

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This final chapter begins with discussion and conclusions on the research findings, followed by recommendations and suggestions for future research in this area.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the intention to use OSNs with regard to travel applications among college students in three Bangkok-based universities. Also, this study aimed to study the differences between demographics of these college students and their perception of the benefits and incentives to use OSNs for travel purposes.

1. Respondent's General Information of Online Social Network Usage

400 questionnaires have been distributed, and the results show that all respondents are member of online social networks. Most of them traveled out of Bangkok and used online social networks for travel in the past 12 months. Facebook is the most popular social networking site, which has been used daily by respondents.

2. Respondents' demographic characteristics

Most of the respondents are female, of Thai nationality and have disposable spending of Baht 5,000-10,000 per month.

3. Perception the Use of OSNs with regard to Travel Decision Making

3.1 Benefits of use

Overall, respondents' perception of Functional Benefit of Online Social Network is in "High Benefit". When looking into specific question, "It's much more convenient for me to receive or to share information about destination" and "Online Social Network enable me to be up-to-date on travel information and activities of interest", both are in the "High Benefit" sector.

Overall, respondents' perception of Social Benefit of Online Social Network is in the "High Benefit" sector. When looking into specific question, "This is a better way of establishing or keeping relationship with others who share the same interests regarding vacation trips" and "It's very efficient to communicate with my friends who have visited or lived in that city and ask them to join my trip", both are in the "High Benefit" sector.

Overall, respondents' perception of Hedonic Benefit of Online Social Network is in the "High Benefit" sector. When looking into specific question, "I was interested with the travel photos, videos and stories on Social Networking Sites", "The use of Online Social Network in the process of organizing and taking vacation trips is both pleasing and fun" and "It's fun to share my travel experience with others on Social Networking Sites", all three are in the "High Benefit" sector.

3.2 Incentives to use

Overall, respondents' perception of Trust Incentive of Online Social Network is in "Neutral". When looking into specific question, "The travel information on Social Networking Sites is more trustworthy than in magazines, TV and from other sources", "I think tourists' comments and suggestions on the Social Networking Sites are to be trusted." and "I trust information from Online Social Network to make travel decision.", all three are in "Neutral".

Overall, respondents' perception of an Altruism Incentive of Online Social Network is in the "High Incentive" sector. When looking into specific question, "My comments about trips and destinations may be of interest to others.", "I always share with friends and classmates what I know and the new things that I discover about places to visit. I am anxious to explain what I know.", and "I use others' contributions and comments about trips and destinations and, to some extent, feel an obligation to contribute as well." all three are in the "High Incentive" sector.

Overall, respondents' perception of Incentive of Online Social Network in Socio-Technical Environment is in the "High Incentive" sector. When looking into specific question, "Online Social Network usage in my region (in schools, services, businesses, travel, etc.) is high.", "Using Online Social Network is trendy and makes me compatible with my friends and classmates.", and "Some personal referents (friend, classmate, relative etc.) use Online Social Network in the process of organizing trip and sharing travel information has to a certain extent, influenced my use.", all three are in "High Incentive" level.

4. Intention to use Online Social Network in travel Decision Making

Overall, respondents' Intention to use Online Social Networkings in travel is in the "High Intention" sector. When looking into specific question, "In the future, I will encourage or recommend my friends to use Online Social Networks for travel purposes.", "I am sure that I will use these Online Social Network tools again to organize and develop vacation trips.", and "I will use Online Social Networks to comment on certain aspects of trips, upload travel photos or videos, and contribute my travel experiences and knowledge.", all three are in the "High Intention" sector.

5. Testing Hypotheses

Result of the significant differences between respondents' nationality and their perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling

The results show that respondents' nationality and respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences".

Result of the significant differences between respondents' gender and their perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling

The results show that respondents' gender and respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences".

Result of the significant differences between respondents' disposable money and their perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling

The results show that respondents' disposable money and respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences".

Result of relationships between the respondents' perception using Online Social Network and their intention to use them with regard to traveling

We can conclude that "the correlation is statistically significant" which is in the high level.

Discussion

The results show that respondents' nationality and respondents' perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences". That means respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling will not be different even if there are changes in respondents' nationality.

Respondents' gender and respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences". That means respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling will not be different even if there're changes in respondents' gender.

Respondents' disposable money and respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling have "no significant differences". That means respondents' Perception of the use of Online Social Network with regard to traveling will not be different even if there're changes in how much they spend on their disposable money.

It has been found that the correlation between the respondents' perception using Online Social Network and their intention to use OSN with regard to traveling is

0.726 or 72.6%, which is above the significant level of 0.05; therefore, we can conclude that “the correlation is statistically significant” which is in the high level. This result was consistent with Parra-Lopez, et al. (2009)’s finding that “the benefits of use, especially social and hedonic benefits significantly affected tourist participants and contribute to social media. These researchers identified them as incentives that positively motivate tourists to contribute to social media”.

The high level of acceptance by this young market and their involvement with OSN has major economic and social implications, especially for tourism businesses. With the emerging of internet era, businesses in tourism are shifting their focuses from traditional to digital marketing. Not only OSN is a popular tool for young travelers to share their traveling ideas, but also it is effective media for tourism businesses to advertise with less cost. Businesses targeting young travelers benefit from OSN which has global coverage, advertising or sending information or pictures to people from over the world, and that information will be shared to their online friends in a minute.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Tourism businesses

1. The results show that Social Networking Sites are a convenient tool to gain up-to-date information about travel destinations. This provides opportunities for tourism businesses to promote and advertise their services. Facebook has the biggest piece of pie among Social Networking Sites, so it is wise for tourism businesses to have at least a Facebook page for those who don't already have one. For those who already have a Facebook presence, it is recommended that it is frequently updated with appropriate information, pictures, deals into the website.

2. From the findings, the respondents are interested in travel photos, videos and stories on Social Networking Sites, and in turn, he/she also shares his/her travel photos videos, and stories. This sharing can be good or bad experiences. This exchange is a significant aspect of the connection between the technology and the

individual travel experience of college students. So, it is important for tourism business to provide good services, to impress the customers, to make sure that customers will share their good experience of the trip.

Research Recommendation

1. This research focused on Online Social Networks related to tourism in the broader view. It is recommended to do future research in more specific areas, such as Online Social Networks regarding to hotels, resorts, or some specific tourist attractions.

2. This study examined the intention to use OSNs for travel purposes. Future research could be focused on another demographic feature .e.g. related people (older or younger).

3. From a marketing perspective, researchers could investigate the value of customer feedback and satisfaction on tourism products through OSNs, as well as on the consequences of loyalty to the use OSNs in travel and services provided on SNSs.

4. Future research should attempt to investigate tourists purchase intention in order to better identify the roles that OSNs play in travel and tourism, building long-term relationships with travelers and ultimately and sustaining profitability in tourism markets.