

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the relatively recent developments in the tourism industry is related to the emergence and fast growth of a potential market segment of the seniority group. According to the information of worldwide community for the baby boomer generation (Stark, 1996) stated that large groups of the baby boomers born between 1946-1964, during those 19 years, there were about 78 millions people born in United States and estimated 450 millions baby boomers worldwide. Until now, this group of people is entering to seniority which will be effecting the demographic of the total population. Starting from 2006, the oldest baby boomers turn 60 years old and the rest will become senior in the next 18 years. U.S. Census Bureau (2006) stated that there were 7,918 numbers of people turning 60 each day in 2006 or 330 every hour. This significant increasing figure is still rapidly growing today and will be continually growing in the near future which will also be related to the increasing number of potential people who are available for traveling due to longer life expectancy and more available time and income of senior people.

There are many studies focusing on this interesting group of tourists such as Littrell (2004), Horneman, Carter, Wei and Ruys (2002), Guinn (2003) for instance. In the conducted researches, different age definitions occurred in each research, most of the researches in United States such as Bailey (2004) and American Public Transportation Association (2005) are often considered senior at the age of 65 years old and over according to the retirement age of United States workers which also consider this age to be eligible for full social security benefits retirement. In Western societies (Teitelbaum, 2004) concern older age of being old as everybody declared to be old when they reach the ages of 65-70 as well as getting the pension entitlement. Besides America and Europe, most of the Asian researchers (Lee, 2005 and McNicol, 2006) are considering the old age at 60 years old because this is the usual retirement age as well.

As there are different definitions of senior age in each country which can be concluded by regions that Asia mostly considers age of seniors at 60 years old, while outside Asian countries the senior age beginning at 65 years old. However there are some researches selecting younger age senior groups beginning at the age of 55 years old in order to understand

the pre-senior group, such as U.S. Department of Labor (2006) which is a non-profit organization that specializes in employment and training services for mature workers in Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire and Taylor counties, which provided the senior community service employment for individual senior age 55 years and older. Another research in America (Knox, 2007) studying the new American home 2007 which also designed specifically for the 55-plus and focusing on this age group as the powerful buyers in the most interesting trends of the housing industry.

For all of the mentioned information, this research decided to research sampling groups at the beginning age of 55 years old and over in order to cover for all targeted markets in both, Asian and Non-Asian countries to also focus on the behavior of the baby boomer generation who will be turning to seniority in the near future. To understand their needs and behavior and prepare appropriate supplies for them at the right time as soon as they become seniors, as well as for the early retiree group which also increases nowadays.

Even so there are different standards in the age of the senior population in various countries but one thing these groups have in common is the turning phenomenon of the baby boomer generation, which will keep on increasing the senior population worldwide in the next several years. They are also related to the retirement period of this entitled group and it will end up as a huge senior market for all industries as well as the hospitality and tourism industry. After their stress from work and regular life running which has been with them most of their life, it is time to reward themselves by traveling to their preferred destinations for taking a break and refresh their tired life. With the potential of this group, many researchers focus on this market which conducted many of researches relating to the tourism industry as there is an increase of being recognized as a significant group of tourists by both, the private and public sectors to stimulate new tourism development. In developed countries like Germany also had a done research concerning the future market of senior travelers. Lohmann and Danielson (2004) described the conclusion on future trend in travel behavior of senior groups to understand the future of tourism for today's seniors and kids traveling in Germany. One of the research results shows the holiday travel propensity and age which examined the holiday participation figures for different age groups in the past and the age structure of German holiday travelers and indicate the change of propensity in holiday travel between 1972 and 2003. This result firmed that older

people travel more as the highest percentage of changes have been increased from 1972 to 2003 in people at age 70 years old and over at 91 percent while the average change percentage of all age rank is 57 percent only.

Another research established by Muller (2000) studied about developed countries such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States (known as CANZUS) and stated that the world's 90 million post-war baby boomers set the stage for some very fruitful international marketing efforts in adventure travel and educational or discovery tourism in the 21st century. The research identified that post-Second World War baby-boom generations in the CANZUS countries have that together form a cohesive and an attractive potential market, most of international tourism marketers recognize that baby boomers in the CANZUS populations arrive at their peak earnings and savings years and approaching retirement, they present a 21st-century challenge for new product development and marketing strategies in international tourism.

In Japan, a research has been carried out targeting specifically the middle-aged and senior sectors. This research has been conducted by Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA, 2002), under the title of Big Potential Demand for Eco-tours among middle-aged people and senior citizens. The results from this survey stated that more than 90 percent of those surveyed, wanted to take Eco-tour trips but that such tours are not sufficiently available which indicates that there is a high demand to travel of senior tourists, while there is still no relevant supplies to respond to this demanding target yet. JATA tends to develop and expand this surveyed market for the 55-64 age groups and will consider the physical strength as the influences of the travel planning.

Looking at Thailand, which has potential and capacity to be developed as a senior tourist destination together with the existing image of tourism products, as Thailand is one of the interesting tourist destinations, suitable to be on top of the senior traveler selection to support their visit as there are varieties of attractions in different types of tourism provided such as beach, mountain, and treatment for instance, which all are inclusively in 76 provinces of Thailand that is full of rich natural and cultural resources. Not only a variety of tourist destinations, Thailand is also including varieties of activities or things to do during the visit, such as culture, golf, diving, dining, shopping, adventure, meditation, eco-tours and the new trends like spa, which also attract the visitors at all ages as well as the seniors. Potential resources in

Thailand are suitable to be developed to support the huge group of senior travelers. Therefore this research has been designed and aimed to enhance Thailand as the senior tourist destination according to the expectations and behaviors of this age cohort to satisfy their retirement life for the senior travelers as the prioritized tourist segment due to its size and potential for future growth.

Although Thailand has potential to be developed to supply this huge group of tourists but the number of senior tourist arrivals in Thailand in the year 2005 was a very small percentage. According to the statistic report of the International tourist arrivals provided by Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT, 2005) which conducted the data during January to December 2005, this report identified that there were 12 percent of senior tourists at age rank between 55-64 years old, and only 4 percent of older senior tourists at age 65 years and over arrived in Thailand in 2005, which indicated only 16 percent of these two age rank when compared with all ages (table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Age Structure of International Tourist Arrivals in Thailand, 2005

Regions Of residence	Age						
	<15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65>
East Asia	285,965	609,477	1,704,222	1,734,747	1,352,881	762,321	243,369
Europe	85,083	311,927	706,810	626,256	505,783	333,120	117,588
America	22,344	85,642	155,563	147,657	156,707	120,789	51,005
South Asia	27,173	55,006	154,101	146,962	89,585	35,286	10,765
Oceania	23,179	71,070	116,025	98,060	103,329	68,033	22,186
Middle East	16,061	41,700	87,357	75,903	52,922	23,162	6,942
Africa	2,367	6,361	19,864	22,981	14,704	5,305	1,471
Total	462,172	1,181,183	2,943,942	2,852,566	2,275,911	1,348,016	453,326
Grand Total = 11,517,116							

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2005

Table 1.1 shows the number of international tourist arrivals in Thailand in 2005, segmented by age rank which indicates that the age rank is between 25-34 years old and is the biggest proportion of tourists with the amount of 2,943,942 or 26 percent of all age ranks while tourists 65 years old and over is the smallest age rank when compared with all ages that arrived from all regions.

Even there was a lower percentage of overall senior tourist arrivals when compared with the proportion of all age ranks in the 2005 record, but there is also a forecast of possibilities and potential growth of this market, as well as the huge increasing number of the baby boomer generation which is supposed to be in the researcher's interest for both, private and public sector purposes to supply all the demands of this market in all required fields as much as possible. In order to understand more about senior traveling and to be eligible to develop Thailand as a top selected destination for senior travelers, the research will focus on the main marketed regions by combining the lowest important regions together as others, including South Asia, Middle East and Africa and remains the top 5 regions which are East Asia, Europe, the Americas and Oceania as original. Therefore the focused regions of this research can be divided into 5 regions as mentioned which will also involve in all contexts of this research as well as questionnaires.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

To develop senior tourism in Thailand, especially for international tourists, the problems for this developing can be stated as follows:

1.1.1 Large Group of Baby Boomer Generation and Growth of the Senior Market

Due to the large group of the baby boomer population, which will be having an effect to the increasing number of senior groups nowadays through 2025 with the significant purchasing power of this group, prognoses by The World Tourism Organization in Lisbon letter

on senior tourism adopted by the 3rd International Conference (Luhrman, 1999), mentioned about the average growing percentage of senior people which is about 6-7 percent annual increase. According to the United Nations (2004), the number of people over 60 will reach 1.1 billion by 2025 almost double the senior population forecast for the year 2000 and 5 times more than the 214 million seniors worldwide in the year 1950. Therefore, the tourism industry and all associated sectors should get more involved and concerned on this growing market for the further development to supply this huge market group and to meet the leisure time needs for them especially.

1.1.2 Potential of the Senior Market

The senior market is not only just huge and continues growing rapidly, many researches already mentioned the potential of this market. Focusing on the tourism industry, this indicates that the senior market is one of the very interesting markets, as they have available time as well as purchasing power for traveling after their hard working time.

1.1.3 Motivation of Senior Travelers

Due to the different ages and generations, it would be interesting for this research to focus on the traveling motivation of the group to gain an insight on how seniors decide on traveling and what motivated them to travel, as well as the type of tourism which they are interested in.

1.1.4 Senior's Travel Behavior and Needs

The senior tourist group has a variety of characteristics, behaviors and needs on the traveling propose, and these would be also different in each specific group, i.e. Thai and other countries. For example, for Thai senior people, at present they would normally stay at home after retirement as they feel hesitant to disturb their children when going out due to Thai culture and thought of being considered on another feeling and do not like to offend others. Therefore, this

research will study more on each group characteristics, behaviors, lifestyle and needs, to complete the understanding on their demand in order to develop the right supply accordingly. Differentiating between elderly travelers by region of resident and other demographic characteristics would help respond better to their increasing travel demand.

1.1.5 Limitation of Senior Travelers

To understand senior travelers deeply, this research will also focus on the limitation effected by the travel decision of senior tourists which can be sectored as below:

1.1.5.1 Senior Tourists' Physical Condition

As per the issue of the older ageing, the physical condition would be affected to the demand of traveling in this group. Some older people are more concerned about the importance of good health as the majority during their travel as well as the convenience of accessibility during their travel. Therefore, this research should identify the related problem to provide the standard of safety and hygiene for senior tourists who are willing to select Thailand as the traveling destination according to the physical condition of this market group. Especially to develop Thailand as a senior tourist destination, the research would also focus on this physical issue along with the suitable activities researching to provide the best services on the demand and condition as well.

1.1.5.2 Limitation of Updated Technology and Information

This group of people tends to be away from the current technology and other updated information, somehow it would be more difficult for them to arrange a vacation plan by themselves. According to the busy lifestyle of nowadays people which put them on the committed of their own life and have less time to take care of their senior relatives. Therefore, this research would focus on this limitation together with the updated technology and information, to find the balancing of these two differences.

1.1.6 Existing Tourism Products for Senior Tourist in Thailand

The general tourist target which also differs in preferred activities and types of tourism, this issue would also happen with senior travelers as well. Due to the limitation of the physical fitness and knowledge of this group, this would cause more difficult conditions on developing and creating more activities and tours as well as tourism products for this entitled group. Therefore, to make the retirement lifestyle more variable and to increase the quality of senior tourism, this research will make a study on existing tours, activities and tourism products for the senior tourist segment in Thailand, in order to be able to create more recreation tours, appropriate activity and products to support the demand of this specific group and increase the standard of the senior tourism, to make the traveling more fun and convenient for their vacation plan in this busy hi-technology period, which is totally different when comparing it with their old lifestyle.

1.2 Related Literature

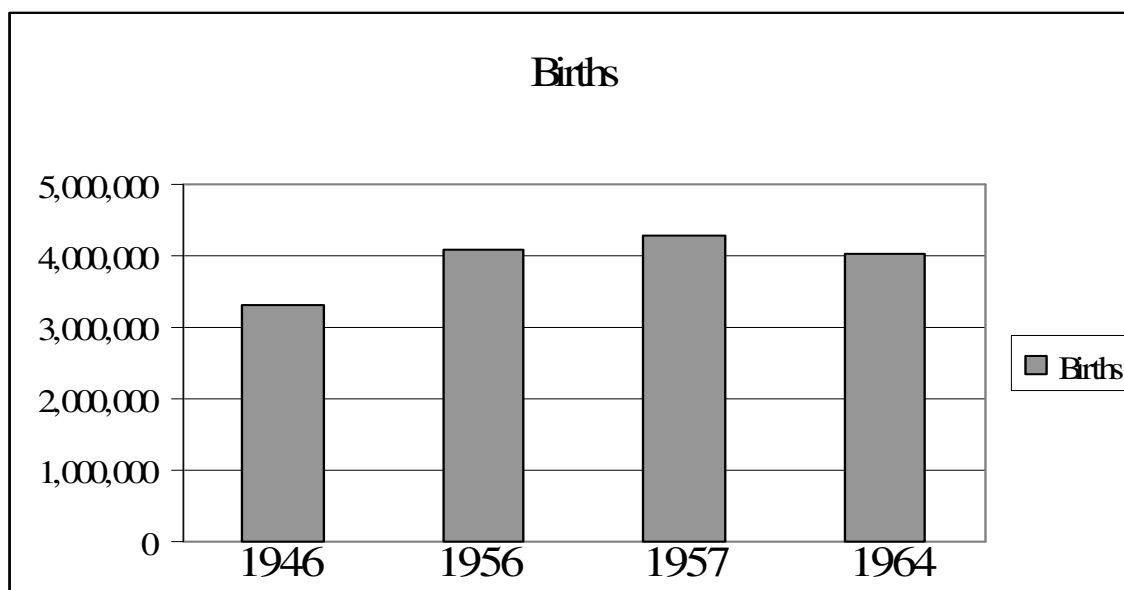
This research will provide a first step by reviewing the existing literature, focusing on related areas of senior tourism and the discovered information from peer-reviewed literature and publications on the internet were reviewed to identify the agreement about the significance of senior markets, related to the baby boomer's ageing, in order to fill the gaps identified through this review and provide the guideline to develop Thailand as the senior tourist destination. Therefore, the literature review of this research can be sectored as follows:

- Baby boomer generation
- Trends of the senior market
- Senior tourism
- Traveling motivation and behavior of senior tourists
- Senior tourism in Thailand

1.2.1 Baby Boomer Generation

Baby boomer generation is the big group of people who was born after World War II through 1964. About 450 million people were born during those mentioned years worldwide (Stark, 1996). In the United States, 78 million baby boomers were born (AARP's research, 2002). There were about 3,311,000 births in 1946, 4,097,000 births in 1956, 4,300,000 births in 1957 and 4,027,000 births in 1964 while there were a lower number of births in the years before and after the baby boomer years. For example, there were only 2,559,000 births in 1940 and 3,160,000 births in 1974. This information identified that the number of births increased during 1946-1964 as the number remained at 4 millions from 1955 until end of the baby boom years (see figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Generation of Baby Boomer during 1946 - 1964



Source: American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 2002

The starting years of baby boomer generation would be similar in each regions and countries as it started right after the ending of World War II when soldiers were returning home from the war which allowed them to have more time spending with homes and families, while the ending years of this generation might differ significantly in each country, for example in Europe (Ogg, 2006), the birth cohort of baby boomers was during 1945-1954. In Japan (Matsui,

1968) defined the baby boom years between 1947 and 1950 and the United States (Stark, 1996) considered baby boom duration between 1946 and 1964. However, during those mentioned years, there were many people born worldwide which made the number of baby boomer population significant and become the largest segment of any other generation either in the United States, Europe or Asia.

Nowadays, the baby boomer generation is entering to senior, which will be effected to the demographic changing of the total population and by the time when the last baby boomer turns 65, the population who is 65 years old and older will be doubled (Bayles, 2003). When comparing the percentage of people age 65 years old and over with overall, in 2003 baby boomers represent 12 percent of the nation's population while it will represent 20 percent in 2030. The percentage of the population 65 years old and over has more than tripled from 4.1 percent in 1900 to 12.4 percent in 2000.

Due to the large number of baby boomers populations, many researches focus in different fields concerning on this market segment. Keister and Deeb-Sossa (2001) identified, that the baby boomer generation is one of the potential groups which possibly grow in the near future. This study also stated that the financial status of this group is also better than the previous generation or their parents which indicated that baby boomers generation had accumulated more wealth as young adults than their parents had at a similar age. Estimates from a simulation model reveal that baby boomers had more wealth than their actual same-sex parents at every stage of the life course. This research has firmed the better life of the baby boomer generation who will be in the senior group in the near future when compared with the quality of the previous generation. An American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)'s research (2002) stated that the baby boomer generation has more money to spend as the median income for boomers bracket is approximately \$47,300 annually and the average household headed by boomers age 35 to 54 spends \$12,000 annually for housing inclusively. Another research (Del Webb Corp., 2006) stated that 75 percent of baby boomers will be more financially prepared than their parents and the spending of Americans over 50 accounts for more than \$2 trillion in income and more than 50 percent of discretionary spending power.

Other researches focus on an increasing need for health care for baby boomers. For example James and Hendrick (2006) identified the potential of this group according to the

increasing demand of the cardiovascular devices market for minimally invasive surgeries amongst the rapidly aging population. This sector poses a significant opportunity for the cardiovascular devices industry, as the occurrence of heart related diseases is the highest in this age group. Journal of Counseling and Development (Kenny, 2006) stated that the deontological counseling is the wave of the profession's future. With the majority of 78 million baby boomers beginning to turn 60 years old in 2006, there will be a great need for pre-retirement to end-of-life counselors which identified that this market segment is worth enough for being of interest in order to develop a counseling service to support them due to the size and potential of this generation.

The number of baby boomers age older than 50 years will be continually increasing and they will spend an additional \$300 billion a year which relevantly shows the significant financial status as well as the purchasing power of this generation.

1.2.2 Trends of the Senior Market

According to the largest number of the baby boomer generation who started turning 60 years old since 2006, there are many forecasts for the senior market growth, such as Hoke (2005) mentioned, this market tends to incline to the positive direction of the growing senior population which will relate to the opportunity to expand this market segment as well as the economic growth. It clarified that the predication of the people at age 65 and over will compose about 15 percent of the world's population, up from about seven percent today. Aging populations are growing especially fast in developed countries such as the United States (Euro monitor International, 2003), there were about 74 million people at age 50 years old and over in 2003 which means that every eighth second another person turns 50. This makes mature consumers the fastest growing segment of the population. By 2010 the 50 year olds and over segment in the US will grow by 21 million while the 18-34 age segments will grow by just only 5 million. Another research also studying senior markets in the United State (Murray, Rueben and Rosenberg 2007) stated that by 2030, there will be an estimate of people at age 65 years and above, which will constitute 20 percent of the U.S. population, up 12.5 percent from 2005. USA Today (Sharp, 2003) indicated that the population at age 65 years old and older was 35 millions in the year 2000, and will increase to 40.2 million in the year 2010. This increasing phenomenon will keep growing through 2020 with the number of senior people at 54.6 millions and 71.5

millions in the year 2030. In the United States Census statistics (O'Brien, 2004) studied about the senior population and stated that the senior population is growing and changing in this country and around the world. This occurs every year and can be described that the number of seniors who were age 65 and older in the United States on July 1, 2004 were 36.3 million, which comprised 12 percent of the total population in 2004 and between 2003 and 2004, 351,000 people joined the 65 plus age group. In 2050, seniors age 65 and older will make up 21 percent of the total population with the projected number of 86.7 million people who will be 65 or older in the year 2050 which means that there is 147 percent of the projected percentage and that the 65 plus senior populations will increase between 2000 and 2050. The United States population as a whole is expected to increase by only 49 percent during the same time period. Looking at the world population, there are currently 483 millions senior populations of people age 65 and over in the world and this research also gives a forecast that there will be 974 million for the total worldwide senior population by 2030.

Japan is another major market of seniors which is one of the most severe cases of aging of any industrialized countries. One research focused at Japan especially (Katz, 2000) and it stated that in 2000, about 20 percent of the populations are over 65 years old and half of those people over 65 are actually over 75. This research indicated that the portion of the aging population in Japan will keep on rising. It will be 23 percent by 2010, 26 percent by 2015 and almost 30 percent by 2025. This research also mentioned that Japan and Europe are the fastest growing elderly populations when compared with other countries. Another major Asian market of Thailand tourism is Malaysia. It (MMA Committee for the Health of the Older Person, 2005) stated the life expectancy of ageing people in Malaysia has been increased from 55.8 years for men and 58.2 for women in 1957 to 70.2 years and 75 years respectively in 2000 which indicated that Malaysians live longer as the mortality rate has been declining, which resulted in an increasing older population, from 5.2 percent in 1970, 5.7 percent in 1980 and 5.9 percent in 1991, to 6.2 percent in 2000 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2006). It was projected that by 2005, Malaysia would enter the ranks of the 'Ageing Nations of the World' with 1.7 million or 7.2 percent of the population being senior citizens (MMA, 1993) and by 2025, Malaysian ageing population will be projected at 15 percent of worldwide figure. Korean Times (2005) mentioned that South Korea will have the highest proportion of senior citizens in the world by

2050, 37.3 percent, which will beat Japan (36.5 percent), Italy (34.4 percent), and the U.S. (21.1 percent). The global elderly population is expected to be 15.9 percent in 2050, there are 36 million senior citizens in the U.S. today but this will grow to 87 million by 2050.

In Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997), the senior market is expected to grow from 3 million to 4 million by 2007, and to more than 7 million by 2051 which will be 32 percent of total population. These figures indicate the significance of senior market growth and being recognized as potential consumers.

The number of the global aging population age 60 years or over (United Nations, 2004) is expected to almost triply increase from 672 million in 2005 to nearly 1.9 billion by 2050, or 6 out of every 10 today's older persons are in developing countries and by 2050, 8 out of every 10 senior citizens live in developing countries. In developed countries, there are 20 percent of today's populations at age 60 years old and over and by 2050 that proportion will increase to 32 percent while the proportion of the population aged 60 or over in the developing world is expected to rise from 8 percent in 2005 to close to 20 percent by 2050.

All of the previous mentioned researches discussed that the senior market is sophisticated and has unprecedented buying power. The number of baby boomers and seniors is significant and its continued growth and expanding are definitely attractive for this research.

1.2.3 Senior Tourism

Senior tourism is one of the attractive new types of tourism nowadays as it specifies onto the specifically interesting group of senior tourists, which has significance of the rapidly increasing numbers today and the near future as well as the potential of this group, which is also outstanding in the general markets. Many studies focused on this specific type of tourism. This research decided to divide the studying areas into 2 parts, which includes demand and supply of senior tourism to understand more on the characteristic's and needs of this market as well as the supply for the senior tourism.

For the demand part, this research will mainly focus on an deeply understanding of the senior tourist demands and on travel as well, as to add more value to the senior's life quality by providing the right supply like higher quality of service, according to their demands,

from the beginning when they start deciding to travel through the traveling time which would liven up the traveler at senior age properly. One of the significant demands of the senior market is the fast growth of this market segment, which related to the increasing demand of the senior market, in another word, senior tourists travel more and more. For example in an developed country like Germany, there is a research designed specially to understand more on the increasing demand of the senior market which aims to develop appropriate supplies, concerning the future of German senior traveler (Lohmann and Danielson, 2004). One of the results shows that the demands of older age travelers have been increased from year 1972 to 2003 and table 1.2 will indicate the change of holiday travel demands of German travelers between year 1972 and year 2003.

Table 1.2 Change of Holiday Travel Propensity 1972 / 2003 in Germany

Age group	Holiday travel propensity		Change 1972/2003
	1972	2003	
< 29 years	57	80	40%
30-39	53	79	49%
40-59	49	81	65%
60-69	41	76	85%
70+ years	33	63	91%
All ages	49	77	57%

Source: Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V. RA1972, 2004

The percentage of demands from German travelers have been increasing from year 1972 to year 2003 at 57 percent of all age ranks and oldest ages have the most significant on this increasing percentage, which indicated that senior traveler groups travel more than in previous years while there are less than 50 percent of change in younger people aged under 29 and 30-39 years old age rank. The highest percentage of change occurred in the oldest age rank of people who are 70 year old and over at 91 percent while there was only 33 percent in year 1972.

This percentage identified the possibility of growth and increased traveling demands of the senior market and it concluded that older German people traveled more in the year 2003. In year 1972, German people aged less than 29 years old were the biggest group of traveling demand but in 2003; the biggest group has been changed to German people aged between 40-59 years old or pre-senior groups, which show dramatic changes of demand with people at this age rank.

Not only is there significance of an increasing demand in the senior market, the uniqueness of the senior demand would also be interested for the senior market. Due to the differentiation of demand in each group of tourists, as well as the dependence on current situations, this would be an important part of this research to understand it to provide the right response at the right time, which would be useful not only for senior travelers but all ages as well. Focusing on the senior market, senior tourists seem to be sensitive to safety concerns due to their age, experiences and physical condition, which would be influenced by senior travelers to be more concerned with safety rather than other age groups. For example, one research of Japan Association Travel Agents (2002) studied about the changes of traveling demands in Japanese tourists from 2000 to 2002 and the results stated that Japanese travel demands for the U.S. mainland is still suffering the effects of year 2000's terrorist attacks, while other destinations, including Hawaii, have been recovering, this results also stated that there has been a sharp increase in the number of Japanese travelers visiting Canada instead of the U.S. During the research years, more Japanese tourists also decide to travel to China as there was the 30th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations which caused an increasing number of travelers to China. This research mentioned that the current situation would be influencing the traveling demand considerably.

Besides the safety concerns of senior tourists, there are also some other things which are considered by the senior group, one research in the second international conference on senior tourism (Handszuh, 1996) identified that five factors are approached for emphasizing and working for basic quality of senior tourism which includes (1) safety and security (2) Sanitation and Salubrity (3) Environmental consideration (4) Accessibility (5) Consumer protection. All of the mentioned factors are influenced by the senior tourist demands and satisfaction on traveling. Another research (Moscardo and Green, 1999) stated that senior tourists nowadays are preferred to seek for leisure and recreation as there is the growing numbers of older people who will be

both, more likely to travel and more active than their younger counterparts. The result of this research indicated that aging is not a major contributor to variance in activity participation as there is a lower rate associated to participation in tourism activities in general and in outdoor physical activities in particular, which will be a lucrative market for tourism as well. As there are varieties of activities of traveling as well as for senior markets, one research studied about the preferred activity of senior tourists while traveling (Japan Association Travel Agents, 2002), which mentioned that there was a high number of demand of senior markets who were very interested in Eco-tourism, to enjoy nature while currently these are not sufficiently available supply provides.

Looking at the supply part, there is a research study about senior tourism in Australia (Walta, 2004), which focuses on the senior market and indicates that there are some distinct advantages for seniors compared to other age groups in terms of travel and leisure activity involvement, due to their propensity to view travel as the point of life which proves the senior market as attractive for tourism marketers and operators, but this area is still relatively unknown and there are not many research studies deeply concerned on this interesting market yet. While the senior market is still moving forward and will be used as an industry recognised standard or benchmark for future profiling and segmenting, where all members of the tourism industry and researchers should focus more on the dynamic characteristics of the senior market and their intentions for retirement travel. Another research (Centre of Tourism Research and Development, 1999) focuses on tourism product development especially for senior markets. This research mentions that tourism products have to be developed based on the travel motives of the senior traveler. Many seniors have the desire and means to travel for pleasure, discovery and learning but contrary to current thinking and practice in tourism marketing, this group is far from homogeneous. This study also stated that most of the seniors are traveling for their personal value adding. A research of Australian perspective (Horneman et al, 2002) described the profile of the senior market, which becomes an important source of tourism trade but it is not an uniform conservative market, which has implications for marketing and product development yet. Therefore researchers need to focus on this market to understand deeply and move forward to the further step of development.

Nowadays, most of the hotel operations provide a discount rate for senior groups according to the different standards of the senior age in different countries. For example, Hyatt Hotel which offers the senior discount rate from 25-50 percent for the person at age 62 years or older save from 25 - 50 percent at participation hotels in the United States and Canada. Marriott Hotels also provides American seniors at age 62 years old or older at least 15 percent off the normal rate worldwide. And all hotels of Days Inns offer 10 percent off standard rates to senior citizens with valid proof of age at 60 years or over, the same as Howard Johnson, which offers special rates at the same age for seniority at 60 years or over. Not only for the hotel industry, the airline services also provide discount rates for senior groups as well, such as United Airline Silver Wings Plus which is available for the travelers at least 55 years of age, and U.S. Airways, which offers the special fare for seniors 65 years and older on selected routes. Besides hotels and airfares, other services related to tourism are also concerning this market group by providing some discount and Bus & Train Travel is one of the example services, such as Greyhound Travel which offers special deals and discounts for United States passengers age 62 and older to get 5 percent discount off the fares as well as Amtrak Passenger 15 percent discounts for seniors at least 62 years of age. One interesting campaign which was provided for seniority group and which was the responsibility of the official New York City tourism, offers a special section devoted to New York City. It Welcomes Senior Travelers, explaining the many bargains available for senior transportation, information about senior savings on the theater tickets, sight seeing tours, and individual discounts on top of New York attractions. There is one private sector based in the United Kingdom (Saga, 2007) focusing exclusively to supply the demands of senior markets at age 50 years old and over by providing variety of services such as worldwide holidays destinations including cruises, award-winning magazine, insurance, financial products, and radio stations for instance which aim to be an efficient, caring, progressive, profitable and responsible organization that seeks to serve the needs of older people.

Therefore, this research will focus onto both demand and supply of senior tourism to gain insight about the senior tourist and match up their demand to the appropriated supply as majority market segment.

1.2.4 Travel Motivation and Behavior of Senior Tourist

In order to develop senior tourism in Thailand, it is important to understand the travel motivation and behavior of senior travelers. The senior traveler may also be considered a new tourist that is more experienced, flexible, and independent as well as quality conscious which would be harder to please than the more traditional tourist (Poon, 1994). This might be reflected by their experiences and knowledge collected since they were young until becoming a seniority. They would be more discerning and will demand higher quality service during traveling, as well as a greater degree of choice and flexibility in their travel and tourism consumption. However, it should be remembered that a significant percentage of older persons do not, and will not have sufficient health or resources to travel. Many researches are studying about the senior travelers such as the motivation (Stuart, 1992), the behavior (Lohmann and Danielson, 2001), potential (Shoemaker, 1989), finance (Turner, 2007) and limitation (Gladwell and Bedini, 2004) as well as the activities during traveling for senior tourist (Littrell, 2004) which studied the tourism activities and the shopping behavior of senior tourist. This research is mainly focusing on shopping activities while there are many other activities which can be suitable and preferred for the senior group. Littrell (2004) identified the shopping behavior of senior tourists at age 65 years old and over which indicated that most of senior tourist preferred shopping as their preferred activity, most of them liked to shop at the reliable department store and their preferred shopping items can be sectorized according to their travel objectives into 2 groups included outdoor shopping and historical site shopping. The outdoor shopping was the group of senior tourists who liked to travel and shop in the tourists attractions and preferred to buy souvenirs or products which reminded them to the visited places. And the historical site shopping was the group of senior tourists who preferred to travel for gain knowledge on history and tradition such as to go to museum for instance, and their preferred shopping products would be the souvenirs, guidebook or CD which indicated the visited historical or traditional sites. The 2 main concern of senior tourist when they shopped were the reliability of the products and uniqueness of the products which indicated of the visited places as well as produced countries. Another research (Shoemaker, 1989) mentioned that most of the seniors are traveling for pleasure and looking for discovery and learning. Centre for Tourism Research and Development (1999) also stated on the travel motives of senior tourist and preferences for holiday destination types, favorite mode of travel, and personal values which aim

to discover how underlying travel motives and values could usefully identify unique senior tourism markets for the purpose of new product development. The results of the factor analyses led to the identification of seven travel-motive segments labeled in order of relative size, such as Nostalgias, Friendliness, Learners, Escapists, Thinkers, Status-Seekers, and Physicals. The four largest segments represent 83 per-cent of the senior tourism market and the strategic usefulness of identifying travel-motive segments is highlighted for tourism product development.

Most of the researches are failures to study deeply in appropriated activities and to make travel experiences impressive even more. This would be caused of the perception of the seniority as most of the people might think of the decreasing in their ability due to physical issues. Reasons for travel and non-travel for senior groups, many things influence the decision to travel, such as health limitation, lack of information of the traveling destination and arrangement, lack of companionship, security and safety concerns for instance. For example, due to health limitations and concerns which would be influenced by the traveling motivation as well as behavior and mostly have an effect on the older traveler aged 80 years old and over (Pederson, 1994). For younger seniors, health limitation would be a small influence as the recuperation from illness or recovery after major surgery is often a stimulus to travel. A research (Blazey, 1987) stated that there are 25.6 percent of travel constraints for seniors were related to health issues and 9 percent to a lack of energy for travel while only 3 percent felt that they were too old to travel. This information would be firmed that health condition would not be a big issue for seniors traveling as senior travelers would prefer to indulge in travel experiences to refresh them and make their retirement life more valuable. Another research (Pederson, 1994) mentioned that most of the seniors are more concerned with comfort than younger travelers, by being comfortable in both, psychological as well as physical. This research also stated that the concern for security and safety would be in central of the purchasing demand in senior group. Stuart (1992) stated that older people are mainly looking for experiences and personal growth, while other age travelers may seek pleasure and escape from stresses. Older people become less interested they are in acquiring possessions and more interested in simply experiencing.

Motives of modern travelers are based on the attitude and includes to experience something different, to explore, to have a change, to have fun, to increase enjoyment, to play and be active, to be with others, to relax without stress, to do as you please and to be close to nature

and an intact environment. Poon (1994) estimated that above listed motives apply from 45 percent to 60 percent of the population in the developed world, including a large proportion of senior traveler segments. Another research (Badinelli, 2000) stated that other elements important to older travelers are interesting venues that provide learning and/or culture experiences, good architecture, pleasant countryside, peace and quiet, participation, opportunity to develop and support friendship and good weather experiences in a comfortable, but simple environment.

Focusing on the traveling behavior, there is one research study on the travel pattern of senior citizen (Lohmann, 2004), which described that there has been an implicit assumption that there will be a close relationship between the travel behavior of today's seniors and those of future ones. This paper reports on a re-analysis of results of the German annual travel survey (Reiseanalyse, 2004), and suggests that such an assumption might be misleading. Tourist demands and travel behavior are not necessarily determined by age, but by generation. For the last third of the life cycle, the travel behavior of a particular generation seems to be quite rigid, and does not change significantly because of factors such as retirement. The results of this analysis show that travel propensity, or patterns of tourist behavior, remain the same up to 20 years for a given generation. Therefore, to understand the future travel behavior of senior citizens is perhaps not as difficult as it might first appear. In conclusion, the actual travel behavior including expectations, motivations and aspirations of people aged between 55 and 65 years in 2000 allows a prediction of prospective travelers aged 65 to 75 years in the year 2010. Such an approach supplies reliable data for the design of future marketing strategies and suitable products.

Another German research (Lohmann and Danielson, 2004) focusing on future trends in travel behavior of senior tourists and give recommendations on how to get the future of tourism out of today's consumer surveys-prospects for seniors as well as kids travel in German. This research also gives the forecast of the future's German senior holiday traveling based on the empirically founded assumptions shown in table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Travel Behavior of Future German Seniors' Age of 75 Years

Year	2003	2008	2018
Total in the age group in millions	6.4	8.3	8.4
Travel propensity in%	65	75	78
Travelers in millions	4.2	5.8	6.6

Source: Forschungsgeneubschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V. (F.U.R, Reiseanalyse RA1972, 2004

All figures mentioned in table 1.3 are collected from West-Germany only, at the age of 75 years-old or 70-80 years of age at a certain year and the figures for 2008 and 2018 are estimations based on the rates of the age groups 65-75 and 55-65 in 2003. Table 1.3 indicates the projection of changes in traveling behavior which defines that seniors travelers are defined as being in the age group 70-80 years and the columns labeled 2008 and 2018 contain the characteristics of today's 65-75 and 55-65 years old travelers, and projecting them into the future. The results of this research (Lohmann and Danielson, 2004) showed the larger number of senior groups in 2008 as well as 2018 and a higher holiday travel propensity. The absolute number of traveling seniors will rise considerably, which indicated the firm of value in the senior market, which would be worth to get in the center of interest for all researchers to clarify the proper demand of this group and develop the supply accordingly, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry due to its potential and ability to travel. Other results of this research also clarified that German travelers will more than likely prefer holiday destination outside of Germany which can be indicated on table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Destination Preferences of Future German Senior at Age of 75 Years

Destination of main holiday trip in %	2003	2008	2018
Domestic	50	42	31
Abroad	50	58	69

Source: Forschungsgeneubschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V. F.U.R, Reiseanalyse RA1972, 2004

Table 1.4 shows that there was an average preference destination of German traveler in the year 2003, as 50 percent of them were likely to prefer to take domestic traveling and another 50 percent liked to travel abroad but their traveling behavior will change in the year 2008 as the percentage to abroad traveling preference will be increasing to 58 percent and this trend of preference will keep rising through year 2018. German travelers will prefer traveling abroad at 69 percent while the domestic traveling preference will drop down to 31 percent. The information in summary of this report has given the trend of senior tourism, which is now

growing in Germany. This research identified considering these markets for German tourism (particularly in Europe) due to its size and growth potential in the shifting age structure, to continue providing expectancy outstrips for the period for retirement. Improvements in the state of health of older persons or greater technological and organizational convenience in travel may help activate the potential for tourism which can be expected from the demographics by 2050. One particular reason for believing that senior citizens will remain the principal source of growth for tourism in the foreseeable future is the fact that much of this market segment is still currently financially secure, so that there are substantial purchasing power resources available for tourism. After retirement, the time available also increases substantially. Senior citizens appreciate travel as a way to keep physically and mentally fit and participate in social life. It is likely that senior citizens in particular will invest in future in maintaining their accustomed lifestyle, which could be associated with rising intensity of travel. Travel habits and experiences of today's younger and middle age groups will affect their travel habits as they age is crucial to the future of German tourism. Greater physical and mental mobility and improved foreign language skills of future senior citizens should remove existing barriers and making destinations elsewhere in Europe more appealing. The greater experience of travel and better education of these age groups could lead to a rising trend in long distance travel. Such a development could create a certain element of risk for German tourism.

Another research is narrowing into the traveling Asia (Lee, 2005), which investigated in senior Koreans specifically to understand attitudes towards leisure travel and the constraints faced by Korean seniors, this research stated that the senior segment of the Korean population is rapidly becoming an attractive target market for leisure destinations due to its increasing rate of growth and the level of income available. While this is a potentially attractive segment for the tourism industry, the impact of traditional Confucian philosophy represents a constraint which may deter senior Koreans from traveling for leisure purposes. Through a self-completion survey of 200 Korean residents over the age of 60 years, conducted in 2002, this paper explores the attitudes of this market towards leisure travel. The constraints which may restrict the travel propensity of senior Koreans and the types of travel experiences they demand are revealed.

In Japan, which is the biggest portion of tourists at all ages as well as senior tourists in Thailand (TAT, 2005), a research (JATA Independent Surveys, 2002) focused on senior travel preferences and this research stated that old age does not effect the travel demands of senior travelers according to the results of this survey related to eco-tourism targeting the middle-aged and senior sectors. The vast majority of the respondents were very interested in making trips for the purpose of enjoying nature. This research purposed to assess the potential demand for eco-tours among middle-aged people and senior citizens, as well as trying to forecast the future market, and collecting possibly useful information for sales and travel-product development. The results have shown that more than 90% of those surveyed want to take trips to enjoy nature but that such tours are not sufficiently available. The results have also indicated that the expansion of the market is most likely to develop among the group age 55-64 years old and that age and physical strength must be taken into consideration in travel planning. Some consumers are becoming more and more quality-minded, while others are becoming more and more sensitive to price. One of the preferred activities of Japanese consumers is shopping, a research (Reisinger and Turner, 2002) determines on the shopping satisfaction of Japanese tourists in Hawaii, the Japanese tourists' favorite place in America. This research aims to test the relationship between different dimensions of product categories, product attributes, and satisfaction with product attributes for Japanese tourists visiting Hawaii and the Gold Coast region of Australia. This survey is targeted to Japanese tourists arriving in Hawaii and the Gold Coast and Japanese tourists departing Hawaii and the Gold Coast was conducted in 1998. In the arrival survey, the importance of 15 product categories was determined along with the importance of 15 product attributes. In the departure survey, 17 elements of shopping satisfaction were collected. Factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used to test the relationship that the importance of products purchased determines the importance of product attributes, and the importance of product attributes, in turn, determines satisfaction with product attributes. The conclusions are important for determining the best focus for retail tourism marketing aimed at increasing tourist shopping satisfaction. As the statistical report stated Japan as the biggest and the most important market, therefore this research will focus on the Japanese tourists as majority. One of the preferred tourism destinations of Japanese travelers is Australia. A research specified onto this group (Lim, 2005) by analyzing the behavior trends in tourist arrivals from Japan to Australia, which

concluded that as tourism forecasts are obtained based on past observations, an historical analysis of Japan's postwar economic success, social factors, and the national government's institutional policies and reforms can help to provide a better understanding of the growth in Japanese outbound travel and the trending patterns in Japanese tourist arrivals to Australia. To achieve these aims, a statistical analysis of the time series behavior of tourism demand, specifically quarterly tourist arrivals from Japan to Australia from 1976 to 2000, are examined. In addition to analyzing the full sample, the authors also consider three sub samples, namely quarter 1 of 1976 to quarter 2 of 1987, quarter 3 of 1987 to quarter 2 of 1997, and quarter 3 of 1997 to quarter 2 of 2000, to evaluate the sensitivity of the estimates to changes in trends arising from the 1987 stock market crash and the Asian economic and financial crises in 1997. Another research also studied on travel motivation of Japanese senior travels (Sangpikul, 2006), which adopted the theory of push and pull motivations and identified three push and four pull factor dimensions of Japanese senior travels. The results of this research indicated that the most important motives (push motivational items) for the Japanese senior travel to travel abroad were 'I want to see something new and exciting', followed by 'I want to see something different than I don't normally see' and 'I want to experience cultures that are different from mine'. While the least important push motivational items were 'I can talk about my travel experience with other people after returning home', 'I want to go to the places my friends want to go' and 'I like to talk about the places I have visited and things I have seen in a foreign country'. For the pull motivational items were included 'cultural & historical attractions', followed by 'Thai temples' and 'natural scenery & landscape'. While the least attractive pull items as perceived by Japanese senior travelers were 'hygiene & cleanliness', 'weather' and 'a variety of travel related information' respectively. In conclusion, the three push factors were labeled as: 'novelty & knowledge-seeking', 'ego-enhancement', and 'rest & relaxation', while the four pull factors included: 'travel arrangements & facilities', 'cultural & historical attractions', 'shopping & leisure activities', and 'safety & cleanliness'.

In Taiwan, there was a research studied on Taiwanese seniors' travel motivation and the influential factor (Jang and Wu, 2006), this research has sectored the travel motivation of Taiwanese senior tourist into 5 groups included (1) Ego-enhancement, (2) Self-esteem, (3) Knowledge-seeking, (4) Relaxation and (5) Socialization. Most of Taiwanese senior tourists were

Ego-enhancement with the biggest proportion and followed after with other factors respectively. Most of Taiwanese senior tourists were traveling to (1) seek special things such as natural phenomenon, (2) return to familiar places or events such as yearly activity and (3) study local life of other countries while their main concerns when traveling are safety and comfort due to their limitation such as physical and illness.

1.2.5 Senior Tourism in Thailand

Tourism is one of the major revenue sources of Thailand as there are varieties of rich cultural, natural and historical resources and interesting attractions, which place Thailand as one of the best selection for tourists nowadays and this is also an important part of Thailand's economy as it is highly dependent on tourism and related industries and attracts high levels of foreign exchange, which rise up Thailand's economy with the good reputation of nature, friendly and exciting destinations, which motivated all related tourism industries such as five star hotels, world-class airlines, myriad of restaurants and tour operators to invest in Thailand as an international tourist trade.

According to the majority of the tourism industry in Thailand, this is also related to the on-going development of tourism industry in Thailand to make the destination up to the standard and provide the appropriate supply for all the tourist demands. Many researches are designed in order to develop the tourism and hospitality industry in Thailand, either by the public or private organizations. But most of the researches are focusing on the general group of international tourists, but not many researches studied on this specific market group of senior tourists in Thailand as a destination yet, while there were many international researches, which studied on this interesting market as well as forecasted about the huge increasing phenomenon of the senior market. Focusing on senior tourist arrivals in the statistic report of international tourist arrivals (TAT, 2005), there was not a high percentage of senior tourist arrivals at either age rank of 55-64 years or 65 years and over occurred in year 2005 which is shown in table 1.5.

Table 1.5 International Senior Tourist Arrivals in Thailand, 2005

Country of residence	Age 55-64 years old	Age 65 years old and over
East Asia	762,321	243,369

Europe	333,120	117,588
America	120,789	51,005
South Asia	35,286	10,765
Oceania	68,033	22,186
Middle East	23,162	6,942
Africa	5,305	1,471
Total	1,348,016	453,326
Percentage	11% of total arrival	4% of total arrival
Total of age 55 years old and over	11,517,116	

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2005

The comparison of 2 age ranks including 55-64 years rank and 65 years or over rank indicate that there are more international tourist arrivals from the age rank between 55-64 years old at the total amount of 1,348,016 persons while the tourists at age 65 years old and over has the proportion at 453,326 persons who arrived to Thailand in the year 2005. The biggest proportion of international tourist arrivals to Thailand in the year 2005 is East Asia from both age ranks, the second group is Europe and the Americas are following. 762,321 tourists from East Asia arrived in Thailand in year 2005, which results to 56.5 percent of the total tourist in all regions at the age rank, while 24.7 percent where from Europe and 8.9 percent from America, which occurred in the age rank between 55-64 years old. 243,369 senior tourists from East Asia arrived in Thailand, which results to 53.6 percent of the total senior tourist in all regions while there are 25.9 percent from Europe and 11.2 percent from America. This comparison indicated that the percentages of each source for both age ranks are not different, which means that there are similar proportions of tourists at age 55-64 years old and 65 years old or over from East Asia, Europe and America. Therefore, these three mentioned regions are the top three market segments for seniority in Thailand destination in the year 2005.

To understand the trend of senior tourism in Thailand, the statistic of senior tourist arrivals (TAT, 2005) for the eight previous years, since 1998 to 2005 will show the total

arrival of pre-seniors and senior tourists at age 55-64 years old and older seniors at age 65 years old and over which is identified in table 1.6 and table 1.7.

Table 1.6 Senior Tourists Age 55-64 Years Arrival to Thailand in 1998-2005

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
East Asia	463,271	546,917	572,336	594,778	708,411	683,105	789,982	762,321
Europe	234,917	253,386	262,191	281,063	312,194	301,403	340,174	333,120
Americas	60,859	72,959	83,651	89,521	103,327	98,736	117,245	120,789
South Asia	13,789	15,876	17,604	18,868	26,527	28,197	32,891	35,286
Oceania	38,612	38,771	40,466	53,123	51,203	46,183	63,029	68,033
Middle East	10,984	12,912	14,360	17,379	20,252	15,051	23,362	23,162
Africa	4,470	4,638	5,449	5,708	6,324	5,480	6,596	5,305
Total	826,902	945,459	996,057	1,060,440	1,228,238	1,178,155	1,373,279	1,348,016

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1998-2005

Table 1.7 Senior Tourists Aged 65 Years and Over Arrival to Thailand in 1998-2005

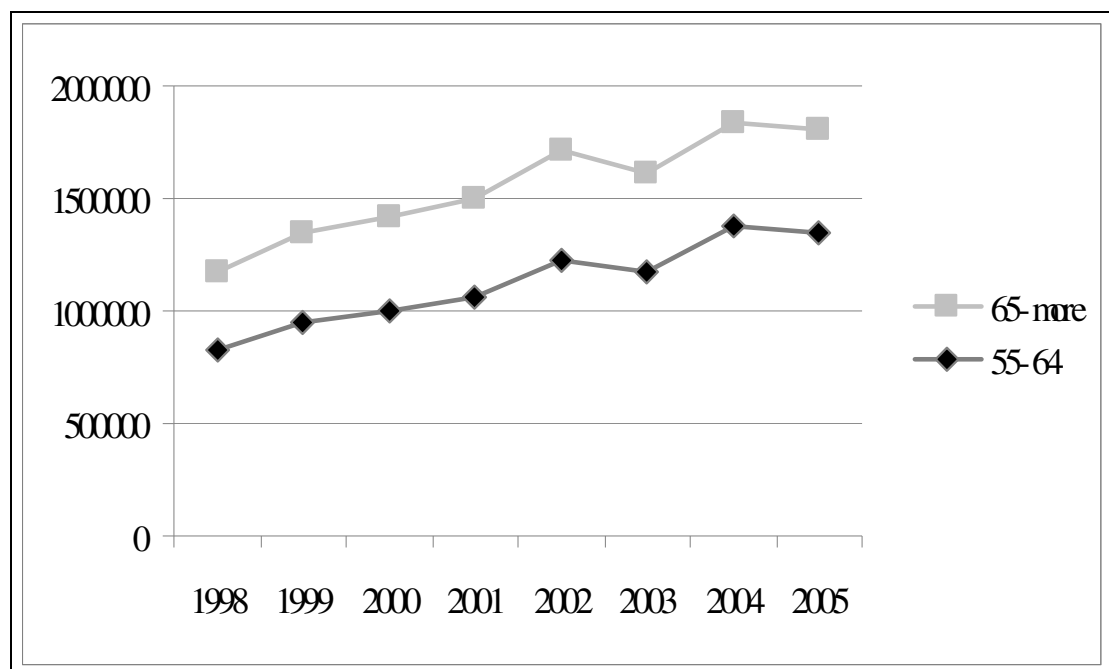
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
East Asia	194,861	238,047	249,307	255,872	286,772	264,404	262,892	243,369
Europe	90,062	97,551	97,141	102,503	111,776	99,323	114,123	117,588
Americas	29,467	37,849	47,378	47,618	45,848	36,689	47,777	51,005
South Asia	5,266	6,031	7,551	7,851	9,056	9,474	11,711	10,765
Oceania	17,379	15,862	16,583	19,757	20,716	15,314	21,267	22,186
Middle East	4,573	4,608	5,985	6,767	6,789	4,873	7,047	6,942
Africa	2,322	1,750	2,494	2,388	1,933	1,641	1,782	1,471
Total	343,930	401,698	426,439	442,756	482,890	431,718	466,599	453,326

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1998-2005

Tables 1.6 and 1.7 shows that the East Asian region is the biggest market of pre-senior and senior tourists arrived in those eight years and the second one is the European market and the America market respectively. Therefore, for further focus on this research, will combine some low important regions together as others which are including South Asia, Middle East and Africa, while the significant markets are still remaining the same such as East Asia, Europe, The Americas, and Oceania for instance.

The number of senior tourists' age 55-64 years old were higher than 65 years or over as well as the growth of 55-64 year rank was significant comparatively in 65 years old and over rank. Figure 1.2 shows the comparison for number of senior tourists who arrived in Thailand during 1998-2005 for both age ranks

Figure 1.2 Growth of Senior Tourist Age 55-64 years and 65 years and above during 1998 - 2005



Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1998-2005

To gain insight to the significant number of international tourist arrivals from each important country, table 1.8 will indicate the narrow down information and show the amount of pre-senior and senior tourist arrivals at age rank of 55-64 years old and 65 years old and over by specifying each country, and the top 25 countries worldwide will be identified respectively as the important market. Then, this research can focus on the right market for studying.

Table 1.8 International Senior Tourist Arrivals in Thailand from worldwide, 2005

Countries	Number of tourists	Number of tourists	Total
	55-64 years	65 years and over	
Japan	222,113	65,888	288,001
Malaysia	169,114	63,380	232,494
US	101,027	43,538	144,565
UK	84,311	34,297	118,608

Table 1.8 (Continued)

Countries	Number of tourists	Number of tourists	Total
	55-64 years	65 years and over	
Korea	81,372	24,663	106,035
Singapore	69,107	23,923	93,030
China	60,401	23,497	83,898
Germany	59,262	20,989	80,251
Australia	56,241	17,456	73,697
France	53,345	13,448	66,793
Taiwan	35,187	12,299	47,486
Laos	33,764	9,393	43,157
Hong Kong	30,739	8,703	39,442
Sweden	30,002	7,210	37,212
India	23,513	6,862	30,375
Netherlands	22,275	5,830	28,105
Switzerland	19,077	5,631	24,708

Indonesia	16,777	5,555	22,332
Canada	16,820	5,279	22,099
Denmark	15,506	4,607	20,113
Vietnam	14,765	4,323	19,088
Philippines	14,598	4,439	19,037
Norway	12,499	4,103	16,602
Italy	11,101	4,001	15,102
Finland	10,277	2,937	13,214
Others	84,823	31,075	115,898
Total	1,348,016	453,326	1,801,342

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2005

Table 1.8 shows that most of the senior tourists arrived in Thailand in the year 2005 of both age ranks are from Japan at the amount of 222,113 Japanese tourists, 29 percent of tourist from East Asia region or 16 percent of tourist aged between 55-64 years old. At age 65 years old and over, there are 65,888 of Japanese tourists arrived in Thailand in the year 2005, which is 27 percent of the tourists from the East Asian region or 15 percent of all regions. This can be concluded that there are 27 percent of Japanese tourists in these both age ranks which indicated the significant of Japan as the biggest market of pre-senior and senior travelers. The second country is also in the East Asian region, which is Malaysia with the amount of 169,116 persons at age between 55-64 years old, 22 percent of the East Asian region or 13 percent of all regions while there are 63,380 Malaysian tourists aged 65 years old and over, or 26 percent of East Asia region, 14 percent of all regions. The third country of both age ranks is not from East Asia but the Americas as there are 101,027 American tourists at age rank 55-64 years old, 83 percent of all countries in the Americas regions or 7 percent of all regions and there are 43,538 American tourists at age 65 years old and over, 85 percent of the same region or 9 percent of all regions at same age rank. The top 4 important countries of both age ranks are the same, while it would be different from the fifth onward. Therefore, to expand the senior tourism, the research should concern the mentioned statistic report to grow onto the right market.

The statistic stated that Thailand is one of the preferred choices of Japanese travelers as there were over millions of Japanese tourists traveling to Thailand between year 2000 to 2005. Statistics of Japanese tourist traveling abroad collected by the Japan Tourism Marketing Company (2006) stated that 1,206,549 Japanese tourists traveled to Thailand in year 2000 and in year 2001, 1,179,202 of Japanese tourists decided to go to Thailand in year 2002, 1,233,239 Japanese tourists traveled to Thailand and 1,026,287 of Japanese tourists in year 2003 as well as 1,194,420 of Japanese tourist in year 2004 and 1,188,871 in year 2005. This occurred statistic has been conducted by the Japanese researcher which indicated that Thailand has been in the Japanese traveling preferences since the year 2000 and this good sign is continually on until now.

Table 1.9 shows the proportion of Japanese tourists relative to total international tourist arrivals in different age groups which indicate that the Japanese are the biggest proportion of all tourists' arrivals at all age rank in year 2005. Most figures of Japanese tourists are at the age rank between 35-44 years old as same as other countries of resident. When comparing the Japanese senior tourists and the total senior tourists from all countries, 16.48 percent of the Japanese Senior tourists at the age rank between 55-64 years old and 14.53 percent of the age 65 years old and over, which results as the significant percentage from the overall.

Table 1.9 Japanese Tourist Arrivals in Thailand in 2005

Age	< 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 >
Japan	20,319	114,383	246,721	269,152	243,337	222,113	65,888
All	462,172	1,181,183	2,943,762	2,852,566	2,275,911	1,348,016	453,326
Percent	4.36%	9.68%	8.38%	9.44%	10.69%	16.48%	14.53%

Source: Tourist Statistics Department of Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2005

As the occurred information and statistics, this research can be ensured that the senior traveler market has the possibility to growth and potential to be in the researcher's interest as well as the suitability of Thailand in order to develop the senior tourism in Thailand to supply this quality of market.

Looking at Thailand, there are few researches studied specifically onto the travel motivation and behavior which related to senior tourist market, such as Maneerat (2004) which researched on the behavior of international tourists visiting Phuket in 2004, this research identified the differences of travel motivation and behavior of senior tourist when compared with other ages, for example objective of visit, type of group travel, type of transportation used frequency of visit and daily spending. This research indicated that tourists of different age level travel with the same main objective, which is for a holiday; but for other purposes of visit, old-aged tourists always travel on business and meetings. For type of group travel, most of adolescent tourists travel with their friends; in contrast, most of old-aged tourists' travels with their family as most of them were already married already. For type of transportation, most of old-age tourists traveled to Phuket by air while adolescent tourists prefer to travel by land and sea, this indicated that old-aged tourists always consider comfort during travel. Most of the old-aged tourists stay longer than younger age tourist because they want to relax after a long voyage and most of them are retiree and can spend more time for traveling.

Another research collected by Thailand Authority Tourism (Rojwallee, 2006) also studied specifically onto the travel behavior of senior tourist of both Thai and international at age 55 years old and over which identified senior tourist market as a quality and potential with high purchasing power group. For the international senior tourist, this research indicated that most of them arranged the travel plan with the travel agents at the percentage of 15.3%, while there were 14.8% arranged the trip on their own. For the average spending, most of senior tourist spent 2,958.45 baht per person per day and the senior tourist from South East Asia countries spent more than other countries at 4,318.50 bath per person per day. The average length of stay of senior tourists who travel with agent was 6-7 days while there was longer length of stay of senior tourist who travel on their own which was 7-8 days, therefore the average length of stay for overall was 7 days. The motivation of senior tourist was the cultural and traditional interest as well as the famous tourist attraction which attract them to travel to Thailand while their preferred activity was shopping, followed after with the historical sightseeing. In the contrast, not many senior tourists were interested in Adventure tour. Looking at the difference of genders, female senior tourists were interested to travel to Thailand more than male because female senior tourists were open for news and knowledge gaining as well as interested in shopping more than male.

All of the mentioned articles and researches have concluded the indication of the importance of senior markets, to understand their background, characteristics as well as to gain insight to their travel motivation and behavior, which will be useful information to develop the tourism industry based on the mentioned research

1.3 Objective

Research Aim: Propose measures for enhancing senior tourism in Thailand for international tourists.

Research Objectives:

- (1) Investigate the existing senior tourism market in Thailand.
- (2) Gain insight in the travel motivation, behavior and preferences of senior tourists.
- (3) Suggest guidelines for responding to the specific needs of senior tourists and developing Thailand as an attractive senior tourist destination.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The expected benefits of this research can be sectorized as follows:

- (1) To understand the senior tourist characteristics, behaviors, motivation, and demands on tourism industry.
- (2) To provide guidelines to the senior tourism stakeholders and/or the tourism and hospitality industry as well as related government institutions such as Tourism Authority of Thailand for developing Thailand as a senior tourist destination.

1.5 Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Research Destination

Thailand is the destination for this research which has Bangkok as the capital, located in the heart of Southeast Asia, neighboring by Myanmar at west and north, Laos at north and north-east, Cambodia at southeast and Malaysia at south. Thailand has variety of the topography which is capable to be developing as the tourist attractions from all target markets as well as in the seniority such as the mountainous zone, multi-colored flowers, fascinating native handicraft, archaeological and anthological mysteries, traditional culture and way of life as well as the sandy beaches. There are three major tourist destinations in Thailand which are including Bangkok, Chiang-Mai and Phuket. This research decides to select these three provinces for studying, as all of them are the attractive tourist destinations in Thailand and each of them are also providing different scenery, activities and types of tourism as well.

1.5.2 Research Demography

The demography of this research is the international senior tourist who would like to travel and consider Thailand as their traveling destination. As Thailand is an attractive destination for both Asian and Non-Asian tourists, therefore this research will focus on both groups according to the tourist arrival statistic of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, year 2005. Refer to this mentioned statistics report which is segmented by age, there are 2 age ranks involved in this research, which are the age rank between 55-64 years, which had 1,348,016 tourists occurred as the arrival in year 2005 and there were 453,326 senior tourists at age 65 years old and over and from all around the world. As this research decided to adopt 60 years old as the senior age definition, therefore the demography of this research can be identified as below:

Age

As mentioned previously, there are different definitions of senior age in each country, therefore this research decided to collect the sampler at beginning age of 55 years old who are part of baby boomer generation today and will become seniors in the near future. Then, this research will rank age of the demography into 5 groups as below:

- Age between 55-59 years old
- Age between 60-64 years old
- Age between 65-69 years old
- Age between 70-74 years old
- Age 75 years old and over

Nationality

As this research will be concerned with international tourists as the majority, therefore it will also sector the data by nationality and regions of residences. According to the region sectors of tourist arrival statistics of Tourism Authority of Thailand, year 2005, and this research can sector the nationality following the residence regions as below:

- *Asia*: including East and South Asia, such as Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Philippines, China, Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos, Brunei, Cambodia, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and others.
- *Europe*: including Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, East Europe and others.
- *The Americas*: including United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina and others.
- *Australia and Oceania*: including Australia and New Zealand
- *Others*: including Africa and Middle East

1.5.3 Research Areas

In order to develop Thailand as the senior tourism destination, this research decided to study specific areas which can be sectorized as below:

Current Supply

- Existing tourism in Thailand
- Service and special treatment for senior tourists
- Tour and activities for senior tourists
- Existing facility and infrastructures provided in Thailand for senior tourists
- Existing accessibility provided in Thailand for senior tourists
- Specific programs and packages for senior tourist
- Satisfaction of current Thailand tourism in senior tourist point of view

Demand of senior tourist

- Characteristics of senior tourists
- Senior tourists' financial and economic status
- Traveling pre-arrangement of senior tourists
- Senior tourists' traveling motivation
- Senior tourists' traveling behavior
- Senior tourists' needs when traveling
- Senior tourists' preferences on tourism
- Other required service for senior tourists
- Limitation of senior tourists

1.5.4 Research Time: This research take 12 months time for the whole process which started in November 2006 and is expected to be completed by December 2007.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

Senior Tourism

Tourism which focuses on older persons as tourists and considers how to provide better services specifically to this market segment.

Senior Tourist

For the propose of this research, tourists aged 55 years and over are referred to as senior tourists.

Baby Boomers

People born between 1946 and 1964 or during the 18 years after World War II.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.3 Conceptual Framework

