

Abstract

Head of Project	Pimlapas Pongsakornrunsilp, Ph.D.
Email	kpimlapa@wu.ac.th
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This study aimed to study the needs of digital platforms among tourism business in Krabi province, to study e-tourism using behavior of tourists who visit Krabi, to study key success factors of applying digital platform in Krabi tourism industry, and to develop guidelines for developing digital platform for tourism business in Krabi. The samples of this study were consisted of 221 accommodation businesses, and 303 domestic tourists and 337 international tourists who had travelled into Krabi province. Questionnaires were used to collect data from businesses and tourists, while qualitative methods were employed to collect data from other stakeholders including tourism businesses and related agencies through focus group, interviews, and participant observation.

The results show that accommodation businesses had occupancy rate 69.81 %, an average number of 38.65 rooms, an average age 8 years 9 months 18 days, and 1.45 IT staffs per business. The majority of tourism business has operated online business, and a half of them present sales and marketing information because they understood the benefits of increasing marketing channel for accessing customers. On the other hand, tourism businesses did not operate online because they did not perceive the importance of online business and lack of IT staffs. However, to develop digital platform, tourism businesses mentioned that digital platform should be easy to use, convenient, and fast, including low cost and be able to present real time information.

Furthermore, this research has collected data in regarding to tourism behavior of domestic and international tourists, e.g. travelling, internet use, booking rooms/accommodation, accessing to internet, the needs of online marketing mixes, and so on. These data are crucial for developing digital platform in corresponding with users' needs, and also guidelines to specify digital platform marketing promotion activities. The findings are employed to develop the digital platform for tourism business in Krabi: specifying clearly target groups, focusing on sales, creating perception and understanding toward digital platform, developing IT staffs, and specifying main agency to take responsibility of digital platform.