

**THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE CONTENT AFFECTING
FOREIGN TRAVELERS' DECISION MAKING PROCESS TO VISIT THAILAND**



THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE CONTENT AFFECTING FOREIGN
TRAVELERS' DECISION MAKING PROCESS TO VISIT THAILAND

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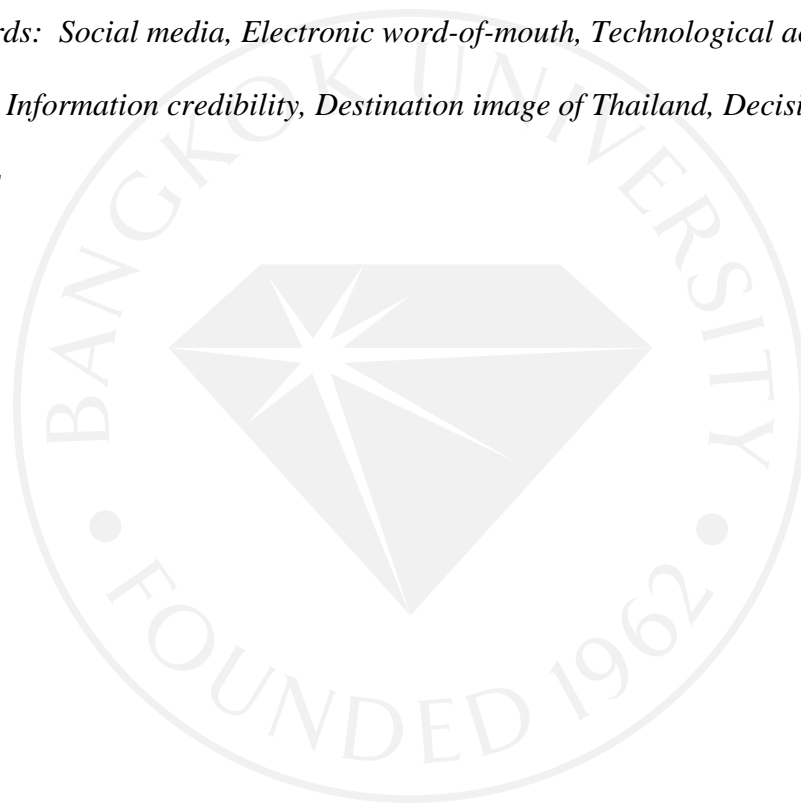
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors including social media, electronic word-of-mouth, perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, information credibility and destination image of Thailand affecting foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. Total samples of 400 respondents collected with survey questionnaire by using the concept of judgement sampling, selecting respondents who usually read the online travel content in social media. The data sets utilized descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The researcher found that most of 400 foreigner respondents were females Singaporean and Chinese people, with age between 18-25 years old. Almost of them were single and the majority of the population had bachelor degree, which were studying and working in state enterprise. The largest group of income range was between 1,501-3,000 USD per month. Most of them are traveling once a year, with a length of trip about one week and plan a trip by themselves. The top three traveling purposes were family vacation, adventure and spiritual. Moreover, most of respondents spent money on traveling aboard about 501-1,000 USD per each travel. The top three social medias that use in daily life were Instagram, Facebook and Youtube. The most top three sources that use for searching travel information were online travel site, friends or family and travel blog. Whereas, Facebook was indicated to be the most affecting on travel destination in decision

making process. Most of them were sometimes use online travel sites. Furthermore, the result shown that electronic word-of-mouth ($\beta = 0.437$), destination image of Thailand ($\beta = 0.272$) and information credibility ($\beta = 0.230$) accounted for 62.3% positively impact decision making process of foreign travelers to visit Thailand with statistical significant at 0.05.

Keywords: Social media, Electronic word-of-mouth, Technological acceptance model, Information credibility, Destination image of Thailand, Decision making process



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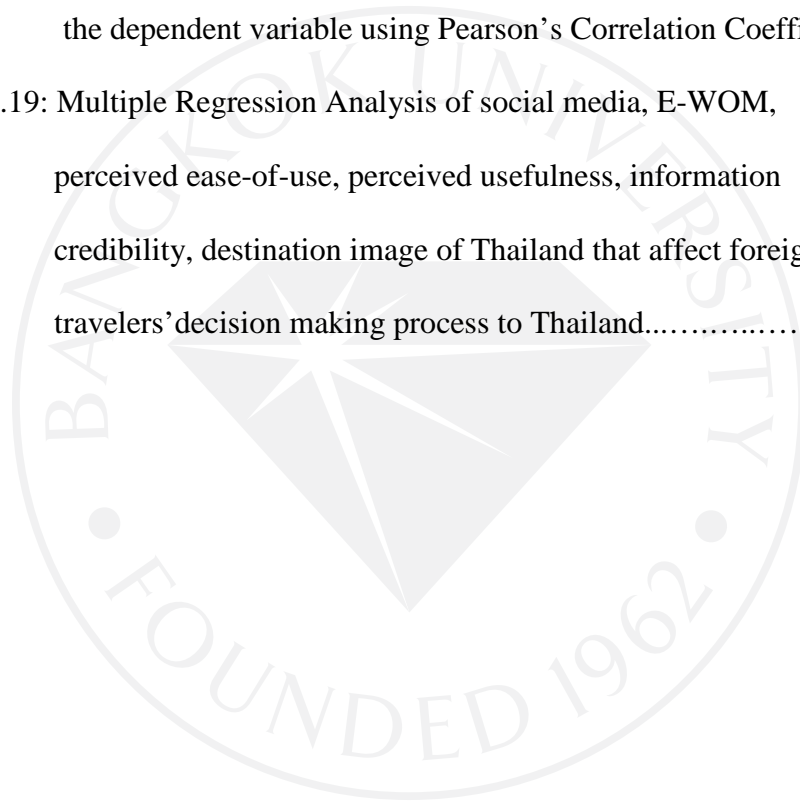
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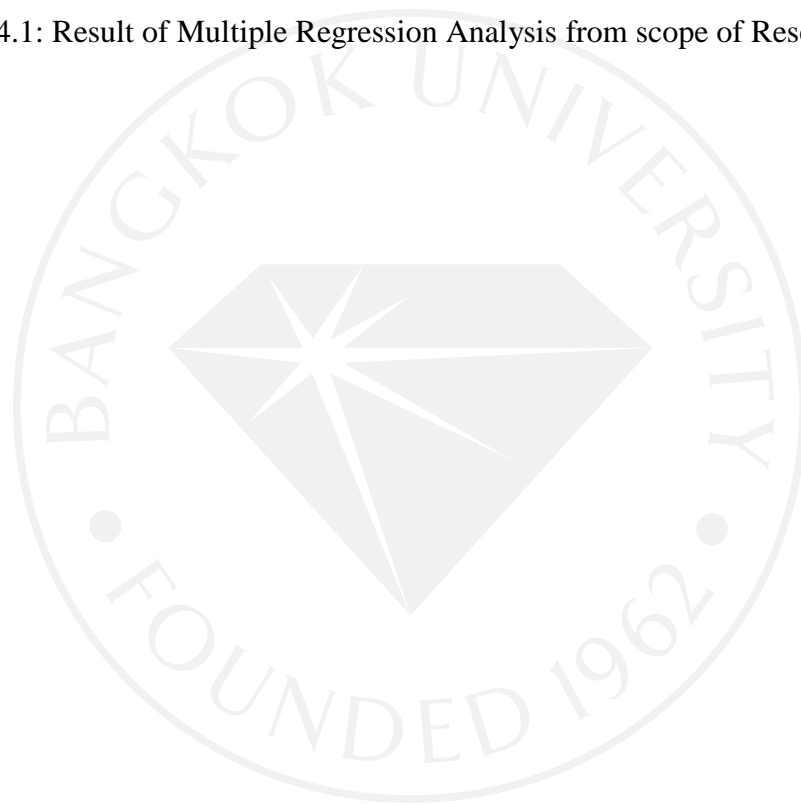
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a perspective of the research study which included background of Thailand, tourist industry and factors of online content that may affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. Followed by statement of the problems, research objectives, scope of research and benefits of research.

1.1 Background

Thailand, “Land of Smiles” in Southeast Asia, has become one of the leading travel destinations in Asia over the last few decades, which was listed 10th “top tourist destination” with 26.5 million international arrivals in 2013 (UNWTO, 2014). Economic of Thailand is still developing, the region's rice and tourism industries still dominating. Bangkok, the capital compacts with an amazing delightful perfectly integrated between modern and traditional culture, lead Thailand to be a dream destination for both nature lovers and urban dwellers. In 2016, Euromonitor International (2017) indicated that Bangkok ranked in 2nd of Top City Destinations with 21 million visitors, surpassing London and New York. China was the 1st of “25 Top arrival nationality” with 9.8 millions visitors, followed by Malaysia, South Korea, Laos, Japan and India in 2017 (Tourism Statistics, 2017). The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) supported Thailand's tourist industry by launching a new campaign “Discover Thainess” in 2015 via online media, inspiring foreign travelers to visit the country. In 2017, TAT adopted new technology of virtual reality (VR) to provide a real experience of local in Thailand to potential visitors before they visit the

country. Therefore, the arrival in 2016 was increased nearly 9% from 2015, and still increasing 8.57 % in 2017 (Hariraksapitak and Temphairajana, 2017).

The blooming of tourist industry in Thailand may cause by a shifting of traditional marketing, such as newspaper, printed, TV and radio adverts, to communicate with travelers. Since the world is connected digitally, tourism industry become one of the leading industries by having rapidly growth during the last six decades (UNWTO, 2013; WTTC, 2013), and give a benefits to travelers who are seeking for an information and also can create content for public their experience and opinions by themselves (Dickey and Lewis, 2011). In addition, Google (2016) has show that 30% of relevance location was searched, and most tourist firms distributed 60% of their networks in online channels (TrekkSoft, 2016). In other words, the arrival of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Internet technology is part of the revolution in tourism industry (Buhalis and Law, 2008). Especially, the Internet that lead to a greater development of tourist industries (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Travel firms used the internet to communicate and market their products and services (Law & Wong, 2003; Llach, Mariomon, & Alonso-Almeida, 2013). The virtual capability of Internet can provide vary sources of information. For instance, mass media, word-of-mouth and opinions (Kim, Lehto, & Morrison, 2007) and also provide an accurate information which related to travelers decision making. Moreover, this information can be provided virtual, videos and sounds, which save cost more than traditional way (Buhalis, 1998). Previous research has shown that the internet and social media platforms are the best places to share a picture, a story and a message. Ordinary people can become travelers for a period of time, not just an information seekers but also become an information co-creators in

online community by having opportunities to share information content and pictures, in spite of being separated by geographical distance and sociocultural differences (Volo, 2010). As customer was changed to be an active users that create content through the internet (Hays et al., 2013). The travelers use social media to search for related information, even it is challenging for travelers to find credible travel information (Yoo and Gretzel, 2009; Lee, Law and Murphy, 2011; Metzger, Flanagin and Medders, 2010), however, it is consider be more reliable source when compared with the provided information from the companies (Chu & Kim, 2011). Previous research has shown that more than 75% of travelers use the internet for trip planning (Hock, 2007), 65% of leisure travelers do online research before they making their destination choice, with 53% of online travel videos are viewed (Think With Google, 2014). Moreover, travelers have perspective of social media as a security way to find deals (Heung, 2003). Therefore, the significant of social media is to help travelers and consumers make a decision through friends feedback, which is constantly updated pre, during and post travel (Parra-Lopez, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutierrez-Ta~no, & Díaz-Armas, 2011).

As the numerous of online channels available such as Facebook, blogs, weblogs, virtual communities and social networking sites, the previous research has provided evidence that travelers of all ages are increasingly using digital technologies to search, explore, interact, plan, book and share their travel experiences (Silva et al., 2015). According to Casalo et al. (2010), perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness affect users' participation in online travel communities. Moreover, feedback and ideas that travelers' provide through online tools can transfer to its chains (Kim, Mattila, and Baloglu, 2011). As the person who create online travel

content have potential to influence others people, online travel marketers need to pay attention to them. Furthermore, Virtuoso travel statistics (2015) has shown that Millennials book travel and compare options through online channels, 90% and 87%, respectively, followed by Gen Xers as 82% book travel online and 71% use online travel agencies (OTAs) for research their travel. Together with image that consumers have of a destination is the product of their experiences of the place and the perceptions each person develops (Bigné, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001; San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008). A study conducted by the Blitz Agency show that 16% of word of mouth influencing on making vacation related decisions, 50% of Millennials was strongly influenced by Facebook posts, and 13% from Instagram post. Therefore, Internet and social media have been found to be an impact of the destination images, which plays a vital role in providing an interaction of person-to-person, thereby the important source of destination image is to provide consumer generated data (Dwivedi, 2009; Frias, Rodriguez and Castaneda, 2008; Li et al., 2009).

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Over the past few years, Thailand tourist industry performed a significant growth as the number of tourist arrivals dramatically increased. The Ibid (2013) named that Thailand was one of several markets that creating new growth frontier for travel in Asia. Moreover, travel trend has been gradually change from relying on travel agent to more on online content as a social media as many travelers now can travel alone by themselves without paying for a traveling company. Statista (2018) indicates that the share of travel agents dramatically decrease in total sales from 80%

in 2008 to 12% in 2015 in the United States. In addition, since social media has transformed the way of travel style, as there are numerous online channels available for travelers to use for these purposes, e.g. Facebook, blogs, weblogs, virtual communities and social networking sites. Travelers can obtain travel information from vary sources as several scholars shown that travelers use different social media in order to search information depending on stage of travel (Verma et al., 2012). Thus, the information that has been gathering from social media sources support Thailand to be one of a travel destination choice to visit. Due to the rise of social media, online travel content has become an important and useful source for acquiring a travel information plan (Litvin et al., 2008), TripAdvisor, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and Flickr are the most frequently used for tourism (McCarthy et al., 2010; Ayeh et al., 2012; Sigala et al., 2012), which is one the reasons that increased visitors come to Thailand over a decades. According to the statistic from tourism department of Thailand (2017), foreign traveler arrivals increased from 29.8 millions in 2015 to 35.3 millions in 2017. Another reason that lead Thailand increased more visitors may cause by the country itself such as geographic, unique culture, variety activities and adventures and by other factors as a foreigner influencers; celebrities and bloggers that shared their travel experiences via online platform, lead to have new travel trends for their audiences. Thus, the argument of travelers decision making reveal that tourist will have the most critical thinking among pre-travel stage for planning, searching information and decision making for traveling (Cox et al., 2009; Zeng, 2013). However, all of these factors help travelers have an alternative choice of decision making process to visit Thailand. Furthermore, travelers can share their travel experiences with others in the online content, also potential travelers can search and

respond to others' experiences (Chen et al., 2014). TravelRave (2013) shown that Asian Millennial travelers presented to be one of a significant growth driver in tourist industry. Due to social networks were more influential for Millennials with 20% in first stage of decision making on destination, and 27% partially relying on research and feedback received from social networks to select a travel destination, Millennials used online community for seeking information, post travel-related photo and create travel-related content the most followed by Gen Xers (MMGY Global Portrait of American Travelers, 2015). 64% of Millennials appeared to be more trustworthy in overall online quality ratings while other generations are 59% trustworthy (MMGY Global Portrait of American Travelers, 2015).

As most hospitality and tourism industries want to communicate with travelers at a low cost, it would be useful for them if they know how to develop their online travel content more effectively, as a part of their tourism business marketing (Casaló et al., 2011). Moreover, perceived usefulness of the online travel content can generate a more positive attitude and will affect travelers' decision making while they read the reviews and opinions in that online travel content (Casaló et al., 2011). In addition, when travelers are planning vacation, it is useful for companies to consider internal and external factors. The internal factors can be divided into: age, income, occupation, lifestyle and past experiences. The external factors are classified into: social media, electronic word-of-mouth and destination image (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007). These variables are significant in the travelers' decision making process (Vinerean, 2014). Thus, It is important to identify the key factors of online content that affect travelers' decision making. Therefore, this research aim to understand the process of

travel decision making of foreign traveler that what extend that the influence of social media and online content affect their choice of destination to visit Thailand.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to study the factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. Those factors of online content are social media, electronic word-of-mouth, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, information credibility, and destination image toward foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand.

1.4 Scope of Research

This current research adopts a deductive approach based on theory and a research strategy is designed to develop the hypothesis. This study use a quantitative method to collect information, a questionnaire was designed in order to obtain information as the primary data. The purpose of the survey is to determine the factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. Moreover, literature, articles and online databases will be collected as a secondary data.

Regarding the sample size, it is difficult to determine the exact total number of foreign travelers that come to visit Thailand. However, in determining the size of the sample for this quantitative study, the Taro Yamane formula with 95% confidence level was applied (Yamane, 1973). According to VOA News (2017), Thailand has a record of 32.59 million foreign visitors in 2016. Therefore, this study will be collecting data from 400 respondents, which are deemed to be the minimum sample size as an effective for research analysis (Yamane, 1973). The online questionnaire

will be distributed in two ways as self-distribution and online channels such as travel community websites. According to Pew Research Center (2015), ages 18-29 have been the most strongly correlated with social media. Today young adults increasingly use social media to be 90%, which is 78% point increased from in 2005. Whereas, ages 30-49 use social media more from 8% in 2005 to 77% today. Therefore, the targeted participants will be foreign travelers who are aged 18-49 years old and who read and tend to read online travel content. The questionnaire is designed to examine the factors of social media and online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand.

1.5 Benefit of the Research

Due to unbiased information as a review and recommendation of online content, it can affect to the travelers' decision making (Casaló et al., 2011). Moreover, in terms of tourist industry, it is important to understand that what kind of online content impact on travelers' decision making the most. Therefore, the result can be benefits to both private companies as to create the right content and deliver on the right platform to the travelers, and Thai government to fully promote Thailand to be travelers-friendly country which lead to the better economics in Thailand.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature to support the research aim and objectives. It begins by reviewing the definition of the important factor of social media, electronic word-of-mouth, followed by a discussion of destination image, online community and perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, and decision making process will be investigated. This literature review addresses the key factors of online content that may affect foreign travelers' decision making process.

2.1 Related Theory of Factors

2.1.1 Social Media

There are different existed definitions of social media in the academic literatures. A recent study had summarized the definition of social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that exist on the Web 2.0 platform and enable Internet users from all over the world to share ideas, thoughts, experiences, perspectives, information, and forge relationship” (Chung and Koo, 2015). In the context of tourism, social media, and web 2.0, has changed the way travelers search, find, read and trust information about tourism suppliers and tourism destinations (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel, 2012). Social media now considered as a trustworthy source of products and services information more than corporate-sponsored marketing communication channels, by consumers (Foux, 2006). For instance, peer's information of product and service that shared in Facebook help users gain more information and lead them to purchase at a 15% higher rate than when they receive

from other channels (Hudson, Roth and Madden, 2015). As tourism marketing is a highly informative industry that uses electronic devices to market products and communicate with customers. (Michopoulou & Buhalis, 2013). Moreover, products and services of tourism are high-involvement products and relatively high cost (Traylor, 1981). Therefore, to make decision of traveling, travelers generally try to gain as much of information related to their travel (Leung, Law, Hoof and Buhalis, 2013). Internet travel websites and social media allow users to share their experiences beside only provide travel information (Chung and Koo, 2015). Therefore, different social media channels have been adopted by tourism companies to communicate and provide information to customers (Özgen and Kozak, 2015). According to Dellarocas (2003), social media gives a benefits to travel firm to understand and respond to their the customers. Moreover, social media is now changing the decision making processes of tourism consumers (Hudson and Thal, 2013).

In the context of travelers, social media channel used for consuming pre, among and post travel products such as booking and paying for hotel, changing reservation and also for sharing their experiences and providing feedback after their trip (Yoo and Gretzel 2008). Overall, social media transforms travelers from passive to active consumers as a producers of their travel experiences (prosumers), while changing the way of relationship between travelers and tourism firms in the way of perceived image and loyalty (Christou 2003 and 2010).

Furthermore, in the context of tourism firm, the new generation of travelers leads the tourism firm to redefine their business model to meet the needs and expectation of them (Sigala et al., 2012). Thus, social media has empowered tourism firms to change the business operations ways from traditional to aim an integrate

customers to be active stakeholders of their business models. As a result, social media has gigantic transformation power over firms' values and supply chain operations (see Figure 2.1), with an increasing number of tourism firms using UGC with their new Service Development processes (i.e. travelers as co-designers) (Kohler et al., 2011): travelers' social network play more active role in the production and consumption of tourism experiences, by influencing the way travelers design and perform their travel experiences such as co-creators travelers (Sigala, 2010); travelers' social networks are increasingly used to build a positive image for tourism firms, and to promote and distribute their services as a co-marketers and co-distributors (Sigala 2011); and their post-trip experiences and feedback are used for improving services, and also supporting other travelers to design their future trips.

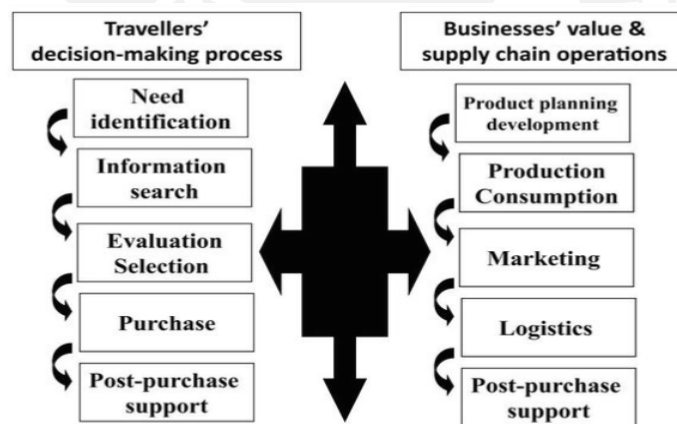


Figure 2.1: Social media affect the whole process

Source: Sigala et al. (2012). *The Integration and Impact of Web 2.0 on Business*

Operations and Strategies. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2OdOApt>.

In conclude, social media in this research defined as “a group of Internet-based applications that exist on the Web 2.0 platform and enable Internet users from all over the world to share ideas, thoughts, experiences, perspectives, information, and forge relationship” (Chung and Koo, 2015), including application via electronic

devices, which changing the style of tourism industries by providing an information to users and allow them to share their experiences in an interactive manner. Therefore, since the internet shorten the world, which lead people connecting to each other in easy way, users as a travelers can search and obtain useful information for make a decision of their destination.

2.1.2 Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WOM)

Gitelson and Crompton (1983) found that informal or personal sources were more likely to be used than formal sources. Word-of-mouth (WOM) has been defined as a communication about a brand, product or service between a communicator and receiver whom perceives as non-commercial (Arndt, 1967). WOM has been acknowledged for many years as having more of an influence on behaviour than other marketer-controlled sources (Sen and Lerman, 2007). Furthermore, the characteristics of internet in terms of ease of knowledge sharing and fast messaging, which give a new define to WOM modatality. Moreover, the internet and social media has created a widespread of WOM transformed to be electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) (Kiecher and Cowles, 2001; Godes and Mayzlin, 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Davis and Khazanchi, 2008; Xia and Bechwati, 2008).

E-WOM refers to any positive or negative statement of a product from a consumers via the internet to a multitude of people (Letvin et al., 2012). Due to the characteristics of E-WOM which are low cost and trustworthy information transmission (Jeong and Jang, 2011), lead E-WOM having greater accessibility and a wider reach to consumer than WOM (Chatterjee, 2001), with less consequences in

decision making process compared to the traditional WOM, by facilitating the search for information (Zhang et al. , 2010).

In tourism marketing, both WOM and E-WOM are play a crucial role in tourism purchases and opinion leaders play a key role in interpreting meanings and influencing opinion seekers (Corey, 1971; Litvin et al., 2008). With the development of the internet and social media platform, the number of travelers are increasingly using the internet for searching destination information and conducting online transactions (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). Moreover, E-WOM is also found to be the most significant source of information while selecting destinations (Raitz and Dakhi, 1989; Vincent and Santos, 1990). Consumers' decision making process has been influenced by E-WOM that shared from other consumers (Goldenberg et al., 2001). According to the research study from Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006), shown that message of E-WOM is a significant tool in the way of consumers can gain information about a brand, product or service quality. Moreover, it is an effectively tool for consumers to reduce the risk and uncertainty experienced in purchasing process, hence their purchase intention and decision making can be further influenced (Chatterjee, 2001).

A customer review is one type of E-WOM that make consumers involved with a positive and negative statement about a product or company. E-WOM provides an indirect experiences, which is helpful for decision making (Jalivand et al., 2011). Other travelers' reviews are often perceived as more up-to-date, enjoyable and reliable information than the travel service companies' information (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). Therefore, the online reviews in tourism context are considered as being

important information in the travel decision making process (Vermyulen and Seegers, 2009).

An opinion leader is defined as a person who tends to influence other people purchasing decision (King and Summers, 1970). Especially, an opinion leader is interested in adopting a new product line, makes an effort to expose himself/herself to the mass media, and they are trusted as an information provider and adviser by opinion followers (Piiro, 1992; Walker, 1995; Livin et al., 2008). Travel opinion leaders' role is very significant in the WOM communication process (Oh, 1997), also E-WOM sources are increasing important in consumers' decision making process, with the the travel opinion leaders of the electronic age who is a faceless reviewers that share their comments on social media platform (Litvin et al., 2008). These interpersonal influences are particularly important in the hospitality and tourism industries, as travelers often have difficulty evaluating the specific and overall value of their services before buying (Kvasova, 2015).

In conclude, E-WOM in this research defined as a characteristics of internet in terms of ease of knowledge sharing and fast messaging of WOM, which included customer review in any positive or negative statement about a product or company, and opinion leader who is an influencer in online community, that positively influence decision making process of other people while they seeking an information of their destination.

2.1.3 Destination Image of Thailand

Decision making process considers a destination image as an important factor and plays a critical role in choosing a destination for prospective and first-time

travelers (Hunt, 1975; Mayo 1975; Pearce, 2005; San Martín and Del Bosque, 2008; Schmoll, 1977). An individual's total set of beliefs, attitudes, impressions and ideas of a place is a definition of destination image (Phelps, 1986). In other words, an image places a symbol of an area into potential tourists' minds and gives them a preconceived idea of the destination (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Image is a process when individuals create a mental representation of a destination, based on information they have received (Gartner, 1993; Isabel et al., 2015). With the worldwide increasing in cultural tourism, local events of different regions have converted into opportunities to showcase their image internationally (Lamont & Dowell, 2008). The image that consumers have of a destination is the product of their experiences of the place and the perceptions each person develops (Bigné, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001; San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008). The sum of the impressions guide and shape a person's behaviour, which may be true, false or imagined (Barich and Kotler, 1991).

A number of researchers have suggested that destination image has become two-dimensional, consisting of cognitive and affective images (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Martín & Bosque, 2008). The interaction of both cognitive and affective shapes a unique overall image through a travelers' comprehensive evaluation of each destination, which includes either positive or negative gauge of the place (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Bigné et al., 2001; Nicoletta & Servidio, 2012; Stern & Krakover, 1993). The reviewed literature clearly suggests that the overall image of destination has been strongly impacted by cognitive image than affective image (San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008). The expected results show that even though cognitive aspects have a greater impact on destination image, but both cognitive and affective factors can significantly affect overall also (Huh,

Uysal, & McCleary, 2006). Furthermore, internet and social media have been found to be an impact of the destination images, which plays a vital role in providing an interaction of person-to-person, thereby the important source of destination image is to provide consumer generated data (Dwidedi, 2009; Frias, Rodriguez and Castaneda, 2008; Li et al., 2009).

In conclude, destination image of Thailand in the research defined as an individual's total set of beliefs, attitudes, impressions and ideas of a place in Thailand that create a mental representation of a Thailand, based on information they have received which includes either positive or negative gauge of the place. Therefore, it can positively affect decision making process of foreign travelers.

2.1.4 Information Credibility

The rapidly development of social media technologies and travelers' willingness to write online reviews, share their experiences and opinions in online travel communities, such as TripAdvisor and Lonely Planet, as well as their owned channels, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. It is now important for travelers to become involved in an online travel community and to obtain online travel information to facilitate their travel planning, as a tourism product is an experience product, which involves risk and uncertainty (Sparks and Browning, 2011; Loda, 2011). However, anonymous reviewers can easily create review content without going through the editing and fact checking process, which can lead to information overload and even uninformative, biased or false information (Kusumasondjaja and Shanka, 2012). Thus, travelers have to face the challenges of finding credible travel

information from the tremendous amount of online information (Yoo and Gretzel, 2009; Lee, Law and Murphy, 2011; Metzger, Flanagin and Medders, 2010).

Information credibility consists of expertise and trustworthiness (Flanagin and Metzger, 2003). Expertise is an informant's ability to present a valid statement (Johanes et al., 2016). Expertise in online travel content refers to the deep of the knowledge in the destination, which includes familiarity and past experience (Kerstetter and Cho, 2004), and expected to have background knowledge to support the review or evaluation, in order to produce an objective and useful recommendation for the readers (Johanes et al., 2016). Expertise is also viewed as being a component of the multi-dimensional construct of prior knowledge that includes familiarity and past experience (Kerstetter & Cho, 2004).

Trustworthiness refers to unbiased of communicator for telling the truth, as subjectively perceived by the recipient. This factor relates to the believe of readers that the informant is honest and is giving an objective view (Greer, 2003). Dickinger (2011) stated that trustworthiness focuses primarily on the provider of the information, but not on the actual message communicated. Therefore, the source's characteristics relevant to the message (for example bias, character, safety or personal integrity) can have an impact on the trustworthiness of the source itself, as well as the perceptions of the message it emits.

Previous studies have shown that credibility is a key early stage in the message persuasion process (Cheung, Luo, Sia & Chen, 2009; Wathen and Burkell, 2002). One study has shown that credible recommendations in a review affect consumers' decision making (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009). It is an important force affecting consumers' future action (McKnight and Kacmar, 2006), as most travelers

are concerned about information credibility in travel blogs or in online travel communities, as the collected information is used as reference material to reduce information asymmetry, lower uncertainty and improve the quality (Zehrer et al., 2011). The study of Flanagin and Metzger (2000) also supported that travelers put in more effort to verify the credibility source than entertainment information. This is similar to the finding of Cheung et al. (2009), in that travelers are more concerned with an assessment of the credibility of the blog article, rather than having trusting beliefs regarding the blogger, as the information credibility of the review is more likely to persuade readers to adopt the opinion expressed in the blog article, visit the destination in the future and recommend the blog article to others.

2.1.5 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

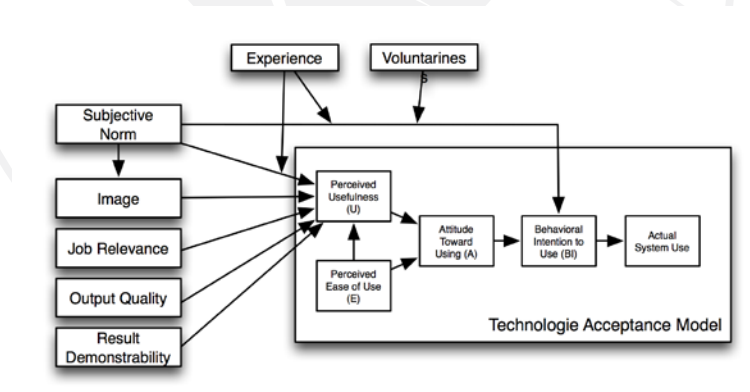


Figure 2.2: Technology Acceptance Model

Source: Davis J., & Venkateh, V. (1986). *A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: Four longitudinal field studies*. Retrieved from <http://test.woland.me/pdfjs/pdf.js/test/pdfs/TAMReview.pdf>.

The Technology Acceptance Model proposed by Davis and Bagozzi (Bagozzi, Davis, & Warshaw, 1992) has been adopted in many studies to explore the factors

affecting personal use of new technology (Mohammadi, 2015; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Therefore, TAM considered as the most effective way to study about consumer acceptance and use of technology related application (Ayeh, 2015; Kim, Kim, & Shin, 2009). The TAM was initially proposed by Davis (1986), which supports a direct relationship between ease-of-use, usefulness and the decision making process. More specifically, a key variables in TAM are perceived usefulness and perceived ease-of-use (Davis, 1989). According to Davis TAM (1986), Perceived ease-of-use is defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" and perceived usefulness defined as a belief of people that using a particular system would support their job performance in an organizational context (Davis, 1989). Behavioural intention to use technology was impacted by perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness in TAM (Doll and Torkzadeh, 1998). TAM has received substantial empirical support in explaining consumer acceptance of various types of technology e.g. technology based services (Zhu & Chan, 2014), smartphones (Joo & Sang, 2013) and the new media (Workman, 2014).

In tourism context, TAM was adopted in many studies to understand and explain consumer acceptance of new technology including hotel front office systems (Kim, Ferrin et al., 2008; Kim, Lee et al., 2008), intention to purchase in online shopping (Amaro & Duarte, 2015), and restaurant computing systems (Ham, Kim, & Forsythe, 2008). The findings of these studies show that perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness are significantly factor of consumer acceptance of technology.

In the context of social media, previous studies support that people tend to create strong and interpersonal relationships with other members, which is social relationships (Baumeister and Leary 1995). In addition, social relationships built by

members and share information with each other through social media (Kim, Zheng, and Gupta, 2011). Perceived usefulness can be seen as influencing the formation of conflict mediation and the credibility of sources (Namho, Heejeong and Chulmo, 2015). Hung and Cheng (2013) study indicated that the level of users' perceptions of the usefulness of technology has a positive effect on their intentions to share knowledge in virtual communities. Consequently, the UGC's perceived usefulness on social media leads members to adopt the information.

In the context of online reviews, perceived usefulness may defined as the degree to which consumers believe that the online reviews will facilitate their purchase decision making process (Park and Lee, 2009). Willemsen et al. (2001) asserted that the perceived usefulness of a review is the primary aspect for users in assessing the online reviews and has been claimed to be an effective predictor of consumers' intent to agree with a review (Cheung et al., 2008; Park and Lee, 2009). Several other researchers have shown that the both perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness of online reviews could also estimate their frequency of usage (Davis, 1989; Wöber and Gretzel, 2000; Wöber, 2003). The quality of a review measured by the number of helpfulness votes, positively influences consumers' decision making (Chen et al., b2008). However, valuable opinion and information from tremendous amount of information, are effective to consumer's decision making (Xinyuan et al., 2015).

In the context of travelers' decision making, perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness of the online travel content can generate a more positive attitude and will affect travelers' decision making while they read the reviews and opinions in that online travel content (Casaló et al., 2011). Therefore, this study examines the

important role of perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness in understanding consumer participation intention on social media and online travel site.

2.1.6 Decision Making Process

According to tourism decision making process, selecting destination is one of the most important stages. The popular theory which contained three stages for tourist destination selection was first proposed by Crompton (1997): (1) awareness set; (2) evolution of an evoked set; and (3) destination selection. These three stages are influenced by external inputs (e.g. stimuli display) and internal inputs (e.g. socio-psychological set). However, the three-stage process in destination selection was argued that it might not be clear, but it is an ongoing process that involves a lot of adaptability and opportunism (Decrop and Snelders, 2004). As such, the decision making process (e.g. destination selection) is unlikely to be a one-directional linear progression toward the final destination choice.

Previous studies have shown that the travel decision making process involves multiple steps, including before travel, during travel and after travel (Woodside and King, 2001). Tourists' decision making process is also a multifaceted decision not only limited to one decision of destination choices, which including the aspects of tourist attractions, activities, accommodation, tourism service and service (Dellaert et al., 1998). Others' experiences and recommendations about goods help travelers decrease uncertainty and increase the exchange utility, since goods experience cannot easily be determined before purchase (Fotis et al., 2012).

Choice set concept also suggested by some of tourism study, as it is the process of consumers making decision by gradually deducting groups of alternatives among finite numbers of potential options to get the final choice (Howard, 1963).

This concept has been particularly used in tourists' destination choices (Um and Crompton, 1990; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989). Furthermore, the tourism decision making theories of Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) claimed that the choice set approach provides a simple and practical perspective to understanding travelers' decision making process. According to integrated relevant tourism research from Crompton (1992), proposed a model (Figure 2.3) on the structure of tourists' choice sets. In this model tourists' decision making process goes through three stages, whereby all destinations that the travelers are aware of are narrowed down to reach a final choice. The three stages are: (1) initial consideration set; (2) contained all of tourists consideration destinations that being possible to visit within a period of time and late consideration (evoked) set (Howard, 1963); and (3) contained of tourists destinations that probably to visit within a period of time and final choice decision, which is the final destination choice. Simply put, this model analyzes the process of three stage of alternative sets that undertaken by potential tourists to reduce the number of destinations before reaching a final choice.

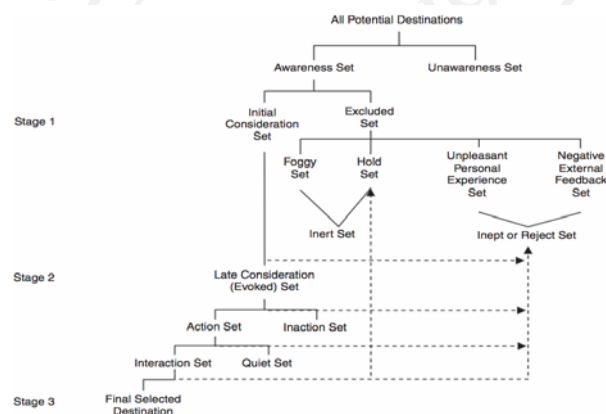


Figure 2.3: Structure of Vacation Destination Choice Sets

Source: Crompton, J., L. (1992). *Structure of destination choice sets*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Structure-of-Vacation-Destination-Choice-Sets-Crompton-1992_fig1_228275933.

2.1.7 Conclusion of Literature Review

In conclusion, this literature review presents a variety of ideas of previous research, but no studies were found that examined the key factors of online content that have an impact on travelers' decision making process. This current study focuses on foreign travelers and investigates the following aspects: social media, electronic word-of-mouth, perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, information credibility, destination image of Thailand, and the decision making process. In terms of the methodology, a quantitative approach is applied through the decision making process studies based on a survey research strategy, whilst an online questionnaire is applied to collect the data. It is assumed in this current study that these factors of online content affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand.

2.2 Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

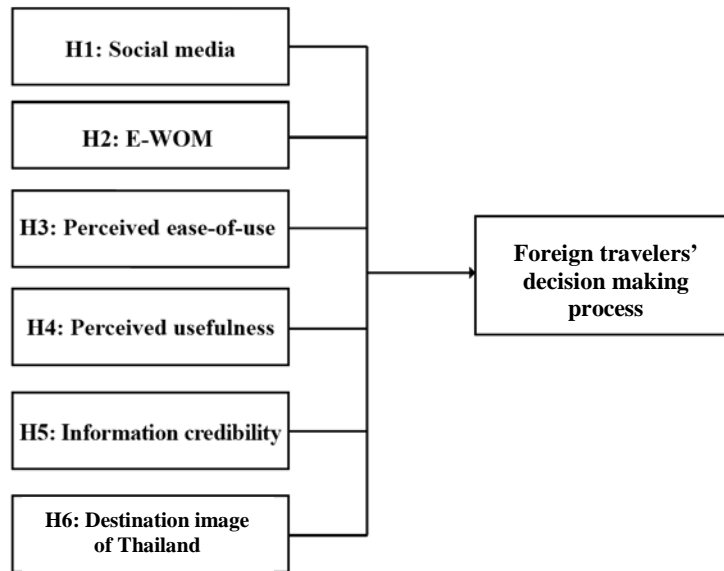


Figure 2.4: Conceptual framework

H1: Social media has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

H2: E-WOM has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

H3: Perceived ease-of-use has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

H4: Perceived usefulness has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

H5: Information credibility has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

H6: Destination image of Thailand has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explores the research methodology, beginning with a population and sample selection, followed by, research instrument, sampling procedure, reliability analysis and statistic tools. Furthermore, this methodology was used for the guidelines in conducting data in order to evaluate the result of the research.

3.1 Population and Sample Selection

3.1.1 Population

The targeted population is foreigners both female and male travelers who are aged between 18 and 49 years old except Thai citizen, particularly those have experience and have recently read online travel reviews content. Refers to chapter 1, Pew Research Center (2015) showed that ages 18 - 29 was the most strongly correlated with social media. Nowadays, young adults use social media about 90%, compared with 12% in 2005. At the same time, ages 30 - 49 use social media more from 8% in 2005 to 77% today. Therefore, these respondents can better evaluate the factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand.

3.1.2 Sampling Size

Regarding the population of this study, it is difficult to determine the exact total number of travelers who usually read the online travel content in social media and who are between 18 and 40 years old. However, in determining the size of the

sample for this quantitative study, the Taro Yamane formula was adopted (Yamane, 1973). According to VOA News (2017), Thailand has a record of 32.59 million foreign visitors in 2016. Therefore, this study will be collecting data from 400 respondents, which are deemed to be the minimum sample size as an effective for research analysis (Yamane, 1973). Therefore, the targeted participants will be foreign travelers who are aged 18 - 49 years old and who read and tend to read online travel content.

3.2 Research Instrument

3.3.1 Exploring published articles and journals from www.emeraldinsight.com and www.sciencedirect.com which related to social media, electronic word-of-mouth, destination image, and travelers' decision making process, together with guidance from an advisor.

3.3.2 Creating questionnaire form by selected from the articles and journals that related to researcher's research to get an approval from an advisor, also finalizing questionnaire to be relevant to this research study.

3.3.3 Launching 40 pilots testing of questionnaires. Next step was to conduct the reliability test of each variable in individual factor by using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. Value of Cronbach's Alpha was between $0 \leq \alpha \leq 1$, higher value means higher reliability and closely related of a section.

3.3.4 Analysis of the reliability test was executed for 40 pilots testing of questionnaires in order to ensure the grouping of question and the consistency of each factor were aligned with theories of study.

According to the above instruments, the questionnaire in this research contained three sections; (a) screening questions included one item which verify as qualified respondent, (b) respondent's profile included sixteen items of demographic characteristics and travel behaviour of the respondents, and (c) seven constructs measurement included twenty-eight items.

In section A, the screening questions will use to screen the respondents who are eligible for the survey, depending on whether they belong to the research population or not (Brace and Market research society, 2008) "Nationality?". The survey process will only continue if the answer is "Others Nationality".

In section B, the questions were asked about demographic profiles of respondents such as age, gender, personal income and also asked about their behaviour. These help to identify the respondents' profiles. The questions are required to choose one answer by respondents.

In section C, construct measurement which comprise of six factors are tested include social media and online community, E-WOM, perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness, information credibility, and destination image based on the relevant literature. More specifically for this part, the five-point Likert-type scale questions were used, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. These questions mainly ask the respondents to rate their perception of quality's statement.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

A non-probability sampling is a set of sampling methods that provides the opportunity to select each member from a population of interest, rather than an unknown sampling group (Burns, Bush and Sinha, 2014). The advantage of non-

probability sampling is that it saves on cost and time. Moreover, it can reach important respondents (Wilson, 2012). Judgement sampling is one of the non-probability sampling techniques in which the researcher makes a decision about who will be the sample most appropriate for the research (Bradley, 2010). This study follows the concept of judgement sampling, selecting respondents who usually read the online travel content in social media. The online questionnaire was circulated via the Google form website as an online survey tool. The survey was sent to various respondents through email, Line, Whatsapp, Wechat and Facebook by link. The link was sent directly to people in the researcher's networks, who could also contribute the link amongst their coworkers. Moreover, the researcher utilised online travel communication and the travel Facebook's page to forward the link to others, as in this way the link was published on the internet.

3.4 Reliability Analysis

A pilot test was conducted to ensure that each question in the questionnaire met a set of aims and objectives before the survey went live (Brace, 2013). A pilot test sample is relatively small, between 10 and 40 respondents (Wilson, 2012). In this study, the pilot test was distributed to 40 respondents, in order to determine if the respondents could answer the questions and to re-check any errors in the questionnaire.

The measurement of reliability employs a Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha was calculated to ensure that all of the constructs were valid.

The reliability of the measurements was acceptable and above the suggested Cronbach's alpha of 0.60 that means acceptable; between 0.70 - 0.80 is good and 0.90 and above is very good and, therefore, all are very reliable (Cronbach, 1951).

The validity of the questionnaire is determined by the accurate data that can adequately address the objectives of the research. The questionnaire must be error free and be able to measure what the researcher wants (Brace, 2013). Thus, the pilot test should be divided into three areas: reliability, validity and error testing.

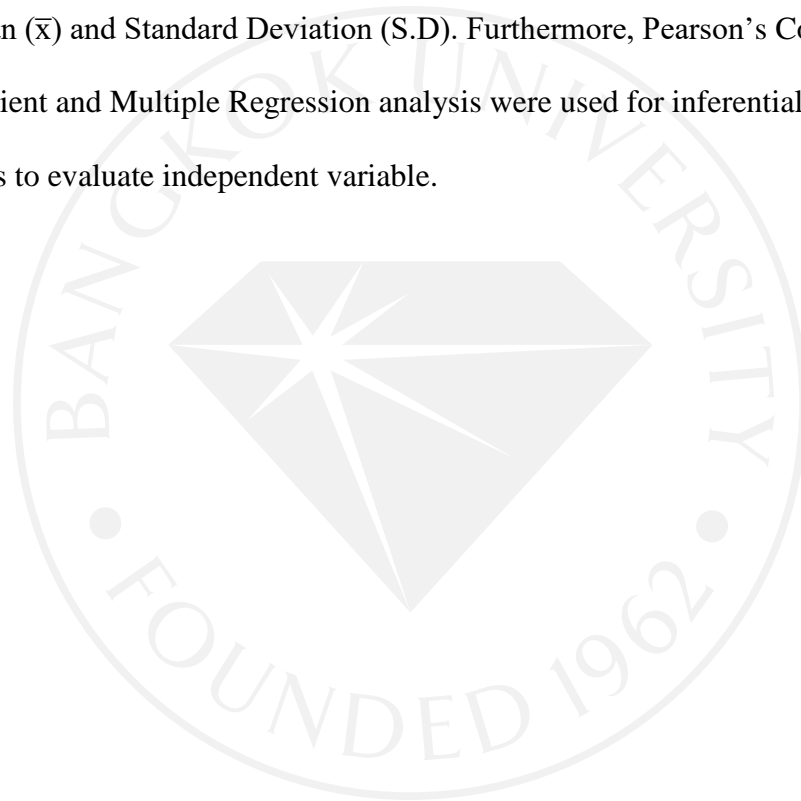
The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of each factor in the survey was computed which had the result value between 0.763-0.913 as table 3.1, meaning that all alpha coefficient passed the suggested level (Cronbach, 1951) and had proven to be reliable.

Table 3.1 : Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 40 pilots testing of questionnaires

Questionnaire	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	
		n = 40	n = 400
Social media (SM)	3	.763	.834
Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM)	6	.864	.852
Perceived ease-of-use (PE)	3	.890	.861
Perceived usefulness (PU)	4	.849	.878
Information credibility (IC)	4	.905	.916
Destination Image of Thailand (DI)	3	.857	.887
Dependent Variable			
Decision making process (DMP)	5	.913	.909

3.5 Statistical Tools

In this research, descriptive statistics are used to analyse all of the demographic characteristics (gender, age and income) by using frequency and percentage distributions. Moreover, the six constructs; social media (SM), electronic-word-of-mouth (EWOM), perceived ease-of-use (PE), perceived usefulness (PU), information credibility (IC), and destination image of Thailand (DI) were measured by Mean (\bar{x}) and Standard Deviation (S.D). Furthermore, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression analysis were used for inferential statistical analysis to evaluate independent variable.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

The aim of this research is to explore factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. The data was collected from 400 respondents by the survey questionnaire, and then analyse the data. The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of each factor was computed which had the result value between 0.834 - 0.916 as table 3.1, meaning that all alpha coefficient passed the suggested level (Nunnally, 1978) and had proven to be reliable.

4.1 Summary of Demographic Data

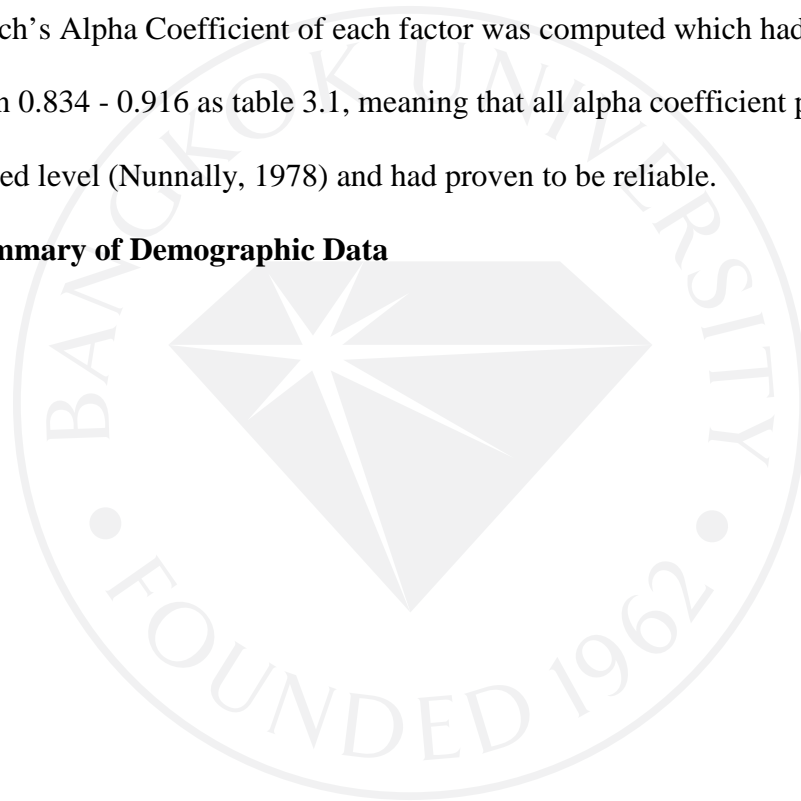


Table 4.1: Analysis of frequency and percentage of nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percent
Chinese	89	22.3
Singaporean	95	23.8
Vietnamese	54	13.5
Laos	19	4.8
Myanmarese	40	10.0
Indian	10	2.5
Japanese	12	3.0
Pakistan	2	0.5
Taiwanese	6	1.5
Malaysian	13	3.3
New Zealand	3	0.8
Indonesian	28	7.0
Nepal	3	0.8
Brazilian	12	3.0
German	2	0.5
France	4	1.0
African	8	2.0
Total	400	100.0

Of 400 foreigner respondents consisted of 23.8% Singaporean, 22.3% Chinese, 13.5% Vietnamese, 10% Myanmarese, 7% Indonesian, 4.8% Laos, 3.3% Malaysian, 3% Japanese and Brazilian, 2.5% Indian, 2% Africa, 1.5% Taiwanese, 1% France, and 2.3% other nationality.

Table 4.2: Analysis of frequency and percentage of gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	152	38.0
Female	248	62.0
Total	400	100.0

Of 400 respondents were female at 62% and male at 38%.

Table 4.3: Analysis of frequency and percentage of age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 18	4	1.0
18-25	201	50.3
26-30	90	22.5
31-35	30	7.5
36-40	17	4.3
41-45	16	4.0
46-50	26	6.5
More than 50	16	4.0
Total	400	100.0

These results suggest that age between 18-25 years old which calculated as 50% is the majority of the respondents in the research. Followed by the age between 26-30 years old, 31-35 years old, 46-50 years old and 30-40 years old, at 22.5%, 7.5%, 6.5% and 4.3%, respectively. For age between 41- 45 years old and more than 50 years old were at the same rank at 4%. Finally, the minority was age below 18 years old at 1%.

Table 4.4: Analysis of frequency and percentage of status

Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	328	82.0
Married	61	15.3
Divorce	11	2.8
Total	400	100.0

Of 400 respondents were 82% single, 15.3% married and 2.8% divorce.

Table 4.5: Analysis of frequency and percentage of education

Education	Frequency	Percent
Under Bachelor	80	20.0
Bachelor	216	54.0
Master	102	25.5
Doctor	2	0.5
Total	400	100.0

Of the total sample and the majority of the population had bachelor degree accounted for 54%, followed by master degree, under bachelor degree, doctor at 25.5%, 20% and 0.5%, respectively.

Table 4.6: Analysis of frequency and percentage of profession

Profession	Frequency	Percent
Unemployed	35	8.8
Student	117	29.3
Self-employed	67	16.8
Housewives	6	1.5
State Enterprise	108	27.0
Public Servants	45	11.3
Private Employee	22	5.5
Total	400	100.0

Most of the respondents or about 29.3% were studying and 27% working in state enterprise. With the minority were housewives at 1.5%. The middle rank were self-employed, public servants, unemployed, and private employee at 16.8%, 11.3%, 8.8% and 5.5%, respectively.

Table 4.7: Analysis of frequency and percentage of income

Income	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1,500	245	61.3
1,501-3,000	89	22.3
3,001-4,500	36	9.0
4,501-6,000	15	3.8
6,001-7,500	9	2.3
More than 7,500	6	1.5
Total	400	100.0

The largest group of income range was less than 1,500 USD per month with ratio 61.3%, followed by income between 1,501-3,000 USD, 3,000-4,500 USD, 4,501-6,000 USD, 6,001-7,500 USD and more than 7,500 USD at 22.3%, 9%, 3.8%, 2.3% and 1.5%, respectively.

Table 4.8: Analysis of frequency and percentage of travel frequency

Travel frequency	Frequency	Percent
Once a year	203	50.8
Twice a year	127	31.8
Three times a year	30	7.5
More than 3 times	40	10.0
Total	400	100.0

Most of the respondents travel once a year at 50.8%. 31.8% travel twice a year, 10% travel more than 3 times a year and 7.5% travel three times a year.

Table 4.9: Analysis of frequency and percentage of trip planning

Trip planning	Frequency	Percent
By yourself	348	87.0
Travel agent	52	13.0
Total	400	100.0

87% of respondents plan a trip by themselves and 13% plan trip by travel agent.

Table 4.10: Analysis of frequency and percentage of traveling purposes

Traveling purposes	Frequency	Percent
Family Vacation	216	54.0
Adventure	118	29.5
Business	27	6.8
Spiritual	33	8.3
Religious	6	1.5
Total	400	100.0

The top three traveling purposes were family vacation, adventure and spiritual at 54%, 29.5% and 8.3%, respectively. The minority were business and religious purpose at 6.8% and 1.5%, respectively.

Table 4.11: Analysis of frequency and percentage of length of trip

Length of trip	Frequency	Percent
1-2 days	47	11.8
a week	308	77.0
2 weeks	33	8.3
a month	4	1.0
more than 1 month	8	2.0
Total	400	100.0

Of 400 respondents mostly travel with a length of trip about one week at 77%. Followed by length of trip at 1-2 days, two weeks, more than 1 month and one month at 11.8%, 8.3%, 2% and 1%, respectively.

Table 4.12: Analysis of frequency and percentage of travel spending

Travel spending	Frequency	Percent
Below 500	61	15.3
501-1000	174	43.5
1001-1500	95	23.8
1501-3000	54	13.5
More than 3000	16	4.0
Total	400	100.0

The majority of 400 respondents were spend money on traveling aboard about 501-1,000 USD per travel trip at 43.5%. Followed by 1,001-1,500 USD, Below 500 USD, 1,501-3,000 USD and more than 3,000 USD per travel trip at 23.8%, 15.3%, 13.5% and 4%, respectively.

Table 4.13: Analysis of frequency and percentage of social media used in daily life

Social media used in daily life		Frequency	Percent
Instagram	No	116	29.0
	Yes	284	71.0
	Total	400	100.0
Twitter	No	317	79.3
	Yes	83	20.8
	Total	400	100.0
Youtube	No	152	38.0
	Yes	248	62.0
	Total	400	100.0

(Continued)

Table 4.13 (Continued): Analysis of frequency and percentage of social media used in daily life

Social media used in daily life		Frequency	Percent
Wechat	No	309	77.3
	Yes	91	22.8
	Total	400	100.0
Whatsapp	No	243	60.8
	Yes	157	39.3
	Total	400	100.0
Line	No	180	45.0
	Yes	220	55.0
	Total	400	100.0
Facebook	No	144	36.0
	Yes	256	64.0
	Total	400	100.0
Snapchat	No	388	97.0
	Yes	12	3.0
	Total	400	100.0
Weibo	No	301	75.3
	Yes	99	24.8
	Total	400	100.0
Tumblr	No	388	97.0
	Yes	12	3.0
	Total	400	100.0

The top three social medias which use in daily life, were Instagram, Facebook and Youtube at 71%, 64% and 62%, respectively.

Table 4.14: Analysis of frequency and percentage of searching information sources

Searching information sources		Frequency	Percent
Travel guide books	No	282	70.5
	Yes	118	29.5
	Total	400	100.0
Journal	No	351	87.8
	Yes	49	12.3
	Total	400	100.0
Tourist company	No	323	80.8
	Yes	77	19.3
	Total	400	100.0
Friends or family	No	161	40.3
	Yes	239	59.8
	Total	400	100.0
Travel blog	No	178	44.5
	Yes	222	55.5
	Total	400	100.0
Online travel site	No	145	36.3
	Yes	255	63.8
	Total	400	100.0

The most top three sources that use for searching information about travel destination, were online travel site, friends or family and travel blog at 63.8%, 59.8% and 55.5%, respectively.

Table 4.15: Analysis of frequency and percentage of social media most affect your decision making

Social media most affect your decision making	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	95	23.8
Instagram	40	10.0
Youtube	10	2.5
Line	6	1.5
Wechat	5	1.3
Other online reviews	55	13.8
Travel blogs	79	19.8
Tourist company website	37	9.3
Online traveling sites	73	18.3
Total	400	100.0

Facebook was indicated to be the most affecting on travel destination in decision making process at 23.8%. Followed by travel blogs, online traveling sites other online reviews and instagram at 19.8%, 18.3%, 13.8% and 10%, respectively. For other social medias that not reached 10% were tourist company websites, youtube, line and wechat.

Table 4.16: Analysis of frequency and percentage of online traveling site usage

Online traveling site	Frequency	Percent
None	26	6.5
Sometimes	180	45.0
Often	72	18.0
Everytime	122	30.5
Total	400	100.0

45% of the respondents were sometimes use online travel sites. 30.5% use online travel sites every time when they planning trip. 18% of often use online travel sites and 6.5% were not using travel site.

4.2 Results of Research Variables

The analysis of the correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of social media, E-WOM, perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, information credibility, destination image of Thailand affect foreigner decision making process to Thailand.

Table 4.17: Analysis of correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient.

(Descriptive Statistic)

	Mean	S.D	N
Social media	3.6475	.97557	400
Electronic word-of-mouth	3.5692	.82545	400
Perceived ease-of-use	3.6933	.86509	400
Perceived usefulness	3.7050	.82632	400
Information credibility	3.4875	.83986	400
Destination image of Thailand	3.7675	.85976	400
Decision making process	3.4780	.88162	400

According to table 4.17, the calculated by weighing the scores of the five-point Likert scale indicated that destination image of Thailand has the highest mean of 3.7675, whilst the lowest mean of 3.4780 was for decision making process.

Subsequently, in the middle ranges were perceived usefulness, perceived ease-of-use, social media, E-WOM and information credibility, the means of which were 3.7050, 3.6933, 3.6475, 3.5692 and 3.4875 respectively. As a result, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed destination image has an impact on the decision making process and strongly disagreed that decision making process affects the decision making process of foreign travelers.

Additionally, the standard deviation shows how much data is clustered around a mean value and provides accurate distribution data. As shown in Tables 4.17, E-WOM has the lowest standard deviation of 0.82545, followed closely by perceived usefulness, information credibility, destination image of Thailand, perceived ease-of-

use and decision making process, which have standard deviations of 0.82632, 0.83986, 0.85976, 0.86509 and 0.88162, respectively. Finally, the highest standard deviations of 0.97557 belonged to social media. Therefore, it can be concluded that almost all of the respondents in this current study consider destination image of Thailand more than the other factors.

Consequently, the descriptive results of this study were mean scores above the average with standard deviations ranging from 0.82545 to 0.97557. Moreover, it is indicated in that the majority of the respondents slightly agreed with, and had positive perceptions towards, the variables provided in this survey.

Table 4.18: Analysis of correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

Variable	SM	EWOM	PE	PU	IC	DI	DMP
Social media (SM)	1						
Electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM)	.698**	1					
Perceived ease-of-use (PE)	.614**	.673**	1				
Perceived usefulness (PU)	.622**	.729**	.723**	1			
Information credibility (IC)	.661**	.750**	.685**	.673**	1		
Destination image of Thailand (DI)	.610**	.715**	.662**	.647**	.770**	1	
Decision making process (DMP)	.570**	.740**	.596**	.601**	.697**	.704**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

According to table 4.18, shows that the Pearson's correlation coefficients are seven variables, which are correlated among all variables, and the relationships between the variables are positive correlated. With the correlation coefficient at 0.570-0.770, statistically significant level at 0.01.

4.3 Results of Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.19: Multiple Regression Analysis of social media, E-WOM, perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, information credibility, destination image of Thailand that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to Thailand.

Dependent Variable : Decision making process, R = 0.789 , R ² = 0.623 , Constant(a) = 1.332						
Independent Variables	β	Std Error	T	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.185	0.139	1.332	0.184		
Social media (SM)	-0.011	.042	-.253	0.801	0.448	2.234
Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM)	0.437	0.060	7.243	0.000	0.300	3.330
Perceived ease-of-use (PE)	0.079	0.050	1.566	0.118	0.393	2.547
Perceived ease-of-use (PU)	-0.047	0.056	-0.838	0.402	0.351	2.845
Information credibility (IC)	0.179	0.060	3.010	0.003	0.298	3.361
Destination image of Thailand (DI)	0.272	0.054	-5.049	0.000	0.347	2.886

*significant at the 0.05 level

According to table 4.19, Hypothesis can explain as the following

Hypothesis 1, social media has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of social media is negative ($\beta = -0.011$) which make social media act as suppressor variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that social media had no positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.801) at 0.05 significant level.

Hypothesis 2, E-WOM has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of E-WOM is positive ($\beta = 0.437$) which make E-WOM act as distorter variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that E-WOM had a positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.000) at 0.05 significant level.

Hypothesis 3, perceived ease-of-use has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of perceived ease-of-use is negative ($\beta = -0.047$) which make perceived ease-of-use act as suppressor variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that perceived ease-of-use had no positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.118) at 0.05 significant level.

Hypothesis 4, perceived usefulness has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of perceived usefulness is positive ($\beta = -0.049$) which make perceived usefulness act as suppressor variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that perceived usefulness had no positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.402) at 0.05 significant level.

Hypothesis 5, information credibility has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of information credibility is positive ($\beta = 0.179$) which make information credibility act as distorter variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that information credibility had a positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.003) at 0.05 significant level.

Hypothesis 6, destination image of Thailand has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. Coefficient result of destination image of Thailand is positive ($\beta = 0.272$) which make destination image of Thailand act as distorter variable. Moreover, the analysis revealed that destination image of Thailand had a positive impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers (Sig = 0.000) at 0.05 significant level.

Therefore, the Multiple Regression Analysis results can be defined that three independent variables, which were E-WOM (Sig = 0.000), information credibility (Sig = 0.003), and destination image of Thailand (Sig = 0.000) could be as the predictors for decision making process of foreign travelers. On the other hand, there were another three independent variables that had no impact on decision making process which were social media (Sig = 0.801), perceived ease-of-use (Sig = 0.118), and perceived usefulness (Sig = 0.402). Thus these three independent variables were not a significant predictor of decision making process of foreign travelers.

The most predictive independent variables were E-WOM ($\beta = 0.437$), destination image of Thailand ($\beta = 0.272$), and information credibility ($\beta = 0.179$). As a result, E-WOM, destination image of Thailand, and information credibility could be shown the positively impacting on decision making process of foreign travelers at

62.3%. The rest 37.7% were influenced by other variables which were not in used in this research. The standard error was ± 0.139 by the following equation

$$Y \text{ (Decision making process of foreign travelers)} = 1.332 + 0.437 \text{ (Electronic word-of-mouth)} + 0.272 \text{ (Destination image of Thailand)} + 0.230 \text{ (Information credibility)}$$

From this equation

If Electronic word-of-mouth value increased by 1 point while other factors remained, decision making process of foreign travelers would be increased by 0.437 points.

If destination image of Thailand value increased by 1 point while other factors remained, decision making process of foreign travelers would be increased by 0.272 points.

If information credibility value increased by 1 point while other factors remained, decision making process of foreign travelers would be increased by 0.230 points.

In statistics, Multicollinearity is a circumstance of a very high relationship among the independent variables (Statistics Solutions, 2017). High multicollinearity indicated the high degree of correlation between independent variables which might be caused the deviation from the true value. Likewise, multicollinearity should not occur as it could lead to incorrect interpreting of multiple regression results.

Multicollinearity can be examined by Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value or Tolerance value. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value should not exceed 4 and Tolerance value should exceed 0.2 (Miles & Shevlin, 2001).

The result from table 4.18 showed that Tolerance value of each independent variables exceeded 0.2 with the less Tolerance was 0.298. Furthermore, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of each independent variables values not over than 4 with the highest value was 3.361. In conclude, there had no Multicollinearity among the independent variables.

4.4 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Result of Multiple Regression Analysis found that were E-WOM, information credibility, and destination image of Thailand had an impact on the foreign travelers' decision making process to Thailand at statistical significant level of 0.05, whereas social media, perceived ease-of-use, and perceived usefulness had no impact on foreign travelers' decision making process to Thailand as Figure 4.1 below

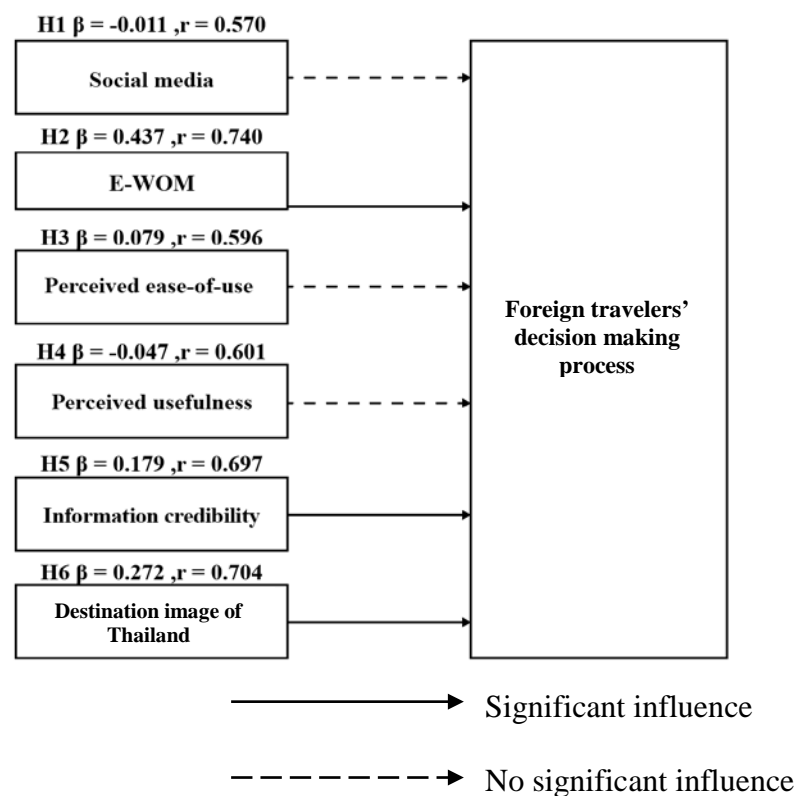


Figure 4.1: Result of Multiple Regression Analysis from scope of Research

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to explore factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand. A quantitative research method was used for this research through questionnaires surveys to collecting data.

The populations were collected from 400 respondents excluded Thai citizen who tend to read and read online travel reviews with age between 18-49 years old. the results could be concluded as the following.

5.1 Research Findings and Conclusion

The majorities of respondents were Singaporean, female at the age of 18-25 years old, single and had a bachelor degree. Almost all studied and worked in state enterprise company with income range between 1,501-3,000 USD per month. Most of them are traveling once a year for family vacation purpose, with a length of trip about one week and more likely to plan a trip by themselves. Moreover, most of respondents spent money on traveling aboard about 501-1,000 USD per each travel. Instagram was indicated to be the most social media that used in daily life at 71%, online travel site was the most sources that used for searching information about travel destination at 63.8%, whereas, Facebook was indicated to be the most affecting on travel destination in decision making process at 23.8%. 45% of the respondents were sometimes use online travel sites.

Regarding the analysis results based on hypothesis could be summarized that there was three accepted hypothesis as follow: E-WOM ($\beta = 0.437$), information

credibility ($\beta = 0.179$), and destination image of Thailand ($\beta = 0.272$). Therefore, the result could be concluded that E-WOM, information credibility, and destination image of Thailand had an impact on the decision making process at statistically significant level of 0.05. In addition, these three factors were explained the positively impacting on decision making process at 62.3%. The rest 37.7% were influenced by other variables which were not in used in this research. Furthermore, the result of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value was not exceed 4 that means there had no Multicollinearity among the independent variables. The standard error was ± 0.139 by the following equation

$$Y \text{ (Decision making process of foreign travelers)} = 1.332 + 0.437 \text{ (Electronic word-of-mouth)} + 0.272 \text{ (Destination image of Thailand)} + 0.230 \text{ (Information credibility)}$$

5.2 Discussion

The research is to explore factors of online content that affect foreign travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand; which comprised of social media, E-WOM, perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, information credibility, destination image of Thailand and decision making process. Based on the sample size recommendations by Yamane (1973), 400 respondents were recruited to complete the survey with questionnaire method. The data analysis found the interesting points as the following.

Hypothesis 1, social media has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that

social media had no impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. Social media is now changing the decision making processes of tourism consumers (Hudson and Thal, 2013). According to Yoo and Gretzel (2008), social media channel used for consuming pre, among and post travel products such as booking and paying for hotel, changing reservation and also for sharing their experiences and providing feedback after their trip. Even social media was consumed as the primary source while searching information, but it may still not strongly influence travelers to making decision to visit the destination in this study, as the result in table 4.17 show that the mean of SM was 3.6475, meaning that the respondents just feeling neutral to use social media in searching and purchasing travel products (SM1), searching to devise an actual tourism plan after choosing a destination (SM2) and search for and obtain extra information while they are traveling (SM3). Moreover, the result of the use social media in daily life part shown that the respondents in the study use only several social medias for each person. With this result, the respondents tend to receive repetition contents and may not gathering what all information that meet their goals. Notwithstanding, this factor was not significantly impact travelers' decision making process to visit Thailand.

Hypothesis 2, E-WOM has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that E-WOM had an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. Raitz and Dakhi (1989) and Vincent and Santos (1990) similarly found that electronic word-of-mouth is the most important source of information when selecting destinations. Shanka, Ali-knight and Pope (2002) also found in their research of destination selection methods that the majority

of Western Australia travel decisions were based on word of mouth communication. Moreover, the respondents in this current research feel secure in following the suggestions of the online influencers which is consistent with the finding of Chatterjee (2001), who found that electronic word-of-mouth can effectively reduce the risk and uncertainty faced by consumers when purchasing products or services, hence their purchase intention and decision making will be further influenced. In addition, Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) found that online reviews increase the awareness of hotels and that positive reviews can improve travelers' attitudes toward hotels.

Hypothesis 3, perceived ease-of-use has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived ease-of-use had no impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. According to Doll and Torkzadeh (1998), perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness of TAM model are two variables which have impact on the behavioural intentions to use a system. Additionally, the previous study of Agag and El-Masry (2016) indicated that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness influence consumer trust and attitude toward online travel community, such as intentions to book online. Notwithstanding, the multiple regression analysis in the research indicated that perceived ease-of-use had no impact on decision making process. According to table 4.17, the mean of PE was 3.6933 which means that the respondents do not strongly agree that social media or online travel sites is simple to use, even when using it for the first time (PE1), In social media or online travel sites, everything is easy to find (PE2), It is easy to move within this social media or online travel sites (PE3). Furthermore, even the result shown that respondents obtain travel information related from online travel site at

63.8%, but the ratios of information from friends or family also high at 59.8%. This result can suggest that the respondents still rely on friends or family's experience to decide their trip and the ease of using social media is not significant for them to gather information in this study.

Hypothesis 4, perceived usefulness has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived usefulness had no impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. According to Casaló et al (2011) research, indicated that the perceived usefulness of online travel content can generate a more positive attitude and will be of greater importance in travelers' decision making. Moreover, Xinyuan et al. (2015) found that, in confronting the vast amount of information, only the useful comments and opinions would influence travelers' decision making process. Bressler and Grantham (2000) indicated that reading online travel review content in a community can provide a certain benefit that would be difficult to obtain without participating in the network, which usually derives from interaction, knowledge sharing or the user-generated content in the online community. However, the multiple regression analysis in the research illustrated that perceived usefulness had no impact on decision making process. According to table 4.17, the mean of PU was 3.7050 which mean that the respondents not strongly agree that reading the online travel information helps me solve doubts when I make a travel decision-making process (PU1), reading the online travel information helps me organize travels in a more efficient way (PU2), Despite the risks that can arise through the information search using social media, it is worth using (PE3) and in general, the online travel review content is useful for a travel

decision-making process (PE4). In addition, respondents still highly rely on friends or family suggestion for making decision of their travel destination. Therefore, perceived usefulness of online travel information not significant for travelers' decision making process in this study.

Hypothesis 5, information credibility has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that information credibility had an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. This finding is consistent with the finding of Vermeulen and Seegers (2009), who asserted that the credible recommendations in reviews do affect consumers' decision making. McKnight and Kacmar (2006) similarly indicated that information credibility is an important force affecting consumers' future action, as most travelers are concerned about information credibility in travel blogs or online travel communities, with the collected information being used as reference material, to reduce information asymmetry, lower uncertainty and improve the quality (Zehrer et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the trustworthiness of online reviews is also significant, as the content of online travel reviews should be trustworthy. Thus, this is an important force affecting consumers' future action, which is in line with the prior research by Dickinger (2011), who also stated that the trustworthiness of online reviews is based primarily on the provider of the information, not the actual message communicated. Therefore, the source's characteristics relevant to the message (for example bias, character, safety and personal integrity) can have an impact on the trustworthiness of the source itself, as well as the perceptions of the message it emits. Hence, this result

in this current study indicates that information credibility significantly affects travelers' decision making process.

Hypothesis 6, destination image of Thailand has an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers or not. The result from multiple regression analysis revealed that destination image of Thailand had an impact on the decision making process of foreign travelers at 0.05 significant levels which accepted hypothesis. This finding is supported by the previous studies by Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Beerli and Martin (2004) and Echtner and Ritchie (2003). This finding accords with Echtner and Ritchie (2003), who provided evidence that an image of a destination can affect the decision making process. Kotler and Gartner (2002) similarly indicated that, as travelers' destination choices are rapidly increasing in number, destination images can be used as a mental short-cut for evaluating information in the decision making process. Moreover, destination image also affects the willingness to choose the destination (Bigné et al., 2001). A positive destination image can increase the desire to travel to tourist spots. The respondents in this current research agree that they would plan to travel if they had a positive destination image. This result supports previous researchers' arguments about how positive destination images can influence travelers' purchase intentions and actual consumption behaviour (Murray and Vogel, 1997). Additionally, Echtner and Ritchie (2003) similarly indicated that, during the travel decision making process, travelers evaluate both positive and negative destination images. More specifically, when the weight of the positive image exceeds the weight of the negative image, potential travelers will make a destination choice decision (McLellan and Foushee, 1983).

5.3 Recommendation for Managerial Implication

In addition to theoretical implications, managerial implications are provided in this study. The results of this study revealed that there are some factors of online travel content can help the tourism business and the hospitality industry to better understand the importance of knowing how to create online travel content that leads directly to positive outcomes in affecting travelers' decision making. In the context of online travel content, E-WOM is deemed to be the most significant factor affecting decision making process, followed by destination image of Thailand and information credibility. In order to investigate foreign travelers in Thailand based on this study, the managers in the tourism industry and the hospitality industry can use the results of this study to guide the travel and tourism's implications and strategic plans of marketing.

This current study also proposed that online travel content needs to give priority to E-WOM, as this is the most significant factor in the view of travelers that greatly affects the decision making process. For instance, tourist company should consider online influencer, who can influence and widely spread the content through online community, as E-WOM is positively affect to decision making process of foreign travelers.

The findings propose that online travel content should have information credibility, and should consist of expertise and trustworthiness to provide objective and useful recommendations for the readers, for example online travel content should be unbiased, and have character, safety and personal integrity. Moreover, the tourism business and the hospitality industry should be experts, which refers to great knowledge of a destination, including familiarity and past experience.

Furthermore, regarding destination image as a factor of online travel content, it should be noted that images tend to be stable over time. As travelers' destination choices are rapidly increasing in number, destination images can be used as a mental short-cut for evaluating information in the decision-making process. According to Fakeye and Crompton (1991), the image refers to the first impression for the customers. Therefore, tourism business and the hospitality industry should invest in advertising to create a sensation of an interesting and wonderful place to visit, thus acknowledging and understanding that the image of destination can affect the decision making process.

With altogether of E-WOM, destination image of Thailand and information credibility combination as a key marketing tool for tourism industry, it could help tourism business and Thailand increase number of visiting traveler which lead to a better economy as well as expand potential new markets in the future.

5.4 Recommendation for Future Research

This current study does have several limitations. Firstly, the research survey contributed in a broad area with a very large population. The sample in this current study may not represent the whole population of foreign travelers around the world. Future research should examine a specific region such as Africa, Asia, Europe, and Middle East.

Secondly, this study does not refer to specific online travel content. Additionally, some of the respondents in this study may have misunderstood or have a different interpretation. This miscommunication can lead to skewed results. Future

research should consider particular names or specific online travel content that could contribute to the same content scenarios.

Thirdly, this research focus on the online factors that affecting the overall decision making process only, thus there may have a possibility correlation between the variables that effect in each step of decision making process. Therefore, future research may focus on purchasing decision making process in order to investigate which factors affect in each step of the decision making process.

Finally, Future research may focus on modeling to incorporate other theoretical constructs by inserting new variables such as gender diversity or group dynamics. In addition, future studies would investigate more on which type content of E-WOM are used for the choice of tourist destination.

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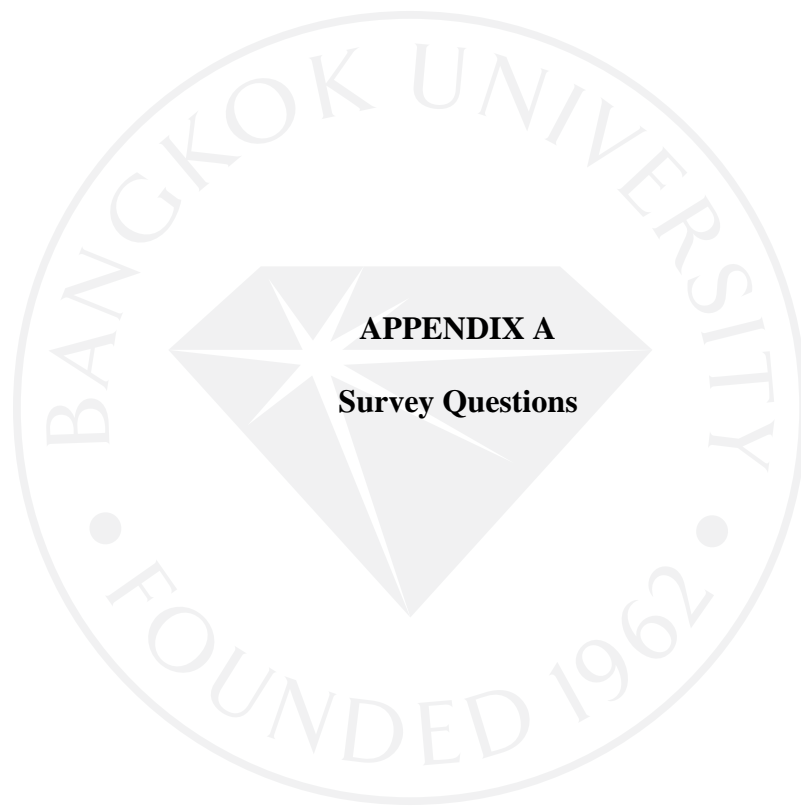
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มหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพ
BANGKOK UNIVERSITY

NO.....

Questionnaire

on

**“The factors of social media and online content affecting foreign travelers’
decision making process to visit Thailand”**

Statement of Informed Consent: You are being asked to participate as a volunteer in a research study conducted by Narat Koopratoomsiri, Master's Degree in Business Administration student, of Bangkok University. This study is designed to gather information about the factors of social media and online content affect the foreign travelers’ decision-making process to visit Thailand. In order to know what kind of online content impact on travelers’ decision making the most. Therefore, the result can be benefits to both private companies as to create the right content and deliver on the right platform to the travelers, and bring Thailand to be travelers-friendly country. The research is being conducted under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Lokweetpun Suprawan, of Bangkok University.

1. Your participation in this project is voluntary; you will not be paid for your participation. If you decline to participate in or choose to not complete the questionnaire, the researcher will not inform anyone of your decision, and no foreseeable negative consequences will result.
2. Completing the questionnaire will require approximately 6 minutes. There are no known risks associated with completing the questionnaire. If, however, you feel uncomfortable in any way during this process, you may decline to answer any question, or not complete the questionnaire.
3. The researcher will not identify you by name in any report using information obtained from your questionnaire; your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of data generated by this questionnaire will protect the anonymity of all individuals.

For further information, including a copy of the results of this study, please contact: Narat Koopratoomsiri; E-Mail: Narat.koop@bumail.net

10. What is the most common purpose for you travel?

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Family vacation | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Adventure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Business | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Spiritual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Religious | |

11. What is the general length of the trip?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) 1-2 days | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) A week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Two weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) A month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) More than a month | |

12. What are social media you use in your daily life? (You can select more than one choice)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Instagram | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Twitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Youtube | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) WeChat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) WhatsApp | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) Others, Please Specify |

13. What source(s) you use for searching information about your travel destination? (You can select more than one choice)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Travel guide books | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Tourism company | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Friends or family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Travel blog | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Online travel site (eg. Agoda, Expedia, Booking, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Others, Please Specify..... | |

14. Which social media most affect your decision making for traveling?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Instagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Youtube | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) WhatsApp | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) WeChat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Other online reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) Travel blog |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9) Tourist company website | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10) Online traveling site (eg. Agoda, Expedia, Booking, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11) Others, Please Specify | |

15. How often do you use online traveling site(s)?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) None | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Often | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Every time when I plan a travel |

16. What is your average spend on a trip?

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Below 500 USD (15,700 THB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) 501 – 1,000 USD (15,700-31,400 THB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) 1,001 – 1,500 USD (31,400-47,100 THB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4) 1,501 – 3,000 USD (47,100-94,200 THB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) More than 3,000 USD (94,200 THB) |

Please mark every question with only one ✓ in the box that most corresponded to your opinion.

		Agreeable Level				
		Highest (5)	High (4)	Moderate (3)	Low (2)	Lowest (1)
Social Media (SM)						
1	I use social media for searching and purchasing travel products.					
2	I use social media for searching to devise an actual tourism plan after choosing a destination.					
3	I use social media to search for and obtain extra information while I am traveling.					
Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM)						
1	I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.					
2	To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews.					
3	When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident in traveling to the destination.					
4	Positive reviews from the online influencers increase my passion on the tourist spots.					
5	I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination.					
6	If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.					
Perceived Ease-of-Use (PE)						
1	This social media or online travel sites is simple to use, even when using it for the first time.					
2	In social media or online travel sites, everything is easy to find.					
3	It is easy to move within this social media or online travel sites.					

		Agreeable Level				
		Highest (5)	High (4)	Moderate (3)	Low (2)	Lowest (1)
Perceived Usefulness (PU)						
1	Reading the online travel information helps me solve doubts when I make a travel decision-making process.					
2	Reading the online travel information helps me organize travels in a more efficient way.					
3	Despite the risks that can arise through the information search using social media, it is worth using.					
4	In general, the online travel review content is useful for a travel decision-making process.					
Information Credibility (IC)						
1	I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are believable.					
2	I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are credible.					
3	I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are trustworthy.					
4	This online travel community has imparity.					
Image of Thailand (DI)						
1	Positive destination image of Thailand increases my traveling desire on the tourist spots.					
2	I will plan to travel to Thailand if there is a positive destination image.					
3	The online reviews from other travelers recommended the destination to Thailand.					
Decision Making Process (DMP)						
1	I read a lot of online reviews about my destination to Thailand before going on holiday.					
2	I search for tourism information about Thailand a long time ahead before leaving.					

		Agreeable Level				
		Highest (5)	High (4)	Moderate (3)	Low (2)	Lowest (1)
3	I seize all opportunities to collect tourist information about Thailand.					
4	I plan the different aspects of my holiday in Thailand very precisely.					
5	I carefully compare choice alternatives before making a final decision on destination in Thailand.					

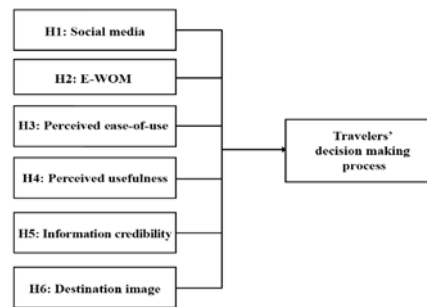
Please recommend for other factors that might positively affect the travelers' decision-making process toward social media and online content.

Thank you for your cooperation
Miss Narat Koopratoomsiri
E-Mail: Narat.koop@bumail.net



Research Title: The factors of social media and online content affecting foreign travelers’ decision making process to visit Thailand

Conceptual Framework



Measurements

Original Question	Revised Question	Theory/Definition
Social Media (SM) ($\alpha=0.753$) (Sigala et al., 2012)		Social media, and web 2.0, has changed the way travelers search, find, read and trust information about tourism suppliers and tourism destinations (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel, 2012).
(SM1) I use social media for searching and purchasing travel products. (SM2) I use social media for searching to devise an actual tourism plan after choosing a destination. (SM3) I use social media to search for and obtain extra information while I am traveling.	1. I use social media for searching and purchasing travel products. 2. I use social media for searching to devise an actual tourism plan after choosing a destination. 3. I use social media to search for and obtain extra information while I am traveling.	

<p>Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM) ($\alpha=0.805$) (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012)</p>		<p>Electronic word-of-mouth was also found to be the most important source of information when selecting destinations (Raitz and Dakhi, 1989; Vincent and Santos, 1990). The online reviews in the travel community are viewed as being important information during the travel decision making process (Vermyulen and Seegers, 2009). Previous research has viewed opinion seeking as a co-phenomenon of opinion leadership that will happen when people search for information and advice about products or services from knowledgeable person (Flynn, Goldsmith and Eastman, 1996).</p>
<p>(EWOM1) I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others. (EWOM2) To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews. (EWOM3) When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident in travelling to the destination. (EWOM4) Positive reviews from the online influencers increase my passion on the tourist spots. (EWOM5) I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others. 2. To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews. 3. When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident in travelling to the destination. 4. Positive reviews from the online influencers increase my passion on the tourist spots. 5. I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination. 	

<p>(EWOM6) If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.</p>	<p>6. If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.</p>	
<p>Perceived Usefulness (PU) ($\alpha=0.821$) (Namho, Heejeong, and Chulmo, 2015; Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalú, 2011)</p>		<p>Perceived usefulness may be defined as the degree to which consumers believe that online reviews will facilitate their purchase decision making process (Park and Lee, 2009).</p>
<p>(PU1) Using this online community helps me to solve doubts when I plan a travel (PU2) Using this online community helps me to organize travels in a more efficient way (PU3) Despite the risks that can arise through the information search using social media, it is worth to using. (PU4) In general, this online community is useful to plan travels.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading the online travel information helps me solve doubts when I make a travel decision-making process. 2. Reading the online travel information helps me organize travels in a more efficient way. 3. Despite the risks that can arise through the information search using social media, it is worth using. 4. In general, the online travel review content is useful for a travel decision-making process. 	
<p>Information Credibility (IC) ($\alpha=0.821$) (Poon et al., 2014)</p>		<p>Information credibility relates to readers believe that the informant is honestly and given an objective (Greer, 2003). Information credibility reflects its perceived capacity to provide valid and accurate information (Choi and Rifon, 2002). Trustworthiness is an informant's willingness to present a valid statement (Johanes et al.,</p>

		2016) and refers to the communicator who is unbiased in telling the truth.
<p>(IC1) The reviews about the hotel are believable.</p> <p>(IC2) The reviews about the hotel are credible.</p> <p>(IC3) The reviews about the hotel are trustworthy.</p> <p>(IC4) This online travel community has imparity.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are believable. 2. I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are credible. 3. I think the online travel review about the tourist attraction are trustworthy. 4. This online travel community has imparity. 	
<p>Destination Image (DI) ($\alpha=0.722$) (Poon et al., 2014)</p>		<p>The destination image has been recognized as being one of the influential concepts in tourists' destination choice process because an image affects an individual's subjective perception, subsequent behaviour, and destination choice (Chul and Stephen, 2012). The positive image exceeds the weight of the negative image, potential travellers will make the destination choice decision (McLellan and Foushee, 1983).</p>
<p>(DI1) Positive reviews on the booking website increase my booking desire on the hotel.</p> <p>(DI2) The reviews on the website said positive things about the hotel.</p> <p>(DI3) The reviews on the booking website recommended the hotel.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive destination image increases my traveling desire on the tourist spots. 2. I will plan to travel if there is a positive destination image. 3. The online reviews from other travelers recommended the destination. 	

<p>Decision Making Process (DMP) ($\alpha=0.770$) (Hilmi A Atadil, Ercan Sirakaya-Turk, Fang Meng, Alain Decrop, 2017)</p>		<p>This model describes how the decision are made while choosing available alternatives choices of consumers' decision-making process. The popular theory which contained three stages for tourist destination selection was first proposed by Crompton (1997): (1) awareness set; (2) evolution of an evoked set; and (3) destination selection. Previous studies have shown that the travel decision making process involves multiple steps, including pre-travel, during travel and post travel (Woodside and King, 2001).</p>
<p>(DMP1) I read a lot about my destination before going on holiday. (DMS2) I search for tourism information a long time ahead before leaving. (DMS3) I seize all opportunities to collect tourist information. (DMS4) I plan the different aspects of my holiday very precisely. (DMS5) I carefully compare choice alternatives before making a final decision.</p>	<p>1. I read a lot of online reviews about my destination before going on holiday. 2. I search for tourism information a long time ahead before leaving. 3. I seize all opportunities to collect tourist information. 4. I plan the different aspects of my holiday very precisely. 5. I carefully compare choice alternatives before making a final decision on destination.</p>	

Remarks:

- 1. Each variable or components must has at least 3 questions.**
- 2. Definition referred in the table must be consistent with the definition is chapter 2.**
- 3. This table must be completed simultaneously with chapter 2.**

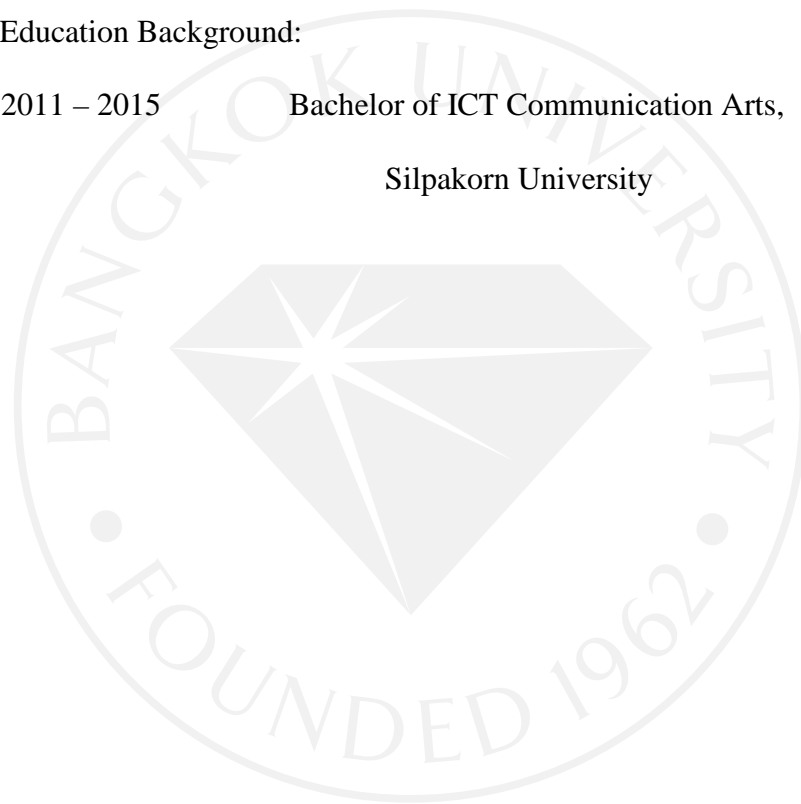
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