

EXPRESS TRAVELWORLD



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Spotlight
Uniquely Telangana

Sustainability
Roadmap towards 2030

INDIA'S FOREMOST TRAVEL BUSINESS MAGAZINE

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DMCs



Over the years, India has become home to many Destination Management Companies (DMCs) that offer local support for global destinations. As we enter 2018, **Express TravelWorld** spoke to leading DMCs to get their vision for the year ahead





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A cautiously buoyant 2018



By design or default, it's the human tendency to look into the crystal ball at the start of the Gregorian calendar to see what the future has in store and the travel industry is no exception to the rule. Industry thought leaders, stakeholders and associates fix their binoculars with focus to read into the future. The results are well, some predictable, some out-of-the-box and few contradictory that have emerged from the various conversations I have had over the past two months. The good news is, most segments, be it cruise, hospitality or aviation have revealed a rather buoyant 2018, with trends revealing a greater momentum in the travel space.

Cruise players feel the markets are certainly showing a trend in their favour, while the airline segment, especially on the domestic front, is also witnessing growth. Few tour operators feel it is the year of consolidations. Others feel though the year may be better than the past, they are still not ready to fly high. Domestic tourism and MICE travel is predicted to be on an upswing. The general feedback has also been that the tribe needs to increase of those tour operators who would invest in destination research with on field product knowledge, rather than promoting copy pasted and regular tour itineraries and packages. Group travel will never go out of fashion but that genre of travellers too are looking for something special to boast about. Here the relationship between tourism boards and the tour operators

The power of the social media is a given. However, our readers truly need to understand the difference between being social on social media and using the social media to gain business mileage

gets all the more vital. Knowledge workshops, training programmes, engaging dialogues and more is the need of the hour.

The role of the government too is critical to give the tourism sector a dose of optimism. The Union Budget 2018-19 is also something that this fraternity is aiming to watch closely. State tourism boards need to shift from their bureaucratic shackles and connect more with the industry to sell India right, both nationally and internationally.

However, it's the gen next of the travel trade that is looking at the future in an optimistic but realistic format. The gen next is clear that the effective use and application of technology is critical for growth. The power of the social media is a given. However, for those of our readers who truly need to understand the difference between being social on social media and using the social media to gain business mileage should certainly stop by an article on Page 32 of this issue. It will set the pace for a lot of thinking for 2018 with respect to social media and more... Happy New Year, readers and here's wishing you all a super successful year as we are all in it together.

REEMA LOKESH
Editor
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MoEFCC invites collective suggestions to solve hurdles in tourism

Saloni Bhatia
New Delhi

AT THE RECENT national seminar on 'Adventure Tourism' by The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Arun Kumar Mehta, additional secretary, ministry of environment, forest and climate change (MoEFCC), said that the ministry is ready to review the regulatory framework including the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) to boost sustainable tourism. The event which was supported by the ministry of tourism (MoT), Government of India, highlighted India's need of developments in the sector which could aggregate growth. He quoted the example of relaxations given to the beach shacks in Goa, which has given immense opportunity for their business. Mehta affirmed, "We will be looking at all the

problems with regard to adventure tourism, but I would request everyone to be specific with their recommendations. Any suggestion to MoEFCC should be made with regard to areas, zones or amendments to be made to boost tourism growth."

At the inaugural ceremony, Satyajeet Rajan, director general, MoT stated that adventure travel in India will be forced to grow due to increasing demand of the new generation. He said, "The challenges that are hindering this sector's growth are safety guidelines and skill development. While the safety guidelines are present, they have not been accepted by the state governments and there is not much skilled personnel as majority of this sector is unorganised. But we have set a National Adventure Task Force, which is closely



(From left) HE Jorge Juan Castaneda Mendez, ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Peru; Swadesh Kumar, president, Adventure Tour Operators Association of India; Dipak Haksar, chairman, CII National Committee on Tourism & Hospitality; Satyajeet Rajan, director general-Tourism, MoT; Arun Kumar Mehta, additional secretary, MoEFCC and Arjun Sharma, co-Chairman, CII National Committee on Tourism & Hospitality

looking into the matter. More satellite phones will also be added in the next five to six years which shall enable prompt action in safety missions."

Dipak Haksar, chairman, CII National Committee on Tourism & Hospitality and chief executive ITC Hotels, highlighted the positive effects on adventure

tourism. Emphasising on employment generation in the remotest of areas, he said the PPP partnerships can give the much needed push to the sector.

IATO urges members to expand business in North Eastern states

Saloni Bhatia
New Delhi

INDIAN ASSOCIATION of Tour Operators (IATO) held 2017's last luncheon meeting in New Delhi recently. Summing up the association's achievements over the year, the members also used the opportunity to discuss future plans and strategies. Rajeev Kohli, senior vice president, who attended the 6th International Tourism Mart in Guwahati, shared his memorable experience in the state. Urging the members to gain more knowledge about the North Eastern states, he

proposed a comprehensive information curriculum (on ground) for the members of IATO. He said, "We need to gain more knowledge and expand our business to more Indian states. The North East is indeed beautiful and we have an active travel trade community willing to bridge the gap in the sector." The members present showed positive interest towards the idea and were more than willing to be part of the initiative. Kohli suggested April 2018 as the ideal time to host the session and invited further suggestions from the team.

Sandeep Jain, honorary

treasurer, shared the good news that Input Tax Credit will soon be reviewed by the GST council. He further informed, "On account of consistent concerns of IATO members, the government has planned to add 55 more immigration counters at the airport by January 2018. Separate counters for first and business class has also been proposed while additional staff is being appointed at the international airport. As India Tourism Milan will not be participating in the BIT Milan fair, members are requested to put forward their participation needs with the IATO team

which can be taken up with the government."

Pronab Sarkar, president, updated everyone on the issue of GST and said the new year might bring some hope for the industry. He highlighted how seven international tourism offices have been closed but marketing efforts will continue through digital medium. The members who have always participated in international shows through these offices were uncertain of future opportunities. Sarkar affirmed that IATO will collectively look into its members' needs and requested them to provide a list of inter-

national shows that they won't be able to attend because of closing of these offices.

The members further discussed other important issues like cleanliness. Many operators have stopped visits to some famous locations like Fatehpur Sikri, which lack proper civic amenities. Last mile connectivity has been another major concern and IATO promised to bring it up with the government. IATO members hope for the government to push more efforts in international PR and marketing which can lead to more business opportunities for the tourists.

BTEA hosts first roadshow in India

Saloni Bhatia
New Delhi

BAHRAIN TOURISM and Exhibition Authority (BTEA) hosted its first travel trade road show in Mumbai and New Delhi respectively. Seeing India's importance as a source market, the delegation included Bahrain's leading hotels, destination management companies and other tourism officials. Speaking to **Express TravelWorld**, Yousef Mohammed Alkhan, director of Tourism Marketing and Promotion, Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority said, "It is not difficult to promote Bahrain in India because both countries are so close in terms

of distance, culture, food among other things. Bahrain offers thousands of years of history through its culture and UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The people are very welcoming which is considered an important factor in international travel."

He stated that BTEA is looking to promote Bahrain as a leisure destination apart from the main focus on weddings and MICE. Talking about the wedding segment, he stated, "It is a comparatively new area where we are only focusing on countries like Saudi Arabia and India. We have successfully hosted a few Indian weddings in the past year and already have book-



Yousef Mohammed Alkhan

ings for next year. We believe we have a lot to offer for the India market where we shall extend full support of the departments, be it for immigration, customs, hotels, etc. Our goal is to get at least ten Indian weddings each year."

"While we started with MICE and weddings promotions for the India market, we are keen to promote it as a family destination as we have a lot to offer in that segment. That is how we are promoting it in other countries and would like to do the same with the Indian market. The middle class in India has grown exponentially in the past 10 years and we plan to focus on their holiday plans apart from

the luxury segment. We shall continue to grow the FIT segment next year," he added.

BTEA will be mainly targeting the cities that have direct connections to Bahrain and using other social media tools to market the destination. While the city already has numerous hotels that can work for the India market, many high-end luxury properties are also coming up. Alkhan stated, "Wyndham just opened this month and many keep adding every month. Jumeirah will be opening a high end luxury property by the end of February next year. The property will feature only 80 high end villas catering to the segment."

DoT-Philippines launches new marketing initiatives

ETW Staff
New Delhi

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DoT), Philippines, along with Her Excellency Teresita C Daza, ambassador, Republic of the Philippines to India, launched 50 branded taxis in Mumbai and two HOHO buses in New Delhi as part of the promotional campaign which will also run in Mumbai. Speaking at the launch, the ambassador said, "This is one way of raising awareness about the Philippines as each taxi and bus displays various destinations from the country. We hope to encourage more and more Indian travellers to discover the beautiful islands. The Philippines has a lot to offer and its slogan, 'It's more fun in the Philippines', has been very helpful in



attracting more tourists. India currently holds the rank of the 12th most important source market for tourist arrivals in the Philippines. During January-July this year, 72,498 Indian tourists travelled to the Philippines as compared to 60,658 tourists for the same period

last year, registering a growth of 28.41 per cent. In 2016, over 90,816 Indians visited the Philippines, registering a growth of 37 per cent."

DoT plans to focus on promoting some new areas and cruise tourism among the Indian travellers apart from ex-

panding the MICE and wedding segment. Speaking to **Express TravelWorld** regarding future initiatives, she said, "Total nine cruise ships dock at Philippines and we'll try to promote their routes with the India market. With an aim to further increase arrivals from

India, DoT Philippines has been undertaking several consumer as well as trade initiatives. The added advantage of visa-free entry for up to 14 days for Indian passport holders with valid AJACSSUK visas (US, Japan, Australia, Canada, Schengen, Singapore and the UK) contributes significantly towards our goal of attracting 100,000 visitors by the end of 2017."

DoT-Philippines also signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Singapore International Airlines (SIA) for a one-year joint marketing initiative that will implement activities to promote the Philippines in the Indian market. The agreement was signed by DoT's undersecretary Benito Bengzon Jr. and SIA's senior vice president for sales and marketing, Campbell Wilson.

Garuda airlines to start direct flights from Mumbai to Bali starting March

Saloni Bhatia
New Delhi

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, Republic of Indonesia, hosted a sales mission and consumer selling promotion in New Delhi from December 13- 21. H.E Sidharto Suryodipuro, ambassador of Indonesia to India, who was present at the event, informed on the new addition of direct flights to Bali. He said, "There are total of 28 flights flying between Indonesia and India. Garuda Airlines, the national carrier of Indonesia will be starting a direct flight connecting Mumbai and Bali starting March 2018. This will not only boost growth between the two cities but also add more convenient options for travellers. Because

of the growth we feel that Indian carriers should also come forward and start direct connection to Indonesia."

Confirming the news, Pradeep Chauhan, assistant general manager, Garuda Indonesia, informed, "Due to increasing demand between the two countries, Garuda has planned to launch a direct flight connecting Depansar Bali to Mumbai. It will be thrice a week and flying directly into Bali as it is the most talked about destination in Indonesia. We will be using a wide body aircraft which won't need refueling, eliminating a stopover possibility."

Speaking on the growth recorded this year, the ambassador, added, "The initial projection of the year was to reach

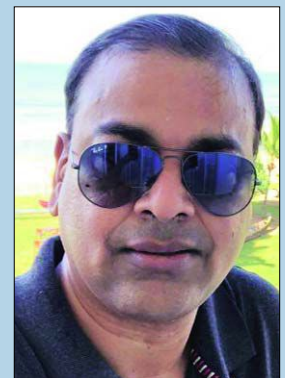
475,000 Indian visitor arrivals but due to the volcano disaster, there has been a slight downfall. However, it was short lived and we are again seeing an increase in numbers from across the world. We assure that Bali is safe and the effect is only in limited areas."

The sales mission saw many come in for more information on unseen locations. Sanjay Sondhi, CEO, OM Tourism, which represents Indonesia in India made a special presentation on some unique locations which can be added to the itineraries. He talked about places like Danau Toba, Morotai; Tanjung Kelayang, South of Sumatra; Morotai, North Maluku and many others which are still uncovered by the Indian travellers.



Club7 Holidays charts out robust growth strategy for 2018-19

Reema Lokesh
Mumbai



Sriram Rajmohan

THE TRAVEL industry is a high touch industry and the one who can deliver value for money quality service can never go out of fashion - this is the firm belief of the CEO and MD, Club7 Holidays, Sriram Rajmohan. Club7 has a clear focus for the coming year - one is to increase its pan India presence, secondly to reach out to both the B2B and the B2C industry with robust and path breaking tour itineraries both national and international and to strengthen its NRI stronghold further. The company has witnessed a positive growth in the leisure segment since the previous year and is aiming to close the year with a turnover of around ₹250 crore by March 2018.

The company has within its fold, key industry experts on its board and boasts a strong network and connect with product suppliers across globe. The company considers its client testimonials as key performance boosters and lays heavy emphasis on it. It also takes up client complaints and feedbacks as a positive opportunity towards growth and puts into place the required mechanisms to rectify and improve the products accordingly.

The company is also focused on the MICE market and investing heavily to strengthen its presence in the online space

The company is also focused on the MICE market and investing heavily to strengthen its presence in the online space. As part of its business strategy, the company will also be entering into some key tie-ups in the retail space to further increase their brand presence in India.

'CRUISING IS ONE OF THE MOST DEVELOPING FORMS OF HOLIDAY'

Highlighting the many accolades and awards received by Star Cruises, **Naresh Rawal**, VP, sales, Genting Cruise Lines speaks about how an increasing number of Indians are taking cruise holidays and celebrating their special moments abroad a luxury liner

By Reema Lokesh

Star Cruises has been one of the first to make strong inroads in the India market. How has the business panned out from then to now?

Star Cruises has been operating its fleet since 1993, taking on the bold initiative to grow the region as an international cruise destination with a fleet of six vessels including SuperStar Virgo, SuperStar Libra, SuperStar Gemini, SuperStar Aquarius, Star Pisces and The Taipan.

Star Cruises' commitment in offering best-in-class services and facilities is reflected in a host of recognitions and accolades received over the years. Along with all the accolades the group company Genting Hong Kong expanded its wings and launched the first-ever Asian luxury cruise line, Dream Cruises' two new vessels Genting Dream (launched 2016) and World Dream (launching late 2017) that will deliver the highest level of guest service and spacious comfort in the region. To capitalise the growing

market demand Genting Hong Kong also acquired Crystal Cruises. In 2015, Crystal embarked on the most significant brand expansion in the history of luxury travel and hospitality, which introduced two new classes of cruising – Crystal Yacht Cruises and Crystal River Cruises – and reached new heights with Crystal Luxury Air and Crystal AirCruises.

What were the elements that were re-looked and redefined with time?

Our parent company, Genting Hong Kong today showcases an impressive portfolio of cruise brands, each catering to the three major cruise market segments, which include the founding cruise brand - Star Cruises for the Asian contemporary segment; luxury Asian cruise line - Dream Cruises for the high-end segment in Asia; and the most awarded luxury cruise line – Crystal Cruises for the global luxury segment.



Naresh Rawal

Teambuilding activities are making a comeback, multiple venues, which are offering creative options for teambuilding activities are in demand. For instance venues with options of offering golfing lessons, Aqua Zumba, Bollywood theme cruises are attracting more meeting planners.

What is the primary target market for the company and

what are strategies earmarked to meet the target?

Cruising is one of the most developing forms of holiday from the Asian subcontinent. More and more Indians are adopting themselves to take a cruise holiday. Today a cruise ship can cater to all kinds of holiday makers, which may be from families with children, senior citizens, honeymooners and the MICE market which is the most evolving segment. More and more people are choosing cruises because it is an all-inclusive package which not only takes care of the stay but also includes meals, entertainment and covers various destinations at the same price.

It is hard to plan a land based holiday which has a mixture of all of these at an affordable price. I see a paradigm shift today, cruise passengers have evolved from the regular two nights itinerary to longer seven nights itineraries and are now with high demand for Balcony and Suite cabins.

How do you see business possibilities from emerging markets of India? Which are the new product upgradations that have happened in the recent times?

At Genting Cruise Lines we are optimistic of this steady growth as cruising today is fast reaching the wider leisure market in India, especially with the emergence of new visible trends in the local cruise tourism market. Indian vacationers no longer take long annual holidays, they prefer two or three short holidays throughout. The guests are spoiled for choice hence we see an upward graph wherein guests are also choosing longer cruise itineraries, i.e five nights and seven nights.

Year on year we are finding an increase in the number of guests celebrating their special moments; cruise weddings are getting very popular and making a niche in the market. Themed cruises are also getting very popular.

Tourism ministry announces 2018 as 'Year of Adventure Tourism'

ETW Staff
Mumbai

ON THE BEHEST of Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI), ministry of tourism has announced 2018 as 'The Year of Adventure Tourism'. The association will spearhead various activities across the country to promote

adventure travel to celebrate the year of adventure tourism. "The goal is to double the adventure travel in the country in the next two years," said Capt Swadesh Kumar, president, ATOAI.

For past few years the focus of ATOAI has been creating widespread awareness about adventure tourism

being one of the important facets of tourism in the country and the need to promote India as one of the most popular adventure tourism destinations in the world. India as an adventure tourism destination has grown in popularity both in the domestic and international market. The celebration of 2018 as 'Year of Adventure

Tourism' is expected to help in achieving the goals which ATOAI has set.

ATOAI is aiming to have a series of events, roadshows in India and overseas, familiarisation trips for international adventure tour operators to mark the celebrations. ATOAI has already given a wishlist to MoT for holding the below

events:

- India Adventure Summit in April 2018
- ATTA - AdventureNext in Panchmarhi, Madhya Pradesh in December, 2018
- ATOAI is also planning to bid for PATA Adventure Travel Mart and Conference in India for February 2019 in Assam.

SNTTA Emir Tours strengthens its commitment toward the India market

Reema Lokesh
Mumbai

SNTTA Emir Tours, voted the Middle East's Leading Destination Management Company at the World Travel Awards this year as well as United Arab Emirates Best Inbound Golf Operator for the third year in a row, by the World Golf Awards, is a well-established DMC based in Dubai and considers India a crucial market for business. With over 40 years of service, the company promises personalised service to travellers to the UAE and Oman, serviced by an experienced team of multilingual professionals.

Featuring a portfolio of more than 400 hotels in the UAE and Oman, SNTTA Emir Tours is a one-stop-shop offering services such as online reservation system, visas, hotel bookings, 24x7 meet and assist services, transfers and tailor-made pro-



Sai Rattan

grammes and excursions, with the services of multilingual guides.

With a variety of luxury transport fleet, the company offers all possible excursions in the region, including sightseeing, entertainment and amusement parks, shopping, cultural tours, adventure tours, dhow cruise,



desert safaris, overnight desert tours, etc.

Further, the company provides guaranteed quality assurance. For e.g. Comprehensive Tour Operators Liability Insurance, accredited by all tourism boards. Sai Rattan, managing director, SNTTA Group said, "SNTTA Emir Tours has been

one of the pioneers of destination management in the Middle East and we take pride in delivering memorable experiences to our customers for over 40 years. With 18 offices across the UAE and ISO certified processes, we cater to all kinds of verticals in the tourism sector, namely leisure and FIT op-

erations, groups, meetings and conferences, incentives, charters, series, weddings, ground handling, cruises and golf tours."

With sales representative offices in various parts of India, SNTTA Emir Tours aims to increase its footprints across India.

Cover-More becomes official travel partner for Arsenal Football Club

ETW Staff
Mumbai

ARSENAL Football Club has announced Cover-More, one of India's leading travel insurance providers, as its Official Travel Insurance Partner. The partnership will run for three seasons. Cover-More Group, parent of TrawellTag Cover-More, is a global specialist and integrated travel insurance and medical assistance provider operating in 14 countries including India, New Zealand, UK, Australia, China and the USA, where the group owns Travelex Insurance Ser-

vices. From December 2017, Cover-More has been creating Arsenal travel insurance, car-hire insurance and match ticket cancellation insurance solutions for fans attending and travelling to games throughout the season, as well as insurance packages that cover the club's pre-season tours.

Mike Emmett, CEO, Cover-More, said, "We aim to protect the individual Arsenal fan experience when they want to go to a game, whether they're travelling from Islington or India, Sydney or San Francisco. We will employ technology to

customise our proposition for each fan and use geo-location to offer them meaningful types of protection products. Examples are a ticket-protection product that also rewards fans if the team wins on the field or switch-on-switch-off travel insurance products for diehard Arsenal fans whether they live within or outside the UK. Arsenal Football Club has thrived on a pioneering and innovative spirit throughout their 125 years in existence. They make their fans proud wherever they are in the world and it is that focus on innovation, the fan expe-

rience and their loyal worldwide following that makes this an exciting partnership for Cover-More."

Dev Karvat, CEO, TrawellTag Cover-More Group, said that Arsenal is one of the world's leading and most supported football clubs with millions of fans worldwide and in India. He said that Arsenal Mumbai Supporters' Club was the first Arsenal Supporters' Club in India to be officially recognised by Arsenal FC in 2008. "This is an exciting partnership for TrawellTag Cover-More in India and globally, and we are thrilled to be as-

sociated such a historic and iconic brand like Arsenal," Karvat said.

The partnership will help Cover-More, which is part of the Zurich Insurance Group, to build global brand awareness by promoting its services through the club's digital platforms, on-pitch-side LED branding and post-match interview backdrops within Emirates Stadium. Cover-More will also become an official partner of the club's increasingly popular Emirates Stadium Tour experience, which currently welcomes 250,000 visitors per year.

'TRAVEL MANAGEMENT REQUIRES A BALANCED APPROACH'

A part of the Expedia family, Egencia provides services in 66 countries, putting travellers at the heart of business travel. **Amit Arora**, MD-India, Egencia Travel India shares how his company is continuously supporting travellers with engaging and effective solutions

By Sudipta Dev

What services are you offering to the Indian corporate traveller, and how does it simplify the whole process for them?

Egencia makes business travel better. Our easy-to-use online booking tool makes even the most complex travel programmes easy to manage across almost any device. Being a member of the Expedia family, we get access to superior supplier content, both domestically in India and abroad. And because we operate our own single platform technology, based on Expedia, we can provide the same great experience found in consumer products that travellers use every day, such as Uber and Google maps, integrated directly into the Egencia app. Adoption is natural when you have a simple solution that meets the needs of everyone - traveller, arrangers and agents. Egencia connects everything your travel programme needs – content, technology, service and reporting – in one place.

What are the cost advantages for your corporate client?

Travel management requires a balanced approach to optimise savings and productivity, manage quality, and minimise risk for business travellers. Being part of the Expedia family does mean that our customers get all the benefits of a TMC



Amit Arora

plus access to Expedia, the largest online travel database with over 350,000 hotels and over 475 airlines. We can provide clients with money-saving alternatives, special promotions and exclusive rates for travel in both India and internationally. No matter the rate selected, from Expedia, Egencia business rates or negotiated rates, the transparency gives travellers plenty of choices while keeping them in budget and policy.

Is travel risk management a part of your product offerings for the India market? What is the awareness level regarding this among Indian companies?

Employees are the most valuable part of any organisation, and that's why we pro-

Adoption is natural when you have a simple solution that meets the needs of everyone - traveller, arrangers and agents.

Egencia connects everything your travel programme needs – content, technology, service and reporting – in one place

vide risk management tools. For us, risk management starts before travellers begin searching for a trip. By having a clear travel programme, companies can maximise security, such as limiting the number of travellers on the same flight or adding custom security messages. In the event of disruption or unplanned events or emergencies, we send real-time alerts to travellers, arrangers and travel managers. And travel managers can track employees en route using Egencia reporting tools to identify who is travelling, their location and their itineraries.

How are you leveraging your existing global client relationships in this market?

Our corporate clients

range from global multinationals to small to medium enterprises. Across the world from Denmark to Hong Kong, from Paris to Bengaluru, our customers experience the same world class technology backed by consistency of customer service with local expertise. Our success locally is a proof of concept to potential global customers and to the rest of the world that the model of technologically driven customer service can work in India.

What, according to you, are the most interesting upcoming trends in the business travel segment?

Certainly providing a seamless, consumer like experience for the business traveller wherever they are in the world, and across any device from tablet to desktop

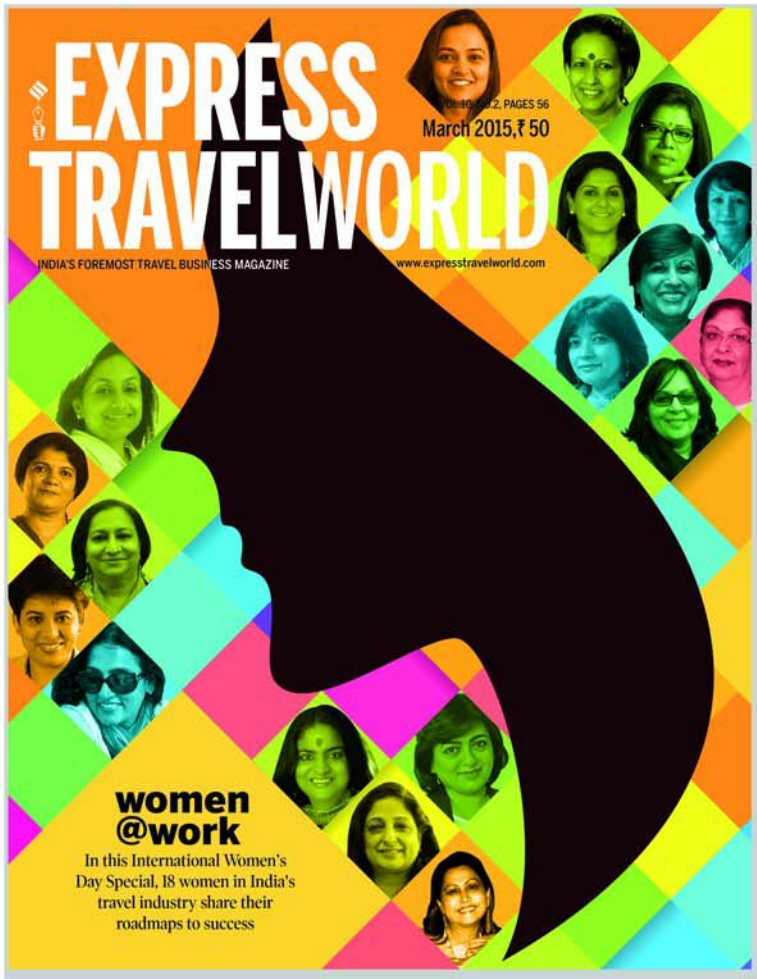
to mobile to wearables, is a continuing trend for us. Utilising apps now is not only for checking your itinerary but to shop and book travel or for directions using a terminal map to help you arrive at your gate. And from our end to provide alerts when something changes along with next steps to speak with our customer support service available anywhere in the world. And with a lens to the emerging technologies of the near future, artificial intelligence (AI), voice recognition, machine and deep learning have the potential to personalise the traveller's experience and return valuable knowledge and time to travel managers.

Expedia invested US\$ 1.2 billion in technology in 2016 and Egencia benefits from this investment in emerging tech.

Any other important factor you would like to highlight.

Expense management continues to be a pain point for most of our customers, travel managers and travellers alike. Egencia is revolutionising expense with open technology and a consumer-grade user experience. We provide a fully integrated travel and open platform expense management solution to create an end to end experience that captures booking, fulfilment and expense.

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Uniquely Telangana



Dotted with heritage spots, cultural avenues, adventurous locations, unexplored destinations, plethora of wildlife and old age crafts, the state of Telangana has plenty to offer for all kinds of tourists. Be it for young or old, the state has a mixed blend of offerings. Here is a look at how you can customise a package for a unique set of travellers

Apart from boasting a world class convention centre in Hyderabad for the MICE travellers, the state of Telangana showcases immense potential to please a leisure traveller. The tourism board has drafted many special themed tours catering to a unique set of travellers who wish to experience the real essence of the state. Right from pilgrimage towns, wildlife sanctuaries, heritage towns, the state has opened up with some new spots. Here we look into some of these unique offerings.

Culinary tours

The region, and in particular the city of Hyderabad, is known for its special traditional cuisine. The city has historic ties with Marathis, Kannadigas, Muslims and Telugus as well which gives it a rich and authentic cuisine. The Hyderbadi Biryani has already made its way across regions with other dishes like Dum Ka Biryani, Qubani Ka Meetha, Irani Chai, Sakinaalu, Sarva

Pindi being equally famous. Specially during Ramzan many visit the place to relish the food. On other occasions one can savour Mughlai cuisine with hint of Nawabi cuisine among other regional dishes. Many culinary tours can be organised in the city because every nook and corner serves some Indian delicacy.

Cultural festivals

Many international travellers who are seeking local experiences want to find such culturally rich destinations. Telangana celebrates many festivals like Bonalu, Bathukamma, Vinayaka Chavithi which showcase how people enjoy festivities in a traditional manner. The celebratory spirit is experienced across the whole region and people are seen indulging in various activities. It is best to organise trips during these festivals which can give people a glimpse of the vibrant Indian culture.

Heritage connect

For senior citizens who are keen on divine experiences, the state of Telangana is dotted with temples and heritage sites.

Every district of Telangana has famous temples that draw pilgrims from all regions. Alampur Jogulamba Temple, Mallela Theertham, Umamaheshwaram are some of the destinations in Mahabubnagar while Balkampet Yellama Temple, Birla Mandir, Peddamma temple and other temples are famous in Hyderabad. Yadagirigutta, Kondagattu, Bhadrachalam, Chilkur Balaji, Sai Baba temple and Surendrapuri, Edupayala Bhavani temple, Kaleswaram, Dharmapuri, Basara, Keesaragutta, Jainath are some of the temples that are popular with senior citizens. While planning these trips there are many serene locations that can host them during their vacations.

Thrill of adventure

For the millennial travellers who are seeking activities that give adrenaline rush, the sites at Bhongir and Vikarabad are tremendous opportunities to explore this Delta region. Many places near Hyderabad like Anathgiri, numerous waterfalls amidst the wildlife sanctuaries in Adilabad, Nizamabad and



Khammam districts can appeal to young people who look out for interesting experiences. Durgam Cheruvu and other trekking destinations close to Hyderabad are frequented by youngsters. These small day trips can be added to the itineraries to explore the new aspects of travelling in Telangana.

Nature trails

Telangana is blessed with natural wonders that are unique to its own. The Durgam Cheruvu, Hussain Sagar Lake,

Lumbini Park, Palair Lake, Pakhal Lake, Jurala Dam, Koisagar Dam, Kadam Dam, Pochampadu Dam, Singur Dam Reservoir, Osman Sagar Lake are pristine locations where one can enjoy some breathtaking views. Also many waterfalls like Gayatri Waterfalls, Kanakai Waterfalls, Kuntala Waterfalls, Pochera Waterfalls, Bogatha Waterfalls are new destinations to be explored. The Mallaram Forest and Tiger Forest can be added to itineraries who are willing to truly indulge in adventure.

ADTOI Convention showcases AP's tourism investment opportunities

Andhra Pradesh as a state offers much more beyond its pilgrimage destinations and the government is making continuous efforts to highlight its various tourism offerings. The state is slowly unraveling its potential to the domestic travel market while marketing to international travellers



When it comes to tourism, India is yet to fully utilise its potential with its numerous offerings. But slowly the states have come forward to go beyond conventional tourism spots and identify numerous locations that can attract travellers from across the world. Andhra Pradesh has also gone beyond religious in offering some unique spots to

increase tourist footfall. The presence of N Chandrababu Naidu, chief minister; Andhra Pradesh government; Bhuma Akhila Priya Reddy, minister for tourism, Andhra Pradesh and Ashima Mehrotra, director, ministry of tourism at a recent tourism convention showcased the proactiveness of the ministry to encash upon this opportunity.

In her address, Reddy informed, "The government of Andhra Pradesh is focusing on creating the necessary infra-

structure required for tourism growth. The tourism policy gives immense opportunities for private investments in various areas that can become future tourist destinations. The proposed Formula 1 racing track near Krishna river and Adventure Sports Academy in Kadappa district are examples of the state's efforts to push tourist inflow. We have already hosted several events this year like Hot Air Balloon Festival, Sounds on Sands while others are in the line up. We plan to



SPECIAL FEATURE



make Andhra state the next favorite destination for Indian tourists.”

Naidu informed that Amravati, the new capital city which is being developed as a green field project will soon be among the top five cities in the world. By 2029, the state is looking to attract ₹30,000 crore investment in the tourism sector, create 10 lakh jobs and increase the domestic tourist footfall to the state to 353 million from the current 153 million. Showcasing his strong belief in public private partnerships, he further revealed that the government has already allotted 10 acres of land in Visakhapatnam to the Lulu Group to build a world-class convention centre along with a shopping mall within the next two years.

He further added, “Andhra Pradesh will soon have electric vehicles as a cost effective and clean alternative because solar

energy is soon going to be cheaper and our state has an abundance of it.”

Commenting on the tourism potential of the state, he stated, “We will develop five tourism hubs namely Amravati, Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Anantpur and Rajamundry.” In his attempt to make tourism as a major contributor of the state's economy he spoke about introducing new policies that favour the sector. He requested all the members to send in ideas and queries in order to work with the government and make Andhra Pradesh a tourism hub for the country.

At the convention hosted by Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI), Rajat Sawhney, vice president, informed that this was their attempt to foray in the southern market. The association also announced the opening of their Andhra Pradesh chapter, led by K Vijay Mohan, president, AP

tours. He said that the association will be penetrating the southern market and unveil new destinations that can transform the domestic tourism circuit.

Addressing the audience, PP Khanna, president, ADTOI said, “Visakhapatnam popularly known as Vizag is called the Goa of East India. It truly has some unique offerings for the domestic market with its well built infrastructure and third cleanest city of India tag. Domestic tourists are keen to explore more destinations and we as an association want to unravel new places. With better connectivity the state can exploit its tourism potential to the fullest. They can go beyond religious tourism and open circuits like Buddhist trail, tribal trail with more investment on the infrastructure front.” This shows the keen interest of domestic tour operators in promotion of new locations and bringing them to a traveller's notice.



India's Most Favoured and Magnificent MICE Destination

Heritage Rich Hyderabad

Hyderabad has been a favourite destination for travellers down the ages. With a glorious history spanning more than 400 years it is a fascinating blend of the past and present. The city offers many attractions for its visitors like the legendary Charminar, Golconda Fort, Salarjung Museum, Mecca Masjid, Taramati Baradari and more...



The city is noted for its natural beauty, mosques and minarets, bazaars and bridges, hills and lakes. Hyderabad's unhurried pace and historic beauty invites one to journey through a living heritage. Meander through gardens and parks, bask in traditional hospitality, visit historic monuments, admire modern architectural wonders or shop to your heart's content in the ancient bazaars or brand new malls. Today the magnificent Rajiv Gandhi International Airport has transformed this burgeoning metropolis into a choice global business and tourism destination.

A World Class MICE Destination

Hyderabad has emerged as one of the leading metros in India for MICE destinations, ranked only behind Delhi, and is on the fast track to becoming India's Convention Capital. A major catalyst for this growth is Hyderabad's location and benefits for both MICE and leisure travellers. In business sector of India, Hyderabad is the new buzzword. The city has become the most favored destination for all International conventions, meetings and trade shows. The city hosted 18 meetings in 2014. The reason are the many world class convention centers and scenic resorts that have come up in downtown Hyderabad.

Hyderabad is also one of the most accessible cities in India by air and rail. The infrastructure inside the city is extremely well developed with numerous 5 star deluxe hotels that are conveniently close to the convention centres and well laid out road network. In



business, time is a major factor, and good facilities like these help save a lot of it. The meaning of Business meetings has changed during the last few years with the advent of business tou

Along with work, people are now looking for something interesting to do. So many of the times, the families of delegates too come along with them to enjoy a pleasant holiday. Understanding the needs, the convention centres provide facilities for sightseeing tours and interactive sessions for families. Hyderabad is also has quite a few tourist attractions that keep the guest coming to the city again and again.

Major Convention Centres

Not many know that Hyderabad was chosen as Asia's BEST MICE DESTINATION – 2012. Hyderabad has India's largest and South Asia's first world class convention center which truly have set the ball rolling for MICE in India. Hyderabad International Convention Centre - HICC can host up to 5000 people at a stretch. The city hosted 18 meetings in 2014. The significant contribution of Hyderabad International Convention Centre is highlighted by the fact that 13 of these 18 meetings were hosted in HICC. Hyderabad International Convention Centre has secured many more new conference bid wins for the city during 2015. It is all set to ring in its 10 year anniversary in 2016.

Similarly there are other centers as well like Hyderabad International Trade Exposition (HITEX) which is specialized to conduct everything from a business meet to an international trade fair, Shilpakala Vedika which is a multi purpose convention center, and Marriott Hotel. They all have facilities like well appointed meeting rooms, board-rooms and private dining rooms, interpretation facilities, high pixel ceiling cameras, exquisite lighting system, drop screens and luxurious staying options. They have hosted many esteemed national and international events and are already booked for many to come. Hyderabad's potential as a tourist destination and

immaculate infrastructure has helped a lot in attracting business travellers to this part of Telangana. .

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Shamshabad, Hyderabad too has been adjudged as the best airport in the country. The presence of Novotel chain of hotel, managed by the ACCOR group, in close proximity, is the icing on the cake for business and MICE travellers. Topping it all, is the Hyderabad Convention and Visitors Bureau (HCVB), which is actively engaged in partnering, collaborating and aggressively promoting the city as the best MICE destination of the country. It is not a small achievement that the International Congress and Convention Association, 2014 recognised Hyderabad as second best MICE destination in the country after Delhi with India placed at 35th position in the global ranking. Welcome to Hyderabad- A legendary, 400 year old city that has transformed almost magically into a must see destination of the world. rism.



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India to have 10,000 seaplanes; e-highways on anvil: Gadkari

ETW Staff
Mumbai

CLEAR WATER bodies dotted with 10,000 seaplanes, 'floating cities' in the form of ocean cruises and electric vehicles zipping on dedicated highway lanes – that's the future as envisioned by Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari. For Gadkari at the helm of affairs to overhaul the country's infrastructure, India has the potential to realise all this and much more. "I have been talking about seaplanes. If it starts, in India we have the potential of starting 10,000 seaplanes. We have three to four lakh ponds in India, plenty of dams, 2,000 river ports, 200 small ports and 12 major ports. It will cost less," said Gadkari.

The minister said he has asked his civil aviation counterpart Ashok Gajapathi Raju to explore a regulatory regime for single-engine seaplanes to facili-

tate introduction of such planes in the country as early as possible. "Seaplanes can land in one foot water and require only 300 metre runway. It has a huge potential and runs at a speed of 400 km per hour. Our ministry and the aviation ministry will finalise its rules and regulations soon. There are different rules in America, Canada, Japan. We will study their laws in three months," he said. The minister, along with Raju, had participated in a seaplane trial run of budget carrier SpiceJet at the Girgaum Chowpatty off the Mumbai coast last month.

SpiceJet plans to buy more than 100 amphibian aircraft at an estimated cost of US\$ 400 million. Describing cruises as 'floating cities', Gadkari said they have the potential to swell to more than 950 from about 90 at present. Cruises from India could go to Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand and massive



efforts are underway to boost this segment, including a ₹1,000 crore terminal being built in Mumbai. A policy is also in the works. Listing priorities for 2018, Gadkari said work will start on much-awaited India's first pod

taxi project after a high-level panel recommended inviting fresh bids for the same conforming to the strictest global safety standards. "Seaplanes, cruises, waterways, electric vehicles, pod taxis, catamarans, expressways

or the mammoth ₹16 lakh crore Sagarmala and ₹7 lakh crore Bharatmala initiatives will change the face of India's infrastructure," he claimed.

(PTI)

Airlines expected to hire over 7,000 pilots in next 5 years: Govt

ETW Staff
Mumbai

DOMESTIC carriers are expected to hire more than 7,000 pilots over the next five years, the government informed the Parliament. These vacancies are likely to emerge as Indian airlines plan to induct more than 900 aircraft into their fleets in the coming years. "The Indian scheduled airline operators have estimated employment opportunities for about 3,700 pilots and 3,600 co-pilots in the next five years," said Minister of State for

Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha in response to a question in the Lok Sabha.

A total of 3,603 pilots and 3,914 co-pilots, and 15,030 cabin crew are currently employed by scheduled Indian airlines as per data maintained by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Sinha added. In response to a question on whether Air India has a shortage of pilots and cabin crew, the government said that the airline has sufficient number of pilots and flight.

It added that Air India's re-



gional subsidiary Airline Allied Service or Alliance Air, plans to hire pilots from abroad because of shortage of ATR commanders. "Alliance Air is facing shortage of ATR commanders. It is having a fleet of ATR 72-600 and ATR 42-320 aircraft. The commanders for these aircraft are not available in the Indian market," Sinha said.

These pilots will be in addition to those provided by the aircraft leasing company along with leased aircraft under a separate pilot agreement.

(PTI)

Railways mulls dynamic-pricing

ETW Staff
Mumbai

PREMIUM CHARGES during festivals such as Diwali, Durga Puja and discounts for travelling odd-hours, choosing a less popular route or train or one having no pantry services, are some of the proposals the Railway Board is considering on dynamic-pricing. During a meeting with senior officials recently, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal as well as the board underlined the need for flexible dynamic-pricing in order to offer competitive fares vis-a-vis airlines. Three railway zones – the Eastern, the Western and the West Central – have prepared presentations, suggesting ways to introduce dynamic-pricing.

The zones have suggested that passengers be offered discounts on trains reaching destination at inconvenient times, for example between 0000-0400 and 1300-1700 hours.



They have also suggested that 10-30 per cent discount be offered for first leg as well as the last leg vacant berth. The dif-

ferent zones have also proposed the railways go for premium charges (10-20 per cent additional) for peak days and

festival seasons. Since there is higher passenger volume on weekends and during festivals such as Diwali, Durga Puja,

Chhath and Christmas, these periods could be earmarked for additional charges, the presentations suggest. Passengers could also be asked to pay extra for choosing high speed trains over others on the same route.

The additional amount could be charged on per-hour basis, depending on the time a passenger saved while travelling in the faster train, the zones have suggested. They have also recommended premium charges for overnight trains, trains with pantry cars, for allowing confirmed booking through e-auction a week in advance on popular trains.

Differential pricing for preferred berths like inside lower ones, cabins near doors on either side and an upgradation fee of ₹20 per berth have also been suggested. Officials in the Railway Ministry said a final blueprint for introducing dynamic-pricing through premiums and discounts will be finalised by December 31.

UP govt signs MoU with South Korea

ETW Staff
New Delhi

THE UTTAR PRADESH government has signed an MoU with South Korea to enhance co-operation in the field of tourism, skill development, culture and farming. A delegation from Gimhae city of South Korea met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Mumbai and discussed ways to improve co-operation between the two countries.

On the occasion, an MoU was signed for giving a new dimension to co-operation in the field of tourism, skill development, culture and farming, which will provide more

employment opportunities and development, an official release said.

Speaking on the occasion, Adityanath stressed on the cultural and historical relations between Uttar Pradesh and South Korea and said that the MoU will go a long way in cementing the bond.

“There are immense possibilities in tourism in Uttar Pradesh and South Korea. There is also a need to improve co-operation in the field of technology. This will not only bring investment, but also create employment opportunities,” Adityanath said.

An agreement was signed in 2000 to develop Ayodhya



Yogi Adityanath



and Gimhae as sister cities, following which a memorial

was constructed in Ayodhya which is visited by a large

number of tourists from South Korea every year.



DMCs: **VISION 2018**

Over the years, India has become home to many Destination Management Companies (DMCs) that offer local support for global destinations. As we enter 2018, **Express TravelWorld** spoke to leading DMCs to get their vision for the year ahead



LUBAINA SHEERAZI

COO, Blue Square Consultants

restaurants and bars, fully equipped fitness centre and an authentic spa experience.

- **Shandong:** Shandong Province nestled strategically between Beijing and Shanghai is easily accessible via a thrilling bullet train journey, where you can visit 'Jinan' the capital of Shandong which has over 72 magnificent springs including the renowned Bauto Springs. There is also Qingdao, popularly known as China's sailing city which is a beautiful port city with European architecture and a mesmerizing sea view. Bordered by the Yellow Sea on two sides, Qingdao boasts of Asia's largest bathing beach and is also known for its locally produced Tsingtao Beer. Additionally, Shandong is also home to Qufu, the birthplace of Confucius, the legendary philosopher and founder of Confucianism.
- **Thailand:** For Thailand, Show DC is Bangkok's newest shopping and entertainment mall which houses

hundreds of shops, restaurants, coffee shops, a cooking school, a rooftop bar, a very large duty-free shop and two theaters where visitors can watch spectacular shows.

- **Ethiopia:** Ethiopia's large diversity, arising from its history and in tune with its beautiful settings is dynamic and alive with energy and excitement. Here one can meet their ancestor, the hominoid skeleton of Lucy at the National Museum; marvel at the mystical churches of Lalibela, hand hewn from rock to create the Jerusalem of Africa and trek the Simien mountains to enjoy endless vistas.
- **Seychelles:** The Beachcomber Seychelles Sainte Anne Resort & Spa will be refurbished and extended as per the French club adhering to the Club Med's five star standards and requirements. Along with the new introduction, some off-beat experiences that fall true with Seychelles continue to be a day trip to Curieuse and Cousin Islands, cycling around La

Digue, trekking all the way up to Morn Blanc and Fond Ferdinand and diving at Desroches Island.

Brand strategy

Whether it is backpacking or luxury travel, there now exists a demand that is varied and interesting among the evolved Indian travellers. We are constantly in sync with the growing trends and are attempting to expand our horizons as a representative agency. Our focus has always been to offer the whole gamut of representational services, such as creative solutions for marketing, PR and sales along with significant media buying and digital marketing expertise.

Vision for 2018

It has been a successful year for our organisation with six new clients comprising of the most interesting mix – a premium hospitality brand, a country, a province, an airline and a luxury cruise liner. The year ahead seems even more promising and all of us at Blue Square Consultants are approaching the New Year with zest and enthusiasm to achieve higher heights, while continuously pushing the envelope towards newer horizons in the representation business.

(As told to Sudipta Dev)

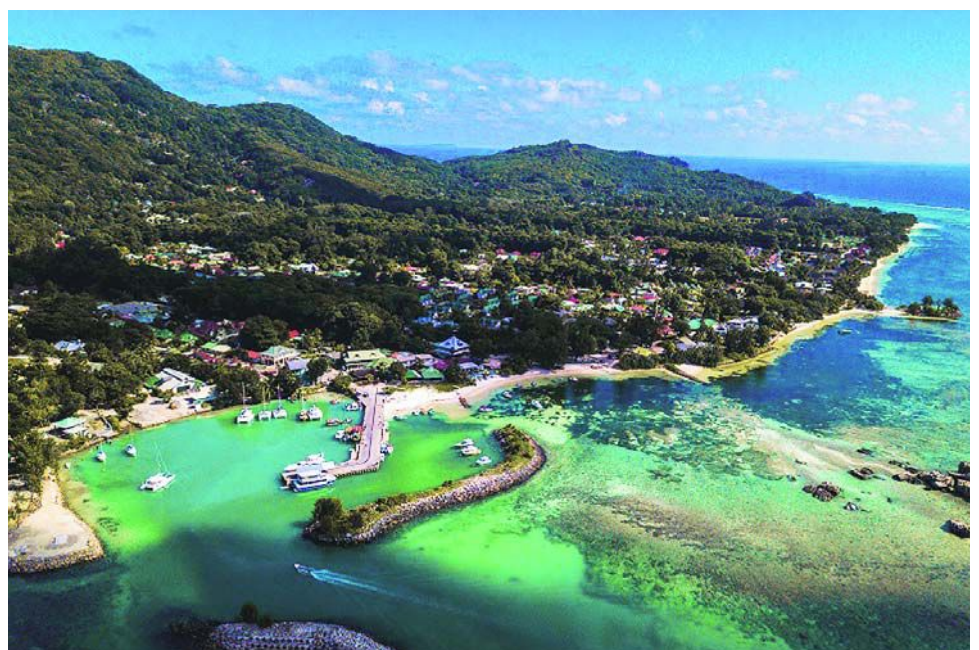
Destinations' new attractions

India is currently booming with a diverse range of travellers who are constantly looking for unique experiences around the world. Over the recent years, travel has certainly gone on to become a lifestyle statement. While Seychelles resonates with being a tropical paradise, Thailand has been highly popular as a destination of culinary delight and Oman is a beautiful contrast of all that was and all that will be. There is also Shandong which is a coastal province in east China that boasts of a fascinating history, majestic mountains and beautiful coastline. Additionally, we are also committed towards promoting Ethiopia, which is an intriguing destination with immense historic and cultural relevance.

The key attractions of our destinations for the year 2018:

- **Oman:** The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre OCEC which is situated within a purpose built, fully

integrated business precinct and has been designed to accommodate world class congresses, exhibitions, regional meetings, gala events, performances and concerts. New Muscat International Airport that is designed as an ICAO category 4F airports and shall be able to accommodate the world's largest aircraft, the Airbus A380. The runway has been designed to enable an independent parallel operation. Also, the new Muscat International Airport will have the capacity to handle 12 million passengers annually that will add to the landscape of Oman's infrastructure. Kempinski Hotel Muscat nestled within the community of Al Mouj Muscat encompassing over six kilometers of stunning coastline will be an unparalleled luxury destination in the capital of Oman. It is expected to open in Q1 of 2018, with 310 rooms and suites, state of the art meeting facilities, world-class



Destination's new attractions

The beautiful, intense and dazzling Principality of Monaco has long fascinated visitors from all over the world. Taste the Mediterranean art of living on wonderful excursions amidst spell-binding scenery, where the heart beats a little faster. Discover tales of localities embracing the nostalgia of the region. Witness the high life with soulful wellness studios, ecstatic art and culture, best-in-class sports facilities and a legendary fashion extravaganza from luxury brands. The destination is also home to some of the best gastronomic delights, pubs and casinos of the world, painting the city into a complete nightlife haven, every evening. Each personalised leisure activity here is a lifetime possession and a priceless experience. Exploring the magnetic heritage and capturing wide-eyed views of this seaside European landscape,

RAJEEV NANGIA

COO

Trac Representations

which blends blissfully with the modern, is definitely, a melange of all things fabulous. But if there's one place that tops every traveller's list, it is Monte Carlo. Experience a private tour of the principality or take to the sky in a helicopter. Discover the many attractions of the Principality in an Aston Martin and then later relax with a Duo massage for some well-deserved rejuvenation and retreat. Experience the exceptional menu signed by Michelin starred Chefs, which offers an enchanting view of the Principality at night. Ideal for a romantic candle-lit dinner. Then,



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MONACO



follow the bright lights of Monaco and step into the Casinos and their gaming tables. Store in, is an exclusive range of the magnificent hotel properties offering a luxuriant stay and the most mesmerising attractions, so you can experience Monaco like never before. Monaco is one place that will always surprise you with its ever-changing delights and experiences.

Brand strategy

This year's new strategy will revolve around the slogan 'Green is the New Glam', which will be used to promote Monaco as an eco-friendly destination. The new redesigned website www.visitmonaco.com would give pride of place to images, experience and showcase new innovative tools such as the initiation of the augmented reality (AR) plan, so as to, bene-

fit from the ability to visualising virtual graphics in the real world and indulge into environmental friendly promotions. To focus more on this aspect, we will be incorporating interactive video projects that will allow visitors to create paperless and personalised itineraries.

Vision for 2018

We present to the world our new Logo for 'Monaco Tourist and Convention Authority. This new, dynamic typology is in line with our vision, as the text logo is a direct invitation to visit the Principality and is easy to identify and to remember. It is available in several colors, to suit the DTC's various sectors of activity, for example in blue for cruises and green for sustainable development and to project 'Green is the New Glam'.

(As told to Saloni Bhatia)



ANJUM LOKHANDWALA

Founder and director, Outbound Konnections

careful preservation of its rich heritage, creative craftsmanship and celebration of the arts, Sharjah is recognised today as the UAE's cultural capital.

- Mleiha Archaeological and Eco-tourism Project, a premier tourism and leisure destination from Sharjah Investment and Development Authority, is inviting youngsters, their friends, and families to travel back in time to discover the wonders of the past in a new series of packages designed to be both fun and educational
- First shopping mall to open in Al Madam, Al Badayer Shopping Mall has been opened in the town of Al Madam on the Dubai-Hatta road, the first purpose-built air-conditioned shopping

mall in Sharjah's Central Region. It is less than an hour's drive from Sharjah city and 20 minutes' drive from Mleiha

- The Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) has announced that it has imported 288 wild animals from South Africa into the emirate, bringing Sharjah's vision for what could be the largest safari park project outside Africa one step closer to reality

Brand strategy

The biggest aviation news of the year was of Sharjah International Airport expansion, which will increase airport capacity from eight

to 18 million passengers a year. We are looking at branding and promoting Sharjah as a family destination keeping in mind that Sharjah has everything to offer for all age groups. There has been a considerable growth from 2016 and we are very happy with Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority's (SCTDA) efforts towards the India market. It was a double-digit growth and we are very happy to see that we are moving in the right direction with our strategies.

Vision for 2018

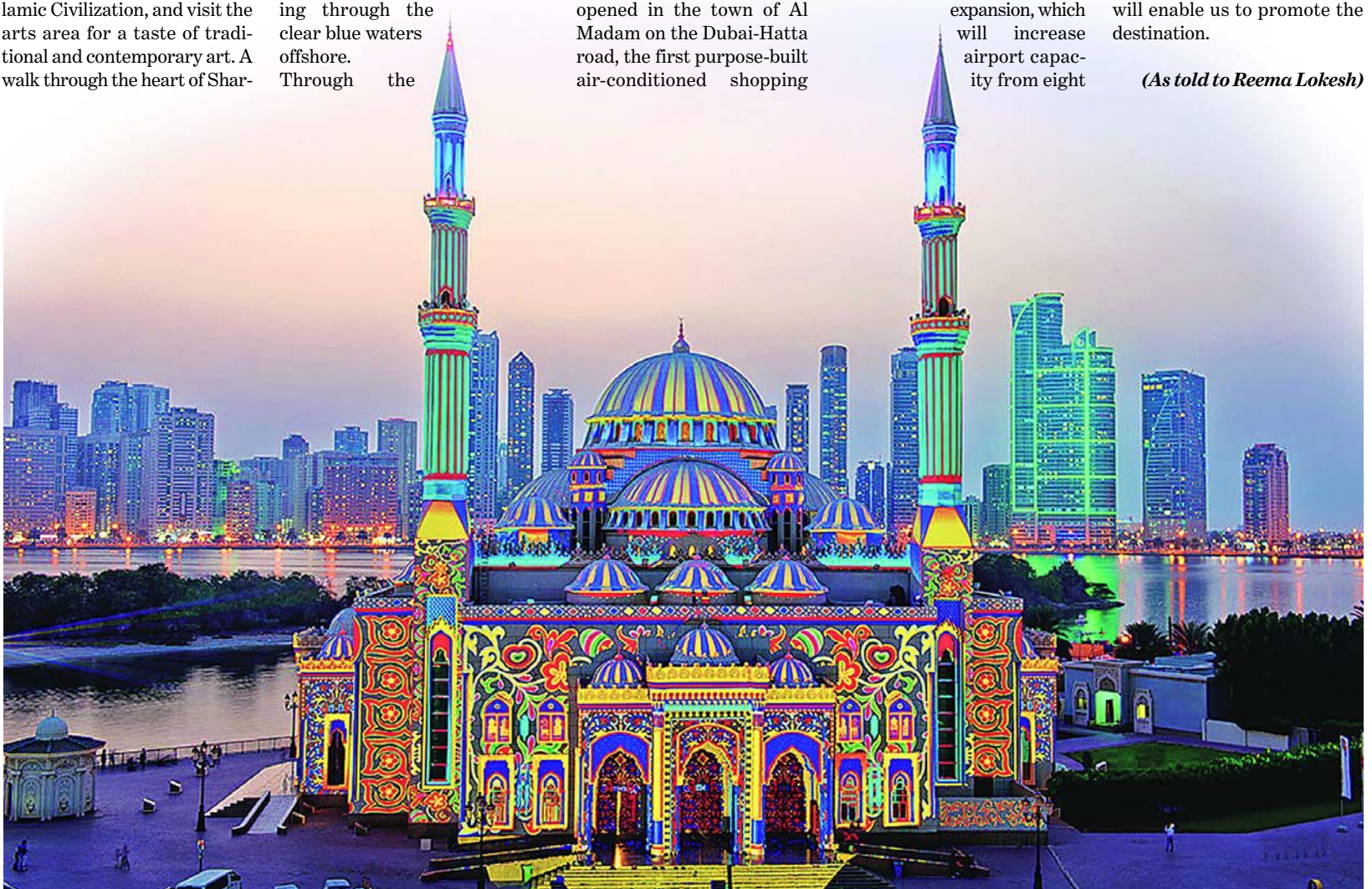
In 2018, we would like to definitely see the increase in tourist arrivals to Sharjah and promote the destination as a must visit Emirate. SCTDA will be doing an online training for our business partners and also extend joint marketing support. SCTDA is open to invite any ideas from our esteemed trade partners which will enable us to promote the destination.

(As told to Reema Lokesh)

Destination's new attractions

The emirate of Sharjah offers an inviting combination of culture, heritage, art and outdoor activities. Admire the rare artifacts at the Museum of Islamic Civilization, and visit the arts area for a taste of traditional and contemporary art. A walk through the heart of Shar-

jah will reward visitors with a glimpse into history, while outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy an exciting four-wheel drive through the dunes before relaxing on the white beaches or snorkeling through the clear blue waters offshore. Through the





SANJAY SONDHI CEO, Om Tourism Visit Indonesia Tourism Officers (VITO India) and Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA)

Destination's new attractions

Indonesia's new attractions include Lake Toba, The Borobudur, Surabaya with Mt Bromo, Jogjakarta with Borobudur and Prambanan temples, Lombok with Gili Islands, Jakarta with Bandung and Flores, Labuan Bajo.

Brand strategy

VITO's brand strategy was to showcase Indonesia through various channels like OOH media, advertisements in mainline media and trade media. We conducted multi-city roadshows and consumer events in malls; and participated in trade expositions, wedding fairs and

FAM trips. The main highlights were the new airline routes: Batik Air from Chennai to Bali, Air Asia from Mumbai and Kolkata.

MTPA's brand strategy was to promote Mauritius as a destination 'Beyond the Beach'. MTPA's promotional activities in 2017 was to showcase the amazing activities for adventure lovers like sky diving, ziplining, quad biking, sea karting, helicopter tours and also a life time experience of walking with the lions. The sports minded travellers, can enjoy a game of golf at one of the many championship level courses in Mauritius. 2017 has been a good year, despite Demonetisa-

tion and GST with an increase of over 5 per cent over 2016. Mauritius has seen a huge increase in the Destination Wedding segment and had a growth of about 30 per cent in that segment.

As part of the promotional plan, MTPA organised workshops for tour operators along with roadshows in five major cities in August 2017. MTPA was active on social media too. Familiarisation trips were organized for travel agents, media and wedding planners to give them firsthand experience. To showcase Mauritius as a luxury destination for the consumers, MTPA did a cover shoot with Bollywood celebrity

Ranveer Singh in association with one of the top lifestyle publications. MTPA also organised Mall promotion to interact with the consumers directly.

Vision for 2018

The year 2017 has been very productive for us with respect to Indonesia. We have witnessed a growth of 44 per cent month on month so far. 2018 seems to be even more promising. We start with participation at IITT in Mumbai then at SATTE in New Delhi followed by multiple city roadshows. To promote Indonesia as an attractive tourism destination in India, our marketing strategy will be, to be more visible to the

consumers through consumer promotion campaigns, food festivals and tactical promotion. We plan to organise more FAM Trips for media, tour operators, and wedding planners to showcase diverse offerings of the destination. We will be focusing on digital/social, print and electronic media. Apart from participation in key travel, MICE and wedding fairs in India, we will also increase interaction with consumers through radio, TV campaigns, mall promotions and encourage film shoots at the destination.

In 2018, MTPA is looking at 100,000 tourists and will aggressively promote Mauritius as a destination for adventure tourism. MTPA will also focus on MICE, destination weddings, luxury, heritage, sports and promote the island accordingly. The Government is also promoting film tourism and has announced a 40 per cent subsidy to film makers who spend over one million USD for filming in Mauritius. MTPA will connect directly with the consumers through mall promotions, sponsored content on TV and FM channels, sponsorship of Golf and HNI events apart. MTPA will continue promoting Mauritius as a perfect destination to travel agents, MICE agents, wedding planners in 2018.

(As told to Saloni Bhatia)





AMIT KISHORE

Co-founder Think Strawberries Taiwan and Jordan

Destination's new attractions

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) proclaimed 2017 as the 'International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development'. In response to this, Taiwan a showcase of eco tourism initiated 'Taiwan Ecotourism Year 2017' with the creation of special tours and packages targeted at this market, with activities planned throughout the year. Taiwan successfully hosted the International Firefly Symposium in April which attracted a never before 186 participants from 22 countries. The upcoming big festival in Taiwan is the Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival that illuminates sky with more than a hundred thousand hot air balloons and lanterns. The next festival is slated for,

March 2 2018. Taiwan is increasingly seeing a rise in tourist footfall from India, so much so that it now has numerous Indian restaurants with authentic Indian food cooked by Indian chefs, who know-of the Indian palette.

On the other hand, Jordan is a unique mix of history culture adventure wellness food and warm welcoming people. The key landmarks that are must see are Amman- the vibrant capital city, Wadi Rum- with its mars like landscape, Petra-seventh wonder of the world, Aqaba-on Red Sea and the Dead Sea - float without sinking and give a 360 degree diverse and incomparable experience to the traveller.

Brand strategy

To make Taiwan more ap-

pealing and familiar to Indians, we believe in educating travel agents as they are the first source of information. We have successfully organized multiple road shows, educational seminars for the travel partners who in turn help us promote Taiwan. Apart from focusing on trade, we are running consumer campaigns such as the recent celebrity endorsement campaign - 'Retreat Taiwan'. This created a huge leverage for the various attractions in Taiwan through a tour of 7 celebrities who experienced different aspects of this amazing destination. Taiwan is also being promoted through new-age technologies like virtual reality and 360 degree photos, through numerous events and campaigns. In Taiwan also, we are conducting special training sessions for guides to help them understand Indian tourists better.

Jordan is a fascinating destination being discovered by Indians who are keen to experience its amazing dimensions and offerings. We developed a strategy specifically to address

the Indian travellers focused on adventure, culture, faith, wellness and MICE.

Adventure: In the coming years we plan to promote this segment through both B2B and B2C channels. Adventure trips for the Indian agents, participation in the adventure expo are few strategies to name. Our campaign, 'Xtreme Jordan' that has already called attention to the idea of working out in the backdrop of picturesque Jordan is a visual treat and is popular among the youth. We are working on similar campaigns to be conducted in new future.

Culture and Faith-Holy-land: Jordan is rich in terms of culture and religion. This segment will become hugely popular in the Indian market considering the affinity for spirituality in our country. Another segment that is gaining popularity lately is culture tourism. India is well-known in this segment for the inbound tourists. Our people have always been open in exploring the cultural aspects of other destinations too. Jordan's vibrant culture encompassing the food, heritage

and history gives true Middle-eastern feel that is unmatched by any of its competitors.

Wellness: The popularity of the spa vacation has increased worldwide as many people are adopting healthier lifestyles. For this reason, Jordan has complimented its natural therapeutic sites with first class resorts offering a diverse range of amenities; to name a few, we have the Dead Sea, Ma'ain Hotsprings, an escapade into the Wadi Rum or a wilderness retreat in the popular Dana Biosphere Reserve. Wellness can be a value addition and pull as part of the itinerary, clubbed with other experiences such as Culture, Gastronomy and History.

MICE: Jordan is located at the crossroads of three continents, making it an ideal meeting place for international events. This popularity is being tapped by educating travel agents across the country through different road shows planned efficiently.

Vision for 2018

Lonely Planet recently named Kaohsiung, a city in Taiwan as one of the top 10 cities to visit in 2018. This is a major achievement and will drive increased tourist footfall in 2018.

We wish to manage this huge demand by bringing to their attention the vast potential of Jordan, not just as an adventure spot but as a complete family holiday, wedding, MICE and honeymoon destination.

(As told to Saloni Bhatia)





MEDHA SAMPAT Director Knack Marketing

preferences and likes. The exotic South American countries are the new flavour of the season. The colourful cocktail that gives a mixed feeling starts at the wild exotic beaches and parties at Rio de Janeiro, and then with some of the extraordinary attractions in Argentina like the majestic Perito Moreno glacier – the progressive glacier where travellers can watch the miraculous sight of the ice collapsing, the energetic Iguazú falls named as one of the seven natural wonders of the world, the stunning wine regions with a backdrop of snowcapped peaks that represent different wine routes along the Andes Moun-

tains, Ushuaia commonly known as the end of the world, the vibrant city of Buenos Aires along with its thumping nightlife, exquisite tango performances, exciting sports where soccer and polo is considered to be the finest in the world, as well as, fabulous adventure options which includes interaction with penguins, whale watching, the gaucho experience and so much more. The flavour changes in Peru, with Cusco being a one of a kind town and Machu Picchu which needs no introduction. The Atacama Desert, Salar de Uyuni – the salt flats in Bolivia and the list is never ending. It is a natural wonder, packed into one continent, which allows travellers to really make their holiday special in every way.

Brand strategy

South America offers an assortment of products which

can be packaged in an innovative way; hence it was important for the travel trade to understand the destination perfectly. Travellers are spoilt for choice. The diversity of the landscape, along with a varied portfolio provides several options for the traveller allowing them to craft a creative itinerary. Travellers want to create holidays which are beyond the ordinary where they have been fascinated with the marvelous scenery, great history, vibrant cities, variety of cuisine along with wine tourism bundled with adventure, sport and entertainment. Our focus and strategy has been to be able to offer the correct mix of elements to the trade based on client preferences. The idea is to showcase many attractions and assist the trade with important tools that allows clients to make informed choices.

Our campaigns are highlighting new and out of the box experiences which will excite the Indian traveller. Some of our campaigns even talk about the real-life experiences of travellers. This allows them to evaluate and differentiate between each place. Different experiences appeal to different people, but in reality with so much

diversity, the opportunity to live the dream, experience the perfect holiday and be spell bound with so many options makes travellers come back to us for more.

Vision for 2018

We specialise in introducing new destinations in the Indian market. The idea is to do this correctly while keeping the brand values intact and creating an aspirational value for the destination. The focus is to bring the two worlds closer, make it more accessible and add a comfort factor to fill in the missing elements in terms of product knowledge. Based on the choices the continent offers the intent is to equip the travel trade to sell it more effectively, to give travellers the most breathtaking experience, and make various attractions on every traveller's bucket list.

Your mind, your body and your courage will take you to far off places. Be bold, be innovative and you will be able to create an electrifying vacation that will cherish, allowing you to fulfil your deepest desires making this trip extra special in every sense.

(As told to Sudipta Dev)





BEATE HK MAUDER KAKKAR MD, Indiva Marketing and MD-India, NYC & Company

New attractions include the “New” Midtown Manhattan with Gulliver’s Gate, National Geographic Encounter: Ocean Odyssey, NFL Experience Times Square and Opry City Stage. Productions coming to Broadway in 2017-18 include *SpongeBob Square Pants*, *Frozen*, *Mean Girls* and *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, among others.

Brand strategy

NYC & Company has launched its new global tourism campaign titled “True York City” to showcase the unique culture of New York City’s five boroughs. This campaign invites travellers to discover the iconic experiences the city is known for, as well as lesser-known aspects that can’t be found anywhere else in the world.

New York City is the world’s greatest creator and exporter of culture. The city invites travellers who seek authentic experiences and appreciate the ‘local,’ from arts, design and retail to culture and cuisine, to explore both our iconic sights and our neighborhood gems—likely to be small businesses, locally owned and operated. The more integrated into the local culture the visitor becomes, the more positive the impact on the city and its residents. The hashtag #TrueYorkCity serves as a call to action for audiences, both local and from away to share their “True York City”.

Vision for 2018

For New York City to continue to be the top global trendsetting city in the world. NYC & Company recently

partnered with Jeremy Jauncey, founder and CEO of Beautiful Destinations, 20th Century Fox on its film *The Greatest Showman* and the James Beard Foundation on a new culinary tourism effort, such partnerships will be the ongoing trend for 2018. NYC & Company, announced the first-ever NYC Broadway Week Winter Stay hotel promotion to coincide with NYC & Company’s celebrated biannual Broadway ticket offering, NYC Broadway Week returns from January 16 to February 4, with tickets on sale January 5, 2018.

Having celebrated its 25th anniversary this past summer, NYC Restaurant Week will take place this winter, January 22 to February 9, 2018, with reservations open January 8. Returning for its second year, NYC Attractions Week will return January 29 to February 11, with tickets on sale January 18. Therefore, with multiple value programmes taking place over the same dates in January 2018, this winter will provide visitors with an opportune time to visit and save.

(As told to Sudipta Dev)

Destination’s new attractions

New York City is dynamic, constantly changing and evolving. Among key infrastructure developments are LinkNYC, offering free Wi-Fi across all five boroughs i.e. Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, The Bronx and Staten Island; the new Second Avenue Subway, with three new stations on Manhattan’s Upper East Side; the introduction of NYC Ferry—new state-of-the-art way to commute and connect in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx; redevelopments at all three major local airports; and an expansion at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. Evolving neighborhoods include Hudson Yards, debut in 2018 the largest private real estate development in the history of the United States with 17 million square feet of commercial and residential space. Additional developments include the Seaport District NYC, opening summer 2018 in Lower Manhattan, with 400,000 square feet of culinary, fashion and entertainment experiences, as well as upcoming developments in Staten Island’s Destination St George with the Empire Outlets, (spring 2018) New York City’s first and only shopping outlet and the New York Wheel, set to be the tallest observation wheel in the world.

New York City has the most

active hotel development pipeline in the country, with an expected inventory of plus 25,000 hotel rooms by the end of 2019. Noteworthy hotel openings this year include 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge- 194 rooms, The Whitby Hotel-86 rooms, Public, an Ian Schrager Hotel-367 rooms, MOXY NYC Times Square- 612 rooms and the New York EDITION Times Square- 273 rooms (early 2018) and The Hoxton Brooklyn with 175 bedrooms will open early 2018.





HECTOR DSOUZA President, L'orient Travels and India representative, SouthWest German Tourism

Destination's new attractions

SouthWest Germany continues to bring in a large number of visitors from India. Over the past seven years we've seen a growth rate of 290 per cent in terms of tourist arrivals from India. Indians are the highest spenders when it comes to shopping, dining and local travel, averaging a daily spend of Euro 175 per person per day. With a recorded duration of 4.3 days per visit, Indian travellers spend the longest duration in SouthWest Germany (Baden Wuerttemberg) as compared to our international average of 2.2 days per visit.

SouthWest Germany's uniqueness lies in the fact that besides castles and natural sceneries that dot most European destinations, it is host to a number of world class attractions that makes it a class apart. Notably, it is renowned for spas, cars and parks. Europe's second largest reserve of thermal waters lie in Baden Wuerttemberg, not surprisingly both Stuttgart and Baden Baden have world class quality thermal spas, providing a variety of water based rejuvenation treatments. Caracella Sp & Friedrichsbad (pronounced - Fredericks Bath), located in the elegant and charming city

of Baden Baden are simply the best deserving a visit from discerning travellers. Europe's finest theme-based amusement park - Europa Park brings in 5.5 million visitors every from different parts of the globe. Roller Coasters dominate the skyline of this park, with a variety of new attractions being added every year. The first gasoline powered automobile was invented in the state of Baden Wuerttemberg, needless to say there are three world class museums, namely - Mercedes Benz Museum designed in the shape of a helix, the Porsche Museum renowned for sport and racing cars, and finally MotorWorld, acclaimed for its car-themed hotel and vintage automobile museum.

Many festivals are held during the spring and summers months. It commences with the Heidelberg Spring Festival from March 17 to

April 21, featuring 90 musical concerts and a must for music lovers, held at Heidelberg. The city of Stuttgart too celebrates spring with a huge funfair in the month of April. The festival begins with the tapping of the barrel of beer by Stuttgart's Lord Mayor. The world's largest wine festival is held in the last week of August with over 250 different varieties of local wine served in 120 different stalls. International Horse Races and the Vintage Car Festival is celebrated in August at Baden Baden, while the charming city of Freiburg has its very own wine festival from July 5-10, 2018. Both Oktober Fest and Halloween are grand events at Europa Park, held during the months of September and October. Summer months also witness Illumination of the Castle at Heidelberg and a brilliant lakeside show (now in its 500th year) at the waterfront of the Lake of

Constance. Beer is synonymous with German culture; the second largest traditional beer festival is held in the city of Stuttgart at the end of summer and beginning of Autumn. Tübingen plays host to an international Chocolate Fiesta from December 4 - 9 where you can learn to cook with chocolate, pair beer with chocolate and even have a chocolate massage.

Germany's world famous Christmas Markets are held in all important towns and cities of Baden Wuerttemberg, the medieval market at Esslingen and the scenic Black Forest Christmas Market, outshine the rest.

Brand strategy

The brand strategy for 2018 is to actively target travellers on various platforms currently available, social media will also be an active mode for SouthWest Germany. Plans are still being finalised, our emphasis will be to train staff from the tourism industry, besides participating in exhibitions and organising couple of fam trips.

Vision for 2018

'Awaken to Freshness' is our tagline for 2018 for Baden Wuerttemberg, also known as the Sunny Side of Germany.

(As told to Mohit Rathod)





PRASHANT CHAUDHARY

President Salvia Travels

ered by Indian travellers. Besides, with casinos bigger than those of Macau, Sochi is also waiting to be discovered by gaming enthusiasts.

- **Inland river cruise:** An unbeatable attraction if one wants to have a slice of both the world, the razzle-dazzle of city and pristine Russian country-side and lots of nature. Our river cruise itineraries get one to explore Moscow and St. Petersburg along with unexplored country-side and lots of nature to create a once-in-a-lifetime experience.
- **Trans Siberian Train:** Embark on a journey of a lifetime through some of the most scenic train routes of

the world onboard the Trans Siberian Train one what could be the longest train ride you have ever taken. Unexplored country-side, undulating vistas, hundreds of large and small far-flung cities and towns that you never heard of before and along the way getting to explore places like Lake Baikal, world's largest freshwater lake by volume. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Lake Baikal is also the deepest, clearest, purest and oldest lake of the world.

- **Belarus and pre Baltic countries:** We believe "Regular is Mundane." Moving beyond the archetypes, we bring some very exciting sojourns to undiscovered exotic

land of Belarus and other former Soviet countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that offers tailor-made itineraries to suit any taste.

- **Kazakhstan:** Ninth largest in the world and Central Asia's economically most advanced country, Kazakhstan offers some of the greatest adventure of life in its windswept lake-dotted vast steppes, high mountains and lush valleys and wildlife. Besides exploring Baikonur Cosmodrome, world's first and the largest space launch facility, combined with hedonistic city nightlife, dazzling shopping centres, wide green leafy avenues of Almaty and museums are some other lifetime experiences that one can enjoy.

Brand strategy

Salvia as a travel brand in India has always been identified with travel to Russia and to some extent the other former Soviet countries also known as CIS countries. Since its inception in 2000/2001, Salvia's brand positioning has been singularly unique that no other company in travel business in India can boast of, that is, brand Salvia is today synonymous with travel to Russia and the former Soviet countries.

Salvia is already the biggest industry brand for travel to Russia. Going forward our strategy will be to further strengthen our relevance to the entire former Soviet region as we see huge untapped and latent opportunity in this region when it comes to promoting outbound travel from India to this region.

Vision for 2018

Our mantra for 2018 is "Regular is Mundane." In travel what is popular or common is often boring for the well-heeled and discerning tourist travellers. And therefore our vision for 2018 is not just to excite but also challenge the travel industry with a whole bouquet of unconventional tourism products from Russia and the other former Soviet regions.

(As told to Sudipta Dev)

Destination's new attractions

Starting with 2017 we have embarked on showcasing Russia and other CIS countries beyond just Moscow and St. Petersburg. At over 17 million square kilometres, Russia is not just the biggest country in the world but also boasts of the most incredible range of tourism products. Besides, the former Soviet regions like Kazakhstan, Belarus and the pre-Baltic countries offers some of the most exotic and undiscovered experiences. And therefore we are bringing in 2018 a lot of new attractions and products that offers some of the most incredible and breathtaking travel experiences in 2018! Some of the new products and attractions that

we are promoting are :

- **Snowy St. Petersburg:** Exploring Saint Petersburg during winters is probably the best experience that one can imagine anywhere in the world. It provides tailor made itineraries to suit individual needs. Staying in the snow-clad country-side villas, learning skiing, riding a dog sleigh, etc.
- **Sochi:** Hailed as the Switzerland of Russia, Sochi, venue of 2014 Winter Olympics, boasts of breathtaking pristine natural surrounding along the Black Sea coast. Lots of sporting and adventure activities, health resorts or a peaceful country-side escapades for those seeking out a time by themselves, Sochi is waiting to be discov-





ELLONA PEREIRA

Senior Manager, Sales, Munich Buzz Travel Marketing

Destination's new attractions

The new Zugspitze cable car, which was officially opened on December 21, 2017, will be in full swing over the coming months, parallel to regular hours of operation. During construction work, Zugspitze visitors are offered the rare opportunity to witness a technical

masterpiece in the making and experience Germany's most spectacular building site at first hand. The cable car's inaugural journey will mark the beginning of a new era, one in which the state-of-the-art Zugspitze cable car whisks passengers up to the highest mountain in the country in unparalleled comfort. Six years of

planning and construction, sometimes under the most challenging of conditions at 3,000 metres above sea level, have been invested in this superlative project which is an indisputable highlight not only for Bayerische Zugspitzbahn Bergbahn AG, but also the entire tourism-dominated region.

In the cold weather, the Nymphenburg Palace canal becomes Munich's longest curling track. Thanks to the shallow water, an icy cover quickly forms across the 500 metres between Gerner Bridge and Hubertusstraße. Beginners and experts are both equally welcome here. Curling teams

can also come into their own in the park café's beer garden. In winter, the beer benches are cleared away and two long ice rinks are set up in their place. The winter season gives the best opportunity to see the roofs of the old town as they look like they'd been dusted with sugar. From the tower of Old St Peter's Church or the Neues Rathaus (New Town Hall), you can see the entire city centre and on some days, even some of the Alps in the background, too. Visibility can be especially good in winter that's when it is worth taking a trip to the Olympiaturm (Olympia Tower). You are also

protected from the cold by a pane of glass.

Brand strategy

Munich has been in the past participated in several trade shows but in the coming year we will reiterate our interest in India as a major source market and also strengthen relations with the existing travel agents and we look forward to make new partners.

Vision for 2018

The year 2017 has been good for Munich as far as the Indian arrival figures are concerned. The highlight of the year was Munich's participation in the travel trade shows with the Jewels of Romantic Europe. Besides, Munich was earlier considered as a gateway destination for Eastern Europe but now this has been reckoned as one of the upcoming MICE destinations in Europe. We look forward to promote Munich as one of the luxury and MICE destinations of the year 2018.

(As told to Saloni Bhatia)





POOJA SABHARWAL

Account Director, Destination Holland, India Buzz Travel Marketing

new', we are presenting the Netherlands in a different way to tourists and business visitors. We will continue to promote popular destinations and cities, while highlighting lesser known sights and regions as well. Our promotional strategies majorly revolve around themes and attractions, including shopping, festivals and celebrations, nightlife, castles, soft adventures, tulips, wildlife viewing, windmills, food and beverages and cultural expeditions.

Vision for 2018

Destination Holland holds the vision of promoting the Netherlands beyond Amsterdam and making it a must go-to country in every European itinerary. We are looking forward to sustaining and adding further on the double-digit growth in the year 2018.

(As told to Saloni Bhatia)

Destination's new attractions

Holland is a beautiful country with plethora of attractions that attract visitors from India all-year-round. This year on April 1, 2017 'Zip Holland' opened its

gates for adventure seekers. It is the the most unique zipline in The Netherlands, that covers a distance of 350 metres, starting from the Bungy Tower and zipping down over the Scheveningse Pier, along the

Ferris Wheel and back down to the beach with speeds up to 70 km/h. Efteling, a fantasy-themed amusement park in Kaatsheuvel in the Netherlands is now being promoted extensively among the Indian travellers. The attractions there are based on elements from ancient myths and legends, fairy tales, fables, and folklore. A great new experience awaits anyone who visits Madurodam: Nieuw Amsterdam. It is an immersive attraction where you go back in time to

experience New Amsterdam in the 17th century. One can also see the Dutch roots of New York at Madurodam through Nieuw Amsterdam.

Brand strategy

The HollandCity strategy consists of three parts: districts, storylines and event strategy. The objective is to distribute tourism across all seasons and the entire country. With our motto 'Supporting the known, introducing the





SHEEMA VOHRA Managing Director-India Brand USA

new museums, theme parks, shopping outlets, hotels and resorts etc opening up regularly across the country.

Brand strategy

The US offers Indian travellers a range of destinations and experiences to choose from. Over the years the country has witnessed a constant increase in the number of tourists from India. To keep this momentum going and to inspire more and more Indian travellers to visit the USA, Brand USA has implemented several initiatives in the India market. The year 2017 had

been designated as the US - India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year'. The objective was to effectively position the United States and India towards increased trade in travel services by bringing the governments and the private sectors in both countries together. It also creates an opportunity for Brand USA to bring new programming opportunities in the India market to its US domestic partners. The initiative will also create inroads for the US travel industry with the India travel trade, and to facilitate better connections and opportunities

to promote travel from India to the United States.

We are also focusing on expanded co-operative marketing programmes and B2B marketing initiatives, product development, besides ongoing consumer marketing. Brand USA's consumer campaigns are meant to welcome prospective travellers to come explore the endless opportunities in the USA, and show how far they can go - geographically, spiritually, and emotionally.

Vision for 2018

Our vision for 2018 is to expand the quantity of US travel product offerings in the India market, while simultaneously increasing awareness of destinations and attractions beyond the major gateway cities. USA has an unparalleled range of holiday products and experiences, unmatched by any other destination in the world.

Destination's new attractions

The United States of America, being a large country, has a

mature tourism infrastructure with the most diverse and comprehensive tourism product offerings in the world. There are



Social? That's for consumers. For travel companies, social media means business

As digital channels mature in scope and power, the industry needs to catch up



USING SOCIAL ties to fuel a business model predates the digital age - think of Weight Watchers. Social interaction got digital as long ago as the late 1970s, when the first internet bul-

letin boards appeared. And the first online ads date to the early 1990s. From these disparate roots, the modern practice of marketing over digital channels has had years to evolve. But has it evolved enough? When it comes to "social media" - including household names

like Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram as well as more specialised channel - the answer is no.

The very name 'social media' may stand in the way because it encourages businesses to think of these channels the way end users

do. Consumers primarily consider them as fun and useful, but they are actually sophisticated media channels. Their technology capabilities have evolved drastically, yet businesses have not kept up.

The unique ability of digital channels to engage, measure, and create two-way dia-

logue is reason enough to take them seriously as tools which can support marketing, operations, finance, or human resources activities for a company. 'Social marketing' is just that: marketing. Businesses need to employ the same rigorous strategies, planning and

HOW TRAVEL COMPANIES USE DIGITAL CHANNELS

Most companies across the travel and hospitality industry have embraced online media to some extent, but they haven't demonstrated sophisticated use of digital channels. Companies' biggest misstep? They've tried to be just as 'social' as consumers. For consumers, these channels are social. For companies, they have to be all business. That means finding the place where their marketing strategies intersect with the ways consumers use these channels - ways that are not only social, but also different from how they use TV, radio, or print. What have travel companies been doing online? A lot of 'social listening' to observe brand mentions by consumers in the hope they'll glean nuggets of useful information. That is worthwhile to do, but not the only way a business should interact with digital channels. Some companies use these channels to engage consumers as a forum for feedback. One-third of consumers say they've left a comment or sent a message to a travel brand's social media page, and half of all frequent leisure travellers (defined as those survey respondents who took at least six trips in the previous year) do.

Some companies use this kind of outreach to provide more cus-

tomised services; for example, Hilton has extended its Twitter-based @HiltonSuggests concierge service to anyone travelling - regardless of whether they are staying at a Hilton property.

Travellers can ask about restaurants, activities, tours, or other suggestions and a local expert will tweet back. Socially, this is innovative. But it can be challenging to tie these specific behaviours to a direct uptick in sales or brand awareness.

Other companies use digital channels for giveaways or contests. About one-third of all consumers, and half of all frequent travellers, report seeing these offerings. These promotions can engage the consumer base, but the key is to ensure these actions align with other key business goals instead of standing outside them. For example, consumers can enter many of these contests simply by 'liking' or 'following' the brand. Companies spend time and money to run these contests - and hand out rewards with real market value in exchange for loyalty that may be fleeting. Fortunately, there are other measurable ways to engage travel audiences online.

measurements to these channels that they use with other traditional channels such as TV, radio, and print. That's a big operational shift, but it starts with a cognitive one. If the only thing you do today is eliminate the term social media from your organisation's vernacular and start referring instead to digital channels, you will have made progress for your organisation.

That's more than a semantic shift. The name an organisation gives something influences the way its employees think of it and the ways they use it. These channels are indeed social - but only for the consumers. For the businesses that use the channels to chase business outcomes, 'social' is a misnomer. If that sounds like doubletalk, consider the parallels: People who watch TV ads don't call themselves "target demos," and people who push carts around grocery stores don't say they're on a "shopper journey." It's okay to use a different frame of reference. In fact, it's essential that businesses do so.

If the shift is more than semantic, where does it lead?

How should you behave differently? First, you need to let go of the consumer-centric view of digital channels. 'Likes', 'follows' and 'shares', have limited real-world value unless you take additional steps to derive value from the relationships they represent. Second, you need to be more discriminating about the consumer connections you make online. Digital channels seduce marketers with the ability to reach "all the people" - but do you cast your net that wide with TV, radio, or print? Of course you don't. Targeting is the key, and when it comes to the ability to target down to the individual level, digital channels blow other media out of the water. Third, you have to be careful about the way you build digital marketing into the structure of your organisation. If you set it apart in a distinct department, it will be a lot harder to tie digital metrics to business metrics.

The shift from the 'social' to 'digital' carries the implication that these channels are much more than PR outlets. They need to be integrated into a company's overall marketing and operations strat-

egy. That's partly because they provide similar access to consumers. And it's partly because they provide a great deal more - like immediate feedback and a wealth of information about consumers, as a mass and as individuals.

Recommendation 1: Use business metrics, not social ones

Fans, likes, and shares aren't actionable enough

It's probably a safe bet to assume that no travel company tells investors its main objective for the next year should center on increasing the number of followers on social media. Yet by diligently collecting consumer likes and followers, this is exactly what businesses have been doing. They have been investing in performance metrics that don't tie back to traditional performance indicators. Measuring the number of "likes" is not meaningful on its own unless it can be connected to a larger business goal.

Instead, these companies need to hold their digital activities to the same standards of measurable return they do apply to everything else they do.

Traditionally, most travel

companies seek to drive more business by increasing awareness, consideration, trial, and retention of current and potential customers. With the right approach, digital can transform these efforts. Companies can also use digital channels to improve metrics in the key areas of awareness, sales, and retention:

Recognise the unique benefits each channel offers - and use them correctly

'Digital' isn't one uniform channel. It's a category of distinct networks, and each digital channel offers different capabilities travel marketers can use to activate a different business metric. Whether a business is trying to disseminate information, build networks, or inspire buying behaviour, the strength of a given digital channel relies on the number of people that can be reached, the quality of that audience according to time-tested marketing criteria, and the ability to directly engage people.

That amounts to a company using its marketing plan as the basis for deciding how (and whether) to use each available digital channel for

the specific strengths it offers, then use that channel to communicate messaging that aligns with the company's strategy. When technology gives you the power to find the people who matter most to your business, you use that power. Or you watch someone else use it to beat you. For example, the New Zealand tourism board wanted to use Facebook to drive efficient traffic to its website, newzealand.com. The board wanted to be efficient with its spending, but also wanted to make sure it was attracting targeted audiences who are genuinely interested in a trip to New Zealand. To expose potential customers to the idea of a New Zealand trip, the board ran a logout campaign (in which a longer video plays once someone leaves the site), then followed up by targeting those people with specific ads that reminded them to go to New Zealand. For the first month, the digital channel campaign was the number-one traffic driver to the tourism site. Web traffic increased 50 per cent, and the cost per arriving visitor was 72 per cent lower than with other sources.

Category/Medium	Targeting ability			
	Print	Radio	TV	Digital
Demographics	Broadly if at all	Broadly if at all	Broadly if at all	Individual level
Interests	Broadly if at all	No	Sometimes	In detail
Income	Broadly if at all	Broadly if at all	Broadly if at all	Yes
Behavior	No	No	Sometimes	In detail
Location	By region	By region	By region	By GPS location
Device	Doesn't matter	Doesn't matter	Doesn't matter	Drives interaction
Purchase patterns	No	No	No	In detail

ways you can slice and measure a digital audience compared with traditional media capabilities. In one example, the travel site BestDay.com used Facebook's Custom Audiences tool to reach its sales targets. By using Custom Audiences, the company could reach people who had visited its website, but had not completed their purchases. Targeting audiences and sending key messages based on behavior helped the company increase sales at a low cost per acquisition.

Is there a model for combining highly detailed consumer data from different sources to drive marketing? Every company can have its own recipe. But here's how it might look for a typical travel company:

Digital offers other unique benefits that travel companies can use to their advantage: Geo-tagging, past reviews, check-ins, and conversations. When they see where a consumer has visited and are aware of their travel patterns, brands can understand those patterns and preferences of individuals and groups and use that information to gain valuable consumer insights. This allows for even more direct targeting that can tie to revenue capture, conversion, and customer acquisition. When Scandinavian Airlines used the geotargeting capabilities of digital channels, it was able to improve the return on its ad spend by a factor of 15-20 and gain valuable new customers.

Because different campaigns or initiatives can have different business goals, travel companies can use the targeting capabilities of social media to reach different audiences for different initiatives, and they can tailor messages to specific audience segments. New back-end technologies enable companies to establish business rules that trigger communication based on specific travel patterns from a wide variety of sources. A consumer may receive a targeted message based on his or her location, review frequency

Increase sales

Best Western used digital channels to drive more booking revenue of business travelers and increase the success of its annual spring campaign. By launching a comprehensive digital campaign across multiple advertising platforms, the chain was able to target people who identified as business travelers with a unique "Be a Travel Hero" campaign that tied into a digital app the company consumers could use to share their dream vacations with friends and family. The approach to consumers was targeted, but the digital tools available were widely varied. By using the right mix, Best Western was able to drive significant revenue growth from this campaign. And because of the data-driven nature of digital, it was also able to track its spending and attribute the success to the correct channels.

Overall, the company reported an increase of more than 20 per cent in revenue over the previous year's spring promotion, and an eight-figure increase in sales revenue. It ended up being the number-one spring promotion in Best Western's history in terms of increased sales.

Every digital media channel is optimised for a particular goal. If that goal doesn't align with any of the company's goals, the company should de-

Companies also need to realise that digital is not a "one size fits all" channel. It's a varied toolbox, and each company will find different tools useful for different marketing needs

prioritise that network. No media department would buy space in every magazine or time on every radio station just because it could. Between the research that informs it and the quick-response technologies that drive it, digital channel marketing has an even greater potential than traditional media to enable well-thought-out omni-channel plans. By focusing on their overall omnichannel strategies, companies can adapt to changing technologies and digital capabilities as needed.

Recommendation 2: A waste of a lovely view
It isn't the number of eyeballs—it's finding the right eyeballs.

A vast potential to know and target the people you want. If you run a travel com-

pany, digital media gives you access to billions of consumers all over the world - some of whom are looking to spend money right now, in the very moment of their interaction with you. But which ones?

Almost all digital channels collect basic demographic information about their users, along with data like age, gender, geography. Many consumers reveal much more, however, including relationship status, past travel locations, education and work history, brand preferences, leisure preferences, and income. And then there's the information they don't have to choose to share - the information about location, search histories, and buying habits that the internet catalogs regardless of whether they share it.

There are fewer limits to what some consumers are willing to share online. The data is there. The question is whether travel marketers will use it. "Being able to target advertising to consumers based on such specific data is much more effective than guessing which ZIP codes your target market lives in," says Blake Chandlee, vice president of global partnerships for Facebook. "Historically, the industry never had the scale of mass media along with the ability to personalise that scale in the way social media does," he adds.

Ability to target

Collecting information on consumers is one step. Using it to target to very specific audiences is the catalyst that sets digital channels apart from other marketing methods. By targeting the precise consumer cohorts their marketing strategies demand, companies can be more efficient with their spending and dedicate more resources to consumers who will actually generate revenue for the company. This is where social becomes digital - and where friendly eyeballs turn into measurable business value.

Digital channel marketing may be 'just marketing', but it's very finely targetable marketing. Consider the different

SPOTLIGHT

and tone, or check-ins. Try that with television and print.

Recommendation 3: Be deliberate about whose job this is

*It matters where digital
“lives” in your organisation*

Does your travel-related enterprise have ‘a social guy’ or perhaps a ‘digital team’? Perhaps it shouldn’t. Digital teams can’t succeed if they operate separately from the rest of the company. If you’re trying to forge a link between digital metrics and business success, the digital operations need to happen right alongside the operational activities you measure everything against. That can’t happen if digital marketing lives in its own little box on the org chart: Companies should think of it as a strategic tool by which all functions can benefit. A successful setup is one that allows digital channels to cut across and support operations, technology, and marketing.

That doesn’t mean there’s a standard template for structuring a company’s digital channel marketing efforts. Ideally all parts of the company will touch that realm, but it might be ‘headquartered’ in marketing or under a ‘chief digital officer’. It might even take the form of a wide-ranging ‘center of excellence’ that touches many departments and reports straight to the top. No two setups are alike, and the way your company solves the problem may be unique enough to count as a ‘secret sauce’ that drives competitive advantage.

Digital channel strategy starts with deciding where digital responsibility lives within the organisation. Looking across all businesses, not only those in travel, a 2013 study conducted by the MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte LLP found 58 per cent of companies have appointed an individual to oversee their organisations’ social business initiatives.

At face value, that looks



More than 50 per cent of travel executives in a Deloitte survey said they believe their companies are behind the competition with respect to digital media presence

like a commitment. But if you appoint one person to oversee digital media, does it end up being a silo? What if you appoint an entire department, and concentrate digital media responsibility there? True engagement with digital channels happens when it occurs across an organisation.

The people tasked with using digital media should be ‘channel-agonistic’ - champions of the company’s business goals and whatever will achieve them, not champions of Twitter or Facebook or LinkedIn. Much like a mechanic places equal value on a wrench, screwdriver, or caliper according to the need

- and much like a brand team sits across all of marketing.

Getting creative

Traditionally, most people have thought of digital media as a public relations or marketing medium. That’s a limited view that leaves value on the table. Instead, travel companies can apply digital channels to support other parts of the business. Whenever a company evaluates its strategic agenda, it should consider all the ways digital channels can help. That determination drives the structure of a company’s digital efforts.

What stands in the way is policy, not technology. For ex-

ample, most travel companies don’t give their departments the power to remediate problems they observe online. They can triage and redirect, but they have limited resources to actually resolve the situations and strengthen their brands in the eyes of consumers. They have ‘social-focused’ employees who help consumers feel like their needs are being heard. But there’s a wide gulf between “we hear you” and “it’s taken care of.” Companies that harness these digital channels and empower employees to use them can build a competitive advantage in the way they cater to their consumers’ desires.

Conclusion

Stephen Colbert once went to a commercial break by telling his viewing audience, “Don’t touch that dial... and if your TV has a dial, you need a new TV.” In the same spirit, does your company need a new understanding of the ways it should use digital media as a hard-core marketing tool? More than 50 per cent of travel executives in a Deloitte survey said they believe their

companies are behind the competition with respect to digital media presence.

As travel companies move from ‘social media’ to a more nuanced understanding of digital channels, the possibilities are endless. But they’ll remain only possibilities until those companies consider the ways their consumers behave online and offline, before, during, and after their travel experiences. Measure the business outcomes, not the social aspects. Use the targeting ability that makes digital so powerful. And be smart about where digital marketing lives within your organisation. There’s a lot of work behind those three steps - but there’s a lot of wasted effort in ignoring them.

Digital media isn’t new anymore, but its reach and potential continues to evolve rapidly. The more quickly companies can adapt to these new muscles and integrate them with core business strategies, the sooner they can transform their digital outreach from an expense to an investment.

Source: Deloitte

Sustainable tourism: Roadmap towards 2030

Participants from around the world joined the official closing ceremony of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 at the Palace of Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland. The event reviewed the year's main achievements and discussed the roadmap for advancing the contribution of tourism towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

"2017, the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, has been a unique opportunity for all of us to come together to promote the contribution of tourism to shape a better future for people and planet and to contribute to making this world a better place," said UNWTO secretary general, Taleb Rifai, at the opening of the event. "We count on you as we embark on this exciting new journey towards 2030. I trust that together, as a sector, as people with the same vision and commitment, we will go far," he added.

Gloria Guevara, president and CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), mentioned, "Sustainability remains the bedrock of our activity. We will continue to drive the conversation on planning for and managing tourism growth, define a sector-wide response to climate change, work on how the sector can reduce illegal trade in wildlife and contribute to inclusive job creation."

"It is so important that we succeed in making tourism sustainable by making sustainable tourism economically viable, culturally accepted, and universally practised," said Michael Møller, director general, United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). "The United Nations World Tourism Organisation deserves great credit



for tackling this head on throughout this past year," he mentioned.

According to Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, State Secretary Economic Affairs (SECO) of Switzerland in the future, a strong international cooperation of all relevant actors involved in the tourism sector should become the driving force to promote sustainable tourism and to implement tourism policies efficiently.

Addressing the event was also HM King Simeon II, Special Ambassador of the IY2017 who stressed the importance of public/private partnerships for sustainable tourism.

The panel discussions had participation from ministers of tourism of Costa Rica, Mauricio Ventura, Jamaica, Edmund Bartlett and Kenya, Najib Balala alongside representatives of IY2017 partners such All Nippon Airways, Amadeus, the Balearic Islands Tourism Agency, ECPAT International, the Institute for Tourism and Leisure, HTW Chur University in Switzerland, Minube, Myclimate, PRMEDIACO and the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority in the United Arab Emirates.

As part of the legacy of the IY2017, UNWTO presented the results of the 'Tourism and

SDGs' report developed in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). On the occasion, UNWTO launched the Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals Programme as a legacy of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017. The programme aims at advocating for the contribution of sustainable tourism to the 17 SDGs and encouraging the full integration of tourism and the SDGs in national, regional and global agendas. It includes the future 'Tourism and SDGs' online platform - a co-creation space to inspire and empower

the tourism sector to act - developed by UNWTO with the support of SECO and an Ambassadors Initiative.

The tourism and SDGs ambassadors designated on the occasion include HE Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, president of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, the president of Costa Rica, HE Luis Guillermo Solís, Huayong Ge, president of UnionPay China; Dr Talal Abu Ghazaleh, chairman of the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organisation and Dr Michael Frenzel, president of the Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry.

Marriott International



Bruce Ryde

Marriott International has recently announced the appointment of **BRUCE RYDE** as the Asia Pacific vice-president for luxury brands and brand marketing. Ryde will be based in the company's Asia Pacific office in Hong Kong. In this new role, Ryde will own the luxury brand strategy in the Asia Pacific, driving appropriate representation and brand preference for Marriott International luxury brands which comprises The Ritz-Carlton, Ritz-Carlton Reserve, St Regis, EDITION, JW Marriott, W Hotels, The Luxury Collection and Bulgari. He will also be working in partnership with continent leadership to maximise guest experience through on-brand activations and build brand preference for both customers and investors.

AccorHotels

AccorHotels has announced the appointment of **GILLES DE RICHEMOND** as chief information officer. Gilles studied engineering at IPSA and began his career in 1998 as a journalist before



Gilles de Richemond

setting up Archimetric, a documentary website and publishing company. He moved to TPS then Canal Plus as head of distributed IT in 2004, then to Transavia France to head up its information system in 2007. He has been the managing director of Voyages-SNCF Technologies, running the voyages-sncf.com, group's technical division and SNCF's Digital Factory, since 2012.

Wharf Hotels

Wharf Hotels has promoted **THOMAS SALG**, general manager, Marco Polo Hotels, Hong Kong to vice president of operations. Reporting to the president, Salg will be responsible for the hotel management company's operational brand standards for rooms, restaurants, bars and events. This remit will also include establishing new revenue streams and further develop the standalone restaurant concept to hotel operations. On the other hand, **DALIP SINGH** has been promoted from hotel manager to general manager for Marco Polo Hotels, Hong Kong. Reporting to the group's vice president of operations, Singh will be in charge of the three popular Hong Kong Hotels located on the Canton Road: Marco Polo Hongkong, Prince and Gateway.

UNTWO

HE ELIZA JEAN REID, the First Lady of Iceland, has been nominated as a special ambassador for tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UNWTO launched the special ambassadors for tourism and the SDGs programmes as a legacy of the In-



H E Eliza Jean Reid

ternational Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017.

Hilton Shillim Estate Retreat and Spa

ABHIJIT GHOSH has recently taken over as the general manager of Hilton Shillim Estate Retreat & Spa.



Abhijit Ghosh

Ghosh has a vast experience of 17 years in the luxury wellness and hospitality industry, having headed operations at Soneva Jani, Maldives; Six Senses Ninh Van Bay, Vietnam and Six Senses Samui, Thailand. He has held senior positions at Umaid Bhavan Palace (Rajasthan), Taj Exotica Resort & Spa (Maldives) and Oberoi Amarvilas (Agra). His key areas of expertise are retreat management, luxury hospitality, guest service, sales, business development, operations management, financial planning and revenue growth.

Treebo Hotels



Sonali Ramaiah

Treebo Hotels has recently announced the appointment of **SONALI RAMAIAH**, a former senior HR executive at Cisco and

Alila Fort Bishangarh

Alila Hotels & Resorts has appointed **BINNY SEBASTIAN** as general manager of Alila Fort Bishangarh, located 1.5 hours north of Jaipur. With 20 years of global experience in hospitality, Sebastian brings with him a wealth of industry knowledge in the luxury hotel segment. He successfully ran prestigious hotels and resorts in senior management roles in the Caribbean and India.



Boeing, as the head of people function. In her new role, Ramaiah will lead all people initiatives for Treebo and will work closely with the leadership team to further strengthen the company's culture and solidify its position as an employer of choice. She holds 16 years of experience in the field of human resources. Prior to joining Treebo, Ramaiah worked at Boeing as the senior HR executive and was responsible for building the defense and IT teams at the organisation.

InterContinental Hotels Group



Vivek Bhalla

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has announced the appointment of **VIVEK BHALLA** as the regional vice president, South West Asia (SWA). Bhalla will be responsible for spearheading strategic growth for the company and operational performance of 31 hotels in South West Asia, across four brands: InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express.

He will also play an instrumental role in driving IHG's growth agenda to have 150 hotels open or in the pipeline in India within the next 10 to 15 years, starting with facilitating the opening of 33 hotels in India within the next three to five years.

Conrad Pune



Ishaan Malik

Conrad Pune recently announced the appointment of **ISHAAN MALIK** as the new front office manager for the hotel. In his new designation, he will be responsible for supervising the daily operations of the front office team to maintain guest delight standards at the hotel. He has been associated with established brands such as Starwood Hotels and ITC Hotels in various capacities related to front office and customer relations management. He joins Conrad Pune from Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts, Maldives where he served as the manager - front office, sports and leisure, and transportation services.



MARKET CONNECT Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism closed 2017 with sales mission and consumer selling initiative 'Wonderful Indonesia' in New Delhi



NEW OPPORTUNITIES Israel Ministry of Tourism hosted 130 travel agents from 17 countries for the seventh 'Israel - Where Else' tourism conference



SAFER, MEMORABLE The tourism department of Seychelles has launched a new leaflet providing tips to hikers, especially tourists, keen to explore Seychelles' walks and trails



MICE FOCUS Agents from major agencies in Mumbai and Delhi recently witnessed Oman's offerings as a MICE destination on a familiarisation trip conducted by the Ministry of Tourism, Oman



TOURISM EXCELLENCE Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurating 'Kerala State Tourism Awards 2015-2016' at Hotel Taj Vivanta, Thiruvananthapuram



NEW ATTRACTION Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis inaugurating the site of the Horse Museum at Sarangkhedra in tribal area of Nandurbar district



SWISS EXPERIENCES Switzerland Tourism recently conducted a five-city trade show in India, where it introduced several new attractions, experiences and activities



ART ACROSS BORDERS Art Bahrain Across Borders (ArtBAB), Bahrain's premier contemporary art fair and curated artists programme, recently debuted in Mumbai at The Bombay Art Society, Bandra



DIPLOMATS FOR PEACE Representatives from 95 countries were felicitated at the 'Diplomats for Peace' event held in New Delhi, for their countries' contributions towards fostering peace through tourism



STAR-STUDED NIGHT The launch of TGI Fridays' flagship outlet was attended by the creme de la creme of Mumbai's society



GOLDEN MOMENT InterGlobe Hotels has been honoured with the 'Golden Peacock Award 2017' for risk management for the second year in a row at the 'Golden Peacock Award Ceremony' in Singapore



LUXURY MEETS SPEED Aditya Thackeray and Biswajit Chakraborty, GM, Sofitel Mumbai BKC at a congregation of 25 Ferrari Cars hosted by Sofitel Mumbai BKC



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Date	Day	City	Time	Venue
12-Feb	Monday	Mumbai	11:00 - 16:00	Trident Hotel, Nariman Point
14-Feb	Wednesday	Kolkata	10:00 - 14:00	The Oberoi Grand
15-Feb	Thursday	Bangalore	10:00 - 14:00	Taj Vivanta, MG Road
16-Feb	Friday	Delhi	14:00 - 17:00	Le Meridien
19-Feb	Monday	Ahmedabad	10:00 - 15:00	Hyatt Regency

RSVP: Indiaroadshow@southafrica.net



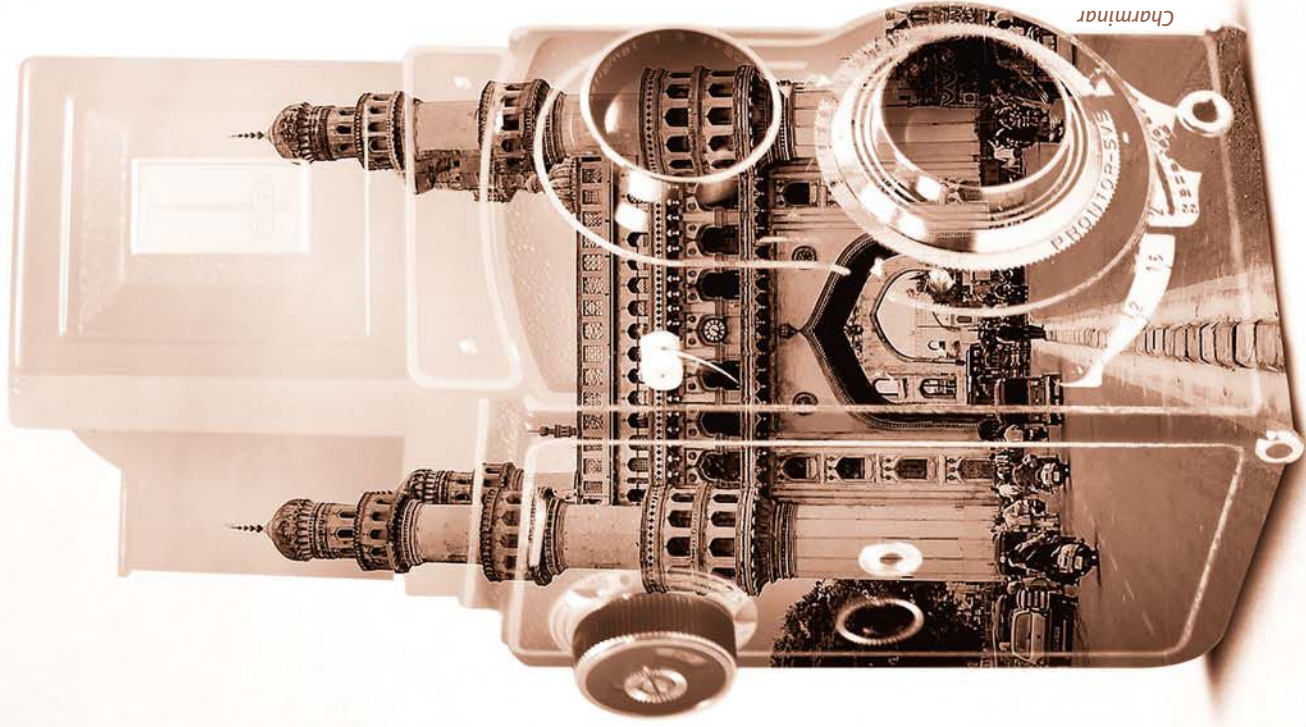
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