

# Implementation of the Marketing Strategies Employed at Philippine Ports Authority in Batangas City, Philippines

Asia Pacific Journal of  
Education, Arts and Sciences  
Vol. 3 No.2, 87 - 94  
April 2016  
P-ISSN 2362-8022  
E-ISSN 2362-8030  
www.apjeas.apjmr.com

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*Date Received: February 16, 2016; Date Revised: March 30, 2016*

**Abstract** - *Marketing the port has always been a problem in developing countries such as the Philippines. With the objective of making it to the global market, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) tapped the expertise of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in financing, developing and constructing the Port of Batangas, Philippines and in putting in place highly sophisticated equipment for the international market.*

*The researcher adopted descriptive research method to identify the level of awareness on the operational services, the marketing strategies employed at the port, and the problems encountered in marketing the Batangas Container Terminal. The respondents of the study consists of 30 informants (5 shipping lines / representatives, 5 truckers, 5 brokers, 5 shippers / cargo-owners, 5 logistics providers, and 5 other private entities using Batangas Container Terminal) who were the respondents present during the data gathering.*

*Findings revealed that the port users and clienteles are aware of the operational services provided by Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc.; while the marketing strategies employed by Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc. is effective. The study also revealed the three leading problems encountered by the ports users and clienteles such as: the insufficient number of cargo handling equipment; the inefficient cargo handling services; and the very slow turn-around time in withdrawal of cargoes. Only the effectiveness of marketing strategies shows significant relationship. This means that the more the respondents are aware of the services, the more the effective the marketing strategies are implemented.*

**Keywords:** *Marketing Strategy, Philippine Ports Authority, Operational Services*

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing the port has always been a problem in developing countries such as the Philippines. Marketing, based on aggregate point of view of online dictionaries, consists of establishing relationships with others through planning, execution and successful distribution of goods to satisfied consumers, although the term has changed and evolved over a period of time. Today marketing is based around providing continual benefits to the customer, these benefits will be provided and a transactional exchange will take place. The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) defined marketing as 'The management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably' [1]. Kotler [2] defines marketing as '*satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process*'. Within this exchange transaction, customers will only exchange what they value (money) if they feel that their needs are being fully satisfied; clearly, the greater the benefit provided, the higher transactional value an organization can charge. Tailor [3] said that "Marketing is not about providing products or services it is essentially about providing changing benefits to the changing needs and demands of the customer".

With the objective of making it to the global market, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) tapped the expertise of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in financing, developing and constructing the Port of Batangas, and in putting in place highly sophisticated equipment for the international market. PPA, since after it developed Batangas Baseport into two (2) Phases, has been eyeing the worldwide scale. The Oxford University Press [4] calls this marketing on a worldwide scale and taking commercial advantage of global operational differences, similarities and opportunities as Global Marketing.

Based on the Feasibility Study conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Batangas will serve as the Main Gateway to and from the islands of MIMAROPA (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), the Visayas, and Mindanao. To cater to the cargo shipping needs of this Hub Port, PPA rehabilitated and developed the Batangas Baseport primarily into two (2) Phases- Phase I and II. Batangas Baseport Phase I is a 22-hectare land area and was completed in 1999 at a cost of Php 1.6 billion. It is dedicated to cater to domestic cargoes. In the 2014 Statistical Report of the Philippine Ports Authority - Batangas, Baseport Phase I alone handled 696,436MT of domestic and foreign cargoes, but this is a lot lower than the 2009 or 2010 cargoes. On the other hand, the Batangas Port Development Project (BPDP) Phase II, which was constructed as an International Container Terminal, and is intended to complement the Ports of Manila and to meet the demands of CALABARZON (Calamba, Laguna, Rizal, Quezon) and Southern Tagalog provinces strived harder to record a data since it was constructed in 2005. After the maiden voyage in 2009, it took the Batangas Container Terminal four years before the shippers decided to use it. Like BPDP Phase I, Phase II is funded by the Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) [8]. Phase II project started on Jan. 16, 2002 with an area of 128 hectares, and was completed on August 2005 at a cost of almost Php 3 B. After its completion in 2005, PPA operated BPDP Phase II, while it is still operating Phase I. From 2005 to 2009, PPA has not recorded even one foreign cargo vessel at the Container Terminal, despite effort of promoting it to International market. Not until MV Mell Sembawang of Marianas Express Lines, Philippines, Inc. has had its maiden voyage at the Batangas Port Container Terminal (Phase II) in April 2009, which call, according to Asian Terminals Inc.'s Marketing Officer Reginald Rivera, is an emergency measure only.

In order to reinforce the efforts of the contractor (Asian Terminals, Inc.) and PPA, the researcher deemed it necessary to determine the factors on what is wrong with their marketing strategy and effort, and why the highly sophisticated facilities and equipment of the International Container Terminal at the Port of Batangas becomes a "white elephant" for more than seven (7) years. The domestic market improved over the years, but the foreign containers that should be utilizing the Container Terminal took more than seven

years to use the BCT, despite the equipment and proximity of Batangas to Manila, where the other clientele are. Another dilemma of the researcher is how to sustain the market. Based on quarterly statistical reports, the container traffic doubled as early as May 2014 onwards, with September and October at its peak recording more than 600% of 2013. However, it slowly deteriorated by the last two months of 2014 which makes the operator wonder if they can really sustain the market.

As the Business Development Marketing Officer of the Philippine Ports Authority, the researcher is quite interested to identify the level of the marketing strategies implemented by Asian Terminals, Inc. to ensure that the market (port users and clientele) stay at the Batangas Container Terminal. After all, the only way to ensure increase of port traffic is by ensuring that the port users stay and continuously use the Batangas Container Terminal. The researcher personally observed the dramatic interests of the shipping companies, truckers, and cargo-owners to the Batangas Container Terminal, after the issue in Manila Port Congestion took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014. The sudden increase of permit application submitted to the Philippine Ports Authority (Batangas) would support the massive interest to do business in the Batangas Container Terminal (BCT). The researcher, as part of the Philippine Ports Authority, has seen the abrupt increase of the container traffic, and was expecting for the continuous increase over the closing of 2014. However, after October 2014, the deterioration was felt. Hence, the fervent desire of the researcher to remedy the situation, and address the issues at this earliest possible time.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study generally aims to assess the status of the marketing strategies implemented and employed by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and Asian Terminals, Inc. (ATI), the operator, in the Batangas Container Terminal (BCT), Phase II.

More specifically, it sought to identify the level of awareness on the operational services at the Batangas Container Terminal, Port of Batangas; determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the marketing strategies employed by Philippine Ports Authority in Batangas City; and identify the problems encountered in marketing the port. It also seek to test the relationship between the level of awareness on the operational services, implementation of the effectiveness of the marketing strategies and problems

encountered at the Batangas Container Terminal (BCT); and in addressing the problems identified, it intend to propose a plan of action to enhance the implementation of the marketing strategies.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The CS Top 100 Ports Magazine (2012) has ranked the International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI) as No. 40 in the top 100 container ports in the world, when it handled 1,513,543 TEU at Manila International Container Terminal (MICT) in 2009 or 10% against its 2007 containers handled. Access for vehicular traffic has been improved with the opening of a new road for empty trucks entering the facility. The strategies used by ICTSI include increasing container handling equipment and cost-containment measures.

The American Journal of Economics and Business Administration [5], in one of its study found that the selection of a suitable strategy is important for ports wishing to improve their financial results. The better financial capability for a firm means investing in the constantly changing shipping market. Economic prosperity also adds value to a firm that uses suitable marketing strategies to satisfy its customers.

The same module has identified the needs of a terminal operator to be able to outperform competition, including berth productivity, depot and repair facilities, and how to deal with uncoordinated volumes of cargoes.

In a 2004 Marketing, Planning and Port Logistics Research, it emphasized that the simple delivery of basic services to the ship and cargo, as the interface between land and sea, is the ideal places to locate features that add value to the load within the logistics industry, but also in aspects of leisure and tourism. Also, the long term mission of the ports has evolved significantly and is no longer just a traditional hub of development, generating employment and facilitating international trade business, to become an essential element of economic policy and transport policy, particularly intermodal, objective-develop hub logistics catalysts links to many supply chains successfully, with activities at the global level, contributing to the competitiveness of enterprises and people, or be a factor competitive region in which it operates[9].

In the study of Olujide and Gbadeyan [6] of Nigeria in assessing the Effectiveness of the Marketing of the Pre-shipment Inspection Services in Nigeria, they identified that the Nigerian economy in

the past decade suffers serious downturn in their port system, which affects almost all its sectors. Corruption, including malpractices in the Port is one of the country's big problem. This external factor is said to be hampering port development.

In the Cargo Systems (CS) magazine issue of August 2009, the turbulence that began in the financial markets in 2007 has said to took hold of the real economy, that in the last part of 2008, many ports around the world has suffered sharp declines in container throughput.

The port marketing strategies in every state varies with both external and internal factors- from the clientele, corruption, global competition, and even local aspects; to implementation and adoption of strategies generate income and facilitate international trade through the port community.

The simple delivery of basic port services in the port area would invite customers, but the international market is more concerned with port logistics and operations, availability of cargo handling equipment, security and safety. The result would be customer satisfaction.

In the 2013 Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) Business Forum held at the Philippine Ports Authority in Batangas Port, international players signify their intention to use the port facility, with the assurance that the government would assist them, and that the costs of other chargers is lower.

The Port of Batangas is yet to learn from ICTSI (International Container Terminal Services, Inc.) who made it to no. 40 of the Top 100 Container Ports in the world, for a 10% increase in throughput with 2,997,606 TEUs in 2009, at its flagship Manila International Container Terminal (MICT) in South Harbor.

Manila International Container Terminal acquired a new 375 metre berth with a 12 meter draught, along with the 14ha paved yard, and increased its fleet of container handling equipment with the acquisition on 4 Noell rubber tired gantries, 10 Stinis spreaders, two skid steer loaders, a pay loader, and a self-propelled telescopic boom. Although the Container Terminal at Phase II Batangas has only rubber tired gantries and 2 Gantry Cranes, the crane rails of 30m wide and 443m long for quay side gantry cranes, place in a 6.6 hectares of Container Yard can accommodate 300,000 TEUs of throughput per annum, and 480 TEUs of refrigerated container of reefer van. The vast land area and facilities may sound competitive, but without

the container vessels using the port facilities, it will remain a “white elephant”.

Indeed, Batangas Port should follow its Manila counterparts that are competing with other ports of the world. Its high time PPA does something to invite the attention of the government in persuading that Batangas Port is the next big thing. After all, successful global marketing is not achieved overnight. Exforsys, Inc., the leading IT and Consulting Firm, in one of its study (2010), says that “A company that takes on a wider scope in their business coverage conquers the global market especially if it has established a competitive advantage in the industry. However, not everything works the same way as how business successfully operates in the domestic field.

In the March 25, 2010 Contract for the Management, Operation, Maintenance, Development and Promotion of Container Terminal “A-1” also known as the Batangas Container Terminal, Asian Terminals, Inc. is responsible to market and promote the Terminal. Specifically in Section 4.16 thereof, ATI may request the Authority to assist in its marketing and promotional activities. To help Asian Terminals, Inc., PPA on its part committed to deny any permits that will be competitive to the former’s market. Thus, the Certificate of Registration / Permit to Operate (COR/PTO) for Commercial Private Ports has been put on-hold, and only Non-Commercial Permits is issued in favor of private ports applicants.

From 2010 to 2012, Asian Terminals tapped the assistance of Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) to market the Batangas Container Terminal through several business forums and meetings. Temporarily, while no foreign container vessel docks the port, Asian Terminals, Inc. requested the Philippine Ports Authority to temporarily use it for domestic container vessels, to which the latter agreed for the time being. In the latter part of 2012, Asian Terminals, Inc. through Mr. Bastiaan W. Hokke, Vice President for Batangas Container Terminal and Pre-Delivery Inspection (BCT and PDI), met with several shippers and shipping lines for matchmaking of cargoes. Only Maersk Lines (also known as MCC) gave a nod, of course for a discounted rate and certain benefits. So desperate to get Maersk, Hokke pushed through, even when Asian Terminals, Inc. is at a loss. In 2013, the effort of Hokke paid off, when Maersk agreed to use the terminal port for another year. Eventually SITC Lines, NYK Lines, and K-Line Shipping followed. In the middle of this development, Hokke was recalled in Manila[10].

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

The method of research adopted in this study is essentially descriptive quantitative research to identify the level of awareness on the operational services, the marketing implemented at the port, and the problems encountered in marketing the Batangas Container Terminal. It is descriptive research because the researcher gathers quantifiable information for statistical inference on the target audience through data analysis.

### **Participants**

Respondents of the study consists of 30 informants (5 shipping lines / representatives, 5 truckers, 5 brokers, 5 shippers / cargo-owners, 5 logistics providers, and 5 other private entities using BCT) who were the 100% of the respondents present during the data gathering.

### **Instrument Used**

Two main data gathering instruments were used in this research: interview and survey through questionnaires. The research utilized a researcher-made questionnaire patterned from marketing strategies reported by Asian Terminal Incorporated. Interview methods are also used to complement the information obtained through questionnaire. After the formulation of the questionnaire, it was validated by Asian Terminals Inc. Marketing Chief Reginald Rivera and Philippine Ports Authority Batangas Port Manager Leopoldo C. Biscocho, Jr.

### **Research Procedure**

The method of research adopted in this study is essentially a descriptive survey, based on the quantifiable information as a result of survey for statistical inference on the target audience through data analysis. The sources of the researcher’s data are both primary and secondary. The researcher-made questionnaire is unstructured used to gather data from the primary data. Interview methods are also used to complement the information obtained from the questionnaire. The secondary data are in the form of internal and external sources. A case study approach was used by the researcher, and the Baseport Container Terminal, which is part of the Phase II of the Port of Batangas Baseport has been chosen for empirical demonstration of the operational services and marketing strategies of the Asian Terminals, Inc. and the Philippine Ports Authority. Respondents

include: 5 shipping lines / representatives, 5 truckers, 5 brokers, 5 shippers / cargo-owners, 5 logistics providers, and 5 other private entities using BCT, on which the study questionnaires were administered to collect the required data.

### Data analysis

The researcher used Weighted Mean(WM) and Ranking in assessing the level of awareness of the port users on the operational services provided by PPA and ATI at the Batangas Container Terminal, as well as the effectiveness of implementation marketing strategies implemented, identification of problems and issues in sustaining the port traffic, and the recommended solutions to the identified problems. Ranking which is also descriptive statistics shows the level of awareness of the port users' vis-à-vis effectiveness of the marketing strategies.

The researcher utilized a Likert Scale to assess the level of awareness of the respondents on the operational services, and the effectiveness of the implementation of the marketing strategies provided by the Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc., at the Batangas Container Terminal, as well as determines the problems encountered in marketing the port.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the study: 3.50 – 4.00: Highly Aware (HA)/ Highly Effective (HE); 2.50 – 3.49: Aware (A)/Effective (E); 1.50 – 2.49: Less Aware (LA)/Less Effective (LE); 1.00 – 1.49: Not Aware (NA)/ Not Effective (NE). In terms of level of agreement: Legend: 3.50 – 4.00: Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49; Agree(A); 1.50 – 2.49:Disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.49:Strongly Disagree (SD).

The results were analyzed and interpreted using the Statistica Version 17.0 statistical analysis software package. Relationships of the level of awareness on the operational services of interval variables as against the marketing strategies, and problems encountered at the Batangas Container Terminal, were tested using the Pearson “r” Product-Moment of Correlation.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the respondents' level of awareness on the operational services provided by Asian Terminals, Inc, the operator of the Batangas Container Terminal. It was found out that as a whole, they were aware on the services rendered by Asian Terminals Inc. and the Philippine Ports Authority, since the composite mean was 2.63.

Table 1. Level of Awareness on the Operational Services at the Batangas Container Terminal, Port of Batangas

Services	WM	VI	Rank
1. Procedure on withdrawal of containers.	2.80	A	1.5
2. Cargo Handling procedure on return of empty containers.	2.70	A	3
3. Stevedoring Services and Rates	2.60	A	7
4. Arrastre Services and Rates	2.67	A	4.5
5. Sufficient number of Cargo Handling Equipment	2.47	LA	9
6. Standardize Safety Procedures	2.80	A	1.5
7. Professional Customer Services	2.57	A	8
8. Process Flow of CH services on entry and withdrawal of cargoes	2.67	A	4.5
9. Crane and RTG Operations	2.37	LA	10
10. Vessel Entrance and Clearance	2.63	A	6
Composite Mean	2.63	A	

Most of the items yield scores ranging from 2.60 to 2.80, thus, “Aware” of the existing operational services and procedures implemented at BCT.

Among the operational services offered by Asian Terminals Inc. and the Philippine Ports Authority, the Procedure on Withdrawal of Containers, Standardize Safety Procedures and Cargo Handling (CH) Procedure on Return of Empty Containers topped on the ranked with weighted mean score of 2.80 and 2.70, respectively. This means that the Safety Procedures is highly felt and recognized by the respondents, and maybe supported by the regular conduct of safety induction seminar, which is a requirement prior to actual operation of truckers and other port users at BCT. Said seminar includes entry and withdrawal of cargoes and other cargo handling procedures.

However, in terms of sufficiency of number of Cargo Handling Equipment (2.47) and crane and Rubber Tired Gantry Operations (2.37), said items were rated “Less Aware”. This is a fact that the ports users only learn about the insufficient number of Cargo Handling Equipment including Rubber Tired Gantries and Cranes when they are already here. In effect, the movement of cargoes or the so-called Turn-Around Time is very slow. Ironically, when compared to the Manila International Container Terminal (MICT), which is operated by International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI), the fully complemented availability of Cargo Handling Equipment such as cranes and Rubber Tired Gantries

(RTGs) would spell the difference of containerized cargo movements. Asian Terminals, Inc., therefore, as Cargo Handling Operator should be able to provide additional cranes and Rubber Tired Gantries.

Table 2. Effectiveness of the Marketing Strategies Implemented by PPA and ATI

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Lower cargo handling rates (stevedoring and arrastre 13% lower for containerized cargoes compared to Manila), per PPA Tariff Rates;	2.73	E	6
2. Longer free storage period	2.57	E	10
3. Shorter travel time from Business Parks (LIMA, EPZA, PEZA) to Batangas, as against to Manila / lesser traffic	2.97	E	2
4. 4. Faster Turn-Around Time / Efficiency	2.73	E	6
5. 5. Complete Facilities (cranes, RTGs)	2.73	E	6
6. 6. Simplified procedure in securing permits from PPA	3.27	E	1
7. 7. Press releases about Batangas Port printed on national newspapers (for CY 2014)	2.80	E	3.5
8. 8. Provision of Pre-Delivery Inspection (PDI) Facilities for Completely Built Units (CBUS or cars)	2.80	E	3.5
9. 9. Continuous consultative meetings with investors	2.63	E	8.5
10. 10. Negotiations for Inland Clearance Depot (ICD) at BCT	2.63	E	8.5
Composite Mean	2.79	E	

Table 2 shows that all marketing strategies implemented were assessed to be effective. Simplified procedure in securing permits from PPA got the highest mean value of 3.27. The timely Simplification of PPA's Permit System has been noted and observed by the respondents, since the usual voluminous requirements were trimmed down to more than half the prior required documents, while the processing time from 3 days is cut down to 2 hours only. This is provided under PPA Administrative Order No. 07-2013 which took effect on December 2013 and implemented on February 2014. It was followed by shorter travel time from Business Parks (LIMA, EPZA, PEZA) to Batangas, as against to Manila /

lesser traffic, this is also apparent due to the opening of the STAR Tollway Corporation from Batangas City to Lipa.

Considering that some of the respondents are from Manila or other areas, they can easily feel the ease of travel using the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (STAR) Tollway. Likewise, the press releases about Batangas Port printed on national newspapers (for Calendar Year 2014) and the provision of Pre-Delivery Inspection (PDI) Facilities for Completely Built Units (CBUS or cars) follows in the rank of Effective Marketing Strategies.

Though all were assessed positive, continuous consultative meetings with investors, negotiations for Inland Clearance Depot (ICD) at BCT and Longer Free Storage Period were found to be the least as observed from the obtained mean values of 2.63 and 2.57. ATI and PPA may also consider these marketing strategies to ensure that the port users would opt to stay.

Following the 2004 Marketing, Planning and Port Logistic Research, the simple delivery of basic services to the ship and cargo is an essential element of economic and transport policy, which contributes to the competitiveness of the enterprise and the people in the competitive region. The Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc. should consider these primary effective marketing strategies to attract the ports users in using the Batangas Container Terminal.

Table 3. Problems Encountered in Marketing the Port

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Very slow turn-around time on withdrawal of cargoes	2.90	A	3
2. Inefficient Cargo Handling services on return of empty containers	2.97	A	2
3. High Stevedoring Rates	2.77	A	5.5
4. High Arrastre Rates	2.77	A	5.5
5. Insufficient number of Cargo Handling Equipment	3.13	A	1
6. Non-standardize Safety Procedures	2.70	A	7
7. Unprofessional Services (including red tape and corruption)	2.60	A	10
8. Non-systematic flow of Cargo Handling services on entry and withdrawal of cargoes	2.63	A	9
9. Uncompetitive people / Equipment Operator	2.67	A	8
10. Deliberate and time-consuming receiving and withdrawal of cargoes	2.83	A	4
Composite Mean	2.80	A	

Table 3 shows problems in marketing the Batangas Container Terminal. Evidently, the problems is said to exist as can be observed from the obtained composite mean of 2.80, rated “Agree”. This implies that the port users, in one way or another, experienced or encountered these problems and issues while doing business at the Batangas Container Terminal.

Insufficient number of Cargo Handling Equipment was the most examined problem since it obtained the highest mean value of 3.13, followed by inefficient CH services on return of empty containers and very slow turn-around time on withdrawal of cargoes. The availability of CH equipment which dictates the movement of containerized cargoes appears to be the primary problem in CY 2014, in effect it gives a slow turn-around time on withdrawal. The volume of containerized cargoes cannot be accommodated with the insufficient number of CH equipment such as cranes and RTGs.

Again emphasis should be made on the cargo handling equipment provided by Manila International Container Terminal (MICT), which is operated by International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI), the fully complemented availability of Cargo Handling Equipment such as cranes and Rubber Tired Gantries (RTGs) dictates the containerized cargo movements or the turn-around efficiency at the port. Asian Terminals, Inc., therefore, as Cargo Handling Operator should provide additional cranes and Rubber Tired Gantries to resolve the issue on insufficient cargo handling equipment.

The least evaluated problem were uncompetitive people / CH Operator, non-systematic flow of CH services on entry and withdrawal of cargoes and unprofessional Services (including red tape and corruption) with 2.67, 2.63 and 2.60 respectively. It suggests that this is not the most concern of the port users, although present (because the verbal interpretation (VI) still provides that they “Agree”, the respondents may either care less to this problem, or they don’t think it is the primary concern.

As seen from the result in Table 4, only the effectiveness of marketing strategies shows significant relationship on the respondents’ level of awareness on the operational services of BCT. This was observed from the obtained r-value which indicates a moderate correlation and the resulted p-value of 0.008 is less than alpha level. This only means that the more that the respondents’ are aware to the services, the more effective to them the marketing strategies that are

implemented. It may also be pointed out that the higher the effectiveness of the marketing strategies are, the lower the problems and issues are encountered by the port users.

Table 4. Relationship Between the Level of Awareness on the Operational Services, Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies and Problems Encountered at BCT

	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies	0.472	0.008	Significant
Problems and Issues	-0.189	0.318	Not Significant

\*\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

## CONCLUSIONS

The port users and clientele are aware of the operational services provided by Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc. The marketing strategies employed by Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc. are effective. The three leading problems encountered by the ports users and clientele are Insufficient number of cargo handling equipment, inefficient cargo handling services, and very slow turn-around time in withdrawal of cargoes. Only the effectiveness of marketing strategies shows significant relationship on the respondents’ level of awareness on the operational services of BCT. A plan of action is proposed to enhance the marketing strategies implemented by the Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminals, Inc.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

A standard information dissemination maybe conducted by the two entities, specifically focused on cargo handling equipment and cargo handling equipment operations. There should be improvement of marketing strategies that would consider value added services to ensure that the port users continuously use the Batangas Container Terminal.

Philippine Ports Authority and Asian Terminal Inc. may address the three leading problems encountered by the ports users and clientele in terms of insufficient number of cargo handling equipment, inefficient Cargo handling services; and very slow turn-around time in withdrawal of cargoes through purchase and installation of two (2) more quayside gantry cranes and four (4) more rubber tired gantries, this is double the number of existing cargo handling equipment. This way, the very slow turn-around time,

which is a result of limited number of cargo handling equipment will also be remedied. As regards the inefficient cargo handling services, the researcher recommends re-training of operators and frontline personnel in cargo handling services.

A deeper study on marketing strategies of the Philippine Ports Authority may be conducted in other areas.

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