

**THE EFFECT OF ONLINE TRAVEL REVIEW ON TOURISTS'  
ATTITUDE TOWARD DESTINATION AND TRAVEL  
INTENTION AMONG THAI FULLY INDEPENDENT  
TRAVELLERS (FITs)**



**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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Thematic paper  
entitled  
**THE EFFECT OF ONLINE TRAVEL REVIEW ON TOURISTS'  
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on  
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.....  
Miss Yanin Srathongnoi  
Candidate

.....  
Asst. Prof. Kannika Leelapanyalert,  
Ph.D.  
Advisor

.....  
Asst. Prof. Nareerat Taechapiroontong,  
Ph.D.  
Chairperson

.....  
Assoc. Prof. Annop Tanlamai,  
Ph.D.  
Dean  
College of Management  
Mahidol University

.....  
Asst. Prof. Pornkasem Kantamara,  
Ed.D.  
Committee member

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Yanin Srathongnoi

**THE EFFECT OF ONLINE TRAVEL REVIEW ON TOURISTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD DESTINATION AND TRAVEL INTENTION AMONG THAI FULLY INDEPENDENT TRAVELLERS (FITs)**

YANIN SRATHONGNOI 5749044

M.M. (MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT)

THEMATIC PAPER ADVISORY COMMITTEE: ASST. PROF. KANNIKA LEELAPANYALERT, Ph.D., ASST. PROF. NAREERAT TAECHAPIROONTONG, Ph.D., ASST. PROF. PORNKASEM KANTAMARA, Ed.D.

**ABSTRACT**

The advance in technology increases the internet usage among Thai population especially for information search purpose. In tourism aspect, many travellers use online travel review as information sources in making travel decision. Therefore, this study aims to firstly examine online travel review as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) relationships between tourist attitudes towards destination and travel intentions. Secondly, to define the influence of eWOM on FITs' future intention. This research validated conceptual model by using quantitative method approach in form of online survey to collect data. The 337 samples of Thai fully independent travellers (FITs) were drawn to represent the population in this research.

Result revealed that eWOM has a credible influence to generate positive impact on tourists' attitude toward destinations and travel intention. Mediation analysis was conducted to test hypotheses as well as showed the relationships between research variables.

Destination marketing organization (DMO) can consider the important of eWOM that can influence potential tourists to visit the destination and introduce attractive destination's marketing communication using online travel review as information source

**KEY WORDS:** eWOM/ Online travel review/ Tourist attitude/ Travel intention/ Thai FITs

51 pages

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism has significant potential and become a driver for growth for the world economy. It represents 5% of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while it contributes to about 8% of total employment (United Nations Environment Programme and World tourism organization, (2012). According to Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), tourism in Thailand has also showed the significant results in Thai economy by generating revenue to the country. In 2014, inbound travellers has reached 24.9 million while the outbound Thai travellers reached over six million, and the number is expected to increase continually. In addition, the advancement of high technology enables traveller to make travelling plan to be more personalized and more specialized. It boosts an independent tourism become more popular and tends to shift travellers away from “package tourism” (Mueller, 2001; Buhalis, 2001; Knowles, et al., 2001).

The trend of travelling abroad is popular among Thai people caused the higher demands on tourism products. According to Thai Travel Agency Association (TTAA) who arranged Thai International Tourism Fair annually mentioned that there were increasing in number of sales in tourism products among Thai consumers. As Visa Global Travel Intentions study showed that Thai travel behaviour is beginning to change because more and more Thai travellers booked their trips and pay by credit card online. Therefore, there is a growth of fully independent travellers among Thai tourist (TTR Weekly, 2013).

Nowadays, internet has reshaped the way tourism related data is allocated and the way people prepare and make an excursion (Buhalis and Law, 2008). One of the most popular online activities is searching for travel-related information (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2006) and travellers are foresee the useful of such content. Several travel related reported that there is an increasing use of online travel referrals for the purpose of planning travel (Bonn, Furr and Susskind, 1999; MacKay, McVetty and Vogt, 2005). Recent studies have examined the influence of Internet-based

word of mouth (eWOM) on product success and how the process of eWOM influences customer decisions and behaviour (Sen and Lerman, 2007; Park and Gretzel, 2007). eWOM can be found in many sources such as online discussions, blogs, social networking sites, shopping sites, and online consumer review site or virtual communities (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). In addition, eWOM has two roles which are providing information about product and service and serving as recommendations (Park, Lee and Han, 2007). It is written from consumer's perspective and provides the opportunity for indirect experience among other consumers (Bickart and Schindler, 2001). Consumers perceive eWOM as more reliable information and rely on it when purchasing high involvement products (Park, Kim and Han, 2007). In this connection, the extensive use of eWOM for travel-related decision can be occurred. Therefore, the effect of eWOM is also important in travel industry.

Regarding a travel mode, it can be categorized in three ways; escorted tours, package tours and fully independent travel (FIT) (Yamamoto and Gill, 1999). FITs follow a personally determined schedule. They are more likely to use services and accommodation operated by local companies, to learn local cultures through interaction with local population. In addition, they tend to purchase tourism products at the destination via internet and contact the supplier directly. With this buying behaviour, FITs can increase the foreign exchange for the destination market. Therefore, there is a potential benefit for destination markets to attract more FITs (Cleverdon and Kalisch, 2000).

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

Several studies showed that the influence of user reviews has a particularly significance on the experience goods (Klein, 1998), as their quality is frequently unknown before consumption (Nelson, 1972) and consumers need to rely on WOM and online reviews to make purchase decisions. To know how information from online travel review and social media impact on consumers' travel decision is important for tourism researcher and destination marketing organization (DMO). In Thai context, the study of the effect of online travel review on tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention among Thai fully independent travellers (FITs) is inadequate. Therefore, it

will be benefits to marketers or destination management organization to know the impact of the online travel reviews and how it influence prospect tourists in order to better understand the consumer insight and able to adapt marketing strategies to be more effectively.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

To fulfil the purpose of this research, all relevant questions can be illustrated as follows:

1. What is the most important information source for Thai FITs?
2. Does eWOM has positive influence on Thai FITs' attitude toward the destination and travel intention?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The main objective of this thematic paper are as follows;

1. To examine the relationships between eWOM and tourist attitudes towards destination and travel intentions.
2. To define the influence of eWOM on FITs' future intention.

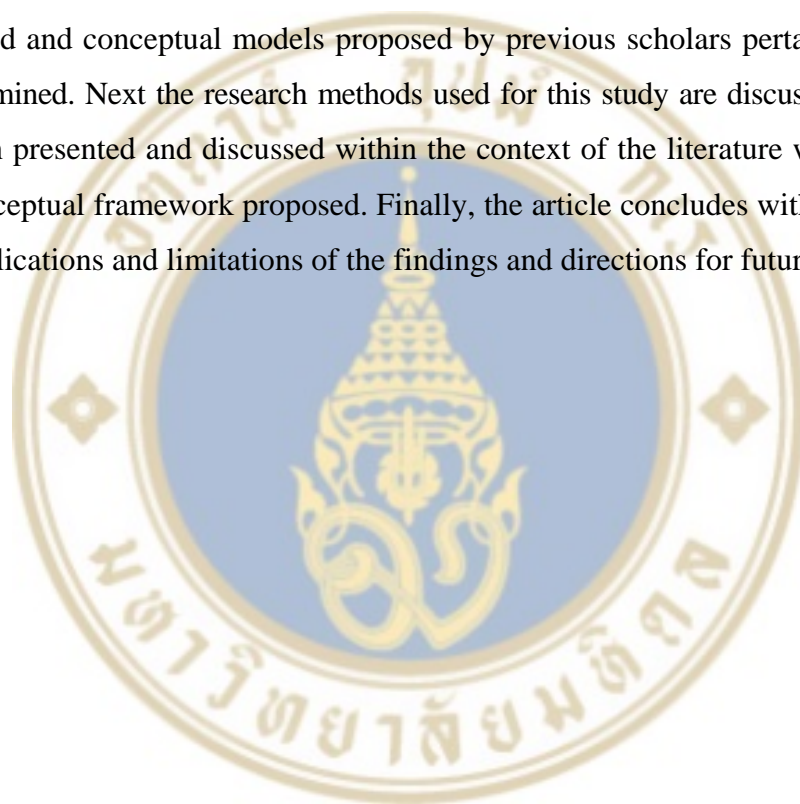
## **1.4 Research Scopes**

This research focuses on the respondents who are fully independent travellers' age above 20 years old who recently travelled abroad and has experiences in gathering information from online travel reviews for their trip preparation. The quantitative methodology is used to collect the data by using questionnaire. The estimated sample size for this research will be approximately 300 respondents in order to measure the accurate result.

### **1.5 Expected Benefit**

It is hoped that this study can document the current trends on FITs' information search in order to provide useful information to destination marketing organization (DMO) such as travel agency and tourism organization to develop suitable marketing communication plan and promote the destination to FITs market through online travel review.

This study consists of four sections. First the literature regarding the effect of online travel review on tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention is reviewed and conceptual models proposed by previous scholars pertaining to eWOM are examined. Next the research methods used for this study are discussed; the findings are then presented and discussed within the context of the literature with reference to the conceptual framework proposed. Finally, the article concludes with a discussion of the implications and limitations of the findings and directions for future research.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE CONCEPTUAL MODELS**

This chapter aims to study on the previous researches which were selected from a variety of sources in order to review their investigations into the effect of online travel review on tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention. The chapter starts with electronic word of mouth in tourism industry (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009), attitude toward destination (Chatterjee, 2001; Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006; Sen and Lerman, 2007) and behavioral intention (Chatterjee, 2001; Chen and Xie, 2008). Then this chapter will discuss further on the conceptual framework which are related to the study.

#### **2.1 Related Literatures**

##### **2.1.1 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) in tourism industry**

According to Richins (1983), Word of mouth (WOM) communication refers to the communication among consumers concerning their personal experiences with a firm or a product. The significance of WOM for consumers' purchase decision has been illustrated in previous studies (Bone, 1995; Brown and Reingen, 1987; Engel, Blackwell and Kegerreis, 1969; Amdt, 1967), especially within a service context (Murray, 1991; Murray and Schlacter, 1990). Service products are intangible and cannot be described. In order to lower the risk and hesitation about product, consumers tend to rely on the experienced sources (Bansal and Voyer, 2000; Murray, 1991; Olshavsky and Granbois, 1979).

eWOM is defined as "all informal communications directed at consumers through internet based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services or their sellers" (Litvin, Goldsmith and Pana, 2008). The eWOM communication's characteristics differ from traditional WOM. Tourism marketing studies

have given eWOM distinctive characteristics. Regarding Pan et al. (2007), the eWOM about travel destination, hotel, and tourism services are important sources of information for travellers. A lot of potential travellers seek advice from online review each year (TripAdvisor, 2006). Among these potential travellers, 84% are affected by reviews when making their travel reservations (Travelindustrywire.com, 2007). Numerous researchers have affirmed the impact of interpersonal communications have distinguished how online travel communities can have impact on tourist destination decision (Zhu and Lai, 2009). They infer that the volume of data on eWOM was essentially corresponded with its effect on consumer behaviour.

Furthermore, researchers found that eWOM plays an important role in the tourism decision making process (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009). Travellers consider eWOM to be more reliable than other sources (Ye et al., 2011; Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). Many eWOM studies have identified key indicators and impacts of eWOM, including variables influencing eWOM intentions and the impact of the e-WOM affecting consumer decision making behaviour. Many components have been investigated in distinctive disciplinary ranges including tourism, marketing and advertising (Zhu and Lai, 2009; Laczniak, DeCarlo and Ramaawani, 2001).

### **2.1.2 Attitude toward destination**

According to the study of Kraus (1995), it showed that attitude has the power and ability to predict behaviours. In addition, this study showed that attitude toward behaviour determined the intention. The study of Ajzen (1991) indicated that attitude toward behaviour was defined as the level that represents person's feeling as appropriate or not appreciate. In other words, the high level of appreciation in attitude shows the stronger on individual's intention to adopt the behaviours (Ajzen I, 2001).

Several studies have shown that behavioural intentions are a function of attitudes towards the destination. Furthermore, marketing literature has demonstrated that attitude has a strong positive effect on intentions (Ajzen I, 1991). In this case, the target behaviour is the intention to travel, and the attitude is that toward the destination. Apart from that, the role of eWOM is also important as it can form consumer attitudes and behavioural intention (Chatterjee, 2001; Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006; Sen and Lerman, 2007; Smith and Vogt, 1995; Xia and Bechwati, 2008). According to the study

in context of information exchange, Ying and Chung (2007) showed that “positive WOM leads to more favourable attitude toward a specific product than negative WOM”. Therefore, the positive eWOM lead to positive attitude as well.

### **2.1.3 Behavioural intention**

According to Kraus, 1995, intentions are assumed to be the motivation factors that affect person’s behaviour. It represents how a person is willing to adopt behaviour and how much effort a person push toward that behaviour. Behavioural intention has long been perceived as an essential mediator in the relationship between behaviour and other factors like attitude (Kraus, 1995; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

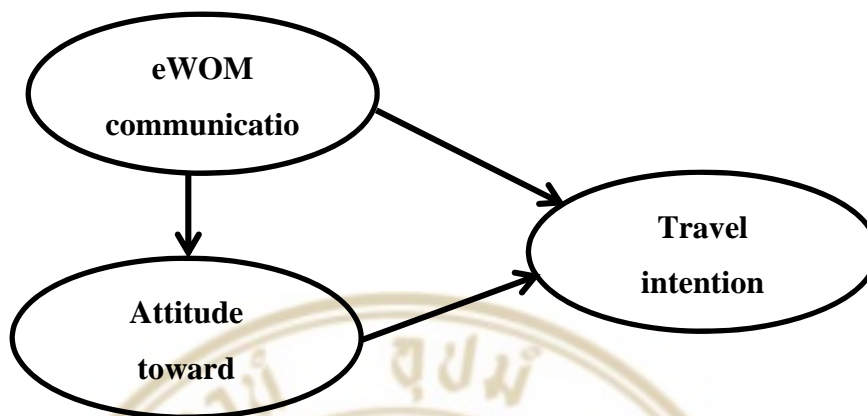
Previous studies have shown that online consumer reviews as eWOM directly impact on behavioural intentions (Chatterjee, 2001; Chen and Xie, 2008). Other research has demonstrated that the impact of eWOM information quantity on purchase intention was significant (Godes and Mayzlin, 2004; Dellarocas, 2003). eWOM information can help consumers make purchase decisions (Gruen, 2006; Lin, Luarn and Huang, 2005). Moreover, researchers examined how online product reviews influence sales of two online book shops using publicly available data from two leading online booksellers (Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006). They found that an online communication has an impact on other consumers' purchasing behaviour. In addition, the online know-how forums had an impact on purchase behaviour.

Referring to the study of pre-purchasing stages in the receiver’s decision making process demonstrated that WOM has an effect on the receiver’s awareness, attitudes, product evaluations, intentions and expectations (Soderlund and Rosengren, 2007). Furthermore, Ying and Chung (2007) indicated that positive WOM induces a strong intention to purchase a specific product than negative WOM (Ying and Chung, 2007).

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

According to the literature review above, figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study which based on the research of the effect of eWOM on tourist’s

attitude toward destination and travel intention from previous researchers which are Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), Albarq (2013), and Zarrad and Debabi (2015).



**Figure 2.1 The conceptual framework of the effect of eWOM on tourist's attitude toward destination and travel intention**

Sen and Lerman (2007) studied the effects of the eWOM on consumer attitudes. The message of eWOM can be evaluated from different perspectives and each factor has specific influence towards the consumers' attitude such as valence, volume, content quality, style, usefulness, the rating of the review and accuracy (Chan & Ngai, 2011; Dellarocas et al., 2007, Park et al., 2007; Sussan et al., 2006). Lee et al. (2008) found that online comments (whether positive or negative) has influenced the receiver's attitude towards the product and help the consumer while processing information.

In tourism industry, the reviews provided by other travellers are often perceived to be more up-to-date, enjoyable, and reliable than information provided by travel service providers (Gretzel et al., 2007). During the travel planning stage the travellers' information search focuses on information such as where to go, where to stay, how to go, and what to do at the destination in order to aware on the unexpected situations occurred. This is consistent with academic research that consumers use eWOM communications to reduce the risks associated with product or service purchase (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). Therefore, eWOM has a significant impact on attitude (Soderlund and Rosengren, 2007; Ying and Chung, 2007; Herr et al., 1991; Laczniak et al., 2001). Thus, it is hypothesized that:



Hypothesis 1: eWOM is positively related to tourists' attitude toward destination

An increase in online intention to review other consumers' opinions about such service or product increases and improves awareness of travellers' attitudes (Dennis et al., 2009; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009). Consumers tend to rely on other consumer's product and service review to make their purchasing decision (Sparks and Browning, 2011). Therefore, eWOM has a significant impact on intention (Soderlund and Rosengren, 2007; Ying and Chung, 2007; Grewal et al., 2003).

Hypothesis 2: eWOM has positive influence on travel intention.

Research confirmed that eWOM has an important role in shaping attitudes and behaviours of consumers (Castaneda, Rodriguez and Luque, 2009). Chatterjee (2001) reported that online reviews had significant influence on purchase intentions of products and retailers. Moreover, theory of reasoned action (TRA) is the most basic behavioural theory and has been used in various researches. Especially in psychology, TRA is a theory about the relationship between the attitude and behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). In tourism industry, the behaviour in question is the intention to travel such destination and the attitude is the consumer's attitude toward the relevant destination. So, attitude has influenced tourists' behavioural intention to visit a destination (Albarq, 2014). Therefore, against these findings it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive significant relationship between tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention

Apart from that, theory of planned behaviour (TPB) can also explain that attitude towards behaviour is affected by the belief and the behaviour will lead to the desired or undesirable results (Ajzen, 1985). The result of the research by Ajzen (1991) also shows that TPB can be used in predicting intention to perform various activities. Therefore, the last hypothesis is a prediction on the relationship between one dependent variable with two independent variables as follow:

Hypotheses 4: The eWOM has influenced travel intention via tourists' attitude toward destination.

**Table 2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings of the Conceptual Framework**

<b>Model of the effect of eWOM on tourist's attitudes toward destination and travel intention.</b>			
<b>Characteristic</b>	Jalilvand and Samiei (2012)	Albarq (2013)	Zarrad H. and Debabi M. (2015)
<b>Applying to focal area</b>	Iran	Jordan	Tunisia
<b>The concept</b>	This model offers sufficient generality to cover the effect of eWOM but the sample was too broad as it targeted all tourists.	This model shows significant result but the sample cannot represent the whole country because it addressed only one area in the country	This model demonstrates the relationship between variables but it lacks of the qualitative data like open-ended questions in order to provide further information sources of tourists

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thematic paper aims to investigate the effect of eWOM toward tourists' attitude on destination and travel intention. This chapter consist of three parts including research design, sample and data collection, as well as data analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research methodology was based on quantitative research using the self-administered questionnaire method. Quantitative research is 'Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)'. It is well suited for testing the hypotheses and for looking at the meaning of particular events or circumstances (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2000).

To find out the impact of online travel review on tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention, therefore, an online questionnaire is used because it can directly target to the online user. In addition, it is easy to collect a large sample and able to do SPSS for statistical testing. The online questionnaire will be conducted via social media channel such as Facebook and travel virtual communities' website which is [www.pantip.com](http://www.pantip.com).

The questionnaire had divided into four parts.

**Part 1:** Screening question will indicate the relevance target respondents for this research.

The screening question aim to identify the relevant data to this study. Three questions were used to assort the target audiences for this study. The questions includes the specific characteristic of travellers and the information search behaviour.

**Part 2:** General question about characteristic and behaviour of travellers such as number of traveling, previous travel destination, number of people joining the trip, total expenses per trip and media that influence when choosing destination.

### Part 3: Specific question

It involved questions about e-WOM, attitude and behaviour intention. This study followed Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold's (2011) six-item measurement of e-WOM. In addition, another four items were added to measure the effect of eWOM for Thai market as found in literature reviews. To measure attitude, researcher adopted the modified scales that Gamble et al. (2009) developed, which included such items as very bad/very good, very unpleasant/very pleasant, very worthless/very valuable. Then, to measure travel intention, researcher used the measurement that was modified and used a three-item that Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) developed. This part included 16 items and used a 4-point numerical Likert-type scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Table 3.1 is the summary of factors questionnaire reference.

**Table 3.1 Factors questionnaire reference**

Factors	Questions	Reference
eWOM	Online review make me more confident in travelling to the destination	Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold's (2011)
	I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help me choose an attractive destination.	
	I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination.	
	I think the frequent update online review websites are more reliable than the out date ones	Grant et al. (2008)
	I think the online review with cost of travelling enable me to choose destination easier	
	I think high detailed online review will help me prepare the trip properly	
	I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.	Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold's (2011)
	If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.	
	I think online review with beautiful pictures from the trip enable me to choose the destination quicker.	Govers et al (2007)
	To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews.	Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold's (2011)

**Table 3.1 Factors questionnaire reference (Cont.)**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Attitude	From the online review and my actual visit, I think the destination is very unpleasant.....very pleasant	Gamble et al. (2009)
	From the online review and my actual visit, I think the destination is very bad.....very good	
	From the online review and my actual visit, I think the destination is very worthless.....very valuable	
Intention	I want to visit this destination	Jalilvand and Samiei (2012)
	After I read online review, I will visit this destination	
	After I read online review, I may visit this destination rather than other destination	

**Part 4: Personal information**

It was done using such items as gender, age, monthly personal income, occupation, level of education, marital status and hobbies.

**3.2 Sample and data collection**

The study's target population was Thai fully independent travellers (FITs) who use online travel review in preparing the recent overseas trip. Persons above the age of 20 years were considered as the primary elements for the sample survey. In addition, the respondent should make an excursion abroad for leisure and vacation in the past six months. Regarding the sampling method, it was not possible to use probabilistic sampling techniques as the accurate data was not available regarding the size and location of this population. Therefore, participants were selected from two non-probability sampling methods which consist of;

1. Convenience sampling which means "a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher." (Convenience Sampling, retrieved 2 November 2015) Therefore, the questionnaires were posted on social media such as Facebook and virtual community such as www.pantip.com in order to reach many people in a short period.

2. Judgment sampling is “a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when “elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher.” (Judgment sampling, retrieved 2 November 2015) Hence, some questionnaires were sent to Thai FIT directly via Facebook messenger and Line application. As a result, the data was collected from real target group.

The screening question in part 1 of questionnaire will assort the data that relevant to the study. Irrelevant data will be excluded during the data collection process. Hence, only valid data will be considered in this study.

### 3.3 Data analysis

After collecting data from the online questionnaire survey, there are three preliminary steps before analysing the data. First, raw data inspection needs to be done by screening on the feedbacks from Google Form. Second, Data cleaning procedures have to be implemented to clear any errors; especially invalid response. Third, data preparation for computerized statistical procedure should be carried out before data import to Statistic Package for Social Science (SPSS). Variable names, types, values, label and measurement declaration for each question and answer need to be completed in order to proceed to the next step.

On this paper, five types of statistical analysis were utilized.

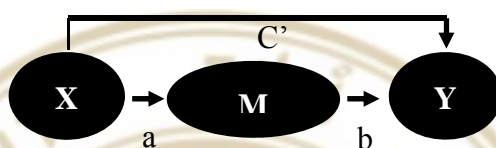
1. Descriptive statistics are implemented to *describe the basic features of the data in a study and summarize information about variables in dataset, such as the averages and variances of variables* (SPSS: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Windows, 2006). Function that use for analysing the data is frequencies.

2. Reliability analysis uses to prove factors' reliability. In order to measuring the internal consistency, reliability analysis is a suitable method to measuring the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha value need to be more than 0.7 (Lehman, 2005) which it can consider as a good reliability results.

3. Correlation coefficient analysis uses to explain correlation within the group of variables. The correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) tells the relationship between -1 to 1 and show the direction of positive and negative relationship of independent variables and dependent variable. However, 0 means no relationship between independent variables

and dependent variable (Lehman, 2005). The correlation matrices can indicate statistically significant (Sig (2-Tailed) value  $\leq 0.05$ ) of the data.

4. Mediation analysis is a hypothesized causal chain in which one variable affects a second variable that, in turn, affects a third variable. It can be examined by multiple regression (Baron and Kenny, 1986). A four step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficients is examined at each step.



**Figure 3.1 Mediation model**

Step 1: Conduct a simple regression analysis with X predicting Y to test path c alone,  $Y = B_0 + B_1X + e$

Step 2: Conduct a simple regression analysis with X predicting M to test path a,  $M = B_0 + B_1X + e$

Step 3: Conduct a simple regression analysis with M predicting Y to test path b,  $Y = B_0 + B_1M + e$

Step 4: Conduct a multiple regression analysis with X and M predicting Y,  $Y = B_0 + B_1X + B_1M + e$

5. Multiple regression analysis is “an extension of simple linear regression. It is used to examine the proposed theoretical model involving a dependent variable and two or more independent variables”. In other words, it is used when we want to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more other variables. (Laerd Statistics: Multiple Regression Analysis using SPSS Statistics, 2015). This analysis will be conducted in step 4 of mediation analysis in order to test the mediation model.

To test this research’s conceptual model and hypotheses, the statistical analysis mentioned above must be met. It must show statistically significant. Then the result are consistent with the hypothesis.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH FINDING

The questionnaire has reached 404 respondents but this paper targeted at valid data from respondents. Therefore, a sample size of this thematic paper was determined at 337 Thai fully independent traveller's age above 20 years old in total. Since the sample consists of social media and virtual community website users, the respondents clearly use the internet for planning their trip regularly.

This chapter consists of demographic respondents' information, general respondents' information, reliability statistic test, correlation coefficient analysis, mediation analysis, hypotheses summary followed by discussion respectively. The research finding was summarized as follows;

#### 4.1 Demographic of Respondents' Information

As the survey was collected 337 Thai FITs respondents, Table 4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents can be illustrated the respondent demographic characteristic as gender, age, income and education.

**Table 4.1 Demographic of respondents' information**

Demographic		Number of Respondents	Valid percentage (%)
Gender	Female	240	71.2
	Male	97	28.8
Age	21-25 years old	64	19.0
	26-30 years old	114	33.8
	31 - 35 years old	88	26.1
	36 - 40 years old	38	11.3
	41 - 45 years old	19	5.6
	46-50 years old	5	1.5
	Over 50 years old	9	2.7



**Table 4.1 Demographic of respondents' information (cont.)**

Demographic		Number of Respondents	Valid percentage (%)
Monthly personal income	Below or equal to 10,000 THB	13	3.9
	10,001 – 20,000 THB	76	22.6
	20,001 – 30,000 THB	77	22.8
	30,001 – 40,000 THB	74	22.0
	40,001 – 50,000 THB	36	10.7
	50,001 – 60,000 THB	18	5.3
	60,001 – 70,000 THB	6	1.8
	70,001 – 80,000 THB	5	1.5
	More than 80,000 THB	32	9.4
Education	Undergraduate	198	58.7
	Post graduate	129	38.3
	Ph. D.	10	3.0

Refer to gender differences in table 4.1, majority of the respondents were female and they contributed 71.2% of the total respondents. In term of age group, the result showed that majority age group (Table 2) were 26 – 30 years old which accounted for 33.8% followed by 31-35 years old (26.1%), 21-25 years old (19%), 36-40 years old (11.3%), 41-45 years old (5.6%), Over 50 years old (2.7%) and 46 – 50 years old (1.5%).

Furthermore, the majority of respondent has a monthly personal income in range of 20,001 – 30,000 THB (22.8%), 10,001 – 20,000 THB (22.6%) and 30,001 – 40,000 THB (22%) respectively. In terms of level of education achieved by respondents, 58.7% reported undergraduate, 38.3% postgraduate and the remaining 3.0% achieved Ph.D level education.

## 4.2 General Respondents' Information

As the research is also exploring the general information of respondents in term of travel frequency, total spending per trip per person, visited regions and number of travelling companions as showed in Table 4.2 as follow:

**Table 4.2 General respondents' information**

Demographic		Number of Respondents	Valid percentage (%)
Travel frequency	1-2 times	250	74.1
	3-4 times	57	16.9
	5-6 times	15	4.5
	more than 6 times	15	4.5
Total spending per trip per person	Below or equal to 15,000 THB	64	19.0
	15,001 – 30,000 THB	108	32.0
	30,001 – 45,000 THB	53	15.7
	45,001 – 60,000 THB	43	12.8
	60,001 – 75,000 THB	19	5.7
	More than 75,000 THB	50	14.8
Visited regions	Asia	263	78.0
	Europe	51	15.1
	Middle east	2	0.6
	North America	7	2.1
	South America	7	2.1
	Oceania	7	2.1
Number of travellers in one trip	Alone	36	10.7
	2 People	114	33.8
	3-4 people	103	30.6
	5-6 people	31	9.2
	More than 6 people	53	15.7

With regard to travelling frequency, 74.1% of respondents travelled 1-2 times per year followed by 3-4 times (16.9%) and finally the travelling of 5-6 times and more than 6 times indicated the same percentage at 4.5%. Moreover, the spending during the trip was ranged between 15,001 – 30,000 THB (32%) and below or equal to 15,000 THB (19%) respectively.

Referring to number of travellers in one trip, majority of respondents visited countries in Asia (78.8%) followed by Europe (15.1%). Regard to number of travellers per trip, the majority of respondents travelled in group of 2 people (33.8%), 3-4 people (30.6%) and more than 6 people (15.7%), while travelling alone accounted for 10.7%.

**Table 4.3 Level of important of information sources during trip planning**

Level of important	TV ads	Tourism event	Radio	Print ads	Destination website	Virtual community website	Social media	Relative family friends
Not at all important	17.5	11.6	37.1	21.4	1.8	0.9	1.5	6.2
Not important	49.9	38.3	51.3	49.3	3.9	2.4	5.9	19.6
Important	30.0	45.1	10.7	27.3	53.7	41.2	50.7	46.0
Very important	2.7	5.0	.9	2.1	40.7	55.5	41.8	28.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.18</b>	<b>2.44</b>	<b>1.75</b>	<b>2.10</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>2.96</b>

Note: The number is valid percentage (%)

The survey measured the important of information sources that Thai FITs used for planning the trip from both online and offline information sources. In order to explore which of information sources that Thai FITs find it is more important. From the table 4.3, the offline information sources (TV ads, tourism event, radio, print ads, relatives, family and friends) were indicated low important as mean below 3 and majority of level of important indicated “Not at all important and not important” while online information sources (Destination’s website, virtual community website and social media) were indicated somewhat high important as Mean above 3 and majority of level of important indicated “important and very important”. Therefore, it can be concluded that the online information sources are more important than offline information sources among Thai FITs.

### 4.3 Reliability Statistic Test

In order to measuring the consistency, reliability analysis is implemented. Table 4.4 is testing the reliability of three factors as follow:

**Table 4.4 Reliability statistic test on eWOM, Tourists' attitude toward destination and Travel intention variables**

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
eWOM	0.819	10
Tourists' attitude toward destination	0.815	3
Travel intention	0.743	3

In order to check that if three variables is good fit with model, Cronbach's alpha illustrated eWOM (0.819), Tourists' attitude toward destination (0.815) and Travel intention (0.743). All variables has Cronbach alpha value greater than 0.7 which can be conclude that these variables were reliable and acceptable.

#### 4.4 Correlation Coefficient Analysis

To measure the correlation between independent variables and dependent variables, the correlation coefficient analysis is shown in Table 4.5.

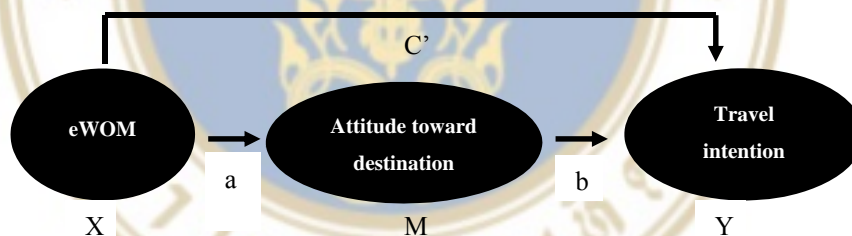
**Table 4.5 Correlation matrix of three variables**

		eWOM	Attitude	Intention
eWOM	Pearson Correlation	1	.371**	.548**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	337	337	337
Tourists' attitude toward destination	Pearson Correlation	.371**	1	.361**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	337	337	337
Travel intention	Pearson Correlation	.548**	.361**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	337	337	337

Table 4.5 showed the results of correlation coefficient of three factors, the results illustrated that all variables had positive correlated (Pearson Correlation or  $r \leq 1.0$ ). There were positively correlation between eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination at  $r = 0.371$ , eWOM and Travel intention were correlated at  $r = 0.548$ . In addition, Tourists' attitude toward destination and Travel intention were correlated at  $r = 0.361$ . Moreover, the links between each of the variables, are statistically significant (Sig (2-Tailed) value  $\leq 0.05$ ). Therefore, the correlation coefficient analysis testing could be concluded that at the bivariate level, each of the conditions necessary to test for the possible role of a mediator has been met.

#### 4.5 Mediation Analysis

Referring to the conceptual model, researcher applied the mediation model to this research's conceptual model in order to test the mediation, examine the relationship between variables and confirm the hypotheses.



**Figure 4.1 Mediation model applied to conceptual model of the effect of eWOM on tourist's attitude toward destination and travel intention**

##### 4.5.1 Step 1: Test path c

In this step, a regression is run to predict Y or dependent variable (Travel intention) from X or independent variable (eWOM) to test path c,  $Y = B_0 + B_1X + e$ .

**Table 4.6 Step 1: Mediation Analysis – Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.548 <sup>a</sup>	.300	.298	.41075	2.016

a. Predictors: (Constant), ewom

b. Dependent Variable: intention

The result in Table 4.6 showed the R-square indicates 30% of variance in the dependent variable (Travel intention) that can be explained by the predictor or independent variable (eWOM).

**Table 4.7 Step 1: Mediation Analysis – ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.271	1	24.271	143.853	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	56.521	335	.169		
	Total	80.791	336			

a. Dependent Variable: intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), ewom

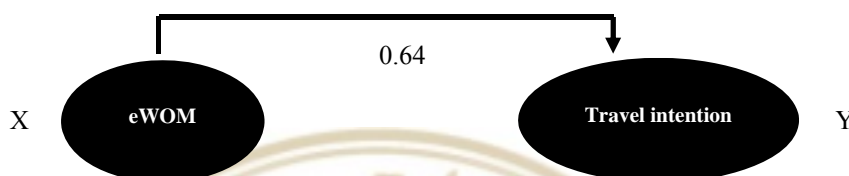
As can be seen in Table 4.7, the ANOVA showed the independent variable (eWOM) statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (Travel intention),  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 4.8 Step 1: Mediation Analysis – Coefficient**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.126	.173		6.498	.000
	eWOM	.640	.053	.548	11.994	.000

a Dependent Variable: intention

According to Table 4.8, the unstandardized coefficient for the prediction of Travel intention from eWOM is  $c = 0.64$ , standardized coefficients (Beta) = 0.548, and  $p = 0.000$  which the result was less than 0.001 level of significant rate. Thus, the overall effect of eWOM on Travel intention is statistically significant. In addition, there is a positive relationship between eWOM and travel intention.



**Figure 4.2 Mediation model's step 1**

#### 4.5.2 Step 2: Test path a

In this step, a regression is run to predict M or dependent variable (Tourists' attitude toward destination) from X or independent variable (eWOM) to test path a,  $M = B_0 + B_1X + e$

**Table 4.9 Step 2: Mediation Analysis – Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.371 <sup>a</sup>	.138	.135	.50059	1.819

a. Predictors: (Constant), ewom

b. Dependent Variable: attitude

The result in Table 4.9 showed the R-square indicates 13.8% of variance in the dependent variable (Tourists' attitude toward destination) that can be explained by the predictor or independent variable (eWOM).

**Table 4.10 Step 2: Mediation Analysis – ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	13.440	1	13.440	53.631	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	83.949	335	.251		
	Total	97.389	336			

a. Dependent Variable: attitude    b. Predictors: (Constant), ewom

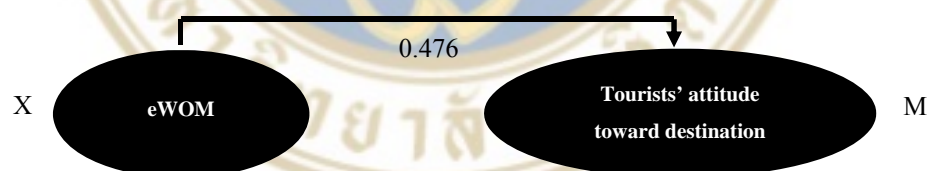
As can be seen in Table 4.10, the ANOVA showed the independent variables (eWOM) statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (Tourists' attitude toward destination),  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 4.11 Mediation Analysis – Coefficient**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.454	.211		6.887	.000
	eWOM	.476	.065	.371	7.323	.000

a. Dependent Variable: attitude

According to Table 4.11, the unstandardized coefficient for the prediction of Tourists' attitude toward destination from eWOM is  $a = 0.476$ , standardized coefficients (Beta) = 0.371, and  $p = 0.000$  which the result was less than 0.001 level of significant rate. Thus, the overall effect of eWOM on Tourists' attitude toward destination is statistically significant. In addition, there is a positive relationship between eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination.



**Figure 4.3 Mediation model's step**

#### 4.5.3 Step 3: Test path b

In this step, a regression is run to predict Y or dependent variable (Travel intention) from M or independent variable (Tourists' attitude toward destination) to test path b alone,  $Y = B_0 + B_1M + e$



**Table 4.12 Step 3: Mediation Analysis – Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.361 <sup>a</sup>	.130	.128	.45796	1.964

a. Predictors: (Constant), attitude

b. Dependent Variable: intention

The result in Table 4.12 showed the R-square indicates 13% of variance in the dependent variable (Travel intention) that can be explained by the predictor or independent variable (Tourists' attitude toward destination).

**Table 4.13 Step 3: Mediation Analysis – ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.533	1	10.533	50.223	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	70.258	335	.210		
	Total	80.791	336			

a. Dependent Variable: intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), attitude

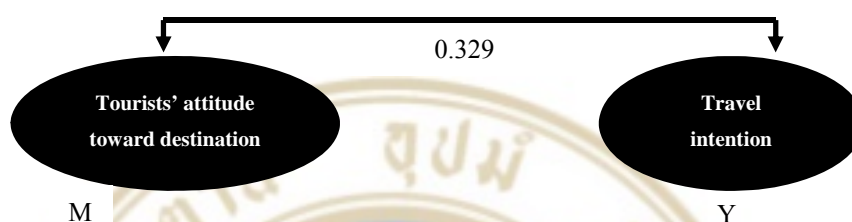
As can be seen in Table 4.13, the ANOVA showed the independent variables (Tourists' attitude toward destination) statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (Travel intention),  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 4.14 Step 3: Mediation Analysis – Coefficient**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.204	.141		15.645	.000
	eWOM	.329	.046	.361	7.087	.000

a. Dependent Variable: intention

According to Table 4.14, the unstandardized coefficient for the prediction of Travel intention from Tourists' attitude toward destination is  $b = 0.329$ , standardized coefficients (Beta) = 0.361, and  $p = 0.000$  which the result was less than 0.001 level of significant rate. Thus, the overall effect of Tourists' attitude toward destination on Travel intention is statistically significant. In addition, there is a positive relationship between Tourists' attitude toward destination and Travel intention.



**Figure 4.4** Mediation model's step 3

#### 4.5.4 Step 4: Test path c'

In this step, a multiple regression analysis is run to predict Y or dependent variable (Travel intention) from two independent variables which are X (eWOM) and M (Tourists' attitude toward destination) to test path b and also path c',  $Y = B_0 + B_1X + B_2M + e$

**Table 4.15** Step 4: Mediation Analysis – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.574 <sup>a</sup>	.329	.325	.40282	2.023

a. Predictors: (Constant), attitude, ewom

b. Dependent Variable: intention

The result in Table 4.15 showed the R-square indicates 32.9% of variance in the dependent variable (Travel intention) that can be explained by the predictors or independent variables (eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination).

**Table 4.16 Step 4: Mediation Analysis – ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	26.595	2	13.297	81.947	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	54.197	334	.162		
	Total	80.791	336			

a. Dependent Variable: intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), attitude, ewom

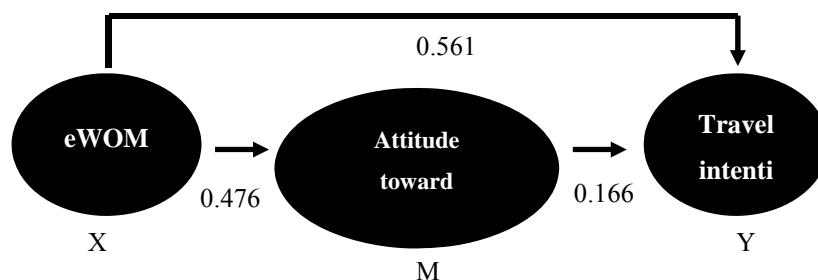
As can be seen in Table 4.16, the ANOVA showed the independent variables (eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination) statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (Travel intention),  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 4.17 Step 4: Mediation Analysis – Coefficient**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.884	.182		4.869	.000
	eWOM	.561	.056	.480	9.949	.000
	Attitude	.166	.044	.183	3.784	.000

a. Dependent Variable: intention

According to Table 4.17, the unstandardized coefficient for the prediction of Travel intention from eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination is  $c' = 0.561$  and  $b = 0.166$ , standardized coefficients (Beta) = 0.48 and 0.183, and  $p = 0.000$  which the result was less than 0.001 level of significant rate.



**Figure 4.5 Path coefficient for eWOM, Tourists' attitude toward destination and Travel intention in Mediation analysis**

The result from 4 steps in mediation test showed that there is partial mediation. In addition, most of the effects is direct as it has higher beta coefficient, but there is a nonzero indirect effect via Tourists' attitude toward destinations as well.

To prove the partial mediation, the significance tests can be applied. Partial mediation occurs when  $0 < c' < c$ , in this case;  $c' = 0.561$  and  $c = 0.640$ . So, partial mediation occurred in this case as  $0 < 0.561 < 0.640$ . Therefore, it confirmed that there is partial mediation.

#### 4.6 Hypotheses test summary

In this research, linear regression and multiple regression methods were used to test hypotheses in order to describe the relationship with all variables. All hypotheses are accepted which are H1 (eWOM is positively related to tourists' attitude toward destination), H2 (eWOM has positive influence on travel intention), H3 (There is a positive significant relationship between attitude and intention to travel) and H4 (eWOM has influenced travel intention via tourists' attitude toward destination). The summary of the hypotheses is showed in Table 4.18 as follow:

**Table 4.18 Hypotheses summary testing**

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Methods test</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>H1:</b> eWOM is positively related to tourists' attitude toward destination	Mediation test Step 2	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>H2:</b> eWOM has positive influence on travel intention	Mediation test Step 1	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>H3:</b> There is a positive significant relationship between tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention	Mediation test Step 3	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>H4:</b> eWOM has influenced travel intention via tourists' attitude toward destination	Mediation test Step 4	<b>Accepted</b>

In conclusion, the result from testing the mediation model in 4 steps supported the hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 were confirmed in step 2, 1, and 3 respectively. Most of the effect is direct (higher beta coefficient). However, there is a nonzero indirect effect via Tourists' attitude toward destination as well. So, the partial mediation confirmed H4 in step 4 of mediation analysis.

#### **4.7 Discussion**

Regarding the literature review, there were several research about the effect of eWOM toward attitude and travel intention. The previous studies used different data analysis from this study which is confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation model (SEM) to prove the hypotheses. In addition, the previous studies also targeted sample characteristics differently.

Even though, the sample characteristics and data analysis tools are different, but this study revealed the similar result. The author aimed to see the influence of eWOM on Thai FITs' attitude toward destinations and their travel intention. Therefore, the sample characteristics of this study are different from the previous researches as it targeted Thai FITs' age above 20 years old who are travelling abroad during the past six months while the previous researches focused the international tourists who visited their countries. However, the result showed that this study indicated the same result as previous researches. It confirmed the positive effect of eWOM toward tourist attitude and travel intention.

The result of this research validates the conceptual model, find additional reliable attributes of eWOM from previous research and supports research hypotheses H1 and H2 indicating that eWOM communication influences tourist attitude and travel intention. This result is similar to the research of Fakharyan et al. (2012) which indicated that e-WOM have positive impact on tourists' attitude and travel intention to certain destinations and there is significant relationship between attitudes toward these destinations and intention to travel. The finding of this research is also similar to the research of Jalilvand et al. (2012), who found that online consumer reviews accurately reflects consumers' travel intention toward a destination. Apart from that, the factors related to receiver's psychological stage which were generated from eWOM such as attitude and purchase intention are the most commonly investigated and it show that tourists' behavioral intentions are related to their attitudes. This consistent with H3 that attitude is confirmed as a predictor of travel intention. Likewise, the research of Barbara and Vesna's (2006) which showed that satisfied tourist tend to use e-WOM to communicate with other persons who share experiences. No matter what positively or negatively, they tend to travel to that destination. In addition, Chan and Ngai (2011) mentioned that eWOM effect influence consumer's attitude such as valence (positive or negative). Apart from that, this research tested additional hypothesis to confirm if the attitude considers as mediator to create travel intention. The statistical analysis revealed that there is partial mediation or a nonzero indirect effect via Tourists' attitude toward destination as well.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This paper aims to understand the effect of eWOM toward tourists' attitude on destination and travel intention among fully independent travellers in Thailand which has been adapted from the existing research. The objective of this study are to examine the relationships between eWOM and tourist attitudes towards destination and travel intention and to define the influence of eWOM on FITs' future behavioural intention.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

In this research, eWOM, tourists' attitude toward destinations and travel intention were proposed and tested by statistical method using descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, mediation analysis through multiple regression analysis.

There were 337 respondents which were 97 males and 240 females participated in this survey. Results showed that the majority age groups were 26 - 30 years old and 31- 35 years old for 114 respondents, and 88 respondents respectively with the income around 10,000 – 40,000 baht. Majority respondents travelled abroad 1-2 times per year with the travel expenditure around 15,000 – 60,000 baht. The popular destinations for these respondents are Asia and Europe. In addition, the recent trip they have made consisted of 2 – 4 traveller's companions.

From the results, the first research question about the most important information source among Thai FITs has been answered. The most important information sources that Thai FITs used during planning and preparation the trip are online information sources including destination's website, virtual community website and social media. Therefore, it shows that online communication is becoming popular information source for Thai FITs.

This research investigated the effect of eWOM on Thai FITs' attitude toward travel intention. The study tested by reliability of three variables (eWOM, Attitude and Intention). Results showed all variables are acceptable and reliable. In addition, the study used mediation analysis that showed correlation coefficient that test the relationship between variables. It indicated that there were positively correlations between eWOM and Tourists' attitude toward destination, eWOM and Travel intention, then tourists' attitude toward destination and Travel intention. Therefore, the links between each of the variables, are statistically significant.

To answer another research question that Does eWOM has positive influence on Thai FITs' attitude toward the destination and travel intention?, the hypotheses test was implemented. It showed that the hypotheses were confirmed during the process of mediation analysis by using series of linear regression and multiple regression method in order to measure tourists' attitude toward destination is mediator that predict travel intention. During step 1, 2 and 3 of mediation test, hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) were confirmed. Therefore, H1 (eWOM is positively related to tourists' attitude toward destination), H2 (eWOM has positive influence on travel intention) and H3 (There is a positive significant relationship between tourists' attitude toward destination and travel intention) were accepted. In addition, H4 (eWOM has influenced travel intention through tourists' attitude toward destination) was accepted during the step 4 of mediation test by multiple regression method. The result revealed that tourists' attitude toward destinations was partial mediation. Most of the effect is direct (higher beta coefficient). However, there is a nonzero indirect effect via Tourists' attitude toward destination as well. Apart from that, this research revealed additional attributes of eWOM that make it reliable.

To conclude, eWOM has influenced Thai FITs' attitude toward destinations and travel intention. Especially, the direct effects has a stronger relationship such as between eWOM and travel intention, eWOM and tourists' attitude and tourists' attitude and travel intention.



## 5.2 Recommendations and Practical Implications

The information from the research can help destination marketing organization (DMO) to understand Thai FITs' travel behaviour and the important impact of online travel reviews toward Thai FITs. Currently, the online travel reviews from other tourists are an influential eWOM that is being used by travellers in their travel decision making especially when they planning and preparing their trip. Since, travellers listen and share experience with each other, DMO need to understand their behaviour and the influence of virtual community that generate eWOM toward prospect tourists. This research revealed useful result that DMO should put emphasize on information online and make the prospect tourists listen and share experience with each other and DMO need to adapt themselves to virtual worlds.

This research attempts to examine the influences of eWOM on the process of a tourism destination choice. In order to increase the visitors to destination, DMO should focus on influencing attitude as it drive travel intention. DMO can influence tourists' attitude and inspired them by photos, enhance travel destination contents in term of quality and quantity of attractive activities and stories. In addition, the information online should generate confidence and trust in prospect tourists' minds. Furthermore, DMO need to understand which types of experience are likely to trigger positive e-WOM. Therefore, once tourists have positive experience from online review and actual visiting the destination, they may visit again and share positive eWOM regarding the destination to other potential travellers. In other words, if the destination provide positive and enjoyable travel experience, it can create the positive attitude in form of the favorable image toward the destination. This also trigger a psychological desire among tourists to share their positive experience with others online. Hence, it will increase more tourists' travel intentions which can easily reduce promotional expenditures.

To enhance intention to visit, suppose that DMO would like to promote new destination to Thai FITs, the key to make the destination popular among Thai FITs is to increase positive eWOM. DMO may invite influencers in online travel review to experience new attractions or destinations. After the trip, they would share their experience online which can increase the exposure of destination on internet. The potential tourists who follow the influencers may share the stories and make travel decision. The more exposure of positive information appear online, the more popular

to such destinations. It's obviously seen that the finding can be resource of information for developing business plan in various point of views.

### **5.3 Limitations**

Even though, this study illustrated potential result for destination marketing organization (DMO), but it has several limitations. The limitations of this thematic paper can be described as following.

1. Time constraint is the important issue for selecting method of collecting data and the number of respondents. This research focused only Thai FITs respondents and have experience in searching information from online travel reviews. The convenience sampling method could not represent all Thai FITs. Therefore, if further research can capture respondents from different parts of Thailand proportionally that would improve the reach and accuracy of the research.

2. Research methodology: In this research, the author used quantitative research approach by using online questionnaire survey. The problem was that quantitative method can capture only certain group of data which cannot explore in-depth as qualitative method generate.

3. Research scope: In this research, the author aimed to observe the effect of eWOM on attitude toward destination and travel intention. There were only few aspects were examined. Therefore, the result cannot represent all factors as it was focused only certain dimensions of variables.

### **5.4 Future research**

For the future research, the next researcher can include additional target respondents like package tour consumers in order to compare the effect of eWOM on their attitude and travel intention.

Furthermore, there are some aspects that need to explore more in future study. In order to precisely explore more on tourist behaviours, the questionnaire should ask respondents about how they share experiences after travelling both positive and negative experiences.

In addition, it should explore more about what kind of information consumers seek online and how they actually use the information they acquire online from other travellers to make their travel decisions. It can be applied in many different research methods such as focus groups or in-depth interviews to measure and find out insight for Thai FITs and include additional respondent like package tour consumers in order for marketer can shape more strategy that suit with consumers.



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**APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey aims to explore the effect of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) toward tourist's attitude on destination and travel intention in order to recommend useful key finding from the study for travel industry to develop marketing plan. The survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete.

### **Section 1: Screening question**

Please put  in the space for your answer.

1. Did you travel for leisure and vacation in the past six month?  
 Yes                       No
2. Do you plan, book and buy tourism products for the recent trip by yourself?  
 Yes                          No
3. Do you use travel online review in preparing the recent trip?  
 Yes                          No

### **Section 2: General information**

4. Why do you use online travel review for preparing your trip? (Check all may apply)
  - Easy to access information anytime and anywhere
  - Reliability of the information as it was from direct experience of the reviewer
  - Enable to select information from various sources
  - Receive updated information
  - Help to aware of unexpected problems during the trip that can be occurred
  - Others: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of trips per year
  - 1-2 times
  - 3-4 times
  - 5-6 times
  - More than 6 times

6. What region you visited recently?
- Africa (South Africa, Kenya, Morocco)
  - Asia (East Asia and Southeast Asia)
  - Europe (Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe and Central Europe)
  - Middle East (UAE, Oman, Qatar, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey)
  - North America (USA, Canada, Mexico)
  - South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela and etc.)
  - Oceania (Australia, New Zealand, Fiji)
  - Others: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Regarding recent trip, how many people participated in this trip?
- Alone
  - 2 people
  - 3-4 people
  - 5-6 people
  - More than 6 people
8. How much do you spend per person (including all expenses)?
- Below or equal to 15,000 THB
  - 15,001 – 30,000 THB
  - 30,001 – 45,000 THB
  - 45,001 – 60,000 THB
  - 60,001 – 75,000 THB
  - More than 75,000 THB

9. During the trip preparation stage, what is the most reliable information source do you think is important to you when select the destination?

<b>Please rate the level of important on each information source.</b>	<b>Not at all important (1)</b>	<b>Not important (2)</b>	<b>Important (3)</b>	<b>Very important (4)</b>
9.1 TV ads				
9.2 Tourism event				
9.3 Radio				
9.4 Print ads				
9.5 Destination's website				
9.6 Virtual community website (Pantip, Tripadvisor, Travel blog websites)				
9.7 Social media				
9.8 Relatives, family and friends				

### **Section 3: Specific questions**

<b>Please rate the importance of the following statements when you use online travel review.</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (4)</b>
10. Online review make me more confident in travelling to the destination				
11. I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help me choose an attractive destination.				
12. I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination.				

<b>Please rate the importance of the following statements when you use online travel review.</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (4)</b>
13. I think the frequent update online review websites are more reliable than the out date ones				
14. I think the online review with cost of travelling enable me to choose destination easier				
15. I think high detailed online review will help me prepare the trip properly				
16. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.				
17. If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.				
18. I think online review with beautiful pictures from the trip enable me to choose the destination quicker.				
19. To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews.				
<p><b>After you read the review and visited the destination, what do you think about the destination?</b> Please rate the level of following criteria.</p> <p>Norte: The left-ended of scale is lowest level of criteria (1) while the right-ended of scale is the highest level of criteria (4)</p>				

<b>Please rate the importance of the following statements when you use online travel review.</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (4)</b>
20. From the online review and my actual visit, I think the destination is <b>very unpleasant.....very pleasant</b>	very unpleasant 1	2	3	very pleasant 4
21. From the online review and my actual visit I think the destination that I visit is <b>very bad.....very good</b>	very bad 1	2	3	very good 4
22. From the online review and my actual visit I think the destination that I visit is <b>very worthless.....very valuable</b>	very worthless 1	2	3	very valuable 4
<b>Please rate the importance of the following statements when you use online travel review.</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (4)</b>
23. After I read the online review, I want to visit this destination				
24. After I read online review, I will visit this destination				
25. After I read online review, I may visit this destination rather than other destination				



## 26. Gender

 Female Male

## 27. Age group

 Below or equal to 20 years old 21 – 25 years old 26 – 30 years old 31 – 35 years old 36 – 40 years old 41 – 45 years old 46 – 50 years old Over 50 years old

## 28. Monthly personal income

 Below or equal to 10,000 THB  10,001 – 20,000 THB 20,001 – 30,000 THB  30,001 – 40,000 THB 40,001 – 50,000 THB  50,001 – 60,000 THB 60,001 – 70,000 THB  70,001 – 80,000 THB More than 80,000 THB

## 29. Occupation

 Student Company employee Government employee Business owner Unemployed Retired State owned organization employee Others: \_\_\_\_\_

## 30. Education

 Below or equal to High school Undergraduate Post graduate degree Ph.D.

## 31. Marital status

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single    | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married   | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Separated |                                   |

## 32. Hobbies (Check all that apply)

- |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading  | <input type="checkbox"/> Movies   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports   | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet |                                   |

