( $r < 0.80$ ) which did not cause Multicollinearity. This made all the variables used in this study appropriate for analyzing the methods of internal marketing communication to build trust and commitment to hotel branding.

For the results of the analysis to test the validity in each elements of strategy of internal marketing communication enhancing trust and commitment on hotel branding by analyzing on confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), there was a validity due to factor loading value was higher than 0.30. (Grid Rangsungnoen, 2010). The results show that for the factors to test internal marketing communication, the acknowledgment and understanding of information on hotel marketing, the motivation to work, the relationship among employees, the quality and the reliability of the information, the factor loading were at 0.887, 0.552, 0.521, 0.361, and 0.354 respectively.

For the test on self-efficacy, the experiences from observing other successes, the verbal motivation, the experiences of their own successes and emotional stimulation, the factor loading were at 0.634, 0.581, 0.528, and 0.513 respectively.

For the test on employees' trust, the trust in each employees' personality, the trust in employees' abilities to work, the trust in providing services to hotel guests, and trust in third-party, the factor loading were at 0.652, 0.501, 0.471, and 0.371 respectively.

For the test on employees' commitment, it was found that the work commitment, the career commitment, the organization commitment, and the colleague commitment, the factor loading were at 0.652, 0.573, 0.564, and 0.491 respectively.

For the results of the analysis on structural equation model analysis (SEM), strategy on internal marketing communication to build trust and commitment on hotel branding, it was found that they were in accordance with the evident data. From the overall concordance of the model, it shows that the chi-square test had no statistics significance at 0.05 ( $P = 0.102; \geq 0.05$ ), which was within the set criteria at more or equal to 0.90. This shows that all indexes like  $GFI = 0.986$ ,  $AGFI = 0.979$ ,  $NFI = 0.901$ ,  $IFI = 0.969$ ,  $CFI = 0.968$  were within the criteria. For the indexes which were set lower than 0.05, it was found that



the RMR = 0.010 and RMSEA = 0.013 which also were within the criteria. In addition, the index of CMIN/df had the value of 1.180 which was lower than 2.

The study set the hypothesis to study the cause relationship among internal marketing communication, self-efficacy, trust in hotel branding and commitment on hotel branding, the results prove the hypothesis as it can be tested by writing the following structure equation model analysis:

$$\text{Self efficacy} = 0.180 * \text{Internal marketing communication}; R^2 = 0.733$$

$$\text{Trust} = 0.074 * \text{Internal marketing communication} + 0.544 * \text{Self efficacy}; R^2 = 0.791$$

$$\text{Commitment} = 0.135 * \text{Internal marketing communication} + 0.370 * \text{Self efficacy}; R^2 = 0.681$$

This means that the developed model had an ability to predict at a high level and is accepted due to the value of squared multiple correlation is equal to 0.791 and 0.681 or 79% and 68% respectively and this is higher than 40% (Saris & Strenkhost, 1984).

In this study, hypotheses were set to study the causal relationship between internal marketing communication, self-efficacy, trust and commitment to hotel branding. The results revealed that all hypotheses were accepted.

## **DISCUSSION**

*The results of the study show that internal marketing communication had direct and indirect relationship on hotel employees' trust, commitment through their self-efficacy.*

The aforementioned results are in accordance with Punjaisri & Wilson's study (2007) which states that the internal communication system and the training are factors which have effects on employees' attitudes and behaviors. In fact, the internal communication is more important and has more effects on employees' attitudes and behaviors than training the employees to improve their work. In addition, the employees' better work performances are the results of their positive attitudes on hotel branding from the brand identification, brand loyalty, and brand commitment through the process of building effective internal communication and in accordance with Buchner's study (2008) the results show that the employees received information and had effective communication as well as supports on ideas which will help employees have trust. This is also in accordance with Zeffane, Tipu & Ryan's study (2011) which the results show that the acknowledgement of the efficiency among employees and the management model, trust and the commitment to the organization are related. However, trust and communication are most related while commitment and communication are less related. This means that



trust and commitment can help improve and maintain their role within the organization only when there is efficiency in the internal communication of the organization.

*The results of the study prove that the internal marketing communication has direct and positive relationship on the employees' self-efficacy.*

This study is in accordance with Ford's study (1996) which proves that when an organization lacks an efficient communication, the employees are likely to experience disappointment or feel unsatisfied and have negative emotion. All these result in lack of self-efficacy among employees and reduce the positive and creative behaviors. When an organization wants to build confidence in employees' self-efficacy, it has to develop relationship among employees as well as create good working atmosphere. This is supported by Buchner (2008) on expectancy theory which puts the focus on the results of the action. This will be seen only when employees believe in their self-efficacy. The colleague or the supervisor will be the mediator to enhance this aspect. The communication between the supervisor and the employees, the persuasion, and receiving the supports from the supervisor will help employees believe in their self-efficacy.

*The study results show that the confidence in employees' self-efficacy has positive and direct relationship on trust and commitment on hotel branding.*

This study is in accordance with Hurter's study (2008) which states that having self-efficacy is related to and can predict motivation and task performance as well as has effects on personal goal setting. The study also points out that having self-efficacy, and commitment are positively related. Employees with low commitment will have low self-efficacy. The findings of this study are in agreement with Akhtar, Ghayas & Adil's study (2012) which states that having self-efficacy is an essential factor for employees to have commitment to the organization. When employees have self-efficacy, the work performance will be better than those who lack self-efficacy. When employees have good work performance, they will be promoted, feel satisfied and gain trust from the organization as well as eventually have commitment to the organization.

The results mentioned above are shown in Figure 1.

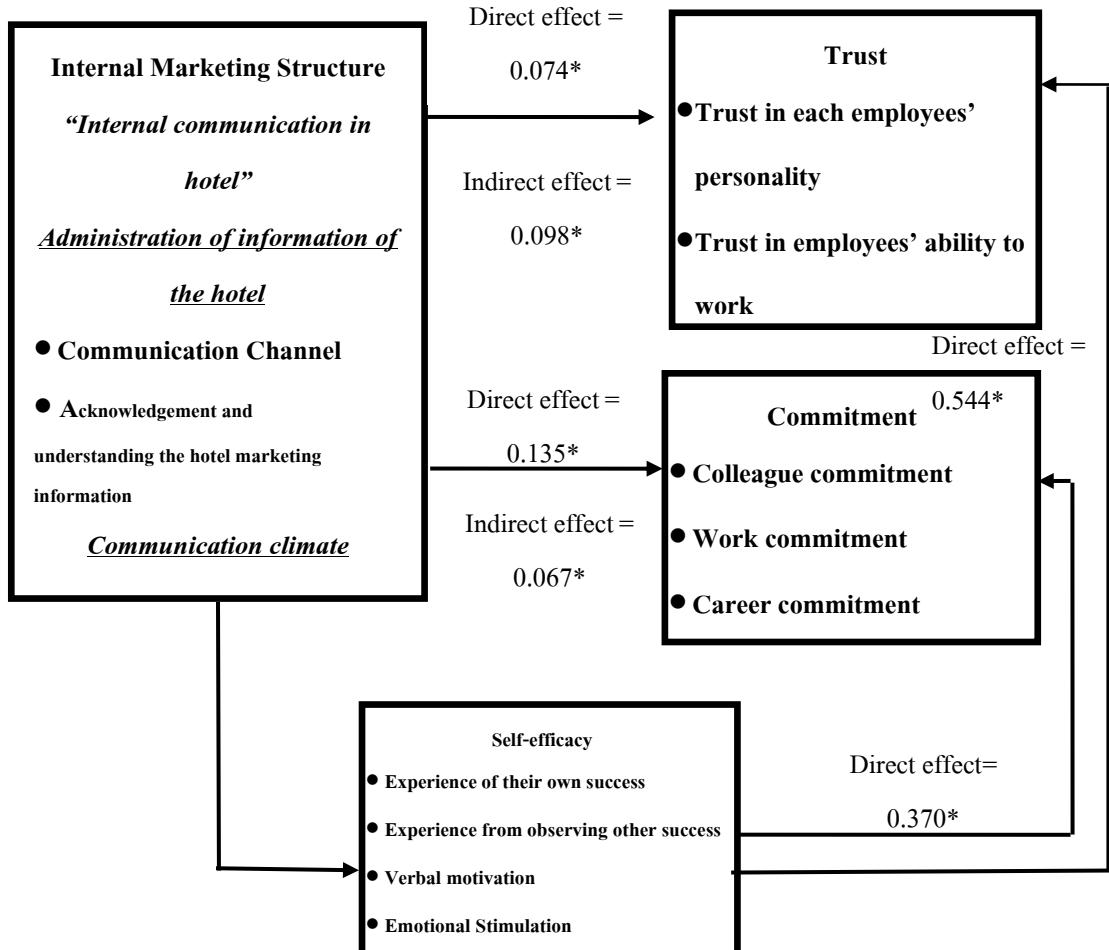


Figure 1: Model of relationship of strategic internal marketing communication enhancing trust and commitment for hotel branding

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study can be adapted to improve the hotel and to increase the hotel efficiency in marketing management. The researcher has presented guidelines to improve the hotel by the executives or the entrepreneurs who first have to get all employees focused on the same goals and moving in the same direction by 3 marketing concepts; exchange, coordination and adaption. These all enhances trust and commitment among employees on the hotel branding. They can gain this by using strategy on internal marketing communication; the hotel should have a plan to communicate internal

marketing system both on managing hotel information to let all employees know about all marketing data clearly and the information contains a unity. This can be done by speaking directly to employees and having a meeting within the units. For the internal communication atmosphere, there should be an establishment to build good relationship among employees as well as to motivate them to work. In addition, the hotel should have a plan for employees to have self-efficacy along with the management of internal marketing communication of the hotel to promote stronger employees' trust and commitment. From the study, the key link between all variables can be summarized as internal relationship. However, the entrepreneur have to focus on team internal relationship; commitment of the members and group cohesiveness. This will result in quality task performance and service provision as shown in figure 2.

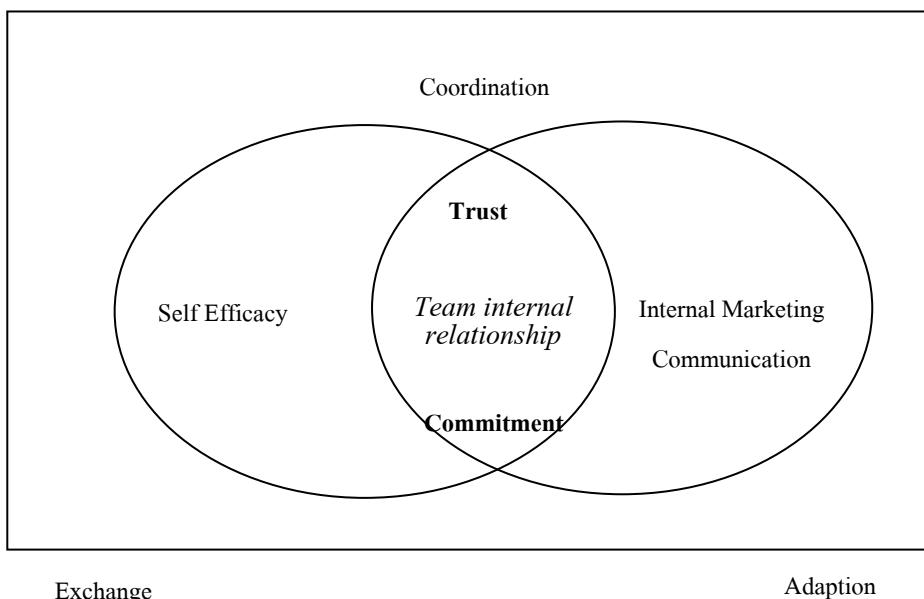


Figure 2: Guidelines in improving hotel by enhancing trust and commitment among employees.

For the recommendation of future research on the sample group, there should be a comparison on international chain hotel that plays more roles and have big impacts on independent hotel as well as Thai hotel chain businesses. Moreover, there should be more in-depth interviews on employees for each type of hotels. In addition, the factors on population like level of education, level of income per month



and the size of different hotel types such as small hotel, medium size hotel, and big hotel should be used for analyzing and comparing among all different hotels.

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