CONCRETE STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SERVICE QUALITY FOR RESORT HOTEL - VIVO BENE VILLAGE ATTRACTING CHINESE CUSTOMERS

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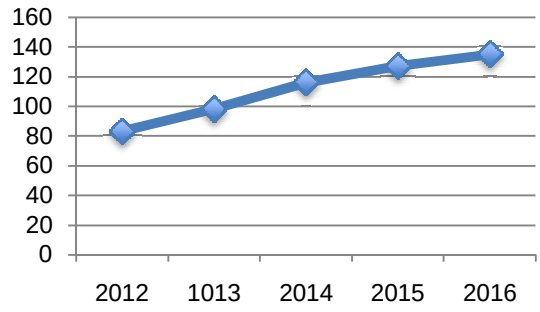
Abstract - The objective of the article is to help the resort hotel find out what service quality should be provided to attract Chinese customer. In the article, the user-generated content analysis and SERVQUA model are combined together to study the key service quality attributes and the relevant knowledge. The output of the research is building a strategic planning in service quality. The research result can provide guidelines for the good performance of resort hotel and assist in wining customer satisfaction.

Key words - SERVQUAL, User-generated content analysis, customer satisfaction, resort hotel, strategic planning

I. INTRODUCTION

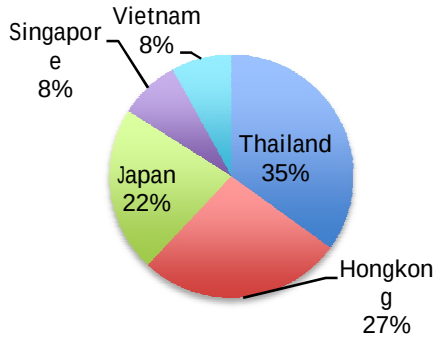
Due to the fast economic growth and the government policy "one belt, one road", the outbound tourism has become a popular travel trend in China.

Fig1. Number of Departures for China
Million/year



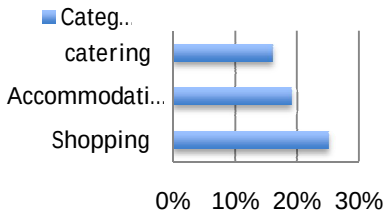
The number of departures of China is growing steadily and is up to 135 million in 2016 [1].

Fig2. Top 5 Outbound Tourism Destination



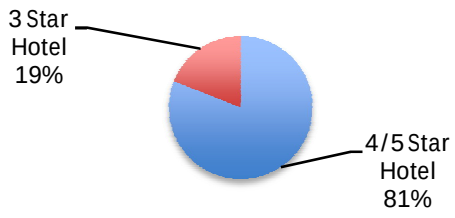
As in [2], Thailand is the most popular destination for Chinese outbound tourists. What's more, Chinese is the biggest tourist resource of Thailand. Tourism contributes to Thailand GDP substantially at an increasing annual rate.

Fig3. Overseas Consumptiopn by Chinese Tourists (Top3)



The tourism revenue mainly includes 3 categories: shopping, food and accommodation. The ratio reveals a difference from the past according to [3]. The top 1 spending on shopping (25%) has decreased sharply while the second consumption of accommodation (19%) has increased mostly. The phenomenon is caused by consumption upgrade, which is the main theme of Chinese outbound tour. That means that Chinese have changed their ways of leisure travel. Comparing shopping, they prefer to spend on lodging to experience the local life for relaxing.

Fig4. Selection on Accommodation from Ctrip



On the selection of accommodation, nearly 81% users choose 4 and 5 rating hotels and resort hotels based on data from [2]. The figure indicates that luxury hotels and resort hotels have become the dominant segments of the accommodation industry in Thailand. The luxury hotel and resort hotel are both equipped with good facility and service, but they are different in some aspects. The luxury hotel is usually a single and closed

building in the downtown, while the resort hotel is made up of multiple buildings and located in the remote area with beautiful natural scenery. In addition, the different focus on provided service also can distinguish the resort hotel from luxury hotel. Unlike luxury hotel, Resort hotel puts much emphasis on customer privacy and the natural experience. What's more, the resort hotel tends to serve customers with long duration. Considering about the increased customer demand caused by consumption upgrade concept, the resort hotel industry has become one of the most potential business in Thailand, especially in Chiang Mai, the second popular destination of Chinese tourists. As the second largest tourist city in Thailand, it has a comfortable environment with a temperate climate, quiet atmosphere and cheap goods. Thus, more and more Chinese people make a leisure trip here for several days, which stimulates the development of resort hotel at a fast speed. In addition, the authority encourages and supports the organizations to attract Chinese customers. Although there is an excellent opportunity for the resort hotels to grab the Chinese market share, little is known about the needs and expectations of Chinese travellers. The resorts don't know how to satisfy and attract the customers and such problem deserves to be researched. Consequently, our research will study what kind of service quality should be provided in the resort hotel to satisfy and attract Chinese tourists in the case of one Chiang Mai resort named Vivo Bene Resort. Facing current developing trends in market, Vivo Bene Resort, located in the remote area in Chiang Mai, originally providing retreat service and holiday leisure for western customers, is attempting to transform a resort hotel to attract Chinese customers.

Through the interview with manager and staff in Vivo resort, it's easy to find that there is a knowledge gap between staff and customer about the user requirement and service performance about resort hotel. In order to attract more Chinese customers, Vivo resort must have a good performance, which means achieving a high customer satisfaction, which is derived from good service quality. Thus, the core part in the research is investigating the service quality attributes that reflect customer requirements. That means figuring out what service quality factors satisfy Chinese consumers mostly. The research output is helping Vivo resort establish a strategic planning in service quality to appeal to Chinese customers.

Research question:
What is the key service quality attribute that results in the knowledge gap between service performance and customer perception in the resort hotel?

Research objective:
To find out the key service quality attributes that strongly affect customer requirement, satisfaction and expectation. To create the relevant knowledge and building the strategic planning in service quality.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

SERVQUAL

[4] develop SERVQUAL for measuring the gap between the service performance and customer perception and simplify it to five dimensions: tangibles; reliability; responsiveness; assurance; and empathy. The five dimension involved 22 items. [5] argue that a model measuring perceptions of service delivery results is more accurate than the gap's model, only depending on difference between expectation and experience. [6] use SERQUAL to identify the quality attributes of the resort performance and found that there is big difference between the customer evaluation and self-evaluation of employees and adds the aspect of "entertainment" of resort hotel to become a total of six aspects for measurement. [7] assume that SERVQUAL is the most widely used model to translate theories of customer satisfaction into management practice. It is proposed that the SERVQUAL model presents the best mechanism to explain customer satisfaction in hospitality and tourism [8]. [9] also state that service quality is an important driver of customer satisfaction and behavioral intention.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

[10] insist customer satisfaction is the centric concept in contemporary marketing theory and practice. The other researchers adopted four aspects to determine customer satisfaction, namely, the personnel service standard, soft hardware equipment, board and lodging, and whole experience feeling [11]. [12] acknowledge that customer satisfaction is decided by quality attributes. The more critical attributes are applied in the product, the more compliments of good performance will be received and vice versa. Consequently, so many researchers have tried to discover the best attributes for improving customer satisfaction effectively. In addition, researchers trust that customer satisfaction is the most dependent variable that affects service evaluations [13].

SERVQUAL AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

According to the literature, service quality and customer satisfaction are closely linked to each other. [14] state the relationship between service quality and satisfaction, both that are significant to the hotel industry. Most resort hotels have similar facilities, if one aspires to survive, it had better rely on delivery of service quality resulting in customer contentment [15]. [16] conclude that the hotel should pay much more emphasis on providing quality service regarding with the factors of perceived quality that are key elements to customers. Though the SERVQUAL has been widely used in the researches about the service quality in the hotel industry, there is very little application to the

resort hotels in Chiang Mai by reviewing the literature. Thus, the paper is trying to make up for the research gap by studying the service quality attributes based on the structure of SERVQUAL.

USER-GENERATED CONTENT ANALYSIS

User-ganerated content analysis can be shorted as UGC. [17] state that UGC is a kind of multiple communications that could strongly associated with the relation between brand and customer in the competitive market. In another word, UGC actually stands for a form of online customer engagement, in which the relationship between consumers and services could be shaped at different phases. What's more, [18] cite the research from Nielsen [19], which found that in more than 20 percent of respondents' minds, UGC is the most reliable source of obtaining information. The rise of third-party websites with offering UGC has enabled a number of information available to the decision of consumer behavior [20]. Some studies have been done to test whether the textual information of online UGC can directly influence economic. Studies concerning retail sales and consumer behavior prove online user reviews strongly support customers' purchasing decisions [21]. [22] indicate that travel-related online review sites accounts over one quarter among the social media websites and over 87% customers depend on online UGC for the purpose of selecting and ordering the hotels. When it comes to online hotels booking, [23] acknowledges that the two most influential elements are recommendations from friends and online user reviews. [24] state the great importance of online user reviews may be due to the fast development of UGC.

A handful of researches about the UGC have been done to study the hotel performance from the relationship between customer volume and online booking. However, there is no scholar studying UGC on basis of SERVQUAL to examine the service quality attributes, particularly, studying the resort hotel in Chiang Mai. The article is try to utilize UGC to capture the key quality attributes hided in the user comments to improve the service performance in Chiang Mai resort hotels.

III. METHODOLOGY

The whole research experimental design is as follows. Firstly, achieving the key service quality attributes to build the final indicator evaluation system by data collection, data processing and expert assessment. Secondly, the strategic planning in service planning could be built based on knowledge created by experts. All the experts are asked about the key attributes through 2 round in-depth interviews. Lastly, Vivo resort could validate and apply the strategic planning to improve the service performance. This part mainly includes data process, in which the unstructured text can be translated into structured data for researching.

Data collection

In China, Ctrip is the largest online hotel reservation service center. Its user hotel-booking ratio is up to 73.7% (Liu & Zhang, 2014). Thus, Ctrip is suitable to be the user-generated content platform. The data is form the selected top five popular resort hotels on Ctrip during the tourist seasons from October to December. Each of resort hotels has more than 800 customer reviews and that ensures the applicability and variety of statistic at some extent.

Based on the dimensions of SERVQUAL model and the big data from Ctip, an initial indicator evaluation system is built. In terms of user-generated context analysis tool, this research relies on a tool named ROST CM produced by the original ROST virtual team of Wuhan University, China. The ROST Web Spider crawler is used to capture user comments on Ctrip.

Data processing

A. Data cleansing. That means removing the duplicate semantic expressions and over-networked terms of the customer reviews.
B. Text analysis. After completing the filter of repeated and unclear semantic words, word segmentation and word frequency calculation could be done at this measure. After that, the words that appear frequently in the comments are extracted as keywords and relative frequency are calculated.
C. The test about the coverage rate of primary index in the frequent keywords is implemented for the validity and applicability of the initialized indicators. And then, the extracted high-frequency keywords that fail to exist in the initial index can be added to build a new indicator evaluation system.

Data index weight analysis

The data index weight analysis is implemented to get the key factors by expert assessment. The more weight the quality attribute acquires, the more important the attributes are. Experts utilize 5 likert (1-5 score) score to assess the attributes. And then the average score of each attribute is calculated and the rank of all the attributes is reached. Factors of 4 scores and above 4 are selected as the very important service quality attributes.

The exports team is composed of 13 people who have rich experience of staying at the resort hotel in overseas trips or domestic trips. Among them, there are 3 managers of resort hotels who have worked on the hotel and resort hotel business for 3 years. The others are dividedly from different industries. Most of them are 80's, secondly followed is 90's and then 70's. The age of interviewees suits the present developing trends of Chines outbound tourists.

IV. RESULT

After expert assessment, the attributes above score 4 are regarded as key service quality attributes. According to the previous indicator evaluation system, experts make some suggestion and establish the final index evaluation system. All the key service quality attributes are classified and organized into 5 new categories. As a result, there are together 5 primary indicators, which refers to 22 items. The 5 categories are: service, environment and traffic, activity, factors affecting online order and catering. Among them, the service category is the most significant with 9 attributes. The results are shown in Fig 5.

Fig5 key service quality attributes

Service			Environment and traffic	Activity
Employee is willing to help	Warm receptionist	Service as promised	Privacy, Security	Field activity
Quickly solving problems	Prompt service from employees	24hours service	Good view	Swimming
Individual attention service	Inform customers service ahead of time	Chinese language service	Free shuttle bus to airport	
Factors affecting online order			Catering	
Payment ways	High cost–performance ratio	Fresh and delicious	Many types of dishes	
Display on website	User recommendation	Breakfast	Local specialty	

Because service is the most critical service quality attribute in the experts' assessment, the article focused on the service part as a case for building the strategic planning for resort hotel. The service quality attributes could be classified into four dimensions of SERVQUAL model in the Fig6. Thus, the strategic planning in service quality is innovated by experts from the four categories.

Fig6 Service attributes in SERVQUAL

SERQUAL	Responsiveness	Employee is willing to help Prompt service from employees Inform customers service ahead of time
	Assurance	Warm receptionist Provide Chinese language service Quickly solving problems
	Reliability	Service delivered as promised
	Empathy	24hours service Provide individual attention

Responsiveness

This dimension emphasizes focus and quickness in dealing with customer requests, inquiries, and complaints.

Thus, the strategy can be divided into 2 aspects: organization and employee. Firstly, organization must ensure the vision and establish the culture to strengthen the commitment of employee to the firm. The internal function system and working process should be available to the employees. The ways of employee management should follow the fair and transparent principle. The real-time feed back for staff and appraisal for outstanding employee are both important manage methods.

In order to improve the staff work efficiency, employee training should be held regularly in different forms, such as the formal teaching skill lectures of communication, service attention and informal sharing meetings about case study and personal sharing. The most effective way is to take the salary incentive, which means payment is directly linked to service performance and personal goal. In addition, the welfare can be provided to staff by providing a relaxing work environment includes food, fitting room, health check and lucky money on holidays. That will increase the individual happiness and commitment to firm.

Assurance

This means that employees must be sincere and have the knowledge and skills necessary to solve customer problems. The main strategy of this dimension is making customers feel like at home and is illustrated

from receptionist, Chinese language service and ability of quickly solving problem.

In terms of receptionist, the service attitude and service skill are considered during the time when customer chick-in and out. The service attitude means receptionist must maintain a proactive, enthusiastic and friendly attitude, expressed by employee's appearance, manners and language. Appearance indicates desk staff to wear uniforms and keep them clean and tidy. The manner means desk staff behave gracefully by keeping a sincere smile and standing straight. The language means staff speaks fluently and express clearly in pleasant tones.

On the other hand, the service skill could be explained from 2 angles: high efficiency, profession. High efficiency means reducing customer's waiting time. Profession shows that staff is knowledgeable enough to answer customer questions, especially the information inquiring during customer's trip. The customer perspective is reflected in the ability of employees to detect customer needs timely. The way to improve efficiency is to train more to improve the proficiency of the service procedure, such as check-in and out, valuables storage and foreign currency exchange. In addition, the employees should have the proper self-decision making power, which benefits the saving of service time and quickly responding to problems. High profession requires desk staff have wide knowledge and rich communication skills. Thus, the staff should practice how to communicate with customers and conclude the information such as route making, food and attraction recommendation to supply complete answers.

Considering about providing Chinese language service, the most significant principle is realizing barrier-free communication between customers and employee. Receptionist and catering are regarded as the major Chinese service in resort hotels. Thus, the resort should train the front desk staff speaking Chinese about Check-in and out and daily talking and provide Chinese menu.

Quickly solving problems mainly test employees' quick resilience and communication skill. Thus, the staff can improve the ability of solving problems by case study and experience sharing. In addition, the emergency practice can be involved in the evaluation of staff performance.

Reliability

This dimension refers to the ability to reliably and accurately fulfill service commitments. In the research, it represents the attribute: service delivered as promised, which means the company offers the service in accordance with its commitments accurately within a specified time. The strategy focus on the commitment and speedy of service. Firstly, the resort hotel is supposed to provide the promised physical facility, for example the room, restaurant and swimming pool. Secondly, the resort hotel should pay attention to offering service with high efficiency, which is lined to employee ability referred in responsiveness and assurance dimensions.

Empathy

This dimension mentions ability of thinking from customer perspective and paying special attention to the customers. At the same time, the business hours should fully consider the actual situation of the customers. The strategy concentrates on convenience and uniqueness through personalized services. Above of all, 24 operating hours should be open to all the customers. In terms of individual attention, staff could notice and the expression and action of the guests to master the psychology of the guests and forecast customer requirements. In addition, staff can remember the customers' preference and make the special activity according the symbols of the tourist group. For example, the resort hotel can supply Selfie stick for young women; candy for children and medical care for the elderly.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The research shows an interrelationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The key service quality attributes are figured out through the combination of user-generated content analysis, SERVQUAL model and expert assessment. Based on the service part of the key service quality attributes, the relevant customer knowledge is created to set the strategic planning in service quality. The strategic planning in service quality is offered to Vivo Bene Village Resort to make up for the service quality gap and win competitive advantages in Chinese market. In addition, it's of great significance to the further research. The research fills the void of study on resort hotel attracting Chinese customers in Chiang Mai. It also benefits the development of wellness resort in Chiang Mai by supplying the guidelines of good service quality. However, there are also limitations in the research. Possible deviation may exist in sample because the customer reviews may have exaggerated situation. In addition, the export team may have the personal preference and can't keep the absolutely fair. But in generally, the deviation is controlled in a proper scope so as to sustain the validity of results.

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