



THAILAND

# THE GREATEST STORY

IN GLOBAL  
TOURISM HISTORY

A 60TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO  
THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND

Key  
Developments

# 2013

- 
- PATA Annual Conference 2013 held April 25-28 in Bangkok
  - Mr Thawatchai Arunyik appointed TAT Governor, Dec 22

# CONTENTS

2013

- Strategies Adjusted to Cope with European Economic Slowdown
- Global, Regional and Local Peace and Stability Vital for Travel & Tourism to Flourish
- No Visas, More Flights Leads to Russian Visitor Surge
- "Higher Revenue Through Thainess" Focus of Action Plan
- Deepening the Emotional Value of Visiting Thailand
- The Disco Plan for Thai Tourism

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# STRATEGIES ADJUSTED TO COPE WITH EUROPEAN ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN



Mr. Suraphon Svetasreni

*Governor*

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## **BORSA INTERNAZIONALE DEL TURISMO (BIT) MILAN 14 FEBRUARY 2013**

On behalf of the Thai tourism industry, I bid you a warm welcome to our networking lunch. Thank you very much for joining us. It is a great pleasure to be here at the BIT 2013 in Milan, reconnecting with friends and colleagues and forging new partnerships with senior representatives of the Italian travel and tourism industries. We truly appreciate your continued support for Thai tourism.

Over the years, Thai-Italian economic and cultural relations have developed very actively. And one of the areas that both our countries share popularity is food. I think if people were to be asked which food is more popular worldwide, Thai or Italian, it would be a pretty close race.

### **MARKET SITUATION**

For the year 2012, international tourist arrivals to Thailand reached 22.30 million, up 15.98 percent. In spite of the Eurozone crisis, visitor arrivals to Thailand from all the European countries have shown a 10.12 percent increase to 5.6 million.

Indeed, the figures showed that the 2011 arrivals from Italy show a total of 174,257 arrivals up 7.9 percent over the same period, and for the year just passed, the first figures show a further increase of 5 percent with the aim to have reached almost 185,000 arrivals from Italy in





2012. Despite Italy being one of the worst-hit European countries affected by the crisis in the 2009 – 2012 period, it still grew from approximately 147,000 (147,541) to almost 185,000 up 25 percent in the last four years.

In 2012, the average daily expenditure of Italian visitors was about 3,419 Baht (85 Euros) per person with a very high average length of stay of roughly 16 days.

As of January 2013, a total of 7 direct scheduled flights are operating between Thailand and major cities of Italy (Rome and Milan) by THAI Airways International.

In 2013, TAT is expecting to receive 196,400 Italian visitors generating 11 billion Baht (293 million Euros) for tourism income to Thailand. And for 2014 our hope is that Italy can reach 200,000 arrivals that will be a great result considering the tough economical period that Europe and the world has been facing together. And I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Italian private sector for your hard endeavours and cooperation in helping us to achieve our set targets.

## MARKETING STRATEGY

Due to the economic situation in Europe, TAT has adjusted its marketing strategies to concentrate more on high-yield visitors – those who are likely to stay longer and spend more. This is in line with the core theme of the TAT Action Plan 2013 “Higher Revenue through Thainess”. TAT will attract tourists with the Charm of Thainess which includes Thai Experience, Thai Way of Life, and Thai Culture.

***“ During this time of continuing economic uncertainty, we believe it is right to focus on these qualities and niche sectors of the market, as they are more likely to be ‘recession proof’. ”***

## NEW PRODUCT UPDATE/NEW DEVELOPMENT

Clearly, for Thailand, the age of trying to generate quantitative, numerical growth is over. We are now trying to achieve the balanced philosophy of enhancing qualitative growth and also improve the quality of our products and services accordingly.

This strategy will be implemented via a focus on niche-markets. Four key target customer segments in this category are golfers, medical tourists, weddings and honeymoons, and ecotourists. During this time of continuing economic uncertainty, we believe it is right to focus on these qualities and niche sectors of the market, as they are more likely to be ‘recession proof’.

We believe we have the right range of products to cater to all four niche-markets.

**Golf:** Thailand today has an expansive range of golf tour operators and over 200 top-quality golf courses nationwide. Golfers come from all around the world, especially places like Japan and Korea, to play and attend international tournaments. We also hold an annual golf travel mart to provide more networking opportunities. Not only are the courses immaculately designed, but the cost of playing in Thailand is generally much lower than that of many countries.

**Health and wellness tourism** is growing rapidly. Thailand is now receiving more than 1.5 million international arrivals for medical treatment per year. Our country is proud to have professional expertise in both prevention and cure. Visitors also come to Thailand to learn how to meditate or apply natural therapies.

**Wedding and Honeymoon:** Our luxury-travel experiences and products have been well-established for decades with a variety of prime properties nationwide. These have been extremely popular with the wedding and honeymoon market. Furthermore, there has been a recent explosion of many new boutique-style properties designed for discerning guests seeking a comfortable, delectable ambience, high-quality individualized service and, extremely important, total privacy.

Bearing the theme of “Flowers and Love”, this activity is part of the “Thailand 2gether Forever” campaign targeted at wedding couples and honeymooners. This specific activity will provide them a fast-track entry via the Immigration Premium Lane at Suvarnabhumi Airport all through February 2013. For the first time, the privilege is also being extended to same-sex couples.

- The Most Popular Wedding Destination Award at the 8th Annual International Awards 2012 organised by Hospitality India and Explore the World magazines on 21 November 2012.
- Earlier in 2012, Thailand won the Best Wedding Destination Award conferred by Travel & Leisure magazine.
- In the January 2011 issue of Recommend magazine, Thailand was named by the travel agent community as the “Sexiest Romance Honeymoon Destination in Asia.”

**Green Tourism:** We will also retain a strong focus on catering to the continuing growing trend for green tourism, a holiday that compliments its environment and the local communities. From quiet treks in the jungles to soft adventure like zip lining and rock climbing, Thailand has outdoor activities to suit any preference.

## NEW SHOPPING AREAS IN BANGKOK

As you are aware, the fun of shopping in Thailand never ends. Some elegant new shopping centres have emerged that allow visitors to enjoy hunting for bargains or buying brand-name products. These include the ASIATIQUE The Riverfront: A lifestyle project on the banks of the scenic Chao Phraya River, the recently revamped and very chic Siam Centre, given a complete makeover and just opened this 11 January; Terminal 21: Located on Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok, this is the first shopping mall with a different theme for each floor. Central Embassy, a mega-mall project in downtown Bangkok, will add yet another landmark to the city’s shopping scene by the end of this year.



In line with the major lifestyle changes taking place worldwide, Thailand is seeing the growth of some remarkably hip, intimate and boutique products which we are marketing under the slogan: ‘CHIC By Thailand.’ The ‘chic’ new products include hotels, restaurants, art galleries, museums, bars, and attractions throughout the country.

All in all, Thailand’s tourism attributes are among the most praised at the international level. According to the FutureBrand Country Brand Index 2012-13 (CBI), Thailand has consistently performed well for the top list of Value for Money as well as ranked as eighth of the Top 25 for tourism, tenth for Food, eleventh for Shopping, tenth for Beach, and ninth for nightlife in the world-class brand.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AVIATION SECTOR

Air access remains our primary source of visitor arrivals, and here a number of developments are underway that will ensure both adequate access as well as high standards of products and services and facilities.



Our former international airport Don Mueang Airport has now been opened for low-cost airline flights. Scheduled airlines now based there are Air Asia, Nok Air and Orient Thai while non-scheduled airlines are Solar Air and Nok Mini. Low-cost airlines are growing significantly, especially for short-haul regional connections.

Phuket International Airport has now become our second most important aviation gateway after Bangkok and is being expanded to accommodate the growing numbers, especially as a result of direct flights coming from regional and intercontinental points. The runway is being extended to allow it to even receive the A380 aircraft. The passenger terminal will also be expanded to accommodate 12.5 million annual passenger movements.

In October, Thai Airways International joined the growing number of global airlines operating the world's largest and most technologically advanced aircraft, the Airbus A380. A total of six A380s will be delivered over the next 6 months, raising to new levels the pleasure of travelling to Thailand in spectacular comfort, style and luxury.

You may find it interesting to note that our aviation primary gateway, Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport topped the list as the most Instagrammed place in the world in 2012. According to Instagram, more than 100,000 photos were taken at Suvarnabhumi Airport last year.

In fact, TAT has been introducing our own travel applications to tourists in an effort to enhance social customer relationship management in every major market so our fan club can connect with us 24/7. Our most popular apps include Speak Thai, Thai Spa and Lifestyle Thailand.

## CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen,

The year 2013 has gone well so far, without any major global upheavals. Barring any negative global, regional or local developments, Thailand expects to remain at the forefront of the Asia-Pacific tourism industry well into the foreseeable future. Our strengths and competitive advantages will continue to serve us in good stead.

As such, we look forward to working with you, the tour operators and media, for mutual benefit in promoting Thailand as the best destination for your clients and readers. And of course, if you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Jittima Sukpalin, the director, TAT Rome and Mr. Sandro Botticelli, the marketing manager of the TAT Rome, who will be glad to assist you.

I would like to thank all of you for joining us here today for your ongoing support. We would like to assure you that “Amazing Thailand Always Amazes You.”



# GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PEACE AND STABILITY VITAL FOR TRAVEL & TOURISM TO FLOURISH



**Mr. Suraphon Svetasreni**  
*Governor*

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## **PATA AGM & ANNUAL CONFERENCE PATTAYA, 26 APRIL 2013**

On behalf of the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Thai tourism industry, it is a pleasure for me to be with you all here. Firstly, I would like to express my warm appreciation and thanks to PATA to host this major event in Thailand again.

Thailand has achieved record-breaking visitor arrivals, crossing the 22 million mark for the first time in 2012. Figures tabulated by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports for January – December 2012 show total arrivals by nationality of 22,303,065, up 15.98 percent over 2011.

We are overjoyed to have achieved this result in the year the people of Thailand commemorated the 85th birthday of His Majesty the King. It is also a tribute to the cooperation and creativity of the entire Thai travel & tourism industry for the huge effort that has been made to ensure that travel & tourism remains a leading industry for job creation, distribution of income nationwide and contribution to culture, heritage and environmental preservation.

The primary contributor to this result was the prevalence of global, regional and local peace and stability. Last year, the world was generally at peace and there were no major geopolitical, economic, environmental or natural disasters and no health pandemics. Travel & tourism can only flourish worldwide if the underlying conditions that support it remain free



***Many changes are taking place in consumer behaviour these days, both in terms of the way people buy their travel products, the destinations they chose, the amount of time they have to travel and the amount of money they spend.***



of disturbance and disruption. That is one of the most important lessons for the entire industry to learn worldwide.

The highlight of the results was the fact that six countries, five of which are within the Asia-Pacific region, are now producing more than one million annual visitor arrivals. These are Malaysia, China, Japan, Korea, India and Russia.

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## **BALANCE STRATEGY**

Many changes are taking place in consumer behaviour these days, both in terms of the way people buy their travel products, the destinations they chose, the amount of time they have to travel and the amount of money they spend. We are monitoring all these changes closely and adjusting our strategies accordingly.

We have to achieve the right balance between long-term and short-term objectives and ensure that we continue to focus on ensuring that our products remain up to standards and are pitched to the right market at the right time at the right price. This is what will keep the Thai tourism industry growing well into the future.

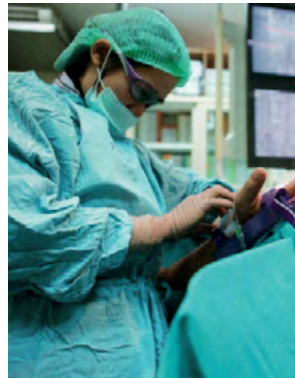
Two of the most important trends we are focussing on are the shift towards digital distribution and increased impact of social media both for travel advice, bookings and consumer feedback. Hence, we are shifting our marketing strategies in that direction.

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## **MASS MARKET OVER NICHE MARKET**

Clearly, for Thailand, the age of trying to generate quantitative, numerical growth is over. We are now trying to achieve the balanced philosophy of enhancing qualitative growth and also improve the quality of our products and services accordingly.

This strategy will be implemented via focus on niche-markets. Four key target customer segments in this category are golfers, medical tourists, weddings and honeymoons, and ecotourists. During this time of continuing economic uncertainty, we believe it is right to focus on these qualities and niche sectors of the market as they are more likely to be ‘recession proof’.



## ECONOMY OVER ECOLOGY

Another important strategic focus is towards sustainability and environmental consciousness in travel products. Hence, we are making conservation and preservation issues very much part of our promotions, too, such as by highlighting ecotourism products, boutique hotels, health and wellness facilities and the Royal Projects.

The Thai travel and tourism industry is becoming increasingly conscious of its environmental responsibilities. The need to reconcile the economic and ecological impact of travel & tourism is critical to the Balanced Strategy that we are pursuing as part of our tourism development policies. TAT has for years been undertaking environmental protection activities and projects.

## CONCLUSION

The year 2013 has gone well so far, without any major global upheavals. Barring any negative global, regional or local developments, Thailand expects to remain at the forefront of the Asia Pacific tourism industry well into the foreseeable future. Our strengths and competitive advantages will continue to serve us in good stead.

I would like to thank all of you for joining us here today and we would like to assure you that “Amazing Thailand Always Amazes You.”

Thank you and Sawasdee khrap

# NO VISAS, MORE FLIGHTS LEADS TO RUSSIAN VISITOR SURGE



**Mrs. Juthaphorn Rerngronasa**

*Deputy Governor for Europe, Africa,  
Middle East and America Market*

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## **MOSCOW AUTUMN TRAVEL INDUSTRY WEEK (MATIW) LEISURE 13-19 SEPTEMBER 2013 MOSCOW, RUSSIA**

On behalf of Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai tourism industry, it is my honour and pleasure to welcome you this morning. It is a great pleasure for me to be here. I would like to thank you all for being with us particularly our Thai Ambassador to the Russian Federation H.E. Lt. Cdr. Itti Ditbanjong for your strong support in promoting tourism to Thailand.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Visitors from Russia to Thailand have been growing steadily over the past few years. Today, they have become mainstream travellers with strong growth potential. In 2006, Russian visitor arrivals totalled 187,658. By 2012, this number had grown exponentially to 1.31 million Russian visitors. Russia is the largest source market from Europe, and one of the six countries generating more than one million annual visitor arrivals for us.

In January – July 2013, Russian visitor arrivals to Thailand totaled 985,215, up by 36% over the same period in 2012. For the year 2013, TAT has set a trend of 1.67 million Russian visitors, up 27.8% over 2012.

One major reason for the growth is accessibility. Russians get 30 days visa-free access to Thailand since March 2007. As of September 2013, there are 14 direct scheduled flights per week between Bangkok and





Phuket and Moscow, operated by 2 airlines - Thai Airways International and Aeroflot Russian Airline. In addition to these direct flights, there are numerous airlines with connecting flights between major cities in Russia and Thailand, such as Siberia Airline, Transaero Air, Vladivostok Air and Pegas Touristik.

Thailand is a popular winter-getaway destination for Russian visitors, especially families. The beach resort of Pattaya has become hugely popular, thanks to the influx of Russian charters and a world-class highway going straight to the Eastern Seaboard resort from Suvarnabhumi airport, the country's main aviation gateway. In recent years, the southern islands of Phuket and Samui have also gained popularity. Feedback indicates that in addition to the beaches, Russian travelers also enjoy Thai food, shopping and sightseeing.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thailand has a long tradition of catering to the luxury travel market, perhaps best exemplified by many of our world-renowned hotels which have hosted the rich and famous for many decades. Over the years, our hotels, including city, resort and spa properties, have emerged with top honours at the world's leading awards. All these honours have played a very significant role in developing a very positive image for Thailand on the world travel & tourism stage. Let me just update you with some products.

**Honeymoon and Wedding:** Our luxury-travel experiences and products have been well-established for decades with a variety of prime properties nationwide. These have been extremely popular with the wedding and honeymoon market. Furthermore, there has been a recent explosion of many new boutique-style properties designed for discerning guests seeking a comfortable, delectable ambience, high-quality individualized service and, extremely important, total privacy.

**Pool Villas:** Another exciting development has been the emergence of a portfolio of private luxury pool villas available for purchase or rental in many parts of the country. These allow luxury travellers to holiday in absolute privacy, comfort and style. The villas all boast private swimming pools and beachfront views, making them ideal for families, weddings and honeymooners. Beside the main destinations of Phuket and Pattaya, another place for hi-end market which located in different location of Thailand also provide interesting pool villas such as The FloatHouse River



Kwai Resort, Dheva Mantra Resort & Spa which located near the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi province, the west of Thailand.

**Soft Adventure Activities:** Thailand has many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries that offer plenty of opportunities for ecotourism and soft adventure like trekking, mountain climbing, rock climbing, cave exploring, wildlife survey of mammals, birds and flying squirrels in Kanchanaburi.

**Medical and Wellness:** To provide visitors with even more choices and greater value for money, the wellness products are being converted into packages that combine medical, physical and emotional consultations, traditional therapies, east-and-west spa treatments, plus various courses and classes. At present, 25 Thai hospitals have received an international quality standard for hospitals. Many hospitals offer wide range of services with emphasis on medical check-up, Anti-Aging, Detoxification and Holistic Therapies.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I will not take any more of your time. We thank you for being here with us and we hope you will take this opportunity to work with our private sector to develop more business opportunities.

# "HIGHER REVENUE THROUGH THAINESS" FOCUS OF ACTION PLAN



Mr. Suraphon Svetasreni

*Governor*

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## **WORLD HOTEL LUXURY HOTEL AWARDS 1 NOVEMBER 2013 PHUKET**

On behalf of the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai Tourism Industry, It is a great my pleasure to be invited here tonight, this promise to be the most exclusive and glamorous event on the global hotel industry calendar.

Firstly, let me congratulate to all the winners which were selected as world-class hotels, in order to recognize their facilities and service excellence provided and available to their guests.

Thailand has a long tradition of catering to the luxury travel market, perhaps best exemplified by renowned hotels like The Oriental which has been host to the rich and famous for many decades. Our most important asset is that we have a generally very positive image in the world, which gives us a significant competitive advantage.

The Thai tourism industry has come a long way since we actively promoted Thailand as a holiday destination in the early 1960s. Allow me to give you a brief roundup of the current Thai tourism situation.

In 2012, Thailand achieved another record-breaking performance, crossing the 22 million mark for the first time. Two source markets, China and Malaysia, are now generating more than two million annual arrivals each. And four source markets - Japan, Russia, South Korea, and India - are generating more than one million arrivals each.





All this growth, and indeed the growth of the entire travel and tourism industry worldwide, has been the direct result of geopolitical peace and economic stability, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region, and the absence of any major environmental disasters or health pandemics or local disturbances, such as those which occurred almost annually in the first decade of the 21st century.

In January to August 2013, Thailand's visitor arrivals surged to a record total of a little over 17.43 million (17,437,219), up by 21 percent over the same period of 2012, according to figures published by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

Visitors from East Asia totalled 10.50 million (+31%), Europe 4 million (+13%), the Americas 758,000 (+7%), South Asia 901,000 (+5%) and Africa 104,000 (4%). There were two regions that showed a decline: the Middle East 410,000 (-2%) and Oceania 657,000 (-3%).

In addition, major markets like China (+88%), Russia (+36%), Malaysia (+16%), Japan (+15%) and South Korea (+12%) are showing strong double-digit growth.

In 2013, TAT is confident that if the global, regional and local situation remains stable, Thailand will receive 26.10 million arrivals, generating a projected tourism income of 1.17 trillion Baht.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

There are several reasons why Thailand as a truly spectacular destination for the discerning traveler.

The country has a good image, generally speaking. Its long-standing geographical advantage has positioned Thailand at the crossroads of Asia. It gives visa-free and visa-on-arrival privileges to citizens of many countries.



There is extensive airline and aviation access to Thailand in terms of both domestic and regional linkages. Added to that, of course, are Thailand's primary assets: A friendly and service-oriented people and an excellent reputation for high service standards and product delivery.

In recent years, we have made a conscious effort to focus more on attracting "quality" tourists. Hence, our tourism strategy plan focuses on developing quality attractions and highlighting Thailand's unique identity, while conserving nature and the environment.

All these products are going a long way towards helping us attract "quality visitors with high yield." This is now a major strategic direction in our marketing plans.

The core theme of the TAT Action Plan 2013-2014 is "Higher Revenue through Thainess". This means emphasising our Unique Selling Proposition, which is the Charm of Thainess, especially the Thai Experience, Thai Way of Life, and Thai Culture.

TAT will put more effort into increasing first-time visitors and high spenders (Luxury Markets). Four niche products used to attract high-spenders will be Golf, Health & Wellness, Wedding & Honeymoon, and Green Tourism. Let me just update you with some products.

**Health and Wellness:** To provide visitors with even more choices and greater value for money, the wellness products are being converted into packages that combine medical, physical and emotional consultations, traditional therapies, east-and-west spa treatments, plus various courses and classes. At present, 25 Thai hospitals have received an international quality standard certification. Many hospitals offer a wide range of services with emphasis on medical check-ups, Anti-Aging, Detoxification and Holistic treatments.

**Honeymoon and Wedding:** Our luxury-travel experiences and products have been well-established for decades with a variety of prime properties nationwide. These have been extremely popular with the wedding and honeymoon market. Furthermore, there has been a recent explosion of many new boutique-style properties designed for discerning guests seeking a comfortable, delectable ambience, high-quality individualized service and, extremely important, total privacy.



**Green Tourism:** We will also retain a strong focus on catering to the continuing growing trend for green tourism, a holiday that compliments its environment and the local communities. From quiet treks in the jungles to soft adventure like zip lining and rock climbing, Thailand has outdoor activities to suit any preference.



**Golf:** Thailand today has an expansive range of golf tour operators and over 200 top-quality golf courses nationwide. Golfers come from all around the world, especially places such as Japan and Korea, to play and attend international tournaments. We also hold an annual golf travel mart to provide more networking opportunities. Not only are the courses immaculately designed, but the cost of playing in Thailand is generally much lower than that of many countries.



**Pool Villas:** Another exciting development has been the emergence of a portfolio of private luxury pool villas available for purchase or rental in many parts of the country. These allow luxury travellers to holiday in absolute privacy, comfort and style. The villas all boast private swimming pools and beachfront views, making them ideal for families, weddings and honeymooners. Besides Phuket and Pattaya, other destinations for high-end markets in Thailand also have beautiful pool villas such as The Float House River Kwai Resort and Dheva Mantra Resort & Spa which are located near the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi province, in the west of Thailand.



**Soft Adventure Activities:** Thailand has many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries that offer plenty of opportunities for ecotourism and soft adventures such as trekking, mountain climbing, rock climbing, cave exploring, and wildlife surveys of mammals, birds and flying squirrels in Kanchanaburi.



## CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that provides you with a good overview of our efforts to attract the luxury travel market and promote Thailand as an upcoming and growing tourism destination.



# DEEPENING THE EMOTIONAL VALUE OF VISITING THAILAND



Mr. Suraphon Svetasreni

*Governor*

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## **WTM LONDON NETWORKING LUNCH 4 NOVEMBER 2013**

On behalf of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, I would like to thank you all for being with us today, as well as for both your support and continued interest in Thailand's tourism industry. It is always a pleasure to be in London. As always, we have seen good business at the Thailand pavilion and are encouraged by your presence here today.

At WTM this year, we have a total of 69 companies and other institutions represented, comprising of 57 hotels and resorts, seven tour operators and travel agents, and five other related agencies.

This year, the Thai pavilion bears the theme "World Event: Romantic Thailand" to focus Thailand as a destination for weddings and honeymoons. Visitors can also enjoy a Thai spa demonstration at the Thai pavillion. Promoting health and wellness as well as weddings and honeymoons are very important components of our niche-market strategy designed to raise the yield per visitor.

Today, Her Royal Highness Princess Ubolratana will preside over the "Thailand Green Excellence Awards" ceremony for travel agents and media in the United Kingdom who play a vital role in supporting ecotourism in Thailand. In the evening, we will organise the "Amazing Thailand Night: Royal Gala Dinner at the Claridge Hotel.



Ladies and gentlemen,

The Thai tourism industry has come a long way since we began promoting Thailand as a holiday destination in the early 1960s. Allow me to give you a brief roundup of the Thai tourism situation. In 2012, Thailand achieved another record-breaking performance, crossing the 22 million mark for the first time. Two source markets, China and Malaysia, are now generating more than two million annual arrivals each. And four source markets - Japan, Russia, South Korea, and India - are generating more than one million arrivals each.

In January to June 2013, Thailand's visitor arrivals surged to a record total of a little over 13 million (13,071,509), up by 23.09 per cent over the same period of 2012, according to figures published by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.



The European market has long been a major market of Thai tourism. Of the 13 million visitor arrivals in Jan-Jun 2013, a total of 3.09 million arrivals were from Europe, a market share of 23.69% and an increase of 11.25% over the same period of 2012.

The United Kingdom is now our second largest market out of Europe. Thailand welcomed over 400,000 (410,538) UK visitors, up 3.07 per cent over the Jan-Jun 2012 period. Given the recent economic conditions in the UK, we think that is a very acceptable figure.

In January – March 2013, UK visitors had an average length of stay of roughly 17 days per person per visit, well above the 10-day average of all visitors to Thailand.

In the same period, UK visitors had an average daily expenditure of 3,800 Baht or about (£75), up 6.52 per cent. This generated a total of about 16 billion Baht or about (£317 million) in foreign exchange revenue, up about 8.3 per cent.

In 2013, we are projecting 838,000 visitor arrivals and earnings of 57 billion Baht from the UK market.

***“ All this growth, and indeed the growth in the entire travel and tourism industry worldwide, has been the direct result of geopolitical peace and economic stability, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region, and the absence of any major environmental disasters or health pandemics or local disturbances. ”***

All this growth, and indeed the growth in the entire travel and tourism industry worldwide, has been the direct result of geopolitical peace and economic stability, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region, and the absence of any major environmental disasters or health pandemics or local disturbances such as those which occurred almost annually in the first decade of the 21st century.

TAT is confident that if the global, regional and local situation remains stable, Thailand will receive 26.26 million arrivals, generating a projected tourism income of 1.18 trillion Baht (£22 billion) in 2013, which is over the target of 24.14 million visitors and 1.1 trillion baht (£21 billion) for tourism income.

Looking to the future, we are targeting a growth of 7% to 28 million tourists in 2014, who are expected to generate a projected a growth of 13% for tourism income to 1.32 trillion Baht (£26 billion).

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## **TAT ACTION PLAN 2014**

The core theme of the TAT Action Plan 2014 is “Higher Revenue through Thainess”. This will mean emphasising our unique selling proposition, which is the Charm of Thainess, especially the Thai Experience, Thai Way of Life, and Thai Culture.

The marketing plan for 2014 is designed to increase the share of middle and upper income tourists. The TAT estimates that these groups of tourists comprise about 30 per cent of all visitors to Thailand, with potential to grow to 40 per cent. TAT will put more effort into increasing first-time visitors and high spenders.

All the strategies are in line with the national economic and social development objectives of better income distribution nationwide, creating jobs in the rural areas, and creating a more balanced and harmonious society.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In line with the above-mentioned strategy, we have decided to focus on honeymoons and weddings as the primary target market to be promoted in the UK market.



Our luxury-travel experiences and products have been well-established for decades. In recent years, we have seen a surge in the development of new boutique-style, pool-villa properties designed for discerning guests seeking a comfortable, delectable ambience, high-quality individualised service and, extremely importantly, total privacy. These are now proving extremely popular with the weddings and honeymoon market.

In addition, there are other niche-market products that will be of interest, such as ecotourism and soft adventure activities. Thailand has many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries that offer plenty of opportunities for trekking, mountain climbing, rock climbing, and cave exploring.

In 2014, we are expecting the opening of Cartoon Network Amazone Water Park, a theme park that will work wonders for the family market. It will be located in Bang Saray, just a few kilometres south of Pattaya.

Of course, many of you are familiar with our health & wellness products, which offer a broad range of both prevention and cure facilities. Visitors can avail of traditional therapies, East-and-West spa treatments, medical check-ups, Anti-Aging, Detoxification and Holistic treatments. Thai hospitals have received international quality standard certification and offer a wide range of services with competitive prices.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Digital marketing will play an increasingly important role in the tourism sector. The Internet has changed consumer behaviour in many ways, both in terms of the way people buy their travel products, the destinations they choose, the amount of time they have to travel and the amount of money they spend. Search and recommendation tools are increasingly important. People are eager to share experiences via social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

We are monitoring all these changes closely and adjusting our strategies accordingly. Indeed, the TAT has been using digital marketing to promote Thai tourism for many years, and we will

continue to tap into a wider pool of travellers through social networks, online games, and mobile applications such as “Lifestyle Thailand” and “SpeakThai Application”. Both apps are available for free at <http://mobile.tourismthailand.org>.

TAT has also launched the Thailand Super Quality Portal in an effort to increase both the quality of our tourism products and the quality of foreign visitors. The Mini Site will present the very best of Thailand’s luxury products and services. It will have many online activities, as well as a concerted CRM drive. Since launching this campaign in April 2013, we now have 800 operators and 14,078 members registered on the website. For further details, please check out [www.thaيلandsuperquality.com](http://www.thaيلandsuperquality.com)

One example of our online footprint in the digital domain is The Little Big Project, a global digital marketing Volunteer Tourism competition we ran earlier this year to inspire worldwide travellers to take a volunteer vacation in Thailand. This campaign won the Digital Innovation Asia Award 2013.

Tourism success has brought Thailand much international recognition and worldwide fame. Thailand is consistently ranked among the world’s leading travel and tourism destinations in international surveys. Our products and services win numerous awards every year. In 2013, Bangkok and Chiang Mai, our two top tourist destinations, have ranked highly in prestigious surveys by Travel + Leisure Magazine and TripAdvisor, and Bangkok topped the MasterCard Global Destination Cities Index for 2013. Recently, Thailand has won the awards as the “Winner of Destination of the Year” from the TTG Travel Awards 2013. Also, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, two Thai companies and Phuket City Municipality have scooped up six of the 26 PATA Grand & Gold Awards.





***“ Our people are why Thailand is so amazing.  
They are at the centre of the journey.  
Inspired by this feeling, the line has become:  
“Amazing Thailand.It begins with the people.”***

”

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to unveil a new global marketing and promotion tagline to reflect our positioning and core values as we go forward. We are proud to be launching this new tagline at the WTM.

To discover the key differentiation, we sought the source of what instills the charm of “Thainess.” The Kingdom of Thailand offers a unique experience for visitors. This is because our people are why Thailand is so amazing. They are at the centre of the journey. Inspired by this feeling, the line has become: “Amazing Thailand. It begins with the people.”

This tagline speaks to the increasingly human-centric aspect of Amazing Thailand. It deepens the emotional value of visiting the country, one that is linked to its people in their attitude, hospitality and spirit. It is a core component of our adherence to the Marketing 3.0 concept whereby customers are treated as the complex, multi-dimensional human beings that they are. Today’s travellers are choosing destinations and services that satisfy deeper needs for participation, creativity, community, and idealism.

Thainess in the culture, art, food and way of life as it has been embodied in the spirit of the people is communicated with this line. But what is Thainess? It is the peace of mind found at the beaches, mountains, waterfalls and islands; the dedication in Thai art, history, handicrafts and national festivals; the blending of tradition and modernity and the simplicity of living with nature. These are what drive an emotional connection with visitors to Thailand and lead them to sharing their experiences with family and friends and returning year after year to Thailand, where “It begins with the people.”

Let us preview where ‘it begins with the people’ comes from (sample VDO).

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before I conclude, I would like to personally invite you all to join us in observing number of major festivals and events which are to be held to ensure a lively and vibrant calendar of activities for year 2013 and 2014.



1. Loi Krathong Festival, 15-17 November 2013, in major tourist attractions such as Asiatique the Riverfront in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Sukhothai, Ayutthaya. The festival is one of the country's most picturesque celebrations.
2. New Year Countdown, 31 December 2013 - 1 January 2014, Welcome the New Year in the Bangkok and major cities such as Chiang Mai, Pattaya, Songkhla, Phuket and Khon Kaen. All these destinations come alive with parties and celebrations.
3. Muay Thai Live - The Legend Lives, this first-of-its-kind Stage Spectacular will be performed live on stage every night in a beautiful new 600-seat theatre in January 2014 at Asiatique the Riverfront, Bangkok.



4. Underwater Wedding Ceremony 2014 – This will be held during 13-15 February 2014 in Trang province. The project is aimed to further promote the truly spectacular natural seaside and marine resources and promote the province of Trang as a “Romantic Destination”.
5. Songkran Festival will be held during 12-16 April 2014, a fun-filled national festival that commemorates the role of water in Thai social, cultural, economic and spiritual life. It includes the annual bathing of Buddha images at temples and homes across the country.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to conclude on a personal note. This WTM has a trace of some personal sadness for me. It will be my last in an official TAT capacity. Next month, I will be retiring after a career of 36 years with the TAT, including four years as Governor. I cannot begin to tell you what a wonderfully enriching and enlightening experience this has been. I will leave with many fond memories, especially the warm relationships I have enjoyed with many of you over the years. I would like to thank you all for your personal and professional support, both to me, and the people of Thailand.

Once again, thank you for being with us today. We count the British and Europeans as good friends of Thailand. Thailand has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the United Kingdom and Europe, and I am sure this will continue for many years in future.

Now, I would like to introduce my successor, Mr. Thawatchai Arunyik who is well-known to some of you, dating back to his tenure as Director of the TAT office in the UK 10 years ago. With the continued support of the many friends that he has in the UK, I know he will do a great job.

# THE DISCO PLAN FOR THAI TOURISM



**Mr. Tawatchai Arunyik**

*Deputy Governor, Domestic Marketing*

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## **PATA ACADEMY, BANGKOK 11 DECEMBER 2013**

I am very honoured to be invited to address on “Tourism in Thailand (Branding, Products, Services, Performance and Strategy)”.

Today, I will begin the presentation with Thailand Tourism Performance, Future, Trend, Strategy and the followed by Branding, Products & Services.

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## **THAILAND TOURISM PERFORMANCE**

Tourism has been one of Thailand’s most successful industries in the last 20 years of socio-economic development. Billions of dollars worth of investment have poured into an industry which generated over 5-6% of GDP. Nearly four million people are employed directly and indirectly in tourism. About 70% of the tourism revenue benefits hospitality and tourism-related businesses outside Bangkok. This helps create more tourism-related jobs and disseminate revenue to local people by boosting investment in rural areas as well as assisting thousands of Thai Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) which are the backbone of the country’s economy.

Tourism success has brought Thailand much international recognition and worldwide fame. Thailand is consistently ranked among the world’s leading travel and tourism destinations in international surveys. Our products and services win numerous awards every year. We are known for our natural and cultural attractions, heritage and hospitable people and a variety of value-for-money products and services.





The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) was established on the 18th March 1960. TAT was the first organization in Thailand to be specifically responsible for the promotion and marketing of tourism.

At present, TAT has continuously promoted the country's tourism for 52 successive years. TAT's vision is to strive towards excellence in the promotion and development of tourism on a basis of sustainable tourism, in line with maintaining the unique Thai splendour and meeting an international standard so as to achieve economic, social and environmental balance.

TAT publicizes Thailand with the intention of encouraging both Thai and international tourists to travel in and around Thailand. It also supplies information and data on tourist areas to the public.

There are now 35 domestic offices within Thailand and 15 more abroad.

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## TAT'S OBJECTIVES

According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand Act B.E.2522 (1979), Section 8, TAT's objectives are as follows:

1. To promote tourism and the tourism industry, as well as occupations of Thai citizens in the tourism industry;
2. To disseminate Thailand's reputation as a country blessed with natural beauty, historical sites, valuable ancient objects, history, art and culture, sports, culture technology, as well as promoting myriads other activities which encourage tourism;
3. To facilitate and provide utmost safety for tourists;
4. To promote a good understanding and hospitality between people and nations by means of tourism;
5. To initiate the development of tourism, along with infrastructure and facilities for tourists.

On 3rd October 2002, the Thai government created a separate Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and entrusted it with the job of taking care of the administrative, legal and product development sides of the industry. Tourism and sports were merged under one ministry because they complement each other in terms of activities under the umbrella of recreation and relaxation.

The ministry has a cabinet-level status and more administrative and operational power to address issues related to infrastructure development, environmental controls and legislative matters. Its main focus is ensuring that Thailand remains a high-quality and sustainable tourism destination.



The TAT also comes under the Ministry but retains charge of international and domestic marketing only. Within the Ministry, specific charge for tourism has been given to a unit called Office of Tourism Development.

The ministry is responsible for setting policies and strategic action plans as well as working with the public and private sectors to ensure their effective and punctual implementation. It is also responsible for training programmes, facilitating the usage of information technologies for administrative and management of tourism, safety and security for visitors, and working with the government, private, local administrative organisations and community groups to ensure that tourism is properly managed. The Ministry is also responsible for promoting tourism cooperation under the framework of various regional and subregional groupings.

In 2002, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau was also set up and funded by the Thai government, TCEB was established to raise the standards of the MICE industry in Thailand, attract more world-class events to Thailand by providing marketing, financial and technical support to organisers and associations.

## **TAT'S ROLE AS A DRIVER OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

Responding to constant and incessant change has become our biggest challenge. As the country's primary tourism marketing agency responsible for driving growth in one of Thailand's most important socio-economic sectors, we spent the entire meeting trying to identify ways of ensuring effective and efficient ways of getting the best value for money from our budgets.

## TAT'S STAKEHOLDERS

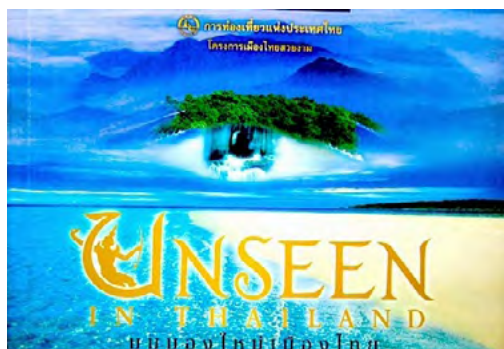
Working with the public and private sector is a cornerstone of our strategy, especially to promote special packages during low season when there is plenty of room capacity available. We are happy to work with the private sector partners to on joint sales efforts such as advertising, production of collaterals and brochure support. TAT also is keen to work with major travel agents to organise chartered flights to Thai destinations which have no direct flights. We also regularly organise fam trips for travel agents and tour operators to introduce new products and destinations.

### Major Events that related to Thai Tourism

**Visit Thailand Year 1987:** One such important example for promoting travel to Thailand was in 1987, the Visit Thailand Year, which marked the auspicious 5th cycle 60th birthday of His Majesty the King, for whom the Thai people have enormous love and respect. That was a great occasion for Thailand and brought together the public and private sectors in an unprecedented show of cooperation in jointly developing and marketing tourism products. The success of this was reflected in visitor arrivals, which grew from 2.8 million to 3.4 million in 1987, a growth of 24 %.



**Amazing Thailand 1998-1999:** This slogan was coined for the campaign that marked the sixth cycle birthday celebrations of His Majesty the King. It was an opportune time because it marked the end of the last millennium and the start of a new one. It also gave us a chance to recover from the 1997 Asian Crisis, and highlight the importance of travel & tourism as part of the recovery effort. The TAT partnered with all government and private organisations in announcing the Amazing Thailand 1998 –1999 Campaign which featured unique sales and offered interesting products across sectors such as accommodation, entertainment, souvenirs and new destinations. This resulted in an increase of 7.53% to 7.76 million arrivals in 1998 while visitor arrivals to most other neighbouring countries declined.



**Unseen Thailand in 2003:** in the beginning of 2003, we faced the SARS crisis. This was a new crisis that led to a new kind of partnership with health authorities as the country mobilised to keep out this deadly strain of virus. We set up a Crisis Management Committee between the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) to



work closely with the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA), the Thai Hotels Association (THA) and other associations in tourism industry. Thai Airways International also worked intensively to alleviate the situation. One solution was to create special promotions to attract international visitors and to boost domestic travel under campaign called “Unseen Thailand”.

Commemorating the 60th anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibhol’s accession to the throne in 2006; Millions of people worldwide bewared witness to one of Thailand’s most spectacular cultural events – the magnificent Royal Barge Procession, the highlight of the many Royal events commemorating the 60th anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibhol’s accession to the throne.

Celebration of 80th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibhol Adulyadej in 2007: This is an especially important year for Thailand as it celebrates the 80th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibhol Adulyadej, the world’s longest reigning monarch.



## 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAT IN 2010: GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THAI TOURISM

This year, both the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai Airways International celebrated the 50th Anniversary of their respective founding. We at the TAT are proud to have played a major role in making Thailand one of the world’s most popular tourist destinations, well-regarded for the quality and variety of its tourist attractions, a premier shopping venue and value-for-money products and services.

## THAI TOURISM CHALLENGES

In the past several years we have been affected by internal and external challenges, Thailand’s travel and tourism remains capable of dealing with crises and that our long-standing good image and numerous other positive factors continue to prevail over temporary negative impacts.



Crises used to be the exceptions, now unfortunately they have become the norm.

- Military Coups (last violent one in 1992)
- Asian Financial Crisis in 1997
- 2003 SARS, Iraq War
- Tsunami (26 December 2004)
- Rioting protesters close Bangkok airport in November 2008
- Global Financial Crisis: In 2009-2010
- Political Unrest (April – May 2010)
- Impact of the 2011 flooding: The floods affected Central Thailand in October and November 2011.
- Eurozone Crisis 2012
- Anti-government protesters (Nov-Dec 2013)

During the disturbances, the TAT prepared a Crisis Management Centre (CMC) to track the situation. The International Public Relations Department was given charge of liaising with the respective Thai government authorities and communicating news of the situation to the TAT overseas offices and general public.

Thai travel and tourism has been able to bounce back, due to a number of unique strengths. It has a long-standing geographical advantage, a visa-free and visa-on-arrival policy which allows ease of access for citizens of dozens of countries; strong airline and aviation linkages and powerful marketing campaigns both individually as well as collectively with our neighbouring countries in the ASEAN and GMS region.

We have products, services and accommodation catering for all budgets and customer preferences. People come to Thailand to enjoy everything from getting a foot massage to a game of golf to a sun-tan. They come to learn how to cook Thai food or meditate or box Thai-style. It is travel & tourism, and travel & tourism alone, that creates jobs at the grassroots level of society, all around the country, from South Thailand to the North and Northeast.



## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

These awards clearly reflect the continuing improvements and upgrading of our entire travel & tourism industry. Here is the list of the TAT and Thai award winners in 2013.

- Two Promotional Videos highlighting “Thainess” win awards at ITB 2013 film competition; One TV Commercial Spot and One Video Clip produced by the Tourism Authority of Thailand were among the top-three award winners at an international Tourism Film and Multimedia Competition held at the ITB 2013, the world’s largest travel trade show held in the German capital of Berlin between 6-10 March 2013. The videos are “Mae La Na” which won second prize for outstanding contribution in The Golden Citygate awards, and “Warm Welcome”, which won third prize. Both are delightfully entertaining pieces of film-making designed to portray the kingdom’s primary tourism value proposition, its “Thainess”, in a warm-hearted, sensitive manner.
- TAT’s promotional video “Warm Welcome” wins another award at the International Festival of Tourism Film “On the East Coast of Europe” in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria – a very popular competition among filmmakers and producers.
- Thailand wins Best Country and Best Wedding Destination Awards at Travel + Leisure Awards; The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) added two more accolades to their name at the Travel + Leisure India & South Asia, India’s Best Awards last night held in Mumbai. The destination was awarded two awards under the ‘Best Country’ and ‘Best Wedding Destination’ category. Thai Airways International also won the ‘Best Airline’ award.
- Thailand won the ‘Best Value Destination (International)’ award conferred by Lonely Planet Magazine India. This is the second consecutive year Thailand has won this award.
- Thailand Wins Best Spa Destination Award (Asia) at 6th GeoSpa AsiaSpa India Awards 2012-2013; The 6th GeoSpa AsiaSpa India Awards were held at the Kingdom of Dreams, Gurgaon, on 29th April to celebrate the Spa and Wellness industry. Thailand bagged the “Best Spa

Destination (Asia)”, Reader’s choice Award voted by the readers of the AsiaSpa India Magazine, which is the most popular spa and wellness magazine in India.

- TAT’s Voluntourism Promotion Campaign Wins Digital Innovation Asia Award ; a global marketing campaign launched by the Tourism Authority of Thailand to promote Volunteer tourism was one of the winners of the first Digital Innovation Asia Awards conferred at a ceremony on June 10.
- Thailand Reaps Rich Harvest in Top of Traveller’s Choice 2013 Awards: Nine of Thailand’s diverse range of tourism spots, products and attractions have been included on the list of TripAdvisor’s Top 25 Landmarks in Asia.
- Thailand Wins “Best International Travel Destination” at the CNBC AWAAZ Travel Awards 2013; Thailand won the “Best International Travel Destination” award at the seventh edition of CNBC AWAAZ Travel Awards, organised in association with Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation in a glittering ceremony held at The Lalit, Mumbai on 25th June 2013.
- Travel & Leisure Poll ranks Bangkok as World’s Best Tourism City, Chiang Mai 10th Best; Bangkok has been voted the Best City in the World in 2013, according to an Internet survey conducted by Travel + Leisure Magazine, a publication of the American Express Publishing Corporation. Chiang Mai came in at 10th best.
- Thailand scoops up six PATA Grand and Gold Awards 2013; The Tourism Authority of Thailand, two Thai companies and Phuket City Municipality have scooped up six of the 26 PATA Grand & Gold Awards.
- Bangkok seizes the top spot as well as Phuket and Ko Samui as the best holiday destination by Smart Travel Asia’s “2013 Best in Travel Poll”.



## TAT’S FORECAST, TRENDS, STRATEGY

Visitor arrivals have grown from only 81,000 visitors in 1960 to 22 million in 2012.

In 2012, Thailand achieved another record-breaking performance, crossing the 22 million mark for the first time. Two source markets, China and Malaysia, are now generating more than two million annual arrivals each. And four source



markets - Japan, Russia, South Korea, and India - are generating more than one million arrivals each.

In January to October 2013, Thailand's visitor arrivals surged to a record total of a little over 21.73 million, up by 22 percent over the same period of 2012.

China is now the biggest source-market of visitors to Thailand. Chinese arrivals totalled 4.05 million in January – October 2013, up by a huge 84% over the same period of 2012.

We are projecting 24.5 million tourists in the year 2013. Should the world remain free of global economic or geopolitical crises or other natural disasters or pandemics, we are optimistic about achieving this target.

TAT has set a 2014 target of 28.01 million international tourist arrivals, generating estimated foreign exchange revenue of 1.326 trillion Baht, up 13% over 2013. For the domestic market, TAT set a target of 136.8 million trips, generating estimated of 700 billion Baht for tourism income, up by 9% over 2013.



***The marketing plan for 2014 will increase the share of middle and upper income tourists. The TAT estimates that these groups of tourists comprise about 30% of all visitors to Thailand.***



## **TAT MARKETING PLAN 2014**

The core theme of the TAT Action Plan 2014 is “Higher Revenue through Thainess”. This means emphasising our Unique Selling Proposition, which is the Charm of Thainess, especially the Thai Experience, Thai Way of Life, and Thai Culture. TAT will put more effort into increasing first-time visitors and high spenders (Luxury Markets).

Our biggest source-markets are all within the Asia-Pacific region – China, Malaysia, Japan, Korea, India and Russia. Because most of the major cities in these countries are located within a five-to six-hour flying time radius of Thailand, they will continue to generate significant numbers in future. This opens the way to attract more high-spending visitors with more specific and focussed marketing campaigns.

The marketing plan for 2014 will increase the share of middle and upper income tourists. The TAT estimates that these groups of tourists comprise about 30% of all visitors to Thailand, with potential to grow to 40%.

In addition, TAT also plans to narrow the gap in the ratio of first-time and repeat visitors, reduce congestion in the popular destinations and exert more efforts to promote emerging destinations

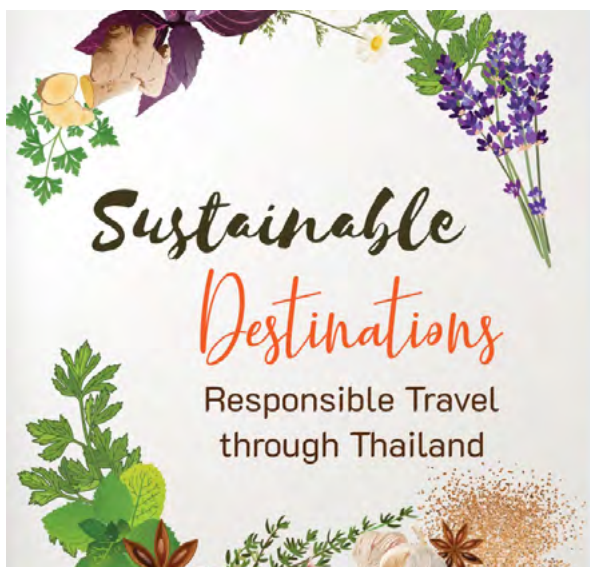
in the provinces. All the strategies are in line with the national economic and social development objectives, viz., to better distribute income nationwide, create jobs in the rural areas and create a more balanced and harmonious society.

The strategy for Asia and South Pacific markets as a whole will be to focus on increasing revenue from first-time travellers, especially in secondary cities or other new cities in existing markets. The TAT plans a similar marketing strategy in the ASEAN countries in the build-up to the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015.

In addition, TAT will also focus on China and India, the two Asian giants. Arrivals from both are growing rapidly.

The plan for European markets can be divided into three approaches:

- 1) Targetting the small and medium markets which have high growth potential such as Turkey and Switzerland, with a focus on first-time visitors.
- 2) Maintain share of medium and large markets such as Italy, Spain, Scandinavian, UK and Middle East which have a high 60% rate of repeat visitors, and penetrate secondary cities to increase first time visitors.
- 3) Increase the share of high-net-worth visitors in large markets such as Russia. The same can be done in the U.S. market by using a celebrity-marketing strategy.



By the year 2015, The Royal Thai Government has set a target of 2.2 trillion baht (70 billion USD) in tourism revenue, of which 1.4 trillion baht will be from the international visitors and the rest from domestic travel.

In addition, the Thai Government has also set six strategic development plans with specific time-bound objectives to be achieved in Marketing, Tourist Attractions, Logistics, Confidence, Facilities, Products and Services. We are confident that this will lead to a vastly improved and upgraded tourism industry.

***“ The rise in social media has led to new ways of communication and awareness of new destinations. This has enabled tourist attractions to be more creative with their online presence and to interact with tourists before they arrive and throughout their trip. ”***

## IT TRENDS

These days tourists can access all kinds of information online. Google maps and similar websites have allowed people to view locations in real time, where they can actually see their destinations and its surrounding areas. The rise in social media has led to new ways of communication and awareness of new destinations. This has enabled tourist attractions to be more creative with their online presence and to interact with tourists before they arrive and throughout their trip. An example of this is the Tweet Seat option in theatres, where people can Tweet while watching movies.

Meet and Seat is an initiative by airlines to make traveling more enjoyable for solo passengers by matching them up with other passengers based on common interests and cultures. People are given the option to select their “ideal neighbour” while making their seat bookings, so they can make new friends during their trip.

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## CONSUMER TRENDS

Tourism trends of today have expanded into new target markets. Segregating the market by gender, age, status, etc. have led to new market segments such as the LGBT market, the Young Senior, the Gen-X-Y-Z, married travelers with children, married travelers without children. This has opened up a wider market which has sparked the development of creative marketing promotions.

A new trend that is appearing is visa-free travel for citizens of some countries. Regional blocs such as ASEAN and EU have led to borderless travel, where tourists from these areas are free to enter and leave countries in the same bloc without any restrictions.

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## ACCOMMODATION TRENDS

Vendors are now getting creative with the accommodation options being offered to tourists.

In Samui there is The Scent Hotel, which is designed to reflect the 1940's and 1950's colonial style and has beautiful rooms decorated in Chinese, Western and local styles. The brand started with

a small shop in Bangkok which sold scents created from ancient recipes in China, and they have developed this concept of turning these scents into an aromatically appealing hotel. There is also The Library Hotel in Samui, which was developed by a local islander who was inspired by books and a simple lifestyle philosophy. The hotel was rated by tripadvisor and the Traveler's Choice Award's as the trendiest hotel in Thailand in 2012.

Other hotels such as the Tune Hotels chain has enabled travelers to tailor their stay packages by selecting extra features such as early arrival for minimal extra costs.

There are also other trends such as the Phuket Bike Resort where they have free bikes available for guests to use and also allow them to bring their own bikes, which they can park inside the rooms. There are also various pet hotels where people can bring their pets along for recreation and relaxation.

Some hotels have now started initiatives whereby guests can purchase any of the decorative items of the hotel that they enjoy, such as the furniture or the décor.



## MEDICAL TOURISM TRENDS

There are special hospitals which provide hotel facilities for medical tourists. Hospitals have now joined with hotel groups to create special rooms within the hospital for these special patients. Special packages are being designed for people who wish to use both the hotel and hospital facilities.

In addition to this, hospitals have started organising free seminars and medical advice stations in department stores for the general public, which tourists can also avail of.





## TOURISM PACKAGE TRENDS

New kinds of special interest tours have now emerged in the tourism industry. One example of this is the “corruption tour” in Czech Republic. Tour guides take people to various locations where corruption scandals have taken place and explain the history behind each scandal.

There are also tours for people with specific interests. These tourists are grouped with other like-minded tourists and are taken to locations that would be of interest to them.



## TOURIST ATTRACTION TRENDS

Flash markets are now a growing trend. This is where locals assemble with their wares for a few hours, create a market on the spot and sell to tourists, and then disperse.

Art is now a big trend in tourism. Destinations are attempting to make their cities more artistic and visually appealing as a whole by encouraging art on the streets, on public transportation and food display by creating beautiful carvings and sculptures made of fruits and other foods.



Street food is also being promoted as a tourist attraction. For people coming from Western countries, this concept is a novelty. Tourists are not used to seeing such a variety of food on the streets available 24 hours a day, so this is something very different and interesting for them.

Countries are now trying to find their unique selling proposition and market. For Thailand, one such attraction is the “lady boys”. TAT marketing surveys showed that Thailand’s biggest appeal for Chinese tourists are the lady boy shows.

***“ The TAT is able to stay relevant in the global market due to the fact that we are up-to-date with all global trends and are able to continuously find new and dynamic ways of attracting tourists to Thailand. ”***

## CROSS CULTURAL TOURISTS

Tourists are taking local concepts that they love from the country that they visit, taking it back to their home countries and attempting to recreate these concepts. An example of this is a “local” Thai restaurant in London, complete with colourful plastic chairs and local condiments decorating the wall to create an atmosphere of a roadside noodle shop in Bangkok.

Thailand is also taking foreign cultures and recreating them at home. Examples of this is Santorini Park in Cha-am, which is a mini recreation of the Santorini Island of Greece, with white-washed buildings and colourful staircases leading to boutique shops, and Palio Khao Yai, which is an Italian-themed shopping center in the heart of Thailand’s wine country.

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## FUTURE TOURISM

The future of global tourism will focus on health and wellness, as well as the 5 S’s – sports tourism, snow tourism (which is where tourists from cold countries escape harsh winters by coming to warm, tropical locations, and tourists from warm countries escape the strong summer sun to find refuge in the refreshing climate of cooler locations), silk road tourism, safari tourism, and lastly, space tourism. Green tourism is also a big focus for the future, as people are becoming increasingly concerned about sustainability and climate change.

As you can see, the tourism industry as a whole is constantly undergoing change and finding new, interesting ways of attracting people to their destinations. The TAT is able to stay relevant in the global market due to the fact that we are up-to-date with all global trends and are able to continuously find new and dynamic ways of attracting tourists to Thailand. This is done through extensive research and planning, such as the DISCO plan which I will now talk about.

**DISCO Plan:** In fact, to give a fun and catchy name to our plan, we are calling it our DISCO Plan. DISCO comprises five components:

- D is for Digital Marketing
- I is for Image Building
- S is for Sustainability
- C is for Crystallization and Crisis Communication
- O is for Organization Management

**DIGITAL MARKETING:** TAT understands the importance of not only having a highly visible presence in the online world, but also in producing and delivering content that is stimulating to our target markets wherever they are.

One example of our online footprint in the digital domain is The Little Big Project, a global digital marketing Volunteer Tourism competition funded by the Tourism Authority of Thailand to inspire worldwide travellers to take a volunteer vacation in Thailand. The project began in March and will run to July 2013. This has given contestants an opportunity to do something meaningful while on holiday. Here is a TV ad of the project:

**IMAGE BUILDING:** Image building is not confined only to colourful ads, but also involves in essence taking Thainess to the world at every high-profile opportunity.

In this regard, we go to great lengths to maintain consistency when we work with celebrities to promote Thailand, when we have exposure at major international events like the recently concluded Monaco Grand Prix, the Paestum Balloon Festival in Italy, the Sapporo Snow Festival in Japan, and BNP Paribas Tennis Open at Indian Wells in the United States, as well as leveraging the success of movies and TV programmes filmed here like *Lost in Thailand* and *The Bachelor* in the United States.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** Sustainable tourism is the backbone of conducting the tourism business now and in the future. With rapid growth comes a number of problems that must be addressed. As a tourism marketing agency, we strive to strike a balance between promotion and sustainability.





Major projects for us in this area include:

- The 7 Greens Concept to encourage Thailand's tourism industry to take responsibility for creating environmentally friendly tourism practices and products.
- Collaborating with various partners to identify interesting options for eco-friendly travel, such as the Green Hotels. At present, we have more than 100 green hotels and 50 ready-to-market eco-friendly products around the country.
- To be in line with the 7 Greens Concept, we have also initiated the "Pedal around Thailand" project with the aim of promoting an eco-friendly mode of travel by bike amongst the young generation that will lead the way to sustainable tourism. Two pilot routes of Nonthaburi to Ayutthaya provinces and "bike around Bangkok" have been launched for this project.



**CRYSTALLIZATION & CRISIS COMMUNICATON:** When we talk about crystallization, we mean that before we make any marketing decision, we must have clear and concise market information and statistics at our disposal. We receive and monitor them through our domestic and overseas offices, and rely on our extensive network with travel trade professionals globally. In fact, many SKAL members were instrumental in getting updates to your clients when Thailand was faced with crises in the past.

This network with our allies in the public and private sectors such as the Tourism Council, PATA, ATTA, THA, TCEB, TICA, Thai Airways International, and other airlines as well as Team Thailand in overseas diplomatic missions help us to communicate accurate and up-to-date information during crises that assists us to recover faster.

In recognition of the contributions of our Thai partners, TAT organizes the Thailand Tourism Awards every two years. The objective of the event is to encourage competitiveness in terms of the quality of management and services in the tourism sector and related businesses,



***“ In the past, roadshows were conducted in the capital cities and commercial centres of the major source markets. Now, increasingly, these roadshows are being conducted in secondary cities of the major source-market countries. ”***

which enhance the marketing benefits and social-community participation in contributing to sustainable tourism. We also want to boost marketing promotions and expand on the success in marketing management to the award recipients and honour the award winners, and encourage other entrepreneurs to develop quality operations both directly and indirectly.

**ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT:** This is the heart of the implementation process. All marketing plans need to be professionally executed and evaluated. Thus, TAT will continue to upgrade the delivery skills of its staff in order to ensure operational and management efficiency and that Key Performance Indicators are met. We follow the path as set in our Corporate Plan as well as work according to the State Enterprise Performance Appraisal or SEPA guidelines.

**TAT Advertising & Public Relations Plan:** The TAT’s advertising and public relations campaigns will be highly visible worldwide through traditional promotional channels including TV commercials and vignettes, print advertising, out-of-home media, brochures, and posters. There will also be an increased use of celebrity marketing, inviting popular actors, and sports figures to major events in Thailand, while also encouraging the movie industry to consider Thailand as a shooting location.

In the new media space, TAT will reach the younger demographic of travellers using social media; such as, an Amazing Thailand video channel on YouTube featuring short documentaries, more use of E-Books and E-Brochures, an iThai application to get Thai tourism updates on iPhone, and an Internet Call Centre that visitors can contact via computer. We will also build on the member network of the Thailand Fan Club that has already been established in our Europe and Middle East markets.

**Roadshows:** Roadshows are a very important part of our marketing efforts. They complement our presence at international travel trade shows and allow small groups of Thai sellers to interact at a more personal level with individual buyers. We do several roadshows every year, usually before and after the bigger travel trade events.

In the past, roadshows were conducted in the capital cities and commercial centres of the major source markets. Now, increasingly, these roadshows are being conducted in secondary cities of the major source-market countries. They are also covering niche-market segments, such as health & wellness, weddings & honeymoons. This helps us tap the next generation of emerging source-markets, in terms of both countries as well as customer segments.



## THAILAND TOURISM BRANDING, PRODUCTS & SERVICES

### Thainess to the World

Powerful branding and marketing campaigns targeted at the right markets at the right time. As mentioned earlier, the core theme of the TAT Action Plan 2014 is “Higher Revenue through Thainess”. This means emphasising our Unique Selling Proposition, which is the Charm of Thainess, especially the Thai Experience, Thai Way of Life, and Thai Culture. TAT will put more effort to increase first-time visitors and high spenders (Luxury Markets).

The marketing messages will emphasize Creative Tourism, where tourists can participate in and learn about unique Thai experiences, such as Thai boxing, Thai massage, Thai cooking and Thai classical dancing. Thai food and Thai local wisdom will also be used as unique selling propositions.



### Products & Services

Clearly, for Thailand, the age of trying to generate quantitative, numerical growth is over. We are now trying to achieve the balanced philosophy of enhancing qualitative growth and also improve the quality of our products and services accordingly.

This strategy will be implemented via a focus on niche-markets. As I mentioned above, four key target customer segments in this category are golfers, medical tourists, weddings and honeymoons, and ecotourists. During this time of continuing economic uncertainty, we believe it is right to focus on these qualities and niche sectors of the market, as they are more likely to be ‘recession proof’.



We believe we have the right range of products to cater to all four niche-markets.

**Golf:** Thailand today has an expansive range of golf tour operators and over 200 top-quality golf courses nationwide. Golfers come from all around the world, especially places such as Japan and Korea, to play and attend international tournaments. We also hold an annual golf travel mart to provide more networking opportunities. Not only are the courses immaculately designed, but the cost of playing in Thailand is generally much lower than that of many countries.



**Health and wellness tourism** is growing rapidly. Thailand is now receiving more than 1.5 million international arrivals for medical treatment per year. Our country is proud to have professional expertise in both prevention and cure. Visitors come to Thailand to learn how to meditate or apply natural therapies.



**Wedding and Honeymoon:** Our luxury-travel experiences and products have been well-established for decades with a variety of prime properties nationwide. These have been extremely popular with the wedding and honeymoon market. Furthermore, there has been a recent explosion of many new boutique-style properties designed for discerning guests seeking a comfortable, delectable ambience, high-quality individualized service and, extremely important, total privacy.



**Green Tourism:** We will also retain a strong focus on catering to the continuing growing trend for green tourism, a holiday that compliments its environment and the local communities. From quiet treks in the jungles to soft adventure like zip lining and rock climbing, Thailand has outdoor activities to suit any preference.



## CONCLUSION

Like any industry, the travel & tourism industry goes through its ups and downs. The good news is people all over the world want to travel and will continue to travel. Globalisation, the Internet and information technology is making people more aware of different cultures and societies. Moreover, people travel for all kinds of reasons these days -- holiday, business, conventions, education, visiting friends and families, sports, training, migration and many more. As long as people continue to travel, there will be always be companies providing products and services to travellers, and there will always be a job waiting for you.

Finally, I hope that this presentation will facilitate you a knowledge and experience. Thank you for giving the Tourism Authority of Thailand the honour of addressing you.

Thank you and Sawasdee khrap.



THAILAND  
**THE GREATEST**  
**STORY** IN GLOBAL  
TOURISM HISTORY

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A 60TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO  
THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND

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