

Sport Comics and Market Development Opportunity: An Exploratory Study in the Thai Boxing Sport

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Synopsis:

Thai Boxing was founded in Thailand since the 10th century with the aimed of self-defense and in a battle or war fields, thus the boxing is perceived as violence sport type, and as result of declining in participants. This exploratory research study in sports comics whether a tool for market development opportunities, and is aimed to find the most appropriate ways to help increasing interest and participators among youth and childhood in Thailand. The In-Depth Interview was made among parents, Sport Officers and Thai Boxing professional, with 400 quantitative respondents. As result suggest sport comic for Thai Boxing is the worth tools to increase participators' awareness.

Abstract:

Thai Boxing founded in Thailand as martial arts since the 10th century and is currently being promoted as a Thainess traditional sport. Thai Boxing, although an athlete and self-defense sport comparable to Taekwondo and Judo, is often been dismissed as violent, and thus not very popular among parents who are often the major gatekeepers for their children's decision to begin practicing a sport and result of declining in participants. However, the National Sports Strategic Plan is to recruit more of the Thai boxers especially the Thai professional boxing participants. This exploratory research study in sport comics whether is a proper mechanism for Thai Boxing sport market development, and to help increasing interest and participation among youth in Thailand.

Based on Bundara's imitation learning, the personality development, and success cases of Japanese comics: manga, the incorporate of famous Thais' figures as its characters, the value creation for those comics, as well as Sagat, in Japanese is "Sangat", and Adon in Street Fighters, Shura in World Heroes, Samchay Tomyamgun in Fighter's History, and Apachai in Kenichi: The Mightiest Disciple: in Neoz, other Thai boxers with supporting roles in Baki The Grappler, of which are Thai boxers who play roles in Japanese comics. Nai

Khanom Tom, who was the first Thai boxing instructor, attracted much attention from the foreign media and was also adapted as a cartoon and aired on cartoon media channels. Therefore, Thai boxing comics are possibly being a means to increase participants in Thai boxing among youth in the country. In order to get broad views and market development template for this research study, the qualitative data was used to draw opinions and responses, in-depth interviews of ten purposively experts in sports and marketing, and the convenience sampling of ten parents with children. The qualitative results suggest that it is the possibility to use sports comic to develop youth market through a positively rewards learning. Moreover, parents with children, children in grades 1 to 6 are interested in Thai boxing; however, due to parents' boxing perception is violence and unreasonable undesirable to let their children practice Thai Boxing sport. Also, research suggests that in order to increase boxing' interests, the first step would be to change parents' perception from the intimidating sport to an art of self-defense, and hence it is suggested that comics gesture will definitely be the softer mechanism to re-introduce the boxing for self-defense sport.

Furthermore, questionnaires are structured: cartoon books reading and purchasing behaviors, Thai Boxing perception as self-defense sport in comparing to Taekwondo and Judo, and heroes in comic books influence children's behavior, etc. The 400 respondents are conveniently sampling in comic book stores in Bangkok, and who are students and parents. The SPSS and descriptive statistics are analyzed, and to find factors and perspectives on comic books. The results are categorized to three groups to draw marketing approach; 1) Children in Grades 1 to 6: the respondents are interested in reading comic books and characteristically show excellent knowledge development skills. This age group is emotionally and physically equipped, and, if proper reading skills are promoted, children in this age group will easily be able to remember the material. The content of such material must be engaging and incorporate sporting aspects; 2) Parents aged between 30 to 50 years: the respondents are the decision-maker who buy the comic books for the younger group and is evident that these parents must be motivated to buy comics for their children. Obviously that Parents often read and screen the books to determine the level of appropriateness before deciding whether the children are permitted to read; 3) For the Thai boxing beginners: the respondents do not want to start Thai boxing only for competing against other athletes, but may also to begin with purposively of self-defense, exercise, or leisure hobby.

Moreover results, sport comics and market development opportunity is suggested the action plan to observe the potential in promoting Thai boxing legacy, the marketing tool through the well-known Thai boxing instructors, with Thai history in comic books. Contents will be in two key parts: 1) Thai boxing training and 2) Thai boxing legacy. The research study find that many Thai boxing instructors have amazing experiences, which could potentially be featured in comics and could be very entertaining for readers. Certain aspects of Thai legacy could also be used as contents in comic books so that they are both informative and interesting at the same time. In this aspect, lessons can be incorporated into the contents of the comics.

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