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# Marketing Communication to Promote Health Tourism in Samut Songkhram, Thailand

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## Abstract

The research aims 1) to study factors affected to tourists in making decision to visit local markets which this study targets to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram and 2) to study the development of local markets in Samut Songkhram. The population and samples are tourists who their destinations were for health tourism in Samut Songkhram, selected by purposive sampling and convenience sampling techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data including frequency, percentage, and standard deviation as well as inferential statistics analysis. The results showed that factors affected to tourists in making decision to visit local markets in Samut Songkhram were herbal products for health and beauty. The development of local markets to promote health tourism were travel services. In addition, the marketing communication of local tourism to promote health tourism was to organize special events.

**Keywords:** Marketing Communication Strategy, Health tourism, Samut Songkhram

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is a service that plays an important role in the Thai economy. An important strategy is Developing the quality of tourist attractions Tourism products and services for balance and sustainability. Tourists have changed their perspective on tourism consumption, which requires health promotion while traveling for leisure, both from tourism activities and the environment in tourist destinations at the same time. Tourists will choose to travel to tourist attractions that can meet their needs for promoting better health. There must be tourism infrastructure. Access to tourist attractions, facilities, tourism activities and attractions, tourist attractions must provide physical, mental and spiritual value to tourists. from the government's tourism stimulation and According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Samut Songkhram has the highest number of tourist arrivals among secondary southern tourist provinces continuously from 2015-2018. such as the "12 Forbidden Cities Project", "12 Forbidden Cities Plus Project" and government tax reduction measures for traveling to secondary cities in 2018. Moreover, Samut Songkhram has a strategy and vision. province to be "City of learning, agriculture, tourism, livable place, strong community" since 2016 By definition, a city of tourism means the province's tourism management is of high quality and standards in terms of tourist attractions and tourism personnel. There are tourism activities with the idea of delivering a "better than before" experience to tourists, creating awareness of the diversity of quality tourist attractions in Samut Songkhram. including natural, cultural, religious, and historical tourist attractions spread across 23 districts, suitable for tourism in promoting and maintaining health.

However, Samut Songkhram has not yet had an in-depth study of its physical characteristics. Management style and nature of services provided in health tourism attractions and the development of health tourism destinations in Samut Songkhram has not yet had an in-depth study to clarify to what extent it can support health tourism. Therefore, it is a research gap that needs answers in developing tourist attractions in Samut Songkhram to respond to the national strategy and keep up with the trend of health tourism and strengthen the development of health tourism in Samut Songkhram to be systematic and have a mechanism for continuous and comprehensive development and from the situation of the spread of the coronavirus (Coronavirus) or COVID-19 has had a severe impact on the global level, including Thailand having declared a state of emergency to control the spread. There are measures for "social distancing" and "stay at home to stop the spread of the virus for the nation". Directly affecting the tourism business sector. Therefore, entrepreneurs need to Find methods for adjusting marketing strategies and marketing communications to penetrate target customers and Adjusting to a new way of life in society (New normal) (Adhphki, 2020).

For these reasons, the researcher is interested in researching the subject. "Marketing communication strategy Local tourism to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram." The goal is to study the factors affecting the decision to travel to the local market to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram and to study the development of the local market to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram

### **1.1 Research Objectives**

1. To study factors affecting the decision to travel to local markets to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram.
2. To study the development of the local market to promote health tourism in Samut Songkhram.

## **2. Literature review**

### **Health Promotion Tourism**

Health promotion tourism refers to organized travel in tourist destinations. Health promotion program Its purpose is to specifically promote health to prevent, restore, or improve health, such as massage, herbal compresses, aromatherapy, mineral baths, and Rishi Datton, etc. (Kalwansil, Sangpikul, & Ponggyelar, 2018) and is directly related to the satisfaction that tourists receive from their travel experiences. (Mill & Morrison, 2012) Health promotion tourism attractions are tourist attractions that tourists visit to do health promotion activities, (Pummanee, 2016) including: Natural health promotion tourist attractions Man-made health promotion tourism attractions and health promotion tourism attractions combined with health promotion tourism activities such as Spa treatment, massage, bathing, exercise and meditation. (Global Well ness Institute, 2015) Tourism facilities are those that demonstrate tourism potential and support a destination to stand out and attract tourists, including accommodation, food and beverages.

### **Marketing Communications**

Marketing communication is an important element in doing business, creating added value in purchasing products and services. Including building a good relationship with customers,

creating a good feeling about the brand. (Kerdpitak, 2022, 2557; Kotler & Keller, 2016) Marketing communication is the process of bringing marketing communications from various channels to mix and integrate for use in marketing together, focusing on motivating and stimulating customers to make purchasing decisions. (เหมือนจิต จิตสุนทรไวยกุล, 2561)

### **Local Market**

Local market means a local market where the local community owns businesses and produces products. Providing services by people who have ties to a common way of life in the local area as owners and operators. The products come from the creative work of the local community's innovations, which are consistent with local wisdom and culture, combining wisdom with integrated operations, linking various activities. (Noknoi et al., 2012) The emergence of a local market has a positive effect on the community's economy, creating jobs and careers for people in the community, reducing labor movement problems.

(Na Sakolnakorn, 2011) Local markets have important basic principles as follows: (1) Develop local wisdom to the international level (2) The community is self-reliant and thinks creatively and (3) The community has created human resources.

### **Development of local markets to promote health tourism**

Participation in the development of health tourism in local communities Providing opportunities for everyone in the local community to participate in every step of tourism development. and local communities benefit from tourism to generate income from tourists. along with creating awareness of caring for and protecting tourism resources and the environment to remain sustainable. Provide opportunities for local communities to participate in tourism. Tourism is developed conveniently, quickly and without conflicts. and help each other maintain tourism resources and the environment to remain sustainable and beneficial to local communities in tourist destinations, and finally, local communities will have a part in controlling the development of tourism with quality and sustainability. (ทิพย์สุดา พุฒจรัส, 2559)

## **3. Methodology**

The study population is Tourists who come for health tourism in Samut Songkhram, Sample group used to collect data, since the exact population size is unknown, the sample size was calculated using the proportion estimation formula to calculate the appropriate sample size with an error of no more than 5% with 95% confidence.

which resulted in a total sample of 384 people. Accidental sampling was used. The research is quantitative research. The tool used in the research is a questionnaire consisting of 5 parts as follows.

Part 1 Questionnaire regarding demographic information

Part 2 Questions about the personality of respondents that affect trends in health tourism behavior in Samut Songkhram

Part 3 Questionnaire on factors affecting the decision to travel to local markets to promote health tourism.

Part 4 Development of local markets to promote health tourism in the Samut Songkhram

Part 5 Information about local tourism marketing communications to promote Health tourism in Samut Songkhram

Checking the accuracy of content by taking it to an expert Three people checked the accuracy and coverage of the content that they wanted to study and then used it to find the consistency index (IOC) for each question. Take the questionnaire received from experts and improve and correct it and then test it with a sample group that has characteristics similar to the actual sample group of 30 people to find the reliability of the questionnaire by finding the internal consistency of Cronbad's alpha coefficient. The reliability value of the entire questionnaire was 0.96, which is consistent with Thanin Sincharu (2014) Setting the confidence value for the entire version to be not less than 0.80 and each question item must have a discriminant power value for each item not less than 0.30, indicating that this questionnaire can be used to collect data.

Data was collected using a questionnaire tool to ask for opinions of a sample group of health tourists in Samut Songkhram. The researcher went to the area and distributed the questionnaires himself. Data analysis used descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of the sample. Analysis of data on demographic characteristics of respondents by finding frequency and summarizing it as percentage, Analysis of data Of factors affecting the decision to travel to local markets, Development of the local market to promote health tourism and marketing communication of local tourism by finding the mean and standard deviation.

#### 4. Results

*Table 1 Show analysis of demographic characteristics*

Demographic characteristics	Percentage
Female	57.50
Age between 30 - 39 years	33.75
Single status	49.25
Bachelor's degree	36.25
Occupation: Employee of a private company	30.75
Monthly income 15,001-30,000	33.75

*Table 2 Analysis of personality characteristics of respondents*

Demographic characteristics	Average
Be creative	3.72
Be fun	3.62
Be Modern	3.59
Likes to travel to new places.	3.58
likes to search for adventure	3.53
like to try new things	3.52
Likes to travel in groups	3.46
Like luxury	3.03
Likes to socialize	2.85

*Table 3 The decision to travel to local markets*

	Item	Mean	S.D.	Results
Thai massage	Use traditional Thai massage services according to the program. Massage in various service centers	3.67	0.57	Moderate
Foot massage	Using traditional Thai foot massage services according to Massage program in the service center	3.69	0.68	Moderate
Baking/herbal compress	Herbal steaming in "sauna" style using heat from coals on the stove.	3.99	0.88	Moderate
Suvakantha Therapy	To use directly on the skin, apply essential oils to the skin and massage the body with your bare hands using a smooth, even weight. Helps relieve stress and reduce aches and pains.	4.03	0.76	High
Mineral bath service	Bathe in mineral springs	4.10	0.87	High
Hydrotherapy	Water aerobic exercise (Hydrotherapy)	4.02	0.77	High
Practicing the Rishi Datton posture	Exercise by practicing physical exercises, also known as Yoga.	3.59	0.76	Moderate
Buddhist meditation practice	Sitting in Vipassana and practicing advanced meditation in Places prepared in the natural forest temple or a place to practice Dhamma	3.48	0.74	Moderate
Providing health food and herbal drinks	Eat and drink in a vegetarian restaurant	3.67	0.67	Moderate
Providing herbal products for health and beauty	Using herbs to clean and nourish the skin, such as applying and scrubbing the body.	3.95	0.82	High

*Table 4 Development of tourist attractions*

	Item	Mean	S.D.	Result
Tourism management	Health tourism attractions have a good, shady atmosphere suitable for recreation.	3.98	0.65	High
Travel services	Health tourism destinations are clean and pure.	3.96	0.61	High
Market management	Products that are unique and stand out from the community	4.18	0.76	High
Accessibility	The entrance to the health tourism attraction is safe.	3.93	0.79	High

	Item	Mean	S.D.	Result
Accommodation side	There are accommodations within a radius of nearby health tourism attractions.	3.99	0.61	High
Tourism activities	The attractiveness of tourist activities in tourist destinations	4.07	0.78	High
The attraction of tourism	Health tourism attractions are complete and clearly the diversity of resources	4.04	0.68	High
Facilities	There are personnel who have knowledge about health tourism attractions to clearly provide services to tourists.	3.51	0.66	Moderate

*Table 5 Local tourism marketing communications*

	Item	Mean	S.D.	Result
Advertising side	Local tourism marketing communications to promote health tourism	3.93	.67	High
Public Relations	Public relations through various media makes people more aware of information about the product.	4.02	.71	High
Sales promotion	Attention to health tourism promotions	4.11	.74	High
Sales using employees	Medical tourism staff are neatly dressed and polite.	4.65	.71	Highest
Organizing special activities	Organizing events to launch new products makes the products look interesting.	4.44	.72	Highest

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

1. Results of the study of demographic characteristics Consistent with the research of Rajati Konghan. (2560) Study of marketing mix factors that affect the perception of the quality of tourism business services by elderly foreign tourists in the Andaman region. The research results found that the sample was male, accounting for 55 percent, aged between 61-65 years, with marital status accounting for 37 percent. 32 percent were single and 31 percent were divorced and separated.

2. The results of the study of personality traits are consistent with. The majority of the sample were women and most forms of health tourism activities were considered to be more suitable for women than men such as Spa services (Spa), herbal product service for health and beauty, etc. but this does not mean that tourists who choose to use the service must only be female. Research has found that tourists who choose to use such services are people who have sensitive personalities, like luxury, like to try new things, like to socialize and care about their own health, which are often characteristics of women.

3. The results of the study of factors affecting the decision to travel to local markets to promote health tourism of tourists are consistent with study of the needs of Thai tourists according to marketing mix factors in tourism, Koh Phayam, Ranong Province. The research results found that Tourists give their needs to marketing mix factors including product, price, and process. Physical characteristics and distribution channels have the same requirements as marketing promotion personnel. The results of the study found that tourists have different personal factors affecting their travel decisions. Tourism in Koh Phayam, Ranong Province, is significantly different at the 0.05 level.

4. Development of local markets to promote health tourism in the province Nakhon Si Thammarat In line with the research of Study of the 7P5 marketing mix that affects health tourism decisions at Raksawarin Hot Springs, Ranong Province. The results of the research found that Thai tourists traveling for health tourism at Raksawarin Hot Springs, Ranong Province, were mostly female. Accounted for 59.50 percent, aged 20-35 years, accounted for 45.00 percent. They are civil servants/government employees, accounting for 29.50 percent. Their average monthly income is 10,001 - 20,000, accounting for 28.50 percent. The 7Ps marketing mix that affects health tourism decisions at Raksawarin Hot Springs Ranong Province as a whole is at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that Physical characteristics were at the highest level, followed by 6 aspects at the highest level: When considering each aspect, it was found that the physical characteristics aspect was at the highest level, followed by the highest level in 6 aspects, namely location, product, process, personnel, marketing promotion, and price, respectively. The results of the study found that Thai tourists traveling for health tourism at Raksawarin Hot Springs, Ranong Province, have different personal factors affecting their decision to do health tourism at Raksawarin Hot Springs, Ranong Province differently.

5. Information about marketing communications, including advertising, public relations. Sales promotion, Sales by employees and the organization of special activities, overalls at a high level, consistent with the research of Studying factors of online social marketing found that Online social marketing factors affect the decision to purchase products through the Facebook Live channel of consumers in Bangkok. It is a channel of consumer awareness through the internet that helps in deciding to purchase products through online stores. to the research of found that Marketing promotion through marketing communications creates awareness and leads to purchasing behavior. In using marketing communication tools, the role of understanding tools should be taken into account. Each page must be clearly defined. This is because if the entrepreneur does not study or find information on each tool well, it may cause the tool to not be used to its full potential. If entrepreneurs want to provide consumers with easy and quick access, they should choose to use search engines on the internet such as Google as a tool that will help consumers find products that meet their needs and use social media to search. Communicate to consumers Including creating useful content and distributing it to consumers in appropriate channels such as social media, websites, blogs, etc.

### **Summary of research results**

Health tourism is health tourism activities related to beauty such as hydrotherapy, Spa services, herbal product services for health and beauty. Targeting the health tourist group means giving importance to the development of tourist attractions, accommodations, and herbal products for health and beauty, including product and service development concepts.



Health tourism formats have been developed to suit groups, such as having massage courses where you can choose the ingredients of your own herbal products. Combining massage with steaming/herbal compresses, choosing a service that can choose between individual services or being able to use a variety of certain services, Packaging design conveys a luxurious concept. but still retains its Thai identity to stimulate health tourism travel and create revolving income within the local area, tour operators or related agencies should give importance to communication through information technology channels, such as marketing communications through social networking websites such as [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), etc.

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