INFLUENCES OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON PROMOTING THE CULTURAL TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The study intended to determine the influence of social media in promoting cultural tourism in the fourth region in Thailand. The sample group is specific to the target community in four areas: North, Northeastern, East and South of Thailand. Group discussions (online conference) with key informants and stakeholders with thirty key contributors. The results showed that the Thai cultural tourism resources and others of all four regions have some similarities. Still, differences depend on the historical background, such as the arts and culture and the northeast (Surin) architecture that influences the arts and culture from the ancient Khmer, which can also be evident from the carcasses, language, and culture lifestyle. The study of social media market development strategies for cultural tourism found that it is essential to take advantage of social media as destination advertisements, online marketing, developing skills and knowledge and offline advertising tool "DODO strategies." Marketing model through online social media of cultural tourism in Thailand, all four regions must be used design and develop the applications and websites. In the development of applications and websites, must consider the use of applications functional, design, usage and safety.

Keywords: Social Media, Marketing, Promoting, Cultural Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism potential consists of 3 aspects: 1) The tourism potential is unique in wisdom lifestyles, such as the languages and clothing, the well-being of local people, performances, and local activities. 2)Tourism support potential on the tourist attractions are developing basic facilities and 3) Management of conservation management, tourist attractions, tourism restoration and environment improvement (Sukanyasirikul, 2012; Khlaikaew, 2015). Thai culture has many performing arts such as Thai dance dramas and variety show sports with different theatrical arts are common in Bangkok, Phuket, Chiang Mai and Pattaya. In Thailand, food and culture tourism is highly successful in most regions. Northern Thailand, especially Chiang Mai, is one of the most popular tourist destinations Northern Thai food is known worldwide (Prapasawasdi, Wuttisittikulkij, Borompichaichartkul, Changkaew & Saadi, 2018). Cultural tourism is linked to the science of design, experience in many areas. Therefore, there is a high possibility of using this type of design process to help strengthen cultural tourism to create suitable communication for the era, including communicating with local stories effectively by focusing on the design process and community participation to reduce the impact of the tourism industry.

Today's travel industry has seen an increase in the use of social media and the development of new technologies worldwide like Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and others. Consumers are involved with social networking sites for intelligent research on their travel and share the private experience of the hotel, restaurants, or airline. In addition, changing the face of the business will have to keep up with the day-to-day advancements in

technology. Some companies are taking advantage of software programs known as customer service management applications. The impact and implementation of social media marketing strategies are critical to meeting the needs of global travellers. Building and accessing internet space has dramatically changed the motivation of travellers to plan and book trips to different destinations (Jashi, 2013). Therefore, it is argued that travel planning serves as a window to understanding how IT has transformed travel and tourism (Yuan, Gretzel & Fesenmaier, 2006).

Nonetheless, there is a lack of systematic empirical marketing activities that affect the use of the internet. Their subsequent performance results in a lack of detailed information about the travel company's low level of tour programs, facilities, services, promotional campaigns, and advertising. As information is the main proportion of the tourism industry, information technology is effective as a heart for marketing and activities related to sales promotion (Hacıoğlu, Şahin, Şahin & Girgin, 2009; Adnan-Raouf, 2019). As a result, there are still digital gaps between tourist markets and destinations within and between countries, and this inequality known as Digital Divide. As a result, there are still digital gaps between tourist markets and destinations within and between countries, and this inequality known as Digital Divide. (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2009). Recent developments in mobile computing, especially with smartphones and travel apps, have created new places for finding and using information based on the contextual needs of travellers on the go. More prominence in guiding travel decisions (Buhalis & Licata, 2002; Wang, Park & Fesenmaier, 2011). Understanding how IT impacts consumer behaviour can be a cornerstone for businesses to identify and develop an effective and sustainable marketing communication strategy (Xiang, Magnini & Fesenmaier, 2015).

Marketing ideas and market trends are constantly changing along with the environmental impact. Companies are adopting new technology tools that use computer automation to support web and mobile applications in their business processes marketing activities in today's business life. At the same time, developments in communications over the past decade, such as social media, have shaped marketing. However, there isn't enough information available to examine the impact of social media on the marketing power of Thailand. It has become indispensable to analyse the role of social media in marketing and its effect on sales in the tourism sector. Other questions popped up: What social media channels are preferred for marketing in Thailand, or what channel is used by travel operators to manage customer relationships? Essentially, this study seeks to examine the impact of social media and electronic communications on marketing in the tourism sector. It will also investigate web and mobile application technologies throughout the study. This study aims to determine the influence of social media on promoting cultural tourism in four regions of Thailand. The objectives are: To define a strategy to develop social media marketing promotion for cultural tourism and analyse social media marketing promotion forms used to enhance access to cultural tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Cultural Tourism and Tourist

According to Csapó (2012), classified cultural tourism in two mains is cultural heritage, such as monuments, groups of buildings and sites, and natural heritage, for example, natural features, geological and physiographical information and precisely delineated areas and natural sites. In addition, cultural tourist motivation is often linked to factors such as satisfaction and willingness to return. Petroman, et al., (2013) assumed five forms of cultural

tourism represented by an equal number of tourists. These five different groups have been identified: 1) Highly motivated cultural tourists travel to a city or region for whatever they supply from a cultural perspective, such as museums, festivals, and theatres. 2) Partially motivated cultural tourists are culturally inspired travellers for whatever they get out of culture and visit their friends or relatives and relax. 3) Accessory motivated cultural tourists are tourists whose culture is an "accessory" to create a stronger motivation are groups of people interested in art and culture. 4) Accidental motivated cultural tourists travel without searching for cultural attractions or activities. But were brought by friends or relatives to attend the event or found by accident because it happened in the vicinity of their accommodation, etc. 5) Unmotivated cultural tourists are people who cultural attractions or events have never attracted under any circumstances.

Likewise, McKercher (2002) identifies five cultural travellers based on their centres and in-depth experiences. 1) The purposeful cultural tourists; this type of cultural tourism has a profound cultural experience. 2) The sightseeing cultural tourists; the tourist type offers a more direct and more entertaining experience. 3) The casual cultural tourist; this type of cultural tourist coupled with the destination is shallow. 4) The incidental cultural tourist, as they travel to their destination, engages in cultural tourism activities with a shallow experience. 5) The lucky cultural tourist, cultural tourism plays little or no role in deciding to visit attractions. Still, as this traveller visits cultural attractions and experiences a profound depth, it is an integral part of cultural tourism. For example, suppose information technology is used to support the collection of consumer behaviour data. In that case, it will be a catalyst for the capacity development of cultural tourism service providers, especially in terms of marketing promotion.

Internet as a Market tool

The concept of interactive technology means interacting between consumers and the interface-driven or supported by technology equipment (Heath & vom Lehn, 2008). By promoting higher interaction creation and customisation, this advanced technology includes other augmented and virtual sensors, widespread connections *via* Wi-Fi and other networks, mobile apps, the latest version of websites and social networks, chatbots, etc. (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2015). For example, the technology buried in life, which activities caused by their visitors, such as using a personal smartphone, can participate in a professional and private experience (Gretzel & Jamal, 2009). As a result, they have engineers again, product development process, management and marketing management and destinations (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005).

Digital technology has radically changed consumer preferences and introduced interactions in the travel industry and has primarily affected the customer journey in this direction. It has become the primary source of information to support data-driven decision-making approaches to dealing with complex relationships. Social media networks should provide adequate and accessible to use the information displayed and seen by those interested in the tourism site, which leads to the purchase decision to get the expected tourism service according to the needs of tourists everywhere (Alghizzawi, Salloum & Habes, 2018; Fang, 2020). The creation of value is understood that occurs through interactions that occur when using offers. In other words, the value is the experience: consumers receive the matter when they experience the offering. Understanding the experience from the perspective and interacting with the context's social and virtual social composition is the key (Minkiewicz, Bridson & Evans, 2016).

Online social media still a relatively new and challenging marketing communication tool, significantly impacting consumers' communication. Most social media help to use online marketing communication, which can be set on the internet. But not the same as the embedded Web 2.0 element that promotes consumer content because of word-of-mouth: WOM information, sharing various news information on these platforms (Duysen, 2012). The same as Carù & Cova (2015) mentioned, the Social Dimension of ServicesCape with the following stimuli: employees, customers, social density, and emotions. One of the most critical elements to create a positive consumption in our postmodern era is the overall dimension. Consumers share and create a shared experience that makes them more fun, valuable, and memorable.

The cultural tourism context that relies on consumer technology may play an active role in customising and creating experiences (Minkiewicz, Evans & Bridson, 2013). In general, interactive technology will allow participants to customise and personalise the experience and have ideas to support giving a more substantial experience. Now, innovative technology which determined as a new era of tourism. The information technology system used in tourism consists of computer booking systems, video conferencing systems, video systems, data management systems, electronic money transfers, telephone networks, mobile communication, etc. (Yavorska, Hevko, Sych, Potapchuk & Kolomiyets, 2019). Over the years, digital services have completely changed the image of the tourism industry. It has helped to improve the service, customer experience and operational efficiency and reduce business costs. It also helps the digital transaction reservation system supporting guests and service systems and communication for both businesses and customers more efficiently (Sonam & Prasad Singh, 2020).

Internet Application in Tourism

Mobile applications create a new dimension in social media marketing, focusing on mobile social media and mobile marketing. Their movements are individualised, consider the user's preferences and interests, engage users through conversations that interest them, and create user-generated content. Travellers follow previous visitor recommendations for travel products and then use a search engine or online travel agency to learn more about attractions and accommodation. The advice of friends and relatives is of utmost importance to vacationers, who then visit travel websites, search engines and OTAs (online travel agents). Users often search for more information through TripAdvisor, Agoda or Lonely Planet, and more in the decision-making process. After that, they would go to the websites, OTAs or applications to book (Živković, Gajić & Brdar, 2014; Kazakov & Predvoditeleva, 2015). Numerous survey results confirm that people are more likely to download a travel app while searching for a destination before taking a vacation. A key feature of social media tools is that it facilitates dynamic interactions in public spaces, between consumers and service providers, and among consumers themselves. These interactions foster social and cultural capital by generating information and opinions that influence travel consumption choices.

METHODOLOGY

According to Sampson's (1996) research qualitative method, the numbers approaching numbers 24 through 30 are usually the most appropriate. The research method was used to determine a social media marketing development strategy, including the distinction of cultural tourism resources and other related attractions and social media marketing development strategy and the model of social media marketing promotion for enhancing cultural tourism in Thailand. Each issue will be analysed concerning the current competitive environment of

cultural tourism. Group discussions (online conference) with key informants and stakeholders held to express opinions and conduct content analysis to formulate a marketing strategy for cultural tourism in Thailand. Thirty key contributors, both public and private, are hots of the community, leaders and tourism representatives, local product manufacturers, homestay entrepreneurs, as well as government organisations such as local government organisations, the community development agency, the office of tourism and sports authority in the region and the stakeholders involved in cultural tourism within the four areas in Thailand.

RESULTS

Cultural Tourism Resources in Thailand

Northern (Chiang Mai)

It was found that Chiang Mai's tourism resources are diverse in arts and cultures blended among nations such as Burma, Laos, and Chinese culture and a blend of cultures that different tribes have influenced in the area. As Kannika Thampanishvong (2018) pointed out that northern Thailand is one of the most charming destinations outside of Bangkok, as the region has a rich cultural fusion, making Northern Thailand one of the most visited places to visit. Many small villages are filled with local people who live just like the Thai people in the big city. The region's culture is inspired by Lanna, Karen and other indigenous ethnic groups, giving tourists a distinctly friendly and lively atmosphere. Trekking tours to hill tribes such as Mae Sariang can provide a unique and memorable experience for the intrepid explorer. Data collection found that cultural tourism in Chiang Mai has a special character representing the local lifestyle of the northern people. Including exciting attractions such as community cultural markets, temple artworks such as Doi Suthep temple, Phu Phing Royal palace, hill tribe villages, waterfalls and more. The accommodation allows tourists to experience local life like homestays. Excursions like offering alms to monks and temple tours, cooking classes, visiting local markets, visiting hill tribes and more. Community traditions like the tour to a famous handicraft village, learn about local customs and culture, tea plantation, local arts and crafts, farming etc. Including public transport and utilities that encourage visitors to reach various attractions comfortably.

Northeastern (Surin)

Surin Province is another province with a distinctive feature of diverse arts, culture, traditions, and life. Surin Province is a famous province for ancient and historical sites linked to the Khmer civilisation, such as Ta Mueng, Nathom and Si Kharaphum castles. Chantub & Pocharee (2016) mentioned that the Identity of Tourist Resource Surin province has six aspects: housing characteristics, local foods, local products, culture and traditions, tourism activities, and tourist attractions. The study was found that the cultural tourism resources of Surin Province can be divided into historical, cultural sites and produced locally. The historical and cultural resources obtained from in-depth interviews in Surin province shown that historical sites are popular with tourists, such as Sikhoraphum, Phum Phon, Phuang, Ta Muen Thom, Ta Muen Tod and Ta Muen castles etc. Cultural resources and local products are the atmosphere of a way of life (rice planting and silk weaving etc.), local wisdom, arts, and traditions according to different periods of local people with similarities and differences due to ethnic diversity, such as Thai ethnicity Khmer, Lao and Kui. As with Intanupat (2020) research, the most influential in creating a good travel experience. These include tourist

destinations with ecotourism environments, ecotourism activities, and cultural tourism activities.

Eastern (Chanthaburi)

Chanthaburi is located in eastern Thailand, bordering Cambodia's Battambang. The secondary city tourism policy of the government has been implemented in Chanthaburi province, characterised by rural tourism or village tourism. This is consistent with Wichitra Boonlae (2021) study results that cultural tourism in Chanthaburi province is a secondary city tourist destination with high potential due to its unique local lifestyle and natural resources. A study on tourism resources in Chanthaburi province found that cultural tourism resources are limited, but on the contrary, there are interesting natural attractions. Outstanding cultural attractions include Chanthaboon Waterfront Community. The community is a blend of three religions and is a centuries-old commercial district. St Mary's Cathedral The most prominent Christian church in Thailand, Tuk Daeng, also known as Khuk Khi Kai, was a prison when the French ruled the city. Traditional handicrafts conservation centre in Samed Ngam village and Khao Khitchakud is both religious sites and nature at the same time. The interviews indicated that cultural sites in the province are tightly integrated with other natural attractions, such as beaches that often contain ancient sites or related to history in one way or another. For instance, the Khuk Khi Kai located at Laem Sing beach. Chanthaburi is also known as a fruit exporting city to other regions both domestically and internationally, so the main products are those related to fruit processing in both traditional and modern forms.

Southern (Nakhon Si Thammarat)

The results of the interviews can be divided into three main categories: Natural attractions, religious and historical sites, and cultural attractions. The attractions in this province are distributed along with all districts. For instance, Pra Mahathad Waramahaviharn temple, Khun Ratthawutwichan house, Suchat shadow puppet house, old city wall and more are located in the Mueang district. Kiriwong village in Lan Saka district is mainly integrated with natural resources. Thong hill viewpoint or Buddhist Park in Thung Yai district. Nakhon Si Thammarat considered an area with exciting history and has different tourism development patterns in each period, which meets the previous research of Nonthawat Rodniam (2020) about the value and importance of the Pak Phanang community with a variety of peoples. A combination of local culture and two new cultures together became a Thai, Chinese and Portugal cultural.

Social Media Marketing Development Strategy

This paper discovered new marketing strategies which would be a primary method to promote cultural tourism. Consequently, it is crucial to determine some effective marketing strategies "DODO strategy" as follows.

S1: Destination advertisements. It is imperative to leverage social media to attract tourists to cultural tourism activities through the cooperation of all stakeholders. This cooperation can organize tourism activities that are linked to all community resources. Communities must present the value of cultural and natural resources and tourism activities for these agents to use the facility to develop tourist routes for visitors. Results in awareness and options for old and new tourists to connect with the community's primary and secondary tourist attractions. Use social media for advertising community attraction resources such as

Facebook, YouTube, multimedia or other online media. It relies on three key factors that help companies achieve sustainable performance: decision-making power that requires cooperation from suppliers and customers to improve sustainable business performance (Somjai, Srisuponvanit & Jermsittiparsert, 2019). Therefore, we ask for cooperation from partners in major attractions to advertise to tourists who visit and create advertising media informing the travel method and duration.

S2: Online Marketing communication as a marketing tool plays a significant role in today's era both "directly and indirectly" involved, for instance, government agencies and all stakeholders; the private sector and the general public, attach great importance to choosing to use online marketing to deliver travel news to users (tourists). Rungsrisawat, Sriyakul and Jermsittiparsert (2019) pointed out that the company's reputation, assurance arrangement, trusting aspect and prefatory trust affect customer attitude on online purchasing. A form of online marketing to promote cultural tourism in the four regions as a destination for tourists is to create billboards or logos on websites or applications. Create a website and application that collects cultural attractions, products, accommodations, and other related information, including information from relevant organisations such as hospitals, tour companies, police stations, and other private and government authorities. Pop-ups and post-advertisement articles published on the website as viral marketing or online word of mouth marketing (OWOM). Bloggers or reviewers "social media influencers" in reviewing activities, products, services or other related to cultural tourism

S3: Developing Skills and Knowledge. There is still a high demand for ethnic culture tourism, but the main problem and obstacle is the lack of community leaders and knowledge of tourism management and community engagement (Panupat, Gulthawatvichai & Karnjanakit, 2019). Hence, development should be related to cultural tourism and other related environments, which is necessary to have the training, support, knowledge, learning, work, systematic management plans and improvements in tourism and hospitality. To help local people have modern knowledge to respond to continuous changes in tourism situations. Moreover, this has helped bring awake recognition for local tourism and harmony in an overview of the travel industry. Promote participation from new generations that live in areas that will play a role in driving cultural tourism in terms of technology, media creation and different advertising methods. Personnel development in cultural tourism stimulating the growth of personnel potential for learning and development. It is a collaboration between the differences of generations that must rely on each other. This study reveals that most people who drive tourism in each area are usually the elderly (40-60 ages).

S4: Offline Advertising. Factors influencing a customer's buying interest are the price and brand of the product because consumers will trust the quality of the product when the product brand is known and has a reasonable price (Syazali et al., 2019). Therefore, offline ads using posters, brochures, and covert advertising "replacement", such as having a corporate company logo or screenshots of various locations in the community on products, including other types of advertising media. In some activities, information or photos may not be apparent or exciting enough to attract or impress the tourists. Therefore, it is vital to develop advertising media by changing the corrections and improving the content and forms to be more appropriate and more enjoyable to attract tourists to visit various places, including bringing offline advertising media to publicise on social media. As the interview results from all involved concluded, social media plays a role in developing all cultural tourism and tourism industries. Because the tourism and service providers at all levels, especially the local manufacturers, began to have a policy or the promotion and development plan of technology related to social media to be used as a direct online marketing communication channel (B2C).

Model of Social Media Marketing

The researcher has brought the results to design and develop the website applications "4As" as follows. Applications functional is the application or website should not provide too many characteristics or details in the design and not complicated in use, such as the primary and second tourist attractions and the new attractions such as hotels, resorts, homestays, police stations, nursing locations, etc. Applications design should have a simple appearance and conveying the way of life, culture, traditions of various communities. These can attract tourists to use and remember and no complexity, meaning, meaning with pictures or logos that match the objectives such as QR code, Line application, Instagram, Facebook Page and pop-ups or alert messages. In the application's design, applications usage is necessary to consider the user's ease of use, providing what the user wants, and even the first use should be understood in a short time. For example, a local provider or other service providers can add or remove and edit various information. Tourists can watch, comment, and share their experiences, a suggestion they are interested in, etc. Application security features include authentication, encryption, recording and application security testing. For example, using a secure online booking system: On unsafe networks, the safety of tourism providers and services is often quite controversial. However, with the reservation system and other secure booking platforms, customer safety benefits, including secured and other financial transactions, must be confirmed and have a notification system if an error occurred and leads to editing immediately between users and service providers.

CONCLUSION

In all four regions in Thailand, marketing communication strategies for cultural tourism are necessary to give attention to the development of information about various attractions, such as historical and cultural information. Creating an image that is formed is to create a selling point through social media by presenting each community's historical information, which is a source of research necessary before travelling, during and shares their experience after the trip. The creation of strategies must use marketing communication tools such as maps and travel guidebooks in an online format, which allow all visitors to access or download with just one click and may also have QR codes in these applications to access all information. As previous research of Solima and Izzo (2017) found on the use of QR codes to access attraction information such as Museums and palaces in Italy and Poland became a popular tool and used a blogger group with many people who follow up as communicators to tourists. In addition, there must be a generation of applications for selling products and services directly related to cultural tourism, such as the online reservation application "ORA".

The study results can be used as a guideline for developing online marketing communication for cultural tourism in all four regions of Thailand, for the private, government or stakeholders. Find the strengths and improve according to the potential of each area that has to make cultural tourism famous and widely popular. Online marketing communication management should focus on budget, personnel, database system, co-coordination, technology support and research. Further research should consider developing marketing communication through integrated social media and studying problems or limitations of marketing communication through online social media of cultural tourism in each area of Thailand.

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