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Photo by Pratchaya Leelaprachayanont

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# Tourism and Hospitality *Trend*

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## Tourism and Hospitality Trends (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2013)

### • Tourism and Hospitality Situations

According to the Bank of Thailand, the number of foreign tourists continues to increase from the end of the second quarter to the end of July 2013, with a total of 2.22 million international tourists. From the second quarter, despite the decline in the number of tourists in May 2013 to 1.85 million, the trend of the tourists is expected to increase until the end of the year, since Thailand is now approaching the high season. The hotel occupancy rate has risen from the end of May from 59.10% to 60.41% in the end of July 2013 where Bangkok and central areas indicated the highest increase of 64.30%.

Also, for the domestic MICE industry, the share of revenue generated from sales of meeting and seminar packages showed that the Northeastern region of Thailand had the highest growth, followed by the Central area (including Bangkok) and the Northern region, respectively.

### • Future of Regional Tourism Industry

With the new target number of international tourists visiting Thailand by the end of 2014 pegged at 28 million, Thai tourism has even more challenging tasks to accomplish. Due to growing popularity of several other ASEAN countries, such as Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos, it can be clearly expected that the competition will be more intense in the near future. However, Thailand should be able to still enjoy the geographical benefits of being at the center of the ASEAN region. It is highly possible to achieve the goal of more than 28 million tourists by the end of 2014.

Regional tourism development, especially the Mekong basin countries, can lead to double-digit growth in 2013 and 2014. Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand are now promoted as “one destination, five countries” where each country can support one another with different tourism elements, enhancing the tourist experience. In the year 2015, it is estimated that these five countries will welcome more than 50 million visitors.

ASEAN connectivity project is one of the future plans to strengthen the integrated transportation system among ASEAN countries in all types of logistics, including air, water and road. There are many regional tourism development collaborative projects to be implemented, such as the master plan for land transportation around ASEAN countries.

With the government aiming to achieve its 2-trillion Baht plan to improve the country’s infrastructure, major spending is expected in the tourism sector, especially in basic infrastructure of tourism development, specifically in the major cities, including Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Pattaya. The highly anticipated high-speed train project should support the tourism development in many underdeveloped areas of tourism around Thailand.

In terms of the target for 2014, Thailand has shifted its focus on the low-income tourists and is now aiming at the higher income group of international tourists, especially from Turkey, Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East, which have higher purchasing power in the tourism market.

## • Trends of Health and Wellness Tourism

Thai spa businesses have expanded into the global scale, with Thailand receiving another reputation as the “Land of Spa” since the destination can attract customers from China, Hong Kong, Japan and England. In addition, the growth of the spa sector has supported the increasing number of entrepreneurs to invest in this sector. Moreover, many spa companies have explored the international market for future business development.

Health and wellness sector clearly is considered the key player in the Thai tourism industry for the next few years. Many hospitals, such as Bangkok Hospital and Samitivej Hospitals, invest in new facilities and services to attract more international medical tourists. With the growing demand for Thai medical services and constantly improving reputations, Thai hospitals, clinics and medical centers should expect high growth in the coming years. One of the key areas to improve is to build trust in the global level for the “Thai medical tourism” brand. Currently, the benefits of medical tourism only go to the big hospitals under specific hospital chains.

Overall evaluation of the tourism and hospitality trends for the fourth quarter of 2013 is positive. However, floodings and political issues appear to be the most threatening factors for the industry while global geopolitical concerns (e.g. Syria and the Middle East) will not have direct impact on the tourism and hospitality businesses in the short run.

# Chinese Outbound Travel to Thailand and Its Policy

As seen from the figures below, Chinese tourist arrivals increased from 60,810 to 1,132,267, in a 20-year period, with the annual growth rate dropping slightly in 1994 (-1.64%) due to the Chinese government's crackdown on using government funds for travel purposes in 1993. The Thai Financial Crisis in 1997 created an unfavorable exchange rate and grew into the Asian Financial Crisis and adversely affected outbound tourism across the region. The greatest negative effect was in 2003 (-18.20%), with the American-Iraqi conflict and the SARS epidemic in Asia and in 2009 (-12.98%) due to the political crisis and H1N1flu pandemic that killed 44 people. In response to these downturns, Thailand launched a low-cost airline, hosted an APEC conference and opened the 1st Tourism Authority of Thailand office in Beijing and thereby boosted tourism demand. Eventhough the political conflict in Thailand in 2010 turned violent, the number of inbound Chinese tourists increased to 1,132,267 with a 38% annual growth rate, which was highest increase recorded for the past 20 years.

YEAR	No. of Arrivals	
	No.	+/- (%)
1991	60,810	-
1992	128,948	112.05
1993	261,739	102.98
1994	257,455	-1.64
1995	375,564	45.88
1996	456,912	21.66
1997	439,795	-3.75
1998	571,061	29.85
1999	775,626	35.82
2000	704,080	-9.22
2001	694,886	-1.31
2002	763,139	9.82
2003	624,214	-18.20
2004	779,070	24.81
2005	761,904	-2.20
2006	1,033,305	35.62
2007	1,003,141	-2.92
2008	937,358	-6.56
2009	815,708	-12.98
2010	1,132,267	38.81

Chinese tourist spending was generally stable after 1994. The average per capita spending was approximately 4,000-4,500 Baht/day until 2010. An increasing level of wealth and having disposable income are the main factors affecting their decision to travel. With a strong economy and continuous economic development in China, the spending power of the Chinese tourists is expected to grow. In addition, income is not evenly distributed in China. Therefore, Chinese tourists mainly came from the coastal cities where the mean income is much higher than in rural areas (Zhang et al, 2005). Another point worth noting is that tourism policies between China and Thailand were developed mainly from the main cities of China ???, such as Guangzhou, Kunming and Guilin, which are geographically located closer to Thailand, which facilitat-

ing the exchange of tourists between the two countries.

Acorn Marketing and Research (2005) reported that the traveling pattern of the Chinese tourist has changed in regards to intention to stay, determinant of traveling to Thailand and attitude towards the country. Interestingly, in the beginning, visiting relatives was the most popular intention given. Recently, research has shown that the main purpose of traveling was for leisure only, followed by leaving a high-pressure environment and making a change in their daily life pattern. In addition, most of them are interested in nature, i.e., beaches, rather than cultural heritage, local lifestyle, tradition and also spa services. Therefore, to promote Thailand, nature destinations should be considered. Lastly, of the many factors influencing Chinese tourists' traveling choices, security was of the greatest concern, followed by convenience in service, and value for money. Therefore, all these concerns are weaknesses for Thailand, and should prompt the government to look at its policies and plans for improvement.

The success of the tourism industry in Thailand can be measured mainly by the increased volume of tourist arrivals and amount of money they spend in Thailand. There are several reasons or policies which contributed to the growth of outbound tourism to Thailand, and they can be summarized as follows:

- Acquiring a tourist visa to Thailand was perceived as a simple process,

including visa on arrival and one-stop service, for tourists in border areas.

- Flight connections with more than 15 different cities in China became more accessible. Additionally, this policy was developed to share the flight benefits between both countries such as between Kunming, Guangzhou, etc.
- Tourism promotion development targeting China in 1999, with increased intensity afterward, resulting in the opening of a Beijing Tourism Authority of Thailand office in 2003.
- Between China and Thailand, there are several collaborative policies in place to support tourism and for increasing tourism demand; such as the agreement to exchange four million tourists per year.
- The policy to support cross-border tourism, which facilitates tourist convenience.
- Development of new routes for travel between Thailand and China; including a train line.
- The ASEAN agreement (which agree-ment???) with China.

All these policies and factors have influenced the tourism demand between China and Thailand. Additionally, the strong relationship between China and Thailand, China's strong economic growth and stability, have supported the development and the constant growth of the tourism industry.

Other factors such as natural resources, community benefits, and quality tourist identification, should not be overlooked when looking at long-term plans and policies in Thailand. Recent

research suggests that the Chinese tourism outbound travel for Thailand can be evaluated from three perspectives: the changing pattern of Chinese tourists, tourism policy development of Thailand, and unstable and unpredictable situations in Thailand. These should be considered in order to understand further development of tourism trends in Thailand, and should be taken into consideration in the policy-making process.

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## Creating Innovation in the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry plays a highly prominent role in the Thai economy in the areas of employment, resource allocation and local community development. As competitive as other business sectors, the hospitality industry has evolved to become one of the leading industries for supporting the growth of the global economy.

To enhance growth, firms need new products, new services or innovation to create superior value for their existing customers and attract potential customers. The basic guidelines for creating innovations are as follows:

### 1 Striving for Something “New”

In the service industry, many services can be imitated easily by competitors, resulting in firms having only a short-term competitive advantage. However, successful companies should always emphasize their initiatives to come up with new products or services.

For example, Marriott has recently introduced worldwide a new brand of hotel called “Edition,” the concept of which is to attract the Generation Y customers who have a different lifestyle from their predecessors (e.g. Baby Boomers and Gen X).

### 2 HRM Practices for Innovation

Firms can develop innovation even when they do not have a research and development department. This can be done by relying on creative employees working in a company with a strong corporate culture

to support the creation of new ideas. For example, adopting a decentralized approach allows employees to explore and test their new ideas and usually provides the company with greater opportunities to have new services and guidelines to new products. In practice, frontline staff are more likely to provide new practical techniques to improve the efficiency of the front office service. However, firms should allow the ideas of the frontline persons to be heard and processed into the company's knowledge storage.

Centralization limits the flow of fresh ideas and information, including talents and insights within the organization. In the service industry, employees interact with the end users or customers at all steps of the service process, leading to a greater degree of understanding how the service affects the acceptance or satisfaction of the customers and creating solutions to help customers become more satisfied with the overall services.

To systematically support hospitality innovation, firms have to emphasize employee training, empowerment, employee attitudes and commitment. Among the hospitality firms' concerns about innovation that must be acted upon at the start of the employee selection process include applying simulation for customer-employee interactions for basic problem-solving and customer service skills.

### 3 The Quality of Training

Poor employee training climate can only lead to fatigue and boredom, hence, the training goal will not be achieved. Successful companies should identify training goals and communicate the importance and expectation of the training for better results. Effective training supports knowledge transfer throughout the organization, especially in the section where teams from various departments join so that they can meet and learn from different dimensions of the organization.

### 4 Focusing on Multi-tasking Skills

Being able to perform several tasks in the hospitality context allows employees to see and understand the relationship of all tasks in the value chain, meaning that they can understand how innovation can affect the whole chain reaction throughout the service flow.

### 5 Flexible and Responsive Policy

In a fast-changing environment, there are several general environmental factors, such as customer expectation, new platform of technology and ability to outperform the competitors. Hospitality firms should maximize the benefits from daily, weekly, and monthly meetings to discuss and analyze the urgency of policy change to make sure that their products and services create superior value to the customers.

Hospitality firms with new innovation can always stay competitive and avoid the negative effect from competitions. In addition, improving innovation can be a long-term effort and investment, but it can definitely yield the above-average return for the company.

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# การสร้างควาเข้มแข็งให้การท่องเที่ยวชุมชน

การท่องเที่ยวชุมชนเป็นการท่องเที่ยวที่เป็นพื้นฐานที่สำคัญสำหรับการท่องเที่ยวไทย จริงๆ แล้วการท่องเที่ยวชุมชนเป็นทางออกที่สำคัญประการหนึ่งสำหรับการพัฒนาชุมชนในด้านต่างๆ เช่น เศรษฐกิจ สังคม รวมถึงการอนุรักษ์ขนบธรรมเนียมประเพณีในด้านต่างๆ

การสร้างควาเข้มแข็งสำหรับชุมชนที่มุ่งพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวนั้นจะต้องเน้นในเรื่องต่างๆ ที่สำคัญดังนี้

**1.** การรักษาและฟื้นฟูความเป็นมาประวัติศาสตร์ของชุมชน การที่นักท่องเที่ยวเดินทางเข้าไปในชุมชนต่างๆ เพื่อความเพลิดเพลินและพบเจอกับประสบการณ์ใหม่ๆ ที่แตกต่างจากกิจวัตรประจำวันของพวกเขา นอกจากนี้ นักท่องเที่ยวยังคงต้องการเรียนรู้ที่มา ประวัติศาสตร์ที่น่าสนใจของแต่ละพื้นที่ ซึ่งหากแต่ละชุมชนมีการจัดการความรู้เกี่ยวกับประวัติศาสตร์ความเป็นมาและถ่ายทอดให้กับบุคลากรท่องเที่ยวได้อย่างเป็นระบบ โดยทุกคนมีข้อมูลที่ถูกต้องและครบถ้วน ก็จะทำให้นักท่องเที่ยวเกิดความประทับใจและชุมชนเองก็จะได้ประโยชน์จากการทราบข้อมูลข้อเท็จจริงของชุมชนของตนอีกด้วย

**2.** ผู้นำของชุมชนที่เข้มแข็ง  
ในแต่ละชุมชนในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวจำเป็นต้องมีบุคลากรเข้ามาเกี่ยวข้องและร่วมแรงร่วมใจกันจำนวนมาก ดังนั้นการที่มีผู้นำชุมชนที่เข้าใจและเห็นแก่ประโยชน์ของชุมชนในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวอย่างทุ่มเทและต่อเนื่อง จึงเป็นหัวใจที่สำคัญต่อความสำเร็จของท่องเที่ยวชุมชน

**3.** ความพร้อมใจของชุมชนในการจัดการท่องเที่ยว  
ความสามัคคีคือพลัง ซึ่งสามารถใช้ได้เป็นอย่างดีในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยว เพราะทุกชุมชนท่องเที่ยวต้องการบุคคลในบทบาทต่างๆ ที่ร่วมมือและช่วยเหลือกัน เช่น คนขับเรือ เจ้าของสวน และกลุ่มแม่บ้าน ซึ่งการที่แต่ละกลุ่มทำหน้าที่ของตนอย่างเต็มที่และเอื้อเฟื้อต่อกันจะสามารถทำให้การท่องเที่ยวชุมชนมีความยั่งยืน

**4.** การสร้างพันธมิตรทั้งที่เป็นหน่วยงานรัฐบาลซึ่งจะสามารถเข้ามาช่วยเหลือได้ในเรื่องของการพัฒนาระบบสาธารณูปโภค ต่างๆ รวมถึง ถนนหนทาง ศาลาที่พัก ห้องน้ำ และ หน่วยงานอื่นๆ เช่น มหาวิทยาลัย ในการเข้าร่วมพัฒนาองค์ความรู้ด้านต่างๆ เช่น ทางทะเล การรักษาสิ่งแวดล้อม การรักษาทำนุบำรุงและในหลายกรณีร่วมฟื้นฟูประเพณีวัฒนธรรม การแสดง การละเล่นพื้นบ้าน เพื่อเป็นการดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยว และยังเป็นสิ่งสำคัญในการรักษาและเพิ่มอัตลักษณ์ของท้องถิ่น

**5.** การเรียนรู้และทำความเข้าใจความต้องการและพฤติกรรมของนักท่องเที่ยว การจัดการนักท่องเที่ยวไม่ใช่เรื่องที่เราจะสามารถทำได้โดยธรรมชาติ เนื่องจากนักท่องเที่ยวแต่ละคนแต่ละกลุ่มมีความต้องการและ ■ ความคาดหวังที่แตกต่าง หลายๆ ชุมชนที่เริ่มทำการท่องเที่ยว อาจต้องมีการปรับตัวที่จะทำความเข้าใจในความหลากหลายและแตกต่างของนักท่องเที่ยว ซึ่งชุมชนจะต้องมีการเรียนรู้และสร้างความเข้าใจต่อไป

ด้วยปัจจัยต่างๆเหล่านี้หากชุมชนท่องเที่ยวได้มีการให้ความสำคัญและลงมือพัฒนาอย่างจริงจังย่อม จะสามารถเห็นผลสำเร็จของการจัดการท่องเที่ยวชุมชนให้มีความเข้มแข็งและยั่งยืนได้อย่างแน่นอน

# Creating a Meaningful Theme: Deep Meaning Model

Creating a meaningful theme is considered as one of the most crucial elements for success in interpretive programs of cultural and natural resources (Ham, 1992; Larsen, 2003). However, it is challenging for interpreters to come up with a meaningful message presented to visitors in an entertaining approach, especially for heritage sites which have an accomplished and abstract concept embedded in the medium of static buildings. Therefore, what message (idea, concept, story) should be conveyed to visitors? What should a meaningful theme be like? And how to create a meaningful theme for heritage sites that now are 'lifeless'?

Crafting a meaningful theme may be the challenges of developing effective interpretive programs, especially when applying to heritage sites which have relatively abstract and complex concepts to deliver to modern visitors (Larsen, 2003; and Kohl, 2004). Such concepts include socio-political change, culture and religion, and economic conditions including globalisation. Heritage sites may have values related to a wide range of disciplines and interest such as science, philosophy, history, religion, architecture and art. Instead of focusing on exclusively on any one of these areas, interpreters may find the most meaningful story with a universal concept which contributes to connecting audiences to the heritage values. This requires great effort in articulating truly meaningful ideas that inspire visitor curiosity and interest. Therefore, the process of creating a meaningful theme ideally requires productive collaboration among scholars, multi-discipline experts, and other staff members of heritage sites.

Jon Kohl (2004) created a meaningful theme for heritage interpretation called 'Deep Meaning Model'. Figure 1 shows a process of deep meaning model that provides a comprehensive way of converting resources into a meaningful theme by giving a greater importance of crafting the meaningful theme with respect to a universal and intangible connection. This systematic approach clearly states a powerful idea that helps provoke visitors to think deeply about the resource. The following steps describe the Deep Meaning Approach.

# THE MANAGEMENT TRAINEE PROGRAM THROUGH THE EYES OF MUIC'S GRADUATES: INTERVIEW OF OUR GRADUATES JOINING I-GRAD PROGRAM WITH INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP (IHG)

In Thailand we can see that "Management Trainee" programs are conducted by various companies with their well-known brands such as Unilever, Nestlé, Mars, L'Oréal, Zara and Standard Chartered. Some of the hotel chains and brands in the hospitality industry have also launched their own similar programs. The I-Grad Future Leaders Programme of InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), Dusit International's Management Trainee Program, Corporate Trainee Programme of Shangri-La and Elevator Graduate Program of Hilton are considered as clear examples of the intention to produce their own management personnel through in-house programs.

As stated before, the I-Grad Future Leaders Programme of IHG is one of the management trainee programs in the hospitality industry which provide an opportunity to candidates in Thailand. It is the fast-track program which allows chosen employees with high potential, at the beginning of their career path, to participate in the specific program designed to build future leaders for the company. The program lasts 18 months and includes intensive learning program to prepare the selected management trainees to be ready to take management roles in the near future. When completing such program, successful trainees will be promoted to be one of the management members, assigned in the specialized area they have chosen. By spending a shorter period of time to become leaders, the program has been seen as the fast-track way to promote employees.

One of the great ways to get to know more about this kind of program, namely by seeing it through the eyes of participants, can provide rich information from the ones who gain direct experience during the program. To use such a way, the program will be demonstrated through the interview with three graduates from Mahidol University International College (MUIC) namely, Miss Sukalin Poommisuthapol (Fah), Miss Voramon Kaewketthong (Kwan) and Mr. Nattawut Wetprasit (Boom), who were selected to join I-Grad Future Leaders Programme. All of them belong to Batch 2012 and have continually experienced it ????. Now they are here with us and more than ready to share with us the interesting things they have faced during the program.

1. Please introduce yourself and briefly tell us about your work experience as a management trainee at IHG.

**Sukalin:** I am Fah, Sukalin Poommisuthapol; I graduated from MUIC with a major in Tourism and Hospitality Management in 2012. Currently, I was a management trainee at InterContinental Bangkok for 14 months in which I was assigned to all departments within the hotel and now I choose to emphasize the training session in revenue management.

**Voramon:** My name is Voramon Kaewketthong or Kwan. I belong to the Food Science and Technology Class 508, MUIC. With this program, I totally shifted my job from science to hotel operation. Being a management trainee gives me a big opportunity to learn every detail of running a hotel, to be involved in every department and to have a hotel manager as a coach to guide me along the program. After a six-month rotation in every department (Phase 1) at Holiday Inn Bangkok, I chose to specialize in the Rooms Division and focus on Front Office operations. My duties fall between a supervisor's role and a duty manager's role which are responsible for daily operations, promoting guest feedback and increasing overall guest satisfactions by initiating and involving hotel's projects.

**Nattawut:** I am Nattawut Wetprasit or Boom. After finishing my High School Diploma from Westchester High School in LA, I enrolled at MUIC right away in 2008 majoring in Tourism and Hospitality Management because I like travelling and I always want to learn how a hotel is operated. Therefore, I was definite that it was the right choice for me. I also minored in Spanish as my third language. During my college studies, I joined a lot of extra-curriculum activities such as the MUIC Volunteer Club, participating in volunteer camps. Before I graduated, I served the College as the President of Student Association which has taught me leadership fundamentals to qualify for the I-Grad Management Trainee Program. Five days after the last day of my class, I immediately joined I-Grad Management Trainee program based at Holiday Inn Bangkok Silom. Out of three phases of the program, I have done Phase 1 which covered the first 6 months that I have to constantly rotate to every single department and section in the hotel to learn and connect the dots. Currently, I am under Phase 2 in which I have to choose a department to be specialized in. In such phase, I am now learning Human Resources and Talent Development in depth.



From Left to Right:  
MISS  
SUKALIN  
POOMMISUTHAPOL  
AND  
MISS  
VORAMON  
KAEWKETTHONG

# MR. NATTAWUT WETPRASIT



## *2. What do you like the most in I-Grad Program?*

**Voramon:** The best part of the program is that it offers you a chance to learn even if you have zero knowledge in hotel operation (like me), to try, to have your own team and to develop yourself and acquire leadership skills. Also, whatever idea you have, you can directly present to your coach which is your GM.

**Sukalin:** What do I like the most in an I-Grad Program is to be given the opportunity in the career path. The program allows us to find ourselves by getting a chance to be trained in all departments, so we get to know what we like and don't like. Also, being an I-Grad, we will get a strong support from our GM and many experts in the hotel.

**Nattawut:** What I like the most out of the program is the commitment from IHG to invest in me, to groom me well to be a leader. I can obviously see the commitment from IHG since I have been selected because the selection process is quite intense and you can see that they really take it serious by having many GMs and Directors of HRs to sacrifice one full day to be the assessors. Once you are selected, you will have an exposure to the management aspects and you are direct coachee of your GM.

## *3. What is the toughest challenge you have faced during the program? How did you overcome it?*

**Voramon:** Toughest challenge I faced is how to work with people. Most of them are seniors with strong knowledge and experiences. Being humble is the best way to get along with them.

**Nattawut:** Seniority and hierarchical culture. In my property, the turnover rate is very low as the majority of the staff works here for more than 10-15 years so they are quite experienced in what they do. However, I am quite young and have entered into a junior-management level who will soon be elevated. There might be a bit of resistance but to overcome this, I utilize my strength that I have which is humility. I listen to them and respect them. It actually works well as I got respect from them in return.

**Sukalin:** People are the toughest challenge I have faced during the program, but they are the challenges that can make us reach our success. I overcome the challenges by trying to understand their actions, activities, needs, and behaviors.

*4. What is your opinion about the fast-track program in tourism and hospitality industries?*

**Nattawut:** In my opinion, I think it's a marvelous program to allow the qualified candidates who are fresh graduates with leadership fundamentals to learn more about the hotel industry. However, in the hotel industry, what matters to stand out from the crowd is your work experience, not your GPA of 3.5. Therefore, you have to work hard to learn as much as you can during the program to gain knowledge and second-hand experience from your trainers.

**Voramom:** It is a great opportunity. Not only learning hotel operation but learning more about yourself- what you are good at and what you want to be in the future. But because it's named 'fast' track, you have to be a fast-learner.

**Sukalin:** Fast-track program is one of the valuable opportunities because it is the shortcut to reach our goal or career path. Moreover, it allows us to shift ourselves once we know that we are not in the right track or right way. The fast-track program may be tough with many challenges, but there are many good opportunities in return.

*5. Please give a suggestion to students/graduates who are interested in joining the program.*

**Nattawut:** "Focus on your study but focus more on extra-curricular activity." I do believe in education that can develop one's ability and fundamentals but be sure to acquire hands-on experience because it can really develop many skills, strategic thinking and give you out-of-textbook knowledge.

**Sukalin:** Just be yourself and show your passion! The program is open for everyone and it happens once a year, so there will not be too late for anyone who is interested in applying to the program. Once you face the failure, it doesn't mean that you will never win again in the future. All of the challenges will prepare you for your future.

**Voramom:** IHG has I-grad recruitment every year. You can keep updating through our Facebook page 'IHG careers,' or meet us at the job fair. Please remember that everyone is welcome! It does not matter what your majors are. Just apply and try your best!

The interviews about the on-site experiences which our graduates have learned during the program can serve as sources for us to be more familiar with the management trainee program, apart from other communication channels used by the hotels. However, for anyone who is really interested in joining the program, receiving information from other sources might not be enough but trying one's best to be selected and directly gain the experience might be the better option.

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# THM-MUIC *Inside* Congratulations!

Salaya Pavilion Hotel and Training Center (SPH) has won the silver and bronze medals on Food Carving in 2013's Food and Hotelier Expo. 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Pattaya

SPH's kitchen team by Mr. Surakarn Totunmuenwai, Demi Chef de Partie, Mr. Akarapong Wongphothon, Chef de Partie and Mr. Pramote Pankeaw, Commis Cook have joined the food carving competition in the Food and Hotelier Expo, 2013 in Pattaya on early August 2013. Their carving works are made from taro and various types of fruits. Three of them with the help of SPH's colleges have helped prepared the project months in advance starting from concept, design and its sketch together with the actual carving preparation. This is the first time that SPH joins the competition, the silver and bronze medals are therefore a big success. Congratulations!!!!

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## Salaya Pavilion Hotel Team Wins Silver and Bronze Medals

The Salaya Pavilion Hotel (SPH) team won one silver medal and one bronze medal at the Food and Hotelier Expo (7<sup>th</sup> Edition) in Pattaya on August 8-10, 2013.



Mr. Surakarn Totunmuenwai, Demi Chef de Partie of SPH's Kitchen Team, won the silver medal in the Food Carving (Individual) category while his team, composed of himself, Mr. Akarapong Wongphothon, Chef de Partie, and Mr. Pramote Pankeaow, Commis Cook, won the bronze medal in the Food Carving (Team) category.

The expo, held at the Royal Cliff Hotel, saw 40 participating teams and 20 individual contestants. It was the first time for SPH to join the competition and the team had to prepare for several months. The event's sponsors included the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Pattaya city government, Nong Prue (Pattaya) municipal government, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau, Food and Beverage Management Association of Thailand, The Housekeeping Club, and Pattaya Spa Club.



# Miscellaneous

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## The Study of Motivation in Festival Attendance

Events and festivals have become a rapidly growing industry, with corresponding growth in its professional education, professional organizations and research, creating significant economic, political and socio-cultural impacts on their destinations. In the past two decades, there are an increasing number of studies in visitors' motivation in festival attendance which is crucial in facilitating the understanding of the decision-making process of festival attendees and enable festival managers to improve the design and marketing of festival offering.

### Festivals

Getz (2005, p.21) defined festivals as 'public, themed celebrations.' Festivals and events is one of the fastest growing segments within tourism (Goeldner & Ritchie 2011: 188). An exponential increase in the number of educational programs offered in higher education (Getz, 2010) has accompanied the growth of professional organizations. Economically, its significance in extending the length of stay, increasing tourist spending, promoting year-round visitation and increasing the distribution of travelers has prompted revival of traditional festivals as well as the creation of newly instituted festivals (Cohen, in Teo et al 2001) Socially, festivals as a form of universal celebration among human cultures, is now given new missions of urban regeneration, promotion of diversity and maintaining a sense of cultural identity and instilling a sense of pride (Robinson et al, 2011).

### Motivation in Festival Attendance

As part of this festival 'boom,' the study of festival motivations has grown in the past couple of decades (Lee, 2006). According to Iso-Ahola, motivation is the "internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behavior (Iso-Ahola 1980, cited in Crompton & McKay, 1997, p. 425). Despite the fact that there are other variables in work (such as socio-demographic and socio-cultural factors), motivation is the triggering point of the whole decision-making process.

Crompton and McKay (1997) suggested three reasons of studying the motivation of festival attendance. Firstly, the understanding of motives facilitates the designing of festival offering. Secondly, motives are closely affiliated to satisfaction. Motive is the key to understanding the festival goers' decision-making process and in turn forms a part and evaluating satisfaction.

According to a review by Li and Petrick (2006), literature in the field can be categorized into (a) early discoveries that established a research framework, (b) cross-cultural testing that tested the transferability of previous studies and (c) studies that contested or confirmed the generalizability of findings. Though a universal scale of measuring festival motivations has yet to be accomplished, a practical and consistent research framework for surveying festival and event motivation is developed and adopted. Generally speaking the researchers will develop a list of motivation items, for each respondents will be asked to assign importance in relation to their attendance decision; the results are then factor-analyzed into several dimensions; and statistical tools are employed to further investigate the relationship between motivation dimensions with event or demographic variables.

Despite the growing number of literature in festival motivation, little research has been conducted in Thailand. McDowall's (2010; 2011) study of the Tenth-Month Merit Making Festival in Narathiwat has identified four motivation dimensions of family/friend; excite-

ment; event novelty and escape. While the findings supported the results of previous researches on festival motivations, more study in the context of Thailand has to be conducted to understand the subject.

As increasing number and forms of festivals are promoted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand as offerings, more research on the motivation in festival attendance in the context of Thailand is instrumental. As Getz (2010) suggested, 'often much more can be learned from comparisons among festivals. Even more revealing can be cross-cultural comparisons' (p.31).

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