

Artist Exposure Utilizing Multi-Language Communication Tools

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Table of Contents

Introduction and Research Questions	5
About the Artist.....	9
Literature Review.....	11
Multi-lingual Community Analysis	15
Online Translation Tools	17
Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT).....	20
Social Media	20
Merchandising.....	25
Project Designs	29
Website Design	29
Prototype Formatting:	29
The Prototype Links:	30
Facebook Fan Page Design.....	32
Print-on-Demand Online Services	32
Implementation	32
Analysis.....	36
Survey Results	36
Facebook Results	39
Print-on-Demand Service Results	41
Future Research and Implications.....	43
Reference	47
APPENDIX A.....	52
APPENDIX B.....	58
APPENDIX C.....	59
APPENDIX D.....	60

List of Figures

Figure 1: Jeerasak LiewThoSong (“Pop”) pictured with an original painting.....	9
Figure 2. “Search Methods for Creating Designs for Merchandise” by Durham (2011).	27
Figure 3: Distribution of “Q39: What other multi-language options would you like to have on the website (e.g. dictionary, links to translators, live translation, and/or translate toolbar)?”	68
Figure 4: Distribution of “Q36: Which Prototype had the best navigation layout”	68
Figure 5: Distribution of “Q36: Which Prototype had the best navigation layout”	69

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Introduction and Research Questions

History has proven that art holds an important role in cultures worldwide. The image of Kuan Yin depicted in a painting, physically located within a Buddhist temple, is now broadcast globally on electronic devices. From oil on canvas to pixels on screen, artists are exploring digital methods to promote their work. Painters do not have to wait to be granted an exhibition to display their art work to audiences; instead they may cut out the middlemen and exhibit their works using the Internet. Some brick and mortar galleries have opted to close their retail space and only present their collection through websites and art communities (Quesenberry, 2008). The 2003 Pew Internet Project (PEW) determined 32 million Americans consider themselves artists, and “the survey suggests that up to 10 million Americans earn at least some money from their performances, songs, paintings, videos, sculptures, photos or creative writing” (Madden, 2004, p.iii).

European and American art markets are already established online. PEW (2003) relates the following:

American artists have embraced the internet as a creative and inspiration-enhancing workspace where they can communicate, collaborate, and promote their work. They are considerably more wired than the rest of the American population. (Madden, 2004,p.iii)

It is a highly competitive market according to Christian Arno (2011) from Media Post News. Arno also notes in the same article that the dominant language used by most websites is English; however, the English market is becoming oversaturated and lacking in multi-cultural reach (Arno, 2011). “It is becoming incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to compete with those

billions of optimized Web pages vying for consumer attention” (Arno, 2011). These marketplaces have grown tremendously. As these communities increase their online presence, they have yet to be populated by those individual artists in third-world and/or rural global markets where online technology has not been completely instituted. Lessening the gap between established art markets and nonexistent markets may easily be achieved through availability, education, time, attention, and access to technology.

RQ1: How can cross-cultural communication be facilitated through the use of online translation features in ways that are easiest for individuals to recognize and use?

RQ2: How can a multi-language website encourage users to contribute to a Facebook fan page?

RQ3: How can print-on-demand online merchandisers be used to globally promote an artist?

This project will discuss how to diversify a website using multi-language options that will reach a larger global consumer base. Using an international approach will allow the artist a means to swim in a larger pool and using multi-language options will make him a bigger fish in these waters. Expanding outside of Thailand will enable the artist to reach those consumers who enjoy Thai artwork and those who prefer his style of painting. Some of his paintings are murals and cannot be removed from their location, so a website will exhibit his abilities through photographs. The final prototype I present will be a good resource of techniques and information, that can be included when the real artist website is created. In addition, exposure through social

media will complement the website and help the artist reach out to others through common networks such as Facebook. The fan page will require continual attention once it becomes established through the timeframe of this project. Lastly, owning shop in Northeastern Thailand is not an option, therefore online merchandisers who print-on-demand will allow the artist to sell his artwork with little overhead costs. These print-on-demand services will provide consumers an option for bringing the artwork home.

My project will examine how to market art work internationally using online translation tools. Specifically, the intent of this project is to explore how existing online multi-language technology will offer a Thai painter in rural Northeast Thailand the opportunity to globally promote his paintings. With so many artists already online, especially English speaking ones, how does a rural artist from Thailand enter this pool? The project will use an online marketing structure consisting of a multi-language website, a global social network, and print-on-demand merchandisers to reach this goal. An artist, from anywhere in the world, can create an online presence with the help of some online resources and reach an enormous audience.

This project focuses on a Thai artist who is willing to go beyond his rural town, not wait for the casual tourist to walk by and buy his paintings, but expand himself using the Internet. He is not adept at using the Internet so he is receiving the help of this project to construct an online presence to expose his artwork. The artist cannot speak English, nor does he possess the skills to develop a website. This project will aid this artist and others like him by creating a simple model to initiate an international artist, with language barriers, a means to promote his work to the world.

On behalf of the artist and with consent, I will pull together a marketing package that will offer a varied audience consisting of art enthusiasts, art consumers, tourists, and those interested in Thailand, (and want) the opportunity to enjoy and experience an artist and his paintings from rural Thailand. To do this, I will apply the principles I learned from courses in the Information Design and Technology program at SUNYIT. The Human Centered Design will be applied to develop the website. The Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) will help guide the study of the artist's website and Facebook Fan Page. All of these online structures will aid multi-language communication with a global audience. With this project I hope to obtain some insight that will offer others an introductory model to implement for their own online marketing schemes, especially multi-language/culture art promotion.

About the Artist

Jeerasak LiewThoSong (“Pop”), a painter, living in Thailand, about 8299 miles from my home in Keeseville, NY (Mapcrow, 2011). Distance is eliminated by the touch of a button when online technology is applied. See Figure 1.



Figure 1: Jeerasak LiewThoSong (“Pop”) pictured with an original painting.

Jeerasak resides in the northeast region of Thailand called, Amphur Kham Riang in Mahasarakham province (also known as Isan region). The economy is driven by agriculture so making a living from selling art is not a huge consideration for residents. As a freelance painter, Jeerasak creates large wall sized murals of Buddhist images and landscapes inspired by the peaceful Isan countryside. Jeerasak sells some of his artwork out of his home and he works with local Art Professors at Mahasarakham University. The paintings he creates are considered “pop art,” explaining Jeerasak’s nickname of “Pop”. His artwork is not titled at this time; therefore, it is important to describe the painting and extract meaning from the image in the painting. The post-impressionist style artwork is similar to Georges-Pierre Seurat. Jeerasak recreates landscapes from his region so they include typical Thai dwellings in rice fields. The color palette often consists of soft rainbow hues. His murals are detailed interpretations of Buddhist images. Until this project, only those traveling through his town or region have had the opportunity to view his work. This project will offer him global accolades.

Individuals enter the field of art for many reasons. At times, artists choose to venture into mediums because of a discovered talent, to make a living, and/or to follow a passion. Often, they do so without the objective of securing monetary rewards. As part of this project, the selected artist was discovered in rural Thailand selling his work to those venturing through his town. It has not been his intention to seek global notoriety for fortune. His potential may be viewed as limited by not utilizing technology. The discovered Thai painter may not financially gain from this work, but may be the focus of what could set a framework for those interested in marketing art globally using similar methods.

Elizabeth Lyons (2011) observed in the book, *The Arts of Thailand: A Handbook of the Architecture, Sculpture and Painting of Thailand*, that Thai painting is “almost completely unknown to the western world” (Moerman, 2011, p.663). Thai peasant art is often overlooked by art critiques; therefore, artwork from rural areas of Thailand appear nonexistent to everyone except those that visit the villages and areas where the artists reside. Internet usage statistics (2011) show that there is potential for more Internet users throughout the world, since they haven’t neared 100% usage yet (Internet Usage Statistics, 2011). There is potential for more artists from around the world to use the Internet to expose their work. Thailand is becoming more accessible due to the advances in wireless and mobile technology. Physical lines do not need to be erected nor, hard wire connections created with wireless availability, however, the area still lags behind in technology. According to InternetWorldStats.com, the world totals 2,095,006,005 Internet Users (Internet Usage Statistics, 2011). Thailand has a population of 66,720,153 where 18,310,000 are Internet Users.

Literature Review

Digital art markets have grown because consumers have more knowledge and access to art due to the advent of the Internet and mobile technology. The art community has openly embraced digital marketing structures. The Smithsonian, the Royal Collection, and numerous art galleries around the world have discovered their digital niche marketplace. Surviving in the world of art assumes that the artist has an online presence. PEW reported that in 2004, artists considered the Internet as a vital part of their marketing approaches (Madden, 2004).

According to Gaudin in 2011, online general retail sales in the United States grew to \$37.5 billion in August 2011 (Gaudin, 2011). The Internet offers consumers a vast selection of

products, prints, and actual works. It is difficult to ascertain the actual value and size for the overall art market due to the varying definitions of art. For example, there is fine art auctioned off online by houses such as Sotheby's and Christie's. Then on the other side of the spectrum, popular art prints are recreated and sold in novelty stores. Would you consider the profit from prints of Van Gogh's "Starry Night" with copies of the original printed on school folders when determining the overall industry value? For the sake of this project, we consider original artwork.

The experience of visiting an actual art gallery heightens most individuals' senses, however a larger audience is now discovering how art online is just as satisfying (Miller, 2011). Today, "instead of people relying on museums to show and tell them about important art, they are increasingly looking at pieces online and making that determination themselves" (Miller, 2011). The art consumer demographic is younger than ever before and knowledgeable about the artwork they desire.

In 2008, LeGene Quesenberry and Bruce W. Sykes had subjects evaluate 140 art gallery websites. The study revealed several attributes of desirable art websites. Replicating the experience of visiting a physical gallery is difficult; therefore, a website must translate its art in a fashion that invokes an emotional experience for visitors. The website can become a resource of information to add value to the artist's online presence. This may even expand the audience demographic and lead to more visitors. General retailers attract customers with their varied selections, availability, and liberal return policies. When art is offered online, marketers must foster relationships between artists and the greater art community. There is a social aspect of art that requires additional attention when developing a brand using online measures. The art community prides itself on a sort of social responsibility to share knowledge, participate in

cultural development, and strengthen credibility. In a physical gallery, exhibitions and tours are provided to entertain and educate, when the artwork is found in remote locations, the art brand must recreate this experience for online visitors. Individuals in Quesenberry and Skye's study expressed a need to be able to reach out to other collectors, artists, gallery staff, and the greater art community in order to fully enjoy art. Art connoisseurs value:

the ability to take a physical stance in relationship to the work; to engage in contemplation in both cognitive and the philosophical sense; to compare one artist's vision, sense of space, composition, timing, and balance with another's; to consider in regard to materials, touch, scale, and surface what it might have meant to conceive and produce such things. (Quesenberry, 2008)

Accessibility to the actual artist helps cultivate trusted relationships between the artist and art patrons. Pleasing the visitor in these ways will increase the likelihood of return visits and ensure these visitors will relay their positive experience to others. There must be a way to allow artists and the multi-cultural audience a tool that permits conversation.

Individuals interested in artwork have the initiative to conduct research over the Internet to learn about the artist's, their brand, and reach out to others within the art community (Quesenberry, 2008). Purchasing art is a unique experience which is "part social event, part public contribution, and part intellectual exchange" and purchasers are more selective and savvy of what art they buy (Quesenberry, 2008). Art is an investment that rarely loses its value so the decision to buy is personal, not pressure driven. The consumer needs a greater and deeper experience with the art and/or artist in order to be moved to buy. A consumer of art is one that

seeks an aesthetic experience, personal association with the art, contact with the art community and fellow collectors, and intellectual conversation (Quesenberry, 2008).

Musicians have also discovered how using the internet helps them reach their target audiences. In the beginning licensing and copyright issues caused the music industry to butt and reject the Internet (Masnick, 2010). While legal issues regarding digital distribution are still in contention, marketers have recognized how the Internet can be used as an effective marketing tool to be competitive in an area where consumers have more entertainment options (Masnick, 2010). Mesick's article proposes a marketing model for the music industry:

Connect with Fans (CwF) + Reason to Buy (RtB) = The Business Model

(Masnick, 2010).

Musicians may use their websites or social media networks to connect with fans and create an interest in upcoming tour dates, events, or song/album releases to generate actual profits. Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails, a popular band, has experimented with different models and found success with this simple model (Masnick, 2010). Musicians must choose to accept the model and embrace using the internet to draw consumers in. Artists may use a similar model to develop a fan community. Even independent musicians, such as Ryan Fitzsimmons, a personal friend and musician (<http://www.ryanfitzsimmons.com>, <https://www.facebook.com/ryanfitzsimmonsmusic>) has utilized the resources found on the Internet to draw fans to not only support his performances, but to persuade them to donate money to fund his coming album. This project will use a similar business model for international artists. Artists who aspire to reach a multi-language audience must find a means to communicate with fans and consumers within their

website with an international social presence. As a result of these communications, consumers will be more likely to purchase the artist's brand.

Multi-lingual Community Analysis

The answer to the questions posed in this thesis incorporate multi-language solutions to enhance online communication for the international art consumer. Predominantly, websites rely on an English speaking audience to conduct business. To expand their reach, businesses will need to become multi-lingual. The Eurobarometer Survey notes that 82% of European consumers are less likely to buy online if the site is not in their native tongue (Arno, 2011). Media Post News discovered in 2011 that "English only accounts for 31% of all online use, and more than half of all searches are in languages other than English" (Arno, 2011). It is interesting to note that Chinese is the second dominant language used throughout website around the world and Arabic is increasing its presence (Arno, 2011). To be productive, providing a multi-cultural and multi-language web presence to art consumers is a logical marketing solution. The art field is dominated by the English market, so offering a multi-lingual website for a Thai artist creates a niche for the artist. This strategy will strengthen the approach to marketing rural artists.

The question remains, how can international artists sell their brand in a global market using digital means? Artists must have a well-designed website which offers users tools for multi-language translation. In the 2010 article, *Art Websites-Every Artist Should Know!*, a "website is the beginning of the selling process; a poorly designed and ineffective website can stop a prospect from investigating that artist's work further" (Math, Light, Space, & Time, 2010).

The internet has spurred a social revolution where cross-cultural communication styles play an important role in web design. There is ample opportunity for web designers to create a web presence that is suitable to a localized or global audience. Finding the right selection of communication features is key. Research conducted by Stam, Guzman, and Thoryk (2012) acknowledges the heavy task of creating a website for a general multi-lingual audience and studies the current efforts made by web designers to bridge cultural gaps in online communication (Stam, 2012, p187.). These researchers identify over 160 international and/or cross-cultural websites/pages commonly use website features that allowed for contact, search capabilities, language options, join or become a member, country choices, Twitter updates, cultural description, RSS feed, Facebook, and E-Newsletter options. These top ten features prove that web designers allow for communication in a multitude of ways. What they realized in their findings was that web pages did not use a large number of features which perhaps would further their communication with viewers and enhance their presence. They surmised that more feature offerings would “enhance the effectiveness of the pages for reaching cultural awareness or further communications” (Stam, 2012, p.193) In summary, this work reveals that there are many opportunities available to web designers to facilitate interaction, create better relationships amongst users and enhance awareness between an international audience (Stam, 2012, p.197). This study encourages the use of social media as a way to further conversation between the brand/company and the user, especially if the “user appreciate the information they receive (from the website), they can contribute to the information by including their own opinions and experiences” (Stam, 2012, p.196). People enjoy sharing information amongst their peers and social networks take advantage of this type of shared communication. Individuals appear to gain

more from an online experience when they partake in the exchange of information. Having a means to communication across languages will broadcast their social presence.

Online Translation Tools

Website globalization faces many challenges which include what language should be used to disseminate information on the site. Language options are essential to facilitate multi-lingual communication. Web designers must use online translation tools to help bridge cultural gaps that exist within the target audience. Translation tools must foster communication, rather than inhibit the flow for exchanging information amongst the website and the users. Translation practices may include a translator service, and/or providing an entire website where all pages offer fully translated pages in the language of choice. Another multi-language option is to localize content to a specific country, or region, developed using the local language with English as a backup.

There are many translation tools available for web designers who want to expand beyond an English speaking audience. In the field of computational linguistics, designers may utilize computer-aided translation, machine-aided human translation MAHT and interactive translation, and machine translation (Machine, 2011). The purpose of these tools is translation from one natural language to another. There are translation engines like Google Translate (<http://translate.google.com/>), Applied Language (http://www.appliedlanguage.com/free_translation.shtml), Lingo 24 (<http://www.lingo24.com/>), and Yahoo's Babel Fish (<http://babelfish.yahoo.com>) These features are embedded in the website as a box that allows for limited character translation. Commercial language translation programs include Systran (www.systransoft.com) and LED (www.lec.com). These programs allow for

complete webpage translation. These examples are also free translation tools that work with various browsers, but not necessarily compatible with all browsers and may not offer every language throughout the world. As a result, a web designer must have an idea of what languages are spoken by users and what browsers they commonly use.

Reid Goldsborough (2009) cautions that a problem that exists with machine translation is “that it’s unable to accurately deal with complicated syntax, grammar, figures of speech, idiom and jargon that native speakers take for granted” (Goldsborough, 2009). Goldsborough points out that Chinese is the most dominant language spoken throughout the world and English takes second, which reinforces the need for multi-language online communication features. (Goldsborough, 2009). When developing a multi-lingual website, Ed Stivala recommends if possible, using a human translator to proofread the content before publishing (Stivala, 2010). Other tips Stivala offers include: be culturally focused with website development, conjure up a sort of emotional connection by being culturally relevant, be clear about the audience, consider expenses of translation tool choices, use top-level domains that target geographical regions rather than language targeting, and keep the site updated with language support (Stivala, 2010).

John Hutchins (2009) discovered that when people use machine translators, the “average length of texts submitted is just 20 words, and that more than 50% of submissions are one- or two-word phrases” (Hutchins, 2009, p.16). He also noted that people use online machine translation tools to translate webpages only 15% of the time (Hutchins, 2009, p.16). He goes on to note that the usage of online translation services, such as Babelfish and FreeTranslation, are increasing. FreeTranslation saw its usage rise from 50,000 in 1999 to 3.4 million in 2006 (Hutchins, 2009, p.16). Some of the complications with using machine translators online include

the inaccuracy of translation results for colloquial and culture-dependent phrases (Hutchins, 2009, p.16). Localizing the language used by websites is key to cross-cultural audiences but remains a difficult task to undertake. Similarly, social networks are continually addressing this battle to find a common language tool (Hutchins, 2009, p.16). Hutchins notes that Thai, among other Asian languages, has been neglected by the online translation world because of a “combination of low commercial viability and lack of language resources” (Hutchins, 2009, p.18). One solution to the translation problem is a combination of open-source statistical machine translation (SMT) and rule-based machine translation (RBMT) systems, where a reliance on multi-engines for translation are used to get the best quality translation (Hutchins, 2009, p.18). SMT depends on an open source development of discovering the “rapid production of systems in new language pairs where researchers do not need to know the languages involved as long as they have confidence in the reliability of the corpora which they work with” (Hutchins, 2009, p.17). RBMT is a slower system that carefully regards grammatical and lexical aspects of languages (Hutchins, 2009, p.18). Translation work began with Arabic and English as a pair in 2002 by The Language Company and more language pairs have been added since (Hutchins, 2009, p.17). More work on translating languages using machine translation is advancing according to Hutchins. He claims the following:

MT technology is being used not just for ‘pure’ translation but increasingly as an aid to bilingual communication in an ever-widening range of contexts and situations, and embedded in a multiplicity of multilingual, multimodal document (text) and image (video) extraction and analysis systems. Whenever there is a need for communication and contact across languages, there will be a potential use for MT – the applications seem unending. (Hutchins, 2009, p.20)

This project will use Google Translate box and a multi-lingual website as options for cross-cultural communication. Google Translate appears to be a popular choice, which explains why I chose this translation tool. Another reason why a free tool was chosen for this project was that this work has a very limited budget.

Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT)

Online environments are able to create and foster relationships once allowed the opportunity and time according to Olaniran, Rodriquez, and Williams in their work “Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) (Olaniran, 2012, p.45). One consideration with regards to online communication is the value that should be placed on culture. Social Information Processing Theory is a useful tool to consider when developing an intercultural website that facilitates communication. Social Presence Theory works with SIPT by emphasizing the importance of how communication effectiveness is the result of meanings that are enriched in an individual’s culture (Olaniran, 2012, p.46). This project will examine how international online communication can be applied to SIPT.

Social Media

To explain the effectiveness of social media, a prime example is the Oreo cookie. The Oreo Company is considered a Master at Utilizing Social Media to effectively market themselves in a way that enables fans to become a part of a greater community. Oreo uses their fan page on Facebook to strike up conversations between their fans. They posted, “Pick a flavor, any flavor! If you could create a new Oreo cream flavor, what would it be” and they received 7,100 likes and 12,500 comments! (Creamer, 2010). One simple question evokes activity on a page for an almost 100 year old brand. However you enjoy your cookie, this company provides a good social media usage model for other brands.

Artists may connect through popular social networks such as Facebook, Xing, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Online based art communities create a social forum for artists and art connoisseurs to connect. These art specific sites focus on the arts, so the opportunity to draw consumers who prefer original art may dwell and enhance their interest in art through the sharing of information at these topic specific sites. Some of the popular art sites include Saatchi Online (Saatchi-gallery.co.uk), Modern Art Notes (artsjournal.com/man), RedBubble.com, WetCanvas.com, My Art Space (myartspace.com), and Self Representing Artists (<http://www.ebsqart.com/>). Certainly all of these communities should be ventured into by artists. However, to initiate the artist of this project to the Internet, we will start with a common, not so focused, social media-Facebook. Facebook provides multi-lingual users an opportunity for social interaction that would enhance the experience initiated by a website.

Social media allows individuals to connect with others from casual conversations to long-term relationships. Having a common interest, and coming together at one location to talk about that interest, is one of the many reasons why people use social media. A Facebook fan page must balance promotion and communication in a way that individuals feel engaged, valued, and accepted. Fans do not want to be solicited; they want a conversational tone that is simple, random, and not necessarily having anything to do with the brand (Creamer, 2010). It is like being a part of a community of friends, rather than being a focus group targeted by marketers. The population on Facebook continues to grow: “every day 15 million people friend each other and every day 50 million people ‘like’ a page (Sorensen, 2010). Coordinating an art website with social media is a definite way to expand brand loyalty, as well as cultivate relationships with patrons. Visitors want to be able to share their experience with their associates, friends, and family through a click of a button. When Conan O’Brian was let go from NBC, team Coco

evolved through O'Brian's use of Twitter to share personal comments about his displeasure with NBC's decision (Bergman, 2010). This team of Conan supporters helped push the number of O'Brian's Twitter followers to 1.8 million (Bergman, 2010). This is just one example of how social media may help support and push a cause. Ai Weiwei, a Chinese artist just broke his silence and returned to social media. He had been detained by Chinese authorities for two months (April, May 2011) for his controversial artwork that offended authorities (Millward, 2011). Weiwei is a strong proponent of sharing his views through Twitter and social media to reach supporters. He has established himself online to further his voice across the globe. Having a Facebook page is one way for visitors to be able to share knowledge and information.

This project will utilize Facebook to open lines of communication between multi-lingual visitors. The limited time frame of this project, only allows for the focus on a single social media. Facebook is a very popular option available throughout the world and it is able to help promote an international artist. Facebook offers users many language options including fantasy ones such as Pirate. Using a social media helps build brand recognition, helps the fan community stay informed, makes the brand visible, and establishes relationships (McNee, 2010). According to Samir Balwani (2009), "fans do not look for a brand's fan page, they often stumble upon it" so the website will push traffic toward the Facebook fan page (Balwani, 2009). Along with a website, the Facebook fan page allows users to share knowledge about themselves, the artist's brand, and their experience with the artist. They are given the opportunity to network and reach out to others within the community, especially other professionals, including other artists. This is how the brand survives through open communication, which in turn serves as a marketing device. The host/artist of the fan page must plan on interacting with the page on a regular basis to

keep it fresh and alive. Engaging the fans helps keep the experience positive and personal. Some quick rules for artists to follow when using social media include:

- Be helpful to people and remain positive,
- Always reply back to someone in a timely fashion,
- Think before you respond,
- Visit the page every day,
- Use proper punctuation and grammar-this is a sort of company brochure,
- Don't use the media to spam people,
- Engage the audience and share information, content, and ideas, and
- Be on your best behavior by using manners, netiquette applies (Math, 2010)

Social media is an event where individuals are offered the opportunity to create an open forum of ideas and share experiences. Artists must take advantage of the tools offered by social media. Consider the social media like an ongoing, 24/7 art exhibit. Thinking of these basic elements in terms of multi-cultural needs can certainly expand a brand's following. Therefore, posting in the languages dominantly used by follows will be noticed and appreciated.

Marketers have discovered that when it comes to a Facebook fan page, "organic growth can help build a more engaged group" (Balwani, 2009). Starting an actual page is simple, but developing good content, and notifying people of the page's existence takes time. Discovering who your audience is will lead to the quickest growth. This will require a study of the page's ongoing activity.

Tara DeMarco (2011) noted in her article, “Global conversation: how European businesses and consumers view social”, social media is approached differently from culture to culture (DeMarco, 2011). It is important for artists to note these differences to develop an effective social strategy. For example, the French enjoy blogging and the Germans tend to use Xing rather than LinkedIn for business connections (DeMarco, 2011). Art marketers need to learn about how their brands are perceived in local and global markets. One way to develop this information is to offer a forum for open communication within a fan page. This will help determine what social media is being used by your specific consumer. Hosting open conversations with visitors strengthens brand credentials. DeMarco’s findings show that social media exists because of these lines of communication as well as the immediate connection to people with similarities such as interests or locations (DeMarco, 2011). Sharing the same language is one opportunity for visitors to expand their participation in a common community. Therefore, an art community found through a website which is connected to a social media in their native tongue will build the market for an artist’s brand.

Facebook is becoming very popular throughout the world and especially Thailand. 10,612,380 Thai Internet users are on Facebook (Internet Usage Statistics, 2011). In January 2009 there were only 250,000 Thai Facebook users. Facebook usage in Thailand has grown extremely fast in the last few years. What has triggered this unusual growth? Factors that contribute to the burst in Facebook population includes political protests that have driven attention to Facebook, as well as word of mouth, gaming, mobile technology advances, and Facebook plans to launch a Kingdom of Thailand service. The Facebook demographic is generally college-age females who use the social media to reduce stress and converse with

friends (Bunloet, 2010). This growth may prove there is an interest in Thai rural art presence on Facebook.

The artist must rely on the community of fans to thrive since the artist for this project does not regularly use the Internet. Enriching the fan base and strengthening the brand following on Facebook will allow others to help promote the artist's work. Those in Thailand using Facebook could potentially be a resource for the artist to use in order to reach out to the world of fans. Art is a community of a variety of demographics and rural artists will need to rely on the online art community to promote his work. For this project, a representative-myself- will setup the Facebook fan page and website and begin to create interest and relationships for the artist. It is my hope that in the future, the artist will either utilize and participate in online discussions, or designate a more permanent representative that will act as a link between patrons and the artist. This person will need to update the website and pages to keep it fresh; therefore, must have access to someone who may take photographs of the paintings or take the photos.

Merchandising

One major obstacle faced by this project is the inability to ship the actual paintings completed by Jeerasak. For this project, print-on-demand appears to be the likely solution. Many artists and crafters turn to websites such as Etsy.com, however in this case, this is not an option. The do-it-yourself (DIY) community found on Etsy allows the service community a platform for selling their crafts. The goal of Etsy is to persuade individuals to partake in the DIY market by teaching others to create and sell their crafts on Etsy.com (Green, 2008). Anda Lewis Corrie (2011) explains that Etsy's objective is to "help people make a living making things" (Green, 2011). This is a community where sharing information will strengthen the overall Etsy

population. This is a sort of open-source movement that has found a niche on the Internet. Etsy makes money from those listing items, those advertising through Etsy, and those sales completed through Etsy. A crafter indirectly invests in Etsy. This project's artist does not participate in Etsy and does not have the means to saturate himself in such an online crafting community, therefore, Etsy, although a great online DIY business, does not meet the needs of this project's artist. This is a project that is utilizing existing technologies in its marketing structure that may be used globally while keeping overhead costs low.

Merchandising the reproduction of Jeerasak's work is one online marketing solution that this project will examine. Shipping from Thailand is costly and not an option for this artist. For the purpose of this project, I will examine cost effective ways to promote the artist's work/brand by using print-on-demand services. Three print on demand service leaders stand out- CafePress.com, RedBubble.com and Zazzle.com as likely choices for the artist. These services offer what is called the "The Long Tail," defined as "IT-enabled markets where consumers' preferences have far greater depth than what one could find in a typical brick-and-mortar storefront" (Brynjofsson, 2006). With no upfront costs or overhead, this project will offer Jeerasak's paintings as images that could be reproduced on canvas, coffee mugs, tapestries, or clothing, depending on the wants and needs of the consumer. Some of the biggest barriers to selling online include managing inventories, fulfillment, and customer service. A print-on-demand service fulfills this role (Millard, 2003). Using print-on-demand merchandisers "lowers the production, distribution, and promotion cost, opening up niche markets" that afford the artist some flexibility and exposure (Brynjofsson, 2006). This also frees up the artist's time so that they may focus on their own unique creations. These services are a way for artists and their brands to expose themselves while empowering consumers to fulfill their needs to identify

themselves with the brand. Another advantage of print-on-demand is artists can expand their products to serve more varied tastes, thus a greater audience.

CafePress.com has patented the “Search Methods for Creating Designs for Merchandise” (Durham, 2009). This system enables consumers to create merchandise based on a design someone else has uniquely created, or upload one of their own to be printed on a product. See Figure 2. This Figure depicts the flow of merchandise creation by CafePress.com. The Figure illustrates the process from choice to production.

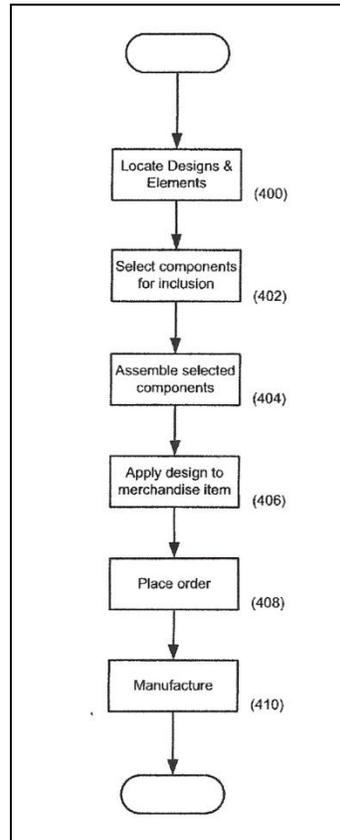


Figure 2. “Search Methods for Creating Designs for Merchandise” by Durham (2011). This figure illustrates the process of creating a design to be printed on merchandise.

Production costs are limited to consumer demand and turnaround time is reduced based upon actual orders completed. One advantage of custom reproduction and merchandising is no need for artists to hold on to inventory in anticipation of sales. Items are created on-demand by the consumers through services such as CafePress.com. Discovering what service is better than another will be researched in this project. The project will concentrate on the quality of designs reproduced with the use of these print-on-demand merchandisers. The artist is not ready to sell and ship his artwork. This is not the initial intention of this project. The project is focusing on creating exposure and fans who want to want a piece of artwork printed on a product, rather than owning an original.

Print-on-Demand merchandisers do not service those art connoisseurs who wish to purchase original artwork. Here is another obstacle faced by the artist. In the future, the artist will need to consider how to respond to consumer requests for original art. This project will only explore reproduction methods, but not the sales of actual work. This is a simple solution to promote the artist, while offering one option for consumers to purchase products with the artist's work printed on it. Having a token of the artist work may strengthen the fan base as well as offer consumers a sense that their purchase has made a contribution to this artist's endeavors. Jeerasak is not wealthy, living in a poor region of Thailand and this may be considered as a way for the art community to gain a sense of social responsibility. Quesenberry comments that "art patrons have a keenly developed sense of social responsibility toward the preservation and development of culture" and perhaps this would feed into that desire (Quesenberry, 2008).

Project Designs

To best answer the three questions posed in this project, I created 2 website prototypes to determine the best multi-language features, a Facebook Fan Page, and performed a quick review of print-on-demand online merchandisers.

Website Design

The first part of this project involved the development of two website prototypes that offered multi-language options. The websites were created using Adobe Dreamweaver CS5.5. The websites are hosted on www.startlogic.com using an account previously acquired by the researcher under www.mlrbruno.com. The purpose of the websites is to follow the Social Information Processing Theory by introducing the Thai artist's work to the world using multi-language features that promote cross-cultural communication. The design incorporates Human-Centered Design characteristics, as well as work conducted by LeGene Quesenberry and Bruce W. Sykes. Content has been guided by the results of their survey of art connoisseurs in the work "Leveraging the Internet to Promote Fine Art: Perspectives of Art Patrons" (Quesenberry, 2008).

Prototype Formatting:

The formats for the project's prototypes are based upon 10 international and multi-lingual art websites. Some of these websites are listed on ArtInfo.com's "Top 10 Artist Web Sites" review, some are specifically Thai artist websites, and some were suggested by Ian Burcroff an Art Professor with Clinton Community College, Plattsburgh, NY (Russeth, 2010). The websites include:

- Sarah Cole: <http://sarahcole.ca/portfolio/pigeonhole/>
- Olafur Eliasson : <http://www.olafureliasson.net/>
- Thai Artists : <http://www.rama9art.org/artisan/male/male.html>
- David Shrigley: <http://davidshrigley.com/>
- Shay Kun: <http://shaykun.com/home.html>
- Martin Creed: <http://www.martincreed.com/>
- Kate Gilmore: www.kategilmore.com

Prototype 1 has a dark background and uses a dark color scheme. This version uses an initial splash page that offers 3 language choices and a link to Applied Language Solutions. To start this project the multi-language website offered links to English, Chinese, and Thai language content. Chinese was chosen because it is the most prominent first language used throughout the world and Thai because the artist for this project is Thai. The language use may seem crude, since my knowledge of these languages is almost non-existent. So if this layout is chosen it will require a more in-depth translation service by those who speak these languages, or else use translation services/software to convert to required language. The navigation layout used for Prototype 1 is on the right sidebar of the screen.

Prototype 2 uses a lighter background and color scheme more in tune with Northeastern Thailand agricultural landscapes. There is no splash page for this version. Prototype 2 has a more organized navigation layout using the left sidebar, and the right sidebar offers the Google Translate box. The Google Translate Box allows visitors an American English website with the opportunity to translate into the language of their choice. Each prototype requires little scrolling to view its content pages.

The Prototype Links:

Gallery: Both prototypes offer thumbnails of the painter's artwork. Prototype 1 displays all of the work and Prototype 2 separates murals from landscapes. A user may click on any of the

thumbnail images to display a larger image. To protect the artist's work, each image has a watermark. Gimp software (www.gimp.org) was used to edit the photographs and add watermarks. This was done to ensure copyright protection for the artist.

About the Artist/Jeerasak: Both prototypes offer personal information about the artist. Different photographs portraying the artist were used. One photograph is when Jeerasak had long hair and he is alongside a mural. The second photograph is a singular portrait with Jeerasak's short haircut.

Contact: This link contains a form that users may submit to the artist's representatives. The page also lists the contact's email address.

About Northeastern Thailand: This page is in development. The purpose of this page is to offer more descriptive information regarding the region where the artist resides. People are naturally curious about other people's lives, especially the life of an artist, in order to gain greater depth and insight into the artwork. They want to relate to what is displayed in the paintings. The website will give some basic information about the artist and his work. It will help visitors understand the creative process that inspires and help connect people to the work. There will be a visual tour of the artist's village and location in Thailand to offer visitors a sense of where the artist is pulling inspiration from.

Link to Facebook Fan Page: This link will take users to the Facebook Fan Page dedicated to the artist and his paintings. The fanpage will have informal questions to promote conversations with visitors and encourage return visits. In addition, this will link the users to another image gallery.

What's New Blog: This link is only offered on Prototype 2, this would be the setting for a blog for the artist. Blogging is another communication channel that will enable content to be updated and relayed to the website visitor from the Artist. Visitors would be allowed to respond to the blog as a sort of ongoing dialogue. The blog would help develop better relations between the artist and the visiting community.

Facebook Fan Page Design

To address the second research question, a Facebook fan page was created (<https://www.facebook.com/jeerasakliewthosong#!/pages/Jeerasak-Liewthosong/305920176101409>). At the launch of the page, I shared the link to the fan page with many of my personal friends from my own personal Facebook account. I periodically posted questions to initiate conversation. In addition, thumbnails of all of the artist's paintings were uploaded to one album. The profile photograph was one of the artist's paintings.

Print-on-Demand Online Services

The researcher conducted a quick review of 3 popular print-on-demand services, Zazzle.com, RedBubble.com, and CafePress.com. Each of these services were reviewed for their ease of use, navigation, file format options, number of visitors per month, payment method options, shipment offerings, intellectual property rights, return policies, links to artist pages, and storefront options. Investigating these areas determined which website was the most ideal to best promote an artist.

Implementation

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to evaluate the 2 prototype websites and the Facebook Fan Page. To evaluate the print-on-demand online merchandisers, I perform a quick review of 3 different services using a chart that I constructed to compare different features of each service that I related to articles about how to promote an artist.

The main evaluation procedure for this project included a 2 part survey (APPENDIX A) that identified the participant population and more specifically addressed the 2 prototype websites. Survey participants included college students registered at Clinton Community College, male and female, and traditional college age-18 to nontraditional age up to 60 years of age. This was the most available population for my research. To entice participants I offered extra credit incentives for participation. This group was to include students from CCC's international club, computer science majors, and art majors. These three population groups best reflect the target audience for my multi-language website. It was hoped that International students who speak Chinese, or other languages, would offer insight as to cultural approaches to a multi-language website and its tools. Art students could potentially address the art focus of the website, since it is a website for a painter from Thailand. Computer Science students who are Internet savvy aided to the functionality and interface concerns of the website prototypes. I was attempting to determine which of my 2 prototypes or a combination will best suit promoting the Thai painter.

This was a completely voluntary survey. Students had up to three weeks to complete the surveys. The main research survey refers to two website prototypes. The websites promote an individual artists original art. The website displays images of landscape and murals created by a single Thai painter. The artwork is not offensive, lewd, or pornographic, but rather appropriate to

the college group of subjects. There is no pressure to buy any artwork, just simply regard the translation tools offered, the features, and/or the layout types.

Tasks included common website activities—clicking, and viewing images. The participants were asked to use a Facebook fan page to hold conversations about the Thai painter's work and/or learn about Thailand. Participants were asked in person to complete a survey either by hand or using a word processing application, such as Microsoft Word, which they emailed or handed in to the researcher. Participants choose to use their own personal computer at home or within their dorm residence. They were also able to use the computers available at Clinton Community College or a public library.

The first survey was a short 7 question set regarding basic demographic information to develop a definition of the participants involved in the study. The answers to these questions have been kept anonymous. Tracking participants were conducted using a separate excel file that will not relate which survey was completed by whom. This file will only tell the researcher who completed the survey so that they may receive extra credit for their coursework. How they answer the survey questions will not reflect their extra credit reward. All completed surveys will result in extra credit of the same value.

The second survey was a longer and more involved survey regarding the two website prototypes that utilize various multi-language features and tools. The research survey asked the subject to navigate the two prototypes in descriptive ways, such as visit prototype 1 from the www.mlrbruno.com homepage then chose the English option, visit the contact form, or visit the Facebook Fan page then asked questions about the page. The survey contained 49 (including the initial demographic survey) questions for the subject to answer. As the researcher, I collected the survey answers and evaluated the answers in a qualitative manner to extract a set of reflections

for website improvement and determine which multi-language tools are preferred by the subjects. This will ultimately decide on the final website design.

In addition, the survey led the participants to a specific Facebook fan page. The participants are offered the option to become a fan of the Facebook fan page for the artist for the purpose of this research, but it is not required of the participant. The Facebook page attempted to initiate light-hearted conversation about the artist's work that may interest the participant. The Facebook pages conversations were initiated mostly by the researcher and the subject matter related to the Thai painter. The researcher observed and monitored these conversations for the duration of the project, which will be concluded by the end of the fall 2011 semester. The researcher encouraged respectful and appropriate conduct throughout the fan page. Those that abuse the fan page in a manner that offends other participants would have been blocked from the page or asked to discontinue their conduct.

The Facebook Fan Page included a gallery of the artist's artwork. Fans were encouraged to "like" their favorite image created by the Thai painter. The most popular images were going to be the ones chosen for print-on-demand services. Not many visitors to the fanpage chose to "like" images so the researcher went ahead and chose images to use on various products. The images are protected from potential copy through the ordering processing.

After the creation of the fan page and completing the website surveys, I watched the activity of the fan page, what happens there, who used the page, and how many people revisited the page. It was my intention to draw in some of the participants from the survey to the fan page in a way that they will revisit the page. To answer the second research question, I regularly visited the page and updated its content and redirected users/friends/fans to new content on the

website. Developing a fan page will take time to grow organically but will require regular attention. In addition, I used a short list of questions (APPENDIX B) as a way to analyze the activity on the fan page. These questions will help answer how people are using the fan page.

Finally, merchandizing service options were regarded to further the artist's brand. A quick comparison of print-on-demand online merchandisers such as Cafepress.com, Zazzle.com, and RedBubble.com was conducted by the researcher. The review would reveal an answer to RQ3: *How can print-on-demand online merchandisers be used to globally promote an artist?* This would include how distribution of artwork is possible when actual shipment of the item is not. These service sites were compared based on what products they offer, the quality of the products, services offered globally, costs of using the services and cost of items, ease of use, and shipment times. A comparison grid was developed to research these three websites. This would be a straight forward comparison to determine the most globally accessible service. The focus of this project is to expose and promote the artist and his work rather than making a profit from actual sales.

Analysis

Survey Results

After about three weeks (November 1, 2011-November 18, 2011), 18 completed surveys were received and reviewed. Students were asked to complete the survey as well as share the survey with their peers and ask for their participation. The researcher asked advisors for the International Club and the Art Club to have their members help with the research. In addition, the researcher asked the students in the Clinton Community College Student Senate and the

Leadership Development Series to participate. Unfortunately out of the many individuals asked to complete the survey, only the students from the researcher's courses decided to participate.

All answers to each question posed by the survey were compiled into an Excel 2010 spreadsheet. Recorded responses were taken exactly as they were entered in the survey by the participant including grammatical and spelling errors. Each survey was assigned a number in no particular order for the purpose of tracking the number of surveys received.

The first section of the survey asked for anonymous demographic information. All participants were students at Clinton Community College. Their ages ranged from 18 to 55 years old. Gender was not a concern but both genders were represented in the results. The college majors represented in this survey included biology, health studies, industrial maintenance, liberal arts, human services, computer technology, business administration, forest technology, physics, and studio arts. Only one participant spoke a language beyond English and resided in another country (Korean/South Korea).

The researcher examined the results of the surveys and developed some strong conclusions. One conclusion that made apparent by the survey revealed that visitors expected more content. They wanted to see a mix of information about the Northeastern Thailand region, as well as information about the artist's village. They thought they would learn more information about the artist and would like to have the artist's mailing address or a phone number to contact him. According to the results, participants would be interested in seeing photographs or video about the artist's village/region.

Regarding the images, participants expected to see more descriptive captions or titles for the paintings. In addition, they were interested to learn about the artist's painting process, as well

as what inspires the artist to paint what he does. Offering information about the artist and his work may interest these participants. It is possible this would encourage a revisit to the website. Another result suggested including a blog or giving updates about new work would make the website more interesting.

The second outstanding result of the survey expressed, was that most of the participants liked the use of the Google Translate Box. The participant from South Korea noted “actually google translator is not always good. Mostly, it provides wrong translates” and would prefer live translation features. English participants would not be able to discern the shortfalls of a feature they do not need to use for a website in their language. Many participants agreed that they would like a live translation feature. See Figure 3: Distribution of “Q39: What other multi-language options would you like to have on the website (e.g. dictionary, links to translators, live translation, and/or translate toolbar)?”. One participant mentioned the speed of translation was a factor. They suggested that live translation would be fast and allow the user to remain on the page they needed to be translated. An online language dictionary was a language feature that participants would have liked to have available to them as, well as audio pronunciation of words such as the watermark on the images.

Ultimately, prototype 2 was the most desirable website (see Figure 4: Distribution of “Q36: Which Prototype had the best navigation layout”). The survey results show that this was the most attractive color scheme and layout. They also preferred the separate image gallery style of Prototype 2 where landscape painting images were organized together, while mural images were on a separate webpage.

To help promote the audience, “word of mouth” potential was questioned in the survey. Some of the participants answered that they would recommend the site to a friend and revisit the site. Others answered that they were not interested in this style or art, the subject was boring, or they just didn’t find it interesting. Figure 5: Distribution of “Q41: Would you visit this website again?” reveals that most would not revisit the website. Perhaps this was not the best selection of subjects to address this topic with.

In conclusion, prototype 2 should be the final layout for the Jeerasak Liewthosong website. A live translation service feature should be offered in the left sidebar with the Google Translate Box. Another language feature that should be offered on the site is an online language dictionary or at least links to multi-language dictionaries.

More content should be added to the information about the artist, as well as information about the region of Northeastern Thailand and Jeerasak’s village. Someone who has access to the artist should be allowed to update content, provide video and images to the website. Video from the artist would be ideal. Visitors want to get to know the artist to draw a personal connection to the artist and his work. All of the painting images should have titles and information about each piece. Perhaps a section about Buddhist murals and images should be provided to help explain to the viewer what they are seeing. Perhaps a guestbook on the website would be a nice way for visitors to share information with each other about the artist.

Facebook Results

The Facebook fan page was created on October 28, 2011. Acting as the artist’s representative, the researcher posted images of the artist’s paintings, as well as attempt to initiate conversation with fans of the site. At the launch of the site, current Facebook friends of the

researcher were asked to join the fan page. About 8 friends who were invited to the fan page chose to “like” the page. At the time of the analysis of the fan page (late November 2011) there were 12 people who “like” the page. Others that visited were trafficked over through the guidance of the prototype survey. Not many visitors or fans made comments and only one person liked images in the gallery. According to the survey results, many participants do not use Facebook and would not entertain creating an account to visit the artist’s page. APPENDIX D records the activity of the Facebook fan page throughout the period of this research. Only two of the researcher comments received responses. For those ten postings by the researcher, 5 people commented. To further a thread of conversations under a comment, the researcher responded to the comments and no one responded with a comment. It is a quiet page. It is possible other people viewed the page and did not feel the need to “like” or comment on the page. Most of the “likes” were from friends who speak English and live in the United States.

As an informal follow up to the use of the Facebook fan page, the researcher opened a discussion with students in class about fan pages and their approach to similar Facebook pages. This conversation lasted no longer than 5 minutes. Students expressed their reduced interest in Facebook. They stated they commonly “liked” brands but did not post on these fan pages because any new updates or posts from these fan pages were viewable on their status updates main page in Facebook. Overall they remained on Facebook to communicate with friends and check their account once a day.

Facebook may not be the best social media to use to promote an artist that is not readily available to fans online. Fans of the artist would need to have a personal connection to the artist to strengthen communication through Facebook. Unless, direct contact can be establish to the artist, a fan page may not be needed at this time.

Print-on-Demand Service Results

To address RQ#3, a comparison of three major print-on-demand services was conducted by the researcher. All information was found on the main websites- www.zazzle.com, www.cafepress.com, and www.redbubble.com. In addition a CafePress.com online store was launched on October 28, 2011. To view the store visit: www.cafepress.com/liewthosong. APPENDIX E: displays the chart used and the answers found. Prices for products were not compared since sellers usually cast their own charges on top of base prices. So it seem irrelevant if similar products sold for different amounts on each service, because the price is set by the seller.

Some respondents to the survey wanted to know how to order paintings and get in touch with the artist. A print-on-demand service is a way to do this. The first service reviewed was RedBubble.com. RedBubble.com was discovered to be the most difficult to navigate and find answers to the proposed questions. As someone attempting to use one of these services, it was most frustrating to start a store through RedBubble, so the attempt was abandoned. Locating the area to log in was easy to find but it was not explained that the log in was for-the store, a forum, or another area of the site. RedBubble had a great forum for artists to share information. Once the researcher entered the forum, it was confusing and there was a sense of being lost because, it was not easy to navigate back to the homepage to look at products or attempt to sell a product. The feeling of being stuck at times was unbearable and the inability to return to the homepage was wearisome. There seems to be a lot of artists in the RedBubble community but it was not obvious how to sell using this service.

CafePress.com was used to create a storefront as an initial attempt to offer products with the artist's work printed on them. Since there was little response to the effort to have fans "like" their favorite work on the Facebook fan page, the researcher chose various prints and product combinations. CafePress.com is a popular service which is easy to use. It was free to create the account. There is a very developed Intellectual Property Rights statement that protects the artist's work, which is an attractive feature

(<http://www.cafepress.com/cp/info/help/index.aspx?page=iprights.aspx>). CafePress.com reaches out to millions globally. The researcher ordered greeting cards with an image on them through the store. The print quality was good but the product was crushed during the short shipping period. The order was placed on 11/20/11 and received on 11/26/11, with the Thanksgiving holiday in-between. If this was a delicate item, such as a coffee mug, would it have been damaged if it were to be shipped overseas?

Zazzle.com was comparable to CafePress.com and receives more hits per month (20,000,000 verses 11, 000,000 of CafePress.com). It is easy to navigate and easy to start a new store. It also boasts a large international shipping area and according to their website, has shipped to over 224 countries (Zazzle, 2011). Zazzle's ARTSPROJEKT is an effort to provide a creative platform for artists to collaborate by sharing their designs, projects, and ideas. It is a program intended to inspire each other and generally further their work as artists throughout the world.

All of these services are comparable, but CafePress.com and Zazzle.com were the most user friendly to navigate and start a storefront. Zazzle.com appears to be the most in tune with the international marketplace through their expansive shipping locations, current international usage and the ARTSPROJEKT. CafePress.com is popular but may not offer products to as many

international users as Zazzle.com does. Although CafePress.com was used as an experimental storefront, Zazzle.com appears to be the best choice for an international artist. Zazzle is most compatible with the global art community. Artists may benefit from the collaborative ARTSPROJEKT set to develop a more robust creative marketplace internationally. Zazzle.com has a storefront available in many languages for many countries; it seems as if it would be possible to contact Zazzle to develop a website for Thailand. The company appears approachable and friendly because of its focus on people throughout the world.

Future Research and Implications

The purpose of this project was to examine cross-cultural communication through a website, social media, and print-on-demand online services. The Social Information Processing Theory attempts to explain the significance of a cross-cultural approach to online media. Time is a factor when developing rich online relationships among artists and online patrons. The theory concludes that more effective online communications exist when you increase the time allowed for communication, which requires a more developed presence. So including more images of the artist himself, as well as allow users to develop avatars or upload images of themselves would enable this creation of relationships. More messages between visitors and the artist need to exist to promote better online communication. Some “high-context cultures (e.g. Asia) need to know whether others understand them and whether they can understand others, within the same communication circumstances” (Olaniran, 2012, p. 50). Ultimately a strong sense of trust needs to be established and trust could not be developed when the artist appeared nonexistent, unavailable, and distant. Visitors need to be offered those cues they witness in face-to-face encounters, to be present in some fashion through online media. The deciding factor for

communicative online features relies on what is readily available, hardware and software compatibility, bandwidth, and the cultural value placed on the technology used (Olaniran, 2012, p. 52). Cross-cultural communication is greatly affected by how cultures value the media. The Social Information Processing Theory states that communication is so culturally bound it could be concluded that developing a website for a global artist needs to be an in-depth analysis of exactly what particular cultures' communication behaviors are, in order to decide which online language features to use. Ultimately, there is no generic online language tool that suits everyone around the world. There is potential in many communication features, but not all are acceptable for a generic global market.

The greatest implication of this research was that an American-English based website that acknowledges multi-languages can be created and used as support for the Thai painter-Jeerasak Liewthosong. The survey was conducted to resolve which features and layouts were preferred to use on a website. The results determined that Jeerasak Liewthosong could go online using prototype 2, but it would require more content. It would be ideal to learn more about the artist's creative process, works in progress, and the town/region where the artist is from. Someone who can regularly go to the artist and take photographs and video would help the website be more vibrant and alive. A representative for the artist, and has regular contact with him, would be beneficial for the purpose of communication with visitors. This element was lacking in this research.

Live translation services need to be incorporated into the website's multi-language features. Research of these services would need to be conducted specifically by those who speak languages beyond English. Using Google Analytics would help define who the target audience is for the website. For this research, it was not needed since only those alerted to the existence of

the website were participating in the survey and not because they were searching for Thai artwork. Posting the link in art communities would offer a way to market the website to a greater, possibly more global audience. Translation services could target the languages used by this greater audience, as well as create a better communications channel for the artist to read posts and submitted forms from visitors. Another feature to be included in response to this demographic research would be to offer multi-language online dictionaries to enable communication and understanding. The survey showed that American users would be interested in this tool.

The use of Facebook may be culturally driven, and neglecting to incorporate others from an international population does not give proper insight to its usage. This may need to be further researched. Unless the artist can go online and participate in Facebook, it is recommend to run the fan page as well as update the website by someone who can contact the artist regularly. It would be someone who speaks Thai fluently in order to translate questions and comments from visitors to the artist. The pages would benefit from this ongoing and real connection to the artist. In addition, advertising the artist through art communities such as Zazzle.com and RedBubble.com would help promote the artist's online presence. Perhaps researching Thailand based art communities online would be a great start. Start regionally then expand globally is another way to promote this global artist. Use the Thai language to create the website then expand out to the global market once popularity grows from the local area, rather than start with English, United States based work. It would be interesting to call upon art experts from Thailand to help with promotion, as well as interview art connoisseurs who speak languages besides English from international markets rather than the United States.

The survey revealed that users expect to find titles or captions about the paintings to educate them about the work. Visitors to the website need to feel a connection to the artist, so it is suggested that the artist work with someone who can relay messages to visitors or else learn to do it himself. It is recommended that the website take on a more definite purpose beyond communicating with the artist and/or his representative and begin selling items through Zazzle.com. The website should have a link to the Zazzle.com storefront and the person in charge of the storefront should participate in the Zazzle art community forums to promote the artist. The activity in the Zazzle forums could direct others to the main website.

The research for this project involved an exclusive group of subjects, mainly from the United States. Another round of research may need to be conducted with a more global audience. It needs to be decided which live translation service would be the easiest to incorporate with the website, along with language dictionaries. It is important that someone take on the responsibility of updating the website, manage the communications from the website, and be able to be in direct contact with the artist. In addition, it would need to be decided who will be financially responsible for the storefront through Zazzle.com and who will pay for the website service and hosting. The project was a great step to initiate how these elements: multi-language website, Facebook fan page, and print-on-demand service would benefit a global artist by opening multi-cultural communications with others.

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International Artist Exposure: From Promotion to Merchandising

APPENDIX A

Website Survey for IDT599

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Please take a few moments to read the explanations that follow to help you decide whether to participate or not.

The following survey helps fulfill the requirements for the Information Design and Technology Program, Master of Science Degree with the State University of New York Institute of Technology. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. The results will not identify the participant in any manner. This research study is being carried out in order to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How can cross-cultural communication be facilitated through the use of online translation features in ways that are easiest for individuals to recognize and use?

RQ2: How can a multi-language website encourage users to contribute to a Facebook fan page?

I would like to include you in the study because you may represent the target audience of the website being developed. If you decide to take part, I will be able to develop a website for a Thai painter that will effectively address a multi-lingual audience. I hope to use the answers from this survey to discover which online translation features are easiest for individual to utilize. The survey will determine what type of format and layout should be used for the website design. This research will be concluded by the end of the Fall 2011 semester. You can expect to spend 1 hour completing the survey and you have 2 weeks to complete and submit the survey to the researcher.

You will be asked to complete a survey form. This survey will ask some basic demographic information however all information provided during this research experience will remain anonymous. Any information which could possibly be used to identify you, for example a name, will be stored in a locked office and on a password protected computer where only Mary Lou Rabideau-Bruno will have access to these identifiable data. Only summative data will be available to the public.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to participate you will experience no adverse treatment. Also, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason.

Contact Information

At any time during this survey if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact the researcher-Mary Lou Rabideau-Bruno by email at marylou.rabideau-bruno@clinton.edu or by phone: 518-593-9177.

The following questions will help describe who participated in this study:

1. What is your age?
2. Are you in college?
3. What is your college major?
4. Is English your dominant language?
5. If English is not your dominant language, what language do you most often speak?
6. List any other languages you speak fluently?
7. Are you originally from the United States? If not, please state what country you are from:

To complete this survey, you must follow the directions provided and answer the related questions. You will need a computer with an Internet Browser to complete the next section.

To Start This Survey, Go To www.mlrbruno.com

- Click on the link for *Prototype 1*

Q1: Please list the links that you see on this page?

Q2: At this point and without clicking on the links, describe what you think these links go to:

- Enter the link called *English*

Q3: The same image is used for all the pages associated with this prototype so far, would you change the image?

- Visit the *Gallery* link

Q4: Are all of the image files displayed? If not, how many are missing?

Q5: Are the image titles descriptive enough?

Q6: Is this page missing any information or feature that would help you with the content of the page?

- Visit the link for *Northeastern Thailand*. You will note that this page is under construction.

Q7: What would you like to learn about this region of the world?

Q8: Would you watch a video about the artist's town?

Q9: Would you like images of the region?

Q10: Would you rather learn about the region or the specific town where the artist is from?

- Visit the *About Jeerasak* page

Q11: What other information would you like to learn about the artist?

Q12: What other features would you like to have on this page (e.g. blog, tweets, contact link, etc.)?

- Visit the *Contact* link. Complete the form and submit

Q12: Was the form easy to use?

Q13: Did the form have problems?

Q14: Would you like to contact the artist in another way?

Q15: Did you find the email address for the artist's representative?

- If you already have a Facebook account, visit the *Link to Facebook Fan Page*

Q16: If you not a part of Facebook, please describe why you are not?

Q17: Do you use any other social networks? List them:

Q18: Respond to at least one question on the page.

- Visit the photos section and "like" your favorite images of the artist's paintings.

Q19: Would you visit the page again? Why or why not?

- Reflecting on *Prototype 1*, please answer the following:

Q20: Was the navigation easy to find?

Q21: Were the links in a logical order? If not, how should they be ordered?

Q22: What other features would you add to this site?

Q23: If you speak either Chinese or Thai, would you visit those links from Prototype 1's homepage and visit the navigation links again? Please list any problems you saw.

Q24: What other languages would you expect the website to include?

Go Back To www.mlrburno.com. Click The Prototype 2 Page

- Please use the Google Translate Box to the right of the page and change the language to any language of your choice.

Q25: Did the page's content change to the language you chose?

- Reset the language to English
- Visit the *What's New* link

Q26: If the artist had a blog, would you read it and what information would interest you?

- Visit the *About Jeerasak* link

Q27: Comparing this page to the page in Prototype 1, what photograph of the artist do you prefer?

- Visit the *Landscapes* link
- Visit the *Murals* link

Q28: Do you prefer these art images separated in this way or mixed together like in Prototype 1?

Q29: Would you like more information about the images or just the generic titles used?

Q30: Did you click on any of the images? What happened when you did?

- Visit the *Contact* link.

Q31: Did it work?

- Visit the *Site Map*

Q32: Would you use the site map?

Reflecting On Prototype 2, Please Answer The Following Questions:

Q33: Was the navigation easy to use?

Q34: Were the links in a logical order? If not, describe why they were not.

Q35: Did you use the Google Translate Box on any of the pages found on this site?

Comparing Both Prototypes, Answer The Following Questions:

Q36: Which Prototype had the best navigation layout and why?

Q37: Which Prototype had the best color scheme and why?

Q38: Would you rather use a Google Translate box to change languages or visit a website completely in the language of your choice?

Q39: What other multi-language options would you like to have on the website (e.g. dictionary, links to translators, live translation, and/or translate toolbar)?

Q40: Would you recommend this site to a friend? Why or why not?

Q41: Would you visit this website again?

Q42: Would you share this website with others? If so, would you email them or connect through what social network?

Q43: Would you revisit the Facebook Fan page again? Why or why not?

Q44: Where the questions asked on the Facebook Fan page interesting?

Q45: Were you able to answer them using your dominant language? If not, please explain:

Q46: Do you use other language options through Facebook? If so, what languages?

Q47: Do you know how to change the language settings on Facebook?

Q48: If you dominantly use English, have you ever visited a website in another language?

Q48a: If yes, how did you manage the page?

Q48b: What tools did you use?

Q48c: Were you able to understand the content? How?

Q49: What Internet Browser did you use to complete this survey?

You have finished the survey! Thank you for your participation. Please submit the completed survey either by email to Marylou.rabideau-bruno@clinton.edu or submit the paper copy to Mary Lou Rabideau-Bruno in room 140M or leave in my mailbox at the switchboard on the 1st floor.

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX B

Facebook Fan Page Study

What is the name of the Facebook Fan Page?

How many fans does the page have?

How long has the page been active?

Describe how fans use the page:

Describe how the owner of the page uses the page:

What does the page offer?

What questions were asked to fans that received reply posts?

Did fans ask questions and what were they?

How often do fans post?

Are users from different countries?

What countries are they from?

Do they post in their own language or English?

What other languages are used?

International Artist Exposure: From Promotion to Merchandising

APPENDIX C

Merchandiser Website Comparison Chart

	Zazzle.com	CafePress.com	RedBubble.com
List products offered			
Available in how many countries			
What is the return policy			
Cost to have a selling account			
Cost to sell items			
Quality of print*			
Direct link to artist brand items or search			
Ease of navigation to find designs			
Upload file options			
How many visitors does this website get			
Describe the process used to order product			
What payment methods are accepted			

*Will order sample items to compare print quality

APPENDIX D

Facebook Fan Page Study Results

What is the name of the Facebook Fan Page? Jeerasak Liewthosong

How many fans does the page have? 12 likes

How long has the page been active? Launched on October 28th to current date

Describe how fans use the page: To view gallery, to see the comments, it is very difficult to ascertain how they used the site, one used it to promote CafePress.com website.

Describe how the owner of the page uses the page: To promote the website with the 2 prototypes, initiate conversation, and to offer a gallery.

What does the page offer? Gallery, questions to the visitors, link to CafePress.com website.

What questions were asked to fans that received reply posts? Q: If you were to purchase art, what style of art do you prefer? What themes are present?

Q: Have you ever used a multi-language website?

Did fans ask questions and what were they? Not really

How often do fans post? Only 1 person posted twice, the others posted once

Are users from different countries? no

What countries are they from? N/A

Do they post in their own language or English? N/A

What other languages are used? N/A

Questions/comments posted by the researcher included:

- Do you interact with other Facebook fanpages? Who and Why?
- How do you feel about a representative of the painter facilitating this page? Would you rather have the artist available here? Does it matter?
- What would you ask the painter?
- Which painting of Jeerasak's is your favorite? Please "like" the ones that you prefer!
- Welcome to the Jeerasak Liewthosong Fan Page. Please visit the photo gallery to "like" your favorite paintings created by the Thai artist.

APPENDIX E

Print-On-Demand Online Merchandiser Comparison Chart

Questions	CafePress.com
List products offered	+ 250 Products Available
Available in how many countries	"INTERNATIONAL SITES: Australia Canada France Germany Spain United Kingdom United States & Worldwide Shipping is available to these countries as well."
What is the return policy	"CafePress.com offers a 30-day money back guarantee on all products. If you would like to return or exchange an item, please contact us to fill out a request form, and we will send you an RMA and instructions on how to send the item(s) back. Shipping charges are not refundable.
Cost to have a selling account	Free
Cost to sell items	<p>There are no up-front costs or set up fees to open a CafePress Shop.</p> <p>You can make money selling your designs on over 250 products. We produce items when customers orders from your shop and you get royalties from each sale. To get a CafePress Shop, you can choose from two types of shop service plans.</p> <p>Option A: No Up-front Fees plan</p> <p>Of the royalties you earn from selling products, we deduct 10%* (up to a \$10 maximum) to cover the monthly shop service fee.</p> <p>If you don't earn royalties, nothing is deducted. Pay only when you make sales.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>If you earn a \$30 royalties for the month, we deduct 10% (\$3) and mail you a check for \$27.</p> <p>If you earn a \$300 royalties for the month, we deduct only \$10 (not the full 10%, which would be \$30). So you get a check for \$290.</p> <p>*NOTE: This is \$10 of royalties, NOT total sales volume.</p> <p>Option B: Pre-pay plan</p> <p>Save with this plan by entering a credit card in your shop Payment Plan page. Select from the options below and we bill your credit card each</p>

	<p>month:</p> <p>\$6.95 per month</p> <p>\$18.45 for 3 months (\$6.15 a month)</p> <p>\$34.95 for 6 months (\$5.83 a month)</p> <p>\$59.95 for 1 year (only \$5 per month)</p>
Quality of print*	Shipment of cards took about a week considering the Thanksgiving holiday and weekend. The package was crushed but cards were not damaged. The print quality uses bright colors, not too pixel-like.
Direct link to artist brand items or search	Yes
Upload file options	<p>CafePress.com supports two picture file formats:</p> <p>JPG - JPG's support over 16 million colors, but slightly "distort" the image to compress the file size.</p> <p>For photos, the human eye cannot tell the subtle changes in color, but along straight edges and in pictures with large solid colors, distortion is sometimes apparent.</p> <p>PNG - Portable Network Graphics format is a completely loss-less compression.</p> <p>Gradients come out much smoother and do not have the distortions that may appear in a JPG.</p> <p>PNG is the recommended file format for image uploads to the CafePress system.</p> <p>Whichever format you use, save all files in RGB color mode. pictures should be between 100 and</p> <p>300 DPI to print</p> <p>Refer to Beginners Image Workshop for details and tips: http://www.cafepress.com/cp/info/help/index.aspx?page=images.aspx</p>
How many visitors does this	over 11 million unique visitors to our website each month

website get	
Describe the process used to order product	chose the product and edit the image
What payment methods are accepted	<p>CafePress.com accepts credit cards, PayPal, CafeCash and CafePress.com gift certificates as payment.</p> <p>We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express and check cards (as long as they are connected with one of the major credit card companies listed above).</p> <p>You can safely enter your entire credit card number via our secure server, which encrypts all submitted information.</p> <p>Pay by Check Card</p> <p>Does not accept checks, or money orders at this time.</p>
Intellectual Property Rights	<p>Statement provided online at http://www.cafepress.com/cp/info/help/index.aspx?page=iprights.aspx</p>

Questions	RedBubble.com
List products offered	T-shirt, hoodies, stickers, iPhone cases photographic prints, cards, Framed prints, Canvas Prints, Calendars
Available in how many countries	<p>Global: APO, FPO, DPO addresses (Defence force, Diplomatic post etc).</p> <p>Due to the nature of APO, FPO and DPO services it may take more than 45 days to receive your order. We recommend using a land / civilian address where possible.</p>
What is the return policy	<p>If you don't absolutely love it, we'll take it back. It's a simple deal - contact us to let us know the reason you wish to return your purchase including a couple of photos depicting any concerns, and we'll take a look with you.</p>

	<p>It's all part of our Satisfaction Guarantee.</p> <p>Easy enough, so you can concentrate on the more important things in life.</p>
Cost to have a selling account	unknown
Cost to sell items	deduct a base price for making products, and send your earnings to you.
Quality of print*	N/A
Direct link to artist brand items or search	
Upload file options	<p>Greeting Cards: 1300x900 pixels (1 megapixel) more info on cropping, borders and aspect ratio for cards here</p> <p>Matted Prints: 1800x1260 pixels (2.5 megapixels)</p> <p>Laminated, Mounted and Framed Prints and Stretched Canvas:</p> <p>2400x1600 pixels (4 megapixels) for the small print 3240x2160 pixels (7 megapixels) for the medium print 3840x2560 pixels (10 megapixels) for the large print</p> <p>Posters:</p> <p>2500x3500 pixels for the smallest print 3500x5000 pixels for the medium print 5000x7100 pixels for the large print</p> <p>Calendar images: 2182x1906 pixels for the months and 2371x2875 pixels for the cover</p> <p>Clothing and stickers: exactly 2400x3200 pixels (and the file must be a PNG).</p> <p>iPhone cases : exactly the same dimensions as the template that you can download from the add work page.</p> <p>The file must be in RGB colour and in JPG format. We accept JPEG or PNG files (we don't accept TIFF or PDF files).</p>
How many visitors does this website get	Cannot find
Describe the process used to order product	

What payment methods are accepted	mastercard, visa, paypal, american express
Intellectual Property Rights	Not Found
Comments	Difficult to navigate site, really indepth assistance but the supportwebsite does not easily link back to main website, very frustrating to find information, community forums are good, great way to reach out to others in art community

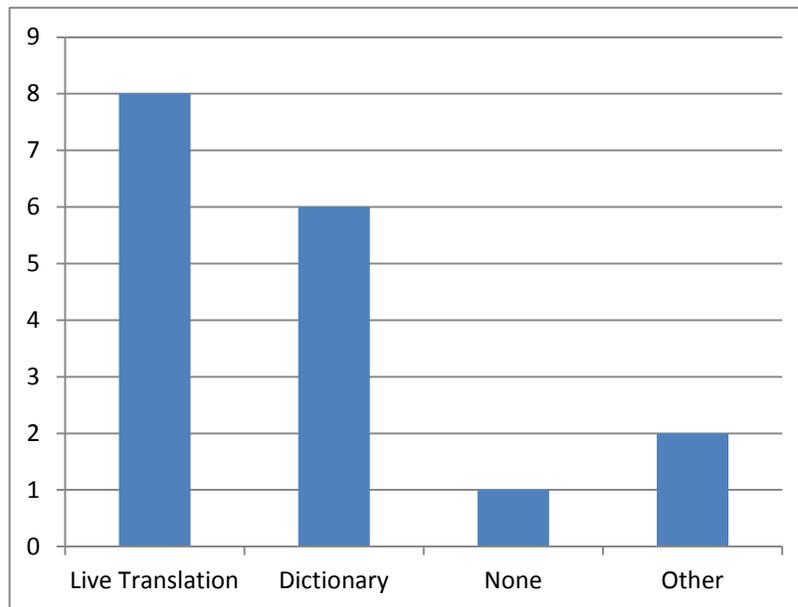
Questions	Zazzle.com
List products offered	+350 Products Available
Available in how many countries	16 domains including USA, Canada, Brasil, New Zealand, China, Australia, Korea, France, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, UK, etc. reaches an international audience through these domains
What is the return policy	<p>If you don't love it we'll take it back.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied for any reason, you may return any unused products for a replacement or refund within 30 days of receipt, subject to the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Shoes: Keds Studio custom shoes are made-to-order specifically for you, so we cannot accept returns. •Stitch Files: In order to obtain a refund of the stitch file conversion fee, you must contact customer support within 10 days of receiving your embroidered product(s) and you must return the product to Zazzle. If you posted an embroidered product for sale to your store without ordering a product, you must request a refund of the conversion fee within 10 days of the date Zazzle uploaded the stitch file to your "My Images" library, which will be indicated by the "sent date" of the stitch file confirmation email sent to you. If Zazzle refunds the stitch file conversion fee, the stitch file will be deleted from your store.

Cost to have a selling account	Free
Cost to sell items	Once you've designed a product and want to publish it for sale, you get to name your own royalty (we call this the "Name-Your-Royalty" system...ya, not bleeding creativity on that one). This means you can set the royalty to whatever you want, from 10% to 99% of the retail price.
Quality of print*	Unknown
Direct link to artist brand items or search	
Upload file options	Zazzle supports JPEG, PNG, GIF, and TIFF formats. The higher resolution the better. Learn more about our image guidelines
How many visitors does this website get	Monthly 20,000,000+
Describe the process used to order product	
What payment methods are accepted	We currently accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and PayPal, as well as Zazzle earnings and gift certificates as payment. We do not accept personal checks, cash, or money orders... or any other payments by regular, posted mail.
Intellectual Property Rights	
Other Comments	<p>ARTSPROJEKT is a curated platform that empowers emerging and establish artists and brands to connect, collaborate, and showcase original art, designs and ideas with fans and consumers. My life has been dedicated to creative innovation in all areas of youth culture, art and action sports - with ARTSPROJEKT I combine over 25 years experience with my desire to liberate artists worldwide.</p> <p>The result is the ARTSPROJEKT platform, a playground in which the world's most creative individuals and brands can turn unique ideas into dynamic product experiences that best represent each</p>

	<p>individual artist and brand. The new ARTSPROJEKT/Zazzle experience offers consumers a robust marketplace with the highest quality retail products, and empowers artists to showcase original art in a safe and secure shopping environment. ARTSPROJEKT is an entirely new community of artistic expression and freedom.</p>
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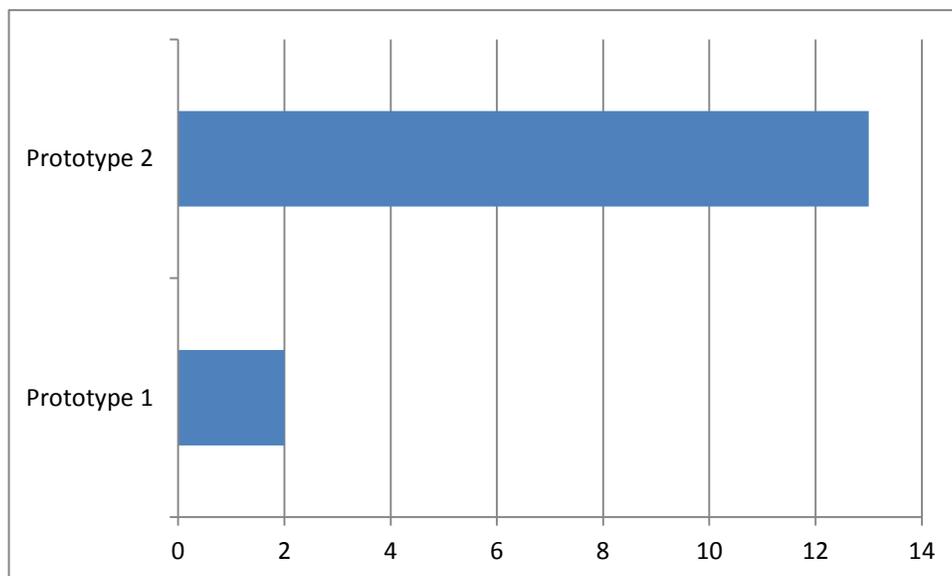
What other multi-language options would you like to have on the website (e.g. dictionary, links to translators, live translation, and/or translate toolbar)?

Figure 3: Distribution of “Q39: What other multi-language options would you like to have on the website (e.g. dictionary, links to translators, live translation, and/or translate toolbar)?”



Which Prototype had the best navigation

Figure 4: Distribution of “Q36: Which Prototype had the best navigation layout?”



Would you visit this website again?

Figure 5: Distribution of “Q41: Would you visit this website again?”

