

# **An Exploratory Study on Tourism Authority of Thailand Organizational Image Attributes**

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## **Abstract**

This research identified the attributes that construct the Tourism Authority of Thailand's (TAT) organizational image and explored the current positioning of each attribute. This research was separated into two phases. The first phase used qualitative, exploratory and inductive research to obtain attributes that constitute the TAT's organizational image. This process is an arbitrary process (Dowling, 1988). There were forty-two attributes generated from the first phase. The second phase mostly used quantitative research to examine the importance level and TAT current performance level of each image attribute considered by both TAT internal and external stakeholders. The survey data was collected during September – December 2014. The Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) was used as the analysis tool. The researcher also extended the analysis by using Paired Sample t-test, which is an additional benefit of the existing data. The result of the IPA helped to identify which attributes emerge important based on the opinion of TAT stakeholders, as well as knowing the positioning of each image attribute. The result of Paired Sample t-test showed all attributes have a significant difference between the importance's mean score and the performance's mean score. The importance's mean score of each attribute is higher than the performance's mean score. This implied that TAT has room for improvement its performance in all attributes. Furthermore, there is some confusion among TAT stakeholders, especially on the perceived service and functionality attributes. Thus, The TAT needs to emphasize and clarify its current roles and responsibilities. Otherwise, the stakeholders will have the wrong expectations of the TAT organization.

*Keywords:* corporate image, organizational image, National Tourism organization image, Tourism Authority of Thailand image, importance-performance analysis.

## **Introduction**

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is an important national tourism organization (NTO), which plays a significant role. Nowadays, there is intense competition in tourism worldwide. TAT needs to get collaboration and cooperation from all levels, both domestic and international to create a competitive advantage over its competitors. Therefore, TAT has to project the most positive image to all stakeholders in order to get the trust, cooperation, collaboration, participation and/or co-creation from stakeholders to achieve its goal. Thus, its perceived image is important or even crucial.