

SKI: Strategic innovations and brand awareness for the laundromat industry in Thailand

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Abstract: This study explores the strategies and marketing communication innovations employed by Alliance Laundry Systems LLC to enhance brand awareness in the Thai laundromat market. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, the research combines qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys to analyze the perceptions of laundromat owners and customers. The findings reveal that digital platforms, particularly social media, play a crucial role in driving brand awareness and customer engagement. Customers highly value perceived quality, including high-tech washing machines, modern payment methods, and regular maintenance services. The study also highlights the importance of brand relationships and loyalty in influencing customer retention. Based on the research findings, the SKi Strategy is proposed, emphasizing product segmentation, distributor management, and innovative communication knowledge to drive business success. The strategy advocates for the integration of advanced technologies such as AI and mobile applications to enhance operational efficiency and customer convenience. The research concludes that the laundromat industry in Thailand is poised for significant growth, driven by urbanization, technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences. The findings offer valuable insights for laundromat operators, distributors, and manufacturers, providing a strategic roadmap for achieving a competitive advantage and long-term success in the evolving market landscape.

Keywords: Brand awareness, Laundromat industry, Marketing communication, SKi Strategy, Thailand.

1. Introduction

The concept of joint laundry encompasses facilities such as communal laundry rooms and self-service coin-operated laundries, often referred to as laundromats (LM). These have emerged as an alternative consumption model within the context of the transition to the circular economy [1] and have the potential to alleviate the environmental burden on households [2] and indoor space usage when compared to personal washing machines. Laundromats, initially offering washers and dryers to customers, have been in operation for decades in both Europe and the United States. However, with substantial technological advancements in the laundry industry, industrial grade washing machines and dryers have been increasingly employed, resulting in enhanced energy and water efficiency due to their quicker operational capabilities. Moreover, industrial laundromats have the adaptability to align with contemporary consumer lifestyles, thus enhancing their appeal. Notably, modern laundromat franchises have experienced rapid and sustainable growth, particularly in Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand [3]. From the perspective of laundromat business owners, the self-service laundromat model has significant growth potential in the current era. In contrast, traditional coin-operated laundromats, which have been in operation for decades, are gradually disappearing from the market. This is because coin-operated laundromats use household washing machines, which do not meet consumer expectations in terms of efficiency and time savings, unlike industrial washing machines used in modern laundromats. It is highlighted the growing laundromat market in Thailand, even during the COVID-19 pandemic [4]. The likened laundromats to convenience stores, which replaced traditional mom-and-pop shops.

The success of laundromat chains such as Laundry Bar can be attributed to their ability to complete washing and drying within just one hour. Customer demographics vary based on location; for example, laundromats in tourist areas primarily serve backpackers and long-term foreign residents, while those in local communities cater to nearby residents and hospitality businesses requiring bedding and linen cleaning. Additionally, laundromats near universities mainly serve students who visit weekly to do their laundry. Laundromat customers encompass diverse groups, particularly those with modern lifestyles. Several factors influence customer preferences for laundromat services in Thailand, including loyalty, satisfaction, and service experience. Phuphisith and Kurisu [5] noted that experiential marketing significantly impacts customer loyalty by shaping perceived value. Customers who recognize the value of laundromat services find them worthwhile due to high service standards and well-maintained equipment. Experiential marketing also plays a crucial role in brand awareness, ensuring that customers associate specific laundromats with reliability and efficiency. When thinking about laundromats, customers tend to recall the brand they have previously used first. Furthermore, experiential marketing enhances customer loyalty by increasing the likelihood of repeat visits. Customers who perceive laundromats as valuable and convenient develop long-term loyalty and demonstrate an intent to continue using the same laundromat. Perceived value also influences customer loyalty, as those who experience high service quality feel that their spending is justified. Additionally, brand awareness contributes to loyalty, as customers who are familiar with a laundromat brand are more inclined to return. This aligns with the findings of Moon, et al. [6] who emphasized that customers prioritize the quality and modernity of laundromat equipment. Secondary considerations include the availability of different machine sizes and the sufficiency of machines to meet customer demand. In terms of marketing strategies, promotional efforts significantly impact customer retention. Effective promotions include regular updates on special offers, discounted pricing packages for frequent users, and free trial services for first-time customers.

Although Alliance Laundry Systems LLC is a major player in the laundromat business, holding the largest market share in Thailand, research on marketing communication innovations for sustainable industry growth remains limited. The company supports laundromat entrepreneurs by offering training on washing and drying techniques, product knowledge, service management, and sales strategies for distributors in Thailand and Southeast Asia. This study explores marketing communication innovations to develop strategic branding models that effectively engage all stakeholders, ensuring the long-term growth of the laundromat business in Thailand following these research objectives:

- To analyze the strategies and marketing communication innovations employed by Alliance Laundry Systems LLC to enhance brand awareness in the Thai laundromat market.
- To explore the role of perceived quality, brand relationship, and brand loyalty in influencing customer satisfaction and retention in the laundromat business.
- To develop a strategic business model for the success of laundromat businesses in Thailand, leveraging marketing communication innovations and technological advancements.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the cognitive capacity to discern or identify a brand across diverse contexts, a phenomenon rooted in the strength of brand-related information stored within the consumer's memory. This concept, as elucidated by Keller [7] is typically stratified into two distinct tiers: namely, the level of brand recognition and the level of brand recall. However, it is imperative to note that Jasin [8] have proffered an alternative taxonomy of brand awareness, consisting of four levels: unawareness, brand recognition, brand recall, and top of mind, where consumers are presumed to have achieved brand recognition. Within the domain of brand recognition, consumers must demonstrate the capacity to acknowledge a brand when specifically prompted or furnished with aided recall, a modality divergent from brand recall or unaided recall wherein consumers spontaneously recollect a brand without any external stimulus. Notably, the zenith of brand awareness resides at the "top of mind," representing the

brand that immediately surfaces in the consumer's consciousness when prompted. This echelon is regarded as the pinnacle aspiration for brands to attain. Furthermore, brand recognition is characterized by consumers' ability to acknowledge their prior exposure, knowledge, or familiarity with a brand [7]. It manifests when consumers can discern the distinct attributes or characteristics of a brand and accurately identify it when prompted by relevant stimuli [9]. This achievement of brand recognition can be facilitated through a multitude of consumer engagement channels, encompassing advertising mediums such as television, radio, email marketing, flyer distribution, promotional sales initiatives, and the cultivation of brand awareness via social media platforms, among others. It is important to underscore that while brand recognition hinges on the ability of individuals to identify that they have previously encountered, heard of, or been acquainted with a brand, it does not invariably equate to a predisposition for consumers to make purchases Panomupatam [10]. Keller [7] posited that the effective establishment of brand awareness can yield three pivotal advantages. Primarily, it serves as a foundational point for cultivating a brand image within the minds of consumers. This, in turn, emerges as a vital constituent that contributes substantially to the construction of the brand's image. When judiciously selected information and brand elements are employed, this endeavor engenders a favorable awareness that facilitates the augmentation of extant consumer perceptions pertaining to the brand. Furthermore, the augmentation of brand awareness can engender Consideration Advantages. Elevating brand awareness within the consumer psyche renders the brand one among the limited pool of options that consumers contemplate when making purchasing decisions. Extensive research substantiates that consumers typically entertain only a handful of alternative brands during the decision-making process. Therefore, a brand's ability to establish itself as a prominent choice among these alternatives heightens the likelihood of being selected over competitors. Ultimately, the cultivation of Choice Advantages materializes when consumers possess a substantial degree of awareness concerning the brand. This heightened awareness substantially amplifies the probability of the brand being chosen by consumers. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that consumers exhibit a propensity to select brands with which they harbor a sense of familiarity, even when these brands may not be the most optimal in satisfying their needs [7].

2.2. Alliance Laundry Systems LLC

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC is considered the origin of the laundromat service provider in Thailand, which has evolved from the inception of the premier laundromat. This establishment, reminiscent of the traditional coin-operated laundromats that have been in existence for several decades, employs standard home washing machines. These laundromats offer a choice of location, such as within the vicinity of a grocery store, on the premises of residential buildings, or along alleyways. Smaller outlets typically house 1 to 5 washing machines, whereas larger establishments may have a dedicated room within a commercial building, accommodating approximately 10 or more washing machines. Furthermore, some of these establishments provide drying facilities through commonly used household dryers. In terms of service fees for laundry and drying, the average cost ranges from 20 to 40 baht per cycle and washing taking approximately 55 minutes and drying around 60 minutes to complete. Operating hours vary based on the convenience of the shopkeeper which is introduced this novel concept in Thailand characterized by its 24-hour availability and the utilization of industrial-grade washing machines and dryers, this innovation marks a significant transformation in the laundromat industry, elevating it to meet modern standards. However, various factors contribute to this modernization, including the size of the establishment, interior lighting, and location. The primary customer base of these establishments overlaps with the traditional laundromat clientele and the initial convenience store users from 2011 to 2015, leading up to the present year of 2021. Thailand currently boasts 2,443 convenient laundromat outlets under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce's Department of Business Development. The latter has identified laundromat services as one of the most promising emerging business sectors in 2021, thanks to the enthusiastic support from the younger generation and the trend toward urbanization. Notably, certain brands have extended their services to

online platforms through mobile applications. This technological integration enables customers to check machine availability and preprogram washing cycles. In Thailand, a multitude of new franchised Laundromats are anticipated to launch nationwide by the year 2023-2024 [5].

3. Research Methodology

This research employs a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative research, which involves in-depth interviews and documentary research, with quantitative research, specifically survey research. The qualitative research utilizes in-depth interviews to analyze the marketing communication innovation strategies of laundromat businesses under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. Documentary research is conducted to examine the marketing communication innovation patterns of laundromat business operators. To ensure the accuracy of the qualitative research tools, the interview questions were further examined by three experts in marketing communication innovation and research language. They assessed the item content validity and clarity of language to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and relevance of the interview questions through the triangulation process. For the quantitative research, survey research was conducted using an online questionnaire to analyze perceptions of marketing communication innovations and branding of laundromat businesses under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. The questionnaire targeted both laundromat owners and customers. The questionnaire underwent a quality check for item content validity and objectivity by three experts with at least five years of experience in strategic business management. The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index was calculated, revealing the following values: IOC for marketing communication and brand perception among laundromat owners under Alliance Laundry Systems Thailand = 1.00 and the IOC for marketing communication and brand perception among laundromat customers under Alliance Laundry Systems Thailand = 0.97

3.1. Sample Group and Key Informants

The quantitative research studied a sample representing the population of Thailand in different regions who use laundromat services under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. The sample group for laundromat customers was drawn from the total population of regular laundromat users in Thailand, which amounts to 1,455,300 people [11]. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula with a margin of error of 0.05 and a confidence level of 95%: Based on the Taro Yamane calculation, a sample size of 400 was deemed appropriate for this study. The sampling method used was convenience sampling, selecting respondents from customers using laundromat services under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. In total, 450 respondents were surveyed. For laundromat owners, the sample was drawn from the 3,850 laundromat business owners across Thailand. Of these, 1,090 owners voluntarily participated in the research. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula with a margin of error of 0.05 and a confidence level of 95%: The calculated sample size was 301, which was deemed suitable for this study. Convenience sampling was used, selecting laundromat owners who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study with Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. For qualitative research, key informants included representatives from all laundromat business distributors in Thailand under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. A total of eight companies were involved: VJ International Group Co., Ltd., Laundry U Co., Ltd., Posh Laundry, Systems Co., Ltd., Straits Laundry (Thailand) Co., Ltd., K-Nex Corporation Co., Ltd., Laundry Bar Thailand Co., Ltd., Chada Laundry Co., Ltd., and Ascend Wash Systems Co., Ltd.,

3.2. Data Collection

For qualitative data collection, the researcher coordinated with key informants, who are representatives of laundromat business distributors in Thailand under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC. The researcher scheduled interviews considering convenience and appropriateness. Interview guidelines were sent to the participants in advance. The interviews were recorded with the consent of all eight key

informants. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews systematically to obtain comprehensive information. The discussions covered facts, experiences, perspectives, attitudes, needs, beliefs, and opinions relevant to the research objectives. For quantitative data collection, laundromat owners who voluntarily participated in the study assisted in distributing online questionnaires to their customers. The questionnaires were distributed via various online platforms, including email, Facebook, and LINE. Follow-ups were conducted to ensure questionnaire completion.

3.3. Data Analysis

After data collection, the researcher verified the accuracy and completeness of the questionnaire responses. The data was then entered into a computer for processing using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic characteristics of respondents, including gender, occupation, age, education level, and average monthly income. The results were presented in terms of frequency distribution and percentage. Opinions on laundromat services were analyzed using mean and standard deviation (S.D.). The researcher organized research data from various documentary sources and in-depth interviews. The data was coded and categorized (Coding and Theming) before being analyzed using descriptive analysis. The findings were interpreted, synthesized, and linked to the research objectives, providing insights into strategic approaches and marketing communication innovation models for laundromat businesses under Alliance Laundry Systems LLC.

4. Results and Discussion

To analyze the strategies and marketing communication innovations employed by Alliance Laundry Systems LLC to enhance brand awareness in the Thai laundromat market, the results from this study can be shown as follow:

4.1. Business Plan of Alliance Laundry Systems LLC

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC was established and has been dedicated to developing the laundry business since 1908 in Wisconsin, USA [12]. It is recognized as a multinational private company headquartered in America, exclusively operating in the laundry sector [13]. Laundromats utilizing Alliance Laundry Systems LLC's washing and drying machines have transformed modern laundromats into spaces that offer an enhanced customer experience. These laundromats integrate contactless payment options through applications such as Speed Queen Insight, Huebsch Command, Ipso Connect, and Primus iTrace. Customers can make payments via credit cards, Value Central Payment top-ups, and mobile banking, or through franchisee applications representing the company. Additionally, laundromats may provide amenities such as TVs, Wi-Fi, power outlets for work or entertainment, reading areas, and children's play zones to accommodate families.

4.2. Business Strategy in Thailand

For the current year, the company aims to position Thailand as a regional model for laundromats by implementing two key strategies [14] shown in Table 1

Table 1.
Alliance Laundry Systems LLC Regional Model.

Strategy	Description
Promoting Premium Laundry Stores	Encouraging the establishment of larger and aesthetically appealing laundromats to create a premium customer experience.
One District, One Laundromat Initiative	Expanding laundromat accessibility in district-level markets with high growth potential, providing investment and expansion opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC continuously innovates by introducing new washing and drying machines, such as the Tempest model, which incorporates inverter technology, reducing motor size

while maintaining drying efficiency [15]. The company also plans to expand service centers across regions to enhance after-sales service capabilities.

4.3. Customer Segments

The company's laundromat services cater to 11 primary customer segments shown in Table 2

Table 2.

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC Customer Segment.

Customer Segments	Description
Hospitals	Requiring specialized washing machines such as Barrier Washers for disinfecting hospital linens [16].
Healthcare Facilities	Including elderly care and rehabilitation centers, focusing on hygiene and personal health.
Laundromats	Offering general self-service laundry facilities.
Residential Communities	Such as villages, condominiums, and dormitories.
Organizations and Institutions	Including military camps, fire departments, prisons, and marine services.
Restaurants and Hospitality	Providing laundry solutions for tablecloths, napkins, aprons, uniforms, and kitchen textiles.
Professional Care Services	Using Soft Wash systems as an alternative to dry cleaning for delicate fabrics like wedding gowns and suits.
Residential Hotels and Serviced Apartments	Offering comprehensive laundry services for long-term residents.
Commercial Laundry Facilities	Industrial-scale laundromats serving various businesses.
Industrial Clients	Including petroleum plants, cleanrooms, pharmaceutical factories, and large-scale laundry facilities.
Business Management Services	Providing operational support for laundromat businesses.

4.4. Market Share and Competitive Advantage

As of 2023, Alliance Laundry Systems LLC holds a 70% market share in Thailand (Future Market Insights Inc., 2023), categorized by brand as shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC Market Share in Thailand.

Brands	Market Share (%)
Speed Queen	36
Huebsch	16
Ipsos	10
Primus	6

The company's global success is attributed to:

1. Being the leading company in the commercial laundry industry worldwide.
2. Over a century of expertise in the laundry business.
3. Significant investment in research and development for superior laundry equipment [17].

4.5. Franchise and Non-Franchise Models

In Thailand, Alliance Laundry Systems operates through two primary distribution models [18] shown in Table 4.

Table 4.

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC Distribution Models.

Distribution Models	Major Companies
Franchise Distributors	K-Nex Corporation (Otteri), Laundry Bar (LaundryBar), Posh Laundry Systems (24 Wash), Limaya (Laundry Station), Ascend Wash Systems (Wonder Wash), VJ International (Kirei).
Non-Franchise Distributors	VJ International Group, Straits Laundry (Thailand).

Some companies operate under both franchise and non-franchise models, including Posh Laundry Systems, Limaya (Thailand), and Ascend Wash Systems.

4.6. Future Business Expansion

Alliance Laundry Systems LLC remains committed to its mission of being the leader in commercial laundry efficiency. The company aims to grow by 10% in 2024 [14] with new laundromats featuring 15-20 washing and drying machines per location. Key strategies include expanding premium laundromats, implementing the One District, One Laundromat initiative, expanding into Indonesia and CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) markets, targeting a 20% market share increase, supporting existing distributors while welcoming new investors, and enhancing brand communication by integrating washing machine branding with laundromat branding to reach more consumers and attract new users.

To explore the role of perceived quality, brand relationship, and brand loyalty in influencing customer satisfaction and retention in the laundromat business, the results from this study can be shown as follow:

Table 5.

Communication Innovation Awareness and Brand Recognition Perceived by the Laundromat Owners.

Awareness Factors	Mean Score	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	Interpretation
Brand Awareness	3.89	0.802	High
Brand communication via radio and TV	3.84	0.978	High
Brand communication via newspapers, magazines, and posters	3.84	1.00	High
Brand communication via outdoor media (LED screens, train station ads, etc.)	3.76	0.928	High
Brand communication via websites	3.91	0.941	High
Brand communication via social media (Facebook, Line, YouTube, Instagram, X, TikTok)	4.07	0.929	High
Brand awareness through word-of-mouth	3.93	0.944	High
Perceived Quality	3.97	0.802	High
Availability of high-quality machines meeting international standards	4.00	0.907	High
Regular maintenance and quality control of machines	3.97	0.991	High
Complimentary high-quality detergent services	3.95	0.963	High
Brand Relationship	4.11	0.771	High
Customers recognize the laundromat brand first when thinking about laundromats	4.09	0.848	High
Customers perceive laundromat services as highly efficient	4.10	0.856	High
Customers believe laundromats help save costs	4.09	0.878	High
Customers feel convenience when using the laundromat	4.16	0.857	High
Brand Loyalty	3.98	0.810	High
Readiness to provide laundry services (washing, drying, folding)	4.06	0.900	High
Offering better promotions compared to competitors	4.02	0.931	High
Choice of laundromat brand due to quality and safety certifications	3.98	1.01	High
Choice of laundromat brand due to strong logo and brand identity	3.88	0.981	High
Choice of laundromat brand due to the use of Alliance Laundry Systems	3.99	0.963	High

The findings shown in Table 5 indicate that laundromat business owners strongly recognize their brands, and the quality of services provided, maintaining high engagement and customer satisfaction levels. This awareness is categorized into the following factors:

4.7. Brand Awareness

Laundromat business owners exhibit high awareness of the brands they operate, with an average score of 3.89. The highest recognition (4.07) was for brand communication through social media platforms such as Facebook, Line, YouTube, Instagram, X (Twitter), and TikTok. This aligns with studies indicating that social media serves as an effective tool for brand awareness and customer engagement [19]. Social media platforms play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, as they provide an interactive space where businesses can engage with customers in real-time. Research has shown that companies leveraging digital communication effectively experience increased brand loyalty and awareness [20]. Furthermore, word-of-mouth referrals (3.93) reinforce the importance of interpersonal communication in brand recognition. As consumer trust remains one of the strongest influences on purchasing decisions, peer recommendations are instrumental in increasing a brand's credibility [21]. Additionally, communication via websites (3.91) underscores the growing influence of digital platforms in shaping brand visibility. A well-designed website serves as a key point of information, offering potential customers insight into pricing, services, and locations. It is suggested that digital presence significantly enhances consumer confidence, making website optimization a necessity for brand growth [22].

4.8. Perceived Quality

Perceived quality was also rated highly at an average of 3.97. The highest score (4.00) was for awareness that the laundromat brand provides high-quality washing and drying machines meeting international standards. This finding is consistent with service quality theories, which suggest that reliability and technological advancement enhance consumer satisfaction [23]. Consumers tend to evaluate service quality based on key dimensions such as performance consistency, ease of access, and reliability. Awareness of regular maintenance and quality control of machines (3.97) supports prior research on customer perceptions of operational efficiency and service consistency. A lack of maintenance often results in customer dissatisfaction, highlighting the importance of routine quality checks. Additionally, the availability of high-quality complimentary detergent services (3.95) aligns with studies indicating that added value features increase customer loyalty [24]. Offering high-quality complementary services strengthens the brand's image and improves overall customer satisfaction [25].

4.9. Brand Relationship

Business owners expressed a strong relationship with their laundromat brand, scoring an average of 4.11. The highest recognition (4.16) was for the belief that their laundromats provide customer convenience, which is consistent with research emphasizing the role of convenience in consumer decision-making [26]. Studies indicate that consumers place high value on convenience-oriented services, particularly in urban environments where time constraints influence purchasing behavior. The belief that customers recognize laundromats for efficient washing and drying machines (4.10) supports findings on consumer perceptions of quality and functional benefits. Quality and performance reliability contribute to a brand's positioning in the marketplace, increasing consumer trust and retention [27]. Additionally, the perception that laundromats help customers save on costs (4.09) aligns with economic theories of value-based decision-making. Businesses that promote affordability as part of their value proposition tend to build stronger customer loyalty. Cost-saving benefits, coupled with efficiency and convenience, create a competitive advantage, making laundromat brands more appealing to budget-conscious consumers.

4.10. Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty was rated at 3.98, indicating strong loyalty among laundromat business owners. The highest recognition (4.06) was for readiness to provide washing, drying, and folding services, a factor that directly impacts consumer retention. Repeat patronage is significantly influenced by service reliability and positive brand associations, reinforcing customer trust over time [28]. The belief that

their laundromat brands offer better promotions (4.02) reflects the importance of promotional strategies in fostering brand preference. Consumers are highly responsive to promotional incentives, particularly in price-sensitive markets. Loyalty programs, seasonal discounts, and referral incentives contribute to stronger customer relationships and increased brand retention. Additionally, the choice of laundromat brand based on the use of Alliance Laundry Systems (3.99) highlights the role of product differentiation in influencing purchasing decisions [29]. Differentiation through premium machinery and advanced service technology enhances brand value and allows businesses to position themselves as industry leaders. Research suggests that brands associated with high-performance equipment often experience higher customer satisfaction ratings [30].

Table 5.
Channels for Observing Communication Innovation.

Advertising Channels	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Facebook	308	29.81
Instagram	122	11.81
YouTube	116	11.23
Line	122	11.81
Website	86	8.33
X (Twitter)	69	6.67
TikTok	123	12.22
Outdoor Advertising	95	9.20
Radio/TV	33	3.19
Newspaper	22	2.13
Storefront Promotional Signs	258	24.96
Other	10	0.97
Total	1033	100

The role of digital and traditional media in influencing brand recognition has been a pivotal factor in consumer behavior studies [31]. The findings shown in Table 5 reveal that Facebook is the most utilized medium for laundromat advertising, representing 29.81% of the observed channels. This aligns with studies indicating that social media serves as an effective tool for brand awareness and customer engagement [32]. The effectiveness of storefront promotional signs (24.96%) highlights the impact of offline marketing strategies in reinforcing brand presence, supporting previous research by Keller [7] who emphasized the significance of visibility in consumer decision-making. The proliferation of digital platforms has significantly altered the way brands interact with consumers. TikTok, with 12.22% of responses, underscores the growing influence of short-form video content in brand awareness. The ability of video-based content to convey brand narratives effectively aligns with studies suggesting that such formats enhance consumer engagement and brand recall [33]. Instagram and Line, each contributing 11.81%, further emphasize the importance of visual and social engagement in contemporary marketing strategies [34]. These findings suggest that brands must integrate a multi-platform approach to maximize consumer outreach and engagement. Moreover, the presence of traditional media such as outdoor advertising (9.20%), radio/TV (3.19%), and newspapers (2.13%) illustrates the continued relevance of conventional marketing techniques. While digital platforms dominate consumer interactions, these traditional formats serve as supplementary reinforcement, ensuring widespread brand recognition across diverse demographics [7]. This multi-channel approach aligns with the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which emphasizes synergy across various communication tools to enhance consumer engagement [33].

Table 6.
Communication Innovation Awareness and Brand Recognition Perceived by Users.

Awareness Factors	Mean Score	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	Interpretation
Brand Awareness	4.18	0.654	High
Familiarity with laundromat brand	4.20	0.718	High
Awareness of laundromat brand details	4.11	0.767	High
Recalling laundromat brand easily	4.20	0.745	High
Exposure to laundromat advertisements	4.12	0.811	High
Recognition of logos and brand colors	4.29	0.732	Very High
Perceived Quality	4.27	0.633	Very High
Quality of washing/drying machines	4.27	0.692	Very High
Modern technology and payment methods	4.29	0.689	Very High
Regular maintenance of machines	4.26	0.710	Very High
Brand Relationship	4.22	0.651	Very High
Time efficiency of laundromat services	4.25	0.692	Very High
Cost efficiency of laundromat services	4.20	0.724	High
Feeling safe at laundromat	4.22	0.701	Very High
Brand Loyalty	4.22	0.628	Very High
Preference for chosen laundromat over others	4.23	0.696	Very High
Recognition of superior promotions or offers	4.16	0.766	High
Certification of hygiene and safety standards	4.21	0.699	Very High
Recognition of brand logos and identity	4.25	0.708	Very High
Recommending the laundromat to others	4.22	0.729	Very High

The increasing shift towards digital consumer engagement has necessitated an evolution in communication innovation strategies. Findings shown in Table 6 suggest that brand awareness among laundromat service users is exceptionally high, with an average score of 4.22. Brand recognition is crucial in influencing customer retention and loyalty, aligning with the model of brand equity, which posits that consumer perception directly affects purchase decisions. Perceived quality scored the highest (4.27), emphasizing that consumers prioritize high-tech washing and drying machines and diverse payment options such as QR codes and e-wallets [35]. This is consistent with research by Choi, et al. [36] on service quality, which indicates that convenience and technological advancement significantly impact consumer satisfaction. Advanced technology in laundromats ensures operational efficiency, hygiene, and ease of use, making them attractive choices for modern consumers. Brand relationship scored an average of 4.22, reinforcing findings by Choi, et al. [36] that suggest strong brand-consumer relationships drive long-term business success. The emotional connection between consumers and brands influences decision-making, with cost efficiency and service safety emerging as key determinants in consumer preference. When brands provide reliability and consistent value, customers are more likely to form positive long-term associations [7]. Brand loyalty, rated at 4.22, demonstrates the importance of consistency in service quality and promotions. Studies suggest that perceived value and brand differentiation contribute to increased consumer advocacy and repeat patronage. Consumers who perceive a brand as superior in value and experience tend to display stronger brand commitment, recommending it to others and continuing to use its services despite competitive alternatives [35].

To develop a strategic business model for the success of laundromat businesses in Thailand, leveraging marketing communication innovations and technological advancements, the results from this study can be shown as follow:

Table 7.
Coding Summary from In-depth Interviews.

Codes	Themes	Description
INN-01	Importance of Innovation	Innovation is crucial for business success, particularly in integrating new technologies to enhance efficiency and reduce labor.
INN-02	Role of Communication Innovation	Communication innovations improve efficiency, speed, and accuracy in business processes.
INN-03	Consumer-Centric Innovation	Innovation must be driven by consumer needs to ensure market relevance and long-term success.
INN-04	Organizational Learning	Continuous learning and skill development are key to sustaining innovation and competitiveness.
INN-05	Strategic Vision for Innovation	Effective leadership in innovation management ensures sustainable business growth.
MAR-01	Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)	Businesses should use multiple communication tools, including advertising, sales promotions, and public relations.
MAR-02	Digital Marketing & Branding	Businesses leverage digital tools, such as social media, apps, and e-wallets, to enhance customer engagement and brand awareness.
MAR-03	Market Adaptation Strategy	Adapting to market needs and consumer behavior ensures competitive advantage.
MAR-04	Consumer Engagement & Experience	Enhancing customer experience through technology-driven communication tools.
MAR-05	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Innovation extends to sustainable business practices, including energy efficiency and environmental conservation.

Table 8.
Theming Summary from In-depth Interviews.

Themes	Supporting Codes	Summary
Innovation as a Business Driver	INN-01, INN-02, INN-03	The company integrates technological advancements and consumer-driven innovation to maintain competitiveness.
Marketing Communication and Branding	MAR-01, MAR-02, MAR-03	Businesses utilize integrated marketing strategies, focusing on digital tools and personalized branding approaches.
Customer-Centric Approach	MAR-04, MAR-05	Enhancing customer experience through seamless communication and sustainable business practices.

This thematic analysis shown in Table 7 and 8 highlight the key insights from the interviews, showcasing the intersection of innovation, communication, leadership, and market adaptation in business strategy.

4.11. Innovation as a Business Driver

Innovation is the backbone of modern business operations, ensuring that organizations remain competitive in dynamic markets. Technological advancements allow businesses to automate tasks, reduce operational costs, and improve service delivery. Research suggests that companies investing in digital transformation experience higher efficiency and productivity [37]. The role of communication innovation has also expanded, allowing businesses to streamline collaboration, enhance decision-making processes, and optimize customer relations. Companies that adopt consumer-driven innovation strategies gain long-term sustainability, as customer needs continuously shape market trends. Organizations that leverage disruptive innovation are more likely to maintain market dominance. Case studies show that companies such as Tesla and Amazon thrive by continuously rethinking traditional business models and integrating emerging technologies [38]. Moreover, artificial intelligence and machine learning are being increasingly adopted to personalize consumer experiences, leading to greater brand loyalty and customer retention.

4.12. Marketing Communication and Branding

Marketing communication has evolved significantly due to digital transformation. Traditional advertising methods are now supplemented with social media marketing, influencer collaborations, and

real-time customer engagement tactics [39]. Integrated marketing communication (IMC) ensures that all marketing efforts are aligned across various platforms, creating a unified brand message [32]. Businesses leveraging data-driven marketing campaigns experience higher conversion rates, as they can personalize content based on consumer behavior patterns [34]. Market adaptation strategies are crucial for brands looking to expand into global markets. Case studies highlight that businesses adjusting their marketing strategies to local cultural preferences see greater customer acceptance. For instance, McDonald's customizes its menu based on regional tastes, which has contributed to its global success. Digital branding also plays a key role, with businesses utilizing interactive content, gamification, and AI-driven chatbots to enhance consumer interactions.

4.13. Customer-Centric Approach

Customer engagement is fundamental to brand success. Research highlights that businesses focusing on enhancing customer experiences tend to retain a higher percentage of loyal consumers. Digital tools such as mobile applications, live chat support, and customer feedback systems enable businesses to interact seamlessly with their audiences. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives further contribute to brand equity. Companies engaging in sustainable business practices not only fulfill ethical obligations but also build stronger customer trust [40]. Brands like Patagonia and Tesla have successfully positioned themselves as environmentally responsible businesses, which has led to increased customer loyalty and advocacy. Moreover, businesses prioritizing CSR benefit from improved employee satisfaction and community goodwill. Personalized marketing enhances the customer experience. Research shows that businesses utilizing big data analytics to customize product recommendations and promotional campaigns see higher engagement rates. Furthermore, the rise of omnichannel marketing ensures that consumers receive a seamless experience across online and offline platforms. By integrating customer preferences into business strategies, companies can create more meaningful and lasting relationships with their audiences [41].

4.14. SKi Strategy for the Success of the Laundromat Business in Thailand

The SKi Strategy for the Success of the Laundromat Business in Thailand is a business model developed from the findings of both quantitative and qualitative research. It has been analyzed and structured into a model that benefits washing and drying machine manufacturers, distributors, laundromat franchisees, and laundromat owners. The goal is to leverage marketing communication innovations to effectively reach target customers.

Ski Strategy for the Success of the Laundromat Business in Thailand

Strategy (S): **Produced** and **identified** the right products and appointed the right **distributors** for each market.

Knowing Innovation (Ki): Using **innovative knowledge** in **communication** and **marketing** to upgrade and develop the **laundromat and route business**.

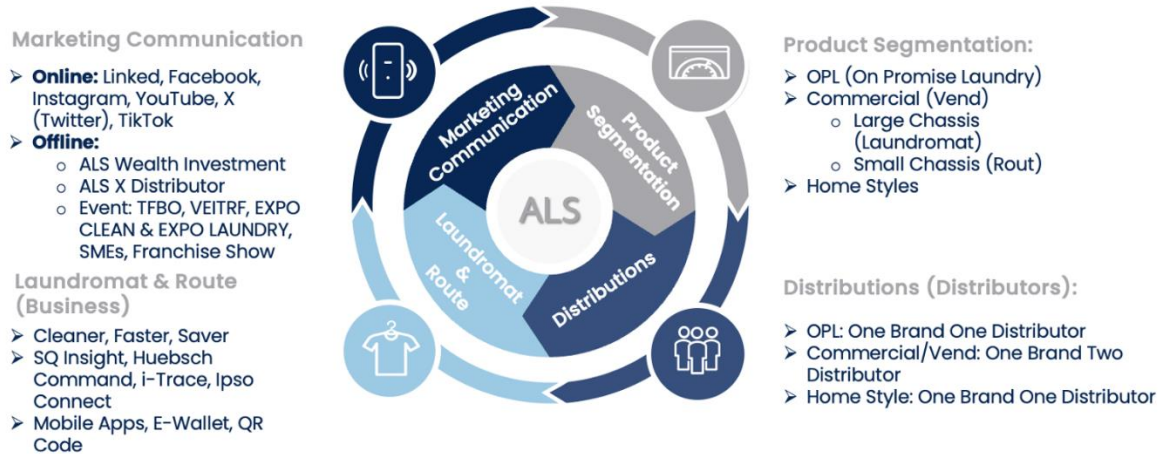


Figure 1.
Ski Model.

The model in Figure 1 is explained as follows:

S – Strategy; the strategy comprises two key approaches: Product Segmentation – The clear categorization and positioning of washing and drying machines under the Alliance Laundry Systems LLC brand. The segmentation is divided into three main types: (1) Washing machines, dryers, and ironing machines for On-Premises Laundry (OPL), (2) Washing machines and dryers for commercial laundromats, and (3) Washing machines and dryers for household use.

Distributor Management Strategy – The company has categorized its distributors into three business units: (1) OPL Business Unit – Serving hotels, hospitals, and factories, with five distributors representing the five available brands, (2) Commercial/Vend Business Unit – Further divided into industrial laundromats and route operations using commercial machines, and (3) Home Styles Business Unit – There are eight distributors across four brands for laundromats, while the route operation sector in Thailand has two distributors.

Ki – Knowledge of Innovation; this involves the application of innovative communication knowledge in the laundromat business, categorized into: Business Model Innovation – This refers to laundromats incorporating advanced technologies such as AI and mobile applications. Examples include Speed Queen Insight, Huebsch Command, i-Trace, and Ipso Connect, which operate via mobile phones, tablets, and computers. These platforms allow users to control washing and drying machines, manage accounting systems, and provide after-sales technical services. Additionally, payment systems via various apps are integrated, along with franchisee- or owner-specific apps designed for customer convenience and sales promotion, and Marketing Communication – Business operators utilize digital marketing innovations, primarily through social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. These channels are used for marketing, sales promotion, and customer education. Furthermore, two-way communication (e.g., real-time interactions) is employed to engage with customers effectively.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that Alliance Laundry Systems LLC has successfully leveraged marketing communication innovations and technological advancements to enhance brand awareness and customer

engagement in the Thai laundromat market. The research highlights the importance of digital platforms, particularly social media, in shaping consumer perceptions and driving brand loyalty. The findings reveal that laundromat business owners and customers exhibit high levels of brand awareness, with social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok playing a pivotal role in brand communication. Additionally, the study underscores the significance of perceived quality, with customers valuing high-tech washing and drying machines, modern payment methods, and regular maintenance services. The SKi Strategy, developed from the research findings, emphasizes the importance of product segmentation, distributor management, and innovative communication knowledge in driving the success of laundromat businesses. The strategy advocates for the integration of advanced technologies such as AI and mobile applications to enhance operational efficiency and customer convenience. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for a customer-centric approach, where businesses focus on enhancing customer experience through seamless communication and sustainable practices. Overall, the research demonstrates that the laundromat industry in Thailand is poised for significant growth, driven by urbanization, technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences. The findings provide valuable insights for laundromat operators, distributors, and manufacturers, offering a strategic roadmap for achieving competitive advantage and long-term success in the evolving market landscape.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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