

ABSTRACT

Hotels at present have largely adopted e-commerce to achieve different business goals. Existing Thai hospitality literature, however, rarely investigates the importance of specific dimensions and attributes of hotel websites from the perspective of website users. In other words, what should be included on their branded hotel websites remains unknown to hotel managers. This paper aims to report an exploratory study that investigates the perceived importance of dimensions and attributes on hotel websites from the perspective of travellers, emphasizing two groups of international hotel website users, e-browsers and e-purchasers.

A non-probability convenience sampling method was used in the survey. A structured questionnaire, with to approximately more than 400 tourists who had visited hotel websites in the last 12 months, the extent to which various hotel website dimensions and attributes were perceived as important was distributed at Sukhumvit area, specifically, in front of hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, and popular tourist attractions etc. Descriptive Statistics were used to describe the basic attributes of the data and inferential statistics investigate questions, models and hypotheses, measuring by Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test, and Independent Sample t-test.

The findings were significant differences in all of dimensions and attributes between two groups of users when approach in Thailand. The difference is that e-purchasers perceived more importance on the reservation information, contact information, facilities information, surrounding area information, and website management. Moreover, there are also difference between e-purchasers and e-browsers in term of gender, age group, nationality, education level, or annual personal income such as most of e-purchasers was 41-50 years old, were qualified with a Bachelor Degree and higher, had an annual personal income of US\$ 30,001-50,000, and most of them were European tourists. On the other hand, e-browsers were lower annual personal income and level of education.

In order to retain e-purchasers, hotel websites should mainly target on reservation information dimension, basic contact and access information, and up-to-date information. On the other hand, to gain more attention from e-browsers, hotel website should provide multilingual sites, presented clearly information dimensions, which can attract e-browser to become e-purchasers such as website with a “fresh look” is an essential part of the service that potential guests can use to develop a first impression of the hotel, especially first timer visitors.

