

Marketing Factors that have Influences on Choices of Chinese Tourists to Choose Thailand as a Destination

Watchara Yisuntes, Kitti Chayakorn

Postgraduate School of Business Administration, Kasembundit University, Bangkok

Abstract— *The research on marketing factors that have influences on choices of Chinese tourists to choose Thailand as a destination attempts to study Chinese tourists' travelling behavior in Thailand and to evaluate marketing factors that have influences on their decision making. Population of the study is 100 Chinese tourists and questionnaires were used as tools to collect the data. Statistics used to analyze the data collected are percentage and mean. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were applied for hypothesis test.*

The research revealed that most of the questionnaire respondents were female aged 21-23, married, graduated Bachelor's degree, working in private companies with average monthly income of 20,001-25,000 Baht.

The samples' travelling behavior in Thailand was found to prefer most on the southern region since there are various places to visit. Average spending for each trip in Thailand is approximately 30,000 – 40,000 Baht. Most of the respondents have visited Thailand twice and they prefer to use service of tour agents. Most of them prefer to travel and enjoy the nature, and they tend to come between October – December. Family and relatives play important role in choosing to travel to Thailand. Each visit is approximately one week in average. The main purpose to visit Thailand is for relaxation, and most of them choose to stay in hotels.

For marketing factors that have influences on Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand regarding product aspect, it was found that samples had high level of opinion especially concerning quality of tourist places, facilities, and convenience to use. Price was found to be in high level of measurement in average especially availability of various payment modes. Distribution channel was in high level of opinion regarding convenient accessibilities and various modes of tour reservation. For promotion, it was found to have high level of opinion especially about promoting local activities during annual festival.

From the result of the study, it is recommended that authorities concerning tourists should pay attention to improving quality of tourist places and facilities to reach a standard while adding more number of equipments to match with number of Chinese tourists. Reservation and payment modes need to be variously available. Local activities of each interesting tourist site should be promoted to attract Chinese tourists.

I. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Tourism is one of the industries that grow fastest in the past 60 years. Now there are new tourist attractions coming up everywhere in the world. There are big investments in tourist field such as lodgings, restaurants, transportation, communication, beauty and cosmetics, souvenir, insurance, entertainment, and sports. There are also development of new products and services to satisfy various customer needs. The data from United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) indicates that in the past most tourists were interested in travelling to the world famous tourist attractions in developed countries. However, in these days tourists tend to

prefer new places especially in developing countries. For some countries, tourism plays very significant role in improvement of sustainable economy, society, and environment. Incomes from local and foreign tourists are generated and they help to improve economy. There are proven fact that tourism can generate the highest income comparing to exports and other industries. Further, tourism industry creates jobs for people and enhances the country's balance of payment.

For Thailand, tourism industry plays significant roles in generating income for the country from foreign tourists. Numbers of businesses are involved in tourism industry such as lodging, souvenir, and restaurant for example. Nowadays, authorities pay attention to tourism and try to build strength of related facilities such as opening of Suvarnabhumi airport and promotion of various tourism products. In addition, Thailand is voted worldwide to have many interesting tourist destination with good choices of attractions and facilities. It is voted to be one of the short-stay destinations with the cheapest cost; therefore it is gaining popularity especially from Chinese tourists (Department of Tourism, 2016).

Chinese tourists market is expanding very fast. The tourists take tours outside the country because of their better economic condition and also the government allows the people to travel abroad more than before, especially to Thailand where there are closeness in geography, race, custom, and culture. These factors make it comfortable for Chinese tourists to travel to Thailand. Chinese tourists' travelling to Thailand has enhanced tourism industry in Thailand from the slowdown. Chinese tourists are the highest proportion of all foreign tourists who travel to Thailand.

Last year 4.6 million Chinese tourists visited Thailand or it can be counted as 18.7% of total foreign tourists (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2014). The fast increase of Chinese tourists is a result of Thai government's announcement of temporary visa exemption for Chinese tourists. From the tourism data, it is shown that Chinese tourists spend a significant amount of money in Thailand.

For all these reasons, the author is interested to conduct a study on Chinese tourists travelling behavior and factors influencing their decision to travel to Thailand. Results of the study shall be used by tourism entrepreneurs as guidelines for improvement of services rendered to Chinese tourists.

Research Objective

The research aims at evaluating marketing factors that have influences on Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand.

Scope of the Study

1.4.1 The study concerns consumer behavior (6W1H) and marketing mix including product, price, distribution channel, and promotion.

1.4.2 Population of the study is Chinese tourists who travelled to Thailand during January – February 2016. One hundred samples were randomly chosen from departure/arrival zone of Suvarnabhumi airport to answer the questionnaires.

1.4.3 Period of the study is between January – April 2016.

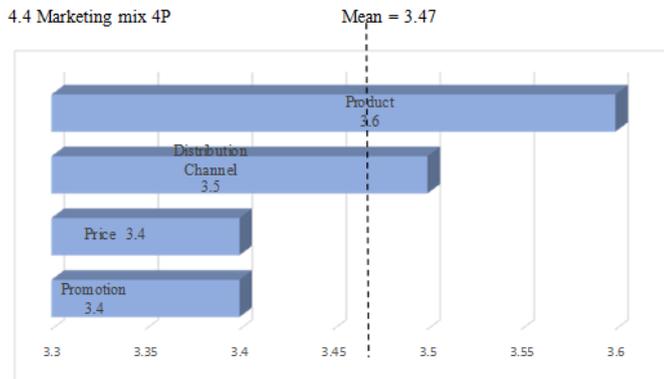


Figure indicates marketing mix factors.

The study found that marketing mix factors that affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand regarding product had a mean of 3.6, regarding place/distribution channel had a mean of 3.5, regarding price had a mean of 3.4, and regarding promotion had a mean of 3.4. Overall mean is 3.47 and it was in high level of significance.

TABLE I shows results of hypothesis test by regression value how marketing factors was related to the decision of Chinese tourists to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

Coefficients					
Marketing Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.628	.186		-.3370	.001
Product					
Quality of tourist places, equipments and facilities are up to standards.	.112	.146	.133	.766	.446
Variety of travelling choices available.	.027	.184	.032	.148	.883
Beautiful tourist places.	.044	.188	.058	.232	.817
Cleanliness of food & drinks	.012	.159	.015	.076	.939
There are sufficient souvenir shops.	.341	.245	.452	1.389	.169
Security.	.263	.172	.252	1.528	.130
Hospitality of local people.	-.262	.201	-.335	-1.306	.195
Price					
Reasonable prices of tour that match with the quality.	.514	.158	.612	3.249	.002

Various payment modes available.	-.271	.170	-.362	-1.598	.114
Price of food & drinks match with the quality.	-.050	.167	-.063	-.302	.763
Reasonable prices of goods around the tourist place.	-.041	.179	-.043	-.230	.819
Reasonable cost of activities.	.537	.119	.644	4.507	.000
Reasonable price of souvenir	.199	.123	.279	1.619	.109
Place/Distribution Channel					
Various modes of tour reservation and convenient accessibility.	-.802	.145	-.843	-5.547	.000
Information provided to tourists.	.365	.217	.479	1.679	.097
Tour reservation and payment via internet and or website of tour company.	.102	.219	.149	.167	.642
Convenience in contacting for tour information	.401	.179	.556	2.242	.028
Roads in tourist places are good and clear sign boards are available.	.499	.183	.588	2.449	.017
Promotion					
There are interesting activities during annual festival of local places.	-.463	.207	-.648	-2.241	.028
There are marketing communications and events to promote tourist places.	.365	.198	.407	1.844	0.69
There are advertisements in the channel that foreign tourists pay attention.	.102	.219	.149	.167	.642
There are special discount for off-season travelling.	-1.029	.210	-1.463	-4.910	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Marketing factors that have influences on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

From table I, hypothesis test results by using regression value at a statistical significance level of 0.05 indicates that marketing factors have influences on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

Marketing Factor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
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For place/distribution channel, convenience in contacting for information about tours has Sig. value of .28 meaning that it has influence on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a tour destination.

Regarding convenience in accessibility and variety of tour reservation modes have Sig. value of .000 meaning that it has influence on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a tour destination.

Regarding convenient roads and availability of clear sign boards, it has Sig. value of .017 meaning that it has effect on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a tour destination.

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There are advertisements in the channel that foreign tourists pay attention.	.102	.219	.149	.167	.642
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For promotion, setting up of interesting activities during annual festival of local area has Sig. value of .028 meaning that it has effect on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a tour destination.

Regarding special discount for off-season tour has Sig. value of .000 meaning that it has effect on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a tour destination.

II. CONCLUSION

The research can be concluded as follows.
Travelling behavior of Chinese tourists in Thailand.

From travelling styles of the samples in the study, it was found that most of them prefer to travel to the southern region since there are various places to visit. Average spending for each trip in Thailand is approximately 30,000 – 40,000 Baht. Most of the respondents have visited Thailand twice and they prefer to use service of tour agents. Most of them prefer to travel and enjoy the nature, and they tend to come between October – December. Family and relatives play important role in choosing to travel to Thailand. Each visit is approximately

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one week in average. The main purpose to visit Thailand is for relaxation, and most of them choose to stay in hotels.

Marketing factors that have influences on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

Marketing mix factors affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand as follows. Product had a mean of 3.6, place/distribution channel had a mean of 3.5, price had a mean of 3.4, and promotion had a mean of 3.4 respectively with the below explanation.

Product was found to be in medium level of measurement and samples focus most on quality of the tourist places as well as convenience and standard of the facilities provided.

Price was found to be in medium level of measurement and samples focus most on availability of various payment modes.

Place/distribution channel was found to be in medium level of measurement and samples focus most on convenience, accessibility, and variety of ways to make tour reservation.

Promotion was found to be in medium level of measurement and samples focus most on interesting activities during annual festival for particular tourist area.

III. CONCLUSION OF HYPOTHESIS TEST

Hypothesis1: Demographic factors have effects on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

It was revealed that gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, and monthly income have influence on Chinese tourists' decision to choose Thailand as a travelling destination.

Hypothesis2: Marketing factors have relationship with the decision to travel to Thailand of Chinese tourists. The hypothesis test results by using regression value at a statistical significance level of 0.05 indicated that marketing factors have influences on Chinese tourists' decision. Influence of price includes price of tour and activities are reasonable and match with the quality. Influence of the place/distribution channel involves convenience in contacting for information about tours, various modes of tour reservation available, tourist places have convenient road, and clear sign boards are sufficiently available. Influence of promotion concerns setting up of interesting activities during annual festival of each local tourist area and special discount for off-season tours.

IV. RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

To further expand this study for more in-depth analysis, the author suggests that studiers should:

- Conduct a study on participation of entrepreneurs in improving tourist places in Thailand so that results of the study shall be use for further development of tourist places and the services rendered to tourists.
- Conduct a study on business administration of entrepreneurs concerning Chinese tourists in order to improve the service to match with the needs of Chinese tourists.
- Conduct a study on tourist places management in Thailand especially participation of people in the community.
- Conduct a study on satisfaction of Chinese tourists for their travel in Thailand on each aspect of marketing factor so that entrepreneurs can offer activities in response to the needs of Chinese tourists which will help to prolong their stay. The study results can be applied to persuade and attract Chinese tourists to take repeat tours to Thailand. This will eventually lead to more income from tourism and improvement of Thailand economy.

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