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การพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์การสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ เพื่อส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสายไหม กลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์

Development of an Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy to Promote Tourism on the Silk Route of the Nakhon Chaiburin Group of Provinces

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research were 1) to analyze the present situation and tourism market of the silk route in the Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces; 2) to study the operations of an integrated marketing communications strategy in the area; 3) to study the tourism behavior, media exposure, and opinions of tourists about the marketing communications; and 4) to develop an integrated marketing communications strategy to promote tourism on the silk route in the Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces.

The results showed that 1) at present, tourism operators in the Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces have joined in a network to promote and develop tourism with a Khom civilization and textile theme. Tourism enterprises in the area have formed alliances and a network for joint marketing activities and selling tourism products together. They can offer various kinds of tourism products, using ancient Khom civilization, silk weaving villages, and tourism routes to neighboring countries as the main selling points in order to increase tourism income in their communities. 2) The integrated market communications strategy had the following components: the media planning strategy combined of diversity of media that are suitable for different target groups. Such media included local cable TV, Internet, exhibitions of silk products and tourism handbooks for the Nakorn Chaiburin group of provinces. 3) Both domestic and international tourists surveyed said they liked cultural tourism. They were exposed to tourist information via the Internet because it was easy to access and

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influenced their decision making. The sample population had a positive opinion of the format of integrated marketing communications. 4) The development of the integrated marketing communications strategy for the study area consisted of (a) inspecting the marketing plan to set the direction for marketing activities; (b) analyzing the current marketing communications situation with an emphasis on internal and external factors; (c) analyzing the communications process with an emphasis on evaluating effectiveness among target groups; (d) setting a budget to respond to the objectives of the communication; (e) developing an integrated marketing communications program by setting key messages and a media usage strategy; (f) auditing, evaluating and controlling to gain useful feedback for operations improvement and for strategic planning modifications in the future.

Keywords: Strategy development, Integrated marketing communications, Silk route tourism, Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) วิเคราะห์สถานการณ์การท่องเที่ยวและการตลาด 2) ศึกษาการดำเนินงานเกี่ยวกับกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ 3) ศึกษาพฤติกรรมการท่องเที่ยว การเปิดรับสื่อและความคิดเห็นของนักท่องเที่ยวต่อการสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ 4) พัฒนายุทธศาสตร์การสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการเพื่อส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสายไหมกลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) สถานการณ์การท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสายไหมกลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์ ในปัจจุบันได้มีการส่งเสริมและพัฒนาด้านการท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสิ่งทอและเชื่อมโยงเป็นโครงข่ายการท่องเที่ยวอารยธรรมขอม เพื่อดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวให้เพิ่มมากขึ้น ส่วนสถานการณ์การตลาด ผู้ประกอบการด้านการท่องเที่ยวกลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์ได้ร่วมกันทำการตลาดและขายสินค้าท่องเที่ยวร่วมกัน โดยทำในรูปแบบเครือข่ายและเป็นพันธมิตร ทั้งนี้สามารถเสนอขายต่อนักท่องเที่ยวในทุกรูปแบบโดยการสร้างจุดขายในด้านความเป็นแหล่งอารยธรรมขอมโบราณ หมู่บ้านทอผ้าไหม เส้นทางท่องเที่ยวแบบเชื่อมโยงกับประเทศเพื่อนบ้านเพื่อเพิ่มรายได้เข้าสู่ชุมชน 2) กลยุทธ์การวางแผนการใช้สื่อประเภทต่างๆ มีการผสมผสานสื่อที่หลากหลาย เหมาะสมกับกลุ่มเป้าหมาย สื่อที่ใช้ได้แก่ เคเบิ้ลท้องถิ่น อินเทอร์เน็ต การจัดแสดงผลิตภัณฑ์ไหมและคู่มือการท่องเที่ยวกลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์ 3) นักท่องเที่ยวทั้งชาวไทยและชาวต่างชาติ มีความชื่นชอบลักษณะ การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม โดยมีการเปิดรับข้อมูลท่องเที่ยวจากสื่ออินเทอร์เน็ต เพราะสามารถเข้าถึงได้ง่ายมีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจ ส่วนความคิดเห็นต่อรูปแบบการสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการอยู่ในระดับดี 4) การพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์ การสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ ประกอบด้วย (1) การตรวจสอบแผนการตลาดเพื่อกำหนดทิศทางสำหรับกิจกรรมทางการตลาด (2) การวิเคราะห์สถานการณ์โปรแกรมการสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ มุ่งเน้นการพัฒนากลยุทธ์ด้วยการวิเคราะห์ปัจจัยภายในและภายนอก (3) การวิเคราะห์กระบวนการการสื่อสาร โดยมุ่งเน้นการตรวจสอบประสิทธิภาพกับกลุ่มเป้าหมาย (4) การกำหนดงบประมาณเพื่อตอบสนองต่อวัตถุประสงค์ทางการสื่อสาร (5) การพัฒนาโปรแกรมการสื่อสารการตลาดแบบครบวงจรด้วยการกำหนดข้อความและกลยุทธ์การใช้สื่อ (6) การตรวจสอบ ประเมินผลและการควบคุม เพื่อให้สามารถนำไปใช้เป็นข้อมูลสำหรับปรับปรุงการดำเนินงานและการวางแผนการสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการเพื่อส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสายไหมกลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์ในโอกาสต่อไป

คำสำคัญ : การพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์ การสื่อสารการตลาดแบบบูรณาการ การท่องเที่ยวเส้นทางสายไหม กลุ่มจังหวัดนครชัยบุรินทร์

Background and Significance

In the midst of increasingly aggressive marketing competition under free trade systems, ongoing economic pressure and the development of information technology, modern-day marketing has evolved and been transformed considerably. Similarly, viewpoints concerning consumers, technology and media, demographic information concerning consumers' lifestyle, their media usage, their purchasing model as well as their purchasing behavior have changed. Companies have adopted a more customer-centric marketing approach, rather than a company-centric one, leading to a drastic change in marketing activity strategies embracing the emergence of the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) concept. The concept is targeted at customer relationship along with the participants of a product brand or an organization who play vital roles in determining whether an organization will succeed or fail.

The Nakhon Chaiburin province group, composed of 4 provinces in the first lower Northeastern region: Nakhon Ratchasima, Chaiyaphum, Buriram and Surin, is deemed a tourism market area fully equipped with ecological and natural tourism, Khmer historical and cultural tourism which will be woven into the Khmer cultural network with its center in Cambodia, woven fabric tourism routes which create the identity of cultural based tourism with their activities based on cultural tourism resources. The Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism covers the area rich with a number of diverse tourism resources well supported by various organizations both at the level of provincial group and the national level; nevertheless, the majority of tourism destinations are in a run-down condition, lacking appropriate maintenance and renovation to retain their capability to serve the tourism demand as effectively as they are supposed to, struggling with the problems concerning inconvenient transportation, community's involvement and importantly marketing communications This falls in line with the information which the researcher obtains from the interviews with tourists revealing that there is a lack of continuity of tourism communication with tourists via various communication tools and channels and that the areas with tourism destinations still lack the promotion for the creation of the identity of cultural based tourism (Research report on the Project of Silk Route Tourism Promotion. Nakhon Ratchasima. 2010).

Taking that into consideration, the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism is appropriate to be granted with comprehensive marketing and communication support and with being ranked as the areas for the tourism promotion in accordance with tourism development plans. Furthermore. It is interesting to apply various tools of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) to create strategies through the thorough and detailed analysis of the areas' tourism communication situations and the study of marketing communication strategies for tourism promotion. The IMC is meant to promote tourism with an emphasis on the overall image of the brand of the Silk Route Tourism. The tourism product with outstanding and differing qualifications exposes tourists with comprehensive integrated tourism experiences which will in turn create the impressiveness on the tourists and raise their awareness of the product brand. This will affirm the sustainable development of the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the present situation and tourism market of the silk route in the Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces.

2. To study the operations of an integrated marketing communications strategy in the area.

3. To study the tourism behavior, media exposure, and opinions of tourists about the marketing communications.

4. To develop an integrated marketing communications strategy to promote tourism on the silk route in the Nakhon Chaiburin group of provinces.

Research Methodology

1. Key Informants

Key Informants in this study included policy makers, directors, heads of the government organizations who were responsible for the development of provinces as well as provincial groups, departments in charge of silk strategy as well as tourism strategy, Tourism Authority of Thailand (Nakhon Ratchasima and Surin Offices), heads of villages or heads of silk groups, local organizations, tourism networks of the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism, scholars in the field of the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) and experts in the field of tourism.

2. Data Collection Tools Data collection tools included

2.1 In-depth interview covering the situations of the Silk Route Tourism and the situations of marketing communication in order to promote the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism and the current conditions of operations concerning the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategy in order to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group.

2.2 A questionnaire administered to tourists both Thai and foreign

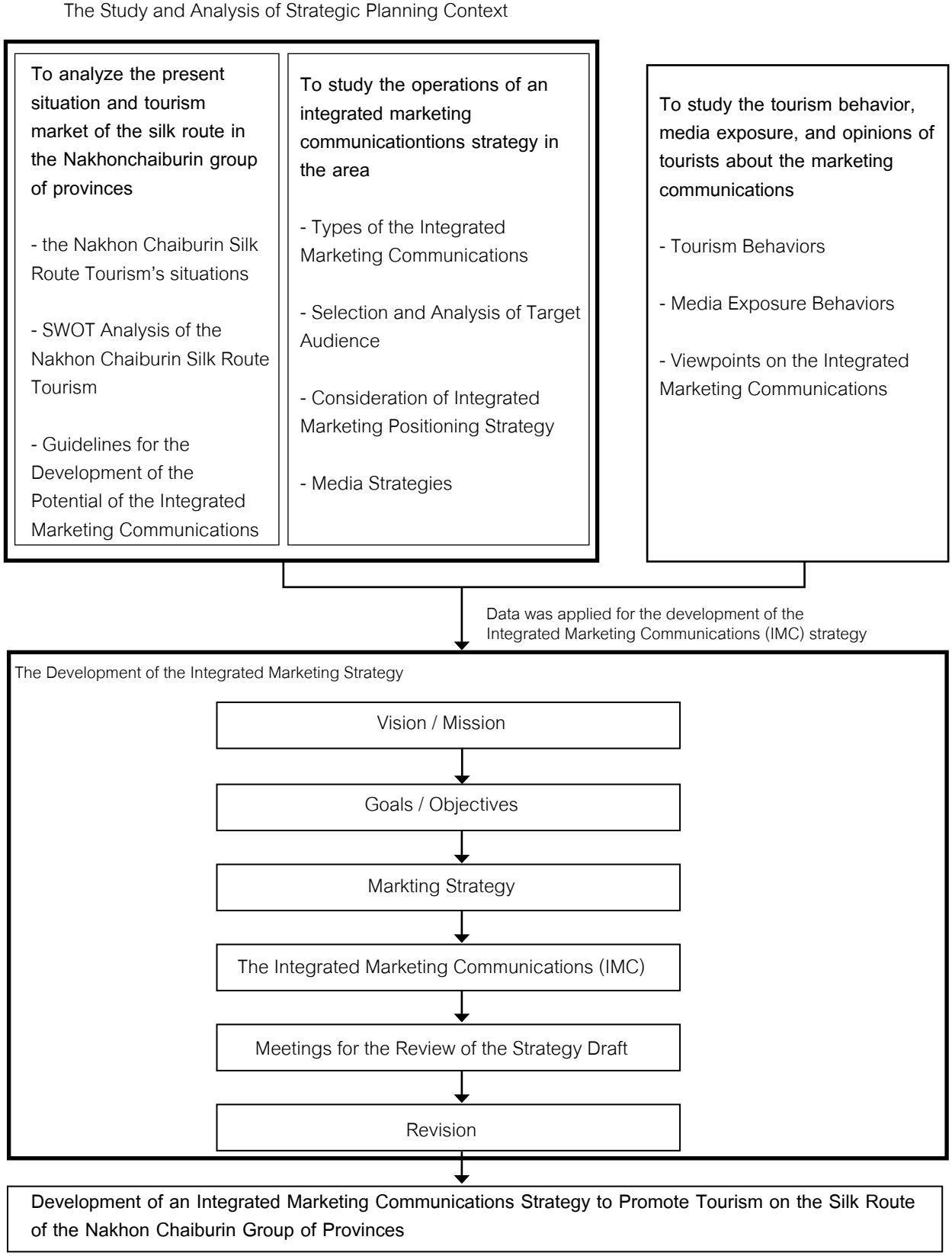
2.3 A group discussion with an aim to present the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategy in order to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group.

3. Data Collection Procedures

3.1 Studying and analyzing the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism's situations as well as its tourism markets, collecting data from documents and reports relating to tourist destinations and collecting data from in-depth interview with key informants as mentioned above

3.2 Exploring the situations of operations concerning the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategy in order to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group by collecting data from a questionnaire administered to tourists both Thai and foreign and ,collecting data from group discussion among key informants as mentioned above .

Research Framework



Research Results

1. The Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism's Situations as well as Its Tourism Markets

Strengths Geographically dispersed resources of cultural heritage with unique identity in the areas reveal the social and cultural evolution revolving around Khmer art and architecture reflecting its influence through building materials and technology. The areas are well equipped with potential cultural heritage, outstanding for their rare exemplification of Khmer art and architecture.

Drawbacks The cultural heritage sites are geographically dispersed and each province as well as organization administer their own tourism destinations independently. Therefore, they lack the joint administration concerning various issues, the wide-range tourism promotion and public relations, the communication on cultural heritage for the creation of knowledge and understanding in an attractive and up-to-date manner, the establishment of museums to promote learning.

Obstacles The Northeastern Region's hot climate can hinder tourism activities. Entrepreneurs hesitate to invest in both domestic tourism and border tourism due to the lack of the clarity in the administration and in the drive for the strategy implementation and the lack of stable political policy and foreign affairs.

Opportunities With the creation of strategy plans and budget allocation plans both at a provincial level and a provincial group level, the promotion for the joint administration of a provincial group can bring out the best in each of the tourism destinations and combine them to generate integrity and attractiveness of the tourism development.

2. The Conclusion of the Implementation of the Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy in order to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group were as follows:

2.1 The Layout of the Integrated Marketing Communications Major activities of the Integrated Marketing Communications of the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism are as follows: advertising, sales promotion, point of purchase communications, direct marketing communications, public relations, personal selling and event marketing.

2.2 The Process of the Integrated Marketing Communications to promote the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism is as follows:

2.2.1 Communication Process :The Nakhon Chaiburin provincial group, acting as the sender, collects data from various sources and converts the ideas and thoughts into a message in the forms of letters, voice, colors and movement among others. The message is then encoded and sent to the receiver via media or medium through various types of communication channels.

2.2.2 Factors for the Planning of the Marketing Communications: Factors for the planning of the marketing communications to ensure the strategic reliability of the Nakhon Chaiburin provincial group are as follows: strategic capability, past performance, corporate communication and external factors.

2.3 Strategy of Media Usage Planning for the Integrated Marketing Communications to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group

2.3.1 Strategy of Media Usage Planning for the Integrated Marketing Communications to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group

2.3.2 Media Strategies : Media strategies act as a part of marketing strategies which are deemed a model scheme for every participating sector in the Nakhon Chaiburin province group in order to ensure the objective achievement.

3. Concerning Tourism behaviors, Their Media Exposure and Their Viewpoints on the Integrated Marketing Communications in order to promoting tourism on the silk route, Nakhon Chaiburin Province Group, it was found out that both Thai and foreign tourists of the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route agreed with the format of the route's Integrated Marketing Communications at the highest level and this had an impact on their decision to make a journey. Also, media which easily access tourists and impact tourists' decision include the Internet, printed matter, personal media and mass media.

Discussion

Research results indicate that the Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy in order to promote the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism makes tourism marketing its priority. It attaches importance to target group, embraces tourists' opinions, integrates the information into decision-making process of the media action plan and marketing strategies. This is in line with Seri Wongmontha's idea on tourism marketing and trends of tourism marketing (2011) that tourism entrepreneurs need to identify what their customers are looking for from travelling, be it cultural appreciation, lifestyle, historical knowledge, tasty food, nice hotels or the purchase of one-of-a-kind products. As a result, their marketing planning can meet the demand effectively by providing quality service, assorted facilities, carefully-selected tasty dishes, diverse types of convenient transportation, hospitality and diverse activities.

According to Seri Wongmontha (2011), the participants' desirable qualities include willingness to accept challenging competition, strategic visions and good marketing plans, hospitality, diverse attractions, the marketing communication skill, the awareness of the importance of marketing communication and the development of tourism industry's human resources, the active role in encouraging local people to become good hosts and all employees to embrace an entrepreneurial mindset, and the readiness to adjust to the changing situations. Private entrepreneurs need to be able to adjust their business models, have the outstanding local culture, and are aware of the significance of the ongoing development of infrastructure and facilities.

According to Belch, G. & Belch, M. (2008), the integrated marketing communications are conducive to an organization's successful marketing strategies. A marketer needs to focus on the integration of various elements of marketing mix, the use of various assorted types of marketing communications to sell products and communicate with consumers. Therefore, marketing communications, marketing communications techniques and consumer research are all indispensable. Concerning product development as well as the development of other related parts for marketing productivity, marketing communication system is used for information technology presentation. Marketing communications via advertising need to be operated together with regular marketing research. It is essential that the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) concept integrate every element and plan for the proper proportion of tool usage relating to timing,

appropriateness and goals at each particular period of time.

Suggestions

1. Policy Suggestions

1.1 Government sectors, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Tourism and Sports Offices in Nakhon Ratchasima, Chaiyaphum, Buriram and Surin, and Offices of Tourism Authority of Thailand in Nakhon Ratchasima and Surin need to set their goals to systematically support tourism, establish a clear marketing management structure and to get involved in creating concrete networking.

1.2 Government sectors can study and apply the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategy in order to promote the Nakhon Chaiburin Silk Route Tourism in their practical development of tourism products.

1.3 Local administrative organizations should develop the potential of tourist destinations, support marketing budgets and foster the staff's service mind in order to generate an impressive tourist experience.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

2.1 There should be research on the Integrated Marketing Communications tools in order to create tools which can appropriately motivate each of the various people with different lifestyles for example in-trend, explorer, family value and conservatives.

2.2 There should be an experimentation of each of the Integrated Marketing Communications tools appropriate for tourist destinations and an examination on the effectiveness and efficiency of each individual tool.

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