



Research Article

## Exploring Thai Consumer Insights in the Gunpla Model Market

Tanakorn Chinpaisal

Independent Researcher

Chaiyasak Chaipunha

Shine international shipping & logistic company limited, Bangkok, Thailand.

Achareeya Robkit\*

International College, King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, Bangkok, Thailand.

\* Corresponding Author, Tel. 09 5535 9559, E-mail: achareeya.r@ic.kmutnb.ac.th

DOI: 10.14416/j.bid.2024.12.009

Received 10 August 2024; Revised 8 September 2024; Accepted 13 December 2024; Published online: 27 December 2024

© 2024 King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok. All Rights Reserved.

### Abstract

Gundam Plastic models, known as “Gunpla,” are popular model kits inspired by characters from the Japanese animation series Mobile Suit Gundam. Over the past four decades, Gunpla has evolved from simple plastic toys into highly sought-after collectibles, gaining popularity among enthusiasts worldwide, including in Thailand. Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), this research explores Thai customer's insight in order to understand factors influencing their purchase decision, attitude towards current business model employed by sellers, and potential business expansion or direction of Gunpla model market. Through semi-structured interviews with 11 participants, this qualitative study investigates key factors influencing collectors, such as emotional connections to the Gundam anime series, preferences for specific model designs and scales, and customization activities post-purchase. Research Findings reveal that most participants favor the MG (1/100) scale for its balance of size and detail, while purchasing is influenced by convenience, with most collectors opting for independent retailers or online platforms over official stores. The study also highlights dissatisfaction with reselling practices due to price markups, which is seen as exploitative by genuine collectors. Customization activities, including painting and modifying models, are popular among collectors, further enhancing their emotional investment in the hobby. Insights from this research can inform marketing strategies for retailers by emphasizing customer engagement, community-building efforts, and addressing issues related to reselling.

**Keywords:** Gunpla, Collectibles Market, Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)

Please cite this article: Chinpaisal, T., Chaipunha, C., & Robkit, A. (2024). Exploring Thai Consumer Insights in the Gunpla Model Market. *Journal of Business and Industrial Development*, 4(3), 129-144.



## 1. Introduction

Since its introduction in the 70s, *Mobile Suit Gundam* franchise has captivated Japanese and overseas fans alike. Initially, the show struggled to find success, and early Gundam models produced by a third-party company were simply children's toys. However, it gained popularity among teenage and adult viewers due to its themes of politics, military tactics, war strategy, and philosophy set against a futuristic, war-torn universe where space battles are fought with enormous robots known as Mobile Suits or Mecha [1][2][3]. This shift in audience engagement prompted Bandai Namco to take over merchandise production, redesigning the products as kits for assembly, which resonated well with older fans. To them, Gunpla's appeal lies not only in the intricate assembly process but also in the creativity it inspires as collectors customize their models into work of arts [4]. The term Gundam Plastic Model was eventually abbreviated to the trademark "Gunpla" (ガンプラ, Ganpura). As of March 2021, a remarkable 714.84 million models have been sold worldwide [1][5]. Interestingly, the franchise's popularity has surged during the pandemic, as customers sought activities to engage in during lockdown, with Gunpla model emerging as a favored pastime [2][3].

The Gundam franchise enjoys a robust fan following in Thailand. Thai enthusiasts come together for events and merchandise purchases, which have contributed to the franchise's growing popularity through new releases and products. The show's popularity in Thailand can be attributed to the creators' intention to attract a broader audience, appealing to both newcomers and longtime fans of Gundam [4]-[7].

The significant fan base for this franchise in Thailand has piqued Bandai's interest in making investments. In recent years, the accessibility of anime and manga has surged in Thailand, drawing many genre enthusiasts to the Gundam franchise. The substantial fan base in Thailand prompted Bandai to incorporate the Thai language on the official website, GUNDAM.INFO [5]. Gundam's global business model involves shipping products to various countries and selling them through dealers. Thailand stands out as the exclusive country where Bandai established a Gundam official shop, *Gundam Base Thailand*, which was launched by Bandai Spirits, a subsidiary of Bandai, on November 11, 2020, located at Siam Center, recognizing it as a key market. Some international customers even travel to Thailand to purchase products from these stores [5][6].

Outside the official shop, Gunpla models are available in a wide array of independent shops and online retailers. Some merchants opt to engage in this business by pre-ordering or purchasing and reselling products. Thai merchants employ various strategies, including sales promotions to attract customers, securing pre-order rights from primary producing countries like China and Japan, among other

methods. These merchants can generate substantial profits from selling figures and models through mark-up and demand driven via scarcity [4][8].

The aim of this research is to explore customer's insight in order to understand factors influencing their purchase decision, attitude towards current business model employed by sellers, and potential business expansion or direction.

### 1.1 Literature Review

The literature review explores various aspects of the existing business models, collectible communities, and customer insights; drawing on research from different fields to provide a comprehensive understanding.

#### 1.1.1 Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)

Consumer Culture Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the cultural and social dynamics within collectible enthusiast community. CCT examines how consumers use products and brands to construct their identities and navigate their social worlds [9]. In the context of collectibles, such as Gundam models, this theory helps explain why individuals are drawn to collecting and how these items become symbols of personal and group identity. Collectibles often carry significant cultural meanings and are embedded in social practices that go beyond mere ownership. CCT explores how collectors engage with these items to express their passions, connect with like-minded individuals, and participate in a broader community [10]. This engagement can involve rituals, storytelling, and the creation of a shared history around the collectibles, which reinforces their value and significance within the collector community [11]. By applying CCT, researchers can gain deeper insights into the motivations and behaviors of collectors, as well as the cultural and social implications of their collecting practices, which stretch into collectible trading. CCT also relates to the following concepts:

#### 1.1.2 Collectors and their Motivations

Collectors are individuals who gather items of interest, often driven by a passion for the subject matter. The motivations behind collecting can vary widely, including personal interest, nostalgia, investment, and social interaction [4][12]-[17]. Designer toys have become popular among adult collectors due to their unique designs and the emotional connection they foster as adults derive significant satisfaction from collecting toys, which can be linked to their lifestyle, brand experience, and the positive image associated with the brand [12]-[14][16]. CCT helps explain how collecting behaviors are influenced by cultural meanings and social practices, highlighting the role of consumption in identity construction and community building [9]-[11].



### 1.1.3 Community of Collectors

The community aspect of collecting is crucial, as it provides a platform for individuals to share their interests, exchange information, and build social connections. Information plays a significant role in hobbyist collector communities; especially, how these communities facilitate the flow of information and support sustainable collecting activities [18]. CCT emphasizes the importance of social interactions within collecting communities. These interactions enhance the cultural and social dimensions of consumption, reinforcing the collector's identity and fostering a strong sense of community. The sense of belonging and shared passion within these communities can enhance the collecting experience and encourage continued engagement [19].

### 1.1.4 Customer Insights and Brand Awareness

Understanding customer insights is vital for businesses aiming to cater to collectors. Insights into customer behavior, preferences, and motivations can inform marketing strategies and product development. The importance of brand awareness includes brand recognition, recall, and dominance. Effective brand awareness strategies can create strong emotional connections with customers, leading to increased loyalty and higher sales [19]-[21]. CCT helps explain how collectors' identities and community interactions shape their purchasing decisions. This aspect could be further exploited by business for more targeted and culturally resonant marketing efforts. This approach not only enhances brand awareness but also fosters deeper connections with the collector community, driving sustained engagement and loyalty [11], [15].

### 1.1.5 Factors Influencing Collectors' Decisions

Several factors influence collectors' purchasing decisions, including the design and quality of the items, the influence of media, and the availability of products. The character and design of Gundam models significantly impact Indonesian consumers' purchasing decisions as the detailed characteristics and community aspects of the collectible toys play a significant role in collectors' decisions [13], [17].

CCT provides a framework for understanding these influences by examining how cultural and social dimensions shape consumer behavior [11]. CCT highlights how the cultural meanings attached to Gundam models, as well as the social interactions within the collector community, influence purchasing decisions. This theory helps explain why collectors value certain designs and characteristics, and how media and community engagement reinforce these preferences.

### 1.1.6 The Role of Media and Marketing

Media and marketing play a pivotal role in shaping collectors' interests and behaviors. The Gundam franchise, for example, has effectively used anime, manga, and social media to build a

strong brand presence and engage with fans. The accessibility of anime and manga in Thailand has contributed to the growing popularity of the Gundam franchise [7]. Effective marketing strategies can enhance brand awareness and attract new customers while retaining existing ones. CCT helps explain how the Gundam franchise's use of various media forms creates a rich cultural context that resonates with fans, fostering a strong emotional connection to the brand. This theory also illustrates how marketing strategies that tap into these cultural narratives can effectively engage collectors, reinforcing their loyalty and encouraging new collectors to join the community.

### 1.1.7 Challenges and Opportunities in the Collectibles Market

CCT highlights the role of community engagement and social interactions in sustaining interest and combating the threat of counterfeit products, fluctuating market demand, and the impact of economic conditions. However, there are also significant opportunities for growth, particularly through online platforms and global expansion. Collectibles are recently viewed as alternative investment opportunities, which make them even more attractive to adult consumers [13]-[14][22]. The success of the Gundam Base Thailand demonstrates the potential for official stores to thrive in key markets [6].

## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1 Methods

A qualitative approach was chosen to gain in-depth insights into the preferences and decision-making processes of these collectors. The researchers first reviewed related studies on collectible products, focusing on qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews. This approach helps in deeply analyzing the behaviors and motivations of Gunpla collectors in Thailand, particularly the factors influencing their purchasing decisions. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with 11 participants. The interviews were designed to gather qualitative data on the participants' insights and behaviors related to Gunpla collecting.

### 2.2 Population and sampling

For this research, 11 participants were selected via Snowball Sampling method, where initial participants refer the researcher to other potential participants within the target population [23]. As a qualitative study into the phenomenon within a niche market, this research prioritizes detailed insights into participants' experiences and motivations. A smaller number of interviewees allows for more in-depth exploration as they are selected for their specific expertise, providing highly relevant insights that reduce the need for a larger sample. Moreover, data saturation, where no new information or themes



emerge, can often be achieved with fewer participants due to the homogeneity of the group [23]-[24]. Using Snowball Sampling also ensures that the sample is both relevant and comprehensive, as participants are likely to recommend others who share similar levels of engagement and expertise from within collector network and ecosystem. Although Snowball Sampling raises concerns over bias and lacking of randomization; rendering it difficult to produce result that can be used for generalization, this method incorporates ‘insider’s insight’ rather than relying on pure randomness or researcher’s bias, which in turn, making the research of niche market reflecting its exclusive nature, and often hard-to-reach or hidden members [24]-[25].

### 2.3 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument is the semi-structured interview. This method allows for prepared questions while also providing flexibility to explore relevant topics in-depth during the conversation.

### 2.4 Data Collection

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with participants. Interviews were conducted both by appointment and spontaneously in stores where Gunpla models are sold. This approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of participants’ awareness and purchasing decisions. In-person interviews were conducted at participants’ homes or stores in Bangkok, while online interviews were conducted via online meeting platforms. The interview was guided by the same set of initial questions before probing into specific areas and experiences as the conversation progress. For both by appointment and spontaneous interview, the researcher clearly explained the nature of the study and participants rights to confidentiality before obtaining consent from each participant.

### 2.5 Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed by categorizing responses based on keywords and themes. This method allowed for identifying common factors influencing purchasing decisions and understanding the diverse preferences and behaviors of the participants.

### 3. Research Results

#### Findings

#### 3.1 The current business model

The Gundam franchise employs various business models to reach its customers.

**3.1.1 B2C (Business to Customer):** This model is prevalent in the Gundam franchise, where products such as Gunpla models are sold directly to consumers through official stores like Gundam Base and online platforms. This model allows the company to maintain control over pricing, branding, and customer experience.

**3.1.2 B2B (Business to Business):** In this model, Bandai Namco collaborates with retailers and distributors to sell Gunpla and other Gundam merchandise. This approach helps expand the franchise's reach and ensures product availability in various regions. Retail partnerships also enable promotional activities and exclusive product releases.

**3.1.3 Event-Based Models:** The Gundam franchise organizes events such as conventions, exhibitions, and competitions to engage with fans and promote new products. These events create buzz around the brand, provide opportunities for direct sales, and enhance the overall customer experience.

**3.1.4 C2C (Customer to Customer):** This model is facilitated by online marketplaces where collectors can buy and sell Gunpla among themselves. Platforms like specialized hobbyist online forums support this model, allowing collectors to trade rare and customized models. This model enhances community engagement and provides a secondary market for products. However, this model also give rise to non-collectors who trade Gundam models solely for profit.

#### 3.2 Customer's Insight

##### 3.2.1 Influence of Gundam Animation:

The majority of participants were introduced to Gunpla model through Gundam anime series such as *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing*, *Iron-Blooded Orphans*, and *Witch from Mercury*. These series were pivotal in sparking their interest in Gunpla model. The storylines, characters, and designs of these anime significantly influence their purchasing decisions. Participants expressed a strong desire to own models that represent their favorite characters or series, indicating a deep emotional connection to the anime. Specific examples include the popularity of *Mobile Suit Gundam Witch from Mercury*, which has a unique plot and strong female characters, attracting both new and existing fans. Another example is the *Mobile Suit Gundam: Movie Trilogy*, which appeals to fans of the original series from the 1970s.



### 3.2.2 Design and Scale Preferences:

The design of Gunpla model is a critical factor for buyers. Participants showed a preference for models with unique and appealing designs, such as Gundam Aerial and traditional models like RX-782. The aesthetic appeal and the intricate details of the models play a significant role in their decision-making process. Gundam models come in different sizes. The MG scale (1/100, 7-10 inches) is the most preferred due to its size and detail, followed by HG (1/144, 5-6 inches) and SD scales [26]. The MG scale is favored because it fits comfortably in the hand and offers a good balance between detail and size. Participants appreciate the level of detail and the challenge that comes with assembling MG models. Some participants prefer SD Gundam, a compact size caricature style with oversized head and a cute or comedic design, for its ease of assembly and customization potential, while others collect HG models due to budget constraints.

### 3.2.3 Buying Channels:

Participants prefer purchasing from merchants and retailers over the official store (Dream Toys) due to convenience, better communication, and the ability to pre-order. They find it easier to connect with merchants who can provide timely updates and personalized service. Online shopping has become increasingly popular, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it offers ease of access and the ability to browse and purchase from home. Participants appreciate the convenience of online platforms and the ability to compare prices and availability across different sellers. However, the official store is often avoided due to its location in central Bangkok, which can be inconvenient for many customers. Additionally, the official store's stock limitations and higher prices compared to merchants are deterrents.

### 3.2.4 Customization Activities:

Common customization activities include painting, brushing, and air coating. These activities allow collectors to personalize their models and enhance their appearance. Participants enjoy the creative process of customizing their Gunpla model to reflect their personal tastes and preferences.

Some participants also engage in more advanced customization, such as modifying models with metal parts to improve aesthetics and functionality. This indicates a high level of engagement and dedication to the hobby, as well as a desire to create unique and personalized models.

Customization is seen as a way to make the models more realistic and to express individual creativity. Some participants participate in customization contests and share their work on social media platforms.

### 3.2.5 Views on Re-selling:

Reselling is a prominent feature in collectibles trading, generally viewed as a common mechanism in collector communities. However, the practice is becoming more problematic as Gunpla



models have been viewed as investment opportunity by non-collectors. Influencers who collect and display their Gunpla models caused sensation among followers. While they help promote Gunpla and attract new customers, they can also lead to issues when people purchase models solely to mimic influencers, rather than out of genuine interest. This trend attracts opportunistic non-collectors who would like to capitalize on the growing popularity by exploiting this trend to inflate prices and causing demand through scarcity.

Participants reflects on this matter as following:

**1) General Sentiment:**

Most participants do not support the practice of re-selling. They expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with resellers who purchase large quantities of Gunpla models and then sell them at significantly higher prices. The high markups imposed by resellers make Gunpla less accessible to genuine collectors, creating a barrier for those who wish to purchase models at reasonable prices.

**2) Impact on Prices:**

Resellers often increase the price of Gunpla models far beyond the original retail price. This practice is seen as exploitative and unfair to the community of collectors. Participants noted that resellers use automated bots to quickly buy up stock from official stores and merchants stores as soon as they become available, leading to shortages and inflated prices for other buyers. This practice prevents other customers from getting the products they want, leading to frustration and disappointment among collectors. Many collectors feel that re-sellers exploit the demand for Gunpla by hoarding models and selling them at inflated prices. This is seen as taking advantage of the community for profit, which goes against the spirit of the hobby.

**3) Market Dynamics:**

The presence of resellers affects the overall market dynamics by creating artificial scarcity. This not only frustrates collectors but also impacts the reputation of the Gunpla market.

Some participants mentioned that they prefer to wait for official restocks or purchase from trusted merchants rather than paying inflated prices to resellers.

**4) Customization and Reselling:**

While customization is a popular activity among collectors, it is generally not linked to re-selling. Participants who engage in customization do so for personal satisfaction and to enhance the aesthetic appeal of their models, not for profit.



#### 5) Official and Retailer Responses:

The official store (Dream Toys) and other retailers are aware of the issues caused by resellers. However, the measures to control this practice are limited. Some participants suggested that better cooperation between Bandai, official stores, and retailers could help mitigate the negative impact of resellers. This could include measures such as limiting the number of units per customer and improving the distribution process to ensure fair access for all collectors.

#### 6) Community Impact:

The practice of re-selling is seen as detrimental to the Gunpla community. It creates a divide between those who can afford the inflated prices and those who cannot, reducing the overall enjoyment and accessibility of the hobby. Participants expressed a desire for a more equitable market where all collectors have a fair chance to purchase the models they want at reasonable prices.

### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

Gunpla models and Mobile Suite Gundam are deeply appreciated by their loyal fan. Gunpla collectors feel a strong emotional connection to the characters and stories, which drives their desire to own related Gunpla models. Collectors carefully choose what model they would like to acquire based on sentimental and aesthetic view on each character. The design of Gunpla models is a crucial factor in purchasing decisions. Collectors prefer models with unique and appealing designs that align with their personal tastes. The MG (1/100) scale is the most preferred among collectors due to its detailed design and size that fits comfortably in their hands. Other popular scales include HG (1/144) which is easier to acquire and SD which is easier to assemble. As they spend time with each building, they become more involve in the process of creating a unique model and unique memory for each piece, becoming attached to their creation. Collectors prefer buying from merchants and online retailers over official stores due to convenience, better customer service, and the ability to pre-order models. This pose a challenge to the official store as they are often less convenient due to location and limited stock availability. Collectors also face challenges with online purchases from official stores that prove to be more difficult to navigate. Interaction with the like-minded people when making purchasing is also something missing it they purchase from the official store.

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) helps explain these behaviors by highlighting how cultural and social dimensions influence consumer decisions. CCT posits that consumption is not just about the functional use of products but also about the symbolic meanings and emotional connections they carry. For Gunpla collectors, the models represent more than just toys; they are a way to connect with the



Gundam universe and express their identity and passion. Emotional connection also extends to keeping their communities exclusive and enjoyable, thus seeing non-collectors' interference as intrusive.

While reselling is seen as a common practice, when done by profit-seeking opportunists who capitalize on a fad trend, it is generally viewed as unappreciative conduct that becomes harmful to the communities. The high prices set by resellers create a barrier to entry for new collectors, making it difficult for them to start their collections. While reselling is seen as a common practice, when done by profit seeking opportunists who capitalize on a fad trend, it is generally viewed as unappreciative conduct which becoming harmful to the communities. The high prices set by re-sellers create a barrier to entry for new collectors, making it difficult for them to start their collections. As non-collectors look for investment opportunity, they take notion from trend set by influencers who spike up the popularity of certain models, often limited-edition ones. Resellers may buy up large quantities of these models to capitalize on the high demand, leading to inflated prices and making it difficult for genuine collectors to obtain them. This can lead to an unstable market where prices fluctuate unpredictably, making it harder for collectors to plan their purchases. This practice not only causing market distortion, it can also lead to frustration among collectors who feel that the hobby is being commercialized at their expense. The practice of re-selling can negatively impact the sense of community among collectors. When models are hoarded and sold at high prices, it can create resentment and reduce the collaborative and supportive atmosphere that many collectors value. Overall, the negative reaction to re-selling is driven by the perception that it undermines the accessibility, affordability, and community spirit of the Gunpla collecting hobby. Collectors prefer a market where models are fairly priced and readily available to all enthusiasts.

In conclusion, Gunpla collectors are driven by a deep emotional connection to the characters and stories of Mobile Suit Gundam, influencing their purchasing decisions and community interactions. The design and scale of the models play significant roles in their choices, with preferences for detailed and aesthetically pleasing designs. Collectors face challenges with the convenience and availability of official stores, often turning to merchants and online retailers for better service and pre-order options. The practice of reselling, particularly by profit-seeking opportunists, creates barriers for new collectors and disrupts the market, leading to frustration and a sense of commercialization among genuine enthusiasts. CCT provides a framework for understanding these behaviors and the cultural significance of Gunpla collecting, emphasizing the importance of community and shared cultural values in shaping consumer behavior. By leveraging these insights, businesses can better cater to the needs of collectors and foster a more inclusive and supportive market environment.



## 5. Recommendations

### 5.1.1 Increase Production of MG Scale Models

**Customer Preference:** The MG (1/100) scale is the most preferred among collectors due to its detailed design and size. Increasing the production of MG scale models can cater to the preferences of adult collectors and boost sales. SD Models might also be attractive to new collectors. Ensuring a steady supply of popular models can help maintain interest and prevent shortages, as well as lessen the impact of resellers hoarding of products.

### 5.1.2 Create Engaging Anime Series

**Influence of Anime:** The storyline, characters, and themes of Gundam anime significantly impact purchasing decisions. Creating engaging anime series with meaningful stories and compelling characters can attract new fans and retain existing ones, driving demand for related Gunpla models. For wider audiences, the franchise owner may consider streaming platforms that easier to gain viewership.

### 5.1.3 Design Unique and Appealing Models

**Importance of Design:** The design of Gunpla models is a crucial factor in purchasing decisions. Focusing on unique and appealing designs that stand out in the market can attract collectors and enhance the overall appeal of the product line.

### 5.1.4. Improve Customer Service and Accessibility in Official Stores

1) **Store Preferences:** Collectors prefer buying from merchants and online retailers due to convenience and better customer service. Improving customer service and accessibility in official stores can help compete with merchants and online retailers, making it easier for collectors to purchase Gunpla models.

2) **Distribution Strategy:** Improving cooperation with merchants to ensure fair pricing and availability, and addressing the negative impact of resellers, can help maintain a healthy market. Supporting merchants with timely restocks and exclusive releases can strengthen their relationship with custome

### 5.1.5 Address Reselling Practices

1) **Enhanced Distribution Controls:** Implementing stricter controls on the number of units sold per customer to prevent bulk buying by resellers.

2) **Improved Communication:** Strengthening communication between Bandai, official stores, and retailers to ensure timely restocks and fair distribution of popular models.

3) **Community Engagement:** Engaging with the Gunpla community to gather feedback and develop strategies that prioritize the interests of genuine collectors.

4) **Anti-Bot Measures:** Investing in technology to detect and prevent automated bot purchases, ensuring that real customers have a better chance of buying the models they want. By addressing the challenges posed by re-selling, Bandai and its partners can create a more positive and inclusive environment for Gunpla collectors in Thailand.

#### 5.1.6 Enhance Online Shopping Experience

**Online Platforms:** Many collectors prefer online shopping for its convenience. Enhancing the online shopping experience by providing detailed product information, easy navigation, and reliable delivery services can attract more customers and increase sales.

#### 5.1.7 Support Customization Activities

**Customization Practices:** Many collectors engage in customizing their Gunpla models. Providing customization kits, tools, and tutorials can support these activities and enhance customer satisfaction. Offering workshops, tutorials, and customization contests can foster a sense of community and inspire collectors to explore new techniques. Online and off-line communities can also serve as venue for expression, interaction, inspiration, and overall increasing customers engagement with each other, thus, leading to stronger fan base.

#### 5.1.8 Collaborate with Influencers

**Influence of Trends and Influencers:** Influencers play a significant role in promoting Gunpla models. Collaborating with influencers to showcase new models, provide tutorials, and engage with the community can increase visibility and drive demand.

#### 5.1.9 Organize Events and Competitions

**Community Engagement:** Organizing events and competitions, such as build contests and exhibitions, can foster a sense of community and encourage collectors to showcase their work. Engaging with the community through social media, events, co-creation, and collaborations with popular influencers can help build a loyal customer base. Understanding and responding to customer feedback can also foster stronger Consumer-Brand Relationships.

#### 5.1.10 Expand Market Beyond Existing Collectors

**Market Expansion:** Exploring the potential for expanding the market beyond existing collectors by examining the attitudes and interests of the broader population in Thailand towards Gunpla model can identify new customer segments and growth opportunities



## 6. Acknowledgement

This research was conducted through a collaboration between independent researchers and a researcher from the International College at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB).

## References

- [1] Gizmodo. (2015, March 9). A History of Gundam, the Anime That Defined the Giant Robot Revolution. <https://gizmodo.com/a-history-of-gundam-the-anime-that-defined-the-giant-r1690326227>
- [2] Hornyak, T. (2021). Entertainment Robots the Latest Craze Worldwide as the Pandemic Rages On. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/09/entertainment-robots-popularity-continues-to-grow-amid-covid-19.html>
- [3] Manpig's Collection. (n.d.). What Is Gunpla?. <https://manpigscollection.blogspot.com/p/what-is-gunpla.html>
- [4] Raktin, S., & Worahiran, C. (2018, June 25). Psychological Factors That Affect Designer Toy Collectors' Behavior. <https://archive.cm.mahidol.ac.th/handle/123456789/2553>
- [5] Sanook. (2015, April 8). Thai Gundam Fans, Get Ready to Celebrate! Gundam Info Now Available in Thai. <https://www.sanook.com/campus/1381241/>
- [6] Nation Thailand. (2021, November 17). Gundam Multiverse Awaits Bangkokians in Siam Centre. <https://www.nationthailand.com/in-focus/40008798>
- [7] Trueid. (2023, January 18). (Anime Recommendation) Mobile Suit Gundam: The Witch from Mercury – A Trending Gundam Anime Set in a School. <https://entertainment.trueid.net/detail/82g4pw08n3Qo>
- [8] Dream Toy Co., Ltd. (2022, August 8). Tamashii Spot Bangkok: The Hub for Bandai Brand Figures. <https://dreamtoy.co.th/>
- [9] Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (2005). Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty Years of Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), 868–882. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/jcr/article-abstract/31/4/868/1812998>
- [10] Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (Eds.). (2018). *Consumer Culture Theory*. SAGE Publications. Retrieved from [https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/93533\\_book\\_item\\_93533.pdf](https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/93533_book_item_93533.pdf)



- [11] Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (2020). Consumer Culture Theory. In E. J. Arnould, C. J. Thompson, & M. Press (Eds.), *An Anthropology of Consumption* (pp. 123–145). Taylor & Francis. Retrieved from <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003052456-7/consumer-culture-theory-eric-arnould-craig-thompson-melea-press>
- [12] Harsadi, M. (2010, May 14). A Consumer Participation Approach to the Design of Functional Collector Toys by Incorporating Designer Toy Subculture. <https://etd.auburn.edu/xmlui/handle/10415/1989?show=full>
- [13] Heljakka, K. I. (2016, September 30). More Than Collectors: Exploring Theorists', Hobbyists' and Everyday Players' Rhetoric in Adult Play with Character Toys. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1555412016670493>
- [14] Herdiani, A., et al. (2021, November 11). Collecting Toys for Happiness: Examining Adults' Satisfaction in Playing with Their Toys. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.1201/9781003303336-19/collecting-toys-happiness-examining-adults-satisfaction-playing-toys-tio-situmorang>
- [15] Formanek, R. (1991). Why They Collect: Collectors Reveal Their Motivations. *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality*, 6(6), 275–286
- [16] Kuntjara, A. P. (2021, March 28). Art Toys as a Tool for Engaging the Global Public in the City of Surabaya. <https://repository.petra.ac.id/19618/>
- [17] Zaputra, Z. L., & Iskandar, B. P. (2013). Identifying Indonesian Consumer Buying Behavior to Design Gundam Model Kits Marketing Strategy. *Institut Teknologi Bandung*, 50–55. Retrieved from <https://journal.sbm.itb.ac.id/index.php/jbm/article/viewFile/556/425>
- [18] Lee, C. P., & Trace, C. B. (2009, January 5). The Role of Information in a Community of Hobbyist Collectors. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/asi.20996>
- [19] Kopp, C. M. (2022, February 21). What Is Brand Perception? How to Measure It and 4 Examples. HubSpot Blog. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/what-is-brand-perception#:~:text=Brand%20perception%20is%20the%20sum,creating%20emotional%20connections%20with%20consumers>
- [20] MBA Skool Team. (2019, April 28). Brand Knowledge: Meaning, Importance & Example. MBA Skool. <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/marketing-and-strategy-terms/17875-brand-knowledge.html>
- [21] Medium. (2016, March 23). Brand Dominance: How to Create a Disruptive Social Brand. <https://medium.com/@aaronpierson/brand-dominance-how-to-create-a-disruptive-social-brand-5544ab025cbe>



- [22] Dobrynskaya, V., & Kishilova, J. (2021, July 30). Lego: The Toy of Smart Investors. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0275531921001604>
- [23] Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball Sampling. *The Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, 32(1), 148–170. <https://doi.org/10.1214/aoms/1177705148>
- [24] Atkinson, R., & Flint, J. (2001). Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies. *Social Research Update*, 33(1), 1–4. <https://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU33.html>
- [25] Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball Sampling: Problems and Techniques of Chain Referral Sampling. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 10(2), 141–163
- [26] Gunpla 101. (2019, September 4). Gunpla Grade and Scale 101. <https://www.gunpla101.com/gunpla-grade-and-scale-101>