

Marketing Planning Strategy to Promote Family Agro-Tourism: A Case Study of Bang Nam Phueng Community Prapradeang District, Samutprakarn Province

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Abstract—The objectives of this study are to increase tourism products and to develop family agro-tourism. The research methodology was to analyze internal and external situations according to MP-MF and the MC-STEPS principles.

The results of this study highlight following necessary improvements; extend the cycling routes, increase the number of bicycle rental shops, offer a recreation place for the elders, organize a space for the floating market products and increase tourism activities throughout the year. In ‘places or distribution channel’ we discuss the improvement of facilities, specifically the routes to facilitate elder visitors and visitors on wheelchairs and furthermore the arrangement of educational trips to relevant centers in the community. In ‘promotions’, we discuss the implementation of an “all inclusive package” were the agro-tourism program, health-conscious program and the elderly fun program converge.

Keywords—Marketing Planning Strategy, Agro-tourism, Bang Nam Phueng.

I. INTRODUCTION

EACH local community has the potential to develop as a tourism oriented community, depending on what resources the local community possesses [1]. Major agricultural productions and tourism generate income for the province, which again will help raise agricultural production and tourism. It is another way to create agricultural sustainability and distribute income to the general population relying on tourism. Agro-tourism is an integration of tourism and agriculture. Its purpose is to support and promote the relation of agriculture and community lifestyle with tourism. This extends from the service sector to the production structure of the country, to add value and competitiveness as another option in tourism and sustainably lead agricultural conservation and development.

Moreover, farmers have more income and more options, and they are able to be proud of their culture, lifestyle and occupation, resulting in succession and conservation of the agricultural occupation in a long term [2]. The researchers chose to study Bang Nam Phueng Community because it has been an ancient community located on Chao Phraya River, maintaining nature and atmosphere, including people’s

lifestyle through the agricultural occupation since the Ayutthaya period. The predominant income stream comes from gardening, e.g., fruit gardens and flower gardens. Moreover, the community preserves its history of a traditional lifestyle mainly based on agricultural occupation [3]. However, the mainstream tourism has made the changes in the tourism of the community, importance of family institution and warmth of Thai families. As a result, there is a tendency to increase a gap between family members. Simultaneously, the elder group has become more and more in the society [4]. The researchers viewed its importance and considered the possibility of the family agro-tourism route, resulting in building a strategy to promote family agro-tourism under the contextual potential of the Bang Nam Phueng Community. This is to create a family network and competitive advantages of a floating market, and to attract more visitors, which in turn will support job creation, increase income and lead to tourism industry development. By implementing the gained information, new guidelines have been devised to improve, plan, and promote the touristic value of the floating market to best suit its potential.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II presents materials and methods used in this work. Section III presents ‘The Determining Marketing Management Strategies’. Finally, Section IV offers a conclusion and suggestions for a paper with future research.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Objective and Benefits

The objective of this research is to increase tourism products and develop an agro-tourism source for family. The benefits of the research are:

1. The community acquires additional income from the amplification of tourism activities due to the promotion of family tourism.
2. Create an image of family agro-tourism.
3. Visitors acquire insight and knowledge in the wisdom and tradition of the community.
4. Visitors can directly purchase products and services from producers, which lead them to get quality products at reasonable prices.
5. Build good family relationships due to having space to do activities together.

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6. The community gains self-pride, awareness and wisdom in the conservation of natural resources and local history.

B. Theoretical Framework of the Research

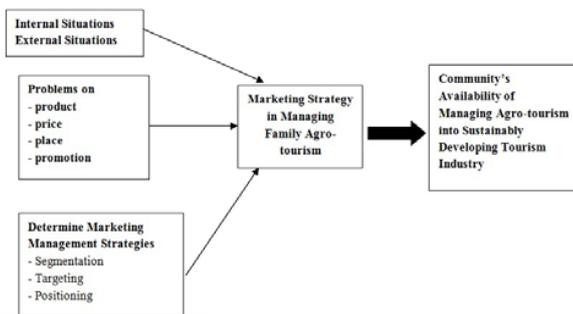


Fig. 1 Theoretical Framework of the Research

C. Research Methodology

The researchers studied documents, textbooks, and articles on theories and concepts, as well as research works on agro-tourism and Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market management. Moreover, it included observation and in-depth interviews with the community leader, the representatives of people in the community, and visitors at the floating market and surrounding areas. After that, the researchers analyzed internal and external situations of the Bang Nam Phueng Community with the MP-MF principle, consisting of Marketing (M), Production (P), Management (M) and Finance (F) and the MC-STEPS principle[5] i.e., Market (M), Competition (C), Social & Culture Value (S), Technology (T), Economic (E), Political & Legal Issue (P) and Supplier (S). Furthermore, they determined strategies to promote family agro-tourism, namely through segmentation, targeting and positioning. Describing each stage of the marketing plan cycle to promote family agro-tourism required tactics in marketing, production, purchasing, finance, and personnel management to identify marketing management strategy consisting of products, price, place and promotion.

III. THE DETERMINING MARKETING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

A. Products

To ensure an increase and diversity of visitors, trendy products should be created, especially for family agro-tourism, as follows:

1. Increase cycling routes in the Bang Nam Phueng community to learn the community's lifestyle, enjoy the nature and clean air, all in proximity of Bangkok. Also, publicize the cycling activities of the visitors into their residence because some might think it affects their daily life.
2. While the cycling activities are being promoted for the visitors, the number of bicycle rental shops should increase from 4 to 10 to meet visitors' needs.
3. Increase canal activities, i.e., offer rowing boats to see lifestyle of people, apart from riding water cycle. This will let visitors better experience the traditional floating market.

4. The Bang Nam Phueng Music Hall, currently a recreation place for the elder's singing activities, should be modified to become a family activity hall, which can host various types of activities for all kinds of people.
5. Organize a space for the floating market products, such as food and household items, decorations, flowering and ornamental plants, as well as products from outside the community.
6. Increase tourism activities throughout the year.

TABLE I
TOURISM ACTIVITY IN 12 MONTHS

Month	Tourism Activity
January	New Year Festival and National's Day Activity
February	Bang Nam Phueng Love Festival
March	Vegetarian Festival with Bang Nam Phueng
April	Songkran Festival consisting of Family Day & Elderly Day Activity
May	Bang Nam Phueng Food & Dessert Festival
June	Bang Nam Phueng Organic Agriculture Fair
July	Activities for Children, teenagers and persons with Disabilities
August	National Mother's Day Celebration
September	Bang Nam Phueng Free Bike Day Fair
October	Suansilp & Ancient Music Fair
November	Loy Krathong Festival
December	National Father's Day Celebration

B. Prices

Pricing strategy should be set according to the local product Standard. The Subdistrict Administrative Organization should ensure price tags are visible on the products and consistently check the prices to build up visitors' confidence.

C. Places or Distribution Channel

No matter where the visitors come from, what help them to arrive at their destination conveniently and quickly without losing their way, are guideposts to Bang Nam Phueng Community. Therefore, the Distribution Channel should be as follows:

1. Make signposts for short- and long-distance cyclists, guideposts to learning centers in the community, including price tags of products and services. The visitors are not familiar with the areas and they probably feel insecure travelling around the community. However, the guideposts should be all of the same design and use natural materials.
2. Improve the landscape and routes to the floating market by expanding the area to facilitate elder visitors and people on wheelchairs to be safer. The route to the floating market is one-way, so the visitors have to walk carefully in opposite directions. It is more difficult to step aside for elders on wheelchair. Besides, aisle side barriers should be built to prevent falling into the canal.
3. In case of publicity, the Bang Nam Phueng Community should publish articles in local newspaper, i.e., Fama Newspaper of the Provincial Administrative Organization or other local newspapers, i.e., Bangmuang News. There is no direct expense for issuing an article as advertisement, but some funds may be needed for gathering information.

4. Arrange educational trips to learning centers in the community for the youth, press representatives, and international travel agencies, focusing the interest of the youth and the foreign visitors on the local wisdom. As a result, these target groups will publicize the information to various kinds of media outlets and build alliances with travel agencies.
5. Creating business news, i.e., schedule a 12-month tourist calendar of activities held at Bang Nam Phueng through brochures and pamphlets, launch of new products or tourism events in the province and at Bang Nam Phueng Community.
6. Organizing family agro-tourism exhibitions and tourism fairs in the shopping centers to introduce agro-tourism locations and the surrounding areas.

D. Promotions

Because this family target group often gives great importance to travelling expenses, the researchers designed the "All Inclusive Packages" which focuses on family activities described as follows:

1. Agro-tourism Program
2. Health-conscious Program
3. Elderly Fun Program

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the study of basic information of the Bang Nam Phueng Community and analyzing its internal and external situations, the researchers pinpointed several tourism advantages. From its ancient community history to the moorage for foreign merchants trading with Thailand, the proximity to historical places such as Samut Prakan or Pak Nam and neighboring three cities; Phra Pradaeng, Nakhon Khuean Khan, and Mueang Samut Prakan, and also five-period historic, i.e., Lopburi, Sukhothai, Ayudhaya, Thonburi and Rattanakosin periods.

Moreover, the Bang Nam Phueng Community has a geographic advantage, being surrounded by the Chao Phraya River. Consequently, soil conditions in the community are rich in minerals and nutrients from a variety of plants and this supports the traditional occupation of the Community, fruit gardeners, being famous for Barracuda mangoes and Cavendish bananas. It is the strength in production based on the abundance of agricultural resources which can grow economic crops, such as gacs and orchids. Besides, there are bases for learning local wisdom, i.e., learning places for using gacs, making palm sugar, breeding flowering and ornamental plants, making herbal joss sticks, making herbal compress balls, and learning center for traditional Thai medicine.

The community strength also comes from 4 places providing education from kindergarten to elementary school, that is, the pre-school child care center in Wat Bang Nam Phueng Nai, the Bang Nam Phueng Nork Child Development Center, Wat Bang Nam Phueng Nork School and Wat Bang Nam Phueng Nai School. There is a sub-district health promotion hospital and there are social groups in the community, such as, Bang Nam Phueng Women Group consisting of housewives doing additional work in their free

time and a Saving Group.

The strength viewed by outsiders is that the Bang Nam Phueng Community is considered the largest green and ozone area for people living in Bangkok and Samut Prakarn. However, the tourism situations have changed in consistence with the economic condition. Nowadays, tourists are more careful with their money and pay more attention to quality. Moreover, rivaling communities have applied a more aggressive price strategy to attract shrunken markets, so the visitors have more destinations to choose from and tend to travel shorter distances and spend less time to make a decision. Also, the Bang Nam Phueng community has some disadvantages, i.e., tourism products are over-focused on the floating market, lack of visitor diffusion, insufficiency of bicycle rental shops and with uncertain opening and closing times, and waste management problems, especially at the Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market. Although there are waste dumpers, they are insufficient compared to the number of visitors. Besides, vendors are not aware of taking care of the canal. The researchers recognized these problems and analyzed the tourism market. It showed that the target group that can be attracted to the Bang Nam Phueng Community is the group of family visitors. It does not only redouble a number of visitors, the community potential can also serve all kinds of visitors. What is required to achieve this is a space for doing activities. The Bang Nam Phueng Community has the space for doing all kinds of activities, for instance, garden and music hall for the elders, home-grown products and goods like vegetables favored by housewife groups, and short- and long-distance cycling routes serving husbands and children. Opening the Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market ensures communal recreation activities; families having meals together on holidays, more warmth among family members, less problems with leisure time management and free time maximization.

However, to promote such activities, the landscape need to be improved in order to be reached conveniently, to look tidy, and it must be based on more natural materials so as to create the atmosphere of an agricultural floating market.

Finally, planning the promotion of tourism is a process occurring at every stage and every group assists in developing sustainable tourism, building a true understanding of tourism, while focusing on long-term benefits. In addition, it stimulates self-support, creating jobs for local people through the promotion of products from folk wisdom, the opening of learning centers for later generations, and the arrangement of a variety of touristic activities for people in the community. This can be achieved with agro-tourism and special activities according to the 12-month tourism calendar, by letting people in the community actively participate in the events. A community always understands its social structure and culture better than an outsider and it will have more potential of success in managing tourism than governmental officers or outside entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it reduces the problems of community exploitation and the monopolization of commercial and tourism activities.

Apart from that, the current community lifestyle reflects the

individual and the relationship of a family longing for a traditional lifestyle. The community managing tourism based on local wisdom, should seek forms of activities revealing its uniqueness rather than imitating activities from other places. The Bang Nam Phueng Community is largely unique in its agriculture and has a long local history, and is therefore suitable to be promoted as a destination for agro-tourism. This kind of tourism, along with agriculture, will be another prospect to provide growth and development, resulting in strong and sustainable practices.

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