

# **A Comparative Study—China's and Vietnam's Inbound Tourism Marketing Strategies**

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## Abstract

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<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>We proposed our main research question as to how China and Vietnam market their countries as international tourism destinations? To gain a better result of the main research question, we also had three sub-questions to discuss, how have China and Vietnam shifted their marketing strategies in recent years? What is the current situation that China and Vietnam have used in international tourism marketing? How should China and Vietnam develop their international destination marketing? We also explained the definitions of international tourism, inbound tourism, and outbound tourism. During the research process, we have used document data, content analysis, sampling and collecting data, and benchmarking research methods. Based on reviewing and combing the relevant literature, this paper introduced the theoretical model of SOSTAC and SWOT to analysed how China and Vietnam promote their international tourism design image. The paper also analysed and discussed the inbound tourism policies development and strategies during different times in China and Vietnam and put forward some strategic suggestions to promote the sustainable development of the inbound tourism industry.</p> <p>After the whole research process, we had found the results and answered our main research question. Meanwhile, we provided some suggestions on how China and Vietnam to promote their international destination image from the national policies level.</p>		
Keywords Inbound tourism, international tourism destination, tourism marketing, policies and strategies, sustainable development, Asia		

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Tourism has always been an important part of the modern service industry. The rapid development of tourism has promoted domestic demand, accelerated economic development, and increased employment. Tourism is the most important way to meet consumption upgrades, release potential consumption ability and improve consumption growth. Owing to tourism's development, its affiliated industries have also boosted the vitality of the entire economic chain. All these have many non-negligible driving forces for improving key national construction issues, stimulating domestic demand, and expanding employment. The tourism industry will be a more important part of economic development. Therefore, each country of the world has paid more effort to promote the tourism industry, especially inbound tourism in recent years. As some reports indicated that the Chinese and Vietnamese inbound tourism markets have had a fast growth in recent years. The number of these two countries' inbound tourists has fluctuated regularly but remained stable overall. Inbound tourism is facing a new period of strategic opportunities, but it still needs to continue to make sustainable changes in many aspects.

The paper aims to identify efficient marketing strategies to improve further growth of inbound travel to China and Vietnam. The paper uses the current situation and policies of inbound tourism in China and Vietnam as the starting point. According to the analysis on the market source, development, transformation of policies, and branding of China and Vietnam as an international destination, this paper gives the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of inbound tourism in these two countries. The paper will provide some advice to relevant departments and enterprises by putting forward some about further expanding China and Vietnam's inbound tourism market.

## 1.2 Thesis Objectives, Research Questions, and Limitations

Tourism has been regarded as an important business behaviour that can bring a big influence on a country's economic development. Tourism, which has heavy influences on contemporary society, is a social and economic phenomenon. (Crick 1996, 15-50). Many countries in the world have started to use various methods to promote their tourism industry. Under this situation, inbound tourism has become the main aspect that each country pays attention to. Each country has been developing different policies for inbound tourism to find

the right target market. Moreover, they provide attractive inbound tourism products and services to different segmentations of customers. They compete to become the best destination brands.

Destination branding and marketing need to show a unique identity compared with its competitors. Destination branding and marketing is an important method to develop inbound tourism. A destination should find its identification to propose different marketing strategies and plans. It is also important to build up the destination brand. The identification and brand of the destination will influence the development of inbound tourism.

China and Vietnam have both become top-ranking destinations for international tourism. More policies and marketing strategies have been developed in these two countries. There is still a large potential market demand in the inbound tourism industry. Hence, the thesis aims to identify what kinds of marketing strategies should China and Vietnam to promote inbound tourism.

Thus, to achieve the research purpose, we set one main research question:

*How China and Vietnam market their countries as international tourism destinations?*

To achieve the research goals and solve the research question, there are some sub-questions needed to be completed:

*How have China and Vietnam shifted their marketing strategies in recent years?*

*What are the current policies and strategies that China and Vietnam have used in international tourism marketing?*

*How should China and Vietnam develop their international destination marketing?*

During the research process, we have provided the basic definitions of international tourism, inbound tourism, and outbound tourism. These definitions are good for the readers to understand and get what we suppose to present. We used SOSTAC and SWOT analysis theories to proceed with our research. These two theories are the best choices for us to use to analyse our research methods. To exactly answer the research questions, we searched for all the related documents and materials which were related to our research questions. We used the content analysis method to classify the materials. We decided and found the accurate data for our research by using the sampling and data collecting method. Because we have not gotten any answers from the interview invitation to the officials and professionals in China and Vietnam, we chose to benchmark method to show what aspects China and Vietnam can learn from the nearby countries. During the research process, we have designed the interview for the officials from China and Vietnam's government or some experts

in the field of inbound tourism. But there were no answers at all. Therefore, we decided to use benchmarking to compare some nearby and similar countries to indicate how these countries are promoting their inbound tourism and what China and Vietnam can learn from them.

### 1.3 Structure of the Thesis

To have a clear development of our thesis, we have divided our thesis into seven chapters. In the first chapter, we gave a brief introduction to our thesis and our research questions. In the second and third chapters, we showed the basic theories we used in the whole process. Besides, we presented what drives China and Vietnam to become international tourism destinations. We analysed the advantages these two countries have. We described our methodologies in chapter four to make the readers know what kinds of methods we have used to do the research. In the fifth chapter, we presented the comparison of the selected tourism strategies in different eras. Then, we made a benchmarking between Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Indonesia with China and Vietnam. Through the benchmarking process, we could see what aspects China and Vietnam need to learn from these nearby countries to develop their inbound tourism. In the last chapter, we gave out our research results and answered the research questions. At the same time, we showed our suggestion on how China and Vietnam to promote their image to become international tourism destinations.

## 2 China and Vietnam as International Tourism Destinations

### 2.1 International Tourism

Tourism becomes an attractive global activity under the situation of globalization. International tourism has become an important industry for every country in the world. It means that the tourists go across the borders to visit foreign countries. According to the World Tourism Organization, someone who travels and stays in a place that is not the motherland with the purpose of business and leisure for not more than one consecutive year. (UNWTO 1995, 4-5.) Inbound tourism and outbound tourism are composed the international tourism. Inbound tourism indicates that non-resident visitors visit the international tourism destination. Outbound tourism indicates the resident visitors go abroad to visit other countries. (IRTS 2008, figure 2.1.)

The tourism industry has a positive influence on a country's economy, a region, or a particular place through tourist consumption. International tourism has several positive impacts on the economic development of the traveling destination. These impacts have been stated by Dr. Hayley Stainton (2020):

- Increase capital accumulation and foreign exchange earnings.
- Create job opportunities for the country.
- Improve the local people's life and living standards.
- Commercialize the local culture and art.
- Strengthen the local communities and Infrastructure construction.

### 2.2 Inbound Tourism

Inbound is a term that is mentioned in the tourism segment, this is a concept that represents the domestic tourism industry. According to the dictionary of Cambridge, inbound is understood as the activity of traveling or moving to a specific place in a certain country. Normally, the concept of inbound is mentioned to foreign visitors who travel to a country in a certain period or people who have resided abroad for a long time and return to visit their homeland (repatriation).

Inbound is known by users when learning about the travel industry and becomes prevalent. However, this concept has just been emerging in recent time, inbound is a potential tourism segment, which brings high economic resources for a country's tourism industry. The purposes are for entertainment, relaxing, and not for long-term work or earning money. Inbound marketing is a technique to attract customers to products and services through social media

marketing, search engine optimization, branding building, and content marketing. Inbound marketing provides improved customer experience and builds trust by providing information to potential customers that they appreciate through message boards or company-sponsored blogs on social platforms. On the other hand, outbound marketing is the traditional marketing method. It promotes products and services by the basics of aiming at customers and building campaigns. (Pulizzi 2011.)

Inbound tourism is an important part of tourism. Its development status is an important indicator to measure the maturity and internationalization level of the tourism industry in a country or region. Since the beginning of the 21st century, inbound tourism in China and Vietnam has developed so well. China and Vietnam have become among the top international destinations around the world.

### 2.3 Tourism Destination as a Concept

Tourism is a phenomenon. Before the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, tourism was still assumed to be for the privilege of the wealthy and aristocrats. People just treated it as a particular phenomenon in socio-economic life. During that period, tourism was a phenomenon, which contributed to enrich human life and perception. This phenomenon is easily understood as leaving homes to stay in an unfamiliar place for various purposes.

The Swiss professors have generalized: Tourism is an assemblage of phenomena and relationships that arises from people's travel and stay outside the locality who have no settlement purpose and are not involved in any monetization. (Hunziker and Krapf 1942.)

Tourism is only limitedly explained in the phenomenon of traveling. However, this is also a notion as a basis for identifying tourists and forming tourism issues in the future.

Tourism is a social activity. Based on the theories of Mill and Morrison, tourism is an activity that people go cross a country's border, or the boundary of an area for amusement or business purposes, which won't last for a long term. Thus, tourism can be considered as specific activities that people desire to do during their trip. Furthermore, tourism is also known as "an activity of people, which happens outside of their regular residence to satisfy their needs for entertainment, relaxation, and sightseeing in a certain time". (Mill and Morrison 2002.)

To consider tourism more comprehensively, it is important to ponder different subjects, which are involved in tourism activities to be able to define and fully understand the essence of tourism. All the subjects include tourists, enterprises that provide tourism goods and services, local government, and the local population.

## 2.4 China as a Tourism Destination

Although China's tourism industry has started a little late, the speed of development has attracted attention from the whole world. Before the reform and opening, the reception of foreign affairs of tourism was mainly, only the industry prototype, not completely belong to the industrial category. In 1978, the mechanism was transformed to develop industrial tourism. In 1984, the central government opened the all-around development of the tourism industry. The government proposed the tourism construction policy on putting the national, local, departmental, collective, individual, self-help, and the use of foreign capital together. In 1986, the State Council decided to put tourism into the social development and the national economic development plan. In 1992, the Central Committee pointed out that tourism is the key industry in the tertiary industry. Tourism was listed as the tertiary industry actively develop the emerging industry sequence first. The 1998 Central Economic Work Conference proposed tourism as a new growth point for the national economy. The support of the Central Committee and the State Council has built a solid foundation for tourism development. Inbound tourism has increased considerably in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Lew & Yu 1995, 68-320.)

In the 1980s, the main routes of China's inbound tourism were so few, mainly Beijing, West (Ministry), Shanghai, Gui, and Guang. By the mid-1990s, the National Brigade had launched some new tourist routes, the most representative of which was the "Oriental Train Along the Silk Road", a special train taken by Chairman Mao, with the Japanese as its main tourists. In the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River, the Americans invested in the construction of a Victorian cruise ship, and the National Brigade launched the "President Series" cruise ship, which has four or five ships called the "President Series". All these have promoted the development of inbound tourism. (Ma & Li 1999, 123-240.)

The development of China's inbound tourism can be seen directly from the figure (see figure 1) in WTA's data analysis report in 2019. This chart has exactly illustrated how China's inbound tourism has developed through the Past Decade. From 2015, inbound tourism has grown gradually. The reason why China's inbound tourism has grown since 2015 in the next part.

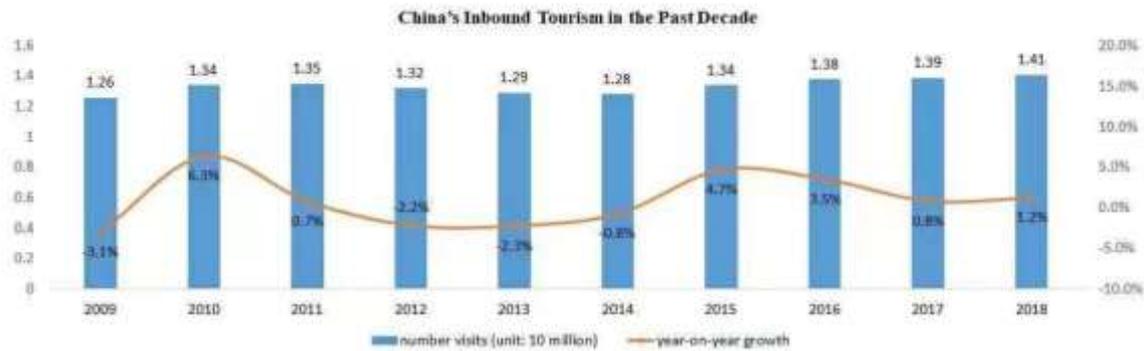


Figure 1. China's Inbound Tourism in the Past Decade (WTA 2019)

Owing to the fast growth of international tourism and the evolving pattern of the international tourism market, China's international tourism industry is having unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Besides, China's inbound tourism has achieved worldwide achievements. As the world tourism centre of gravity tilted towards the Asia-Pacific region, China's inbound tourism market will become more international hot spots. During the process of rebuilding the international tourism market pattern, international competition is becoming more and more intense. To maintain the existing market share of the traditional international tourism market, such as Europe and the United States, China's neighbouring countries and regions to attract international tourists also increased investment and publicity in tourism. (UNWTO 2017, 6.)

Forty years ago, China opened the door to reform and opened on behalf of inbound tourism. In the past 40 years, inbound tourism has been an important factor in promoting cultural and economic exchanges between China and the outside world. Inbound tourism helps to show the image of China in the new era. The advantages of China's inbound tourism are the promotion of policies, the significant improvement of international status, the gradual improvement of cultural self-confidence and civilized identity, abundant tourism resources, a safe tourism environment, enhanced access, and so on. (Wang 2018.) China has its characterized advantages to be a tourism destination meanwhile there are also some disadvantages.

#### Advantages:

- At present, China has more than 15,000 tourist attractions covering the natural landscape, social life, reform achievements, and history and culture, including 28 places on the World Heritage List. There are 137 outstanding tourist cities in China. More than 2000 museums of all kinds. The unique local conditions, colourful cityscapes, magnificent construction projects, and so on, provide unique conditions for the development of inbound tourism. (China Highlights 2020.)

- As one of the birthplaces of the world's civilization, China has its unique splendid culture and glorious history. It has many world heritages which are worthy to visit. Qin Shi-guang's Terracotta Warrior Pit and Copper Horse are known as the eighth wonder of the world, and the built Terracotta Warriors Museum has become attractive to international tourists. The frescoes of Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes are regarded as the treasure trove of world art. The Great Wall is a magnificent sight that everyone wishes to experience. (WTA 2019, 16-20.)
- China has 56 ethnic groups. This means each ethnic group owns the characterized culture and history. China can present a fascinating cultural landscape to international tourists. (Wikipedia, 2021).

Disadvantages according to WTA (2019, 37-39):

- In terms of visa facilitation, China's visa-free policy does not match the development of inbound tourism.
- The degree of internationalization, public service facilities, and facilitation levels are still insufficient.
- Tourist attractions are overcrowded during peak seasons.
- Owing to internet limitations, China doesn't efficiently use international social medial platforms to promote its international destination brand. The international tourists have little knowledge about China.
- The viewing and dining experience of inbound tourists is reduced. The trend of qualitative and aging is obvious, and the participation of tourists is not strong. The lack of leisure and holiday products for tourists to repeat consumption. The haze weather is an extremely unfavourable incentive for the increase of inbound tourists.

## 2.5 Vietnam as a Tourism Destination

Before the open door in 1986, the communist government had monopolized the whole sectors of tourism and only collaborated and connected to socialist countries such as Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. In the same year, the Vietnamese Congress released the renovation program of political and economic reforms which has been successfully converted Vietnam from a centrally planned, stagnant, and unstable Soviet-style economy to a dynamic and fast-growing market-oriented economy grounded in a socialist society. (Sun-tikul, Butler & Airey 2008)

In 1987, Foreign Investment Law was issued by the government. This law encouraged foreign investment in Vietnam, especially in the tourism industry. Along with the national renewal, the tourism industry has risen and developed rapidly in both size and quality, affirming an important role and position in the economy. Due to the close attention of the Party and State with mechanisms and policies, these achievements create more and more favourable conditions for the development of tourism. In 1998, Politburo issued the Conclusion Notice for the development orientation in the new period, creating an important turning point for the tourism industry. Vietnam tourism has stopped the decline, restored and maintained a high growth rate, gradually integrating regional and international tourism, positively contributing to the renovation of the country. Especially in 2017, Politburo issued the Resolution for the first time, in which tourism development becomes a key economic sector and an important strategy for the development of a country, forming a driving force for other branches and fields development. (Vietnamtourism 2020).

The number of international tourists has increased to 3,583,486 in 2006 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2007). Until 2019, the number was more than 18 million. Compared to 1990, it increased by 72 times. In the period from 2015 to 2019, the annual growth increased to 22.7% per year (by the Tourism Organization the world ranks highest in the world). Domestic visitors have increased by 85 million in 2019. (tapchitaichinh 2020.)

The following chart in figure 2 shows the number of tourist arrivals registered in Vietnam each year. Anyone who spends at least one night in the country but does not live there for more than 12 months is considered a tourist. Insofar as the survey included the purpose of the trip, business trips, and other non-tourism travel purposes have already been excluded. Data in the chart are given to millions of tourists. The red line represents the average of all 11 countries in Southeast Asia.

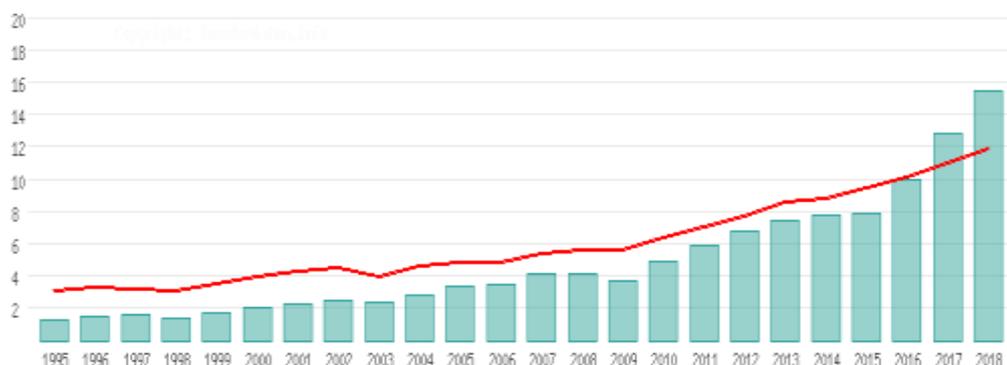


Figure 2. The growth of Vietnam tourism sector from 1995 to 2018 (Wikipedia 2020)

Advantages:

- Diversity in tourism resources: This is one of the most important competitive advantages of Vietnamese tourism. Its rich and diverse resources are spread evenly across the length of the country, which is distributed evenly in most spaces. Natural and cultural resources are interwoven to create a high attraction. Vietnam is also a country with many worldwide recognized historical and natural heritages. The climatic diversity between regions of Vietnam also creates more diverse experiences and possibilities to exploit the development of tourism products. The tourism resource system in many exploited places has been well recognized and appreciated in the market.
- The new destination with many international tourist markets: Vietnam is gradually investing in the development of tourism products in many areas across the country. In several studies, Vietnam's tourism has been evaluated by international markets as an emerging destination with great potential for development. Vietnam is a destination with continuous development, a large investment speed, and a rapid change of appearance.
- Diversities in Vietnamese cuisine: Vietnamese cuisine has been highly appreciated by many world-famous characters, culinary experts, and media. CNN (USA) voted Vietnamese cuisine as one of the 10 most wonderful cuisines in the world. Conde Nast Traveller stated that Vietnamese banh mi is one of the best street foods in the world. Moreover, Vietnamese pho, voted by Business Insider magazine as one of the must-try dishes once in a lifetime, etc. Therefore, tourists and event organizers also consider Vietnamese cuisine as an effective approach, as a "magnet" for tourists. In addition to being awarded the title of "Asia's Top Food Destination - 2019", Vietnam is also being nominated for the title of "World's Top culinary destination - 2019" by the World Tourism Awards. That is a valuable recognition for Vietnamese cuisine and tourism.

#### Disadvantages:

- Procedures for issuing visas are slow and complicated: This issue has been discussed in many conversations about the direction of tourism development. A tourist destination in a country that does not require a visa, is always a top priority. The procedure is long and complicated, causing psychological concern for tourists. This is a huge limitation in attracting visitors to Vietnam. (Linh Nhi 2015a.)
- Tourism facilities are not well-formed: facility is an important factor in tourism. The tourism industry's development is associated with the construction and completion

of technical facilities. However, facilities in Vietnam are still very poor. Many facilities are badly degraded. Many of the tourism sights can't satisfy the tourists' needs. (Linh Nhi 2015b.)

- Cultural identity is being lost in oblivion: There are then 50 ethnic groups with distinctly ethnic cultural identities. We are proud of our unique and ancient cultural traditions. However, Vietnam in the eyes of international visitors not only has beautiful natural scenery and rich and diverse cuisine, but also being attracted by many old traditional craft villages, old mossy villages, or customs of ethnic minorities, etc. But most of them no longer retain the inherent traditional features that have been influenced by modern life. This has led to visitors' disappointment. (Linh Nhi 2015c.)

## 2.6 Current Situation of Inbound Tourism in China and Vietnam

The inbound tourism industry of China has started to enter a new normal steady growth in 2015. The government has established effective related policies to support the inbound tourism industry. The economy and society of China have developed so fast in recent years. It has gradually realized the "Chinese Dream". The government has simplified the visa application. It implements a facilitation policy in customs clearance, duty-free, and navigational rights. Additionally, the national tourism administrative departments have made innovative efforts to do global promotion and destination marketing. All these have provided the basic guarantee and new momentum for the continuous development of the inbound tourism market. ("13th Five-Year Plan" Tourism Development Plan, 2016a.)

To attract international tourists to visit a country, it is important to make the international tourists know, recognize, and identify with the destination country. It is initial for the country to promote its cultural strength and international destination image. China, with the world's third-largest territory, has the world's second-largest economy. It also has a splendid history and culture, but its attractiveness to foreign tourists has not been fully exploited. To promote its country's image as an international traveling destination, China has continuously drawn up many entry policies for international tourists. The government has proposed the "13th Five-Year Plan" Tourism Development Plan. This plan is mentioned all the related policies and ideas to support the development of tourism.

The continuous development of China's inbound tourism market is inseparable from the country's continuous policy support for inbound tourism, such as continuous efforts in visas, shopping tax rebates, and document facilitation applications that have created a better policy environment for inbound tourism development. In April 2018, the National Immigration

Administration implemented a visa-free policy for inbound tourists from 59 countries in Hainan Province; in 2019, it continued to implement favourable policies for inbound tourism, carried out cooperative research on the "Belt and Road" tourism industry, provided multilingual services, and improved the movement of inbound tourists Payment solutions and more. (FORWARD 2019.)

In addition to policy support, China has also strengthened the integration of culture and tourism to strengthen Chinese cultural promotion. It has continuously innovated business models, enhanced the international influence of China's tourism, and targeted key source market identification and marketing. The continuous optimization of China's inbound tourism development environment has promoted the continuous development of China's inbound tourist arrivals and income.

There are also four important strategies to promote China as an international destination. The first one is the "515 Strategy" which includes five goals, ten actions, and 52 specific initiatives to improve the upgrading and transformation of tourism. This strategy also aims to promote the quality and efficiency of tourism and accelerates tourism to become modernized and internationalized. The second is the "Tourism Plus" strategy. Through smart tourism, rural tourism, industrial tourism, business tourism, research tourism, medical tourism, old-age tourism, health tourism, and other fields, focusing on the promotion of integration and development. The third is the "regional tourism strategy". The last one, an important one, is the "Belt and Road" tourism cooperation strategy. "Belt and Road" is the common prosperity for a country along the way. It is the organic combination of the Chinese dream and the world dream. ("13th Five-Year Plan" Tourism Development Plan, 2016b.)

Nowadays, sustainability has become an important aspect of each industry. Sustainable tourism has become popular among tourists. The tourists started to realize how important to protect nature. The government of China also tries its best to develop eco-tourism to protect and preserve natural landscapes.

Since the opening and reform in the 1980s, tourism has contributed more to the economic development in China. The tourism market in China has had a make-over into one of the world's tourism fields. The domestic trips' number in China was estimated that it would grow to 2.38 billion trips by 2020, pointing out a rise of over 50% compared to the number 10 years ago. (Lai Lin Thomala 2020a.)

China's tourism industry's total revenue summed up to 3.94 trillion yuan in 2016, which increased by 15.2% compared to before. The tourism industry contributed to China's gross domestic product (GDP) and supplied about 22.5 million jobs for Chinese people. In 2015,

there are about 65 million people who worked in the tourism sector. (Lai Lin Thomamala 2020b.)

China has been recognized as one of the most attractive international destinations, the international tourists mostly come from Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and the UK. The inbound tourism revenue has increased to 11 billion US dollars by 2015. Around 134 million visitors have visited China in 2015. In the same year, the number of international tourists who stay overnight in Guangdong province reached 34,5 million. (Lai Lin Thomala 2020c.)

With regards to the number of China's outbound tourists, as shown in the infographic below, the number of outbound tourists has continued to grow steadily since 1992 and is expected to increase in the coming years as can be forecast from the infographic.

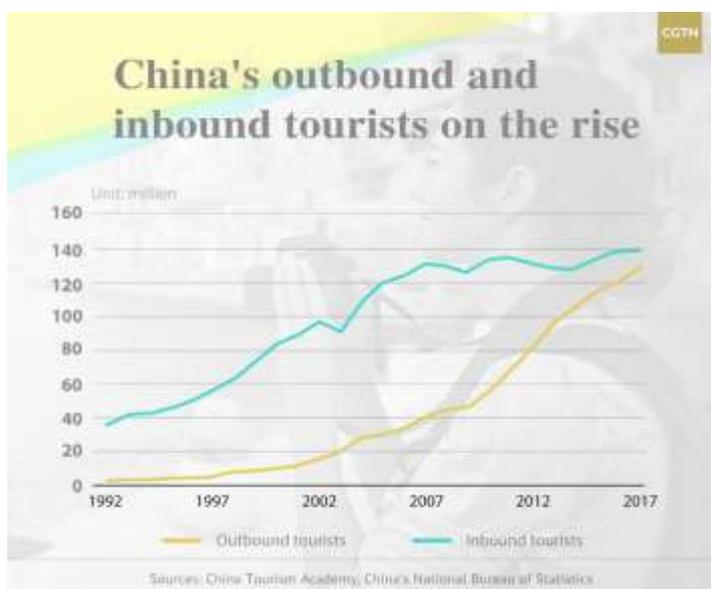


Figure 3. Tourism industry in China – Statistics and Facts. 5.3.2020 (Statista 2020)

As stated by a survey which was answered by many China travel agencies and travel companies, it indicated that the travellers now are becoming more concerned about the prevention and control of the Covid-19 pandemic at the destination. The key concerns will be the sanitary measures in force. Free Independent Travel (FIT), customized tours, and self-driving travelling are being implemented by the pandemic situation to avoid crowded places, large travel groups, and follow social distancing rules. In the following years, outdoor, island, natural landscape, medical tours, and family tours will become the most attractive tourism trends. Business + Leisure will remain still one of the tendencies for business tourism classes. Business travellers are expected to have family or personal travels to the specific destinations during their business trips next year by over 60% of the surveyed travel companies. (TTR WEEKLY 2020a.)

According to the market survey based on 200 China outbound travel agencies and travel companies in figure 4, the prevention and control of the Covid-19 pandemic at the destination are considered most important to Chinese travellers. Sanitary measures in force will also become key concerns, as will stable flight schedules. Self-driving tours, Free Independent Travel (FIT), and customized tours are being driven by the new situation to avoid places with crowds and large travel groups. (TTR WEEKLY 2020b.)



Figure 4. Share of surveyed travel companies that estimate the travel products preferred by Chinese travellers in the coming year (TTR WEEKLY 2020)

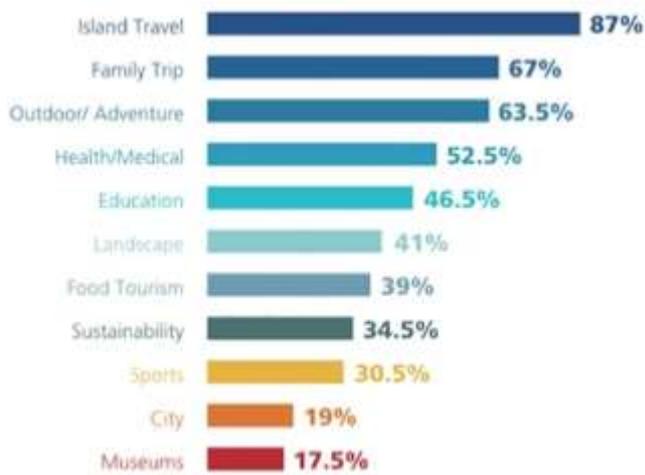


Figure 5. Shared by the surveyed travel companies that estimate the popular travel themes next year (TTR WEEKLY 2020)

In figure 5, Island, outdoor, natural landscape, family, and medical tours are expected to be the most popular themes in the coming year. Meanwhile, Business + Leisure will be still one of the trends for business travel in the future. Over 60% of the surveyed travel companies expect business travellers to make personal or family trips to the specific destinations of their business travel next year in China.

In the new era of integration of cultural and tourism development, the development prospects of China's inbound tourism market are good, and its growth trend is expected to be further stabilized. With the increase in the proportion of overnight tourists and foreign tourists, the market structure of China's inbound tourism will be further optimized.

Inbound tourism has never left the centre of the national tourism development strategy system. The country's determination to develop inbound tourism has never wavered. Inbound tourism has entered a period of recovery and growth since 2015, but it is also facing unprecedented fierce international competition and unprecedented challenges of reform and innovation. In the face of this big change, greater determination and resolute action are needed to boost the development of inbound tourism.

Figure 6 below provides the number of tourist arrivals in the Asia Pacific in 2019 by country and region. In 2019, China received the highest number of visitors across the Asia Pacific region with approximately 100 million international tourist arrivals. Contrastingly, Vietnam received more than 22 million international tourist arrivals in 2019.

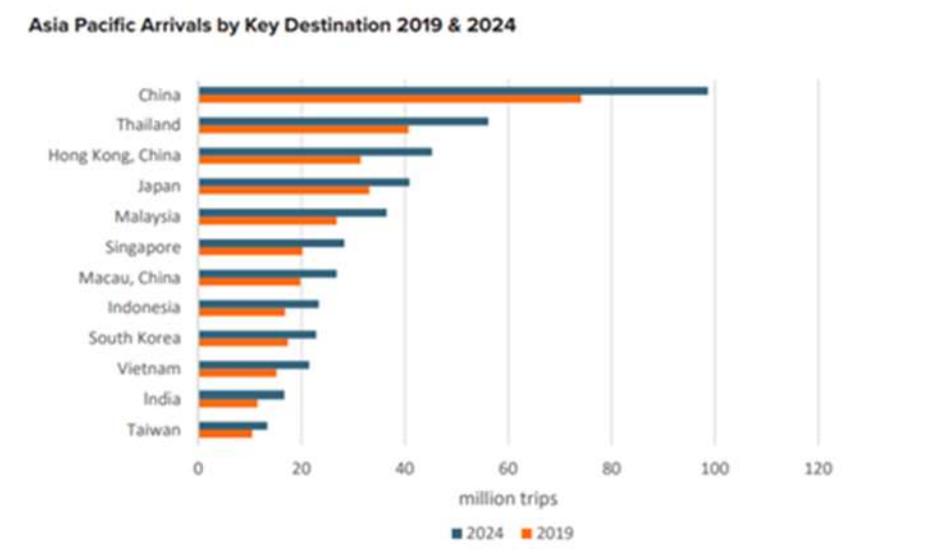


Figure 6. Asia Pacific Arrivals by Key Destination 2019 & 2024 (Bremner 2019, 17)

Tourism is one of the areas that Vietnam mostly focuses on investment as well as one of the key industries with stable development and high profitability, which makes a significant contribution to the growth of the GDP of Vietnam. The tourism development in Vietnam is also reflected in the fact that Vietnam has been enhancing its tourism image with many well-known cultural heritage systems, which were awarded by UNESCO for its natural and hidden beauty. The inbound tourism market is a goal of Vietnam's tourism industry, which accounts for a large part of the total income of the tourism business now. Inbound tourism

also occupies a large part in the business strategies of tourism companies. The rapid development of inbound tourism also helps Vietnam to partially solve burdens and the local labour force in the tourist areas. Inbound tourism leads to the development of many related industries that require high human resources. (Công 2018.)

Meanwhile, Vietnam had only exempted citizens of 22 countries from entry visas. Therefore, electronic visas for citizens of 40 countries entering Vietnam have been implemented in 2017. Continuing to exempt visas for citizens of 5 Western European countries was expected to increase their competitiveness to attract international visitors. The unilateral visa exemption for 5 European countries and Belarus continues to be extended in 2018 is an important policy that has been decided by the Government. It has been maintained continuously for 3 consecutive years. And due to this policy, tourists from the high spending market, with long stays, have grown steadily around 20%. Currently, Vietnam waives visas for citizens of 13 countries including Korea, Denmark, Russia, Japan, Belarus, France, Italy, the UK, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Spain, and Norway. The period of this unilateral visa exemption does not exceed. (Tapchitaichinh 2018.)



Figure 7. Visa policy of Vietnam (Wikipedia 2021)

Accordingly, Vietnam will become a popular international destination which will also become one of the leading countries in tourism development in Southeast Asia and 50 countries that have the competitive capability in tourism among the top of the world.

The tourism's total revenue reaches 1,700 - 1,800 trillion VND (equivalent to 77-80 billion USD), the average growth is 13-14% / year. This had contributed to GDP by reaching 12-14%. Tourism creates about 5.5 - 6 million jobs, of which about 2 million direct jobs, an average growth of 12-14% / year. In particular, Vietnam will strive to have at least 120 million domestic tourists and 35 million international visitors. The average growth rate of international visitors will remain 12-14% /year and domestic tourists from 6 - 7%/year. (Thứ 2020.)

To improve and promote the tourism industry, there are still more things to be done. Vietnam needs to develop new tourism products; invest more in the infrastructure systems and technical facilities for tourism; train and develop human resources; promote its destination brand. Meanwhile, Vietnam should implement excellent development and investment policies. It also needs to actively join in many international cooperations to promote its international destination image. (Thú 2020.)

Vietnam's tourism industry had achieved much success based on the Director-General of the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Nguyen Trung Khanh, in 2019. There were more than 18 million visitors (an increase of 16.2% compared to 2018), served 85 million domestic tourists. The total revenue of tourism was about 720,000 billion VND. As a consequence, Vietnam has become a country among 10 countries in the world that have achieved fast growth in one of the 10 countries in the tourism industry.

In a developing economy like Vietnam, a boom in the tourism industry can help to bring a substantial number of benefits to economic development. The related industries, such as resorts, hotels, pubs, restaurants, etc., will also develop together with tourism. The government of Vietnam has also done excellent work to improve the local infrastructures to push for tourism development growth. (Anh 2019.)

## 2.7 Future Trends

UNWTO presented that the arrivals of international tourists will increase by 3.3% a year from 2010 to 2030. Between 2010 and 2030, arrivals in emerging destinations (+4.4% a year) are expected to increase at twice the rate of those in advanced economies (+2.2% a year). (UNWTO 2016, 3.)

As international tourism is booming, especially in China, global tourism will continue to grow according to these key trends. The trends will create more economic opportunities for Southeast Asia's destinations. China with the largest number of people will become also the largest source market around the whole world and will strongly affect the tourism development policies of many countries. (UNWTO 2016, 6.)

There are many different travel trends in the world tourism industry. The travel trends include luxury tours, experience travel, entertainment travel with modern equipment, adventure travel, self-designed tours, etc. Tourism service providers need to do more work to build innovative travel packages to satisfy the customers' demand.

In the new era, the younger tourists like mostly sustainable tourism. They are responsible for the environment. High-tech tourism such as e-tourism, virtual reality travel, and smart

travel through entertainment complexes, parks, and modern entertainment areas are becoming more attractive to many visitors. Tourism should balance the development between social, economic, resource, and environmental protection, not only let eco-tourism help the development of the local economy, but also to maintain our survival home. Therefore, Sustainable tourism will be the main concept when design and plan the tourism industry. In 2015, UNWTO has proposed "TOURISM IN THE 2030 AGENDA". This agenda has given an exact framework about how a country to develop its tourism industry until 2030. The agenda also proposes the ambitious set of 17 sustainable development goals that are transformative, people-centered, integrated, and universal. (UNWTO 2015.)

Despite being one of the industry's most severely hit by the COVID-19 acute respiratory infection epidemic, the Chinese tourism industry is slowly recovering, as more and more tourists are visiting famous destinations in this country. China's lockdown is over, there have been no COVID-19 cases reported. Businesses remain cautious, but almost all the schools, businesses, and factories have opened again. When a lockdown is over, travel is an important leisure activity for the Chinese. The travellers number for the May Labour Day long weekend has dropped about 53 percent since 2019. Meanwhile, there represents a recovery from the April long weekend when travel dropped by 61 percent. (Enger, Saxon, Suo & Yu 2020.)

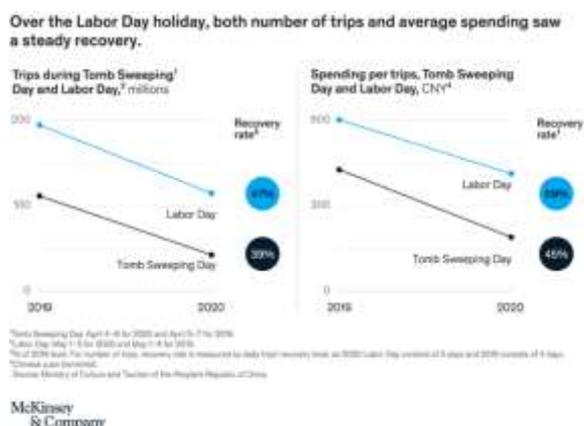


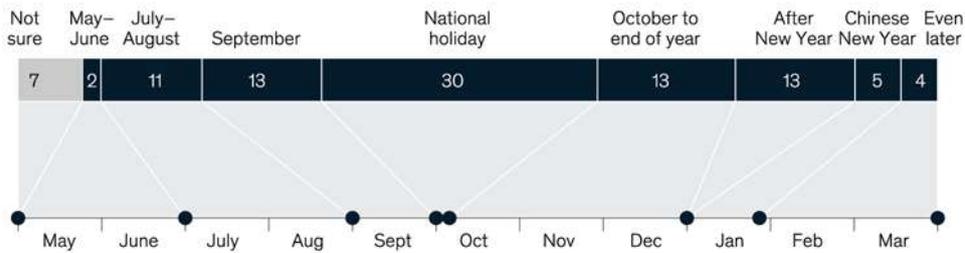
Figure 8. Over the Labour Day Holiday, Both Number of Trips and Average Spending Saw a Steady Recovery (McKinsey & Company 2020)

The graph shows the recovery of the number of trips and average spending of Chinese people over the Labour Day Holiday. The survey in figure 8 shows that confidence in domestic travel increased by 60 percent over the past two weeks. The number of travellers for the recent May Labor Day long weekend went down 53 percent from 2019, but that represents a recovery from the April long weekend when travel was down by 61 percent.

Now, tourism has slowly recovered. COVID-19 has a serious effect on people with underlying medical conditions and elderly people. But the younger tourists will become willing to travel after the pandemic. According to Ms. Kinsey and Company's survey, a small number of people are willing to travel in the early summer. On the contrary, most respondents do not have to intend to travel far until the National Holiday. (McKinsey & Company 2020)

**The travel-recovery peak will likely come after September 2020 in China.**

Planned resumption of travel,<sup>1</sup> % of respondents<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Question: When do you expect to take your next leisure trip? (n = 1,682 respondents, data collected from April 13-18, 2020.)  
<sup>2</sup>Figures may not sum to 100%, because of rounding.  
 Source: COVID-19 Travel Sentiment Survey, 2020



Figure 9. The Travel-recovery Peak will Likely Come After September 2020 in China

Currently, Macao is the only outbound destination seeing a rebound in bookings from mainland China travellers. We can see in figure 10 that forward bookings concentrate on the upcoming holidays, especially during the Labour Day holiday and the Dragon Boat Festival. (Forwardkeys 2021)

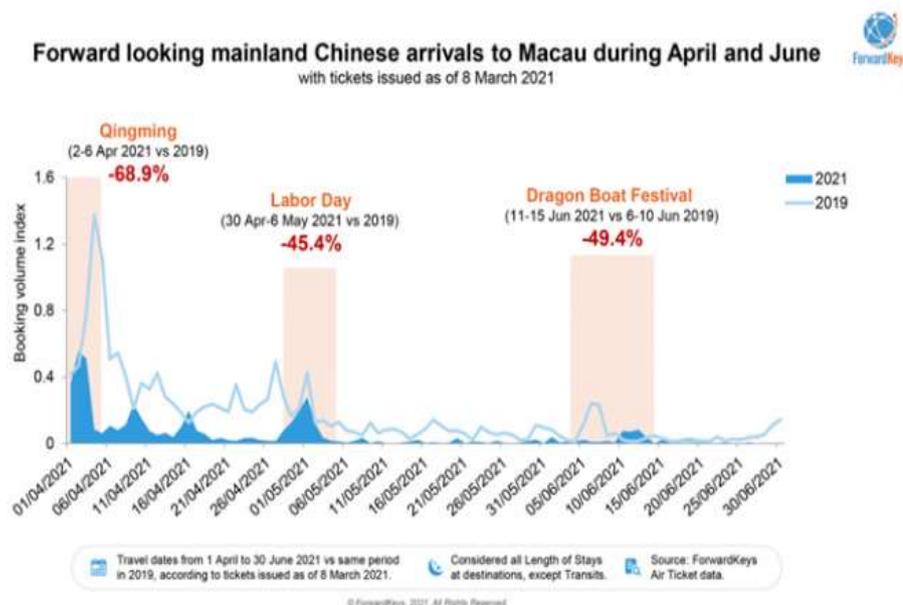


Figure 10. Forward-Looking Mainland Chinese Arrivals to Macau During April and June

Flight tickets for the Labour Day holiday are only 46,9% below the levels in the same period in 2019. Meanwhile, outbound travel from China is counted as 95,6%. Travelers are already starting booking for their trips during the Dragon Boat festivals in June, which is 42,7%. (Forwardkeys 2021a.)

According to data from the China Tourism Institute (CTA), the Chinese tourism industry recorded positive statistics during the 2021 Lunar New Year and mid-February this past. (Forwardkeys 2021b.)

Specifically, domestic sales started to increase from the third day of the week-long vacation. The number of tourists arriving and departing from tourist destinations such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong was nearly equal to or exceeding the same period in 2019. At the same time, the demand for city travel or relaxation in the suburbs umbrella, study tourism, and family travel tends to increase strongly. (Forwardkeys 2021c.)

Besides, according to data from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), the country's aviation industry served about 23.95 million passengers in February 2021, an increase of 187.1% over the same period. At the same time, arrivals on domestic routes have also returned to the same levels in 2019, according to data from the online travel service provider. (Forwardkeys 2021d.)

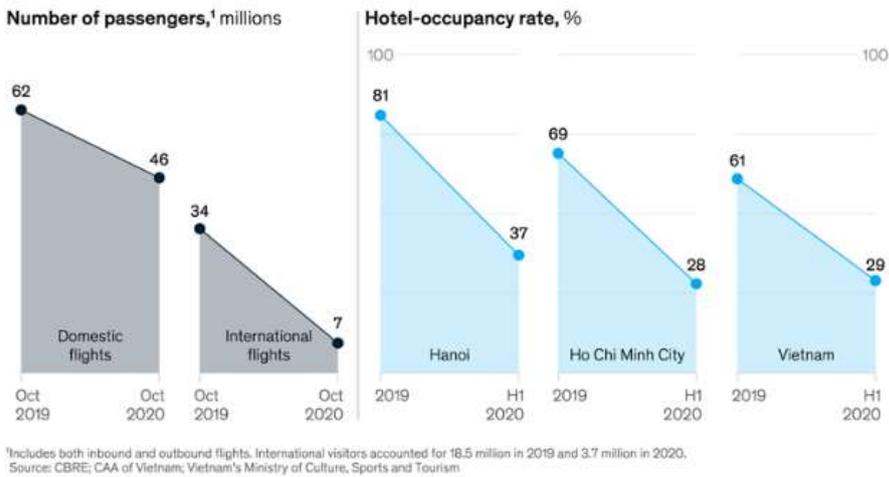
According to a CTA report, in 2021, China is estimated to record 4.1 billion domestic tours, up 42% from 2020. Domestic tourism revenue is expected to increase 48%, reaching 3.3 trillion yuan (about 507.47 billion USD). (Forwardkeys 2021e.)

After a long-time limitation on traveling owing to the COVID-19, tourism will recover again worldwide. The tourism industry which has suffered a lot during the pandemic period could be one of the fastest to rebound. Under this situation, Vietnam will have opportunities to increase market shares among the tourism market.

The tourism sector in Vietnam relies heavily on international tourists, which has plunged last year. Among Vietnam's GDP, tourism occupied a large share. In October 2020, international flights decreased 80% compared to October 2019.

In figure 11, the number of foreign tourists dropped which made a huge impact on the Vietnamese economy. In 2019, the tourism industry was accounted for 12 percent of the country's GDP,<sup>1</sup> international traveler made up only 17 percent of overall tourists in Vietnam. The tourism sector created 660,000 jobs between 2014 and 2019, and this sharp expenditure dive has also stunted the country's food and beverage and retail industries.

**COVID-19 had an outside impact on Vietnam's tourism sector.**

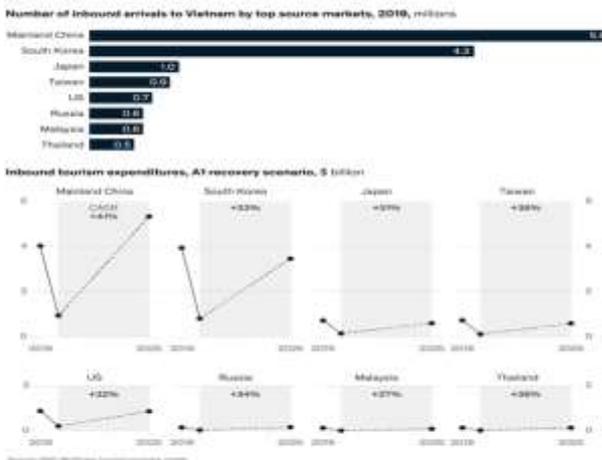


McKinsey & Company

Figure 11. COVID-19 Had an Outsize Impact on Vietnam's Tourism Sector (McKinsey and Company 2021)

Vietnam's tourism industry had two-digit growth in 2019. After the government put the traveling limitations to prevent the pandemic at the beginning of 2020, foreign visitors' number has declined dramatically. This has a bad influence on Vietnam's overall economy and tourism industry. The tourism industry only contributed 12 percent to GDP this year. The international tourists only have 17 percent of the whole tourists' number in Vietnam. But the revenue of the inbound tourism was still higher than that of domestic visitors. From this, we can see Vietnam is dependent on the international market. The majority of Vietnam's international tourists come from Asian countries, with those from China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. These international tourists can lead to a fast recovery in the tourism industry compared with other international destinations. (Constantin, Francois & Thao 2020.)

**Vietnam can expect to see international tourism rebound first with travelers from other Asian economies.**



McKinsey & Company

Figure 12. Number of Inbound Arrivals to Vietnam by Top Source Markets, 2019

Since the start of the COVID 19, Vietnam has been hunting a zero-case-first strategy. This strategy is associated with the country where COVID-19 transmission rates are low. Therefore, travellers' confidence is relatively high.

Vietnamese tourism's recovery will be depended on whether COVID-19 can be controlled or not throughout the whole world. Vietnam should show its controlling situation of COVID-19 to recover the inbound tourism step by step. Vietnam needs to promote that it is a reliable and safe country to travel to. It has reopened to welcome domestic tourists meanwhile it is also a safe country for international tourists to visit. Vietnam should implement some apps on smartphones to make the international tourists get the latest information relating to COVID-19. It is also good for Vietnam to promote its inbound tourism through digital marketing activities, such as online entertainment activities, video clips, and photo contests, and media activities via social networks to present Vietnamese history, culture, and nature. Meanwhile, Vietnam can organize various webinars to introduce its new tourism trends and products.

According to the market demand, a new set of tourism promotion publications should be built. The pandemic of COVID-19 also provides a good opportunity for the tourism industry to reconsider its policies, products, and tourism concepts that are suitable to the new demand of the market.

### 3 Destination Marketing

#### 3.1 Situation Analysis

After comparing different kinds of marketing models, SOSTAC becomes the most suitable one to achieve the research goal. PR Smith has developed a marketing model named SOSTAC in the 1990s. SOSTAC® is the abbreviation of six crucial points shaping a development plan, as Smith stated (2014):

- Situation Analysis – Where are we now?
- Objectives – Where do we want to go?
- Strategy – How do we get there?
- Tactics – Details of the strategy
- Actions – Who does what when?
- Control – Measurements and metrics

This is the first step of the implementation of SOSTAC is the situation analysis. It is important to know the situation and background of China and Vietnam's inbound tourism. SWOT is an important tool to be used in the situation analysis step. It helps to get a deep understanding of the situation both inside and outside. SWOT was offered by Panagiotou (2003). SWOT analysis is one of the most important analysis processes to estimate an organization's current market position. SWOT analysis, which is a strategic planning technique, is used to support and help the organization or a person identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to project planning and business competition or project (Panagiotou 2003, 8-10).

#### 3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the organization are largely dependent upon its size, resources, and the markets in which it functions. Objectives include the short-term goals of an organization and long-term goals. Objectives are the highest level of policies or guidance to the whole organization. China and Vietnam need to understand the goals they want to achieve and what kind of brand and image they want to establish an international tourism destination. Besides, a marketing plan includes two ways of setting objectives. The first is to use the well-established SMART principle of goals and objectives which are: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time. (UKESSAYS 2020.) The objectives must be SMART.

Destination marketing is another objective to achieve by both China and Vietnam. For the national tourism development authorities, destination marketing is one of the most significant factors. The public nature of these marketing activities doesn't specifically promote a supplier or a business, it can influence choice, drive demand, and increase the number of international tourists. The image brand of a tourism destination is an important factor in the tourism industry.

Lomanenko (2018) has stated several steps to successful destination marketing:

- Identifying markets and targets. This needs to know what kinds of markets a company or country has. It is also important to know what the target is.
- Identifying customer needs and wants. To know to understand the customer's needs and wants is important.
- Matching tourism resources and products with the selected targets and markets. This means it is important to provide the right tourism resources and products to the right customers at the right time.
- Studying the competitors. Nowadays competitors are also beneficial for a company's development. A company can learn from the competitors to improve its service and products.
- With the selected targets of demand to developing tourism products coherent.
- Developing and implementing a marketing strategy. Suitable marketing strategies play important roles in the business world.
- Monitor results.

These have well indicated the steps how to achieve successful destination marketing. Each step has different goals and contents. It is important to learn and know each of the steps.

### 3.3 Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategy is a process where can allow the organization to concentrate the limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales and achieve sustainable competitive advantages (Baker 2008, 3). The company's data on the target customer demographics, other high-level elements, key brand messaging, and value position need to be included in the market strategy. To provide value to the consumers, an effective marketing strategy must mix all the elements of marketing. (EconomicsDiscussion 2020.)

A company uses the value proposition to summarize and convey the reasons why the consumers need to use their services or buy their products. Value proposition explains and presents the added value of the product or service the company offers to the customers. This will persuade a potential consumer to buy or use this company's product or service instead of buying other companies. Value Proposition should explain how products meet consumers' needs and state the benefits of the product and why it is better than similar products among the market. An ideal value proposition should be straight to the point and be appealing to customers' shopping motivations. It helps maintain a company's competitive advantages and makes the target customers get benefits from the company's products or services. (Twin 2020.)

To clearly define the responsibilities of the current marketing, marketing strategies can be summarized in the 4P structure. In which, Product (product) will be strategic, while Price (price), Place (location) and Promotion (sales promotion) are elements of the strategy. In the other words, marketing is the perfect combination of strategy and strategy in the 4P model to achieve the set goals.

Many people are thinking narrowly about marketing and tend to underestimate the field. Strategic biases often push marketing away from strategic discussions. But in essence, marketing must first be strategic before it can progress to books.

Strategic scopes include understanding customers, defining segments, focusing on segments, designing products, positioning products, building brands, understanding company competencies, understanding clear competitors, understand the macro environment.

According to UNWTO, tourism marketing is a management philosophy based on the needs of visitors, which can be done through research, prediction, and selection of products or services. Travel from suppliers to the market to suit the purpose of the business, tourism organization, and visitor satisfaction, to maximize profits for that business or tourism organization. (Tourism Notes 2021.)

The purpose of Tourism Marketing is to promote the business or organization, make it stand out from its competitors, attract customers and create brand image and awareness. Nowadays, modern travel marketing strategies using the Internet such as websites, online advertising, Email Marketing, Influencers, Facebook, and social media platforms play an important role in tourism businesses.

### 3.4 Market Segmentation

People, who have similar characteristics, split up into groups of a company to segment a market. To create and find the right target market, a company needs to use various kinds of market criteria to sell its products or services. The right target market segmentation allows having more precisely targeted marketing and personalized content. Market segmentation can define the target audiences at the same time understand the demand of the audiences. A company needs to figure out the ideal customers. Meanwhile, marketers can use market segmentation to customize their content for different audience groups and offer more precisely targeted advertising options and. (Barone 2021.)

To respond to the most basic criteria of a market segment, there are at least 3 characterizes. Firstly, there must be consistency among the group's common needs. Secondly, there is at least a unique trait to differentiate one group from other groups. Ultimately, there should be the existence of a general response, or a similar response, and the predictable part of marketing. (Barone 2021.) Followings are the types of Market Segmentation:

#### Behavioural Segmentation

Behavioural Segmentation classifies potential customers according to their behaviours. It makes the companies design the related information that caters to those behaviours. The majority of the actions are related to how consumers interact with products, websites, apps, or brands. (Lotame 2019.)

Several types of behaviours contain (Lotame 2019):

- Online shopping habits
- Actions are taken on the website
- Benefits sought
- Usage rate
- Loyalty

#### Demographics Segmentation

Demographic segmentation is the basic form of market segmentation. Combining demographic segmentation with other types can help companies to narrow down their market. Most companies approach this segmentation to get the right customers to use their products. Therefore, it also has its variables such as race, nationality, occupation, family size, age, sex, etc. (Lotame 2019.)

## Psychographic Segmentation

Psychographic Segmentation is familiar with demographic segmentation, but it's less tangible than demographic segmentation. Its classification methods include lifestyle, personality, beliefs, traits, attitudes, values, and social class. These attributes may not be as easy to observe as demographics, but they can give companies valuable insight into customers' motives. It is important to make the company know that customers with the same demographic information may make different purchasing decisions. This helps the company to implement attractive and right content to the customers through understanding these aspects of the customers. (Lotame 2019.)

## Geographic Segmentation

Geographic Segmentation focuses on prospective locations to help companies determine their marketing strategy. Geographic segmentation divides the target groups according to geographic boundaries. Their location, such as state, zip code, and country, is the most basic factor to identify the users. In addition, the characteristics of the area where the customers live, such as the population density, the climate, and whether it's urban, rural, and suburban, would be used to identify the consumers. (Lotame 2019.)

Other types of Market Segmentation (Lotame 2019):

- Firmographic segmentation
- Generational segmentation
- Life stage segmentation
- Seasonal segmentation

According to the current situation of China and Vietnam's inbound tourists and the macro trend of the development of the world's tourism industry, combined with the analysis of the regional structure of China's overseas source market and the relevant factors affecting the distribution of the source market, China and Vietnam's inbound tourists will be the overall positioning of the source market is established as a base in the Asian market, accelerating the development of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Southern Dumb, Oceania and other new markets, and actively cultivate Africa, South America, and other potential markets. At the same time, according to the principle that the primary market is the core, the secondary market is the leading and the opportunity market is the auxiliary development. To develop different market characteristics hierarchically. The development target level of China and Vietnam's inbound tourist source market will be classified divided into the first-level source market for Macao, Taiwan, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Hongkong, the United States: the

second-level source market for the East South Asian countries, Western European countries, Mongolia, Australia, Canada. (WTA 2019, 12-13.)

### 3.5 Tourism Distribution Channels

A distribution channel is a set of relationship between independent and interdependent organizations and individuals that participates in the process of delivering goods from producers to customers. The distributions channels link the customers with the business.

A tourism distribution channel, that facilitates the delivery of products and the sale, is a network of intermediaries. The facilitates are related from the tourism suppliers to consumers. Tourism distribution channels are different from the tangible goods in which the goods are conveyed to the consumers. The channels of tourism distribution in which the tourists are conveyed to the services or products they consume. (Buhalis and Laws 2001.)

Tourism channels include indirect and direct. Indirect distribution is the distribution of intermediate products and direct distribution is the distribution of products from the manufacturer to the consumer. Tour operators plan and design different kinds of travel packages and promote the packages to retail establishments or travel agencies. They operate and own several components of the travel chains such as airlines, hotels, retail travel agencies, and insurance companies, etc. It offers them competitive pricing, bargaining power, and ownership.

Products from small businesses are difficult to match with the market demands and plans of the tourism industry because the cost of distribution per unit is very high. Therefore, direct selling from the supplier is still prevalent in sustainable tourism products' distribution. Small operators in some countries are an option to choose from. They run small businesses with fewer employees, their capital and revenue can not support them to participate in the distribution and marketing channels of wholesales carriers.

Table 1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Tourism Distribution Channels.

	Tourism Distribution Channels	Advantages and Disadvantages of each type.
Channels	Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct	_ Easily control business over sales.	_ Requires high investment and professional capacity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ More flexibility in responding to market changes.</li> <li>_ Efficiency of these efforts increases through personal relationships.</li> <li>_ Being able to apply rapid initiatives to locals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Do not benefit from economies of scale.</li> <li>_ It takes more effort to expand the area.</li> <li>_ Being easily excluded from general travel distribution systems.</li> </ul>
Indirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Ensuring better promotion through more efficient means.</li> <li>_ Marketing is broadened more widely.</li> <li>_ Reducing business operating costs at the destination.</li> <li>_ Strengthen the industry through better service partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Less personal impact on the effectiveness of the promotion.</li> <li>_ Less flexibility for market changes.</li> <li>_ Depends on price and fee.</li> <li>_ Risk of anonymity.</li> </ul>

### 3.6 Future Aspects of Tourism Marketing

The prosperity of the inbound tourist source market is the fundamental guarantee for the development of inbound tourism. The intangible and non-transportable nature of tourism products determines the importance of tourism promotion and market development. Tourism is a kind of social activity of human beings, tourism consumption behaviour must be influenced by political, economic, social, and cultural factors. Therefore, future tourism promotions should not be limited to the scope of tourism administrative departments and tourism enterprises, we should strengthen extensive cooperation with various sectors and fields of society to launch a full range of promotional offensives. Innovative publicity and promotion are important prerequisites for further developing overseas source markets. Set up a new concept of competition-oriented tourism marketing, establish a long-term international market share of the target marketing strategy. We should vigorously promote the construction of smart tourism. Smart tourism is the extension and development of tourism information, to improve the level of tourism services as the center, next-generation communication network, intelligent data mining high-performance information processing, and other technologies to support the intelligent tourism information.

## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Methodology

To resolve a research problem, methodology in research means a systematic method. The methodology is used to gather data through concluding the research data, using various techniques, and providing an interpretation of the data gathered. As a whole, a research methodology is the blueprint of a study or plan. (Murthy & Bhojanna 2009, 32.)

Tourism, which involves several constitutive elements, is a complex phenomenon. It needs careful consideration of different attributes to do better research in such an area. In the nowadays study, a “self-administered questionnaire survey” methodology has been adopted.

Qualitative analysis is a method to collect and interpret data in research. Qualitative research is a type of social science research. It collects and works with non-numerical data that seek to interpret meaning from these data. Qualitative research helps understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places. (Ashley 2020.)

This paper is mainly based on a quantitative research method that helps to explore the current situation and dynamic trends of the inbound tourism market in China and Vietnam. We collect the related visual and textural materials from the Chinese and Vietnam governments' reports, professional analysis reports, and social media to analyse our research questions. Based on the current situation and theories, we propose our ideas and pieces of advice to the Chinese and Vietnamese inbound tourism development and marketing. Meanwhile, we have chosen some countries rather than China and Vietnam to benchmark the inbound tourism in similar countries. We divided these countries into two groups: one is China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan; the other is Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia. By comparing different aspects in these two groups, we can have better research results.

### 4.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research tool that focuses on the internal features and the actual content of media. It is a research technique of the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Dwyer et al, 2012, 439). The data of this paper was collected from the internet, reports, academic articles, and marketing materials. Combined with the qualitative analysis method, we categorize the related themes, questions, and concepts within the references. Then to analyse our research results. All the related data and information were classified and analysed by the method of content analysis. The content analysis helps to find out the detailed and accurate data for the final research

result. Content analysis also makes us analyse the existing concepts without having direct communication or interaction with the participants or interviewees. For us as researchers, our presence will not influence the research results.

### 4.3 Sampling and Data Collection

The sampling process contains three steps: select sources of communication, sampling documents, and sampling within documents (Dwyer et al, 2012, 447). It is important to determine what kinds of sources and objectives can be used during the content analysis. Sampling all the relative information is important to do research. It can help to collect and choose useful information and avoid non-probability information. This will directly affect the result of the research.

In this paper, the sampling materials are the contents, images, and sources from the related and official websites, news, reports of professional agencies, and academic articles. To achieve the research result, the selection of the information will focus on the materials that are related to the research questions. Materials that are related to inbound tourism analysis will be chosen as the main source to solve the research problems.

The data of this paper is from all the websites and reports which indicate the statistics of the inbound tourism market in China and Vietnam. All the data should be official numbers so it can be trustable. Both the international English data, Vietnamese data, and Chinese data will be selected to analyse the research questions.

Categorization is an activity that consists of putting things, such as objects, ideas, or people, into categories (classes, types, index) based on their similarities or common criteria. After sampling and data collection, categorization will help the authors to better analyse the data by using the substitution model and correlation model. Categorize data is a complex process. It is important to have a profound understanding of all the information behind the data and categories' mind structure. (McGarty 2015, 186-191.) Our paper uses a categorization method to analyse the similarities between different aspects in Chinese and Vietnamese inbound tourism to process our research. Meanwhile, it helps us to analyse the common criteria in benchmarking part.

Normative analysis refers to the process of making recommendations about what action should be taken or taking a particular viewpoint on a topic (Jodi 2019). The empirical analysis is to study and interpret the data and information based on a piece of evidence. The normative analysis is mainly based on literature analysis and research. Technical journal papers collected and referred to relevant data on the theoretical research of inbound tourist source markets at home and abroad. The empirical research is mainly to find and collect

many recent several years of tourism development-related data, to accurately grasp the development status and future trends of China and Vietnam inbound tourism. The combination of normative analysis and empirical analysis makes it the readers easy to read and have a better understanding of the thesis.

#### 4.4 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is the process of comparing your organization, its operations, or processes against other organizations in your industry or the broader marketplace (John 2019). It is a process that can help the researchers to identify possible opportunities and issues. Benchmarking can enable learning from others, reveal the position of a country among others, provide a reference of the best performer, increase awareness of decision-makers, reveal the uniqueness of nations cores competencies, and promote the country through the high ranking. (Bagnoli, Mio, Garlatti and Massaro 2016, 321.) Benchmarking with Japan, Korea, and Tai-wan, China can well compare its situation with these nearby countries and have a better understanding of its competitors. It also makes China learn the new opportunities for rapid growth.

To achieve the benefits of benchmarking, we have considered the whole process-how to make the process understandable and controllable. The process of benchmarking needs to spend more time and effort to find the related information. Meanwhile, all the information needs to be categorized and analysed. Then, we decided on a benchmarking plan and decided our benchmarking targets. Compared to the similarities of the inbound tourism in Asian countries, we finally decided to choose Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia as our benchmarking countries. We divided these countries into two groups based on their similarities: China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan as one group; Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia as the other group. We searched and collected the information and data for these countries' tourism websites or other reports. Then, we compared all the collected data to find similar and different aspects in the inbound tourism field. Through benchmarking, we also indicated what aspects China and Vietnam could learn from these countries to promote the image of inbound tourism.

## 5 Comparison of the selected tourism strategies in different eras.

### 5.1 SWOT Analysis

In chapter 2 we have written that SWOT is an important tool to be used as the situation analysis. Therefore, we will discuss the details about China's and Vietnam's situation to become international tourism destinations.

In the following two tables we have listed briefly species of China's and Vietnam's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats as an inbound tourism destination. These tables can make the readers grasp the main concept easily and quickly. Through SWOT analysis, it indicates that there is still a large potential development of inbound tourism in China and Vietnam. They should insist on their strength and improve their weakness. China and Vietnam can propose efficient policies and marketing strategies based on SWOT analysis to promote their brand as international destinations. The following SWOT analysis is summarized by us through different kinds of reports, governments' policies, and media articles.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of China as an inbound tourism destination

<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>
Tourism resources are abundant.	Lack of inspiration and creativity, not good at tapping into the needs of inbound tourism consumers.
There are long history and culture.	
There are many places which are worth visiting. Each place can provide different kinds of tourism.	There is a lag in the response to the market.
The tourism infrastructure is constantly improving.	Environmental pollution is serious in China, especially damage to the natural environment.
Network technology has also helped the tourism industry.	Tourism is a new industry in China, lacking international brand and visibility.
Traffic developed, reducing the waste of time.	There are many undesirable phenomena in the tourism service industry.
Tourism also brings benefits to the government, so the government has established a series of relevant laws and support policies.	The development model of tourism resources, which only pays attention to economic benefits, leads to the destruction of tourism natural resources.

<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREAT</b>
<p>Because the world tourism industry is generally booming, it also provides a good opportunity for China.</p> <p>The government strongly supports the development of tourism.</p> <p>The government and many tourism companies start to learn from foreign advanced technology, experience, and management methods.</p>	<p>The foreign tourism industry continues to hit China, China's competition pressure is huge.</p> <p>As technology continues to improve, traditional travel agencies in China are facing a crisis.</p> <p>Travel agencies are too divided and competitive.</p> <p>There are many alternatives in the international market, and they are big threats.</p>

Table 3. SWOT analysis of Vietnam as an inbound tourism destination

<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>
<p>Use of tourism potential to the great extent.</p> <p>Regional development of tourism throughout the country.</p> <p>Cultural diversity</p> <p>Vietnamese cuisine is attractive</p> <p>Proactive government policy approach, prioritizing the tourism sector.</p> <p>Coastal and marine tourism industry</p> <p>Spectacular landscapes.</p>	<p>Small qualified staff in marketing</p> <p>Poor services at small tourism spots.</p> <p>The polluted and crowded environment in big cities.</p> <p>English is still a barrier for foreign tourists</p> <p>The high rate of society's vices</p> <p>The government is still prone to arbitrary and disruptive policy decisions at the microeconomic level.</p> <p>It still requires applying for a visa when entering Vietnam, which can only be obtained to the custom post and its high cost.</p>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREAT</b>

<p>Visa policy for international visitors to Vietnam has been improved</p>	<p>Tourism products are still poor and monotonous</p>
<p>Vietnam's tourism market has great potential to exploit</p>	<p>Vietnam travel enterprises are still weak, mainly small and medium enterprises accounting for 84%</p>
<p>Vietnam has attracted a lot of FDI in tourism projects, many coastal resorts and 5-star hotels have been invested</p>	<p>Potential foreign competitors in the South East Asia area.</p>
<p>The population is conscious of the benefits tourism gives.</p>	<p>The government is easing visa requirements.</p>
<p>The possibility to offer internet reservation and payment service constitutes an opportunity.</p>	<p>As the coastline is near about 3500km, which is going to affect seashore tourism in case of a disaster such as a tsunami or an earthquake.</p>
<p>Vietnam is known for an annual increase of 13% in the tourist field.</p>	

## 5.2 China's Inbound Tourism Development Strategies from 1978 to the Mid-21st Century

Inbound tourism is the real manifestation of national tourism competitiveness. Inbound tourism is a symbol of the country's cultural soft power. Meanwhile, it is the "window" of the country's foreign exchanges and a basic index to measure the country's overall tourism strength and international competitiveness. (Fang 2014, 3.) The development of inbound tourism can be strengthened people-to-people exchanges between China and foreign countries. Inbound tourism can promote capacity-building in international communication. "One belt, one road", the implementation of the national strategy has opened a new door for China to promote the inbound tourism's development. The assertion of the new era was put forward in the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. This is the biggest opportunity for China to promote inbound tourism. Since 2008, China's inbound tourism has been hit by various shocks. As a result of slow wandering growth, China faced double pressure, both from the domestic and international environment to the develop inbound tourism during the bottleneck period. According to the 2017 Annual Report on the Development of Inbound Tourism, China's inbound tourism has picked up and entered the recovery stage. From the current international environment, many countries continue to promote visa facilitation, tourism investment cooperation, and international tourism statistics

accuracy. They intend to strengthen the interaction with China's economy and culture. (Tourism report 2017, 40-45.)

The development path of China's inbound tourism has gone through a process from unusual development to weakening, and then to new development. From 1978 to the starting point of the 21st century, China's tourism is taking a "priority development of inbound tourism". Although there were ups and downs, the rapid development of inbound tourism has been achieved by China. Owing to the influence of the global economic crisis after 2008, China's inbound tourism has gradually appeared the "wandering - stagnating - development" process, from priority development of inbound tourism to "inbound tourism, Outbound tourism, and domestic tourism". However, inbound tourism was relatively weak compared with booming outbound tourism and domestic tourism. The coordinated development of China's three major markets is very necessary to seize the historical opportunities of the new era. Inbound tourism is on a new road to start again.

From the perspective of the new era, China's tourism industry should be the "three major markets" for coordinated development. In the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed a comprehensive analysis of the international and domestic situation. From 2020 to the middle of the 21st century can be arranged in two stages: from 2020 to 2035 to achieve the basic modernization, and then strive for another 15 years, the basic realization of socialism generation. Under the guidance of this goal, the balance and full development of China's three major tourism markets is very important. Inbound tourism will usher in a new stage of great development. (The State Council 2016a.)

The overall policy of development is adjusted to: "take regional tourism as the grasping hand, vigorously develop inbound tourism and domestic tourism, and standardize the development of outbound tourism." China's inbound, domestic and outbound tourism markets are different from before. Among them, inbound tourism belongs to the "export trade", which involves alleviating the down-sloping pressure of the economy. Inbound tourism must pay more attention to develop vigorously, while domestic tourism belongs to the happiness industry, involving tourism to benefit the local people. In short, vigorously developing inbound tourism and domestic tourism should become the fundamental policy level of China's new era tourism policy. (The State Council 2016b.)

From the national level, the state has issued the Opinions on Promoting the Development of Inbound Tourism in the New Era. This has covered the contents as improving the competitiveness of national tourism, promoting measures, and building a world tourism power. China needs to guide and encourage the development of inbound tourism both from the

national will and strategic level. It also formulates a medium- and long-term tourism development strategy for China's new era. At the strategic planning level, the National Tourism Administration should take the lead in formulating the Medium- and Long-Term Tourism Development Strategy for the New Era. This will lead to the development of the national tourism industry with the concept of tourism throughout the region. At the same time, China should learn from the experience of the world's tourism powers, such as the EU's New EU Tourism Policy Framework, Australia's National Long-Term Tourism Strategy, the United States' Tourism Promotion Act, and set up a special tourism promotion agency to implement the tourism development strategy. (The State Council 2016c.)

In 2013, China has conducted the concept of "One Belt and One Road" national tourism community. Although China has built a framework for cooperation in tourism culture with the countries concerned, it has followed up the implementation of measures that also needs to be strengthened. China should start with the detailed rules and implement the implementation plan of the State's actions. It can make full use of the advantages of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to implement the framework for the development of tourism cooperation among SCO member states signed in 2016. China needs to persuade the tourism authorities of different countries to sign the implementation of the program. (The State Council 2016d.)

### 5.3 Vietnam's Inbound Tourism Development Strategies from 1975 to Current

After the Southern of Vietnam was completely liberated and the country was reunified, tourism activities gradually spread to all regions of the country. The tourism industry and the whole country entered the work of restoring economic activities and preparing conditions to gradually shift to a socialist-oriented market mechanism.

This is the period when the tourism industry operates in the condition that the country has just gone through the war of national liberation and restore the economy and destroy the US's transport siege. At the same time, Vietnam had to continue to fight to protect the northern and southwestern borders of the country.

The tourism industry has done excellent work in securing and developing tourism in the newly liberated cities and provinces from 1975 to 1990; successively expanding and building more new establishments from Hue, Da Nang, Binh Dinh to Nha Trang, Lam Dong, Ho Chi Minh City, Vung Tau, Can Tho. State tourism enterprises under the General Department Tourism, ministries, departments, people's committees of cities and branches have been step by step established to bring into play a key role in travel activities, promote markets, and build technical facilities.

In the period 1975-1986, the tourism businesses operated under a centralized, bureaucratic, and subsidized model, so their operation efficiency was not high. This was also the period when the country's economy faced many difficulties and challenges. After 1986, the Resolution of the 6th National Party Congress was born, which marked an important innovation of the Party in political leadership, thought, and macroeconomic management. The economic model was transformed from central planning to a market mechanism, with a socialist orientation. The economy was gradually opened, creating conditions for enterprises to actively develop the economy more dynamically and effectively. The arrangement, renewal, development, and improvement of the operation efficiency of state tourism enterprises have been extremely interested in the General Department of Tourism and localities. (Suntikul, Butler & Airey 2008.)

In terms of organization, the state management agency in tourism has changed many times to create favourable conditions for the tourism industry to develop commensurate with the country's potentials and advantages, with quest requirement.

Specifically, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism was set up in June 1978 which worked directly under the Government Council. By August 1987, the General Department of Tourism was an agency of the Council of Ministers. In April 1990, Vietnam Tourism Corporation was established based on the reorganization of the apparatus of the former General Department of Tourism, under the direct State management of the Ministry of Culture - Information - Sports and Tourism. (Suntikul, Butler & Airey 2008.)

The workforce in the tourism industry in the period before 1986 served diplomacy and foreign affairs under the subsidy model. Since the 6th National Party Congress in 1986, tourism businesses have step by step self-operated to serve under the competitive market mechanism, so that the workforce has been gradually trained to improve workmanship to serve the increasing demand of domestic and international tourists. During this period, the tourism industry has strived to overcome difficulties and challenges, welcomed, and served international tourists from fraternal socialist countries and other countries in the world to Vietnam. (Suntikul, Butler & Airey 2008.)

In 1990, Vietnam received only about 250 thousand international visitors, by 2008 it received 4.2 million arrivals, tourism income reached four billion USD. Currently, Vietnam is firmly in the fifth position among ASEAN countries in terms of the number of international visitors and income from tourism. Infrastructure in major tourist centers and many tourist spots have been invested, upgraded, and created more favourable conditions for travel of tourists. The quality of tourism products and services has been raised. Many high-end hotels, resorts, and entertainment areas have been built, especially high-end hotels in many

big cities and marine resorts in the central and southern central regions. (Koushaan Das 2019.)

The rapid growth of the tourism industry with important contributions to GDP, increasing foreign currency revenue, creating more jobs, eradicating hunger, reducing poverty, restoring many industries, trades, traditional craft villages, and cultural traditions in Many localities have been aroused, the face of urban is adorned more beautiful has combined impacts on the process of economic restructuring, promoting many other economic sectors to develop, contributing to promoting economic development of many regions and localities in the country. The main benefits that tourism has brought about in recent years have created a new awareness of the role of tourism in socio-economic development. The tourism market is constantly expanding. The tourism structure has been diversified with more diversified and attractive products to exploit tourism potentials. Tourism revenue has grown dramatically, creating many job opportunities, eradicating hunger, reducing poverty as well as contributing to changing economic structure. Currently, tourism contributes about 5% of the country's GDP, confirming the role of the tourism industry in the national economy.

The tourism industry's workforce has grown in both quantity and quality. Up to now, about one million workers are working in the tourism sector. From 1991 to 2009, direct labour has increased 20 times, from 21 thousand to 370 thousand; indirect employees are estimated at 737,800 in 2009. Tourism is also an economic sector attracting a lot of foreign direct investment into Vietnam. The foreign investment in tourism particularly reached 8.8 billion USD / 22.48 billion USD in 2009. This investment accounted for 41% of the total registered FDI. Besides, Vietnam actively cooperates in the tourism sector with many regional and international organizations. (Suntikul, Butler & Airey 2008.)

Vietnam Tourism became a member of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 1981. In 1989, Vietnam joined the Asia Pacific Travel Association (PATA). With the policies of making tourism an important economic sector of the country, the Government of Vietnam has approved a primary plan for tourism development of the country. International cooperation, promotion, propaganda, and advertising on tourism are focused. With efforts to expand international cooperation, Vietnam tourism has signed more than 100 international tourism cooperation agreements with other countries, creating favourable conditions and legal bases to strengthen cooperation with other countries and international partners. Vietnam Tourism has actively and proactively participated in many cooperation mechanisms in the region and the world, such as cooperation within ASEAN, Greater Mekong Subregion, ACMECS, CLMV, and CLV Mekong-River cooperation Hang. Expanding, Vietnam tourism actively

participates in other multilateral cooperation frameworks such as G20, APEC, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), etc. (Vietnamesetourism 2019a.)

At the same time, Vietnam tourism also focuses on deepening bilateral cooperation with partners that are key markets such as China, Korea, Japan, Southeast Asia, India, Europe, and North America. As a result, Vietnam tourism has taken advantage of capital, experience, technology, and source of tourists, promoting tourism promotion and international economic integration, proactively linking Vietnam tourism with regional tourism and the world. Some governments and international organizations such as Luxembourg, Japan, Spain, Germany, Netherlands, EU, UNWTO have support programs for Vietnam tourism in human resource training and technique. (Vietnamesetourism, 2019b.)

Tourism promotion has been increasingly professional and highly effective, through proactively organizing and participating in events and activities to promote tourism in Vietnam abroad. Not only that, but Vietnam tourism also actively participates in serving major international events in Vietnam, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC 2006 and 2017), The Council of the World Parliament Union (IPU-132) in 2015, the World Economic Forum Conference on ASEAN 2018, the US-Korea Summit in 2019, etc contributed to affirming the position and ability of Vietnam in hosting the world's major events and demonstrating a friendly, trustworthy, and peaceful partner and destination. Being the largest tourism donor in Vietnam, the European Union continues to be a strong partner and has over the past 12 years worked closely in supporting the tourism sector as the country solidifies its place on the world tourism stage. (Vietnamesetourism 2019c.)

Apart from the EU-funded ESRT Programme, a range of other donor agencies are currently supporting tourism-related development initiatives in the country, some of which have been ongoing for some years. Those include “Support to the “Initiative for ASEAN integration” (IAI), a project funded by Germany Agency for Technical Cooperation; UNESCO support for Tourism Development in Quang Nam and Thua Thien - Hue provinces; Ha Long Bay Alliance - An initiative for the protection and conservation of Ha Long Bay by International Union for the Conservation of Nature, partnered with USAID; other projects or initiatives supported by Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organisation, World Wild Fund for Nature, Lux-Development, Italian Development Cooperation Office and Swiss Cooperation Office in Vietnam. (European Court of Auditors.)

## 6. Benchmarking

### 6.1 Comparison between China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

#### 6.1.1 Japan

Among the major developed countries in the world, Japan is the unique one that chooses the tourism industry as a national development strategy. It is undeniable that Japan, as the world's major developed country, has a different national tourism development strategy model from that of developing countries. Nevertheless, Japan's strategic model of tourism nation-setting is an especially important reference for China to formulate a national tourism development strategy.

Figure 13 below shows a clear structure of the composition of Japan's tourism bodies. It is easy to understand what kinds of tourism bodies Japan organized to promote its inbound tourism. We can also learn how these bodies work with each other.

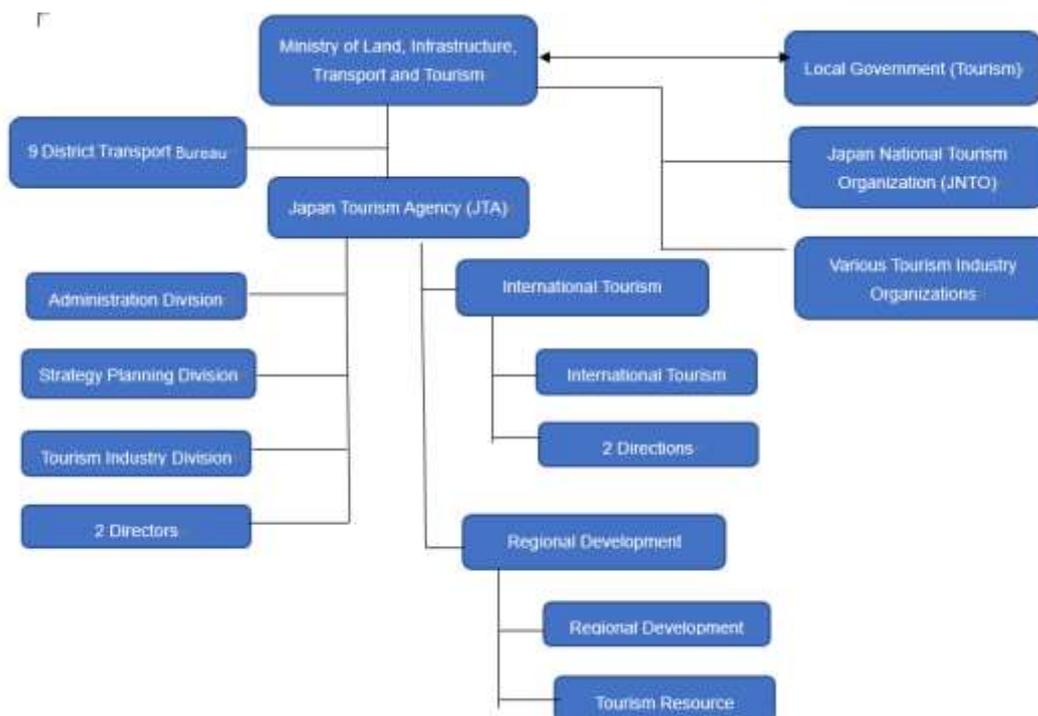


Figure 13. Japan Organisational Chart of Tourism Bodies (OECDiLibrary 2020a)

National Strategies:

- National Tourism Development Strategy Plan in Japan. The national tourism development strategic plan is the macro guiding program of national development tourism for

a while. As far as Japan is concerned, the main content of the national tourism development strategy plan is embodied in the Action Plan for the Establishment of The State of Tourism and the Basic Plan for the Promotion of the State of Tourism. Among them, according to the Basic Law on tourism and the promotion of the state. It is required that the Basic Plan for the Promotion of tourism and nation-by-state should be adjusted once every 5 years. (OECDiLibrary 2020b.)

- Tourism talent training strategy. While implementing the strategy of tourism nation-building, the Japanese government has trained tourism professionals by encouraging public universities to develop tourism higher education, strengthening the training of high-quality foreign language tour guides by the Japan Government Tourism Administration (JNTO), and opening "tourism superman schools" in close cooperation with civil society. (Ling 2006, 40-44.)
- Fiscal and financial support strategy. While implementing the strategy of tourism nation-building, the Japanese government has increased the tourism budget year by year, has implemented fiscal policies such as "landscape business formation promotion fee" and "international conference delivery money" to support landscape construction and bid for international conferences, and provided preferential financial support measures for accommodation enterprises in the tourism circle. (Ling 2008, 23-27.)
- In the process of implementing the strategy of tourism nation-building, the Japanese government formulated and implemented the Landscape Law, and set up landscape rooms (section levels) in the Ministry of Land and Transport following the law, which is specifically responsible for the specific work of beautifying the land. The landscape room mainly takes the following measures to implement the land beautification strategy: to issue the Guidebook on Urban Landscape Construction, to carry out "one region, one sightseeing" activities, to build beautiful communities, to implement the urban landscape assessment system throughout the country, and to carry out landscape transformation of landscapes that hinder viewing. (Ling 2006, 44-48.)

Customer segments:

In implementing the strategy of internationalization of tourism, the Japanese government has mainly opened the tourism market to Asian countries, especially the Chinese mainland, and taken effective measures to expand key international source markets (such as the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Singapore, and other source markets) and emerging international source markets (such as India, Russia, and other source markets) following the development of tourism.

Figure 14, cited from Japan-bound Statistics, below has given us a clear picture of the customer segments. It is easier to see which countries are the main and right customer groups. Through the figure, we can see which countries can be Japan's most important international customers.

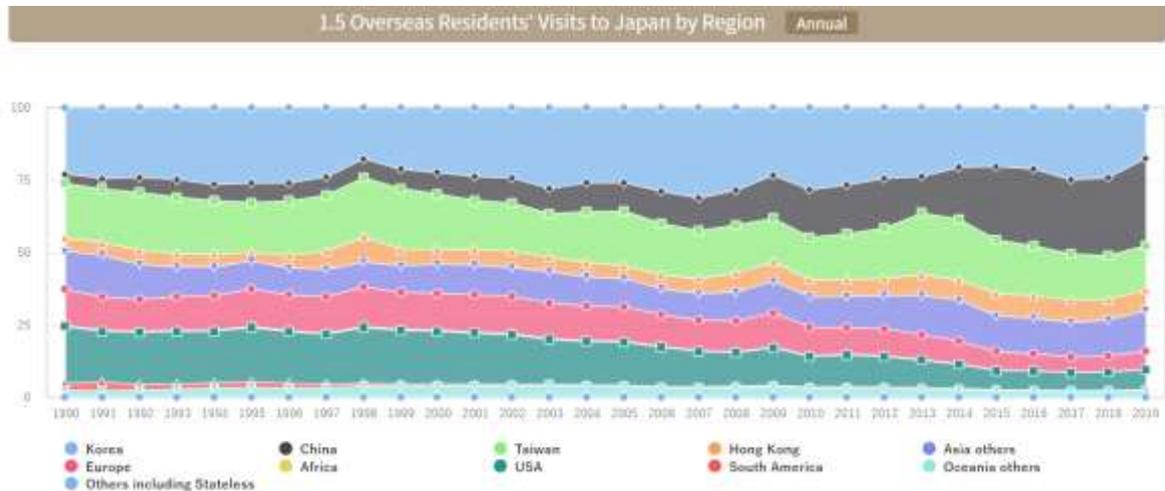


Figure 14. Overseas Residents' visit to Japan by country (JTB 2020)

#### Marketing Strategies:

As the expectations of the tourist community become more diverse and complex, their travel habits are changing. The fusion of tradition and modernity gives Japan its unique charm, making it a destination for people all over the world. While applying the marketing strategies to establish national tourism image and recover from the pandemic, Invest Japan's (2021, 3-6) Tourism part has summarized the Japanese government mainly adopts:

- DX (Digital Transformation) in tourism. By using cutting-edge ICT to innovate products, services, and business models in the tourism sector.
- Strengthening of external communication to promote inbound tourism. The Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) has aimed to advertise Japan to the world by making it foreign tourists easier to obtain information about Japan. The governments have also established foreign offices to promote Japan's inbound tourism. Meanwhile, Japan actively organizes more and more international events and activities.
- Expansion of the consumption tax exemption system for foreign tourists visiting Japan.
- Multilingual Support.
- Financial services. Make shopping easier in Japan for foreigners.
- OTA (Online Travel Agencies).

- Hotels/accommodations. It is necessary to encourage domestic travel demand to establish a foothold and prepare to restore the inbound demand after the pandemic.

#### Tourism Types:

The Japanese government is implementing the strategy of tourism nation-establishment. In the process, mainly to develop inbound tourism to adjust the tourism industry structure, to relax the regulations of travel agencies to anti-monopoly management, to build tourism circle to carry out tourism industry layout, eco-tourism, health care tourism, and agricultural leisure tourism, and other development of sustainable tourism. Japan promotes the inbound tourism image through its unique culture, food, and shopping. (JNTO 2021.)

At different stages of the development of tourism, the Japanese government has done more to develop international tourism as fast as they can in Japan through the government-led tourism development model. This model includes the formulation of laws, the implementation of the necessary tax adjustment policies, and active fiscal and financial policies. The policy of Japan's international tourism development is of positive significance to China.

#### What aspects that China needs to learn from Japan?

- China should Build a solid tourism development strategy support system. Drawing on Japan's experience in formulating and implementing the Basic Law on promoting Tourism, the National People's Congress of China should formulate the Tourism Law of China as soon as possible, clearly define the status, functions, and national tourism development plans of China's tourism industry and promote the new China's tourism industry following the law.
- To implement the strategy of tourism nation-building, the Government of Japan has increased the budget of the Tourism Department year by year, and state-owned financial institutions have provided low-interest loans to tourism enterprises and implemented preferential tax policies for tourism enterprises, which has effectively promoted the development of tourism nation-building strategy.
- To strengthen the construction of tourism talents, especially colleges and universities, China should improve the quality of tourism education and train high-quality tourism talents. At present, although many universities and colleges in China have set up a tourism management college (department), in-school tourism college students to participate in tourism social practice opportunities are very few, and most tourism enterprises are not willing to accept internships for college students, a semester of graduation internships are also in vain. As a result, tourism education and tourism social prac-

tice is out of touch, many graduates of tourism management majors will not be recognized by tourism enterprises, which is the most prominent problem in the field of tourism education in China.

- Create a brand-new national tourism image. All departments of the Chinese government, embassies, and consulates aside and large multinational state-owned enterprises should use various occasions to promote the real China and enhance the understanding of China among the peoples of the world. Also, Chinese outbound tourists should be deeply aware that their behaviour in the process of traveling abroad will have a direct impact on the national image. Chinese outbound tourists should give full play to the role of "civil ambassadors", travel in strict accordance with the Guidelines of Chinese Citizens' Outbound Tourism Civilization, maintain a good national image, and contribute to shaping the image of national tourism and enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture.
- For the peoples of the world to experience a "real China" first-hand, not only foreign tourists can experience China's modern urban culture, but also foreign tourists to remote areas to experience China's original traditional folk culture. We should implement the strategy of inbound tourism development and create a space where foreign tourists can travel smoothly and at ease in China.
- To improve the quality of tourism services and to do a good job in receiving foreign tourists. In China's economically underdeveloped areas, the quality of tourism services is still relatively low, unable to meet the needs of foreign tourists, to take measures to strengthen the training of tourism services, improve the quality of service in these areas; At present, some tourist-developed cities in China have set up English signs, Japanese and Korean signs of the city is very rare, which does not match Japan, South Korea is China's main source of tourists; Drawing on the experience of Japan's Special Japan Government Tourism Bureau (JNTO) for the development of inbound tourism, it is suggested that China set up a specialized agency to carry out international tourism publicity and promotion, international conference bid, international tourism demonstration city identification, and other work.

### 6.1.2 South Korea

South Korea itself belongs to the natural scenery, which is not a colourful country, but its tourism industry in inbound tourism, outbound tourism, and other aspects of foreign ex-

change have won the world's attention, become a new bright spot of South Korea's economic growth. Tourism has bought a strong promotion of the recovery of the Korean economy. South Korea has thus entered the ranks of Asia's tourism powerhouses.

National Strategies:

- Government-led development strategy. Tourism costs are low but have high efficiency, short cycle, pollution-free while driving the development of surrounding supporting industries. South Korea formulated a national tourism development master plan and defined policies to promote the inbound tourism industry.

Figure 15 below shows a clear structure of the composition of Korea's tourism bodies.

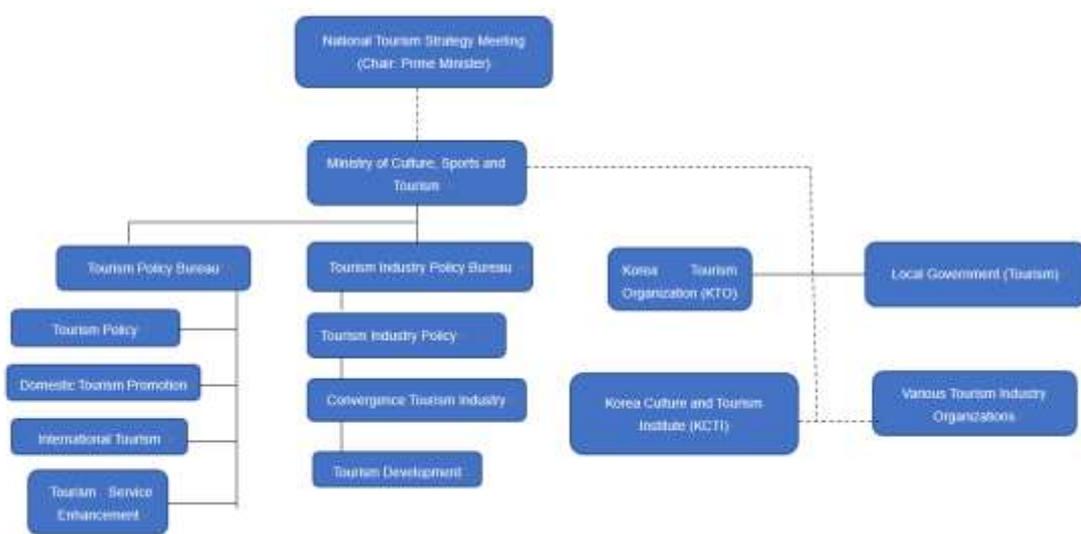


Figure 15. Korea: Organization Chart of Tourism Bodies (OECDiLibrary 2020)

- At the micro-level, the Korean government has formulated a long-term development plan for tourism resources and put forward strategic measures to use the "Korean Wave Effect" to promote the development of tourism. The government is working to improve the competitiveness of Korean tourism throughout the whole world so that it can enter the track of globalization as soon as possible. (Bekorean 2021.)
- Better tourism infrastructure and flexible tourism management system. After decades of development, South Korea itself has a certain scale of more perfect and advanced tourism infrastructure. South Korea has a highly developed air, road, sea, and rail network. South Korea's restaurants are also many, high and low-grade suitable for all levels of consumption of customers. South Korea has also built some theme parks, national parks, shopping centres, museums, ski resorts, golf courses, and casinos to at-

tract all types of customers. Also, South Korea's developed electronic information technology provides convenient conditions for the development of Korean tourism to the network, thus adapting to the development of international tourism. South Korea's tourism sector focuses on providing every overseas tourist with a variety of facilities and strives to satisfy the tourists' needs. (Travel Impact Newswire 2018.)

- The development of tourism resources and places of interest requires huge funds, and the government encourages private, local governments, and modern enterprises to jointly invest in tourism, thus forming a flexible pattern for governments and people to jointly set up tourism. Most of South Korea's tourist attractions are developed by the private sector and are run by the private economy. Korea's tourism industry has achieved economic and social benefits of the "win-win situation". (Travel Impact Newswire 2018.)
- To expand the influence of tourism and enhance its reputation in the world, South Korea pays great attention to publicity and promotion and has earlier enacted a tourism promotion law. In recent years, the cost of tourism promotion has been increasing, Korea Tourism Commune, National Tourism Corporation, Korea Tourism Association to work together to promote publicity. South Korea has conducted a variety of promotional activities, including Korea's overall tourism image, local tourist hotspots, and tours. (Travel Impact Newswire 2018.)

#### Tourism Types:

- Tourism products can be divided into Hallyu tourism, medical tourism, beauty & well-being, performing arts, and so on (Visitkorea 2021).
- Unique tourism products and strong tourism promotion. South Korea's main tourist areas are Seoul Circle, East Coast Circle, South Coast Circle, Jeju Island Circle, etc., Such as Seoul Circle is a combination of traditional culture and modern civilization in one of the attractive tourism areas; Jeju Island tourist area is full of subtropical scenery, has been opened as a wedding tourism specific tourist area; Busan Tourist Area is a famous seaside scenic spot in South Korea and is currently working towards the construction of an international resort and natural saltwater baths. (Visit Korea 2021.)

#### Marketing Strategies

- The "Korean Wave" effect is contributing. In recent years, the "Korean Wave" boom, is an important reason for South Korea's tourism boom. South Korea's fashion culture spread around the world. Especially in East Asia, South Korea's film and television songs sell well, computer games, popular clothing are respected. South Korean stars

have attracted more international fans especially fans in the Asian area. The fans are willing to see the idol's style or experience the idol's life. Traveling to Korea certainly become their first choice. Using Korean drama to drive tourism is one of the strategies of South Korea's tourism industry. (Farrar 2010.)

- Using high technology to promote its inbound tourism. At the same time, South Korea has used various international social media platforms to promote its destination images, such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook (Travel Impact Newswire 2018).
- Also, the Korean government and industry attach great importance to the construction of South Korea's tourism soft environment, has introduced the "Revitalization of Tourism Program" and so on, many times to relax the visa threshold for Chinese tourists, increase the number of Chinese guides, the introduction of submarine fishing and other Chinese-style restaurants suitable for the tastes of Chinese tourists, promote RMB "accessible" shopping, the formation of a special tourism police force, etc., to enhance the satisfaction of Chinese tourists to South Korean tourism. (OECDiLibrary 2020.)
- During the COVID-19, Korea has organized the IMAGINE [VIRTUAL REALITY] KOREA to continue to introduce Korea to the world (Visit Korea 2021).

What aspects that China needs to learn from Korea?

- The tourism development road of neighbouring Korea is worthy of our study and reference. China should strengthen the promotion of foreign tourism, which is the forerunner of the development of international tourism and is of vital importance to the development of international tourism.
- The Government should strongly support the development of inbound tourism in terms of policy and so on. With the use of rich Chinese cultural resources, to create fine tourism, learn the successful experience of fine tourism in Korea, the culture infiltrated into all aspects of tourism.
- Set up exhibition tourism, focusing on the development of international business, conferences, large-scale events, and other business exhibition tourism products and incentive tourism products, improve China's foreign production rate, training potential inbound tourism consumers, and carry out targeted tourism marketing.

### 6.1.3 Taiwan

With the development of modern tourism, Taiwan has implemented the "Sustainable Development Strategy of Tourism Resources" in recent years and has re-integrated and master-planned tourism resources to meet the needs of developing inbound tourism. Taiwan's tourism industry has now realized the "T three-in-one" development pattern of island tourism, out-of-island sightseeing, and island tourism. This has formed a new scene with Taiwan's distinctive characteristics and rich and diverse service experience.

National Strategies: (stated in Taiwan Tourism 2030, 97-98, Tourism Bureau, MOTC)

- Building a country through tourism and implement “tourism mainstreaming”.
- Scale-up Tourism Bureau to Tourism Administration.
- Deliberate about amending the "Statute for the Development of Tourism" and rename it the "Tourism Development Act."
- Promote the tourism development fund legalization and deliberate about renaming the airport service fee.
- Promote the "Tourism 2020-Taiwan Sustainable Tourism Development Program", with the goals being: "diversified development, creating added value for tourism", "security and safety, and implementing tourism social responsibility" and “creating a local happy industry and innovating and achieving sustainability" (Tourism Policy in 2020, 1).

The chart below (figure 16) shows a clear structure of the composition of Taiwan’s tourism bureau. There are many functional departments to form the tourism bureau.

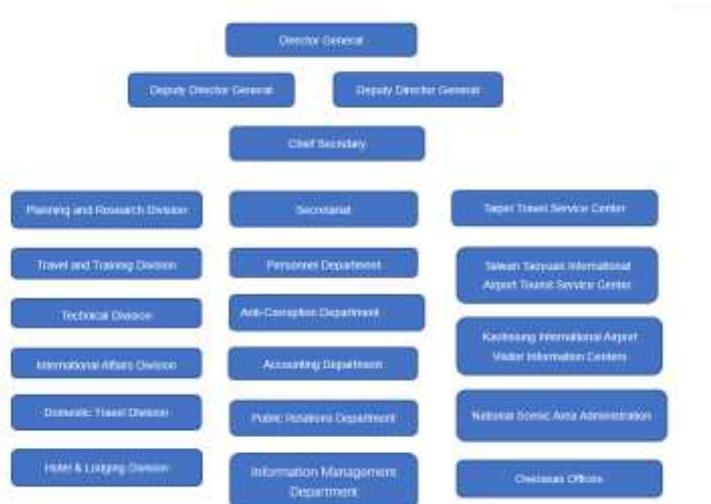


Figure 16. Organization Structure of the Tourism Bureau (Tourism Bureau 2019)

Tourism Types:

- Highlight the cultural and ecological themes. To develop sustainable tourism, Taiwan has designed a special theme for each year since 2018. (Tourism Bureau 2019.)

The following figure 17 has a clear presentation of Taiwan's tourism concept of sustainable tourism. It is easier for us to know the main idea and how to develop sustainable tourism in Taiwan.



Figure 17. Sustainable Tourism (Tourism Bureau 2019)



Figure 18. Year of Cycling Tourism (Tourism Bureau 2019)

Figure 18 is one of the example themes in 2021 under the guidance of sustainable tourism in Taiwan.

Customers Segments

- The distribution of the main source markets is about the same as in the previous two years: Chinese mainland, Japan, Hong Kong and Macao, Korea, the United States, Malaysia, etc. Although China's market is shrinking, it is still the largest target market for Taiwan's inbound tourism.

#### Marketing Strategies:

- Tourism brand image promotion and promotion and construction. Through the cooperation of discovery, National Geographic, and other well-known international channels, Forbes, Monocle, and large portal sites such as Google and Yahoo, we will enhance Taiwan's tourism image. (Tourism Bureau, 2019.)
- Carry out traditional festivals, religious celebrations, indigenous activities, and Hakke cultural activities, and increase the marketing of special festivals and folk activities (Tourism Bureau, 2019).
- Established overseas offices to promote Taiwan's inbound tourism (Tourism Bureau, 2019).

#### What aspects that China needs to learn from Taiwan?

- China needs to design specialized tourism products based on China's unique culture, history, and other characteristics just as Taiwan has done.
- China needs to pay more attention to environmental problems while develops its tourism. Pollution is a big issue in China. China should design a sustainable tourism development policy to protect the environment like Taiwan.
- It is good to provide more discount offers and interactions with international organizations.
- Establish overseas offices to promote China as an international tourism destination.

## 6.2 Comparison between Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia

### 6.2.1 Thailand

In the 1960s, with relatively stable politics compared to other countries in the region, Bangkok gradually became an important trading hub in the world. Besides that, the resort and retail industry were also gradually formed during that period, with the "support" of thousands of American soldiers who could rest during the Vietnam War. During this period, the world tourism industry was developing more and more, becoming one of the periodical "pleasures" when the quality of life in developed countries was increasingly improved.

As they learn that it is initial to develop the tourism industry, Thailand has paid more attention to its tourism development and it is becoming one of the top tourist countries in Asia now. This success comes not only from tourism but also from many other related industries.

Thailand has become a successful example by using social network applications to promote tourism. It uses suitable measures and available resources to market its international destination image.

On the contrary, Vietnam's inbound tourism has not yet developed so fast compared with the nearby countries. There are still potential opportunities for Vietnam to become an attractive international tourism destination owing to its history, culture, landscapes, and nature.

Statistics on the number of tourists and revenue from tourism show that Thailand has a strong development and a much higher growth rate than Vietnam. Specifically, in 2014, although Thailand encountered a crisis from political protests, the number of tourists to Thailand was still 3 times higher than international tourists to Vietnam.

Years	2014		2015		2016	
Index	Number of international tourists. (per person)	Revenue (Billion USD)	Number of international tourists. (per person)	Revenue (Billion USD)	Number of international tourists (per person)	Revenue (Billion USD)
Thailand	24.820.000	42,063	29.936.185	42,544	32.590.000	63
Vietnam	7.874.312	10,952	7.943.651	15,014	10.012.735	17,178

(Hanoitourist 2020)

The table shows that the number of international tourist arrivals to Thailand increased rapidly from 2014 to more than 24 million, to 2016 was more than 32 million, and increased more than 3 times over the years compared to Vietnam. Since international arrivals increased rapidly over the years, tourism revenue in Thailand also increased steadily, specifically in 2015, it was 42,544 billion USD, 3 times higher than the revenue in Vietnam in the same year, and in 2016 it was 63 billion USD. nearly 4 times higher than the turnover in Vietnam. (Hanoitourist 2020.)

Not like Thailand has promoted inbound tourism through effective social media and networks for many years, Vietnam has not made full use of social media to promote inbound tourism. As we all know that, digital marketing has become an important tool for marketing. Vietnam needs to implement effective social media marketing strategies to attract more international tourists.

**Reasonable cost:** internet advertising costs will be much more economical than traditional marketing when companies need to run advertisements compared with before. Nowadays, with the rapid development of information technology, the most typical and popular video-sharing websites are YouTube. To market a tourist attraction, product or service nowadays, just think of an idea, shoot a video clip and post it on social media platforms. The more compelling content will attract your targeted audience and spread it out, the higher the level of identity of the tourist attraction, product, or service will be.

**Speed:** especially for programs with urgent time requirements, the Internet can significantly shorten the time from concept creation to appearing in front of the target audience.

**Flexibility:** benefiting from the unique Internet's characteristics, the promotion activities by using online marketing tools can change and adjust the content. This is not possible if you advertise through the press.

**Marketing segments:**

To get a potential customer, social media only costs about 38% compared to traditional marketing with a very high effect. Through the Internet, websites, social networks, etc, consumers have more time and conditions to search for service information and consult for the concerning information about the products before making the decision. Many countries have found an internet application solution such as a new communication and communication tool to improve the effectiveness of Marketing. They at least create their own "gravity" by showing the national marketing in digital space domestically and internationally. In addition to the brand, create viral effects, find potential customers, etc, they collect feedback from domestic and foreign customers through social networks. (Crutchley 2020.)

Thailand is known as "the land of smiles". Thailand tourism has probably become the spiritual thing of many people in the world, and one of the attractive tourist destinations for travel enthusiasts.

Thai tourism started to develop quite early thanks to the early opening mechanism, around the early 1960s. And "Amazing Thailand", which is the consistent message that Thailand sends to tourists, is a slogan. To make Thailand become the tourism hub of Southeast Asia, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has carried out many impressive media campaigns

both inside and outside the tourism industry to promote inbound tourism. This country has very potential. And especially the emergence of increasingly modern social networking sites and attracting many views and interactions around the world. Therefore, tourism marketing on social networking sites is also increasingly popular. (Crutchley 2020.)

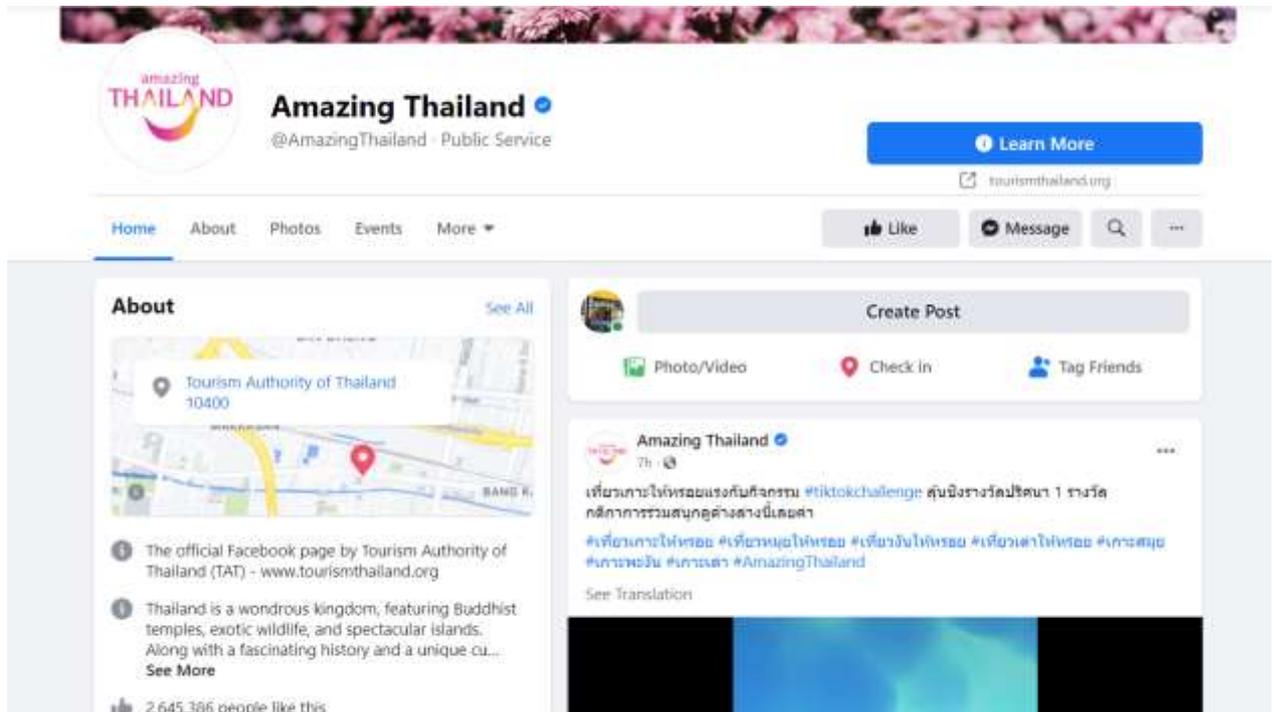


Figure 19. Amazing Thailand is an official Facebook page of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (Amazing Thailand 2021)

From 2014 to 2015, to restore the development of the economic sectors in general and the tourism industry in particular, Thailand has introduced many different development policies. Particularly for the tourism industry, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has launched some truly impressive media campaigns through social networks and achieved certain effects to help Thailand tourism develop increasingly strongly.

Year	Name of campaign	Content	Messages
2014	I hate Thailand. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54uzEouACYs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54uzEouACYs</a>	Experience in the journey of traveling through Thailand as a foreign tourist who lost his	Don't ever come to Thailand, you will love this country.

		luggage and was stolen in Thailand.	
2014-2015	Thailand Extreme Makeover <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ThaiExtremeMakeOver/videos">https://www.youtube.com/user/ThaiExtremeMakeOver/videos</a>	Attracting visitors to join the beauty surgery in Thailand through the program arranged and broadcast through episodes.	Medical and aesthetic tourism in Thailand is a very safe, enjoyable, and unforgettable experience.
2/2015-12/2015	Only	Invites visitors to Thailand to experience unique activities in Thailand: Muay Thai, traditional dance, making garlands, food, and speaking Thai.	Experience what is Thai and only in Thailand.

### **I hate the Thailand campaign.**

In 2014, Thailand's tourism fell into a crisis. Starting with the military coup, followed by demonstrations and conflicts took place in the capital Bangkok. Even their beaches are not quiet after the murder of two British tourists on the island of Koh Tao, South Thailand.

These pressing problems have caused Thailand's tourism to decline rapidly: by March 2014, the number of tourists to Thailand decreased by 21% compared to the same period in 2013. (Gecker 2014.) Therefore, rebuilding the country's image in the eyes of international tourists becomes an urgent task for the Thai Ministry of Tourism.

It all started from a mysterious video titled: "I Hate Thailand". This video was silently uploaded to YouTube from an anonymous account. Even though the video wasn't even

boosted, this video immediately attracted the attention of the online community thanks to the shocking title.

The video is done in the narrative style of the protagonist named James, a tourist with blond hair and blue eyes. James said that he had been robbed of all his luggage and was wandering around Thailand without a penny. James calls this a "nightmare" and bluntly concludes that he hates the country. After that, the video takes viewers in the footsteps of the guy on his journey to find the lost items. The funny thing is the more watching, instead of sympathy, the more annoyed the audience is because of his constant attitude. Luck only came to James after meeting a native girl. She agrees to help James and takes him to her village, where he meets good Thais, learns their customs, and starts a slower, closer life to the beautiful nature. Since then, he gradually changed his view of everything. The video ends with the main character smiling happily and sharing that he now sees Thailand as his home. (Gecker 2014.)

Only one day after showing up, this video has attracted 3 million views and became a hot topic on social networks. On top of that, it has been repeatedly mentioned by many major newspapers around the world such as Fox News, Huffington Post, and CBS, attracting a total of earned media impressions of 235 million views (in the US only).

As a result, Thai tourism recovered 15.9% in the following year. And this campaign won the most successful social media campaign award at Adfest 2015.

The success of trade promotion campaigns has brought Thai tourism to impressive numbers. The Thai tourism industry develops quite strongly in the region and ranks 15th in the world. Travel service is also a service that attracts foreign currency much higher than other industries in Thailand. The cheap price and excellent service along with the hospitality, and cultural traditions of the Thai people are important factors contributing to tourist attraction. Success from the activities, promotion campaigns, and the quality of tourism make each year, Thailand welcomes several international tourists over 10 million people, mainly from countries in Asia, Europe, and ASEAN. There were 13 million tourists in 2005 which brought the earnings about 409 billion baht (about 10 billion USD), after 8 years the number of tourists to Thailand tripled to 32.6 million tourists. By 2016, revenue was \$ 45.9 billion and even higher. (VOA 2017.)

What aspects that Vietnam needs to learn from Thailand?

- Experience in human resource development: there is a much higher competitiveness of human resources for tourism development in Thailand than in Vietnam. Owing to opening the economy and developing the market economy in the direction of modernity

ahead of Vietnam for many years, the team of staff and professionals for the tourism industry has been trained and fostered better in terms of both professional qualifications and skills.

- Vietnam needs to combine tourism with commerce to increase tourism revenue.
- Policies to develop a variety of tourism products: cultural tourism, ecotourism, MICE tourism, medical tourism, agricultural tourism.
- Vietnam needs to promoting propaganda activities, promote tourism, boldly invest in the market development of the tourism industry.
- Vietnam needs to have plans to educate more high-quality tourism workers who can approach the world level to do more contributions to tourism economic development. The tour guides in Thailand are well trained with higher foreign language skills, a Thai tour guide usually speaks at least 3 foreign languages.

### 6.2.2 Singapore

Singapore knows exactly how to market its image as an international tourism destination although it is only a small island with limited resources. Singapore has made full use of its human resources, ability, and strengths of the location to promote inbound tourism. The government has implemented suitable and effective tourism policies in different development stages to achieve tourism development success.

National strategies:

Singapore has made a strategic plan since 1965. They have carried out six different tourism development plans, which were: "Singapore Tourism Plan" (1968), "Tourism Development Plan" (the year 1986), "Strategic Development Plan" (1993), "Tourism 21" (1996), "Tourism 2015" (2005), "Tourism Realms 2020" (2012). (History SG 2019.)

Each of the above-mentioned plans has different goals and purposes. Singapore intends to restore and preserve the historical areas such as the Singapore River, Tanjong Tagar, Chinatown of the Chinese, etc. in the "Tourism Development Plan" (1986). In the "Strategic Development Plan" (1993), Singapore changed its goals and focused on sustainable tourism, and designed more new tourism concepts. (Our SG Heritage 2018)

In 1996, Singapore launched "Tourism 21". It is a long-term vision for inbound tourism development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It also proposed several new strategies, such as regional tourism strategies, tourism capital strategy, new tourism product development strategy, emerging tourism market strategies, etc. (History SG 2019.)

In "Tourism 2015", Singapore changed its focuses to develop its inbound tourism with the motto of making the customers have a better understanding of Singapore. Its purposes were to promote Singapore as a "must-come" tourist destination. Singapore improved its service standards to provide memorable experiences for tourists, develop key tourism products, upgrade the tourism infrastructure, develop professional tourism businesses and human resources. Meanwhile, Singapore spent \$300 million to implement and develop new tourism products, compared with Vietnam which only spends \$2 million in 2012. (Hà 2019.)

#### MICE tourism development in Singapore

Singapore has built a MICE tourism development strategy, which is determined to bring the country to become a leading power in the Asia region for conference tourism. At the same time, Singapore will develop to become the center of services and resorts in the region. This strategy identifies major tourism projects that need to be implemented such as Formula One™ Singapore Grand Prix, Integrated Resorts, and Singapore Flyer. MICE tourism development focuses on the advantage of geographical location, modern infrastructure system, being the centre of major trade activities in the region, Singapore determines to develop tourism. MICE is at the heart of the tourism product development strategy. Singapore has collaborated with the world's leading major hotels to develop conference centers and private investors to develop modern technical facilities. By the late 1990s, Singapore had all the necessary floors and facilities to host world-class MICE events such as the Suntec Singapore International Convention, the Singapore Exhibition, and Convention Centre. In 1996, SCB Change, Singapore Exhibition and Convention Development Bureau (SECB) expand into the field of exhibition organization. Along with that is the cooperation with business parties in the field of events and travel to improve the quality of the MICE travel experience for customers who are traveling. Currently, Singapore has become the world's leading destination for MICE tourism, which contributes more than 30% to the country's total tourism revenue. However, this country still makes efforts to change, develop constantly, to maintain its leading position. (Singapore Tourism Board 2020.)

## Growth Opportunities for Singapore MICE Tourism Market



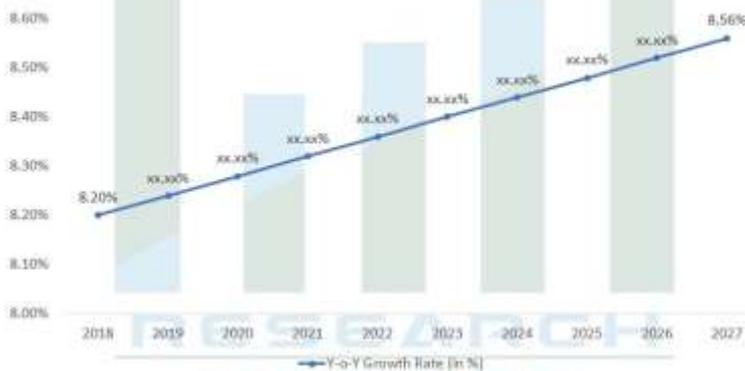
Figure 20. Growth Opportunities for Singapore MICE Tourism Market (Research Nester 2021)

Figure 20 shows us how the Singapore MICE tourism industry is thriving on the back of increasing advancements in technologies, that promote effective communication via onsite social media networking, group announcements, creating appointments, and convenient business contact exchange among others, along with the development of sharing business economy across nations.

In the year 2017, a market value of USD 2332.1 million has been attained by Singapore MICE Tourism. From the forecast period 2019 to 2027, it anticipates that a valuation of USD 5214.9 million will be achieved. Compared to the previous market, the Y-o-Y growth rate of 8.56% will be achieved in 2027. (Research Nester 2021.)

As we can see in the figure below, Singapore MICE Tourism attained a market value of USD 2332.1 million in the year 2017 and was anticipated to achieve a valuation of USD 5214.9 million by 2027 by a CAGR of 8.4% throughout the forecast period, i.e. 2019-2027. The market is further anticipated to achieve a Y-o-Y growth rate of 8.56% in 2027 as compared to the previous year. (Research Nester 2021.)

**Singapore MICE Tourism Market, Y-o-Y Growth Rate (in %), 2018-2027**



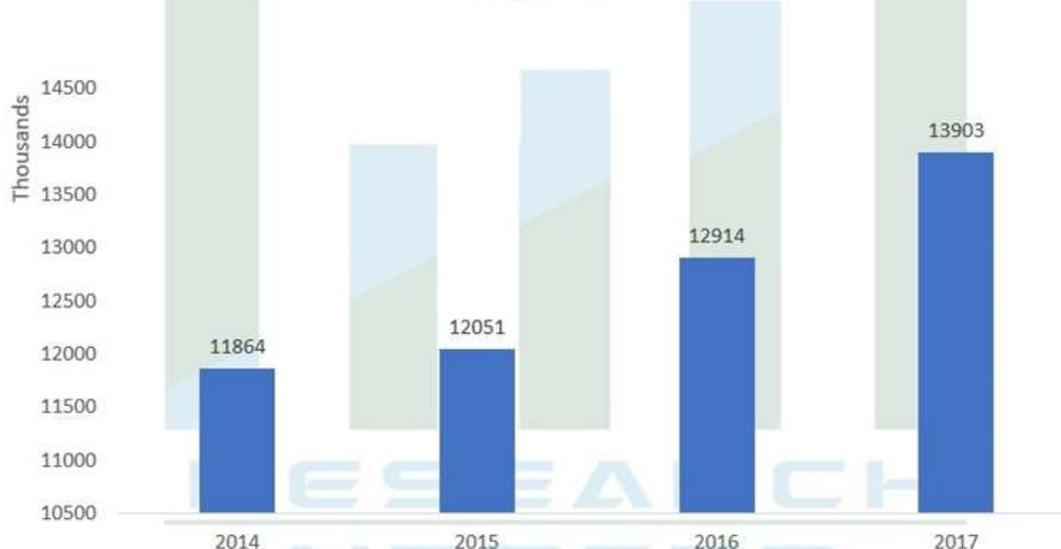
Source: Industry & Primary Sources, Research Nester

Figure 21. Singapore MICE Tourism Market, Y-o-Y Growth Rat (in%), 2018-2027 (Research Nester 2021)

Singapore shows the world the "heritage" that it owns not only infrastructure such as Marina Bay, Sentosa, or F1 racing, but also individuals who know how to pursue and keep the fire passionate. Ambassadors have a chance to speak their passions in Singapore to people from other countries around the world. (Research Nester 2021.)

In figure 22, the number of arrivals of international tourism in Singapore shoots up from 11864 (000's numbers) in the year 2014 to 13903 (000's numbers) in the year 2017.

**International Tourism, Number Of Arrivals - Singapore, 2014-17**



Source: The World Bank

Figure 22. International Tourism, Number of Arrivals – Singapore, 2014-17 (Research Nester 2021)

Singapore is famous for providing premier business and leisure destinations. Meanwhile, it designs customized experiences according to its characteristics. The tourism industry has been considered an important economic pillar that contributes more to the increase of the national GDP. Based on the statistics conducted by The World Bank, the number of international tourist arrivals has increased to 13903 (000's numbers) in 2017 compared with 2014 when the number was 11864 (000's numbers). (Research Nester 2021.)

Singapore's new marketing plan is based on quantitative and qualitative research of this country, through surveying more than 4,500 people about their views on Singapore. Respondents are residents, expats in Singapore, and residents of 10 other countries (Australia, Belgium, Japan, Malaysia, India, UK, Indonesia, Germany, USA, and China). The results show that "passion" and "potential" are characteristic of Singapore's spirit. In which, "potential" is seen as the attraction of Singapore, while "passion" is considered as the driving force behind those potentials, according to the Singapore representative. (Singapore Tourism Board 2020.)

Marketing segments:

Singaporeans' intentions not only stop at tourism but also focus on promoting economic activities. Two former brands Your Singapore of the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Future Ready Singapore of the Singapore Department of Economic Development (EDB) have officially joined the new media brand: Passion Made Possible. The reason for this move, Singapore believes that competition in the tourism industry and attracting investment capital is strong globally.



Figure 23. PASSION MADE POSSIBLE – Joint Global Brand of STB

Passion Made Possible comes out with the tourism and business purpose of promoting Singapore internationally, and to advertise Singapore's unique mindset and attitude: "a passionate, never-settling spirit of determination and enterprise that constantly pursues possibilities and reinvention". In the development of the unified brand, EDB and STB have embarked on quantitative and qualitative research to discover what Singapore stands for, with about 4,500 respondents who come from 10 countries. Participants expressed that the concepts of 'passion' and 'possibilities' exactly reflect Singapore's spirit: While 'possibilities' were strongly associated with Singapore as a destination, the 'passion' to strive was what drove these possibilities. (Singapore Tourism Board 2019.)

Singapore is not the only country that is changing its tourism marketing mindset. Korea is also refreshing videos promoting its country by introducing 8 different videos on 8 topics, 8 Korean travel styles instead of just 1 video as many years ago. Although the target tourism ambassador that Korea chose is still famous artists, the content also focuses more on personal experience, instead of simply introducing beautiful destinations as before.

Promotion videos of the above countries all emphasize personal experience, short and concise, while Vietnam's video is still long, introducing beautiful scenes but not yet emotional. Vietnam also has a tourism ambassador, but just an individual who does not have outstanding characteristics, nor outstanding activities.

What aspects that Vietnam needs to learn from Singapore?

- Vietnamese markets need to be divaricated.
- Vietnam needs to create a stable financial foundation for marketing:
  - + In Singapore, the National Administration of Tourism is an agency under the Ministry of Trade but has the authority to act to establish and be responsible for the direction and development of the industry. One of the first things STB does is create a travel tax framework for hotel systems. These units want to do accommodation business, they must pay tax. Since then, the General Department of Tourism has a stable source of finance and uses it for marketing to bring visitors back to the taxpayers.
  - + While in Vietnam, each year the budget is only about 2 million USD for communication work, a modest figure compared to Thailand and Singapore. According to BCG Global Consulting, advertising costs in Singapore in 2016 were 83 million USD.
- Vietnam should focus more on destination marketing: According to SATC, Vietnam has the advantage of unspoiled nature, delicious food, friendly people, and many unique

local festivals. These are new travel trends and customers are willing to pay for a genuine experience. The problem for Vietnamese tourism is to find unique products that can only be found in Vietnam and widely advertise to tourists around the world.

- Social media is a must thing.
- Vietnam needs to put forward ideas about digital content to serve visitors.
- Improving visa policies: Vietnam needs to be more open about the visa exemption policy. The impressive growth numbers of Western European visitors during the visa-free pilot show a positive influence from this market. Currently, Singapore is exempt from visas for more than 150 countries around the world.
- Vietnam needs to increase investment in facilities and technical infrastructure to develop the tourism industry, especially establishing convenient transportation routes and flight routes to maximize potentials, available advantages, and needs to be a long-term vision, choosing suitable planning ideas and plans, selecting consultants who are experienced in the field of tourism infrastructure development.

### 6.2.3 Malaysia

Malaysia is the country with the most developed tourism industry in the region. Malaysia's tourism development goal to 2020 becomes a leading tourism development country in the region and internationally. The main message of the tourism industry expresses its development goals and perspectives: "Positioning Malaysia as a leading tourism destination in market awareness and building the tourism industry into a major contributor to economic development - the society of the country". Malaysia's top 10 tourist markets in order of importance include Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, China, Brunei, India, Australia, the Philippines, UK, and Japan.

National strategies:

Malaysia's general strategy for economic transition, the tourism industry develops a tourism development transition plan to 2020 focusing on product and market development with the main goal of focusing on the market which has high affordability, promote tourist consumption program. (NIKKEI Asia 2020.)

The two main directions of the perspective development are how to protect, conserve and preserve the environment. The government needs to promote the development of green tourism, the award of the green hotel, a national campaign for a green Malaysia, a clean

Malaysia. It should propose a comprehensive development that focuses on sustainability and balance.

In the current global competitive landscape, Malaysia is determined to have innovations and improvements in product development. Initiatives focus on hosting events of national importance including: "Malaysia my second home" to encourage foreigners to buy a home in Malaysia for leisure and travel. Besides, Malaysia also concentrates on maintaining and promoting shopping tourism products. Focusing on products for the high-end tourism market and identifying specific locations and activities: resorts, entertainment, sports, shopping venues. Especially focus on promoting medical tourism, educational tourism, and finally MICE tourism. (Tourism Malaysia 2009.)

To have an attractive way to promote its tourism, Malaysia has presented three highlights.

Firstly, Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country that has a mixture of many different cultures as a unique cultural identity. With more than 60% of the population following Islam, the Muslim culture of Malaysia offers an enjoyable experience for visitors. Besides, Malaysia also has a unique culinary culture, because this is the intersection of many top cuisines. With many attractive destinations in Malaysia, visitors can enjoy the true beauty of Asia from luxury cities, tropical forests to high mountains, pristine highlands. In particular, the highlight of Malaysia's tourism is diversified and world-class tourism products at competitive prices. Highlights are resort tourism, entertainment, adventure sports, shopping venues, etc. Malaysia is currently promoting the development of new products such as medical tourism, educational tourism, and service tourism. (MICE). To attract more tourists, Malaysia always focuses on creating new tourism products that satisfy all the needs of tourists around the world.

In terms of tourism planning, Malaysia does not have a tourism development master plan like Vietnam's approach, but only the "Malaysia tourism transition plan to 2020" to attract tourism markets, high affordability and increase travel spending. Major tourism development areas and areas where have specific functions have been identified in the Tourism Development Strategy since the 1970s to be maintained. According to this national orientation, localities, even tourism businesses will have specific tourism development plans. (Nikkei Asia 2020.)

Obviously, with many countries in the region, ASEAN is becoming a large source of fields. In Malaysia, the proportion of ASEAN customers accounted for 76% of the 26.7 million international customers coming to the country last year and Vietnam is "exporting surplus" here. (Nguyen 2019.)

Southeast Asia recorded a growth rate of 4.6% over the same period last year, an increase of more than 3 million visitors in the first 6 months of 2019. In which, Vietnam welcomed 8.48 million international visitors, ranked 4th in the region after Thailand (19.7 million), Malaysia (13.3 million), Singapore (9.3 million), and ranked 4th in the region in terms of growth after Myanmar, the Philippines, and Cambodia. Thus, Vietnam has surpassed Indonesia to rank 4th in the region in terms of international arrivals. So far, Vietnam has ranked 5th in Southeast Asia. The other top 4 countries are Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. (Nguyen 2019.)

Based on the annual Vietnam tourism report released in 2019, by the end of 2018, Vietnam welcomed 15.5 million international visitors, nearly catching up with Indonesia (15.8 million) and Singapore (18.5 million). Although not able to surpass Malaysia (25.8 million arrivals), but in the past 3 years, the tourism industry of this country is showing signs of slowing down. The Vietnam Tourism Industry can believe that with its rapid growth in international arrivals, Vietnam will surpass Indonesia, then catch up with Singapore and par with Malaysia in the next few years, firmly standing in the No. 1 position. 3 Southeast Asia. In 2018, Thailand was still the leading country in ASEAN countries in terms of international arrivals, reaching 38.3 million arrivals. (Nguyen 2019.)

What aspects that Vietnam needs to learn from Malaysia?

- The Vietnamese Government needs to attach great importance to the promotion of tourism products based on product diversity - customer satisfaction. Because the Malaysian Government regularly upgrades equipment for the tourism industry (every year, it spends millions of Ringgits on this work) and maintains the development of ethnic culture, protects the ecological environment.
- Vietnam needs to put forward some ideas for economic transformation, the tourism industry builds a plan to shift tourism development and focus on the market with high affordability, promoting the consumption of tourists.
- Vietnam needs to formulate strategies, plans, and proposing policies and solutions to develop a tourism economy suitable for a different time. To develop tourism, it is important to focus on researching and proposing development focuses for each period, focusing on carrying out new tourism types, which will satisfy the market needs.

### 6.3 Reflects and Founding

Comparison between these countries' inbound tourism development and marketing strategies, we found that all these benchmarking countries have established their inbound tourism

brand promotion. They exactly understand that the tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the whole country's economy, especially after COVID-19. Through analysing their various kinds of national policies, marketing strategies, customer segments, and types of tourism, we can conclude that these policies and strategies can satisfy the customers' needs and demands. They use fertilized technics and ways to attract international tourists to establish their international destination image. Each country mentioned above knows what its strengths are and opportunities to become international tourism destinations. They implement different kinds of tourism types and policies to attract and satisfy international tourists. They have clear objectives and efficient marketing strategies. They are using different contribution channels to promote them as international destinations.

The Asian tourism industry has two great advantages, namely, the large population in the region, and the strong growth economies that are the basis for increasing the income of people with an increasing middle class. These two advantages cooperate have been creating an increasing travel demand. In recent years, all the countries' economies above have considered the smokeless industry as a key sector.

Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore are the countries with the largest number of international visitors, of which Malaysia has quite a high number of visitors from regional countries, accounting for 77.76% of the total number of international visitors to Malaysia. Singapore, Thailand attract about 28 - 37% of international visitors from countries in the region, although accounting for such a proportion, there are about 3-4 million international visitors from ASEAN countries. That is also a sizable number of visitors. Besides, medical tourism is also one of the emerging products in the area recently. Singapore, Thailand, Japan, Korea are the countries that account for 90% of the medical tourism market in Asia.

To develop sustainable tourism, the Japanese Government attaches special importance to the formulation of a national strategy for tourism development and concretization through action programs. Japan uses tourism to increase employment rates; increase training to improve skills in the tourism industry. Promoting the ethical and supportive network in the tourism business and responsible tourism as a factor for sociocultural development. Besides, it is advisable to encourage citizens to participate in cultural education programs and activities to promote the quality of cultural experiences through tourism.

Besides Japan and Korea are the more attractive international destination countries in the Asian region. More and more international tourists have become interested to visit Japan and Korea year by year. Inbound tourism has brought a large source of foreign currency income which has contributed to their national economic development. Korea focuses on

using images of popular stars to market its culture, beautiful scenes at the same time introduce the people of Korea. This strategy has yielded truly impressive results, bringing Korea to more people in the world. According to recent reports on the number of tourists to Korea, more than half of the Asian visitors who come to the country are attracted to commercials, dramas, and especially Kpop idols from South Korea. The fast development of in-bound tourism has brought more benefits to their countries' development.

Asian countries are rapidly deploying new, unique tourism models in the hope of reviving the smokeless industry. One of the measures to attract tourists is to strive to build the country's image as a safe and medically reliable destination, always putting ensuring the health of visitors first.

Thailand recently announced that it is promoting the collection of travel fees worth about 10 USD for foreign tourists, to provide insurance benefits for visitors to the "country of smiles". Along with that, Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia simultaneously implemented measures to require people to strictly comply with the hygiene and manipulate the effects of the disease. This is also the factor that makes foreign tourists choose Asia as their destination.

Another initiative that many Asian countries actively deploy during the pandemic is to apply digital technology to develop smart tourism. The Asian tourism industry recently witnessed the explosion of a series of virtual reality travel programs. Japanese entertainment company First Airlines said that since the Covid-19 outbreak in Japan, the number of bookings for corporate virtual tours increased by about 50% compared to the pre-pandemic period. In Singapore, the Singapore Tourism Board promotes a social networking initiative to inspire tourists' tourism inspiration for a beautiful, identity-rich Southeast Asia region. Accordingly, Instagram social platform users are encouraged to share their memorable memories on every street in Southeast Asia. This initiative has received a great response from many young people.

The Covid-19 epidemic is still complicated, requiring the Asian tourism industry to actively adapt to find a path of sustainable development in a new normal state. The initiative and creativity of countries will be the key to helping the regional tourism industry overcoming a difficult period, gradually changing its appearance in a more positive direction.

## 7. Conclusion

### 7.1 Key Results

The main research question of the thesis is how China and Vietnam market their countries as international tourism destinations. To get more accurate research results, we also have three sub-research questions to support and solve our main research question. These are how China and Vietnam shifted their marketing strategies in recent years; how are the current situation and policies that China and Vietnam have used; what drives China and Vietnam tourism development and destination marketing.

To the main questions, we found that it is initial for China and Vietnam to implement national-level policies to support the inbound tourism development. In addition, they need to plan effective marketing strategies based on their actual situation. China's and Vietnam's marketing strategies have shifted according to the international tourism development. Their marketing strategies have an effective influence on their international destination images.

In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, we have analysed the possibilities of China and Vietnam becoming International tourism destinations. We have used SWOT and SOSTAC to indicate how China and Vietnam market their inbound tourism. China and Vietnam both have their own unique, characterized, and diversified cultures. They can use their advantages to establish the international destination image. They need to exactly know their situation in the world and what are their objectives to become an international tourism destination. They need to implement efficient marketing strategies and combine the marketing strategies with the 4P (product, price, place, and promotion) marketing structure. The two countries need to know the customers' demand and make a precious marketing segmentation. They should know about who their targets and ideal customers are. Besides, the distribution channels are important aspects for China and Vietnam to promote their image as an international destinations. They should make full use of social media platforms to market their tourism.

In Chapter 5, we have a deep analysis of how China's and Vietnam's inbound tourism development strategies from the 1970s to current. China and Vietnam have changed their development strategies according to the reality of the tourism industry. They have done a lot to promote as an international tourism destination. Their destination images have been established step by step. They have attracted more and more international tourists. But there are still some policies that need to be implemented. They need to have more flexible visa policies to make the foreign tourists have easier ways to visit these two countries.

We have used SWOT analysis to show what drives China and Vietnam. There are many strengths and opportunities for them. They should make full use of these strengths and

opportunities to promote their inbound tourism. China and Vietnam both have diversified cultures. They can present the uniqueness of their histories and cultures to the world to attract more international tourists.

In closing, we have proposed some of the more prominent conclusions in these analyses are:

- 1) China and Vietnam need to have country-level inbound tourism development strategies to promote their international destination image.
- 2) China and Vietnam need to find efficient models or platforms to promote inbound tourism to the international market. The international tourism market doesn't know more much about China and Vietnam. Two countries need to establish their international destination brand image. These two countries should do more promotion activities to show their cultures and attractive aspects to the world.
- 3) Reduce and simplify the visa processing and related policy and regulatory measures for foreign tourists.
- 4) To promote international, regular, transparent tourism services, to achieve international standards, so that foreigners in China and Vietnam can achieve accessibility, personal rights and interests can be well protected, and so on.
- 5) Strengthen international cooperation. China and Vietnam should have more cooperate with international tourism organizations or other countries to promote their images as a tourism destination. The cooperation can let China and Vietnam increase their international visibility and awareness. In this way, the outside world can have more understanding of these two countries.
- 6) Comparisons benchmarking tourism between countries in the same regions of Vietnam and China so that both countries will come up with aspects about what they need to learn and improve from other countries.

## 7.2 Evaluation of the Research Process

Inbound tourism is a basic indicator for moving from a major tourist country to a strong tourist country, an important carrier of international tourism competitiveness, and a cornerstone for the integration of tourism into the national strategic system. Outbound tourism of China and Vietnam has played important roles in the international tourism industry. On the contrary, inbound tourism of these two countries has not yet been well developed and pro-

moted to the international world. These two countries' inbound tourism brand needs to establish through the whole world because China and Vietnam have their unique and advantages to become the popular inbound tourism destination. To present and process our research, we choose the marketing model SOSTAC to analyse China and Vietnam's various related aspects to be the international destination. To answer our main research questions, we needed to show how China and Vietnam have done through different centuries to promote their inbound tourism, what are their advantages and disadvantages to becoming an international destination. Also, we did a benchmark with different countries. We divided China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan to be one group and Vietnam, Thailand, and Singapore to be another group, somehow, have their similarities in cultures and geographical aspects. Through benchmarking, we indicated that China and Vietnam could learn from these countries to develop and promote their inbound tourism. All the analyses maximumly support our research questions.

Our research is qualitative research that can help us to familiarize the concepts to be studied and analysed. Qualitative research put its emphasis on facts and causes of behaviour (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In this way, the research results are reliable and valid. The whole research process is based on the data from the official websites, reports, and academic research. Although we didn't successfully get any interviewing answers from the governments of China and Vietnam. We still tried our best to search for reliable and official documents which were related to our research questions. A good qualitative study can make us understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing (Eisner 1991, 58). In a quantitative study with the "purpose of explaining", reliability is to evaluate the quality (Stenbacka 2001, 551.) Our research is easy to understand and we have focused on our purpose and make the readers get our ideas. The readers can grasp our concepts.

Before we started our research process, we have talked about and decided on the methodologies to be used, this helped us to obtain valid and reliable research results from the starting pointing. Besides, we have done an effective assessment of the related literature to conduct reliability and validity measures. We kept reliability and validity as the guidance to conduct the research process. Besides, we have chosen suitable research methodologies to achieve our research goals. We have used the comparison of data, constant testing, comprehensive data to organize and analyse various data in the right way. In such a research process, we have established authenticity.

Also, during the last step of finalizing the thesis, there were some problems. One of the authors didn't do the final work actively. The other author faced problems in find motivation

and meeting the jointly agreed deadlines. Unfortunate issues emerged in our pair work dynamic, and it affected the credibility and reliability of Chapters 2, 3, and 6.

### 7.3 Future Research

The research work on the development of the overseas source market for China's tourism industry is a systematic project with a wide range of requirements and complex contents, and it is also a very meaningful work. Mistakes and loopholes in the "research" made in this paper are also inevitable, especially in China and Vietnam's national policies on immigration, the author will be in the future work and study of this subject for further exploration and research. We had tried our best to contact the local government of China and Vietnam to process interviews with the professionals and officials. But we had not gotten any responses. We couldn't get the actual information and all our research is based on the existing research and reports. Due to the limited knowledge of the author, the research and analysis of the problem are bound to be in-depth and comprehensive enough, the shortcomings and omissions in the paper are inevitable, please experts, scholars to give valuable advice.

During our research process, we also find some new questions coming out such as what kinds of tourism China and Vietnam need to promote based on their own unique and characteristics, which channels are the best for them to promote their international destination image. The time is limited, and we don't have enough time to do more research and write these.

The research results of this paper can provide some reference and reference for the tourism management departments of China and Vietnam to make scientific decisions and formulate relevant tourism planning policies and development strategies, reasonably open the market for inbound tourists, and actively develop marketable tourism products.

## **8. Summary**

This paper focuses on how China and Vietnam should market their countries as international tourism destinations. To better solve the main research question, we have proposed three sub-questions to support the solution of the main research question. We gave a brief introduction and definition of international tourism, inbound tourism, and outbound tourism. And we also explained the destination marketing based on SOSTAC.

Our paper is qualitative research which is based mainly on collecting and interpreting data in research. Through documenting data, content analysis, sampling, and collecting, we found out the suitable and accurate materials we can use for our research. Another research method we used was benchmarking. We compared China and Vietnam with six nearby countries which are also based on SOSTAC. After benchmarking, we pointed out how and what aspects China and Vietnam need to learn from these countries. At the end of this part, we also have a reflection on what we have found and written for the benchmarking methods and the current pandemic situation of these Asian countries.

In addition, we also provide some suggestions on how China and Vietnam to promote their international tourism destination image. They need to have national-level policies to support inbound tourism. China and Vietnam should join more international activities and affairs. In this way, they can make the foreign world know about their attractive aspects. They need to show more about the country brand to the whole world. A country brand is important for both China and Vietnam to develop and market their inbound tourism.

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