

Management Strategies analysis of Thai Hotel Case  
Study: Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa



An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Business and Managerial Economics  
Field of Study of Business and Managerial Economics  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS  
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การวิเคราะห์กลยุทธ์การบริหารและการจัดการของโรงแรมในประเทศไทย กรณีศึกษา: โรงแรม  
โอเชียนบีชพรอนท์ รีสอร์ท แอนด์ สปา



สารนิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
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Study: Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa  
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Field of Study                      Business and Managerial Economics  
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การระบาดของโรคโควิด-19 ทำให้อุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยวทั่วโลกหยุดชะงักลงอย่างไม่เคยปรากฏมาก่อน รวมถึงในอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยวในเกาะภูเก็ต ประเทศไทย ผลกระทบของการแพร่ระบาดต่อภาคการท่องเที่ยวเป็นไปอย่างกว้างขวาง ไม่เพียงแต่ธุรกิจโรงแรมเท่านั้น แต่ยังรวมถึงสายการบิน ธุรกิจตัวแทนท่องเที่ยว สถานที่ท่องเที่ยว ธุรกิจภายในชุมชนท้องถิ่น และเกือบทุกภาคส่วนธุรกิจทั่วโลก ด้วยเหตุนี้ โรงแรมต่างๆจึงต้องใช้กลยุทธ์การจัดการที่มีประสิทธิภาพและการปรับปรุงองค์กรเพื่อช่วยบรรเทาผลกระทบจากโรคระบาด

นอกจากผลกระทบของโควิด-19 แล้ว ปัจจัยอื่นๆเช่น สถานการณ์การเมืองโลก ความก้าวหน้าทางเทคโนโลยี และกระแสสังคมยุคใหม่ ก็ส่งผลกระทบต่ออุตสาหกรรมโรงแรมในภูเก็ตเช่นกัน ดังนั้น งานวิจัยนี้นอกจากจะทำการตรวจสอบผลกระทบที่เกิดขึ้นจากการแพร่ระบาดของโรคโควิด-19แล้ว ยังรวมถึงปัจจัยภายนอกที่ส่งผลกระทบต่อกลยุทธ์การจัดการของ Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa และให้คำแนะนำเพื่อลดผลกระทบเหล่านี้

งานวิจัยนี้วิเคราะห์กลยุทธ์การจัดการของ Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa โดยการ  
 ใช้ SWOT, PEST และ MOST เป็นเครื่องมือในการวิเคราะห์ เป้าหมายของการวิจัยนี้คือเพื่อทำความเข้าใจอย่างถ่อง  
 แท้เกี่ยวกับกลยุทธ์การจัดการในช่วงที่เกิดโรคระบาด สถานการณ์โดยรวมที่เป็นผลมาจากปัจจัยภายนอก และเสนอแนะกลยุทธ์  
 การบริหารในอนาคตสำหรับ Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa ตามลำดับ

งานวิจัยนี้จะให้คำแนะนำสำหรับการจัดการและการปรับปรุงองค์กรที่สามารถช่วยให้โรงแรมฟื้นตัวจากผลกระทบ  
 ของการระบาดใหญ่และมีความยืดหยุ่นในการปรับตัวในอนาคตมากขึ้น

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ลายมือชื่อนิสิต .....  
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The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented disruptions to the global tourism industry, including in Phuket, Thailand. The impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector has been widely impacting, affecting not only hotels but also airlines, travel agencies, tourist attractions, local communities, and almost every sector of business around the world. As a result, it is crucial for hotels to implement effective management strategies and organizational improvements to help mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

In addition to the impact of COVID-19, other factors such as global political situations, technological advancements, and trends in modern society can also significantly affect the hotel industry in Phuket. Therefore, this research will also examine the potential impacts of these external factors on the management strategy of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, and provide recommendations to mitigate these impacts.

This research analyzes the management strategies of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa in Phuket, Thailand, by conducting a SWOT, PEST, and MOST analysis. The goal of this research is to gain a thorough understanding of a SWOT, PEST, and MOST analysis of management strategy during the pandemic, overall circumstances and suggest the future of management strategy for an Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa respectively.

Based on the results of these analyses, this research will provide recommendations for management and organizational improvements that can help the hotel recover from the pandemic's impacts and improve its overall resilience.

Field of Study:	Business and Managerial Economics	Student's Signature .....
Academic Year:	2022	Advisor's Signature .....

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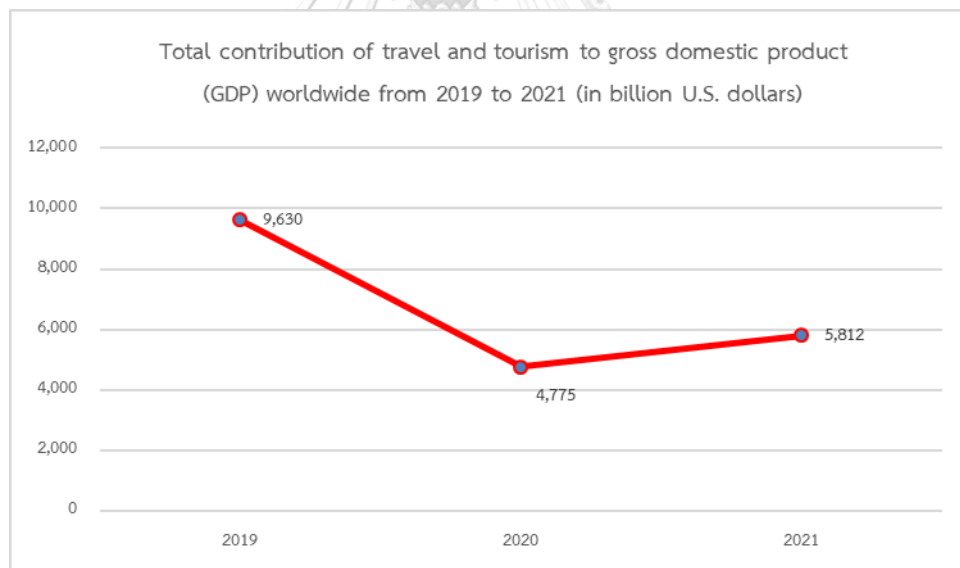


# 1.Introduction

## 1.1 Research Background

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, it has not only affected human health but also the global economy, with businesses of all sizes being hit hard by the pandemic. Many businesses have had to adapt to survive during these challenging times. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused fear and uncertainty among people around the world, which has resulted in many people choosing to stay at home. In response, some countries have implemented prolonged lockdowns, while others have imposed restrictions on movement and communication. These measures have had a significant impact on the tourism industry on a global scale. During 2020, the world's GDP fell by 3.4 percent. Especially, the tourism sector caused the world GDP to fall by 1.5%-2.8% which is \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion (World Tourism Organization, 2022). As seen in Figure 1, the total contribution of travel and tourism to worldwide gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased drastically from \$9,630 billion in 2019 to \$4,775 billion in 2020, which is a decrease of more than 50% in one year of contribution in 2019, and recovers to \$5,812 billion in 2021 (Statista Research Department, 2023).

**Figure 1 Total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP worldwide, 2019-2021**



One such destination that has been significantly impacted is Phuket, Thailand, which has traditionally been a popular tourist destination. However, the local hotel industry in Phuket has been facing unprecedented challenges and has been forced to adapt to a rapidly changing business environment.

Moreover, the tourism industry in Thailand is susceptible to various external factors that could adversely affect its growth and development. This research aims to examine the potential impact of various global situations on the tourism industry in Thailand, including the ongoing conflicts in Russia and Ukraine, the trade disputes between China

and America, the emergence of new technologies such as big-data, the situation of the global economy, and the trend of Thailand's society. Understanding the potential effects of these situations on the tourism industry in Thailand is crucial to developing effective strategies to mitigate their impact and promote sustainable tourism growth.

This research focuses on the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, which is one of the affected hotels in Phuket, Thailand. This resort is a case study, as it offers a full range of facilities and is located at Patong Beach, which is a popular destination in Phuket. In order to understand the management strategies during the pandemic, and to identify the its overall circumstances, a SWOT and PEST analysis of an Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa in Phuket has been carried out. It provides insights into the challenges faced by The Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa.

## **1.2 Objective**

The purpose of this research, first, is to analyze the SWOT analysis of a management strategy during the pandemic of COVID-19 and then analyze the PEST analysis of its overall circumstances. This research will rely on a variety of data sources, including onsite interviews with the resort's management and staff, industry reports, market data, and feedback from clients via the resort's website. The analysis will be used to provide recommendations for improving and recovering the resort's operations by using the MOST analytical tool as an explanation, with the ultimate goal of contributing to the sustainability of local hotels in Phuket, Thailand.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Phuket Island before and during COVID-19**

Phuket, covering a total area of approximately 543 square kilometers, is the largest island in Thailand. In the past, the island derived much of its wealth from tin and rubber, whereas nowadays tourism dominates as the main industry of the island's economy (Apichaya, 2020). Some 20% of Thailand's economy was related to the tourism industry. However, Phuket, which is mainly economically 95% related to the tourism sector (David and Chalida, 2021), has been a popular tourist destination in southern Thailand for many decades, known for its beaches, nightlife, and cultural attractions. In 2018, before the pandemic, the island was a bustling hub of tourism activity, with approximately 14 million visitors each year, which is 3.9 million Thais and 10.1 million foreigners. Hotels were fully booked with more than 88,000 rooms, and local businesses thrived on the income generated by tourism, which is over 400 billion baht annually (phuketemangazine).

The world first encountered COVID-19 in the first quarter of 2020. And Phuket was heavily impacted by the slowdown of international travel. From the hotels being almost 100% booked, the occupancy went down to 24% in that time, and flights gradually cancelled. Finally, borders closed, and many local businesses are struggling to survive while others are forced to close. Due to the ban on Chinese tour groups in late January

2020, the number of Chinese visitors declined by roughly 60.5% in the initial week of February 2020.

Therefore, the sudden loss of revenue had a severe impact on the local community. Phuket also had strict quarantine measures for travelers and a curfew for the locals. The government also implemented testing requirements, social distancing measures, and capacity limits in public spaces. Phuket's beaches were closed, and most activities were shut down as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the virus. The island was placed under lockdown, and all non-essential travel was banned. This led to a significant decrease in the number of tourists visiting the island.

Currently, Phuket Island is reopening to tourism with non-strict measures and regulations. However, the number of tourists is still far below pre-pandemic levels, and the island's economy is still recovering. The island is slowly coming back to life as more visitors return.

## **2.2 Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa on Phuket Island, Thailand**

Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa is a local family business hotel established in September 2008 with authorized capital of 250 million baht (Department of Business Department, 2023) and whose objective is to provide a full facility service, including a swimming pool, restaurant, bar, fitness center, and spa. Some of room are sea view rooms. The resort is located at the northern of the beachfront Patong area, which is a quiet place away from the hustle and bustle of Patongs main strip but close enough to visit with a very short trip to the town center.

The resort is owned by a family, that all of whose members were born and raised in Phuket. They own not only the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa but also other local hotels. However, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa is the top-ranked hotel, which provides full facilities and is decorated as a luxury resort. Most clients reviewed this resort as an average 4.1-star resort and also positively commented on all facility service, especially food and beverage (Google review, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, 2023).

## **3. Data and Methodology**

### **3.1 Data**

This case study analyzed management strategies for Thai hotels, with a particular focus on The Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa in Phuket, Thailand. The data was collected through on-site surveys conducted between October 26th and October 28th, 2022, which included observations of the circumstances and interviews with the resort's owner and management team. Additionally, data was gathered through research conducted using internet resources. Finally, this data will be analyzed in a qualitative way.

### **3.2 Research question**

What management strategy is most suitable for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa?

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

This research was conducted using the following methods

1. On-site surveys were conducted in Phuket from October 26th to October 28th, 2022, which involved collecting data through observations and interviews, not only of the hotel, but also the circumstances in Phuket.
2. Additional data was gathered through internet research.
3. Analyzing the collected data by using SWOT and PEST analytical tools as a result.
4. Analyzing the collected data by using MOST analytical tools as a suggestion.

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 SWOT analysis of the management strategies of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa during the pandemic

The pandemic has presented numerous challenges, including reduced customer demand, supply chain disruptions, and increased competition from alternative accommodations. To navigate the impact of the pandemic and emerge stronger on the other side, the management of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa can conduct a SWOT analysis of its operations. This analysis will enable the management to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the hotel during the pandemic, and develop strategies to leverage its strengths and opportunities while addressing its weaknesses and threats. By doing so, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa can adapt to the challenges posed by the pandemic and position itself for success in the post-pandemic world.

#### 4.1.1 Strengths

Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa is a local business that is managed by one family, which offer the more advantages to the client compared to chain or public businesses. Family businesses are usually relatively closed, with little interaction between individual members, which leads to unique systemic conditions that impact the performance of the operation. In the context of a family-owned resort during the COVID-19 pandemic, a strong entrepreneurial orientation can be a significant advantage. A family-owned resort could be more willing and able to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and to take calculated risks to ensure the continued success of the business. They can make quick decisions and implement changes without having to go through a lengthy approval process, and they can offer a more personalized and intimate experience for guests, which can be especially important during the pandemic when people are seeking a sense of comfort and security. Although family business is more likely to have a top-down approach to management, its hierarchy is systemically smaller and less complex. Thus, a member of the family is likely to take care of the client and always deal with any problems by themselves. Therefore, the family could give a direct command to the operator or staff to solve the problem immediately.

All of these lead to client loyalty to the resort, which is a really strong point because clients may be satisfied with the resort's services and spread the word to other clients. According to the outbreak of virus, there are a few tourists in Phuket. Every hotel needs to attract all clients to maintain them or make them return again.

Moreover, the resort's management team is composed of local citizens. They have strong ties to the local community and can draw on these relationships to provide a safe and secure environment for guests during the pandemic. And they could give a suggestion to clients correctly about traveling around Phuket area.

#### **4.1.2 Weaknesses**

The biggest challenges faced by the hotel sector have been a decline in demand due to travel restrictions in the first phase of the virus and reductions in consumer spending. This has led to a decline in occupancy rates and revenue for hotels. During this time, the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa has to reduce its employment rate as much as it can operate itself to maintain its level of service and operational efficiency. Mr. Worapol, one of the board of directors, said, “We have to switch staff from this hotel to another hotel all the time.” According to this business family, they have more than one hotel business. This issue became one of the weaknesses of the resort that the author can observe accordingly. Along with a few members of staff and nowadays as the world begins to relax its restrictions, Phuket’s tourism industry is making a comeback. However, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa seems to have a limitation on its capacity to deal with a huge number of returning tourists. Besides, both Mr. Worapol and some articles indicate that workers who were laid off during the COVID pandemic typically move back to their hometowns, where they can deploy the knowledge and skills they acquired during their time in Phuket to pursue entrepreneurship. A former chef who returns home to open a restaurant. This issue is about human resource management, which the management team needs to improve promptly in order to be prepared for the return of the tourism industry.

Moreover, because Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa is positioning itself as a luxury resort. The closure of borders and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have certainly had a negative impact on the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, as well as on many other luxury hotels that primarily target foreign travelers. This is a weakness for the resort, as it has resulted in a significant decline in bookings and revenue. The lack of bookings is a direct result of the travel restrictions and border closures put in place by governments around the world to slow the spread of COVID-19. With foreign travelers unable to enter the country, the resort has lost a significant portion of its target market, and has likely had to rely on local travelers to make up for the shortfall. However, local demand alone may not be enough to sustain a luxury resort like the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa. In response to this weakness, the resort may need to find ways to adapt its business model to appeal to domestic travelers or find other ways to generate revenue. This could include offering special promotions or packages to local travelers, developing new products or services that are targeted specifically to the domestic market and the limited budget traveler, or exploring other revenue streams such as hosting events or partnering with local businesses.

#### **4.1.3 Opportunities**

With decreased demand for hospitality services due to the pandemic, the resort has an opportunity to focus on improving itself in order to be prepared for the return of the tourism industry. This can involve increasing efficiency and finding ways to reduce costs. The Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa can continuously strive to eliminate waste and improve efficiency. This can include standardizing procedures, reducing unnecessary steps, and leveraging technology to automate repetitive tasks.

First of all, the opportunities for local hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic include the potential for increased demand from domestic tourists due to reduced international

travel. With travel restrictions and social distancing guidelines in place, many people are opting for domestic vacations rather than traveling abroad. This presents a chance for hotels to tap into this market segment and increase their revenue.

Second, the reconciliation between Thailand and Saudi Arabia presents a significant opportunity for the local hotel industry in Thailand. With the reopening of travel and tourism between the two countries, it is expected that there will be an increase in demand for hospitality services, including hotels. This presents a chance for resorts to tap into a new market segment and increase their revenue.

Thirdly, the low occupancy rate during the pandemic presents an opportunity for resort to upgrade and improve their facilities. With fewer guests, resort has the chance to perform maintenance and renovations without disrupting the guest experience. Likewise, they also have an opportunity to improve their internal operations. To re-evaluate and optimize internal processes, which can lead to improved efficiency and a better guest experience. By streamlining processes and optimizing staffing levels, resort can reduce wait times and provide a more personalized and attentive service to guests. Furthermore, the resort can also invest in new technologies to improve the guest experience. For example, self-check-in kiosks, and mobile check-in in order to reduce wait times, increase convenience, and help staff provide a better guest experience.

#### **4.1.4 Threats**

One of the threats faced by local hotels in Thailand is the persistence of the pandemic and the associated health and safety concerns. According to a report by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global tourism industry, leading to a decline in international tourist arrivals of up to 80% in some regions. This decline in tourism has led to significant economic losses for the tourism industry, including hotels.

Another threat faced by local hotels in Thailand is competition from larger hotels, which may have more resources and be able to offer more amenities, services, and experiences. According to a report by Hotel-Online.com, competition in the hotel industry has increased in recent years, as the number of hotels and level of investment in the industry have grown. This competition can make it difficult for local hotels to stand out and attract guests, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people are looking for hotels that prioritize health and safety measures (Apichaya, 2020).

In addition, changing consumer preferences and behavior as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic can also be a threat to The Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa. For example, many people may be hesitant to travel due to health and safety concerns and may prefer to stay closer to home. Others may be looking for different types of travel experiences, such as virtual tours, cooking classes, or wellness retreats, which may not be offered by local hotels.

## 4.2 PEST analysis for the overall circumstance of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa

PEST analysis is a tool used to analyze the external factors that can affect a business or industry. The acronym stands for political, economic, social, and technological factors, which are analyzed to identify potential opportunities and threats. In the case of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, a PEST analysis can provide insights into how external factors may impact the hotel's business operations and success.

The Political factors that may affect the resort include global political instability. The economic factors such as the global tourism industry economy. Social factors such as income inequality distribution and aging society could also impact the resort's business. Finally, technological factors such as an online booking platform or big data could also affect the resort's operations and competitiveness.

Analyzing these factors can help the resort identify potential challenges and opportunities and develop strategies to adapt to changes in the external environment. By understanding the political, economic, social, and technological factors that may impact their business, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa can make informed decisions and stay competitive in the ever-changing tourism industry.

### 4.2.1 Politics

In terms of politics, global political factors can have a significant impact on the tourism industry in Thailand, including local hotels in Phuket. One example is the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which has resulted in economic sanctions and travel restrictions imposed by both sides. Russia is a major source market for tourism in Thailand, with thousands of Russian tourists visiting the country each year. Since the war began on Feb 2022. The amount of Russian tourists in Phuket, Thailand, has decreased drastically as shown in Figure 2. Russia tourism in Thailand has been the top international market since January-April and has disappeared according to the war (Bill, 2022).

**Figure 2: Top 5 international market resource of Phuket, Thailand**

Top 5 International Source Markets of Phuket's Tourism Industry 2022			
January-April		May-August	
1.Russia	48,281	1.India	103,688
2.United Kingdom	31,169	2.Australia	43,677
3.Germany	26,808	3.Singapore	38,797
4.France	17,894	4.United Kingdom	27,412
5.Sweden	13,767	5.Malaysia	22,413



The ongoing military offensive by Russia in Ukraine has the potential to negatively impact international tourism, as it has contributed to the already high oil prices and transportation costs, added to the existing uncertainty, and disrupted travel in Eastern Europe. Russia and Ukraine combined account for only 3% of global spending on international tourism as of 2020. However, if the conflict persists, it could lead to a loss of approximately \$ 14 billion in tourism receipts globally in 2022. In 2019, Russian spending on travel abroad amounted to \$ 36 billion and Ukrainian spending reached US\$ 8.5 billion. These values significantly decreased to \$ 9.1 billion and \$ 4.7 billion, respectively, in 2020 due to the pandemic of COVID-19 (World Tourism Organization, 2023).

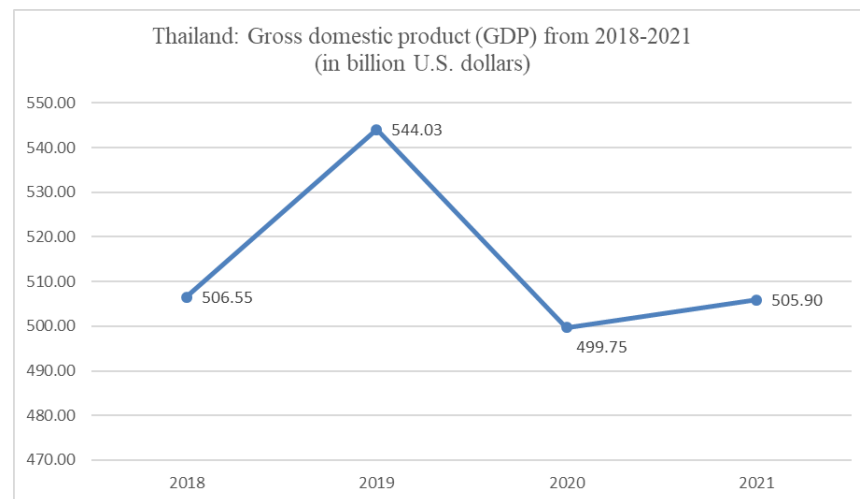
Similarly, the ongoing trade war between China and the United States can also have an impact on the tourism industry in Thailand. Both China and the United States are major source markets for tourism in Thailand, with millions of Chinese and American tourists visiting the country each year. However, the trade war has resulted in increased tariffs and trade restrictions, which could potentially lead to a decline in the number of tourists visiting Thailand from both countries.

In summary, the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the trade war between China and the United States could potentially lead to a decline in the number of tourists visiting Thailand from both countries. This could result in lower occupancy rates for hotels in Phuket that rely heavily on tourists from these markets. As a suggestion, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could look into diversifying their source markets to mitigate the impact of political tensions on their business.

#### **4.2.2 Economy**

In terms of economy, according to Statista.com, Thailand's GDP contracted from \$544.03 billion in 2019 to \$499.75 billion U.S. dollars in 2020 due to the pandemic, as shown in Figure 3, with the tourism and hospitality sectors being the most severely affected (Aaron, 2022). Thus, hotels have had to adapt to the changing regulatory environment to survive. The Thai government has implemented various policies and regulations that have affected the hotel industry. For example, the government has imposed travel restrictions and quarantine requirements for travelers entering the country, which have reduced the number of tourists and impacted hotel occupancy rates. These restrictions have been in place since March 2020 and have been periodically updated and extended in response to the evolving situation.

**Figure 3: Thailand's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 2018-2021  
(in billion U.S. dollars)**



The Thai government implemented travel restrictions on March 26, 2020, which were later extended to April, 2020. Subsequently, the restrictions were extended several times, with the most recent extension being until February 2021 (ศรัณษา, 2022). These travel restrictions have significantly impacted the number of international tourists visiting Phuket, Thailand, with the occupancy rate declining from 75.2% in 2019 to 19.5% in 2020 (Puttachard Lumkam, 2022). As shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Occupancy Rate (%) by Province**

Province	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bangkok	82.4	82.2	28.2	13.0
Chonburi	79.6	80.4	28.9	11.5
Phuket	76.0	75.2	19.5	7.7
Suratthani	72.1	68.2	20.0	5.4
Chiang Mai	76.0	74.3	41.8	20.5
Krabi	69.2	68.5	18.6	6.0
Phetchaburi	70.5	69.0	41.5	24.6
Prachuap Khiri Khan	66.7	64.3	35.7	21.2
Kanchanaburi	69.6	69.3	42.5	22.6
Nakhon Ratchasima	66.8	66.8	39.4	25.0

The impact was particularly severe on major tourist destinations like Phuket, Suratthani, and Krabi, where businesses heavily relied on foreign visitors. Occupancy rates in these areas plummeted to below 10%. In contrast, provinces like Phetchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Kanchanaburi, and Nakhon Ratchasima depended more on the domestic market, resulting in occupancy rates that remained relatively high, typically above 20%.

However, to recover the economic, the Thai government has implemented several economic stimulus measures to support businesses and individuals impacted by the pandemic, including the "We Travel Together" domestic tourism campaign and the "Phuket Sandbox" program, which allows foreign travelers to visit Phuket without quarantine.

The Phuket Sandbox program is an initiative by the Thai government to stimulate the economy of the tourism industry. The program allows foreign travelers to visit Phuket Province without having to undergo quarantine, which helps to attract international tourists to the region. The program requires foreign tourists to meet certain requirements, such as being fully vaccinated and having a negative RT-PCR test result, before they can travel to Phuket. Upon arrival, they are required to take another COVID-19 test and must stay in a designated hotel for the first seven days of their stay. After completing the quarantine period, they are free to travel and explore Phuket and other parts of Thailand (Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, D.C., 2021).

The We Travel Together program provides subsidies for eligible hotel stays, along with coupons and discounts for other spending activities, in an effort to encourage domestic tourism. The program aims to support local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops, that have been negatively affected by the pandemic. Under the program, eligible Thai citizens can receive a 40% subsidy on hotel room rates, up to a maximum of 3,000 baht per night per room, for up to five nights per person. In addition to the hotel subsidy, participants can also receive discounts on transportation, attractions, and other tourism-related activities. The program has been well-received by the public and has helped to boost domestic travel to Phuket and other parts of Thailand.

In summary, the pandemic has caused a contraction in Thailand's GDP, and the government has imposed travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, which has reduced the number of tourists and impacted the tourism economy. However, the government has implemented economic stimulus measures to support businesses impacted by the pandemic, which could help to stimulate demand for hotel rooms. As a suggestion, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could explore new opportunities to attract domestic travelers, such as by offering more affordable packages or partnering with local travel agencies.

#### **4.2.3 Social**

Thailand is known for having high income inequality. According to data from the World Bank, Thailand's Gini coefficient, a commonly used measure of income inequality, was 65.1 in 2019 (World Economic, 2019). This means that income is not evenly distributed across the population, with a relatively small number of individuals or households holding a large portion of the wealth. The high level of income inequality in Thailand can lead to a variety of social and economic issues, such as poverty, limited access to healthcare and education, and social unrest.

From a tourism industry perspective, income inequality can have both positive and negative impacts on local hotels in Phuket. On the one hand, the presence of wealthy individuals in the country can contribute to the growth of luxury tourism, with high-end hotels and resorts catering to this market segment. However, on the other hand, the relatively low income of many Thai citizens can limit their ability to travel and stay at local hotels, potentially reducing demand for these services.

Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa should be aware of the income distribution in Thailand and its potential impact on their business. They can take steps to address the issue by offering a range of accommodations and services that appeal to both luxury and budget travelers, and by engaging with local communities and organizations to support economic development and address social inequality. By doing so, the resort could position itself for success in the competitive tourism industry and contribute to the overall economic growth and development of Thailand.

Furthermore, the demographics of a country could have a significant impact on the tourism industry, and Thailand is no exception. One important demographic trend in Thailand is the aging population, which is leading to changes in the types of experiences they are seeking. Thailand is currently experiencing a demographic shift towards an aging society, which is characterized by an increasing proportion of older people in the population. According to the Bangkok Post, the proportion of the population aged 60 and over in Thailand is expected to reach 28% by 2031 (Bangkok Post, 2021). This trend is due to a combination of factors, including increased life expectancy and a decline in fertility rates.

The aging population in Thailand is likely to have several impacts on the tourism industry. Firstly, older tourists may have different travel preferences and requirements compared to younger tourists. For example, they may be more interested in cultural and historical sites and prefer less physically demanding activities. With a larger elderly

population, there may be a shift in demand for certain types of accommodations and services that cater to the needs of older individuals. For example, hotels may need to invest in more accessible rooms and facilities, as well as healthcare services and support staff, to cater to the needs of elderly guests. Additionally, resorts may need to consider implementing stricter health and safety measures to protect their older guests, who may be more vulnerable. Secondly, an aging population may have an impact on the workforce in the tourism industry. As the population ages, there may be a shortage of younger workers to fill roles in the industry, which could lead to labor shortages and increased labor costs.

Finally, an aging population and income distribution in Thailand may have implications for the overall economy. Older people tend to have lower incomes and may spend less on tourism than younger people. This could lead to a shift in the types of tourism products and services that are offered in the country. Wealthy tourists may opt for more luxurious accommodations, while older tourists may prefer more accessible accommodations and activities. As a suggestion, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could consider diversifying their offerings to cater to the needs of different segments of the population, such as by offering more accessible rooms or activities that cater to older travelers.

#### **4.2.4 Technological**

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of technology in the hotel industry, with many hotels implementing digital solutions to reduce contact and enhance the guest experience. This includes the use of mobile apps for check-in and room service and the adoption of contactless payment methods. The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of digital marketing and online booking platforms to reach customers and generate revenue. According to a survey by SiteMinder, around 53% of Thai travelers intend to make reservations directly with their preferred accommodation providers, with over 40% indicating that they will book online via the accommodation's website and 12% stating that they will book through direct communication methods such as phone or email. This contrasts with the 24% who plan to use an online travel agency to make their bookings (Maria, 2021).

with the advent of online booking platforms. These platforms have disrupted the traditional agent model that dominated the industry a decade ago. Online booking platforms offer lower costs and greater convenience for both hotel operators and customers. Online booking platforms have lower overhead costs since they do not require physical offices or staff. As a result, they can offer lower prices and more competitive rates to hotels, attracting more customers to their platform. In turn, this leads to increased visibility and revenue for hotels that list their properties on the platform.

Moreover, the online booking platforms have also improved the customer experience by offering more personalized and convenient services. Customers can easily search and compare hotel prices, read reviews from other customers, and make reservations all in one place. In addition, these platforms are powered by artificial intelligence (AI) technology that can collect and analyze vast amounts of data on customer preferences,

behaviors, and trends. This allows the online booking platforms to personalize their services and recommendations to individual users, making the booking process even more convenient and tailored to the needs of the traveler.

In summary, the rise of disruptive technologies, such as online booking platforms and the Internet of Things, is changing the hotel industry in Thailand and around the world. The rise of online booking platforms and AI-powered technologies could lead to increased competition for the hotel industry in Phuket. As a suggestion, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could embrace technological innovation by partnering with online booking platforms to increase their visibility and revenue. They can also leverage AI-powered technologies to personalize their services and recommendations to individual customers, which could help enhance the customer experience and loyalty.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

Based on the SWOT and PEST analysis, it can be concluded that there are both controllable and uncontrollable factors that can affect the success of Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa.

Controllable factors, such as strengths and weaknesses, can be improved or adjusted by the resort management in order to enhance business performance. For example, the Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa's strengths as a family-owned business include its strong entrepreneurial orientation, quick decision-making ability, and personalized experience for guests, all of which can be further leveraged to attract more customers and build brand loyalty. On the other hand, the resort's weaknesses, such as lack of employees and limited room types, can be addressed by hiring new employees and providing them with intensive training to ensure their efficiency, as well as expanding the options available for rooms.

Uncontrollable factors are external factors that the resort management cannot directly control but should prepare for in order to minimize negative impacts and take advantage of positive changes. For instance, the current COVID-19 pandemic has created a significant challenge for the hospitality industry in Phuket due to the reduction in tourism demand. However, the resort can prepare itself by maintaining strong ties with the local community, implementing health and safety measures, and providing flexible cancellation policies to attract more guests. The resort can also take advantage of the government's initiatives to promote domestic tourism in Thailand and offer tailored packages to attract local travelers.

In summary, the resort management should focus on improving and adjusting controllable factors, such as strengths and weaknesses, while preparing for uncontrollable factors, such as opportunities, threats, politic, the economy, social issues

and technology, to maximize the success of the business in the current uncertain environment.

## **5.2 MOST analysis for Suggestion of the Management's Strategy for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa**

MOST analysis is a strategic management tool that helps organizations identify and prioritize their mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics. It provides a structured framework for analyzing and developing strategies that can help organizations achieve their goals and stay competitive.

In this research, using MOST analysis to develop strategies for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa to improve its management practices in the post-COVID era. The mission statement aims to position the hotel as a better option than its competitors, and stealing clients from competitors, while the objectives focus on finding new market sources and increasing sales. Strategies include adjusting operations to cater to the new market sources and conducting marketing research to understand their needs better. Finally, tactics aim to improve the overall customer experience and encourage positive reviews on social media. Overall, the MOST analysis approach can help the resort stay competitive in the industry and achieve its long-term goals.

### **5.2.1 Mission**

With the gradual lifting of travel restrictions and the gradual resumption of domestic and international travel, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa has to gear up to attract customers and regain lost revenue. In this highly competitive market, it is essential for resorts to have a clear mission that sets them apart from their competitors. In addition to sustaining growth, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa should also have a mission to come back better than before COVID-19 and also to scramble customers from competitors with loyalty throughout the year.

Firstly, scrambling customers from competitors is an essential mission factor for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, as Phuket's market is highly competitive, with many hotels vying for a limited pool of customers. To achieve this mission, resorts should focus on developing a differentiated customer experience that sets them apart from their competitors. This can be achieved by offering unique amenities, personalized services, and upgraded facilities that are tailored to the needs and preferences of the target market. For example, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could offer guided tours, cultural activities, or local cuisine experiences that are not available at other hotels in the area.

Secondly, the mission to come back better than before COVID-19 is essential for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa, as it recognizes that the pandemic has fundamentally changed the tourism industry. To achieve this mission, the resort must be willing to adapt to the new reality and embrace change. This may involve investing in technology to optimize operational efficiency, enhancing the customer experience, and offering

new services and amenities that reflect the changing needs and preferences of customers.

In addition, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa must also be willing to collaborate with other stakeholders in the tourism industry in Phuket. This may involve working with local governments, tourism boards, and other industry players to promote the destination and develop innovative solutions to the challenges facing the industry. Ultimately, the mission to come back better than before COVID-19 is not just about regaining lost revenue and market share. It is about recognizing the opportunity for hotels to create a more sustainable, resilient, and customer-focused tourism industry in Thailand. By embracing change, collaborating with others, and staying true to their mission, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa could emerge stronger than ever from the pandemic and set itself up for long-term success.

By having a clear mission, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa can differentiate itself from its competitors, attract new customers, and maintain a loyal customer base that sustains growth in the long term. Resorts will not only survive the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but will also thrive in the highly competitive tourism market in Thailand.

### **5.2.2 Objective**

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa must have a mission, as previously mentioned. To achieve those missions, the resort must set clear and measurable objectives that guide its decision-making and help them stay on track. In addition to objectives related to sustaining growth, optimizing operational efficiency, and maintaining financial stability, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa should focus on finding new markets and growing sales.

Firstly, finding new markets is an essential objective for resorts after COVID-19, as it recognizes that the pandemic has fundamentally changed the tourism industry. Traditional markets may no longer be viable, and hotels must explore new opportunities to attract customers. To achieve this objective, hotels must be willing to invest in market research, understand the changing needs and preferences of customers, and develop targeted marketing strategies that reach new audiences. The top five international source markets for Phuket hotels between May and August 2022, as reported by C9 HOTELWORKS' Phuket Hotel Market Update, are: 1. India with 103,688 visitors; 2. Australia with 43,677 visitors; 3. Singapore with 38,797 visitors; 4. The United Kingdom with 27,412 visitors; and 5. Malaysia with 22,413 visitors (Bill Barnett, 2022). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the major international tourist markets for Phuket were mainly China and Russia.

The second objective for Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa is to grow sales every month until the hotel is fully booked. According to data from interviews with the owner of the resort, this resort has been shutting down since the beginning of the pandemic. And gradually return to being open but not full of clients. This objective recognizes that the resort needs to generate revenue quickly to recover from the financial impact of the



pandemic. To achieve this objective, resorts must be willing to invest in marketing and promotional activities, offer attractive pricing and packages, and provide exceptional customer experiences that encourage repeat bookings and positive reviews both online and by word of mouth. Additionally, resorts can explore opportunities to partner with local tour operators, event planners, or other businesses to create value-added experiences that attract customers and generate revenue.

### **5.2.3 Strategies**

Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa must develop effective strategies to meet an objective. The first important strategy factor for a resort is to adjust its management and operations to fit the needs of new markets such as India and Saudi Arabia. These new markets are expected to be key drivers of growth in the post-COVID-19 tourism industry in Thailand, and hotels that can successfully cater to these markets are likely to gain a competitive advantage.

To cater to these markets, resorts may need to adjust their menus to include more vegetarian and halal options, offer prayer rooms or mats, and provide cultural experiences that are relevant to these markets. Resorts may also need to adjust their marketing and promotional activities to reach these markets effectively.

Secondly, another important strategy factor for resorts is conducting market research to identify the most attractive packages and promotions for the target market, including both old and new markets. Market research can provide valuable insights into customer preferences and behavior, allowing resorts to develop packages and promotions that are tailored to their target market's needs and desires. Resorts can also use market research to identify emerging trends in the industry and adjust their strategies accordingly.

Thirdly, resorts could partner with local tourism boards and travel agencies to promote their offerings to potential guests. By working with these organizations, the resort can reach a wider audience and tap into their expertise in marketing and promotion. Tourism boards and travel agencies can also provide valuable insights into the needs and preferences of their customers, allowing hotels to develop more effective marketing campaigns and promotions.

Lastly, the resort should identify the competitive local hotel strategies and tactics to improve its own strategy and tactics. This involves analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of its competitors, identifying opportunities for differentiation and improvement, and developing strategies that leverage its own unique strengths and capabilities. By understanding its competitors' strategies and tactics, resort can identify potential gaps in the market that it can fill, develop more effective pricing and promotion strategies, and differentiate themselves from their competitors in ways that are meaningful to their target market.

### **5.2.4 Tactics**

To enact the mentioned strategies, the following tactics could guide the resort's daily activities after COVID-19.

Firstly, personalized customer experiences, In the post-COVID-19 era, guests are looking for more personalized and tailored experiences. To meet this demand, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa should focus on providing exceptional customer experiences that exceed guests' expectations. This could involve offering customized packages and promotions that cater to specific guest preferences, such as adventure travel, wellness retreats, or cultural experiences. Furthermore, hotels should invest in staff training to ensure that all guests receive a warm welcome and personalized service throughout their stay. This could involve training staff on communication skills, cultural awareness, and problem-solving techniques to handle any issues that may arise during a guest's stay.

Secondly, encouraging guest reviews, positive guest reviews is essential for attracting new customers and building a strong reputation in the market. To encourage more guest reviews, resorts can offer benefits to customers who take the time to leave a review about their business on social media. Positive reviews on social media can be a powerful marketing tool for resorts, as they help to build credibility and trust with potential customers. This could involve offering discounts on future bookings, complimentary upgrades, or exclusive access to resort amenities. Resorts can also use guest reviews to identify areas for improvement and optimize their operations. By monitoring guest feedback and addressing any concerns or issues, the resort can ensure that all guests have a positive experience and are more likely to recommend the resort to others.

Furthermore, resorts can use market research to identify new trends and adjust their offerings accordingly. For example, if there is a growing demand for eco-friendly or sustainable travel, resorts could invest in green initiatives such as reducing plastic waste, using renewable energy, or sourcing locally produced products.

In conclusion, Oceanfront Beach Resort and Spa must focus on providing exceptional customer experiences and encouraging guest reviews to stay ahead of the competition and attract new customers. By personalizing their offerings, optimizing their operations, and staying up-to-date with the latest trends, resorts can build a strong reputation in the market and fill bookings to meet their sales objectives and complete their mission.

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