

**BANGKOK BOUTIQUE HOTEL RECIPE  
(THE GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER INSIGHTS)**



**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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2016**

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Thematic paper  
entitled  
**BANGKOK BOUTIQUE HOTEL RECIPE**  
**(THE GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER INSIGHTS)**

was submitted to the College of Management, Mahidol University  
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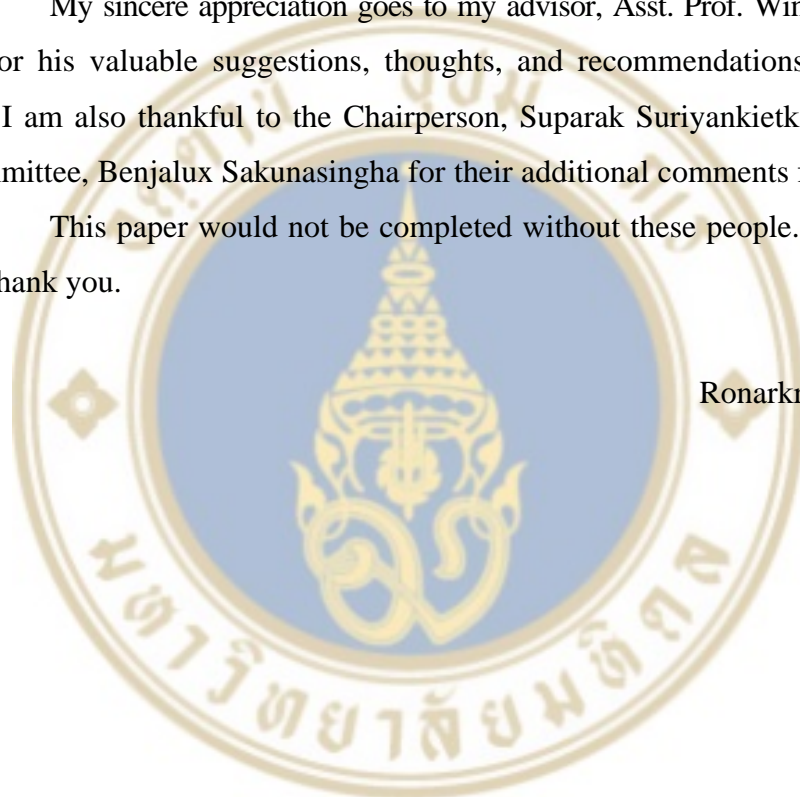
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ronarkrit Chinitrarayon



**BANGKOK BOUTIQUE HOTEL RECIPE (THE GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER INSIGHTS)**

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**ABSTRACT**

This sole purpose of this paper is to understand the insights of tourists toward boutique hotels in Bangkok. The study started from selecting groups of foreigners in the Grand Palace in Bangkok to conduct interview, totaling thirty-two respondents from China, France, Germany, Korea, and the United States. Interviews were directed to gain the insights toward four important aspects of boutique hotel: the design, the service, the price, and the location.

The first aspect, the design, was found that all respondents agreed design was very essential and described good design as being either modern, chic, trendy, loft, or traditional. The second aspect, the service, was found that most targeted respondents and online reviewers perceived good services for boutique hotels in Bangkok as active, friendly, and helpful with smiles and good welcoming, yet professional. The third aspect, the pricing, was found that in the market average and in customers' perception were at the same level, at two to three thousand baht per night. The last aspect, the location, was found that majority of respondents valued the location in the Rattanakosin, Bangkok's old town district.

**KEY WORDS:** Bangkok Boutique Hotel / Customer Insight/ Traveler/ Tourist

38 pages

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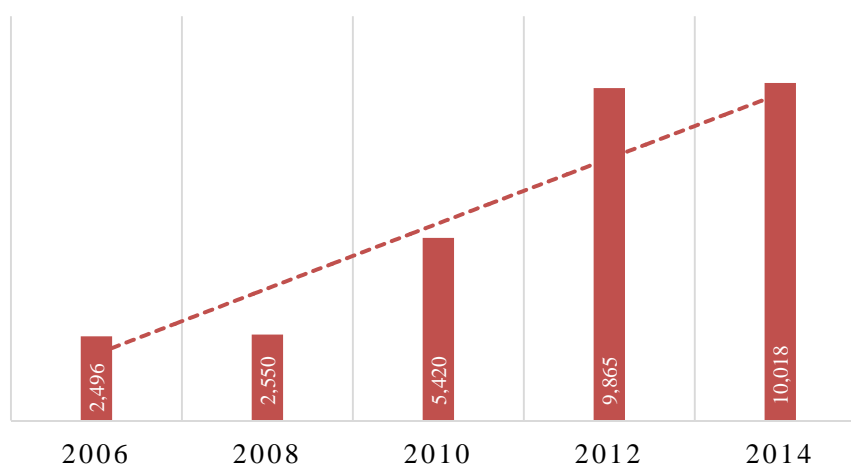
## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Thailand had lately put its attention to tourism industry, considering it as one of the main industry to drive the economy. The country announced some new regulations to support the growing of tourist numbers visiting Thailand. The new Multiple Entry Tourist Visa (METV) for foreign visitors to facilitate the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) integration was settled in November, 2015 with the aim to even boost Thailand's tourism industry. The launch of new electronic application recently took place that allows citizens of nineteen countries to apply for visa on arrival online prior to their trip to reduce the traffic at the kingdom's main gateway, Suvarnabhumi Airport and to promote the positive image of Thailand as a welcoming destination. Thai Government also settled the new "1111 hotline" for all foreigners' complaint cases in March, 2015 to ensure prompt responses for all complaints from foreigners. The fact that Thai Tourism Industry has been well supported from the government since the industry has been rapidly growing strong over the past recent years was solid.

Hotel business also shares the same success. After those successful years of operation, according to the National Statistical Office (NSO) in Thailand, the number of hotels in Thailand has been skyrocketing as the figure shown below has jumped from around two thousand five hundred hotels in the year 2006 to be around ten thousand in 2014, noted that the record has been updated in every two years.

### NUMBER OF HOTELS IN THAILAND



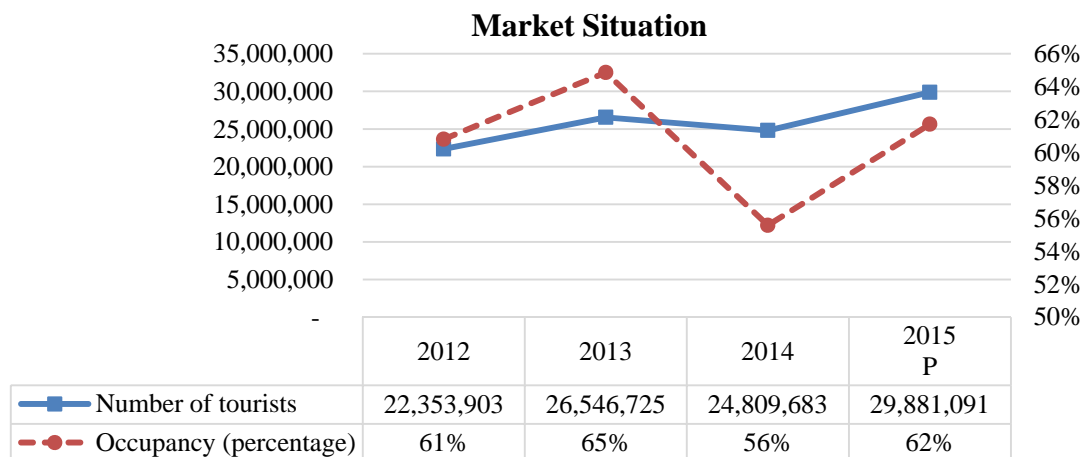
**Figure 1.1** Number of hotels IN THAILAND

**Source:** The National Statistical Office (Thailand)

A wider range of hotel types had therefore been introduced to the market to serve those new and existing travelers; each of which tried to distinguish themselves from others to gain competitive edge. A large number of boutique hotels have also come into existence in the process. Over time, more and more of this small hotels were opened, both registered and non-registered. The business had been in a tremendous success, it seemed.

#### 1.1 Problem Statement

Conversely, when looking at the market situation below closely, there were some uncertainty. Based on the data from Thai Department of Tourism and Bank of Thailand, the figure above showed the number of tourists entering in Thailand compared to the country's occupancy rate. In these past four years, there was the fall of occupancy rate in 2014. The decrease in 2014 was mainly due to the anti-government protests during the peak tourism season,



**Figure 1.2** Market Situation

**Source:** Bank of Thailand & Department of Tourism

During the late of 2013 to the early of 2014, and the military curfew implemented thereafter. The consequence severely hurt hotel industry in that year. As entrepreneurs had already invested before this unfortunate events arise, resulting in more hotel were already opened, the competition became even more fierce as hotels struggling themselves to survive. Luckily, the figure tended to rebound back a little in the year 2015.

The boutique hotels, who usually had less source of money, would be greatly suffered if the situation could not fully recover and remained negative as they could not survive over years of hardship. Some of them had already forced out of the market. Therefore, it is better to take a precautious step and try to beat the current market against competitors.

## 1.2 Objective of Study

The purpose of this study is to find customer insights toward boutique hotels in Bangkok in different aspects: location, service, design, and price. The paper should be used as a guideline for any Bangkok-boutique-hotel entrepreneur to help gaining more customer satisfaction, moving toward to success. Entrepreneurs would also be able to further analyze the findings to answer why some of Bangkok boutique hotels could be so successful, but many did not.

### 1.3 Scope and Motivation Of Study

This study of boutique hotels was conducted from Bangkok market in Thailand. The characteristic of this market was that numbers of boutique hotels here were heavily expanded with variety in styles, which allowed the researcher to easily choose some of them as cases to finding results.

Another fact was due to the market constant growth. At some point in time, if not now, the room supplies from these small hotels in Bangkok would exceed the demand. Therefore, not everyone is successful. It should be better to understand the customer insights.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE**

The purpose of this educational paper is to find insight of customers toward Bangkok boutique hotels. However, there were some of following summarized business concept, the marketing mix, and terms to discuss as to get mutual understanding between the researcher and the readers.

#### **2.1 Marketing Mix**

The business marketing model is often used when determining brand's offering, in this case the boutique hotel's brand. The component of the marketing mix is classified into four parts: product, price, place, and promotion.

For entrepreneurs to be successful, knowing customers' insight of this marketing mix is crucial. Therefore, this paper will be using the model in the consumers' perspective, aiming to find their insights.

##### **2.1.1 Product**

Products are the main reasons for customers purchasing from a business. For boutique hotel, core product is its accommodation offering, which would be reflected through the design of the hotel. Service can also be viewed as an additional product as in this business having good service can lead to having competitive edge over competitors. That is, to analyze what they would expect from boutique hotels' design and service.

##### **2.1.2 Price**

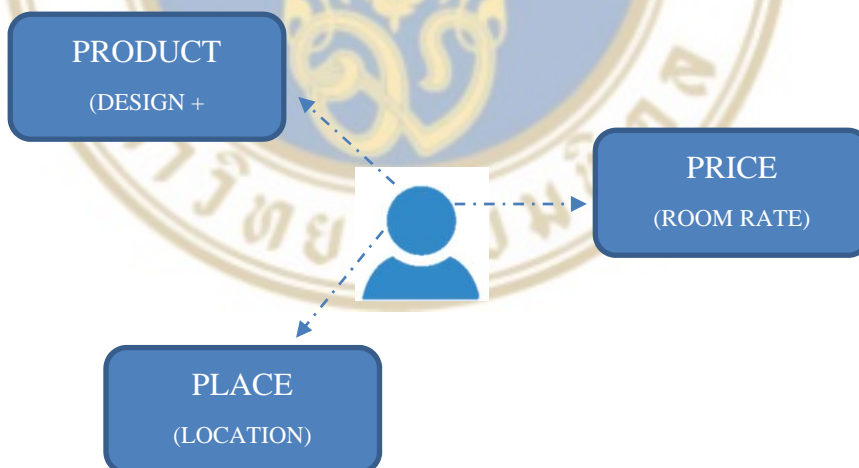
The price of the marketing mix could be viewed as the room rates offered by boutique hotels. Consumers' insight about pricing is to find the right price set that their target customers would expect to pay.

### 2.1.3 Place

In general, this aspect of marketing mix would cover the distribution channel available for any particular brand. However, under the current market situation, the researcher had found that all boutique hotels in Bangkok, if not in the world, would have exactly the same distribution channels, which were to promote themselves via online channels such as through online travel agents and social medias. Therefore, the researcher would only focus this aspect of marketing mix in finding customers' insight toward choosing the right location to build boutique hotel in Bangkok such as new town or old town, ignoring distribution channels.

### 2.1.4 Promotion

This aspect is the way the brand would communicate with customers, aiming to assist the purchase of the product. The nature of this business, again, bared no difference among the players in the market. The current strategy was to enhance engagement between hotels and travelers through social medias and online travelers' review sites. This study, therefore, would not mention about this aspect of marketing mix.



**Figure 2.1 The Scope of Interest in This Paper**

## **2.2 Boutique Hotel**

Boutique hotel is a term that defies a type of hotels as the word has been regularly used nowadays, especially in the current hospitality market. The term boutique hotel is usually interchangeable with the term bed and breakfast hotel. There are many definitions available, trying to explain the comprehensive scope and concept of this hotel category. The majority have finally reached consensus in defining boutique hotels, best characterized from its important identities such as size, location, design, services, and price.

### **2.2.1 Design**

As suggested from Anhar, HVS Global Hospitality Service, Style, distinction, warmth, and intimacy are key words in creating design for boutique hotels. Boutique hotels usually held different concepts in decoration to make a distinctive-valued position in the market. Sometime, boutique hotels had designed in response to historical buildings but sometimes created interesting architectural aspects (Agett, 2007; McIntosh et al., 2005; Lim et al., 2009). This tailored-made establishment from both in- and exterior from a unique combination of structure details made each boutique hotels different among themselves.

### **2.2.2 Service**

Service was the one of key success factor that led boutique hotel successful. To distinguish itself to other types of hotels. The service scope for boutique hotels tend to be less formal, when compared to those regular hotels. However, another unique feature was to provide personalized service (Lim et al., 2009; Erkutlu et al., 2005), treating guests with more special and enhancing unique feeling. Interaction between staffs and guests was commonly emphasized to create relaxed, yet homely environment (Agett, 2007; McIntosh et al., 2005).

### **2.2.3 Price**

There was no any specific price set for boutique hotel. In Bangkok market, boutique hotels' price gap was so large that sometimes it even more expensive than

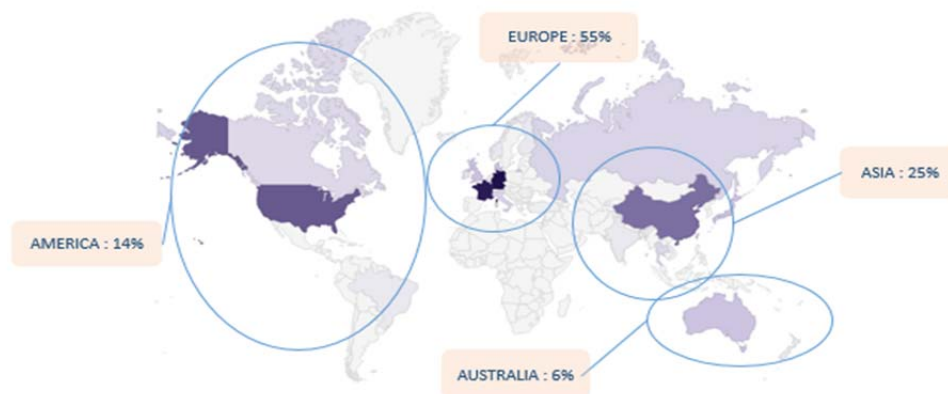
regular hotels. The current price level could be ranged from some hundreds to ten thousand baht.

#### 2.2.4 Location

Location is a very important factor for boutique hotel to gain competitive edge over hotel types. Even though there was no specific location defined for boutique hotel. However, it could be noted that it usually had location choice different in comparison to chain hotels. According to Albazzaz et al (2003), boutique hotels are mainly sprouted in trendy districts in either suburban areas, town, or city center. There was also noted (Lim et al., 2009) that boutique hotels around the world were generally focus around attractive neighborhoods.

### 2.3 Target Customer

To clearly identify the target customer of boutique hotel. The researcher used information from interviewed with one of the boutique hotels in Thailand (anonymous). The target customers could be explained in geographical view, together with their lifestyle and purchasing power.



**Figure 2.2 Shows customers of a boutique hotel categorized by continent**

These map were coated from guest records of one boutique hotel in Bangkok, who gathered over years of operation (seeing the full list in appendix section). As highlighted on the world map, the color became darker in proportion to the number of



customers. Most of its customers were from Europe at around fifty-five percent, leading by Germany and France at their teen and twelve percent respectively. The second biggest group of customers were from Asia at twenty-five percent such as from China, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, and Thailand. Customers from American Continents, both north and south, had accounted for around fourteen percent: United States at ten percent, Canada at two percent, and Brazil at one percent. The rest goes to Australia and New Zealand, totaling six percent.

*Life Style Keywords:* adventure, outgoing, comfort-oriented, experience-seeker

*Income:* Medium to high

## **2.4 Secondary Source Of Information**

The researcher also used secondary sources of information in comparing the self-analysis findings, derived from his individual in-depth interviews. Those sources were the TripAdvisor and AGODA and these two sources were frequently referred throughout the paper.

### **2.4.1 Tripadvisor**

TripAdvisor is an American travel website, providing reviews of travel all around the world. It is currently regarded as the world's largest and the most popular travel website, with more than 60 million members and over 170 million reviews and opinions of hotels, restaurants, attractions, and other travel-related businesses. Therefore, the researcher referred to this source to get a basic understanding toward which boutique hotels in Bangkok were to focus as they were already popular among the travelers.

### **2.4.2 AGODA**

GODA is an Online Travel Agency (OTA) based in Singapore that offers valued deal of accommodation through its online channels: website and mobile application. It is one of the world's fastest-growing online hotel platforms, hosting hundreds of thousands of hotels from around the worlds, that supports thirty-eight different languages. The researcher used AGODA's review source to compare with his findings as all hotel

reviews of AGODA are 100 per cent authentic. All reviews from AGODA must be submitted only by actual customers after they had completed their hotel stay. After analyzed, these reviews (of Bangkok boutique hotels) were a perfect reflection of travelers' insights.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This paper was conducted to study consumers' insight toward boutique hotel in Bangkok market in four main aspects: location, service, design, and price. The aim is to clarify what these target people actually want when choosing to stay in boutique hotel in Bangkok. Therefore, the researcher would like to divide into four parts: research design, population and sampling, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

For this research study, the researcher used qualitative method for collecting all data to analyze. In-depth interview, one of qualitative method, was more appropriate and therefore chosen in order to get the detailed information. The process allowed the researcher to recognize behavioral patterns of specific group of people toward some specific questions about size, location, design, services, and price of boutique hotels in Bangkok, treating them as consumers' insights. Reactions, as well as voice tones, would also be noted during the process as reflected from their perceptions based on their previous boutique hotels experience. For those respondents, who had never stayed at any boutique hotels, were excluded from the list as these people might have wrong perceptions toward boutique hotels, resulting in wrong insights analysis.

When in-depth interview was fully analyzed, the researcher also further analyzed information from reliable secondary sources, the TripAdvisor and AGODA's reviews, to compare the results. The researcher used collected data from those sources from thousands of actual reviews from travelers around the world. During the process, many boutique hotels in Bangkok were chosen (see a full list in appendix section).

### 3.2 Population and Sample

According to in-depth interviews, it started by using purposive sampling to collect data. Many group of foreigners were selected in the Grand Palace in Bangkok. The researcher first attempted to approach with questions to make sure if these group of foreigners had experienced to stay in boutique hotel, before request to conduct the interviews, to make sure they were our target respondents. That is to put a focus only to group of foreigners, who had experience in staying at any boutique hotels (especially in Bangkok).

After excluding non-experience-in-boutique-hotel respondents, there were thirty-two respondents; twenty-eight were couples and four were a group of family. During the interview, researcher took time to have interview with them around 5 to 10 minutes per group to get into their insights

### 3.3 Data Collection

In-depth interview is the technique to gain qualitative information about a person's thought and behaviors by communicating and asking series of prepared questions in English. To gain most benefit, most questions were open-ended type and were prepared in advance by the researcher.

Most interviews took place around midday, 12 P.M., in the Grand Palace, where the researcher found it as the most suitable place in Bangkok to conduct due to a high number of travelers and their appropriate lifestyles. The process took around five to ten minutes per group of thirty-two respondents. The researcher allowed these respondents to freely express their opinions and ideas toward the following topics.

1. Have you ever stay in any Boutique hotel before?
2. How about in Bangkok?
3. Which hotel did you stay?
4. Could you describe a perfect location in your opinion for a boutique hotel in Bangkok?
5. What are reasons behind your answer?
6. How do you describe a service (people) in boutique hotel?

7. What make a service in Boutique hotel different from other types of hotel?
8. When choosing to stay do you concern about the design of the hotel?
9. Why design matter to you?
10. How much did you pay for your current stay in that boutique hotel?
11. If you were to choose to stay in a boutique hotel in Bangkok again, how much would you like to spend?

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

After successfully collecting data, the researcher analyzed results using content analysis, decoded from the notes taken during interview process. Even though there were thirty-two respondents, they were viewed as fifteen groups of respondents because they were partners or family, who traveled together (one answer would represent one group of people with the same origin). That is, a couple were viewed as one and a family were also view as one. Therefore, in total, there were fifteen set of answers to analyze.

All Answers were firstly categorized, concerning to the topics of interest, into four parts: location, design, service, and price. The researcher thereafter searched for the same behavioral patterns or the same set of answers and grouped together, such as responses about understandings toward perfect location, in order to easily present the findings.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is describing a topic of interest, resulting from interview of groups of respondents around the Grand Palace area. The interest was to find insights of boutique hotel customers in Bangkok market in four aspects: location, service, design and price. Those respondents were classified demographically below, pronounced in a percentage.

**Table 4.1 Group of respondents**

Country of origin	Qty. (n)	Percentage (%)
<i>Couples</i>		
Germany	5	33
United States	3	20
France	3	20
China	2	13
Korea	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>93</b>
<i>Family</i>		
Germany	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

Total numbers of the group of respondents were fifteen. The majority were couples from Germany, which accounted for thirty-three percent of total respondents. A portion of couples from the United States was equal to those from France at twenty percent. Another thirteen percent was from China. A couple from Korea represented seven percent. Lastly, the remaining of seven percent was a family from Germany.

## 4.1 Design

All fifteen couples had put importance toward design of boutique hotel and agreed that they chose boutique hotels from their unique design. In fact, boutique hotel should be able to put more focus in building unique design than other types of hotels should. Compared to other type of hotels, boutique and hotels usually had number of rooms so much lower that made possible for them to have each of their room designed differently. The case could be much harder for other type of hotels since it would require much higher investment cost. The following quotes were examples from the interview.

*“It gave me a little bit of feeling difference than staying in big chain hotel”*

(love couple traveler, Germany)

*“My girlfriend loves loft style.”* (love couple traveler, U.S.A.)

*“Design is something that make us choose to stay in a boutique hotel”*

(love couple traveler, China)

*“I am an architecture. I love seeing different things”* (a family traveler,

Germany)

*“... Design also gave hint of local culture”* (love couple traveler, Germany)

*“After I saw room pictures from internet. I decided to book there”* (love

couple traveler, France)

*“That place.. the look, its service, ambience was something we don’t have*

*in our country”* (love couple traveler, China)

*“Would love to face something trendy”* (love couple traveler, Germany)

*“Boutique hotels should be chic design, right? that I have concerned”*

(love couple traveler, Korea)

*“Modern style”* (love couple traveler, France)

*“I don’t know (about the good design). Just want something different”* (love

couple traveler, China)

*“Once in a while. We don’t want to have the same feeling when go abroad.*

*We can get that in the States (all hotels around the way feel the same to them)”* (love couple traveler, U.S.A.)

The results revealed that all respondents concerned and expected good design from boutique hotels. In terms of being unique, the design was either described

among these group of respondents as modern, chic, trendy, loft, traditional. This finding also matched with one of research from Silpakorn University stating that people booked boutique hotel in Hua-Hin based upon their preference of the room architecture (Raksanoh, 2000). The following were the reviews that we found online to support the clause.

The figure displays four examples of reviews from TripAdvisor, arranged vertically. Each review includes a profile picture, user name, location, level, and the review text itself. The reviews are:

- Review 1:** User: kristin m, Toronto, Canada, Level 2 Contributor. Review: "Absolutely incredible!" (5 stars, Nov 10, 2015). Text: "We stayed here for two nights while in Bangkok. The room was spotless, very modern and exactly as represented on the website. Even more importantly the staff was amazing! Suggestions for restaurants, sites and recommendations on how much taxis and tuktuks should cost. Would 100% stay here again!"
- Review 2:** User: JVGNewYork, New York, Level 1 Contributor. Review: "Perfect homey oasis in the heart of Old Bangkok!" (5 stars, Jan 7, 2008). Text: "...Each room is beautifully and individually decorated in gentle, soothing colors and lovely antiques, yet with the necessary amenities, such internet access, TV and air-conditioning, and in various configurations that can accomadate a couple traveling alone or a family with children. My husband and I were there for three days and stayed in the Jasmine room which is snug but has a..."
- Review 3:** User: Princess\_Fiona68, Geraldton Western Australia, Level 3 Contributor. Review: "What A Delightful Hidden Gem!" (5 stars, April 5, 2014). Text: "...We booked The Lemongrass Room 112 which is delightful. What it lacks in space it more than makes up for in beauty and charm - dark wooden floorboards, a gorgeous wooden 4 poster bed and bifold doors that lead out into the private courtyard with lush plants, a table and chairs and little fish pond with a soothing water feature...."
- Review 4:** User: EROJ, Level 2 Contributor. Review: "Best Hotel Ever!!!" (5 stars, Feb 19, 2014). Text: "...The hotel's design concept is one of a kind - modern, yet relaxing and warm. The design concept and family run business creates a home away from home experience. The views of the river and temple are spectacular. The food is Thai-riffic! Best Thai food in Bangkok. This place is a true gem. Don't miss an opportunity to stay at..."

**Figure 4.1** Examples of reviews




## 4.2 Service


Since service was rather hard to tell which was the better service, customer could only receive emotional impression toward good service, not physical benefit. Therefore, the researcher asked couples to elaborate what a good service of boutique hotels in Bangkok is like. Each group of the respondents could answer more than just one dimension. Their thoughts of good service were being active, friendly, helpful, and professional and having smile, both on and off duty, and having warm greeting ambience. For example, a couple from Korea described good service through four things: being active, friendly, helpful, and professional. While, a family from Germany believed a good service was being friendly and having a smiley face with warm greeting. The following chart represented the result.




**Figure 4.2 Service Summary**

All respondents pointed out that a good service could be viewed as being friendly. The result was similar to a research studied from Chiangmai University stating that the most concerned factor for people in service was the good human relations and politeness of staff (Ruankieaw, 2000). On the other hand, only four groups said good service would reflect through being professional. They described professional in the same sense as the service provided in the four or five star hotels, expected service to be more formal with staff wearing uniform, thereby creating a sense of privilege. The following were quoted from internet to use as example to support the clause.










kalinka2002  
Antipolo City, Philippines  
Level 5 Contributor  
35 reviews  
16 hotel reviews  
29 helpful votes

**“Excellent service, awesome food, great place!”**  
 Reviewed November 19, 2015


...The crowning glory, however, is the absolutely fantastic **service**. It's family run, so you get a sense of warmness and welcome that you won't find in a bigger hotel chain. Every single one of them was incredibly helpful and nice, and made you feel at home. I would DEFINITELY go back to stay here without hesitation.

More ▾  
  


Helpful?  Thank kalinka2002 Report





Owitoucan  
Level 3 Contributor  
14 reviews  
7 hotel reviews  
7 helpful votes

**“Charming, friendly, traditional B&B in a perfect location”**  
 Reviewed February 7, 2014


...The **service** was excellent, and we got a lot of good tips and recommendations from the staff. On one occasion, we called the hotel when searching for a restaurant nearby, and a member of staff came out to find us and led us to the place we were looking for - really good quality **service**. Very minor criticisms, mostly meant...

More ▾  







Helpful?  2 Thank Owitoucan Report





MrsParis  
Paris  
Level 3 Contributor  
15 reviews  
11 hotel reviews  
18 helpful votes

**“Fantastic value for money”**  
 Reviewed April 10, 2013


.....) - is the **service** and the **smiles** of the staff. Everybody was very helpful and we never got the impression that we bothered them if we asked for a piece of advice. On the contrary. I am happy to give Loog Choob my warmest recommendation and will certainly return!

More ▾  
    

Helpful?  2 Thank MrsParis Report





sanchari83mitra  
Mumbai (Bombay), India  
Level 4 Contributor  
41 reviews  
15 hotel reviews  
29 helpful votes

**“Good if you just want to shop in MBK”**  
 Reviewed May 19, 2014


...The reception girl is sometimes very rude. There is no lift and also there are no **service** guys to take your baggage. The moment you step out of the hotel it is very stinky. Breakfast is also limited with only two eggs they will serve you. Rooms are good and clean. Basic and nice!!

More ▾

Helpful?  Thank sanchari83mitra Report



rp1987  
Mumbai  
Level 3 Contributor  
19 reviews  
6 hotel reviews  
7 helpful votes

**“Good hostel, service was ordinary”**  
 Reviewed February 25, 2013

...The **service** however was poor. The staff are unhelpful, don't respond and were plain rude at times. Though they could do something about that. The location is good - away from the crazyness of khao san road but still well connected through the sky train and not too far away from the river either.

More ▾


Helpful?  Thank rp1987 Report

Figure 4.3 Examples of reviews

### 4.3 Price

Fifteen respondents were questioned about how much they would like to spend money for boutique hotel in Bangkok. Every group expected price of boutique hotel to be more than one thousand baht. Those answers could be classified into four groups. The first group could accept any price between one to two thousand baht. The second group was any price between two to three thousand baht. The third group was any price above three thousand baht. The last group, however, was the group that said pricing can be any price, depending on the value of the hotels that reflect from its design, service, quality, and location.

*“around two thousand..”* (a family traveler, Germany)

*“As long as everything is great. If it is three thousand baht, I’m still ok.”*  
(love couple traveler, China)

*“Even high price as 4000 to 5000 Baht, room design and service make me satisfied, I’m ready to pay”* (love couple traveler, U.S.A.)

*“Three something, I guess”* (love couple traveler, France)

*“should be around one to two thousand”* (love couple traveler, Korea)

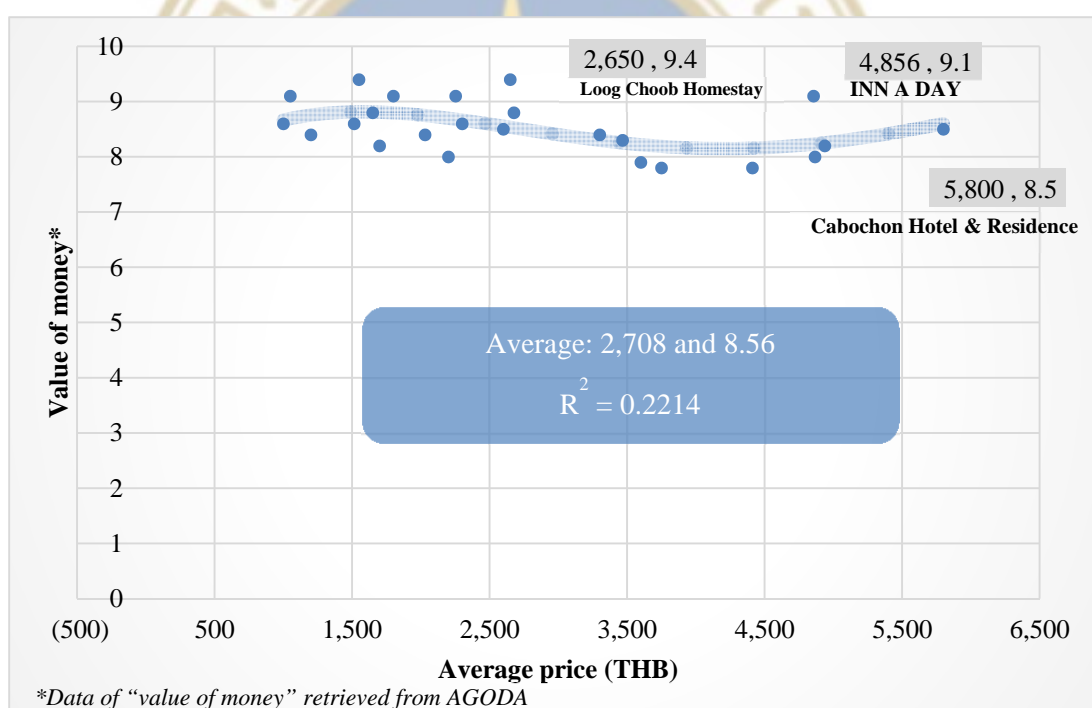
*“It could be one, or two, or three, or whatever. It’s hard to tell”* (love couple traveler, Germany)

The majority of forty percent, six out of total fifteen couples, expected a price from two to three thousand baht. The second biggest portion was at thirty-three percent, five couples, agreed at a price between one to two thousand baht. Twenty percent of respondents thought than a price should be more than thousand baht. However, only one couple, that accounted for seven percent, said that their reasonable boutique hotel price was unable to tell.

**Table 4.2 Result of expected price for boutiue hotels in Bangkok**

Price	Qty. (n)	Percentage (%)
1,000 – 2,000	5	33
2,000 – 3,000	6	40
3,000 and above	3	20
Any price	1	7

Moreover, the researcher had also used value of money scores of boutique hotels from AGODA reviews to compare with average prices of selected boutique hotels to see if they had mutual relationship. The scale of value of money score rated was ranged from one to ten, marking one as a lowest and ten as a highest possible score. In theory, the higher the average price would result in the lower value of money score. The top thirty best boutique hotels in Bangkok based from TripAdvisor were therefore selected as examples to evaluate the case. However, seven of those hotel either had number of reviewers in AGODA lower than twenty or had no review available. Therefore, they were excluded from the chart. Those seven hotels were Baan Kao, Bangrak House No 32, Be My Guest Bed and Breakfast, Hansaah, Kama Bangkok, Old Capital Bike Inn, and The Bhuthorn.



**Figure 4.4 Average price VS Value of money**

The result was shown that there was no obvious relationship between value of money and average price. The average room rates of these twenty-three hotels was 2,708 baht with value of money at 8.56. There were some hotels that could outperform the list. For example, Loog Choob Homestays average room price was 2,650 baht with value of money score at 9.4 (the highest). INN A DAY's price was

much higher than the list average at 4,856 baht but received value of money score at 9.1. Another example was Cabochon Hotel & Residence. Its price was 5,800 baht, double the average, but still could maintain the value of money in average level (8.5). That is, on average, price of those favorite boutique hotels in Bangkok had already matched with perception from customers at two to three thousand baht. However, there were some customer that were willing to pay more.

#### 4.4 Location

Most respondents, totaled 12 out of 15 groups of respondents, highlighted that the old town of Bangkok (Rattanakosin Island) was a preferable location when choosing a boutique hotel in Bangkok. The following statements were therefore quoted from interviews as examples to support the clause.

*“I don’t want a place that take longer than 15 minutes to reach this area (Grand Palace)”* (love couple traveler, China)

*“The location around here is perfect (near the Grand palace). Only a walking distance from Wat Pho, the Royal Palace and all that”* (family travelers, Germany)

*“location is very perfect to enjoy sightseeing at old town”* (love couple traveler, U.S.A.)

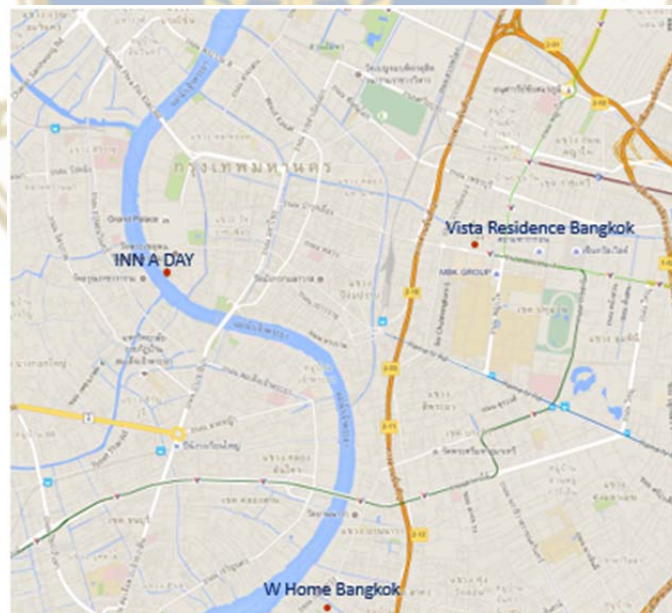
*“We rather choose to be in this area (WatPho) than in Silom or Siam square. That was a little bit too busy for us”* (love couple traveler, France)

*“Here is already great. With the boat and everything (is) closed by”* (love couple traveler, U.S.A.)

*“I love this area. So charming.”* (love couple traveler, Korea)

Therefore, this finding suggested that, to stay in a boutique hotel in Bangkok, customers favored Rattanakosin Island over other parts. This location held many cultural-related attractions such as ancient temples and historic museums. To be around this area would give them more of local experience, as a result. This finding was also in line with a previously studied research from Chiangmai University that stated boutique hotels should reflect most culture and historic story (Wasantavisuwat, 2008). Therefore, Rattanakosin area was a more preferable place.

Moreover, the researcher had also found this finding relevant to review scores of boutique hotels from AGODA source. The source was solid and genuine with no fake reviews because only customers, who had booked hotel with them and actually went to a place, would qualify to review scores in AGODA. Those customers were asked to assess the hotels in five core aspects, which were cleanliness, value of money, comfort, staff (service), and location. The scale ranged from one to ten, marking one as a lowest and ten as a highest possible score. Three well known boutique hotels were therefore selected as examples to evaluate the case: W Home Bangkok, INN A DAY, and Vista Residence Bangkok (as their locations portrayed in Figure 3). These small hotels were chosen based on their popularity among travelers as they were on the top list of the best Bangkok bed & breakfast hotels in TripAdvisor (see in Appendix 2); the TripAdvisor was regarded as the world's most popular source for traveling around the world. The popularity result was that W Home Bangkok was voted the first, INN A DAY was the second, and Vista Residence Bangkok was at the twenty-ninth of best Bangkok boutique hotel.



**Figure 4.5** Location of W Home Bangkok, INN A DAY, and Vista Residence Bangkok

W Home Bangkok was located in Rong Jay Charoenkrung Community on Charoen Krung 79 sub street, Bangkokaem area. Even though, its location was a little far from most Bangkok tourist attractions, yet offered an exceptional experience to its customers as W Home Bangkok was tucked away in quiet local residential area. It had easy accesses to river boat taxi, around ten-minute walk, and the sky train, around five minutes by bus. INN A DAY was on the other hand located in the old part of Bangkok in busy Tatien Community (Thai and Chinese community) on Rattanakosin Island. The location was walking distance from Bangkok three major temples: The Grand Palace, Wat Pho, and Temple of dawn, and from museums. An easy mode of transportation was only a river boat taxi that could be reached in less than five minutes, walking. For Vista Residence Bangkok, the location could be called the new town and fashioned area, the Siam area. Only two-minute walking distance, customers could reach the sky train and ten-minute for many famous shopping malls such as MBK Center, Paragon, and Central World.

That is, the choice of locations was represented in from of either the quiet yet comfortable local residential area of W Home Bangkok, the charming historic zone of INN A DAY, or the new fancy and fashioned area of Vista Residence Bangkok. There were one hundred and four customers reviewed the W Home Bangkok. INN A DAY was evaluated from one hundred and ninety-three customers. Lastly, Vista residence had received six hundred and fifty-nine reviews. INN A DAY was received the most score for location at 9.1, Vista Residence Bangkok followed behind at 8.7, while W Home Bangkok got lowest at 8.4. This result suggested that the old town of Bangkok were the most popular among boutique-and-hotel-preferred travelers in Bangkok

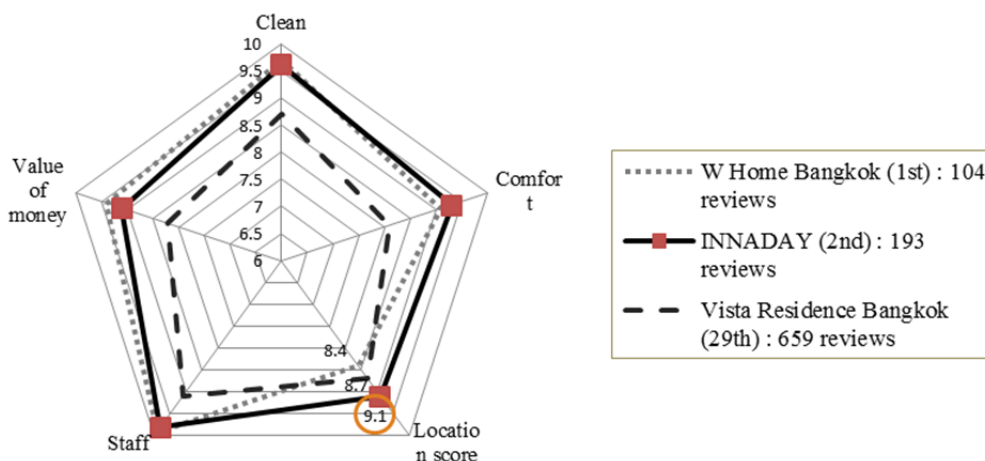


Figure 4.6 Brand health check from AGODA as of January 28, 2016





## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

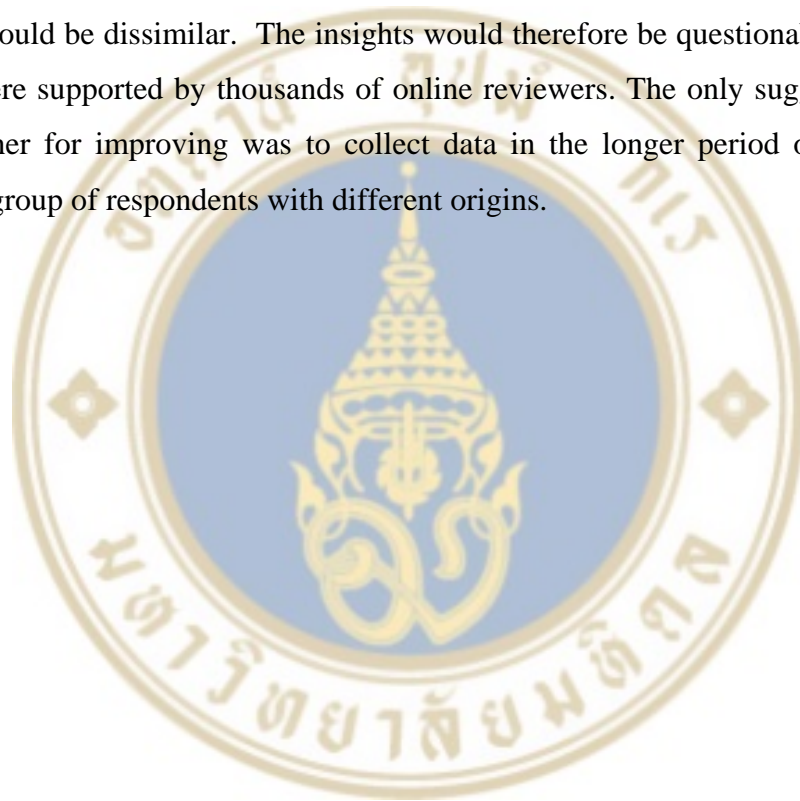
#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The findings of this academic paper were derived from a group of fifteen boutique-hotel-preferred tourists, who came from China, France, Germany, Korea, and United States. They could be classified into two clusters: couples (fourteen group) and family (one group). The researcher also emphasized on using available reviews from online sites: AGODA, and Trip Advisor to compare the consistency of those findings.

The first finding related to the design. All respondents agreed design was very essential and characterized as either being modern, chic, trendy, loft, or traditional. Entrepreneurs should therefore be encouraged to implement some of these concepts when building a boutique hotel in Bangkok. Reasons behind were because design reflected the charm of the place, and created uniqueness. The second finding scoped on service aspect. Most targeted respondents and online reviewers perceived good services for boutique hotels in Bangkok as active, friendly, and helpful with smiles and good welcoming. Entrepreneurs were highly encouraged to recruit candidates with the mentioned characters for the perfection of their services provided. The third finding focused on price. In Bangkok, the price from the average of popular boutique hotel's and the price from customers' perception were almost the same, at two to three thousand baht per night. However, as suggested from insights drawn from online reviewers, there were people who would pay more if it worth their money. The last finding was the location. The majority of respondents valued the location in the Rattanakosin, Bangkok's old town district, where cultural experiences were richly found. Reasons behind were that places in the old town could very-well reflect Thai cultures, seeping through architectures such as temples and museums and old-styles communities. They also explained that it would be more convenient to commute to many major Bangkok's tourist attractions if staying in this area. The old town of Bangkok could be said as a preferable location for building boutique hotels in Bangkok. Entrepreneurs were therefore encouraged to aim for this area.

## 5.2 Limitation

Due to the nature of this business, a seasonal demand was inevitable. This paper might then be questioned for its consistency. Even though part of these findings was drawn from thousands of online reviewers, the other part was concluded from the in-depth interviews from world travelers, which was conducted in January, 2016. The major participants in these interview were the German. This portion would be altered if the interview was held in other months such as in February when most Chinese travelers fly to Thailand. With different group of participants, thoughts toward boutique hotels could be dissimilar. The insights would therefore be questionable, even though they were supported by thousands of online reviewers. The only suggestion from the researcher for improving was to collect data in the longer period of time with the bigger group of respondents with different origins.



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**APPENDICES**

### Appendix A: List of actual customers of one boutique hotel in Bangkok

<i>COUNTRY</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
<i>Germany</i>	13.10%
<i>France</i>	12.66%
<i>United States</i>	10.04%
<i>China</i>	9.17%
<i>Australia</i>	4.37%
<i>Denmark</i>	4.37%
<i>Japan</i>	4.37%
<i>United Kingdom</i>	4.37%
<i>Taiwan</i>	3.93%
<i>Italy</i>	3.06%
<i>Russia</i>	3.06%
<i>Canada</i>	2.62%
<i>Thailand</i>	2.62%
<i>Korea</i>	2.62%
<i>Austria</i>	2.62%
<i>Belgium</i>	1.75%
<i>Ireland</i>	1.75%
<i>Brazil</i>	1.31%
<i>Finland</i>	1.31%
<i>India</i>	1.31%
<i>New Zeland</i>	1.31%
<i>Norway</i>	1.31%
<i>Bulgaria</i>	0.87%
<i>Israel</i>	0.87%
<i>Netherlands</i>	0.87%
<i>Romania</i>	0.87%
<i>Swisszerland</i>	0.87%
<i>Turkey</i>	0.87%
<i>Chile</i>	0.44%
<i>Poland</i>	0.44%
<i>Sweden</i>	0.44%

## Appendix B: TripAdvisor Ranking of Bangkok Bed and Breakfast as of Jan 27, 2016

Rank	
1	W Home Bangkok
2	INNADAY
3	Loog Choob Homestay
4	Focal Local Bed and Breakfast
5	Kama Bangkok
6	K Maison Boutique Hotel
7	Old Capital Bike Inn
8	The Choice Residence
9	Hansaah
10	Cabochon Hotel & Residence
11	Bangrak House No 32
12	Baan Kao
13	Lub d Bangkok - Silom
14	Cafe ice Residences
15	Alt Hotel Nana
16	Silom One
17	Baan Dinso Hostel
18	Baan Pra Nond Bed & Breakfast
19	The Asadang
20	Bizotel Bangkok
21	Baan Noppawong
22	Tints of Blue Hotel
23	Feung Nakorn Balcony Rooms & Café
24	Loy La Long Hotel
25	Baan Chantra
26	Be My Guest Bed and Breakfast

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Rank	
27	Sivarin Guesthouse
28	The Bhuthorn
29	Vista Residence Bangkok
30	Lilac Relax-Residence

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## Appendix C: List of address of TripAdvisor's top 30 hotels in Bangkok

	Name	Address
1	W Home Bangkok	Charoenkrung 79, Yak 8   Near Asiatique Riverfront, Bangkok, Thailand
2	INNADAY	57-61 Maharat Road   Phra nakhon, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
3	Loog Choob Homestay	463/5-8 Loog Luang Road   Si Yaek Mahanak, Bangkok 10300, Thailand
4	Focal Local Bed and Breakfast	289 Soi Charoennakorn 28   Charoennakorn Road, Klongsan, Bangkok 10600, Thailand
5	Kama Bangkok	3331/25 Sut Prasoeet 4   Bang Khlo, Bang Kho Laem, Bangkok 10120, Thailand
6	K Maison Boutique Hotel	116/17-21 Rangnam Road, Bangkok 10400, Thailand
7	Old Capital Bike Inn	607 Pra Sumen Road   Pra Nakhon, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
8	The Choice Residence	5 Soi14, Rama II Road,   Bang Mot, Chom Thong, Bangkok 10150, Thailand
9	Hansaah	44/7 soi Sri Bumphen, Bangkok 10120, Thailand
10	Cabochon Hotel & Residence	14/29 Sukhumvit 45 Road   Klongton Nua, Wattana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
11	Bangrak House No 32	32, Soi Sathon 16, Soi Trok Sung, Khet Bang Rak, Thanon Sathon Nua, Sliom   Bangkok 10500, Thailand
12	Baan Kao	405, Soi Sin Sathorn Tower, Krung Thonburi Road, Bangkok 10600, Thailand
13	Lub d Bangkok - Silom	4 Decho Road   Suriyawong, Bangrak, Bangkok 10900, Thailand
14	Cafe ice Residences	44/4 Soi Phiphat 2 (Sathorn 8)   Bangrak, Bangkok 10500, Thailand
15	Alt Hotel Nana	222 Sukhumvit Soi 4 Sub Soi 2 (Nana)   Khlong Toei, Khlong Toei, Bangkok 10250, Thailand
16	Silom One	281/15 Silom 1 Road   Silom, Bangrak, Bangkok 10500, Thailand
17	Baan Dinso Hostel	113 Trok Sin, Dinso Rd.   Borvornnivate, Pranakorn, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
18	Baan Pra Nond Bed & Breakfast	18/1 Charoen Rat Rd.   Yannawa, Sathron, Bangkok 10120, Thailand
19	The Asadang	94 Asadang Rd.,   Wang Buraphaphirom, Pranakorn, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
20	Bizotel Bangkok	104/40 Rangnam Rd, Phayatai, Ratchathewe, Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Name	Address
21 Baan Noppawong	112-114 Soi Damnoen Klang Tai   Ratchadamnoen Klang Rd., Bowon Niwet, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
22 Tints of Blue Hotel	47 Sukhumvit 27   Wattana Klongtoey, Wattana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
23 Feung Nakorn Balcony Rooms & Café	29 Soi Feungthong Feungnakorn Rd., Watradchabophit   Phranakorn, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
24 Loy La Long Hotel	1620/2 (inside Patumkongka Rachaworawiharn Temple) Song Wat Road   Sampanthawong, Bangkok, Thailand
25 Baan Chantira	120/1 Samsen Road   Bangkhunprom Phranakorn (between Soi6 and Soi8), Bangkok 10200, Thailand
26 Be My Guest Bed and Breakfast	11 Ratchadaphisek Road   212/4 Nathong1 Lane, Bangkok 10400, Thailand
27 Sivarin Guesthouse	11/1 Soi Samsen 3, Samsen Road   Watsampraya, Phranakorn, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
28 The Bhuthorn	96-98 Phraeng Bhuthorn Rd.,   Phranakhorn,, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
29 Vista Residence Bangkok	80 Soi Kasemsan 3, Rama 1 Road   Patthumwan, Bangkok 10330 , Thailand
30 Lilac Relax-Residence	100 Soi Lad Krabang 7, On-nut Lad Krabang Road, Bangkok 10520, Thailand

## Appendix D: Brand Health Check, scores based on AGODA as of January 28, 2016

		Clean Comfort		Location score	Staff	Value of money	# Reviews
1	W Home Bangkok	9.7	9.1	8.4	9.9	9.4	104
2	INNADAY	9.6	9.3	9.1	9.8	9.1	193
3	Loog Choob Homestay	9.7	9.6	8.2	9.8	9.4	209
4	Focal Local Bed and Breakfast	9.6	9	7.9	9.8	9.1	121
5	Kama Bangkok	8.8	7.6	4.4	6.8	6.4	5
6	K Maison Boutique Hotel	9.6	9.2	8.2	9.3	8.8	102
7	Old Capital Bike Inn	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
8	The Choice Residence	9.4	9	7.7	9.4	9.1	35
9	Hansaah	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
10	Cabochoon Hotel & Residence	8.9	8.9	8.5	9.2	8.5	82
11	Bangrak House No 32	6.8	6.3	8.5	6.7	7.3	12
12	Baan Kao	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
13	Lub d Bangkok - Silom	8.6	8.3	7.7	8.2	8.4	495
14	Cafe ice Residences	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.4	8	44
15	Alt Hotel Nana	8.9	8.4	7	8.5	8.2	82
16	Silom One	9.1	8.8	8.8	9.1	8.4	179
17	Baan Dinso Hostel	9.3	9	8.6	9.2	8.6	279
18	Baan Pra Nond Bed & Breakfast	9.1	8.9	8	9	8.3	304
19	The Asadang	8.9	8.4	8.6	9	7.8	24
20	Bizotel Bangkok	8.9	8.6	8.4	9	8.6	448
21	Baan Noppawong	8.9	8.6	8.4	8.6	7.9	130
22	Tints of Blue Hotel	9.4	9.5	7.2	9.4	9.1	23
23	Feung Nakorn Balcony Rooms & Café	8.8	8.6	8.3	8.7	8.5	997
24	Loy La Long Hotel	8.6	8.7	7.9	8.7	7.8	235
25	Baan Chantra	8.9	8.4	8.6	9.2	8.4	78
26	Be My Guest Bed and Breakfast	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
27	Sivarin Guesthouse	8.7	8.6	8.2	8.7	8.6	240
28	The Bhuthorn	9	9.3	9	8.7	8	6
29	Vista Residence Bangkok	8.7	8.1	8.7	9.1	8.2	659
30	Lilac Relax-Residence	8.9	9	8.2	8.9	8.8	835

### Appendix E: List of Average price of TripAdvisor's top 30 hotels in Bangkok

Rank	Name	Average price (THB)
1	W Home Bangkok	1,550
2	INNADAY	4,856
3	Loog Choob Homestay	2,650
4	Focal Local Bed and Breakfast	2,253
5	Kama Bangkok	700
6	K Maison Boutique Hotel	2,677
7	Old Capital Bike Inn	4,455
8	The Choice Residence	1,050
9	Hansaah	1,800
10	Cabochon Hotel & Residence	5,800
11	Bangrak House No 32	1,000
12	Baan Kao	n/a
13	Lub d Bangkok - Silom	1,200
14	Cafe ice Residences	2,200
15	Alt Hotel Nana	4,938
16	Silom One	2,030
17	Baan Dinso Hostel	1,515
18	Baan Pra Nond Bed & Breakfast	3,467
19	The Asadang	4,411
20	Bizotel Bangkok	2,300
21	Baan Noppawong	3,600
22	Tints of Blue Hotel	1,800
23	Feung Nakorn Balcony Rooms & Café	2,600
24	Loy La Long Hotel	3,750
25	Baan Chantra	3,300
26	Be My Guest Bed and Breakfast	1,200

Rank	Name	Average price (THB)
27	Sivarin Guesthouse	1,000
28	The Bhuthorn	4,867
29	Vista Residence Bangkok	1,700
30	Lilac Relax-Residence	1,650

