

## **The Approach to Develop Value Chain to Enhance the Management Efficiency of Thai Tour Operators in Order to Support Free Trade within the Framework of ASEAN Cooperation**

**Authors :** Yalisa Tonsor

**Abstract :** The objectives of this study are 1) to study the readiness of Thai tour operators in order to prepare for being ASEAN members, 2) to study opportunity and obstacles of the management of Thai tour operators, and 3) to find approach for developing value chain in order to enhance the management efficiency of Thai tour operators in order to support free trade within the framework of ASEAN cooperation. The research methodology is mixed between qualitative method and quantitative method. In-depth interview was done with key informants, including management supervisors, medium managers, and officers of the travel agencies. The questionnaire was conducted with 300 sampling. According to the study, it was found that the approach for developing value chain to enhance the management efficiency of Thai travel agencies in order to support free trade within the framework of ASEAN cooperation, the tour operators must give priority to the customer and deliver the service exceeding the customer's expectation. There are 2 groups of customers: 1) external customers referring to tourist, and 2) internal customers referring to staff who deliver the service to the customers, including supervisors, colleagues, or subordinates. There are 2 issues which need to be developed: 1) human resource development in order to cultivate the working concept by focusing on importance of customers, and excellent service providing, and 2) working system development by building value and innovation in operational process including services to the company in order to deliver the highest impressive service to both internal and external customers. Moreover, the tour operators could support the increased number of tourists significantly. This could enhance the capacity of the business and affect the increase of competition capability in the economic dimension of the country.

**Keywords :** AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), core activities, support activities, values chain

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