

ABSTRACT

This thesis develops the concept of destination management with a particular focus on the management of a local destination. It concentrates on seeking to understand what constitutes the general concept of destination management, exploring management practices, and clarifying the overall management of the local destination. In the absence of previous literature, a conceptual framework is developed from the bodies of literature in tourism, management, inter-organizational relationships, and integrated coastal management. This framework illustrates aspects, issues, and dimensions that are relevant to destination management and provides a structure for the analysis of destination management in Pattaya, Thailand.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, a multi-phase case study is used. A mix of holistic and embedded cases is used to obtain broad and in-depth data relevant to the concept and practice of destination management. Pattaya, as one of the major coastal resorts in Thailand, is selected as the case study as tourism has been developed there for several decades and its diverse problems provide a range of management challenges. Its major tourism attractions – beaches, nightlife, Pattaya Music Festival – are examined as embedded cases. In addition to secondary data, semi-structured interviews and observation are used to collect primary data. The broad concept of destination management is developed first and then used as a basis to examine the nature and extent of destination management in Pattaya. The conceptual framework provides a structure to analyze the individual embedded cases and to compare commonalities and differences between their management processes and structures and their implications for the practice of destination management.

The research reveals that there is a relationship between the practitioners' perspectives on a tourism destination and on destination management, and that there is a relationship between their initial perspectives on destination management and their management practices that occur at the destination. Destination management is defined as "*the collaboration of relevant agencies responsible for providing multiple tourism products at the destination in a way to achieve common goals or destination goals.*" The research also highlights that destination management requires the integration of management agencies, of management purposes, and of management

activities at the destination scale. In Pattaya, varying levels of integration occur and relevant agencies are commonly involved with managing aspects of tourism rather than the destination as a whole. The embedded cases reveal that two main forms of management occur in Pattaya: daily operations and project management. Daily management is practised by single agencies to achieve individual organizational goals and is evident in most aspects of beach management and the management of dispersed nightlife activities. Project-based management involves the pursuit of project goals and is carried out by committees, for example, Walking Street Committee and the Pattaya Music Festival Committees. A lack of common goals and low levels of integration are factors which lead to an absence of destination management. The formulation of destination goals and a scaled-up project management structure is suggested as one means of fostering destination management.