



# Electronic Marketing Home Stays Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigate the Electronic Marketing Strategy were used by home stay Entrepreneurs in Nakhon Si Thammarat. The study also aims at indentifying the tourism characteristics and the ways of tourism information perception. To achieve the objectives of the study, quantitative data were collected by interview the representatives of four communities who are home stay entrepreneurs and electronic questionnaire were used for collecting data from the tourists during December 2012 – February 2013. A total of 315 tourists were returned the electronics questionnaire. The findings of the study indicated that the major strategy were used in home stay business is Electronic Marketing that used by 3 of 4 home stay communities in order to promoted their business provided by social network (face book). And only one community had their own web site. The problem and entrepreneurs need were found in this study as follows; the potential development of information system strategy for tourists behavior responding and communicate with target group. And they also requite the supervision and budget from the government in order to improve the tourist attractions. The findings also showed most of travelers were female; their tourism style was traveling by the group and most of them searched for home stay by pictures as a search engine their used. On the other side, some of tourists were used website and social media online for searching.

**Keywords:** Electronic Marketing, Home Stay, E-Marketing, Home stays, Ecotourism, Tourists behavior

## 1. Introduction

Ecotourism is gaining popularity in both Thai and the foreign groups. They have prepared activities of community tourism to learn lifestyle, local handicrafts culture by provide home stay which meaning rather than as a accommodation. It is a travelling model that taken accommodation to be a center and provide various activities depends on tourists need. Normally, the meaning of home stay is home that settled in a rural community with people in the community as the owner or family members spend everyday use in there. Nakhon Sri Thammarat province has provided mission and goals to generate income from travelling increased by 21 percentages. The objectives to increase productivities, value-added and revenue of development in agriculture industry for OTOP products and eco-tourism and culture (Nakhon Sri Tammarat Office, 2013).

Electronic Marketing Strategic is using the Internet and others communication technology to create a dialogue between companies, customers. The numbers of internet using have increased rapidly whether private or public sectors must adjust themselves to comfort with tourists behavior nowadays. Tourism Authority of Thailand is dedicated to focus on giving entrepreneurs realized the importance of identity in the online world and has owned on website for using online channel as a marketing strategy. Therefore, tourism management by using electronic marketing is very importance to guide the success of home stay tourism business which increasing communication channels, sales and customer services through information technology. Electronic marketing has made competitive of home stay tourism under circumstances and tourists behavior, generating income and creating self-sustaining.

## **1.2. Research Objectives**

- (1) To examine electronic marketing strategy that home stay tourism business entrepreneur's use.
- (2) To examine the tourist behavior and how tourists recognize the information through online media.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Electronic Marketing Strategy**

According to [Coviello et al. \(2001\)](#), electronic marketing strategy (e-Marketing) is to use internet and others technology for creating a dialogue between companies or organizations and customers.

The term e-marketing, Internet marketing and online marketing are frequently interchanged and can often be considered synonymous ([Kumar, 2010](#)). Very simply put, e-marketing or electronic marketing refers to the application of marketing principles and techniques via electronic media and more specifically the Internet. E-marketing is the process of marketing a brand using the Internet. It includes both direct response marketing and indirect marketing element and uses a range of technologies to help connect business to their customers. By such a definition, e-marketing encompasses all the activities a business conducts via the worldwide web with the aim of attracting new business, retaining current business and developing its brand identity.

This also helps us to differentiate between e-marketing and e-commerce, since E-commerce is simply buying and selling online

No real difference has been found according to my search between e-marketing and internet or web marketing. However, according to Chaffey and Smith e-marketing and internet or web marketing as subtly different, for example ([Chaffey and Smith, 2008](#)):

(1) Internet (or web) marketing is achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies,

(2) E-marketing is achieving marketing objectives through use of electronic communications technology.

The internet offers numbers of tools to the marketer, such as ([Marketing Teacher Ltd, 2011](#)):

(1) A company can distribute via the Internet e.g. e-bay, martinus.sk, Amazon.com,

(2) A company can use the Internet as a way of building and maintaining a customer relationship e.g. Dell.com,

(3) The money collection part of a transaction could be done online e.g. electricity and telephone bills,

(4) Leads can be generated by attracting potential customers to sign up for short periods of time, before signing up for the long-term e.g. which.co.uk,

(5) The internet could be used for advertising e.g. Google Adwords,

(6) Finally, the web can be used as a way of collecting direct responses e.g. as part of a voting system for a game show.

We can see the e-marketing performing e-marketing into two ways. One is an existing organization may embark upon some e-marketing as part of their marketing plan. Secondly, an organization trades solely on the internet and so their marketing plan focuses purely on e-marketing.

The marketing plan in either case is the next step, whether focused upon e-marketing or all marketing ([Stokes, 2009](#)).

The e-marketing strategy is normally based and built upon the principles that govern the traditional offline marketing known as 4 P's (Product –Price-Promotion-Positioning) that form the classic marketing mix. Add the extra 3P's (People-Processes-Proof) and we got the whole extended marketing mix.

### **2.2. Standard of Thai Home Stay**

Standard of Thai Home Stay or accommodation as touching of rural culture on Thai standard means home is in a rural community with people in the community as the owner or family members live as a resident or spend everyday life in the home. Furthermore, home should be ready with properties of initial home stay 6 items as followed;

(1) Owners and family members must be built home stay as just extra income only.

(2) Providing rooms or living space in home which not utilize. It can adapt to be a tourists accommodation.

(3) Tourists have to stay overnight in the same home with owner that have an opportunity to learn and exchange cultures and ways of life between them.

(4) Family members must be willing to accept incoming tourists for staying overnight together as well as relay a great local culture to tourists.

(5) Householder and family members cooperate with the community for manage the home stay as well.

(6) Home has to be a member of group, club or cooperative that cooperate with that community. (Department of Tourism Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2009)

### **2.3. Standard Criteria Home Stay of Thailand Home Stay Committee**

(1) Required foundation the features of home stay 6 items.

(2) Number of household that be a group, club or cooperatives of home stay at least 3 households.

(3) The home that applies for assessment must get house number issued by the government.

(4) The location of the community, group of home stay or residence must be located in protected areas such as national park, wildlife sanctuary etc. except with the permission from the owner.

(5) Process of preparing home stay follow by home stay standard regulation of office of tourism development not least than 6 months. (Department of Tourism Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2009)

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Population and Samples**

(1) Clubs, Community and home stay entrepreneurs in Nakhon Sri Tammarat province selected the samples by using judgment sampling. They selected home stay in 4 communities in province that perform on standard criteria of Thailand home stay standard. They were Khiriwong village in LanSaka district, Ban Laeam Homestay in ThaSala district, Travel Community Club by Phromlok community in PhromKhiri district and Ban LaeamPhatap in Khanom district.

(2) The visitor who want to stay as a home stay style which survey by online questionnaire through tourist attraction website in Nakhon Sri Tammarat province and social media since 1st December 2012 – 28th February 2013.

### **3.2. Research Instruments**

(1) Interview head of home stay entrepreneurs which was divided information into 2 parts; General Organization Management and The use of electronic marketing strategy of group and problems & implementation.

(2) Questionnaire for tourists through electronic survey divided into 2 parts; respondent's information and awareness and using of online media. The statistics were used frequency and percentage

## **4. Result**

(1) The finding found that three-fourths of home stay community focus on electronic marketing through facebook for communicates with customers except only Ban Laem community does not have fan page and Khiriwong community has their own website.

The entrepreneurs have selected electronic marketing strategy because reach to target group clearly, form of advertising contain of detail, picture, others travel program information, others various career, home stay accommodations. Foreigner customers contacted by themselves through social media. This group has provided a good buying and known in the field of conservative customers. Social media is reached to target customers and a good buying. Furthermore, the entrepreneurs can respond faster by using facebook. During the enterprise did not use facebook, not too much customers but they has been recommended from coordinator and others. Head of group was creating to develop website and using facebook that will added up more customers and always send messages to old customers for leading them return to home stay again. Beside, communication is more faster that in the past.

Problems and needs of entrepreneurs were needed for development of potentiality on strategic information system or learn new techniques and technology for responding tourist behavior and communicate with target groups. Including, the agencies need to take care and provide a fund for developing in tourism community.

(2) From the total of 315 people of respondents by electronic survey could summarize and indicated on Table 1 as follows;

**Table-1.**Frequency and percentages of questionnaire respondents

General Information	Number of Respondents	Percentages
<b>1. Gender</b>		
1.1 Male	107	34
1.2 Female	208	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2. Education Level</b>		
2.1 Under Undergraduate	62	19.7
2.2 Undergraduate	200	63.5
2.3 Master Degree	51	16.2
2.4 Doctorate	2	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3. Occupation</b>		
3.1 Civil Servant	96	30.5
3.2 Private Sector Employed	33	10.5
3.3 Self-Employed	21	6.7
3.4 Student	157	49.8
3.5 Unemployed	8	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4. Travelling Type</b>		
4.1 Group Tour (4-10 people)	146	46.3
4.2 Family Tour	54	17.1
4.3 Couple Tour	95	30.2
4.4 Individual Tour	13	4.1
4.5 Agency Tour	7	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100</b>

Most of tourists were female as equal 66 percentages, undergraduate level as equal 63.5 percentages, careers was undergraduates as equal 49.8 percentages and type of travel as group tour of 4-10 people was representing as 46.3 percentages.

Searching of Home stay classify by frequency that indicated on Table 2

**Table-2.** Frequency divided by type of media which tourist use to find travel information

Type of media	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Image via Search Engine	277	87.9
Website	231	73.3
Facebook	226	71.1
Google+	209	66.3
GPS	104	33.0
Twitter	34	10.8
Frosquare	22	7.0

According to table 2, type of media that made tourists know tourist attractions was image by searching through search engine as representing of 87.9 percentages, followed by website as equal 73.3 percentages and facebook as equal 71.1 percentages respectively.

## 5. Discussion

(1) Website is a importance and necessary for business but the finding found that only one from four group of home stay communities which contained own website. It consistent with problems and needed of communities that need to develop potentiality of information technology and modern electronic marketing strategy with meet the needs and tourist behavior in present.

(2) Most of tourists finding information trough online media were searching images through search engine which indicated that communication through image was a importance for tourism community and entrepreneurs by selecting presented image. Design and development website must provide channel to upload tourist activities images.

## **6. Suggestions**

(1) Using of electronic marketing strategy of samples contained only 2 channels if compared with the present of electronic market strategy such as Blog, Tweeter, Instagram, google+, Frosquare or location base. Educational institutions can give academic service for information technology or online marketing and development website to juveniles or representing of entrepreneurs agent in tourism communities.

(2) Government agencies should educate and develop the potential of entrepreneurs and improve in English language skills to accommodate foreign visitors which tend to increase nowadays.

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