



Marketing Communication Guidelines (7Ps) for Promoting Community Tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The objectives of this research were to: 1) Investigate the tourism behavior of tourists towards community-based tourism destinations in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, and 2) Explore marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province.

Methods: This study employed a quantitative research approach. The population and sample for this study comprised 400 tourists who visited and participated in activities with local communities in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using percentages and content analysis. The findings of the study revealed that.

Results: Tourists visited U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, primarily for recreation, selecting destinations based on their personal interests. Regarding marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, the operational approach should prioritize fostering mutual understanding and collaboration among relevant government agencies, private-sector operators, local communities, and other tourism stakeholders. Significant attention should be dedicated to various media platforms, effective promotion of community tourism attractions, the organization of festivals and traditional events, and initiatives aimed at encouraging sustained tourist visitation. Furthermore, proactive marketing strategies should be implemented through online channels.

Conclusion: It is crucial to foster shared understanding and collaboration among all stakeholders to position the community in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, as a quality leisure destination for tourists. This should involve an integrated process that combines communication and marketing, utilizing the 7Ps of the marketing mix. Additionally, to effectively promote community-based tourism through marketing communication, relevant agencies should provide various forms of support, including budget allocation, personnel, and diverse media resources.



These efforts are essential to support the management of marketing communications for tourism promotion, continuously updating promotional materials and destination information to ensure they remain current and relevant, thereby capturing tourists' interest and motivating them to select the area as their travel destination.

Keywords: *Marketing Communication, Tourist Behavior, Community-based Tourism*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has emerged as a significant industry, playing a pivotal role in the economic and social development of many countries worldwide, including Thailand, which has consistently recognized the potential and benefits of tourism. In particular, community-based tourism (CBT) has garnered increasing interest, as it emphasizes the active participation of local communities in management and directly benefits them from tourism activities. Simultaneously, it promotes the conservation of culture, local ways of life, and natural resources, aligning with the concept of sustainable tourism development. Therefore, CBT not only generates income for residents but also fosters a sense of pride in community identity, distributes income to regional areas, reduces inequality, and empowers communities to achieve long-term self-reliance (Intrepid, n.d.). This leads to not only investment and job creation, but also income distribution to local communities. In addition, it also generates domestic circulation of money from Thais traveling within the country. It brings hundreds of billions of Thai Baht in foreign exchange earnings into Thailand annually (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2011).

U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, has high potential for community-based tourism development, owing to its long and prominent history as the cradle of the Dvaravati civilization. It possesses archaeological sites, significant temples, and unique agricultural lifestyles and local handicrafts that can attract tourists. Thailand possesses historical tourist attractions distributed across all regions of the country. These visits aim to explore sites associated with historical events, allowing visitors to appreciate the historical value of the locations and gain knowledge and understanding of the origins of various ancient monuments and artifacts (Chanchanit Ketnoi & Somruthai Soontayatron, 2018). U Thong, Suphan Buri, is likewise a significant historical tourist destination. However, the development and promotion of community-based tourism in this area may not have received adequate or effective communication and marketing. Consequently, its existing potential has not been fully realized. Tourists may still be unaware of the charm and unique identity of the communities in U Thong District, due to limited access to information and a lack of ongoing motivation to visit. Therefore, establishing clear and appropriate marketing communication strategies is essential to connect communities with tourists and build awareness of the value of community-based tourism in the area (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration, Public Organization, 2021).



In light of the preceding discussion, this research aims to investigate the tourism behavior of tourists visiting U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, and to explore appropriate and effective marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in the same area. This will be achieved by understanding tourists' behavior toward community-based tourism destinations, including the factors and motivations influencing their travel choices. Subsequently, the collected data will be analyzed to formulate proactive and practical marketing communication strategies. The development of actionable plans and policy recommendations that benefit relevant government agencies, private-sector operators, and local communities in the area. This collaborative effort is expected to drive the sustainable growth of community-based tourism in U Thong District and position it as a recognized quality leisure destination. According to Nutvigorn Hansapan & Chamroen Khangkhasri (2021), problem analysis and communication strategies aimed at enhancing marketing communication potential for community-based tourism enable the approach to be applied to other contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

7Ps Marketing Strategies

The 7Ps Marketing Mix: A Comprehensive Framework for Business, Product, and Consumer Understanding (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023). The 7Ps Marketing Mix, often referred to as the 7Ps, is a strategic framework designed to foster a deeper understanding of a business, its products, and its target consumers. The 7Ps are integral to a marketing plan, enabling businesses to precisely address consumer needs with their products and services, thereby establishing a significant competitive advantage in the marketplace.

2.1 Product

In the context of the 4Ps, "Product" refers to the goods or services a brand offers to consumers. However, within the 7Ps framework, the definition of Product is significantly expanded. It not only encompasses the physical or service offering itself but also extends to its intrinsic attributes, quality standards, the perceived value it delivers to consumers, its usability, inherent benefits, the functionalities that cater to consumer requirements, and ultimately, the brand's overall image and perception (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.2 Price

Price denotes the strategic determination of product and service costs. This element is crucial for attracting consumers to purchase at a price point that is both desirable for the business and satisfactory for the customer. Effective pricing strategies necessitate a primary consideration of appropriateness, ensuring the price is commensurate with the value customers receive, aligns



with the product's quality, and remains competitively positioned without being excessively higher than competitors. A pricing approach that prioritized profit alone, without considering suitability or product quality, led to diminished popularity and an inability to keep pace with market rivals (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.3. Promotion (Marketing Communication and Promotion)

Promotion encompasses the strategies for marketing communication and promotional activities aimed at stimulating higher-than-normal sales volumes. This can manifest through various channels, including digital advertising (e.g., Facebook Ads, TikTok Ads, Instagram Ads), content creation showcasing products, organizing engaging customer events, product launch events, influencer marketing campaigns, or offering special product promotions. The primary objective of Promotion is to incentivize consumers, fostering greater interest and purchase intent. Promotional efforts can be deployed across both online and offline (physical store) channels, with pricing and details tailored to each platform (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.4 Place (Distribution Channels)

Place refers to the channels through which products are distributed from the brand to the consumer, ensuring the most convenient, effortless, and rapid accessibility. The greater the convenience and ease of access offered by the chosen channels to consumers, the higher the likelihood of successful sales. This factor is instrumental in significantly increasing a business's sales revenue and profitability (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.5. People (Human Resources)

People are a critical component of the 7Ps Marketing Mix, representing the human elements of the business ecosystem. This includes internal staff within the organization, the consumers themselves, and any individuals or entities engaged in the buying and selling process. The primary role of People is to cultivate strong relationships between the brand and its customers, ensuring excellent service delivery that leads to customer satisfaction and repeat patronage driven by positive impressions. Therefore, People are paramount; regardless of how superior a product or how sophisticated the marketing efforts, substandard service from poorly trained personnel can severely damage a brand's reputation and customer loyalty (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.6. Process (Operational Procedures)

Process refers to the operational procedures adopted by a business to ensure the highest-quality products and services, or to the methodologies employed to achieve desired strategic objectives. This includes activities such as product development, service enhancement, maintaining product



standards, monitoring service delivery, product promotion, and customer care. The overarching purpose of Process is to ensure customers receive the best possible experience by defining a precise customer journey at every stage, from initial product awareness to final purchase (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

2.7 Physical Evidence (Tangible Environment)

Physical Evidence encompasses the tangible elements of the physical environment or the sensory perceptions customers experience when interacting with a brand's products and services. This can involve touch, sight, sound, smell, or the overall feeling received. Physical Evidence significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions. For instance, a difficult-to-navigate website, a slow-loading application, or a poorly accessible physical store can cause potential customers to abandon their interest within seconds of encountering such negative physical evidence (ANGA Bangkok Co., Ltd., 2023).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a quantitative approach to investigate tourism behavior and marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province.

3.1 Population and Sample

Given that the target population for this study was large and its exact size was unknown, the sample size was determined using Cochran's (1953) formula for an unknown population size. With 95% confidence and a 5% margin of error, the minimum required sample size was estimated at 384 participants. For practical considerations in data collection and analysis, the researcher opted for a total sample size of 400 participants, comfortably exceeding the calculated minimum of 384. Consequently, the sample for this research comprised 400 tourists visiting community-based tourism destinations in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province. These participants were selected using convenience sampling.

3.2 Research Instruments

The research instrument used was a questionnaire, comprising three main sections: 1) General demographic information of the respondents, 2) Data concerning tourists' behavior, and 3) Marketing mix factors. The developed instrument was then assessed for content validity by three experts to evaluate the consistency of the questionnaire items. Following this, the instrument was pilot-tested with a sample of 30 participants to assess its reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The data analysis revealed that the overall questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of 0.94.



(Cronbach's alpha), indicating very high reliability. The data collection period was between October 2024 and July 2025

3.3 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics, including percentages, means, and standard deviations (S.D.). The criteria for interpreting the mean scores were established as follows:

- A mean score of 4.51 – 5.00 indicated the highest level
- A mean score of 3.51 – 4.50 indicated a high level
- A mean score of 2.51 – 3.50 indicated a moderate level
- A mean score of 1.51 – 2.50 indicated a low level
- A mean score of 1.00 – 1.50 indicated the lowest level

4. RESULTS

4.1 Tourist Travel Behavior towards Community-Based Tourism Destinations in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province

The study results, derived from 400 respondents, revealed that the majority were female (56%), while males constituted 44%. Regarding education level, 16% held a postgraduate degree, 37.33% a bachelor's degree, and 46.67% had less than a bachelor's degree. The majority were aged 26-35 years (32.00%), followed by those aged 16–25 years (25.00%). In terms of marital status, 40.33% were single, 33.67% were married, and 26.00% were widowed/divorced. Most respondents (59.66%) had no children. Regarding occupation, 38.00% were private sector employees, followed by government officials (32.33%). Their average monthly income was primarily in the 20,001–30,000 Baht range (39.33%), followed by 10,001–20,000 Baht (37.00%). Most respondents (65.33%) visited U Thong District for the first time, while 21.33% had visited 2-3 times.

The findings on tourist behavior indicated that tourists visited U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province, primarily for relaxation (70.66%), followed by leisure/enjoyment (13.66%). The majority of travel was in groups (64.66%), with respondents traveling with family/spouses/relatives (49.00%) and friends (32.67%). Destinations were chosen based on personal interest. The most considerable portion of expenditure was on travel expenses (35.67%), followed by food/beverages (30.70%). Tourists predominantly chose to travel during weekends or holidays (62.00%). The duration of their trips was mainly 1-2 days (62.6%), followed by 3-4 days (20.33%).

Regarding tourists' opinions on the marketing mix (7Ps), the overall perception of the marketing mix factors was high (Mean = 3.66, S.D. = 0.65). When considering each dimension individually, the highest mean score was for People (Mean = 4.05, S.D. = 0.80), followed by Physical Evidence (Mean = 3.83, S.D. = 0.66), Process (Mean = 3.76, S.D. = 0.61), Place (Mean = 3.71, S.D. = 0.81), Price (Mean = 3.70, S.D. = 0.60), Product (Mean = 3.70, S.D. = 0.59), and Promotion (Mean = 3.43, S.D. = 0.74), respectively. Further details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation of Tourists' Perception Levels towards Marketing Mix Factors (7Ps) (n=400)

Marketing Mix Factors (7Ps)	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level of perception
1. Physical Evidence	3.83	.66	high level
2. Product	3.70	.59	high level
3. Price	3.70	.60	high level
4. Process	3.76	.61	high level
5. Place	3.52	.61	high level
6. People	4.05	.80	high level
7. Promotion	3.43	.74	high level
Total	3.66	.65	high level

4.2 Explore marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province

The study findings revealed that most tourists visited primarily for relaxation and enjoyment, often traveling in groups with family/friends and preferring short trips (1-2 days) during holidays. Their main expenditures were identified as travel and food. The overall perception level of the marketing mix factors (7Ps) was high, with the 'People' dimension scoring particularly well. However, the 'Promotion' dimension recorded the lowest mean score compared to the others. Therefore, marketing communication strategies should focus on raising awareness and promoting the area's unique strengths, especially the human aspect and experiences that contribute to relaxation and leisure.

4.2.1 Product Communication

Emphasize Experiences for Relaxation and Enjoyment Communicate by highlighting activities that promote relaxation (e.g., river cruises to observe local life, visits to organic farms, traditional craft workshops) and enjoyment (e.g., tasting local cuisine, cultural performances), aligning with tourists' primary objectives.



Offer Packages for Families and Friends; Create tourism packages specifically designed for group travel, such as weekend trips with shared activities, to attract the primary target groups.

Showcase Community Uniqueness and Stories Communicate the background stories of community products and services (e.g., history of local dishes, traditional craftsmanship wisdom) to build cultural value and interest.

Establish Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) and communicate the distinctiveness and unique identity of community-based tourism destinations in U Thong District that cannot be found elsewhere.

4.2.2. Price Communication

Present Value for Money and Transparency Communicate package or activity prices that reflect good value for the experience received, with clear breakdowns of expenses (e.g., travel costs, activity fees, food expenses) to enable tourists to easily plan their budgets.

Promote Group Deals: Develop discounted promotions or special package pricing for group/family travel to encourage purchase decisions.

Highlight Affordability/Accessibility Communicate that the destination offers various budget options to attract tourists with average incomes ranging from 10,001 – 30,000 Baht.

4.4.3. Place Communication (Distribution)

Enhance Online Information Accessibility: Develop user-friendly and comprehensive websites or social media pages as information hubs, featuring straightforward navigation to tourist attractions and convenient booking or inquiry channels.

Collaborate with Partners: Coordinate with Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), local agencies, or community tourism platforms to expand access and booking channels.

Emphasize Travel Convenience Communicate detailed travel information to the U Thong District, including major routes and public transportation options, to facilitate first-time visitors.

4.4.4 Promotion Communication

This area requires significant development:

Create Engaging Digital Campaigns: Utilize social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) to create high-quality and attractive visual/video content. Focus on community storytelling, engaging activities, and relaxing atmospheres.



Leverage Influencer Marketing: Invite travel bloggers or micro-influencers whose followers align with the target demographic (26-35 years old, female) to visit and provide genuine reviews, building credibility and awareness.

Organize Promotional Activities, or Festivals. Publicize annual special events or festivals that reflect local culture to attract tourists during holidays.

Develop Content Marketing: Create articles, blogs, or e-books on topics such as "Things to Do in U Thong," "One-Day Itinerary in U Thong," and "Accommodation and Delicious Food in U Thong" to provide information and inspire travel.

Participate in Travel Fairs: Attend domestic and international travel trade shows to promote the destination and build networks.

4.5.5. People Communication

A key strength to be communicated

Feature Stories of Local People: Create content that highlights the faces and stories of community members, such as a local restaurant owner, a local guide, or an artisan, to showcase the warmth and friendliness that tourists highly value.

Utilize Tourist Testimonials: Collect positive feedback and reviews from tourists who were impressed by the hospitality and interactions with community members to build trust.

Communicate the Culture of Hospitality: Emphasize the image of excellent hosts, friendly smiles, and readiness to provide service, fostering confidence and positive impressions.

4.6.6. Process Communication

Communicate Ease of Planning and Access: Clearly explain booking procedures, travel arrangements, and participation in various activities to alleviate tourist concerns, especially for first-time visitors.

Provide Inquiry and Problem-Solving Channels: Establish convenient and rapid contact channels (e.g., Line Official, Facebook Messenger, Call Center) to provide information and assistance during their trip.

Present Quality Management: Communicate the systematic and well-organized management within the community, including aspects of safety, cleanliness, and service standards.



Communicate the community's systematic, well-organized management, covering aspects such as safety, cleanliness, and service standards.

4.6.7. Physical Evidence Communication

Present a Clean and Appealing Image: Utilize high-quality photographs and videos to showcase the natural beauty, cleanliness of locations, comfortable accommodation, and various facilities.

Emphasize the Display of Products and Services: Convey the atmosphere of shops, local products, and handicrafts presented in an organized and attractive manner.

Create Tangible Promotional Materials: Develop beautifully designed brochures, maps, or souvenirs that tourists can keep as mementos and use to spread word-of-mouth.

5. DISCUSSIONS

Tourist Travel Behavior towards Community-Based Tourism Destinations in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province

The study, based on 400 respondents, revealed that the majority of tourists were female (56%), predominantly younger adults aged 26-35 (32.00%), and a significant portion had less than a bachelor's degree (46.67%). Most were single (40.33%) and without children (59.66%). Their occupations were mainly in the private sector (38.00%) or government (32.33%), with average monthly incomes primarily between 10,001 and 30,000 Baht. Notably, the majority (65.33%) were first-time visitors to U Thong District. The findings on tourist behavior indicated that visitors to U Thong District primarily sought relaxation and enjoyment. Most tourists traveled in groups, often with family or friends, choosing destinations based on personal interest. Their main expenditures were on travel and food/beverages. Trips predominantly occurred during weekends or holidays and were typically short, lasting 1-2 days. Regarding tourists' opinions on the marketing mix (7Ps), the overall perception was high (Mean = 3.66, S.D. = 0.65). The 'People' dimension received the highest mean score (4.05, S.D. = 0.80), while 'Promotion' had the lowest (3.43, S.D. = 0.74). These theories can be utilized to better understand and formulate effective marketing strategies, as follows: Tourist Motivation Theory: Push and Pull Factors, Consistency with Research Findings: The study revealed that most tourists visited for "relaxation" (70.66%) and "enjoyment" (13.66%). These represent Push Factors, reflecting tourists' intrinsic motivations to escape daily routines, reduce stress, and seek new experiences (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979). Simultaneously, the finding that tourists "choose destinations based on personal interest" indicates the Pull Factors of U Thong District itself, such as unique community characteristics, local activities, and the area's natural beauty, which can fulfill those specific interests. Implications for Application: Marketing communication should emphasize the benefits of rest, relaxation, and enjoyable experiences (Push factors) while also presenting the unique



selling points of community-based tourism destinations that align with tourists' specific interests (Pull factors). The Extended Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) Consistency with Research Findings: The research directly assessed the 7Ps of the marketing mix and found a high overall perception level. Notably, the "People" dimension received the highest mean score (4.05), whereas "Promotion" recorded the lowest (3.43). This aligns with the concept of Booms and Bitner (1981), who expanded the traditional 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) to include People, Process, and Physical Evidence, highlighting the unique characteristics of services. The strong performance of the "People" dimension suggests that the quality of service and interaction with local community members are crucial for tourist satisfaction and represent a key strength to be maintained and communicated. The lowest score for "Promotion" indicates that communication and outreach strategies for the target audience are not yet robust enough. Moreover, the 7Ps framework should guide marketing development and communication. Emphasize the strength of the "People" dimension through storytelling and showcasing authentic, friendly service, and urgently improve the effectiveness of "Promotion" strategies, especially through digital channels. And the Experience Economy Theory, Consistent with Research Findings. Tourists visiting for "relaxation" and "enjoyment" are not merely consuming goods or services; they are seeking memorable experiences. The high importance tourists place on "People" indicates that interactions with locals, warm hospitality, and friendly service are integral to creating positive experiences. This aligns with Pine and Gilmore's (1999) concept that the contemporary economy is not just about selling products or services, but about staging unique and memorable "experiences" for customers. Group travel with family and friends, and participation in traditional craft workshops, all involve engagement and shared experiences. Implications for Application: Marketing communication strategies should focus on presenting the "experiences" that U Thong District can offer, such as local lifestyle immersion, cultural learning through various activities, and fostering a connection with the community, thereby meeting the demand of tourists seeking more than just a trip.

6. CONCLUSION

Explore marketing communication strategies to promote community-based tourism in U Thong District, Suphan Buri Province

Therefore, the proposed marketing communication strategies focus on:

6.1 Product: Emphasizing relaxation and enjoyable experiences, offering group packages, and showcasing community uniqueness and stories.

6.2 Price: Communicating value for money, transparency, group deals, and diverse budget options.

6.3 Place: Improving online accessibility, fostering partnerships, and highlighting travel convenience.

6.4 Promotion (Key Development Area): Implementing engaging digital campaigns, influencer marketing, organizing events, developing content, and participating in travel fairs.

6.5 People (Key Strength): Featuring stories of locals, utilizing tourist testimonials, and communicating the strong culture of hospitality.

6.6 Process: Ensuring ease of planning and access, providing clear inquiry/problem-solving channels, and showcasing quality management (safety, cleanliness).

6.7 Physical Evidence: Presenting a clean and appealing image through high-quality visuals, emphasizing product displays, and creating tangible promotional materials.

These strategies aim to leverage the district's strengths, particularly its human aspect and unique experiences, while addressing weaknesses in promotional efforts to raise awareness and effectively attract target tourist segments—aligning with Marketing Communication Strategies and the Extended Marketing Mix: 7Ps for Services. The proposed strategies comprehensively cover all elements of the 7Ps of the services marketing mix, including Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence (Booms & Bitner, 1981). Specifically, the strategies' emphasis on "People" as a core strength and the use of "Process" and "Physical Evidence" to build confidence and a positive image underscore the relevance of this theory. Kotler (1997) discussed concepts and theories related to consumer decision-making, positing five stages: need recognition or problem awareness, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

It expands upon the original 4Ps to accommodate the unique characteristics of service industries like tourism. Consistency, Product Emphasizing relaxation, memorable experiences, group packages, and community stories. Price Communicating value for money, transparency, and diverse budget options. Place Enhancing online accessibility and travel convenience. Promotion, implementing digital campaigns, influencer marketing, events, content development, and trade fair participation. People, highlighting local stories, tourist testimonials, and a strong culture of hospitality. Process, ensuring ease of planning, addressing inquiries, and managing service quality. Physical Evidence, Presenting a clean image, high-quality visuals, and tangible promotional materials. Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), in the "Promotion" section, identified as a key development area, outlines the use of various channels such as engaging digital campaigns, influencer marketing, organizing events, content development, and participating in travel fairs. The coordinated integration of these diverse communication tools to deliver a clear, consistent, and cohesive message to the target audience is the core principle of IMC (Shimp & Andrews, 2013). This approach will enhance the effectiveness and credibility of



the intended messages. Consistency: The coordinated, diverse marketing promotion strategies aim to maximize awareness and effectively attract tourists. Experiential Marketing: The strategies emphasize "relaxation and enjoyable experiences," "community uniqueness and stories," and feature "stories of local people" and the "culture of hospitality." All these efforts are geared towards creating meaningful and memorable experiences for tourists. Experiential marketing (Schmitt, 1999) focuses on creating customer value through various experiences—sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational—which aligns with building perceptions and value not just around the product itself, but around the entire experience received. Consistency, the emphasis on "memorable experiences," "community stories," and the leveraging of "stories of local people" aim to foster deep connections and significant value. Destination Marketing, All proposed strategies ultimately aim to "raise awareness" and "attract target tourist segments" to the "district." This is achieved by leveraging the area's strengths, particularly its "local people" and "unique experiences." This approach reflects the principles of destination marketing (Pike, 2008), which focuses on branding, promoting, and managing a specific tourist destination to make it known and appealing to visitors. This theory provides a framework for creating a clear and distinctive identity for the area. Consistency, the focus on utilizing the district's strengths to create a "unique identity" and "attractive image" to draw tourists to that specific destination. This is further corroborated by the study conducted by Wisetphao & Charnwannakorn (2025), Guidelines for Developing the 7Ps Marketing Mix for Cultural Tourism: A Case Study of Wat Lampaya Floating Market, Nakhon Pathom Province, which found that opinions regarding all seven dimensions of the marketing mix were high. These seven dimensions of the marketing mix were found to be crucial for promoting community tourism. Additionally, Natthapasit Pimpakorn et al. (2025) investigated the tourism components, marketing mix, and integrated marketing communication influencing sustainable tourism in Uttaradit Province. Their study revealed that the marketing mix and integrated marketing communication are crucial factors impacting sustainable tourism in Uttaradit Province.

7. LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Recommendations for Enhancing Community-Based Tourism in U Thong District

1. Cultivate and Communicate Authentic Experiential Offerings (Product & Experiential Marketing) Given that tourists primarily seek relaxation and enjoyment, and the district's unique offerings drive interest, it is crucial to develop and communicate authentic, engaging experiences.
2. Optimize Promotional Efforts through Integrated Digital Strategies (Promotion & IMC) The low score in 'Promotion' highlights a critical area for improvement. A robust, integrated approach is necessary to raise awareness and effectively reach target demographics.



3. Harness the "People" Factor as a Core Strength (People & 7Ps for Services)

The 'People' dimension is U Thong's highest-scoring asset. This strength must be strategically communicated to build trust and enhance the destination's appeal.

4. Ensure Accessibility, Value, and Smooth Processes (Place, Price, Process & 7Ps for Services):

To facilitate visits, especially for first-time visitors, and cater to the target income bracket, operational aspects must be transparent and efficient.

5. Enhance Physical Evidence to Reflect Quality and Appeal (Physical Evidence & Destination Marketing)

Visual appeal and tangible elements significantly influence perceptions.

7.2 Recommendations for Future Research on Community-Based Tourism in U Thong District

1. In-depth Analysis of Tourist Psychographics and Segmentation: While the current study identifies demographic profiles and broad motivations (relaxation, enjoyment), a more nuanced understanding of tourists' psychographics (e.g., values, attitudes, lifestyles, travel philosophies, specific interests beyond general relaxation) is crucial. This would allow for more precise market segmentation and highly targeted product development and communication. Given that most visitors are first-time, understanding the initial decision-making process and anticipated experiences is particularly valuable.

2. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Implemented Marketing Communication Strategies. The proposed strategies aim to address the identified weaknesses in 'Promotion' and leverage strengths in 'People'. Future research should assess the impact of these implemented strategies both quantitatively and qualitatively. This will provide evidence-based insights into which communication channels and messages are most effective, and whether the desired changes in tourist awareness, perception, and behavior are achieved.

3. Assessment of Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts on the Local Community: as a community-based tourism destination, understanding the impact of tourism on the host community is paramount for sustainable development. The current study focuses solely on the tourist perspective. Future research should investigate how increased tourism affects residents' livelihoods, cultural integrity, social structures, and the natural environment. This includes assessing the distribution of economic benefits, potential for employment, community perceptions of tourism, and any emerging challenges or concerns.

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