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## RRFactors affecting buyers' perceptions in accordance with marketing strategy: a case of vernacular Thai product

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### Abstract

Traditionally and locally made handicrafts such as Thai silk, pottery and wood carving are considered part of products with vernacular style. Development of such products need careful considerations, consumer discernment and aesthetic perceptions are among crucial factors determining the success of the design, and therefore, determining the acceptance of the products. The research uses a set of vernacular design as case study to test the cognitive perception of prospective users—between those who discern and not-discern the history of utensils. Distinctive consumers—tourists from oversea, local folks, and urbanites—are controlled variables assumed to post different tastes and perceptions.

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### 1. Introduction

Vernacular artifacts are usually developed by means of long term utilization of such utensils and the acquaintance extended through local practice and belief into cultural formation in the particular ancient society at large (Leesuwan. 1981. 21-23). Ancient artifacts of high-style, on the other hand, are utensils employed in the royal ceremony or daily life, most of which are highly decorated and made of precious material such as gold and silver. Both types of artifacts are thus valuable in the historical context, reflecting practice, believe, ritual, way of life, (Leesuwan. 1999. 75-76) and the most importantly the affective significance perceived by users in the contemporary age (Leesuwan. 2003. 49-52). Artifacts as such should hold a common and correct notation, by which present users appreciate their non-secular value in the historical sense (Leesuwan. 1986. 32).

Applying ornament and design of both vernacular and high-style artifact in modern day product through simplification and symbolic representation not only transmit the beauty and charm of ancient talent, but also bring

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with them the meaning and sense of pride (Premchita & Pittathawatchai. 1985. 90). Difference in demographic attributes and historical background brings about differences in identity perception of product as such. The affective facet of perception also brings about valuation, certain behavior, and expectation

Putting artifacts with applied ornaments into a foreign market, such as exporting or selling as tourist memento, without proper explanation of their background and importance would jeopardize the products’ sense of value and representation (Chumalaiwong & Pittathawatchai. 1986. 59-61.). This research thus aims to explore the perceptual pattern of potential foreign purchasers with different level background knowledge of the product. The research endeavors to, and whether the pattern of perception affects the marketing strategy. Could a provision of brief historical and cultural rationalization on the packaging be of help to raise the awareness and the product value?

**2. The research purposes**

The purposes of this research are to seek remedial approach to study *marketing strategy* vis-à-vis consumer perception on vernacular products, utilizing Thai local products as a case study. The research attempts to find an appropriate methodology to reach a pattern of local product identity, and to develop a suitable course of design approach to preserve the unique style, while maintaining the popularity of the products among different types of consumers. The research also aims to derive a final design guideline being able to generalize and applicable for vernacular design as a whole.

**3. Theoretical foundation**

The research bases its framework on three lines of thoughts, namely, 1. Theories regarding marketing strategies and product attraction, 2. Principles of assessment on vernacular product and local mentality and identity vis-à-vis the local and cultural facet, 3. Theories concerning human socioeconomic and cultural attributes and the differences in consumption pattern.

**4. Research framework**

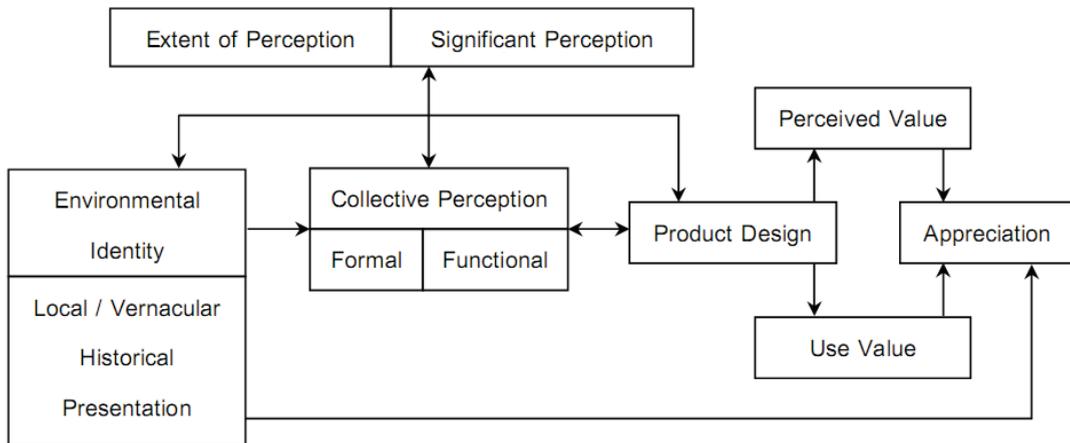


Figure 1 Conceptual and research framework.

**5. Research methodology**

The study first gathers images, ornaments, and design elements of vernacular pieces to be categorized and reviewed by art history experts, in order to establish a pattern of unique design characteristics, reflecting the local

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