Analyzing Chinese Customer Behavior of Buying Thai Herbal Makeup Products—Take Herb Basics as an Example

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Abstract. For the Thai tourism market, Chinese tourists have been an important source of customers. With the development of social media and online travel agency (OTA) platforms, the purchasing habits of Chinese tourists in their travel experience have also received more feedback in travel purchasing. The sales of Thai herbal products are growing, and the data and comments of an example brand Herbal Basics in offline shopping experience mostly in Dazhongdianping. This article identifies the key concepts and factors in the area of customer knowledge management with text mining and focus grouping to find out customer behaviors. The customers refer to Chinese customers of Herbal Basics, including existing customers and potential customers.

Keywords: text mining, focus group, customer behavior, Chinese customers, Thai tourism.

1 Introduction

For the Thai tourism products purchasing data, We can see the data and comments of Herbal Basics in the offline shopping experience in Dazhongdianping. Most Chinese customers just go to this place and buy it, and they don't want to buy it unless they come to Chiangmai. According to the official website data, Chinese customers buy it just a little. The marketing doesn't know the customer's behavior including what products they like most when they want to buy, and what channels they will know this brand (advertising makes it popular). The transaction of traditional tourism products will turn into more in cross-border E-commerce platforms in China, and at the same time, the offline purchase service and sales volume of Chinese customers will be improved. The first and most important step is to know the behaviors of Chinese customers, including existing customers and potential customers, for the same type of product (competitors), and the customer data are useful for analysis of transactions of Thailand herbal products.

Why do I choose herb products? Why do I choose this brand as an example? This is because herbal products are an extraordinary travel category for Thai tourism, and there are plenty of comments on social media and OTA platforms for this brand. Herb Basics specializes in crafting Thai home spas, aromatherapy, herbal products, and gifts. Situated in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Herb Basics was established in 2003 and currently operates its retail outlets across Chiang Mai, Bangkok, and Phuket. Their range of Herb Basics products not only meets but exceeds the stringent requirements set by GMP (ISO22716: 2007) for cosmetics. Additionally, their

products are Halal certified. The brand takes pride in its environmentally conscious approach to manufacturing and has been duly recognized with a "Green Factory" certification.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, four stores in Chiangmai were temporarily closed, while three main stores remained open. Being recognized as one of the top 10 brands in Chiang Mai by the Chamber of Commerce, the Herb Basics establishment was honored with the Dianping Certificate of Popularity in 2017, which serves as a testament to the unwavering support it receives from its valued customers.

First, this paper identifies the key concepts and factors in the area of customer knowledge management with text mining and focus groups. Secondly, it develops a way to analyze customer behaviors to help the marketing strategies. The whole process methods will become an effective marketing method to be used in the purchase of actual tourism products.

For the research steps, the text mining method is used for text analysis to identify the purchasing habits and needs of existing customers. This study also combines with the existing marketing focus, summarizes the survey questionnaire of potential users for essential oil and herbal products, and uses the knowledge management focus group method to analyze potential customers. It also combines the purchasing habits of existing customers with those of potential customers to form a new marketing strategy.

1: For the same type of products, this paper collects the preferences, buying habits, and customer characteristics of Chinese customers who like to buy similar products purchase volume, purchase experience, and channels to know the brand.

2: This study collects offline purchasing information of Chinese customers, and conducts interviews, including product types, and purchase demand; it also collects online purchasing information of Chinese customers, conducts interviews, including product types, and purchase demand (text mining is employed to parse comments of Dazhongdianping, and the focus group method is used to analyze the customer's behavior in depth).

3: It collects information about advertising platforms and analyzes data, selects channels, and does an advertising strategy, combined with analysis and selection of advertising channels.

2 Literature review

2.1 Chinese customer behavior about Thailand traveling

In 2023, the tourism industry report released by the Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports shows that the top 5 countries with the highest number of tourists to Thailand in the first 7 months of this year are Malaysia (2.43 million), China (1.83 million), South Korea (900,000), India (880,000), and Russia (850,000). China has always been the main tourist source market for Thailand's important tourism industry. In 2019, before COVID-19, the number of Chinese tourists reached 11 million, accounting for more than a quarter of the total number of Thai tourists that year. Over 60% of the esteemed Chinese tourists have made multiple visits to Thailand. Among the general Chinese tourists, 46.2% prefer staying in Thailand for a duration of 1-3 days, whereas 50% of the esteemed Chinese tourists opt for a longer stay of 4 to 6 days. While the majority (66.7%) of general Chinese tourists choose organized tours by travel agencies as their means of visiting Thailand, half of the esteemed Chinese tourists also rely on

such tours while the remaining half are independent travelers exploring Thailand on their own [2].

For the customer behavior parts, the quantitative questionnaire was used to analyze online OTA users' customer behavior. In the preference order, the online customers have rated, low price and variety(more options) as the key determinants in the customer choice. The price sensitivity of the online customer has been a constant in various studies conducted (BCG-Google, Amit) [3]. Some focus on the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on Thai tourist behavior and travel motivations in Thailand. The findings indicate that SMIs could have a strong impact on Thai tourists' travel behavior. What the participants experienced with SMIs could have helped them in terms of basic information that plays a key role in their decisions made for any trip [4]. The impact of COVID-19 on international tourists' consumer behavior. The quantitative analysis interviewed a limited number of people, and the amount is insufficient [5].

With the development of social media and OTA platforms. Customer engagement with brands in social media platform configurations engaged customers to share information and experiences with brands and other customers. However, empirical research on how customer engagement (CE) relates to customers' sharing intentions with the brand is limited. We can see an example in **Figure 1.** This study aims to investigate causal patterns of four CE dimensions: focused attention, absorption, enthusiasm, and interaction, together with two cognitive structure properties in stimulating sharing intentions with the brand.
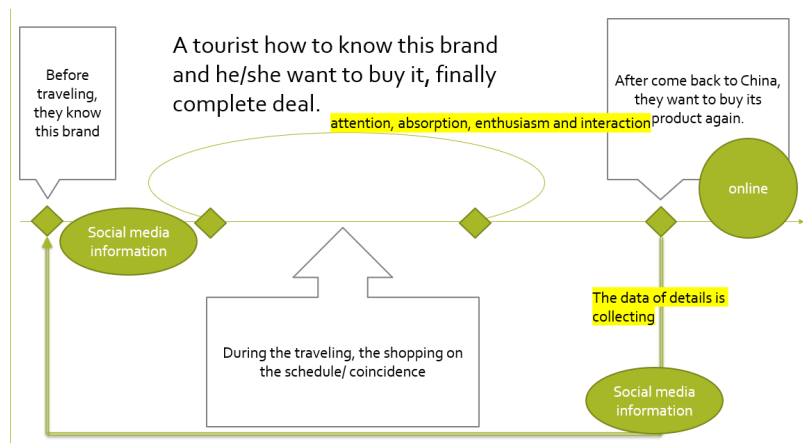

Figure 1. Diagram showing how a tourist gets to know this herbal brand, shows the intention to buy and finally completes the deal [1].

3 Methodology

3.1 Text mining

With the advent of the big data era, text mining technology is increasingly being applied in fields such as information retrieval, natural language processing, and machine learning. This article aims to provide a review of relevant literature on text mining, to better understand the development history, research status, and future trends of this field.

Text mining aims at disclosing concealed information using methods that can cope with a large number of words and structures in natural language and allow it to handle vagueness, uncertainty, and fuzziness [6]. Customer behavior analysis in text analysis is applied to the field of tourism. Structural equations or regression analyses are among the techniques used most to analyze data, and researchers tend to employ well-known theories [7]. From the analysis, the research found the tourism experience of Thailand has outstandingly higher satisfaction in variables such as the weather for traveling, the taste of local food, and the places to visit, which lead to a better quality of life when compared to the traveling experience in China [8]. For the research, there are eight areas in which quantifiable data can be integrated into quality assurance decisions [9]. Some article provides a six-stage Text Mining Analysis Roadmap on how to use text mining methods in practice [10].

3.2 Focus group

Focus group, as a qualitative research method, is commonly used to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors of specific groups. This article will analyze the application of focus groups in multiple fields through the literature review, and explore its research value and limitations.

Focus group is a discussion method that brings together multiple interviewees. Researchers guide the discussion and collect the interviewees' views and experiences on a certain topic or product. This method is widely used in fields such as market research, sociology, psychology, etc., to gain a deeper understanding of the needs and expectations of the target group. The advantages and limitations of Focus Group.

Some use the focus group method to analyze the information deeply. Entrepreneurs in the medical and health tourism industry should focus on marketing strategies that influence the decision-making and loyalty of Chinese tourists. This includes business planning, strategies, and practices leading to marketing success and loyalty [11].

4 Result and Conclusions

4.1 Data collection and summary

In the introduction part, it selects 3 methods to analyze Chinese customer behaviors in buying Thai herbal makeup products. We can see the process in **Table 1**.

Table 1. The research process steps for text mining, questionnaires, and focus group.

Text mining	Questionnaire	Focus group	Period
More than 1 thousand comments on DAZHONGDIA NPING Product/experience/feeling/preference	Take part the customers into potential customers and exciting customers At least 100 questionnaires	take the existing customers into two different groups, and for the potential customers, they will focus on some brand products that they mentioned.	**Plan**

		Total 2 groups and at least 6 people a group.	
Select 1290 comments on DAZHONGDIANPING for 7stores	Select109 questionnaires	Total 2 groups and 6 people in each group.	**Actual data**

1) In the text mining section part, we arrange the data according to the frequency of different Chinese word segmentation, with essential oil products appearing the most frequently, followed by hand cream. The original product data include facial mask products, bath care products, essential oil fragrance products, etc. In addition, a separate product line for souvenirs has been listed. In user data reviews, the gift purpose of souvenir gifts is the highest, which also means that souvenirs purchased for tourism purposes are the most common.

2) The weight of the word with the highest word frequency is 1, and the word frequency of other words divided by the highest word frequency is the weight of other words. The 10 top frequency shows that as Table 2 follows:

Table 2. The research of text mining in Dazhongdianping comments, top 10 frequency.

Key Words	Frequency	Weight	Part of speech
essential oil	367	1	n
Chiangmai	308	0.8392	n
good	213	0.5804	adj
Aromatherapy	176	0.4796	n
goods	172	0.4687	n
this store	160	0.436	n
smell	145	0.3951	n
many	133	0.3624	adj
product	131	0.3569	n

1) For adjectives that describe evaluation, their evaluation is mostly positive, exquisite packaging design adds attractiveness to service purchases. The weight formula is explained in Table 3:

Table 3. The research of text mining in Dazhongdianping comments, top 10 frequency about adj. words.

Words	Frequency	Weight	Part of speech
Chiangmai	308	0.8392	adj.
not bad	103	0.2807	adj.
cheap	72	0.1962	adj.
exquisite	32	0.0872	adj.
convenient	25	0.0681	adj.
Not expensive	23	0.0627	adj.
suitable	22	0.0599	adj.
just enough	17	0.0463	adj.
simple	15	0.0409	adj.
common	14	0.0381	adj.

2) For the questionnaire part, we select 109 potential customers to do it. The results show that 87% have purchase intention. Among them, first-tier cities account for 56%. The potential customers come from Chinese e-commerce users who have purchased aromatherapy brand products on Taobao.

3) For the focus group part, we select the two groups in different talking. The most different impact is cognitive differences in the shopping environment and differences in local purchasing experience. The purchasing scenario imagined by potential users is more in line with the local Chinese market. Their purchase intention is all positive, reaching 91%. In terms of offline detail services, they prefer meticulous services, preferably providing Chinese language services. In addition, they mentioned the optimization of airport express delivery and online e-commerce services.

5 Summary

As for the research method, the existing customer behavior and potential customer behavior are analyzed, and the methods of text mining and focus group are adopted respectively. In the screening of potential customer samples, a questionnaire was used for sample screening. The part of speech analysis in text analysis needs the concept transformation of Chinese and English, and the distinction between network language and written language. In addition, there should be more samples for analysis based on quantitative analysis, and the analysis of relatively famous brand customers is a relatively complete CKM process.

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