

# Marketing Communication Through Brand Storytelling of The Communitique Products in Phayao Province

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## Abstract

This study constitutes a research and development method (R&D) aiming at refining marketing communication strategies through the product storytelling of communitique products in Phayao Province. The research instruments comprised the interviews on marketing communication preferences through the product storytelling related to community identity, as well as focus group discussions to exchange information and insights regarding communitique products and conveyed identity through storytelling. By using a specific purposive sampling method, the sample group involved 20 community product entrepreneurs. Content analysis for qualitative data was employed. The findings revealed that (1) the entrepreneurs aspired to possess their own product brand, name their products through storytelling, and desire contemporary publicity reaching diverse consumers; (2) critical components of the communitique product storytelling in Phayao Province necessitated having a product brand, narrative communication, product promotion, and preferred marketing communication channels; (3) the prototype marketing communication strategy through the storytelling of communitique products in Phayao Province comprised five steps: brainstorming to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; identifying communication strategies for marketing; integrating various crucial components of communitique products through storytelling; training community entrepreneurs in product presentation channels; and evaluating and adjusting the strategy outcomes. The prototype marketing communication prototype through storytelling of communitique identity developed herein can be utilized to promote the communitique products in Phayao Province, emphasizing product quality, distinctiveness, and the use of various media to craft compelling narratives.

**Keywords:** Marketing Communication, Brand Storytelling, Communitique Products

## Introduction

Community products in Thailand, termed “communitique,” merge traditional skills, cultural heritage, and sustainable practices. These products are locally made and supported, blending ancient techniques with modern creativity to embody the spirit of tight-knit communities. They range from handwoven textiles and artisanal pottery to organic agricultural goods, showcasing the diverse talents of rural villages and towns. These goods are not only aesthetically appealing but also carry significant cultural value, preserving traditional methods and narrating historical tales. Since 2001, the Thai government has supported these community products through a comprehensive project that integrates with government agencies to enhance the quality and marketing of these goods. This initiative aims to improve the living standards of local craftspeople, making them economically independent and fostering community pride and solidarity. The project adopts a “Local Links Global Reaches” strategy, promoting these unique products domestically and internationally and expanding their development and distribution channels. National and regional committees support this effort by encouraging innovation, bolstering community resilience, and stimulating local knowledge utilization (Community Development Department, 2019).

Community products in Thailand face several issues, such as being driven by external forces rather than the community-centric approach seen in Japan's “One Village One Product” (OVOP) model. The benefits of these projects tend to accrue mainly to more advanced groups, leaving others behind. There is also a discrepancy between the market demand and the supply of these products, suggesting a need for better alignment of policies. The 2015’s evaluation by the Community Development Office in Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, and Mae Hong Son revealed weaknesses in the market and network for community products, including poor collaboration, insufficient funding, and inconsistent support from government and private sectors. The report recommends research into marketing strategies like packaging, product standards, and distribution channels, as well as exploring sustainable business models to help community product entrepreneurs thrive in competitive environments.

Phayao province is a charming and culturally rich region situated in northern Thailand. The province is well-known for its calm landscapes and charming environments, and one of its most notable features is the breathtaking Phayao Lake. Surrounded by thick flora, the lake offers a peaceful environment for both locals and visitors. Phayao is rich in history; its ancient roots are exemplified by historical monuments like the temples from the Chiang Saen dynasty. The province is also proud of its thriving local culture, which is demonstrated by the numerous traditional celebrations and events that highlight the unique history of its citizens. Travelers are invited to discover Phayao province’s distinct charm and feel the

warmth of Thai hospitality, as it stands as a hidden gem with a blend of historical significance, natural beauty, and cultural vibrancy.

Thailand's development strategy involves each sub-district producing local products to connect with both domestic and international markets, aiming to enhance quality and standards. The Ministry of Interior prioritizes community products as key to developing a sustainable local economy integral to the national economy. This initiative encourages grassroots communities to standardize local resources into products and services that reflect their unique identities. It promotes self-reliance and mutual assistance, addressing challenges across all community levels from individuals to networks. The strategy supports occupational groups in managing resources according to self-sufficiency principles, helping them evolve into small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and beyond.

The renowned communitique products of the province include crispy rice crackers, crispy brown rice, black sesame oil, spicy chili pastes, and rose-scented balm, herbal cleaning products, embroidered blankets, and herbal salted eggs. The highly renowned communitique products include textiles and woven products from water hyacinth handicrafts products. However, a survey conducted in the communities of Phayao province in 2020 found that some local producers faced issues related to product quality, standards, and packaging that did not meet market demands, resulting in a lack of consumer appeal. Veerapun Anunchaitawat and Brinda Sunhachawee (2018) noted that the issues regarding the community products included lack of marketing communication techniques, unable to access desired media for communication, incapable to use various marketing communication tools, lack of visual communication, fail to create messages that attract consumers. It is undeniable that more than 40 percent of community products still inept to reach international standards or compete in the global markets. The root of the problems stems from the deficiency to present stories that resonate and clearly reflect the value of the products and the brand storytelling techniques which link between brand and consumers through products or services (College of Management Mahidol University, 2019). Therefore, the researchers aim to explore and enhance the potential of these entrepreneurs, proposing practical marketing communication strategies, especially through storytelling techniques, to broaden the distribution channels for a diverse range of products.

## Research objectives

1. To investigate the role of brand storytelling in shaping the identity of community products in Phayao province.
2. To identify and analyze the key storytelling elements that resonate with the communitique products in Phayao province.

3. To propose strategies to enhance marketing communication through storytelling for communitique products in Phayao province.

## Literature review

### 1. Marketing communication through the marketing mix lens

Marketing communications, as defined in academic literature, encompasses the strategic use of various communication channels and tools to promote products, services, or brands to target audiences. It involves the dissemination of persuasive messages aimed at influencing consumer behavior and achieving marketing objectives. Kotler and Keller (2016) defined marketing communications as the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers - directly or indirectly - about the products and brands they sell. Fill and Turnbull (2019) provided an in-depth exploration of marketing communications as a strategic discipline, emphasizing its role in building relationships with consumers and creating brand value. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2017), effective marketing communications not only enhance brand recognition but also establish a coherent and attractive brand identity. Storytelling in marketing has become more and more popular to interact and establish a connection with customers. Businesses can improve brand memory, create a distinctive identity, and increase consumer loyalty by including narrative into marketing communications (Holt, 2003). The idea that narrative is a potent tool for marketers to forge deep connections and sway consumer behavior is generally supported by academic research.

Marketing communication, which uses a variety of platforms and channels to communicate brand messages to target audiences, is a dynamic and essential component of corporate strategy. Advertising, public relations, sales promotion, events and experiences, content marketing, personal selling refer to an integrated marketing communication. The digital age has revolutionized marketing communications, emphasizing the importance of internet platforms like social media, online video, digital advertising, email marketing, virtual reality, and online forums for customer interaction (Laverie et al., 2020). Malinee Kumkrua and Teerapun Chokeudomchai (2019) noted that integrated marketing communications have been widely adopted across different industries, enhancing product identities and fostering stronger communities. Marketing communication, alongside the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion), forms a comprehensive marketing strategy. It acts as the link that ties these elements together, effectively communicating the value proposition of products or services, influencing consumer perceptions, and driving success across the marketing mix. Essentially, marketing communication serves as the cohesive force that ensures a unified and impactful approach to engaging target audiences.

**Product Strategy** involves creating differentiation through symbolic and experiential features (Ferrell and Hartline, 2005) influenced by characteristics like complexity, innovation, quality, and brand name, ultimately impacting consumer perceptions and choices. Differentiating products from competitors is crucial for driving sales and attracting attention (Kotler and Armstrong, 2017). **Price Strategy** is essential for revenue generation and market positioning, with pricing decisions aligning with perceived customer value (Hinterhuber, 2008). **Promotion Strategy**, including publicity, sales promotions, personal selling, and advertising, plays a vital role in conveying a product's message and brand to consumers influencing their perceptions and purchasing behavior (Armstrong et al., 2015). **Place Strategy** focuses on efficiently reaching target customers through distribution channels, logistics, and physical product distribution, emphasizing the importance of distribution channels and intermediaries in creating value and effectively reaching customers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2017).

## 2. Brand storytelling

Storytelling has emerged as a powerful tool in marketing and communication, capable of shaping consumer perceptions and enhancing brand engagement. Academics recognize its role in establishing emotional connections and resonating with audiences. Research by Heath, DelVecchio, and McCarthy (2011) highlights the persuasive impact of well-crafted stories in capturing attention and improving message retention. Additionally, Berger and Milkman (2012) discuss the viral nature of narratives and their effectiveness in being shared and remembered. Atkin, Hunt, and Lin (2018) emphasize how storytelling humanizes businesses, fostering relatability and building consumer trust and loyalty. Utilizing storytelling in marketing communications allows companies to define their brand identity, connecting with the values and goals of their audience. By forging emotional bonds through storytelling, businesses can create a sense of shared identity and values, enhancing brand memorability and relevance. Overall, storytelling serves as a powerful tool to communicate a business's personality, leaving a lasting impression on consumers and nurturing brand loyalty through genuine relationships.

Brand storytelling efficiently communicates a brand's values (Herskovitz and Crystal, 2010) engaging both consumers and stakeholders, which can lead to improved financial and recruitment outcomes. Belova's (2021) study demonstrated how storytelling, with its ability to evoke emotions and enhance memorability, is emerging as a prominent trend and advertising tactic in marketing. Choi (2024) categorized storytelling marketing into three types: the brand's history, consumer experiences, and fictional brand stories. Leveraging the brand's history or consumer experiences fosters relatability and draws audiences into the brand narrative. Crafting fictional brand stories, even if not directly tied to the brand's true history, also contributes significantly to storytelling marketing.

### 3. Communitique products

In Thailand, communitique products, stemming from the term “community products” and emphasizing uniqueness, showcase the rich local craftsmanship and cultural heritage of various communities. Marketed under initiatives like “One Tambon One Product”, these items include intricately woven textiles, handmade crafts, specialty foods, and traditional herbal products. These initiatives not only preserve local customs but also create economic opportunities in rural areas. Emphasizing community products aligns with Thailand’s commitment to sustainable development by empowering local entrepreneurs and promoting cultural pride. Additionally, these products boost tourism by allowing visitors to bring home a piece of Thailand’s culture while supporting the communities they visit economically. The concept of promoting community products is organized into quadrants to categorize products for development, establish integrated product profiles, enhance publicity, and build product value for wider acceptance, aiming at income generation and community strengthening. Products are divided into four groups based on quality and quantity of production. **Group A:** Internationally outstanding products with high standards and large quantities, targeting the international market. **Group B:** High-quality, high-priced products produced in small quantities, focusing on creating and adding value for specific customer groups. **Group C:** Products developed for competitive markets, characterized by low quality, low price, but large production quantities, emphasizing efficiency and competitiveness. **Group D:** Products adapting to supply chain production, with low quality, low price, and small production quantities. The focus is on adjusting to production cycles, preserving traditional skills, and expanding career options.

### 4. Communitique Products and Marketing Communication

The concept of communitique products in Thailand reflects a celebration of local craftsmanship and cultural heritage, often showcased through initiatives like “One Tambon One Product”. Emphasizing community products aligns with Thailand’s commitment to sustainable development, empowering local entrepreneurs and promoting cultural pride. Additionally, these products play a crucial role in tourism promotion, allowing visitors to take home a piece of Thailand’s unique culture while supporting local economies. Isari Pairoa (2021) emphasized the importance of clear and concise advertising content that focuses on product information, benefits, and production sources to build trust and confidence in consumers’ purchasing decisions. Utilizing online media and distribution channels, especially social media, is crucial for effective sales promotion, with marketing strategies adapted to reach diverse global audiences. In storytelling marketing, content should facilitate easy brand association and recognition, with narratives structured to enhance clarity and comprehension.

Consumers establish a mutual relationship with the brand by relating brand stories to their own experiences, fostering engagement. Narrative forms, such as novels, facilitate psychological immersion, enhancing consumer connection with the brand (Choi, 2024).

Storytelling marketing for community products fosters deeper emotional connections with consumers compared to traditional advertising methods. By conveying the symbolic value of these products through stories, storytelling marketing captures consumers' interest, evokes emotions, and leaves a lasting impact (Ha and Song, 2020). Consumers develop favorable attitudes toward community products and build strong relationships with the brand (Choi, 2024). Additionally, storytelling marketing triggers viral marketing, where consumers voluntarily share commercial messages. Due to their engaging nature, consumers actively seek out storytelling messages from brands and share them through social media, amplifying word-of-mouth promotion. This suggests that actively engaged messages can be more impactful than passively encountered traditional advertisements.

## **Research Methodology**

### **1. Target group**

This is qualitative research, the researchers examined data from the primary source of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. The key informants consist of top community product entrepreneurs in the Phayao province. The selection is based on three criteria, including 1) entrepreneurs at the Quadrant B level, 2) entrepreneurs in the form of community enterprises or sole proprietors, and 3) entrepreneurs who are interested in participating in this research project. The sample group comprises 20 entrepreneurs, including those with product ratings ranging from 1 to 5 stars and those without any stars. The researchers have categorized the entrepreneurs into five groups based on the criteria of the top communitique product types: 1) food, 2) beverages (no sample group in this category), 3) fabrics and clothing, 4) tools, decorations, and 5) non-food herbal products.

### **2. Data collection tools**

This is a research and development initiative aimed at enhancing marketing communication strategies through storytelling for community products in Phayao province. The researchers have divided the implementation process into four phases. The first phase involves surveying and interviewing 20 entrepreneurs to identify trends in marketing communication through storytelling related to the identity of communitique products. In the second phase, the knowledge gathered from the first phase is developed into a prototype that can be practically implemented. This includes engaging the community in group discussions with 20 entrepreneurs to exchange information and opinions about communitique products. The third phase focuses on implementing the prototype created in phase two,



which involves marketing communication through storytelling about the identity of community products. This phase also includes learning about communication through storytelling. The fourth phase involves monitoring, measuring, and evaluating the outcomes, with ongoing adjustments to the prototype to align with the current situation. The details about data collection tools are as follows:

### **2.1 In-depth interviews**

Focus on the overview of marketing communications, storytelling of identity for communitique products, cultural sensitivity, community engagement, challenges, and solutions for promoting the communitique products. The interview questions start with probing an overview of research topic and the specific focus on marketing communication through storytelling of identity. Followed by the storytelling strategies employed in the marketing communication of communiqué products in Phayao province. The researchers also explore how the current storytelling strategies align with or enhance the identity of the products and the province.

### **2.2 Focus group discussions**

Conducting focus group discussions (FGDs) for this research serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it allows for an in-depth exploration of individuals' perceptions of Phayao province's communitique products, including their thoughts, feelings, and associations with the products and the conveyed identity through storytelling. Secondly, FGDs help identify the essential storytelling elements that resonate with the target audience, aiding in refining marketing communication strategies. Thirdly, participants can offer feedback on current marketing efforts, assisting in gauging effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. Given Phayao province's likely unique cultural aspects, FGDs provide a platform to discuss and analyze the cultural relevance of storytelling in marketing, ensuring alignment with the local context. Additionally, FGDs promote community involvement and empowerment, allowing community members to contribute actively to marketing strategy development. Lastly, FGDs aid in understanding the preferred communication channels of the target audience, essential for effectively disseminating storytelling content. Therefore, employing focus group discussions in this research context, a nuanced understanding of the intersection between marketing communication, storytelling, and the identity of Phayao province's communique products can be achieved, offering actionable insights for enhancing brand resonance and community engagement.

### **2.3 Data analysis**

For qualitative data, content analysis is utilized, where the characteristics of qualitative data such as text, dialogue, storytelling, occurrences, symbols, images, photographs, emotions,

facial expressions, gaze, tone of voice are examined. The researchers emphasize the interpretation of the meaning derived from categorizing these characteristics. Following this, meaning is sought by applying academic principles related to the issues, community potential, societal factors, and the readiness of the populace to generate income from resources and local knowledge within the community. Linear interpretation is employed when phenomena are clear, whereas if phenomena are unclear or data is extensive, interpretive principles such as academic principles, customs, culture, values, beliefs, etc., are applied and interpreted more subtly (spiral interpretation). The procedural aspects of data analysis include 1) transcribe data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions, 2) analyze the significance and content of the data, 3) establish axial codes along with definitions or meanings of the codes, 4) read the data and assign axial codes to the substantive content appearing in step 2, 5) design a thematic index, categorizing topics into main and sub-groups in detail, 6) divide main topics into boxes to manually organize data, 7) subdivide main topics into sub-topics from the main topics identified in step 6, and 8) write the results of data analysis by interpreting the meaning of the grouped topics through narrative description, along with presenting phenomena in the form of images, diagrams, objects, and quotations as supplementary data for the narrative description.

## Results

The unveiling of research results for the study titled “Marketing communication through brand storytelling of the communique products in Phayao Province” marks a significant juncture in an exploration of the intricate dynamics between marketing communication strategies and the unique identity of community-based products in Phayao. Through an in-depth investigation, this research has navigated the realm of brand storytelling, aiming to unravel its role in shaping the identity of communique products within the cultural and socio-economic context of Phayao province. As we lift the veil on the research results, the narrative unfolds, revealing insights, patterns, and implications that illuminate the effectiveness of brand storytelling in conveying the distinctiveness of local products. These findings not only contribute to the academic discourse surrounding marketing communication but also hold practical implications for businesses, community stakeholders, and marketers seeking to enhance the visibility and resonance of communique products in the vibrant landscape of Phayao province. The researchers will present the study results in three parts according to the objectives as follows:

## To investigate the role of brand storytelling in shaping the identity of community products in Phayao province.

Based on the criteria of the top communitique product types: food, fabrics and clothing, tools, decorations, and non-food herbal products. In the food group, the products cater to both the public and local community members, offering affordability and accessibility in local community stores, village markets, and international markets. Star ratings reveal that the first two products lack ratings, while the third has earned a one-star rating. Despite this, product branding within the group generally lacks a meaningful connection to the community or product context, except for the “Roasted Salted Peanuts from Huay Sing Lagoon,” which uniquely incorporates environmental and community-specific elements in its brand storytelling. Promotional strategies predominantly rely on word of mouth, while the chili sauce group collaborates with Facebook for promotion.

The fabric and clothing group, the target audience expands to both the public and foreigners. These products are distributed through various channels, including their own stores, event booth sales, and wholesale both locally and internationally. Most products in this group establish their own brand identity, often incorporating the founder’s name or fabric patterns as logos. Brand storytelling frequently revolves around narrating production history tied to local wisdom. Promotion relies heavily on word of mouth, supplemented by brochures, leaflets, Facebook, and a newly formed group that is yet to establish promotional channels.

In the household and decorative items group, the target audience remains diverse, including the public and foreigners. Products are distributed within the community, local shops, and through wholesale. Most products in this category establish their own brand identity, incorporating group names, village names, or unique symbols. Brand storytelling often intertwines with the production history to create compelling narratives about the product’s uniqueness and its connection to local traditions. Promotional strategies prioritize word of mouth, supplemented by brochures, leaflets, Facebook, and a newly formed group that is yet to establish promotional channels.

In the non-food herbal group, the target audience comprises the public, with the product earning a 4-star rating and being sold at home or through various locations. The product establishes its own brand identity, emphasizing brand storytelling that highlights its composition of 100% coconut oil from the local community. Promotion relies primarily on word of mouth, with only one promotional channel currently established.

The need for marketing communication through product storytelling in Phayao province, focusing on four product categories. First, **product branding**: most communitique

products, especially in the food group, predominantly feature their own brand, often using group names, founder names, or community names as product logos. The simplicity of these logos, often depicting individuals or product names, results in a lack of meaningful connection with the products or communities. Some products lack their own branding due to a lack of knowledge on how to create compelling logos, diminishing their overall appeal.

Secondly, **storytelling communication**: while several brands in various categories have interesting stories related to their product history, only a few effectively incorporate these narratives into their brand. Brands in the fabric and clothing group, such as those emphasizing unique weaving techniques or using local materials, excel in integrating compelling stories into their products. However, many other product categories struggle to extract and communicate these stories effectively, leading to a missed opportunity to differentiate their brands and attract consumer interest.

Third, **public relations channels**: the communication channels, especially for food and clothing products, heavily rely on traditional methods such as word of mouth within the community. The use of community radio and some print media is observed, while a limited number of products use Facebook for publicity. There is a need for a more diversified approach to public relations, incorporating social media platforms, creating engaging content, and exploring radio and print media for wider reach and impact.

Finally, **communication channel preferences**: respondents express a desire to maintain existing communication channels while incorporating new ones. There is a strong interest in utilizing social media platforms like Facebook and developing applications for showcasing products during events or exhibitions. Training and guidance from external organizations are sought to enhance knowledge and expertise in utilizing various communication channels effectively.

In conclusion, there is a significant opportunity for communitique products entrepreneurs in Phayao province to enhance their marketing communication by improving product branding, effectively incorporating storytelling into their brand identity, diversifying communication channels, and leveraging social media and technology for wider outreach. Additionally, external support and training can play a crucial role in empowering local entrepreneurs with the necessary skills to navigate modern communication platforms.

**To identify and analyze the key storytelling elements that resonate with the communitique products in Phayao province.**

Storytelling is a powerful communication tool that engages and captivates audiences. Several key elements contribute to effective and successful storytelling in this study, including narrative, characters, theme, style, and symbols. An exploration of the role of brand storytelling

in shaping the identity of communitique products reveals insights into various product categories, including food, fabrics and clothing, household and decorative items, and non-food herbal products. First, food group: the study finds that product branding within this group generally lacks a meaningful connection to the community or product context, except for the roasted salted peanuts product that incorporates environmental and community-specific elements in its brand storytelling. Promotional strategies predominantly rely on word of mouth.

Products in fabric and clothing group category often establish their own brand identity, incorporating founder names or fabric patterns as logos. Brand storytelling frequently revolves around narrating production history tied to local wisdom. Promotion relies heavily on word of mouth, supplemented by brochures, leaflets, Facebook, and a newly formed group that is yet to establish promotional channels. Most products in household and decorative category establish their own brand identity, incorporating group names, village names, or unique symbols. Brand storytelling often intertwines with the production history to create compelling narratives about the product's uniqueness and its connection to local traditions. Promotional strategies prioritize word of mouth, supplemented by various channels such as pamphlets and brochures. The product in the non-food herbal category establishes its own brand identity, emphasizing brand storytelling that highlights its composition of 100% coconut oil from the local community. Promotion relies primarily on word of mouth, with only one promotional channel currently established.

The overall findings indicate that there is a need for improvement in marketing communication through product storytelling in Phayao province, particularly focusing on four aspects: product branding, storytelling communication, public relations channels, and communication channel preferences. There is an opportunity for entrepreneurs to enhance marketing communication by improving product branding, effectively incorporating storytelling into brand identity, diversifying communication channels, and leveraging social media and technology for wider outreach. External support and training are highlighted as crucial factors in empowering local entrepreneurs with the necessary skills to navigate modern communication platforms.

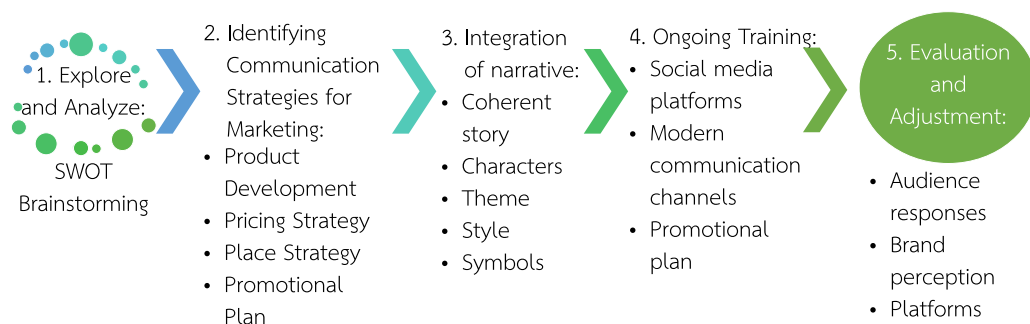
### **To propose strategies to enhance marketing communication through storytelling for communitique products in Phayao province.**

From the data synthesis, the researchers analyzed the suitable marketing communication strategies for communitique products in Phayao province, employing a fundamental marketing framework, the 4Ps, as follows: **Products** in the sample group in Phayao exhibit clear characteristics and well-defined target consumer groups. However, there is room for improvement in product branding, with a focus on making product logos interesting,

memorable, and reflective of the product's meaning. Development opportunities lie in modernizing product formats to elevate products and expand the target audience while maintaining quality standards. **Price strategies** are crucial for attracting customer interest and competing effectively. Communitique products in Phayao demonstrate appropriate pricing, matching the product types within their categories. However, enhancing product development and creating compelling stories can justify higher pricing, adding value to the products. **Place strategy**, products are predominantly distributed within local communities, occasionally exported, and showcased at events. A proposed strategy involves creating centralized product distribution centers in communities and expanding distribution channels through online platforms like Facebook to reach a wider audience. Finally, **promotion strategy** is primarily conducted through word of mouth, with limited use of other media. To increase product awareness, a multi-faceted approach is recommended, incorporating online platforms like Facebook, LINE, Instagram, TikTok and any other various applications available up to date. Training sessions are suggested to empower entrepreneurs in utilizing online media for effective marketing and promotion.

The local entrepreneurs should focus on omnichannel strategies which offer several benefits in today's retail markets. Omnichannel strategies offer several benefits such as enhanced customer experiences across various channels both online and offline. It enables brands to engage with customers at different stages of their journey, from awareness to post-purchase support. Omnichannel allows customers to shop anytime through their preferred channels. In today's competitive market, offering an omnichannel experience can set a brand apart from its competitors. Providing a seamless, consistent experience across channels can attract and retain customers, ultimately driving revenue growth.

Moreover, the creation of storytelling is emphasized. While all communitique products have interesting histories, there is a lack of emphasis on incorporating these narratives into marketing strategies. Highlighting these stories in various forms, such as short videos, online publications, or other digital media, can create emotional connections and enhance brand recall. In conclusion, the researchers propose a marketing communication strategy model for the communitique product group in Phayao, emphasizing product development, attractive pricing, diversified distribution channels, and multi-platform promotion, with a strong focus on storytelling to establish a unique brand identity and emotional connection with consumers. Additionally, continuous training is suggested to equip local entrepreneurs with the skills needed for effective online marketing.



**Figure 1.** Prototype model for improving marketing communication through storytelling.

The development model for improving marketing communication for communitique products in Phayao province through storytelling can be summarized as follows:

1. Explore and analyze brand storytelling to understand the features of the communitique products, target consumer groups, current marketing methods, and opportunities for improvement, from the brainstorming with the participants and academics using SWOT analysis.

2. Identifying effective communication strategies for marketing necessitates a comprehensive approach and utilizing a fundamental marketing framework of the 4Ps can guide the selection of appropriate tactics to enhance marketing messaging. To effectively choose communication strategies for marketing highlight product's key features and benefits to appeal target market, align price with product's perceived value. While selecting distribution channels and locations that meet the audience's needs and combining various promotional methods to convey the brand's message. This integrated approach ensures that marketing communication resonates well with the audience.

3. Integration of storytelling of the communitique products successfully achieved by the key elements of coherent story, characters, theme, style, and symbols. Effective storytelling for communitique products hinges on using key elements that create a unified and compelling narrative. A cohesive plot engages the audience, while authentic characters build a relatable connection. The narrative's theme resonates with the audience's values, and a unique style ensures a memorable storytelling experience. Strategic use of symbols deepens the narrative's meaning, enhancing audience understanding of the products and strengthening the brand's identity.

4. Ongoing training for the use of social media platforms, modern communication channels, and promotional plan. Training in social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LINE, TikTok becomes crucial for crafting impactful digital marketing tools. Training in modern communication channels enhances customer interactions and brand messaging.

Furthermore, ongoing training in developing a promotional plan allows entrepreneurs to refine their skills in creating and executing effective campaigns. This includes understanding market trends, analyzing consumer behavior, and leveraging various promotional tools to maximize the impact of marketing communication efforts.

5. Evaluation and adjustment are integral processes in refining marketing communication strategies to ensure their effectiveness. Analyzing audience responses helps assess the effectiveness of marketing messages with the target demographic. By monitoring engagement rates, click-throughs, and social media interactions, marketers can gauge communication impact. Evaluating brand perception reveals how well the messaging aligns with the intended brand image and helps adjust strategies to maintain a positive reputation. Additionally, analyzing platform performance assists in identifying which channels generate the most engagement, aiding in resource optimization. Regular evaluations and strategy adjustments ensure a responsive and adaptive marketing approach that aligns with the changing needs and preferences of the target market.

## Conclusion and Discussion

**1. Marketing strategy:** the promotion of communitique products in Phayao province requires a comprehensive plan encompassing product, price, place, and promotion to effectively reach the target audience and impact product sales. A study reveals that businesses face challenges in distribution channels (place), necessitating knowledge development to expand distribution through online social networks for broader and convenient customer reach. Similarly, marketing promotion issues are addressed by emphasizing product quality, distinctiveness, and utilizing various media to create compelling stories for a more effective and widespread market presence. Consistent with the work of Narin, Sukiam, and Theerasorn (2021), which states that products made from community-sourced raw materials must be developed to add value to the products, the price should be reasonable and worthwhile. Distribution channels should include both online and offline services. Emphasis should be placed on selling through social media to reach a broader range of customers.

**2. Marketing communication through storytelling:** the study emphasizes the significance of storytelling as a powerful communication tool for engaging audiences effectively. Key elements contributing to successful storytelling include narrative, characters, theme, style, and symbols. However, Group 1's promotional strategies primarily rely on word of mouth rather than focusing on elements that contribute to a story's unique identity, such as theme. To enhance brand identity and emotional connections with consumers, the study suggests developing narratives highlighting product history, unique attributes, and cultural significance (Kumphum and Plianroong, 2021). This approach aims to make products distinctive



and memorable, especially for local or niche items. Local entrepreneurs are encouraged to study cultural narratives and traditions to foster emotional connections with consumers and create brand memories (Holt, 2003). To support successful marketing communication, training and knowledge dissemination on storytelling, product development, and new media usage are essential, as many local entrepreneurs lack expertise in these areas. Additionally, the study aligns with Putwatthana and Rukumnuaykit's (2021), suggesting that storytelling should be integrated into branding and packaging strategies to add value to local products, particularly in secondary tourist provinces. Constant adaptation and differentiation by entrepreneurs are crucial to ensure effective communication strategies that resonate with the target audience amidst evolving technology and product variety.

**Marketing communication channels:** beyond using a variety of marketing communication tools and selecting media suitable for the target audience, there is a focus on utilizing public relations tools through online media for marketing promotion. To ensure the success of communitique product, it is crucial to actively promote or provide knowledge in creating brand narratives, product development, and using new media for product publicity. This is particularly important as local entrepreneurs currently lack expertise in these areas, as observed in a study on marketing communication through storytelling for the fabric group in Chiang Mai province (Wira-pan Ananchai-twatt and Brinda San-chawee, 2018). The study suggests that besides training on content creation, there should be an emphasis on using public relations tools through online media. In developing marketing communication strategies to elevate the unique identity of community products and create value in Phayao province, the researchers have proposed training guidelines focusing on three key areas: crafting product storytelling content, product development, and utilizing online media to enhance communication channels. These three topics further elevate the status of Phayao province's top-notch products.

Nevertheless, the development of marketing communication strategies may require constant adjustment and learning due to technological changes and the increasing diversity of products, providing consumers with more options. Therefore, entrepreneurs need to adapt, create product strengths, define clear target groups, and blend various marketing communication methods for the most effective communication. In line with Malinee Kumkrua and Teerapun Chokeudomchai (2019), online marketing communication strategy significantly influences the purchasing behavior of OTOP products through social media platforms among consumers in Kanchanaburi province. Therefore, to increase product sales, there must be a continuous development of online marketing communication strategies to meet consumer demands. Parichart Yanoi (2019) affirmed that the establishment of brand identity and

marketing communication plays a crucial role in promoting tourism in Nan province. Various tools, including advertising, public relations, promotions, direct marketing, and event marketing, were employed in the tourism marketing communication process. The implementation of integrated marketing communication strategies was instrumental in disseminating the brand identity effectively to attract tourists.

### **Contribution from this research**

This research significantly contributes to advancing communitique products in Phayao province by providing a deep understanding of the challenges faced by local businesses. A key contribution is the identification of distribution channel challenges, emphasizing the need for knowledge development and expanding online distribution through social networks. This modern approach aims to reach a wider customer base conveniently. Additionally, the research offers valuable insights into addressing marketing promotion issues by focusing on product quality, distinctiveness, and storytelling through various media channels. The study advocates for a holistic marketing communication strategy, including booth exhibitions, government campaigns, and online media, which aligns practically and culturally with each sub-district's product promotion.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of strategic branding, product development, and continuous innovation to maintain competitiveness in the market. It highlights storytelling as a powerful tool for strengthening brand identity and emotional connections with consumers, recommending training and knowledge dissemination among local entrepreneurs. Incorporating public relations tools through online media adds sophistication to the proposed strategies, reflecting the evolving landscape of marketing communication. Lastly, the research underscores the necessity for entrepreneurs to adapt and differentiate constantly in response to technological advancements and product diversity, offering practical guidance for navigating Phayao province's communitique product promotion.

### **Recommendations for future research**

This study serves as a mere suggestion for developing marketing communication strategies for the communitique product group in Phayao province. It has not yet delved into implementing and assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed marketing communication methods. Therefore, in future studies, there should be a comprehensive scope that includes the practical application and evaluation of the suggested communication strategies to determine their effectiveness and impact. Furthermore, there may be additional studies on developing storytelling skills for community product entrepreneurs to identify

selling points and product differentiators through training activities and leveraging product highlights for ongoing marketing communication efforts.

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