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NAMASTAAI

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VFS Global is **the world's leading outsourcing and technology services specialist** for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. VFS Global is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the **Swiss Kuoni Group**, which belongs to the **Swedish private equity company EQT**, one of Europe's leading private equity houses. With **2675 Application Centres**, operations in **139 countries** across five continents and **over 175 million applications** processed as on 30 June 2018, VFS Global is the trusted partner of **60 client governments**.

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THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

MEGA Trends
"Not easily visible" Opportunities

SHIFT Paradigms and enjoy fulfillment (JOMO)

***"Progress is man's ability to complicate simplicity**," said Thor Heyerdahl.*

***"I am not comfortable, till I am uncomfortable**," is another quote that amazed me.*

Why Change and Grow? Answers are absolutely clear. We are **either** moving **forward** or **backwards.** There's no 'standing still.' We either become stronger or weaker. If we can't move forward and grow stronger, we reflect our weakness. Others grow bigger. *Isn't that what's happening to many in our industry today?* It is time to shift paradigms, think beyond, apply new algorithms and act aggressively to sustain our positive motion.

The MEGA Trends our industry is encapsulating can attack us with FOMO - Fear Of Missing Out. FOMO is a form of worry or anxiety that we are missing out on something… others have more fun than us. **It can't be FOMO. *It must be JOMO*** - Joy Of Missing Out. JOMO encourages us to choose what we want to do and keeps us engaged. It is like fulfillment. JOMO energizes our living.

The time is NOW. Trends from IATA and others provoke us to **"shift"** to newer paradigms.

- 2036 Forecast - Air Passengers will nearly double to 7.8 billion as compared to 4 billion during 2017 (IATA).
- Biggest Driver is Asia Pacific (AP). AP will source more than half of the new passengers. An extra 2.1 billion annual passengers by 2036, for a market size of 3.5 billion.
- India's air traffic was over 135 million passengers during 2017. 117 million were domestic passengers. 998 lakhs in 2016 to 1,171 lakhs in 2017 is 17.3% growth.
- The "three" fastest-growing markets in terms of annual additional passengers in 2036 compared to 2016 will be:
  - China (921 million new passengers for a total of 1.5 billion)
  - US (401 million new passengers for a total of 1.1 billion)
  - **India (337 million new passengers for a total of 478 million)**

Here are some more trends…

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has changed traveller responses and behaviour. They can ask via the smartphone for availability, price, on-time queries, etc. AI-powered apps and technology are driving the speedy scenario. Here's an interesting comment - *By merging historical data with sophisticated machine learning algorithms, travel companies can now predict when and where travellers might want to go and generate personalized ads, thereby boosting sales.*



There's now Virtual Reality. Its possibilities are endless. Transformation will peak to unknown levels. Passengers may no more read - they will see, before booking. VR will be a key enabler.

In this "difficult-to-believe" scenario, **let's learn to believe**. TAAI cannot be a bystander. Digital Empowerment is our new initiative. TAAI-Connect can change the way our industry and India can grow beyond to optimize the trends.

GB Shaw said, ***"Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds, cannot change anything."***

It is surely the time for us to unfreeze and shift. We cannot be late, for living is NOW. Are you ready?

Let's do it together.

Warm Regards

Sunil Kumar R
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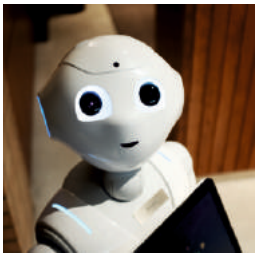


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ABOUT THE COVER

Bill Gates rightly remarked: "Information technology and business are becoming inextricably interwoven. I don't think anybody can talk meaningfully about one without the talking about the other." Technology has changed the way people work, communicate and even travel. Understanding this, TAAI has embarked on a unique initiative to Digitally Empower its members through TAAI-Connect. Read all about it in this issue's Cover Story.

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ET Now releases 2 Episodes on the 64th Convention & Exhibition of TAAI



Yet another huge visibility - Thank you Times Network! It was an outstanding episode featuring the convention and TAAI's way to promote Tourism. On 3rd June, at prime times of 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm, ET Now telecast a Special Feature on the recently-concluded and most successfully organized 64th TAAI Convention at Srinagar, J&K.

The episodes candidly reflected that TAAI Conventions have always been a sought-after event for the travel and tourism fraternity. It demonstrated to the viewers that TAAI is committed to promoting a destination very dear to millions of hearts, stretched in the cradle of the Himalayan Mountains across the crimson lakes - the most enchanting Kashmir valley.

Times Network, our Television Media Partner captured the happenings of the mega event and showcased it exclusively on their ET Now channel, which reiterated that we have a superb tourism destination, that one must visit and promote.

The episode started with dazzling views of Kashmir, the crown jewel of India. Hon'ble Chief Minister - J&K, Ms.Mehbooba Mufti inaugurated the Convention and urged the audience to provide a "Healing Touch" to the beautiful valleys and people of Jammu & Kashmir. She welcomed the delegates to this beautiful paradise, adding that it was a pleasure to host them in their scenic capital.

Mr.Sunil Kumar R, President, TAAI welcomed and encouraged all the delegates to promote tourism and support the state. He added that the three-day convention was supported by knowledge sessions, exhibition and many other features.

Hon'ble Minister for Tourism of J&K, Mr.Tassaduq Hussain Mufti addressed the audience during the inaugural function. Mr.Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director Tourism, Kashmir and his entire team were of great help in taking the event forward. He also expressed his pleasure at being associated with TAAI. The episode also featured several other dignitaries, who actively participated in the sessions and the events of the 64th Convention of TAAI.

TAAI Leadership Awards were given to the most distinguished.

The show shared glimpses of the golf tournament, the entertainment evenings at both venues - The Lalit Grand Hotel & Palace and SKICC. The TAAI Convention concluded on a promising note.

The 64th TAAI Convention was also broadcast by Kashmir Life Studio; The Digital Travellers (day wise releases); SUBSCRIBE; EXCELSIOR NEWS; PTC NEWS; Travelworldonline and more... A search on YouTube will give you an insight to all of these. Kashmir Life Studio's broadcast of Mehbooba Mufti's speech is available on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=giEhg-1BkMk

TAAI TEAM meets CMD of Air India



Mr Sunil Kumar, President of TAAI, greeted the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India Mr Pradeep Singh Kharola, presented him with a bouquet and a copy of NAMASTAAI.



On 12th June, 2018, TAAI team had a detailed interaction with the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India Mr Pradeep Singh Kharola. CMD invited TAAI to support the Airline in its marketing and complimented the "Digital Empowerment initiative of TAAI." He made a few key offers to TAAI and encouraged a positive relationship with the Airline.

The TAAI team also had a detailed interaction with Mr Pankaj Kumar, Executive Director of Air India along with his team - Mr Madhu Mathen and Mr PP Singh.

TAAI Team meets Vistara Airlines



TAAI Team met the Director Commercial & Strategy, Mr Sanjeev Kapoor along with Marketing Head, Mr Vishesh Khanna of Air Vistara Airlines in Delhi. Vice President, Mr Sanjay Narula updated Air Vistara team on the activities that TAAI is doing for the benefit of the members since the new team has taken office. He also explained on how TAAI could work in unison to promote Air Vistara as well as sought support and co-operation from the Air Vistara management.

Mrs Jyoti Mayal, Hon. Secretary General and Mr Neeraj Malhotra explained in detail the issues members were facing with regards to ticket stock and capping and also requested Air Vistara to include TAAI members in all marketing initiatives. Mr Rajan Sehgal, MC Member took this opportunity to brief them about the new technology initiative of TAAI. Air Vistara is now planning to fly international routes and requested TAAI's support to make it a global airline.

TAAI & Amadeus: A great partnership to promote Tourism Studies in J&K at Kashmir University.



With an aim to augment the career prospects of students in the field of tourism, Amadeus India, leading provider of IT solutions and pioneer in travel technology in India recently conducted a special training from 14th May to 20th May, for students studying Tourism and Travel Management at the University of Kashmir. The training was undertaken in collaboration with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) to introduce and prepare tomorrow's budding professionals for the job market.

Mr. Rakesh Bansal, CEO, Amadeus India, said, "Kashmir is one of the most preferred tourist destinations with thousands of travellers visiting throughout the year. It is only natural that this place should have more trained professionals in the field of tourism who have hands on experience in terms of latest technology and know-how. With this aim we reached out to the university and were pleased to see students' response to our training. We are trying to impart job training to the students which will prepare them well and open up a lot of avenues for them when they step into the market for jobs eventually."

Mr. Sunil Kumar, President, TAAI said "This week-long program of Amadeus to train about 90 students on reservation and ticketing process has been a huge success. The students are now inspired to get actively connected with the growing Travel & Tourism Industry that requires specialised training to meet the ever-increasing demands of the industry. We are delighted to join hands with Amadeus India who have played a valuable role in organizing this training for the students of J&K."

As a part of company's CSR initiative, the training focused on imparting the right skills, aptitude, knowledge and approach by showcasing different models and case scenarios. The students were conferred a training certificate at the successful completion of the course.





TAAI Jammu & Kashmir Chapter along with Dr. Shahnawaz Ahmad Dar (Coordinator MTTM Program) played a significant role in organizing this training at Kashmir University. Past Chairman, Mr. Shamim Ahmad Shah emphasized with students the benefits of this training. Chapter Chairman, Mr Zahoor Qari also addressed the students and assured more such opportunities in future. The coordination of the training programme was well supported by Mr. Tanvir Hassan Dar, Hon. Secretary and Mr Sameer Ahmad Baktoo, Hon. Treasurer, TAAI Jammu & Kashmir Chapter. The program was conducted by Mr Dhruval Sanjiv Shah of Amadeus.

Amadeus conducts such trainings across India periodically to boost the job opportunities for students after college.

The Department of Management Studies, University of Kashmir expressed gratitude to TAAI for this splendid initiative and requested for greater collaborations with TAAI in enhancing the skills of the tourism students.

The faculty members of the Kashmir University that were present were **Prof.Mushtaq Ahmad Darzi,** Head Of Department, Department of Management Studies along with the following members:

- Dr.Shahnawaz Ahmad Dar, Coordinator MTTM Programme
- Dr.Riyaz Ahmad Qureshi, Assistant Professor
- Dr.Aijaz Ahmad Khaki, Assistant Professor
- Dr.Iqbal Ahmad Bhat, Assistant Professor
- Dr.Jennifer Majid, Assistant Professor

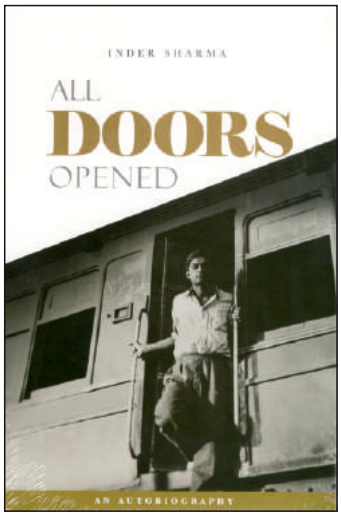


Master of Tourism and Travel Management (MTTM) program offered by the Department of Management Studies, University of Kashmir, has been initiated keeping in view the growing importance of the Tourism Industry and to meet the increasing demand for skilled and resourceful managers in this rapidly expanding industry. This advanced program focuses on building the understanding of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry with detailed operational aspects. It includes papers on Tourism, Hospitality, Travel and Tour Operations, Aviation, Heritage, Adventure, MICE, and Management, along with field trips to tourist destination within India. This program provides a sound foundation in business and management principles as well as a platform to develop specialist tourism knowledge and skills, which are essential for a successful career in the tourism industry.

ALL DOORS OPENED

A book by TAAI Past President Inder Sharma released





Chairman of Select Citywalk, the only travel professional to be awarded the Padma Shri wore many hats. But there was one that the late Inder Sharma, whose autobiography "All Doors Opened" was released by MP Dr Karan Singh and Lt.Gov. Anil Baijal at a glittering function last week, was particularly proud of.

The seventies were heady days in New Delhi. Connaught Place was the epicenter. Giant, overland buses parked just where Palika Bazar is today, BOAC and Quantas occupied CP's A Block across the street. It was an era of big ambitions: when Indians were dreaming of seeing the world and foreigners flocking to India.

Halfway down the Inner Circle was another prominent sign: SITA World Travel. The office always bustled with activity and whether it was a rail or an airline booking, SITA's agents bestowed the same smiling attention upon every customer: an early precedent to the later term 'customer service.'

At the helm of that company sat Inder Sharma, the doyen of India's travel industry. The audacious story of how he acquired what was initially a US company and made it the flagship travel house of India, is one of the highlights of "All Doors Opened."

But the autobiography goes back much farther in time. In "All Doors Opened" and like the true travel tycoon he was, Inder Sharma takes readers on several delightful journeys. From tiny villages in Punjab to cordon bleu restaurants in Paris, from conferences in Switzerland to satsangs at the feet of his beloved 'Guruji' in Delhi, the author sketches his life the way he led it: with guts, gumption, superb intuition and a large dose of puckish humour.

For those embarking on their business careers and dreaming big, "All Doors Opened" lays down simple guidelines to achieve big results. But more than that, it allows junior executives, for whom Inder Sharma is a legendary giant, a privileged stroll down the long memory lane of his highly successful and yet - compassionate - life.

Inder Sharma writes with ease and eloquence, preferring a chatty narrative to a dry treatise. Like a *'sutradhar,'* the author intentionally repeats certain thoughts, emotions and points important to him, to lend them greater emphasis.

"All Doors Opened" contains moving passages on his endless love for his family and friends, his decades-long loyalty to his Coffee Club, a circle of friends who met at a single venue in Delhi, year after year. In addition to many other fascinating details of how some of Indian tourism's biggest successes were registered only after Inder Sharma's persistence and futuristic vision, it also tells the gripping and incredible story of the later birth of Select CityWalk, India's signature shopping centre.

It's the story of a remarkable life, one that gives hope to the despairing, life to dreams and soundly dispels the commonly-held belief, that successful magnates must be uncaring human beings. Inder Sharma's autobiography urges readers to fly, follow their chosen star, but - to always stay firmly rooted in reality and grounded in humility.

"150 rupees a month to multi-millionaire, a fantastic journey of hard work, learning, and serving by Inder Sharma. This book is a must read for all those young men looking to do big..."
~ Prem Prakash, Chairman, ANI Media.

"The book makes an honest effort to recapture the many faceted life of Inderji and the times he lived in. Reading the book is like living those years with him..."
~ Balbir Punj, well known columnist and former Member of Rajya Sabha

"The author's spunk, humor, grace and dignity makes it a textbook of an exemplary life."
~ Padma Rao Sundarji, Editor, "All Doors Opened"

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SUNIL KUMAR
AT THE 74TH IATA AGM - SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



The IATA Annual General Meeting (AGM) and World Air Transport Summit is the world's largest gathering of airline leaders. The 74th AGM, hosted by Qantas, brought 1,000 industry leaders to Sydney on 3-5 June 2018.





Some excerpts from the presentation by Director General & CEO of IATA Mr.Alexander de Juniac.

The IATA Annual General Meeting (AGM) and World Air Transport Summit is the world's largest gathering of airline leaders. The 74th AGM, hosted by Qantas, brought 1,000 industry leaders to Sydney on 3-5 June 2018.

To achieve maximum benefit from NewGen ISS we created a Global Delivery Center operating across four locations: Beijing, Madrid, Montreal, and Singapore. It is a massive change, impacting about a quarter of our total staff.

Learning from key points shared at the AGM

Today IATA is an association of some 290 airlines. Together they meet 82% (4) of the global demand for air transport services - both cargo and passenger.

NewGen ISS is the most extensive and ambitious modernization of the IATA Billing and Settlement Plan since it was created in 1971. On 8 March 2018, Norway became the first market to implement NewGen ISS. Rollout across all BSPs is taking place in a series of waves and is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2020.

Transparency in Payments is being introduced in conjunction with NewGen ISS. TIP reveals the different costs associated with each form of payment in the BSP. At present, airlines only see the settlement cost after the fact, if at all. No form of payment is barred by TIP but agents can only use those forms to which an airline has previously given consent. Importantly, TIP allows agents to use their own credit cards if an airline approves. http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/airline-distribution/Pages/transparency-payments.aspx

The costs involved for the value delivered. When cash is moved through the BSP, the estimated transaction cost is about $240 for every million dollars of sales. But for agents using virtual cards, costs could skyrocket to an estimated $29,000 per million dollars of transactions. Since TIP became public, competition has been stimulated and some of these products have significantly reduced their prices.

Over the last few years the world has come to a new consciousness on diversity issues, particularly with respect to women in the workplace. As you can see from this room, we have work to do on gender balance.

IATA's diversity initiative - called Mosaic - is driving our own internal change. For example, we now insist on a gender-diverse list of candidates for new hires. And we are reviewing work policies to ensure that IATA fosters diverse talent regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and so on.

Mr.Michael McCormack, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, addressed the AGM.

Excerpts include:

"Welcome to Australia and the magnificent city of Sydney I do hope you will have a moment beyond your conference agenda to enjoy our 'Aussie' sights and attractions; and please, do come back again, soon!

I acknowledge the central role you play in supporting, driving and promoting a safe international aviation industry - and in maximising the benefits for sectors like tourism.

Aviation has been absolutely central to this nation's development. Aviation is a core component of connecting people across our nation, from our capital cities right down to our regional communities.

~Michael McCormack

We're a country 3,860 kilometres long - a vast country, with a population of around 24 million spread on a vast land mass of 7.7 million square kilometres. We're pretty big! To build and progress as a nation, we've had to learn how to move people and freight, to connect communities and provide vital links for our farmers and miners - Aviation has been absolutely central to this nation's development. Aviation is a core component of connecting people across our nation, from our capital cities right down to our regional communities. And aviation brings Australia to the rest of the world in terms of tourism, trade, and most importantly, people to people links, just as the ships did, not that long ago - albeit a little bit longer.

Our host airline for today, Qantas, enjoys the mantle of the oldest continuously operating airline in the world.

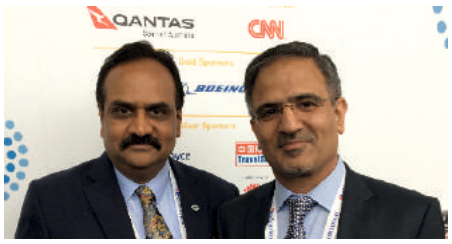
On the 1st of December 1947, Qantas began the famous Kangaroo Route - the first regular weekly service from Australia to London. The journey required seven stops and four days. And here we are in 2018 - we're delighted that we now have a non-stop direct link between Australia and Europe, with Qantas delivering a 17 hour service between Perth and London in the Boeing 787."

"Tourism Research Australia recently reported that international visitor arrivals continued at record levels, with nine million visitors arriving on our fair shores. This is a remarkable outcome - to be precise, 9.02 million international visitors in the year to March 2018…an increase of 7.7 per cent on the previous 12 months. Our visitors spent $41.3 billion during their stay, an increase of 6 per cent on the previous year. People are coming to Australia for business, to advance their education, to visit friends and families, and to experience all the national treasures on offer."















His Excellency Akbar Al Baker is the 77th Chairman of IATA's Board of Governors

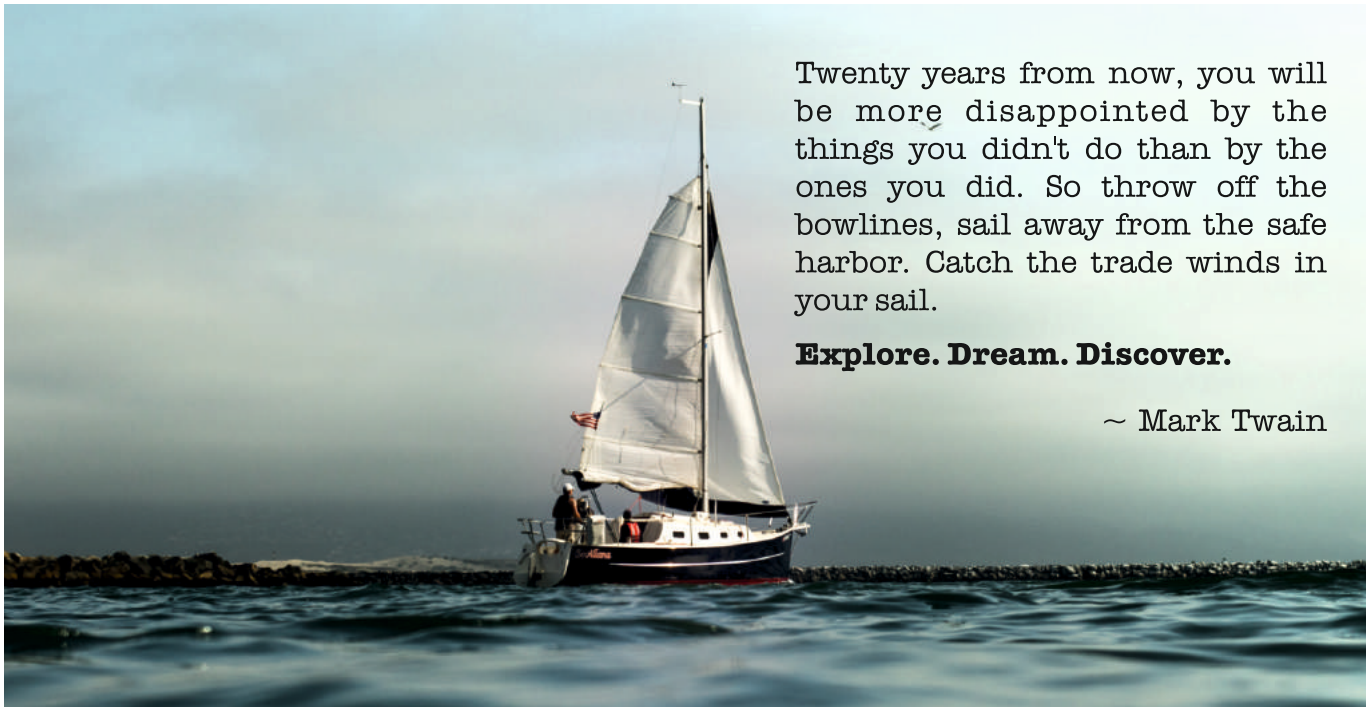


IATA announced that Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, has assumed his duties as Chairman of the IATA Board of Governors for a one-year term effective from the conclusion of the 74th IATA Annual General Meeting in Sydney, Australia. Al Baker is the 77th Chair of the IATA BoG and the first CEO from Qatar Airways to hold the position.

Mr.Naresh Goyal on IATA's Board of Governors for 2018-2019

Mr.Naresh Goyal, Chairman - Jet Airways (India) Ltd., will serve on IATA Board of Governors for 2018-2019. We wish him all success.





Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sail.

Explore. Dream. Discover.

~ Mark Twain

UFTAA Meets at Madrid for their Second Board Meeting

Led by TAAI President Mr.Sunil Kumar, UFTAA had its Second Board of Directors Meeting at Madrid, Spain on the 24th & 25th May, 2018 at Crown Plaza.

UFTAA Board meets **four times** a year. The key matters the Board deliberated upon were:

a. IATA Matters - NewGen ISS & NDC - Review of PAPGJC meeting held at Madrid on 23rd & 24th May

b. Credit Card acceptance by Airlines - Resolution 890

c. UFTAA taking a strong stand on behalf of Central & Western Africa who are going through immense challenges with Airlines & IATA matters

d. UFTAA's way forward on technology

e. UFTAA's Tourism Forum

f. ADM's a huge challenge to the industry - Review of TAAI's proposal before PAPGJC: This was deliberated upon based on the discussions held at the PAPGJC meeting

g. Planning for UFTAA Congress

h. Review of administrative and priority matters including UFTAA HQ matters; membership program; B2B opportunities and other key areas.









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UFTAA initiates a mega meet with IATA on Central & West Africa matters

On 22nd May, 2018 - thanks to UFTAA, the most important meeting between the representatives of Associations in Central & West Africa and IATA was held. The four hour meeting focussed on the need to streamline IATA Governance and Airlines matters that are posing a huge challenge to CWA. Uniquely, CWA Travel Associations (under FISAVET) operates a 'Mutual Fund' for their members in place of the regular financial security to be submitted by their members. This is another unique feature like the TAAI IATA Joint Bank Guarantee, which was re-introduced, thanks to the most effective role played by TAAI and supported by UFTAA during the 2014 presentation at San Diego PAPGJC Meet.

Delegates from various Associations met a high-powered delegation from IATA in the presence of UFTAA President Mr Sunil Kumar R & Vice President Mr Yossi Fatael.



PAPGJC MEETING AT MADRID

President Sunil and the others in UFTAA Team attend deliberations on key matters impacting Travel Agencies

The 31st PAPGJC Meeting (Passenger Agency Program Global Joint Council) met at Madrid, Spain on 23rd & 24th May 2018. This was an important meeting since it reviewed in detail - matters pertaining to NewGen ISS which was being launched globally in different waves. President of TAAI, Mr Sunil Kumar, who is also the President of UFTAA, along with his UFTAA Team joined the two day deliberations on industry matters and governance. PAPGJC has representatives of 12 Airlines and is the parent body of APJC.

Some of the matters that were deliberated at the PAPGJC are given here, which are of immediate interest to the agencies.

A. NewGen ISS implementation

The proposed date for cut-off in India is scheduled as a part of second wave countries - around the last quarter of 2018.

NOTICE TO MIGRATE TO RESOLUTION 812 for INDIA is expected for release on 3rd July 2018
(90 Days Notice Period)

When NewGen ISS is implemented in a market, Resolution 812 comes into effect. This includes the provisions related to the introduction of the new accreditation models, the new risk management framework and Remittance Holding Capacity.



As part of the transition to Resolution 812, all Agents are transitioned to the GoStandard Accreditation, and assigned their Risk Status and individual Remittance Holding Capacity. In addition, as a pre-condition for the implementation of Resolution 812, IATA EasyPay is available for Agents in the market.



B. Global Default Insurance (GDI) rollout

Global Default Insurance has been made available as a Financial Security in 51 markets from across the different regions. By end of 2018, it is expected that the implementation of GDI will be complete worldwide.

Euler Hermes, the GDI Insurer conducted a survey with Agents. This has provided a basis for improvements in the overall GDI offering and implementation. One of the main challenges remains making Agents aware of this new offering. Survey results are given below

NewGen ISS
GDI Customer Survey Outcomes

Period	Survey carried out in the **23 countries** rolled out already - lasted 3 weeks in **February 2018**
Sample	Survey **sent to 5000 agents. 400 answers** received.
Objective	• **Better understanding of the market**, particularly substitute product segmentation • Deeper understanding of the **agents' needs / agent journey**, product appetite
Questionnaire	3 different questionnaires were sent out depending on the target group. Each questionnaire had a **specific part designed for the group** selected, and a **standard set of questions.**

C. RHC - Remittance Holding Capacity

It is a part of NewGen ISS program and a formula has been worked out by PAPGJC which is approved by Passenger Agency Conference - RHC fixed at 100% over the average of 3 highest settlements made by an Agency during the previous one year

D. TIP: Transparency In Payments

Agents is a valuable reference for information on the BSP, applicable procedures as well as the changes introduced by NewGen ISS and TIP.

A user guide on how to consult an Airline's consent in BSPlink is available through the IATA Customer Portal.

E. Agency Credit Card :Update on Communication to Airlines/Agents on Resolution 890

At its November 2017 meeting, the Passenger Agency Conference adopted an amended Resolution 890 on Customer Card Sales Rules as part of the NewGen ISS & TIP Resolution package.

See below extract of amended Resolution 890: Sub-section 3.4. This Resolution gives authority to accept only a Customer Card when using the card acceptance merchant agreement of the Member/Airline to collect payment for the sale of passenger air transportation and Ancillary Services. The Agent may not accept any other card or payment method that uses the Member/Airlines' card acceptance merchant agreement, including any card issued in the name of the Agent or any Person permitted to act on behalf of the Agent, unless specifically authorised by such Member/Airline. A failure to comply with the present paragraph 3.4 will be undertaken under the sole responsibility and liability of the Agent toward the Member/Airline concerned."

The amended Resolution 890 has become effective worldwide (for any market under Resolution 800, 812 and 818g) as of 1 March 2018.

F. ADM Matters - Churning Bookings or otherwise

UFTAA took up the matter with IATA on the subject of ADMs for churning bookings, which the airlines attribute as "GDS Abuse." The points raised before the PAPGJC was that according to the resolution, it is not legal for any Airline, without any consultation with the agency fraternity, to use the process of ADMs for raising debits via the BSP. The discussion on this subject was quite extensive and it was quite evident that the Airlines cannot send such Debit memos unless there has been consultation to this effect between the Airlines and the Agencies.

G. PCIDSS

Presentations were done by QSA's supporting Travel Agencies to be certified under the PCIDSS rollout.

Communication from IATA

Deutsche Bank and IATA Pilot Direct Sales Payment Method

You may be aware that Deutsche Bank announced the launch of a pilot with IATA to test a new method of payment for Direct Sales, *(See the Financial Times article, published on 6 May 2018)*. The purpose is to reduce the cost of processing direct payments between passengers and airlines through airlines' own website. This new method of payment leverages on the new PSD2 regulation that requires banks to provide third parties access to customer data and initiate payments.

The concept was first presented at the World Passenger Symposium in October 2017 and communicated in Airlines International. This Deutsche Bank pilot is operating under the guidance of the Payment Method Working Group and the Financial Committee. We will provide a presentation to PSG and PAPGJC members during the upcoming meetings. IATA welcomes any airlines wishing to join this pilot.

(On this communication, UFTAA raised the subject of Agencies joining the program. The subject of Agency's corporate credit card was also put up)

TAAI-EASTERN REGION ON TAAI CONNECT INITIATIVE





At the Meeting of TAAI Eastern Region on 14th May at Hotel Auris, Kolkata members interacted with our technology partners TPConnects. Mr Ratiner Jung gave a detailed presentation on the technology initiative and the TAAI-Connect development in progress to empower members digitally. The meeting was very purposeful.

TAAI-WESTERN REGION MEETS CZECH TOURISM; MACAU TOURISM & YAS MARINA

On 26th June, 2018, our Western Region met with Mr Arzan Khambatta the head of Czech Tourism in Mumbai. PR Manager Ms Rashmi Chandani discussed ways in which TAAI and Czech Tourism can partner for their roadshows. Czech Tourism sought TAAI's help due to our reach in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities and were in process of carrying out a survey amongst travel agents about Tourism Promotion to Czech Republic.

TAAI assured support and reaffirmed that we have the right mix of agencies including tour operators across India and would be a strong one-point contact.

TAAI-Western Region also met Ms Dency Mathew the Marketing and PR representative of Macao Government and Tourism Office and held discussions to promote stronger bi-lateral ties.

TAAI-Western Region, Mr Siddesh Subhedar Sales Manager of YAS Experiences discussed ways in which we could jointly do a roadshow for our membership.



3-4 interactive sessions with 30-40 agents per session were conducted to discuss about organizing a joint road show covering all the 3 products i.e Czech Tourism, Macao Tourism and YAS Marina.

TAAI did share with Macao Tourism that we continue to consider Macau as a potential venue for the TAAI Convention in the near future. It was a productive meet with great possibilities for our future.

TAAI Southern Region review Technology Initiative and NewGen ISS

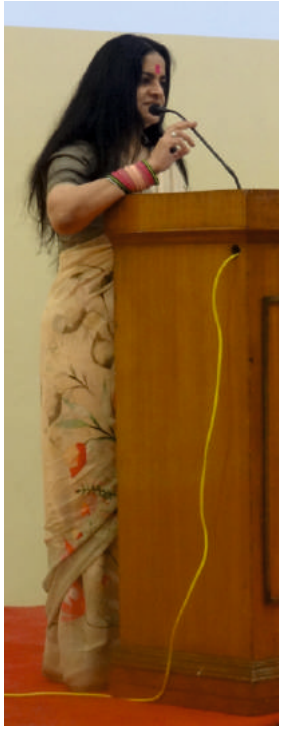




TAAI President Sunil Kumar delivers the presentation

At a well-attended and well-organized meeting of TAAI Southern Region, members were given an insight into the updates and the impact of the changing resolution of IATA from 818g to 812, due to the introduction of NewGen ISS. President Sunil Kumar elaborated in detail. He also gave an insight into "Why the digital empowerment initiative" and his interaction was supported by a presentation from TPConnects through a delegation comprising of Mr Rajendran Vellapalath; Mr Ratinder Jang and Mr George Rajan. There was a welcome response to the technology initiative. TAAI VP Mr Sanjay Narual; HSG Ms Jyoti Mayal and Hon. Treasurer Mr Imtiaz Qureshi were present. Mr Shahul Hameed, who chaired the meeting also honoured the visiting OBs to TAAI SR.









TAAI-Chandigarh involved with multiple activities...



Interaction with Las Vegas Authorities & Road Show



Road Show with Spiceland Holidays



Ms Poonam Makhija from Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority updated the members of TAAI Chandigarh Chapter on the product knowledge to provide best of tourism related services to their customers at The Lalit Hotel, Chandigarh on June 2018.

Mr Mohineesh Ahuja from American Airlines held an interactive meeting with TAAI Chandigarh members and updated them regarding developments of the airline, at Taj Hotel in Chandigarh.

The TAAI Chandigarh Chapter held a Road Show by Spiceland Holidays at Hotel Hometel, Chandigarh. The guest of honour, Mr Madhu K G gave a detailed presentation on the hotels in Kerala and the growth in tourism.

It was a great opportunity for the members to make these connections.



TAAI-Rajasthan updates its members on NewGen ISS & TAAI Connect







Hotel Hilton, Jaipur played host to very well-attended 4th General Meeting of the TAAI Rajasthan Chapter. The meeting witnessed presentation by Mr Sanjay Narula, Vice President - TAAI, who shared updates with members on NewGen ISS and the changes it would bring about in the market. He also shared detailed information on the TAAI-Connect program that will digitally empower members. The successful meeting encouraged more member involvement.



TAAI-KERALA meets at Grand Hyatt, Bolghatty

The well-attended 5th Meeting of TAAI-Kerala Chapter was held at the sprawling five-acre Hotel Grand Hyatt, Bolghatty. Members experienced firsthand the charm and tranquility of this famed property. Mr.K.C.Chandrahasan, CEO, Kerala Travels Interserve Ltd., spoke on the evolution and future of the travel industry in India. He expressed his futuristic plans to evolve and adopt better technology and encouraged membership to go this way. He forewarned that the ordinary ticketing business would disappear in maximum two year's time unless strategies are altered in accordance with the modern times. The chapter decided to conduct a one day seminar to the Travel fraternity on the subject. Grand Hyatt hosted a sumptuous dinner.



TAAI-Nagpur interacts with Jet Airways Personnel

22 members attended the meeting held by TAAI Nagpur Chapter on 3rd May 2018 at Chitnavis Centre, Nagpur. Jet Airways personnel joined the meeting for an interaction with the members of the Chapter, resulting in a fruitful discussion and both sides sharing valuable information.







TAAI-UP & UK CHAPTER on Tourism Matters

Nepal Tourism and Regional Hotel Association Nepal, had their Road Show at Lucknow on 3rd June 2018. Mr Suman Ghimire, President, Regional Hotel Association Nepal and a large contingent of hoteliers and tour operators from Chitwan, Nepal participated. Chairperson, TAAI-UP & UK presided over the function.

Israel Tourism Road Show was also held at Lucknow during May 2018 where TAAI-UP & UK Chapter representatives participated.

TAAI-South Gujarat meets with Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai





This promotional meeting of Indonesian Trade, Travel & Investment in the Indian Market was held on 11th May 2018 by Mr Malcom Pandol, a member of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), South Gujarat Chapter along with other members of the Surat Region at Mr. Malcom Pandol's residence.

Mr. Ade Sukendar, Consul General of Indonesia, Mumbai joined the meeting with his wife and other officials. He conveyed his best wishes to Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), South Gujarat Chapter. This meeting highlighted the economical and cultural relations between our two friendly countries and about the further strength for Indonesian Trade, Travel and Investments in the upcoming years. The Pandols hosted a sumptuous dinner.

TAAI Gujarat Chapter organizes 7th TRS Skill Development Training Program

The successful 7th Skill Development Training Program was organized in association with TRS Skills Academy in June 2018. The program focused on retail sales and customer service with the objective of honing the skills of members and their employees. The training program was conducted by Mr Sundar Vasudevan, faculty member of the institute. The topics covered included:

- Gaining insights into the critical issues of retail selling
- Understanding the retail buyer and the sales cycle
- Motivating buyers and increasing retail sales
- Understanding what customer service is from the buyer's and seller's point of view
- Developing and implementing a program focusing on customer service
- Identifying key characteristics of professionalism and time management





Vythiri village hosts TAAI Managing Committee meeting on 24-26 July, 2018



Vythiri Village™
a luxury spa resort

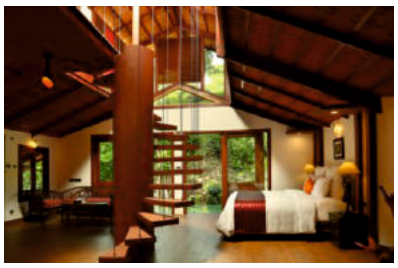
Awarded the Favourite Boutique Hotel by Outlook Traveller Magazine.

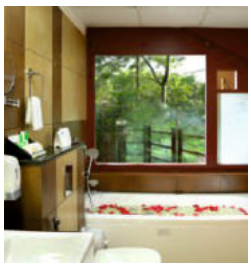
The backdrop for the TAAI Managing Committee Meeting couldn't have been more delightful: Vythiri Village, in the heart of Wayanad, Kerala. Sprawled across 26 acres of refreshing green, this five star luxury resort is sure to appeal to all your senses: the aroma of fresh spices, tea and coffee, the delicious food that your taste buds will thank you for, the sylvan surroundings which are a visual treat and the soothing sounds of Nature that will serenade you during your comfortable stay. The serenity of the resort is perfectly matched by the uncompromising luxury of its cottages and pool villas perched on a hillside.

Vythiri is truly Nature's best kept secret and the perfect spot to escape from the tedious and hectic city life. It is also ideal for luxury wedding and MICE.

Luxury accommodation

36 richly appointed deluxe rooms, 26 finest suite rooms, 12 elegant cottages, 5 plush Jacuzzi villas and 21 classy celebrity pool villas... you will be spoilt for choice at Vythiri Village!





Indulge in a feast fit for kings!

A taste of Kerala or flavours from the world... you'll find them all at the Vythiri Village Resort. And while your taste buds delight in the feast served with love, your eyes will feast on Nature's spread of blues and greens.

- Spice Bowl, serves traditional Malabar foods with 100 local spices.
- Sky Restaurant, open air multi-cuisine restaurant overlooks the beautiful waterfall and the Wayanad hills. You can enjoy Continental, Chinese and Indian delicacies here
- Maikhana, the bar; is a perfect place to unwind with a fresh drink or a cocktail from one of their fine selection.
- Tea Garden Restaurant is the Indian speciality restaurant
- Thattukada - The houseboat restaurant, serves evening tea, coffee with local savouries.



Get rejuvenated, recharged and refreshed... discover wellness at Vythiri Village.

Our modern deadline-driven life can be quite stressful. Come over and let our experts massage your stress away

- Ozone treated swimming pool
- Nawa - A world class Spa
- Ayurveda Centre
- Yoga training
- Fitness centre

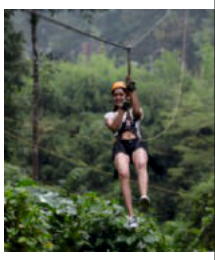


Exciting activities

There's plenty to do here. But we recommend doing nothing too! Just relax, soak in the ambience of this green paradise and re-charge your batteries! Or maybe catch up a movie or two in the 12D Cinema. Or enjoy a musical programme. Or indulge in the many recreational facilities available at the resort. Here's a look at what Vythiri Village offers for those seeking adventure:

- Zip-line
- Archery
- Paint ball
- Cycling
- Bamboo rafting
- Stream walk
- Plantation walk
- Trekking





Meeting & Banquet Area

Vythiri Village is also the perfect venue for one-of-its kind conventions. We have large Convention Halls, Banquet Halls and Meeting Rooms complemented by state-of-the-art conferencing amenities and exceptional service.





TAAI MP & CG Chapter Updates

TAAI Members associate with 'The International Yoga Day' at Indore.





India Tourism, Indore and Devi Ahilya Vishwa Vidyalaya, Indore jointly organized a Live Yoga demonstration in their sports complex, at Indore on 21st June, 2018. About 1,000-1,500 participants attended this program. TAAI members were actively involved in this event along with school and college students, NCC Units, Scouts and Guides, Government Officials, NGOs, private companies and other business and trade associations like CII; ICC; ICAI; ICSI, etc.

Chhattisgarh Calling!



Mr T K Jose and Mr Hariom presenting the memento to Shri Kedarnath Gupta, Vice Chairman; and Mr Hemendra Jadon and Mr Kirtivyas presenting the memento to Shri Mr Nandy, MD Tourism Board, Chattisgarh.



a little bit of fun on the sidelines!

TAAI delegates enjoying a boat ride at Gangrel Reservoir.



Ready for take off! TAAI delegates in front of the restaurant at Gangrel Reservoir, on the day of their return to Raipur.







TAAI AP & TS Chapter on TAAI Connect Initiative

TAAI AP & TS Chapter had organized the presentation by TPConnects on the TAAI Connect initiative at its regular meeting in Hyderabad. The meeting included an initial debrief by TAAI President Mr Sunil Kumar and he shared the success of TAAI Convention as well as the digital empowerment initiative by TAAI. Mr George Rajan and Mr Ratinder Jang were present at the presentation by TPConnects on TAAI Connect. The interaction reflected several members ready and eager to join the TAAI Connect initiative.

TAAI Pune updates members on TAAI Connect; IATA matters & VISA updates

Mr. Shaishav Parekh briefed the Pune chapter members on the technology initiative and the developments of TAAI Connect during a well-attended meeting. The members discussed the success of the 64th Convention in Srinagar and the team reminded the members of the PCI DSS compliance. On the matter of visa issues, Mr. Mehboob Mohammad Shaikh, Hon. Treasurer, TAAI reassured the members that the current TAAI committee is working in unison with VFS and has already conducted four meetings in the past one year.

TAAI CONNECT
TRAVEL TOURISM MICE HOSPITALITY
DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT
TAAI'S Technology Initiative

TAAI Powers the "Digital Empowerment" initiative...

A unique opportunity offered to travel agencies..



Presenting

TAAI-Connect

It revolutionizes the way travel agencies can do business. With many online agencies, the environment will be very different!

Technology Powered "Change" is proving miraculous, every moment. It is an astounding happening that is driven by a speed faster than thought, for many. It has enabled never-before practices that have become irresistible for many to be driven by. With changed behaviours, it is almost impossible to "run the race of living" and that of doing business.

For the Travel & Tourism Industry, these user behaviours are compelling stakeholders to offer greater convenience bundled with competitive costs to sustain the success of doing business.

TAAI CONNECT
TRAVEL TOURISM MICE HOSPITALITY
DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT
TAAI'S Technology Initiative

Get **CONNECTED** to unmatched, never-before benefits!

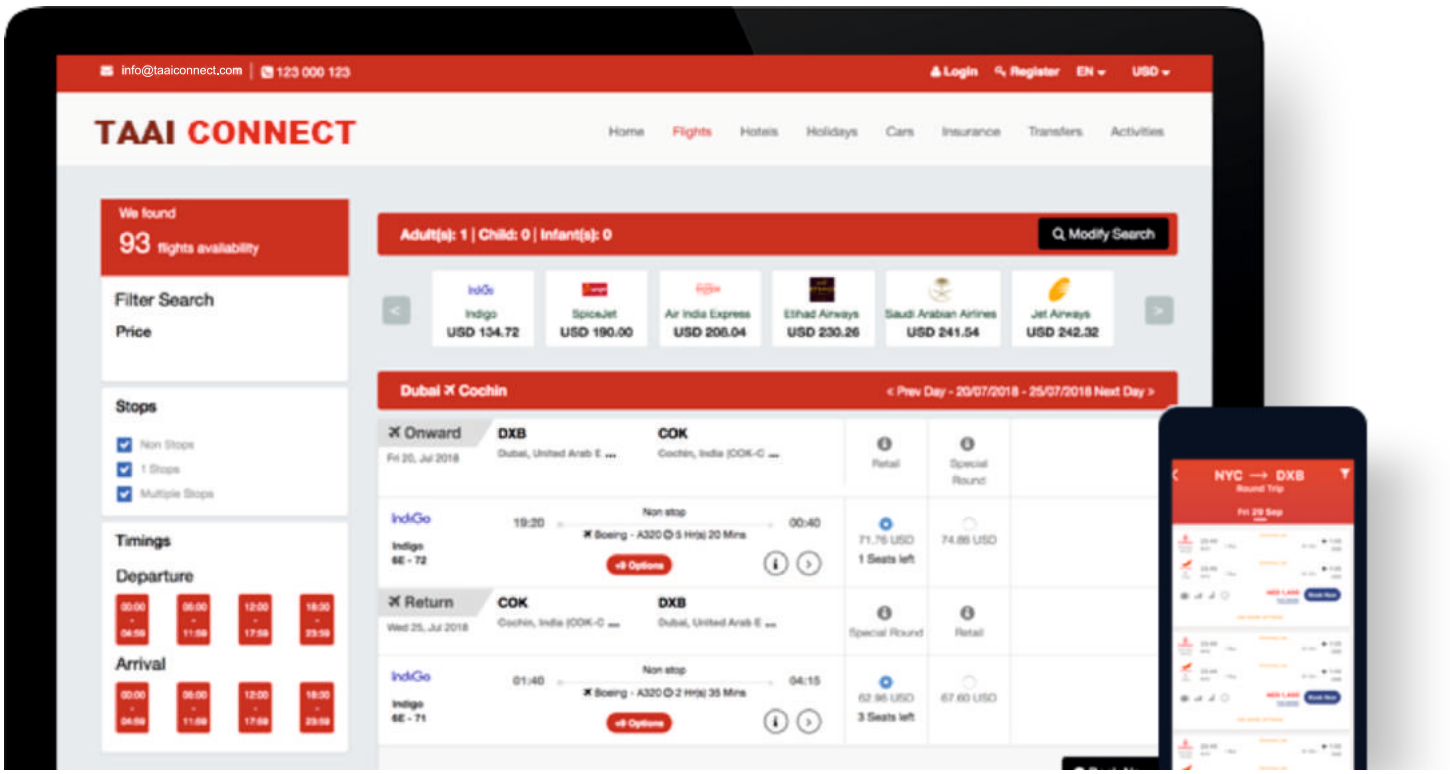
Unlock a world of unimagined **opportunities!**

With **zero** Investment!

HERE'S WHAT TRAVEL AGENTS CAN GET WITH TAAI-CONNECT

- Your own Website (Existing or New)
- Comprehensive designing of your Website
- Integrating your website with a Booking Platform integrated with your GDS and Ticketing
- Connecting your platform with a payment gateway linked with your own bank
- Corporate Booking Tool - For you to offer this to your corporate customers
- Mobile Application - imagine your clients buying services from you and paying directly into your Bank Account through a credit card from a mobile phone.

And here's the best part - the investment on technology comes from TAAI's partner, reducing your financial risk!



> **I cannot be "under-capable"** is a statement one must introspect - and take action - upon, in this changed scenario. Losing customers to a more convenient competition is one level of growing discomfort while not being able to capitalize on the opportunity of roping in newer and more customers is a totally different level of challenge.

For those who have limitations - financial; manpower; volumes; size; location or otherwise, to imagine a "connect" with this mind-boggling technological transformation; to reach out to more and lucrative suppliers or directly connect with wholesalers or to be offered hand-holding and support; is a certain out-of-reach proposition. It does deprive many of the myriad opportunities from a trendy today and dynamic tomorrows. In a fast growing industry, the mounting size of which is almost unstoppable, to be a by-stander and be dispossessed of the required competence is something that one cannot be a part of.

TAAI can only be more relevant if we are able to address those needs of our members which most cannot accomplish as stand-alone. For a single agency to possess the capabilities of a large multi-national or a large online organization should be what an association like TAAI must offer.

Travel Agents Association of India having offered industry leadership for seven decades has unveiled an important initiative to benefit its members - TAAI's **Digital Empowerment** initiative. TAAI-Connect supports member agencies to encounter the fast evolving, challenging and demanding market scenario. ***'TAAI-Connect' perfectly complements the 'Digital India' initiative, by the Government of India.***



TAAI-Connect & its features

TAAI-Connect enables agencies that do not have a full-fledged online portal to **go online** and to offer services to their existing and potential national and global customers, in a manner that allows them to safeguard their clients preferring an online agency. It can help you get more customers into your domain.

The vision to support **'Digital Empowerment'** from TAAI now brings to every agency of TAAI, the opportunity of this most important gift - **to go online**. To be digitally empowered. To feel courageous and confident that one is able to withstand the onslaught of change and competition.

It is education that made this world highly progressive. It will be **'Digital Empowerment'** as an opportunity that will make the travel agency, particularly those standalones, endowed with competence and proficiency to discover a new paradigm to do business.

TAAI's offer - TAAI-Connect, is a humble initiative. Today, it may be a limited version offering. But as we grow, in numbers and size, obviously, the abundance will rise and the bandwidth of the connect will be vast.

Here's a scenario, worth introspecting:

- Globally, a large percentage of "travel selling" happens through online agencies! This is consistently growing.
- The magic of online connect has introduced newer players in the market whose size has grown to never-imagined numbers
- These new players, thanks to their 'Digital Empowerment,' have by-passed many, who have been in the marketplace for decades

Looking back, it appears to many of us, as an opportunity lost!

Why did an agency not go online?

- High costs
- Sustainability to maintain profit levels due to increased maintenance costs
- Fear of failure
- Lack of the right opportunity
- Contentment with traditional ways of doing business
- A reinforced self-created opinion that one may not continue for long, so why invest.

There could have been more reasons!

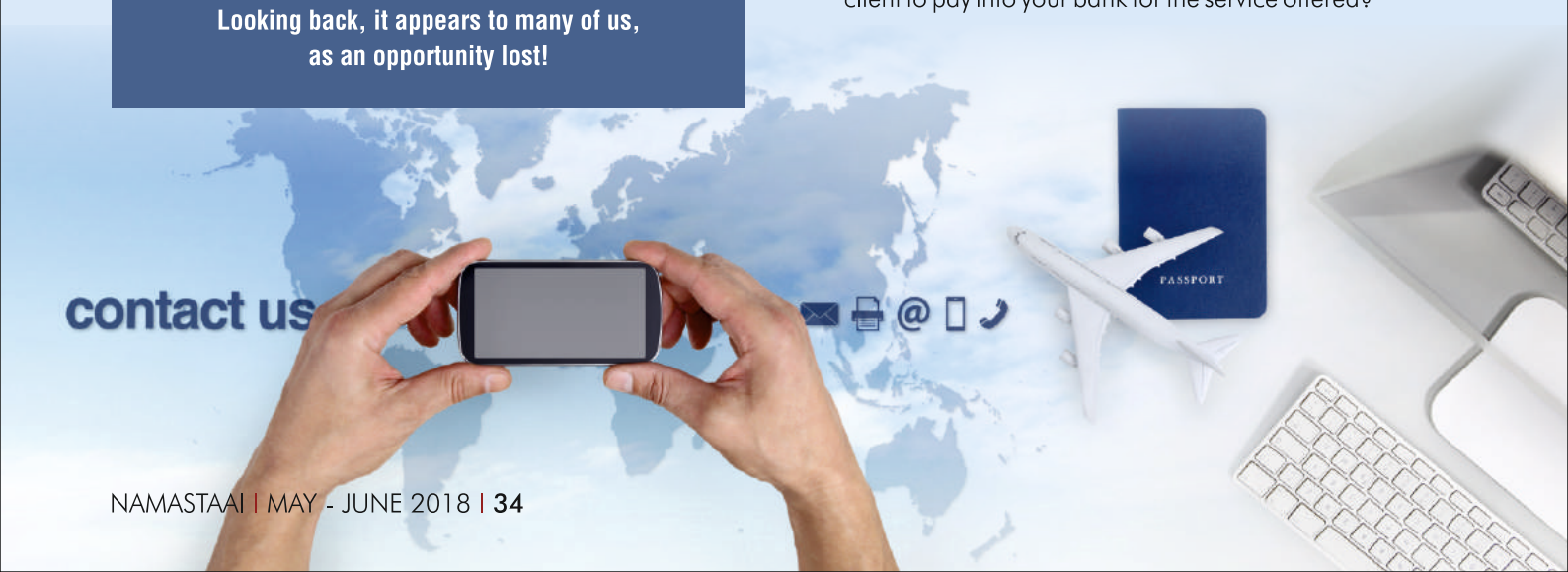
Imagine travel agencies that are over 25 years old, no matter where they are located - a big city or a smaller town; how much have they grown? *Or has the size or volumes or profits actually come down?*

TAAI-Connect is an ambitious start-up to facilitate and support those willing to try it out, those ready to adorn newer profile with higher competencies. The beauty is - there is not much of financial risk involved.

The key questions before many travel agencies:



- Are you now keen to create your own website, clearly reflecting your profile?
- Are you ready to make your digital presence felt with an empowered online portal that is connected to the GDS of your choice, maybe your very own GDS to support you with your segments?
- How about a website that is integrated with your own ticket stock or offers you the capability to assign ticketing to any other agency?
- Would you like your website to be integrated with a payment gateway, either your own or that is offered with the platform - thus connecting your current or potential client to pay into your bank for the service offered?



This is only level ONE.
There is a level TWO and perhaps,
a level THREE and more...

LEVEL 1

Level one is aviation or ticketing service.

LEVEL 2

Level two is to integrate your platform with your own suppliers, or if your supplier is not large enough, to connect you with bigger and top level global suppliers offering travel and tourism products - hotels; tours; transfers; and more - much more, which can attract your online visitor client and help them buy from the "Known you" rather than from an unknown seller.

LEVEL 3

Level three could be cruises; insurance or rail or any other service that attracts the customers to you.

This is how your capabilities continue to rise...

Do remember - always - the power of 'Technology' or **'Digital Empowerment'** is to convert your thinking into a doable happening.

TAAI has partnered with a technology partner to offer you this competence, without any initial investment for the technology and its integration. You may call it as a huge investment someone else is making on your behalf, for your benefit.

Are you ready to get digitally empowered? No matter which part of India your agency may be located in - urban or rural - this initiative can support and transform your agency into a digitally empowered agency which can successfully sustain your existing customers and help you attract new customers.

Yes this is a never-before OPPORTUNITY, every member agency, must try out!





TAAI-Connect.
The missing piece you've always been looking for!



You can have a new Website or integrate TAAI-Connect with your existing website...

Through this initiative, travel agencies are provided with a website or their existing website can also be integrated and enhanced with many more features. They are offered an online platform with a booking engine (Aviation & non-aviation products and services).

The home page of the website is designed to support agencies to present their profile; links to their products and services and an integration is also offered to support the agency market/promote their products or services to other agencies.

Booking Engine Integration

TAAI-Connect = Ticketing; Hotels; Tours; Transport and more...

The Booking Engine integrated with your website can support online sales of several products and services, such as ticketing, hotels, tours, transport, cruises, car rentals and more. This feature also allows members to integrate their own content. Additionally, if the agency has online access with a Hotel Engine or any other connect, integration with such product/service will be offered through TAAI-Connect.



It's your own GDS!!!

TAAI-Connect can be integrated with your chosen GDS!

The platform supports integration with the agency's preferred GDS. The online sales will therefore result in usage of agency's contracted GDS and segments will be to the Agency's credit. Should the Agency desire to utilize any other GDS that is offered for the online access with benefits; such option is also available to the agency.

It's your own ticket stock!!!



TAAI-connect is integrated with the agency's own ticket stock. At the option of the Agency, some or all ticketing can be diverted to another agency, whose ticket stock can be thus used
(*Conditions Apply*)

TAAI-Connect is "NDC enabled" too...

Our Technology partners are IATA's NDC certified and NDC capable. TAAI-connect enables travel agencies with access to rich content as well as ancillary options. Travellers can have their preferences recognized when shopping via the online platform in the same way that they are available on the airlines website – a service that may not be directly available to agents today owing to technology limitations.



One Order - an IATA initiative - is one of the biggest changes in the airline industry after the introduction of E-ticketing

One Order is a data communication standard lead by IATA to support a simplified and enhanced airline distribution. This industry-led initiative intends to replace the multiple and rigid booking, ticketing and accounting methods using the data communications advances made possible by the implementation of the New Distribution Capability (NDC).

One Order will result in the gradual disappearance of multiple reservation records as well as e-ticket/EMD concepts to be replaced by a single reference travel document

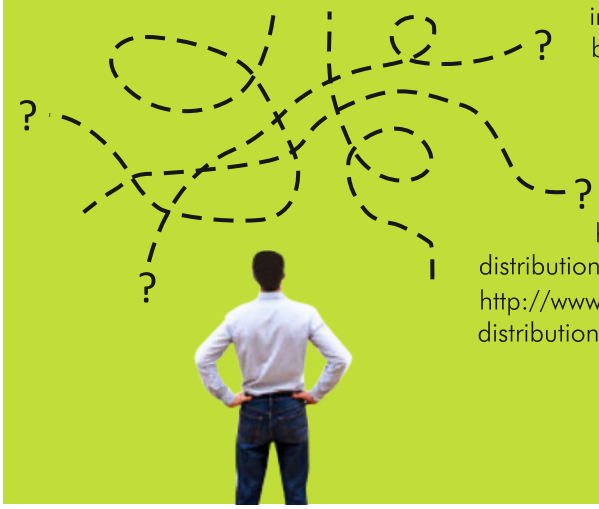
Benefit for Travellers

Travellers will no longer need to juggle between different reference numbers and documents. With a single reference number they will be easily recognized by all service providers.

Benefit for Travel Agents

Travel agents will be able to follow an identical process to book flights and products from airlines, regardless of the airline's business model or technology capability. This will expedite the service they provide, and will increase productivity.

One Order will facilitate product delivery and settlement between airlines and their partners with one simplified and standardized order management process. Through a new streamlined process, both airline communities will be able to manage customers in a seamless and homogeneous manner



TAAI Connect platform will be designed to incorporate the One Order standards introduced by IATA.

It is an extension to NDC which simplifies the data communication standard. More information can be gathered from these links given below:

https://www.iata.org/whatwedo/airline-distribution/Documents/basic-guide-to-one-order.pdf

http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/airline-distribution/Pages/oneorder.aspx

A corporate booking tool for your corporate customers and your own Payment Gateway

TAAI-Connect offers travel agencies with a Corporate Booking Tool with the option of a B2B platform as well. You will thus be offered advanced capabilities. This can enable Travel Agencies to administratively offer required terms to your corporate or B2B customers.

Corporate Booking Tool
&
Payment Gateway

TAAI-Connect also comes with a Payment Gateway integrated to your own or chosen bank account. If the Agency already has their own payment gateway, TAAI-Connect will help with the integration. TAAI has negotiated with a few vendors at the best possible rates and as we move forward, the growing strength of TAAI-Connect may get us more options at attractive terms.

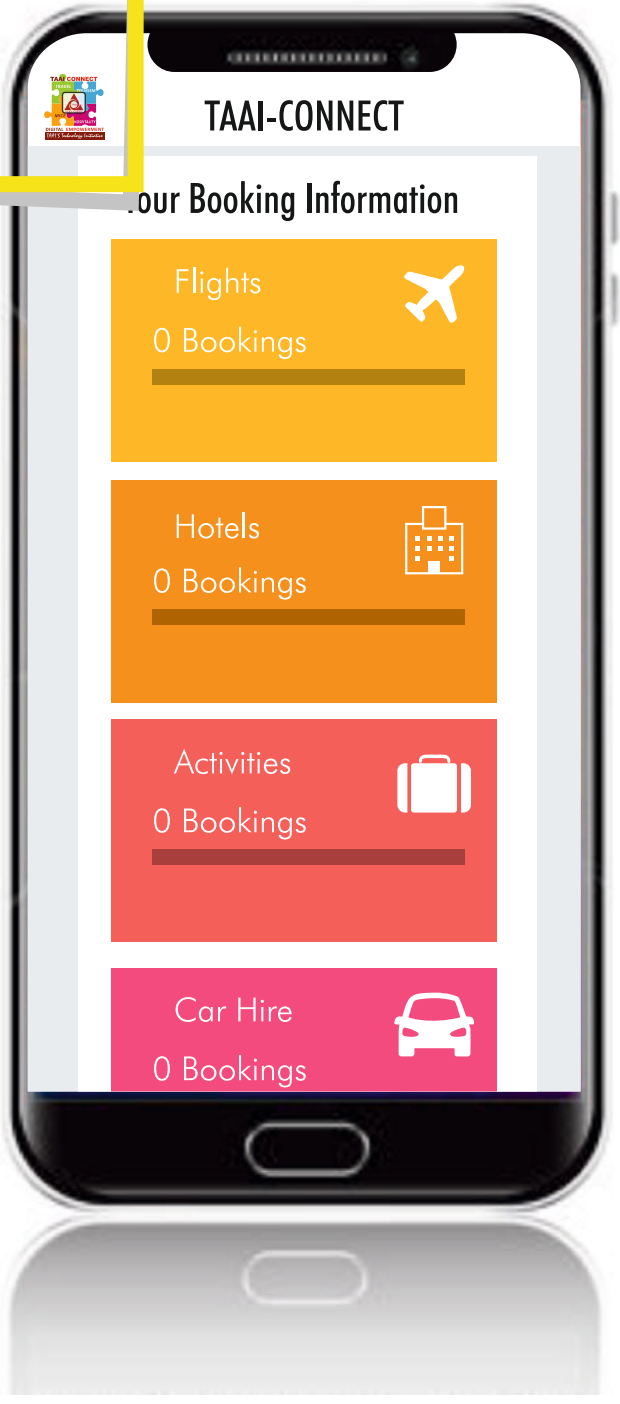
These features make TAAI-Connect an excellent option that one cannot afford to miss out on.



TAAI-CONNECT comes with a MOBILE APP
You can offer greater convenience to your customers as you promote higher sales....

The extent of 'Digital Empowerment' is far beyond a booking engine on a platform integrated with the agency's website. The initiative rewards the agency with a Mobile App as well. Travel agencies can offer products and services to their existing customers through mobile technology, which is growing in demand and offers convenience at great cost.

User-friendly Mobile App



TAAI-Connect comes to you from TAAI's ambitious initiative to empower Travel Agencies, digitally, in this fast changing world.

It is yours without any Technology Cost

There is absolutely no technology cost that is required to be invested by the travel agency. Our technology partner will make all the investment on behalf of the agency that signs up. The development of a website; its integration with the platform; and further integration of the platform with the GDS, as offered to be connected by the agency; ticketing of the agency as well as the payment gateway is done without any cost to the agency. A nominal per passenger cost is what the agency will have to pay to our technology partner towards the technology investment irrespective of the number of segments or services offered to a passenger. There is no minimum volume or productivity demanded from any agency towards the technology investment. The initiative is primarily done to inspire the agency move into this domain which is a huge connect with the future.



- The detailed terms and conditions will be made available to the agency upon the signing up.
- A no-obligation intention to be digitally empowered can be shared by submitting this "simple application" (Interactive) - **Contact TAAI**
- It is reiterated that the TAAI-Connect comes as an OPTION to every agency member of TAAI. There is no compulsion for any member to join. In case the member agency feels value in signing up, they are welcome apply to join the TAAI-Connect initiative.

TAAI proposes to add as many features into TAAI-Connect

www.TAAIConnect.com

We have created a platform http://www.taaiconnect.com where travel agents can request for a demo login by themselves and have access to the content they wish (Flights / Hotel / Car Rental / Activities etc). On submitting the request an auto email will be generated and sent to the travel agent with the login ID and password for them to access the system. The TECH team will hand hold the agencies as they get enabled digitally.

TAAI & TPCONNECTS - The Digital Empowerment Partnership!

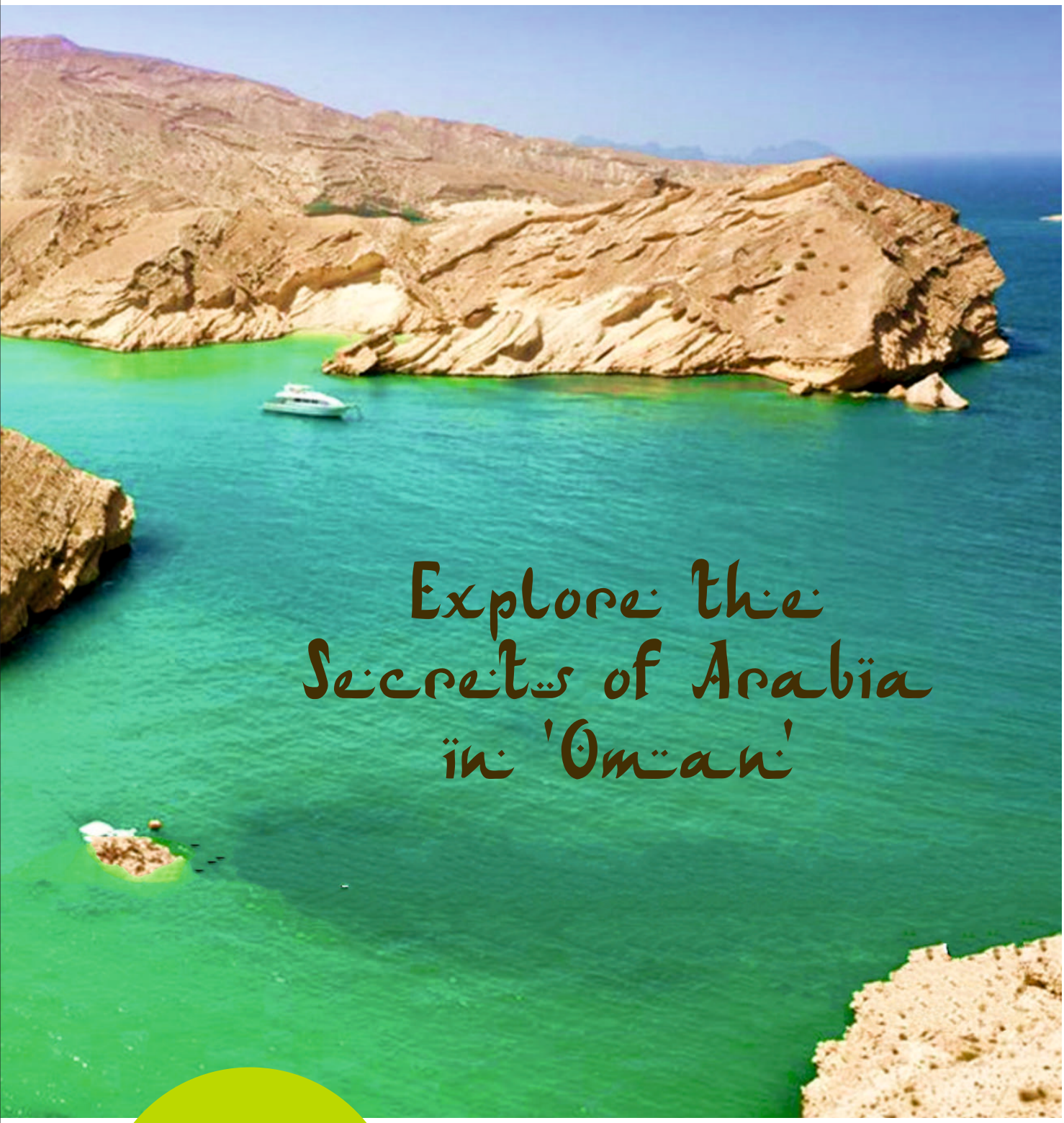
TAAI has associated with TPConnects, a Dubai-based Technology Company whose robust and scalable NDC standard full back-end and internet booking engine with payment gateway will power TAAI's Digital Empowerment initiative. TPConnects will also provide all the technical support and will offer integration.

TPConnects will be creating a national team that will assist our applicant member agencies, who are approved by TAAI and admitted into this TAAI-Connect initiative, to go online. The integration by TPConnects will be done based on the arrangement they have entered into with TAAI.



A stunning landscape dotted with rippling dunes, ornate mosques, beefy forts, bustling souks, succulent dates, sun-kissed beaches, age-old traditions, ritzy hotels, beautiful wadis, friendly locals and incredible hospitality, Oman is now on every traveler's itinerary. Located just 2 ½ hours away from India is Oman, a quaint, unexplored and beautiful destination in the Middle East. The Sultanate is connected via direct flight with major Indian cities.

SULTANATE OF
oman
Ministry of Tourism



Explore the Secrets of Arabia in 'Oman'

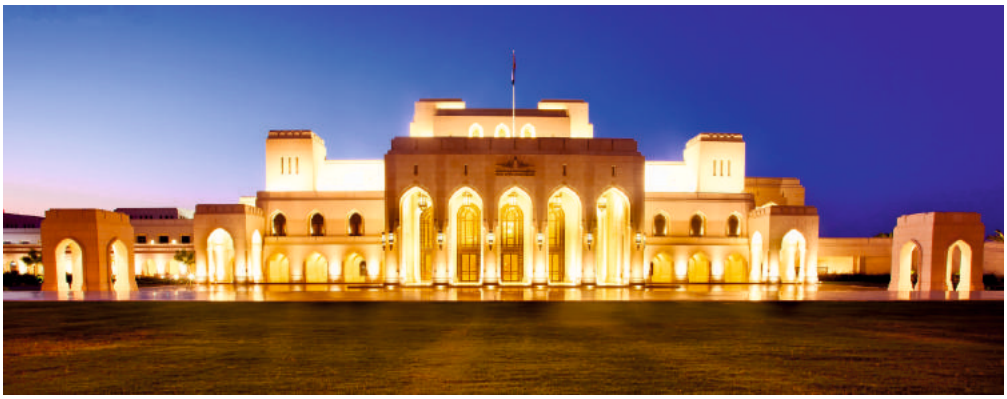
Top 10 secrets of Oman that will surely surprise you.

1 **Beautiful Beaches** - Oman possesses some of the most natural and pristine beaches in the world. The Sea of Oman, Arabian Sea and the Strait of Hormuz lend Oman a 3,165-km long coastline. Some of the best beaches include Finns beach, Ras Al Hadd, Al Sawadi, Bandar Al Jissah and Yiti beach. Also, visit Corniche - the beautiful promenade that runs for 3 kms along the Muscat harbor and is lined with pristine gardens, parks, waterfalls and statues.



2 **Scent of Amouage** - For a sniff of something exotic, head to Amouage factory where the 'most valued perfumes in the world' are produced. Amouage is a home-grown perfume brand which uses exotic ingredients like frankincense, roses, saffron and spices to make their trademark scent. A whiff of this perfume is enough to feel like a royal.

3 **Royal Opera House.** A state-of-the-art opera house exists in Muscat where world class operas and musicians perform round the year. The opera house complex consists of a concert theatre, auditorium, formal landscaped gardens, luxury restaurants and an art centre for musical, theatrical and operatic productions.





4 **Grand Canyon of the Middle East** - Oman has a topography that is enveloped with majestic mountains. Nicknamed the 'Grand Canyon of Arabia', Jabal Shams - the highest mountain (3,005 metres) is definitely worth a visit to experience pleasant weather while the rest of the country has higher temperatures.



5 **Turtle Watching** -Who would have wondered that thousands of turtles come and nest in Oman? Watch the natural process of nesting and hatching in front of your naked eyes. Located at the headland of the Arabian Peninsula, Ras al Jinz houses one of the largest nesting areas for Green Turtles in the Indian Ocean. Another wonderful secret revealed.



6 **Discover the Underwater Magic** - Oman has a profusion of exotic marine life and some of the best dive sites in the world. Some of the most beautiful coral reefs sites of Oman are located in Muscat area, Daymaniyat Islands, Bandar Jissah, Bandar Khayran, Fahal Islands, Sharqiya, Barr al Hikman, Masirah Islands, Dhofar, Musandam and Marbadh.



7 **Swim in the azure waters of Wadis** - Indigenous to Oman are Wadis which are naturally created swimming pools due to rainwater. Characterized by a rich variety, diversity, and a wealth of natural attractions, these wadis form an integral part of the country's environmental system. Among the most pristine is Wadi Bani Khalid, approximately 200 kms from the capital, which is always full of water and the local Omanis come for a day trip there, swim with their families and enjoy with friends. Any Wadi you go to in Oman the view is mesmerizing and worth a dip in the azure water.

8 **Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque** - One of the few mosques that allow entry for non-Muslims, the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque is a true feast for the visual senses. The lavishly decorated mosque with its archways, courtyards, chandeliers, ornate doors, white marble floors and manicured lawns is an architectural marvel. An opulent Swarovski crystal chandelier hangs from the dome and the floor covered with a handmade Persian carpet spanning 4,263 sqmetres.





9 **Explore art and culture** - The historical forts and castles of Oman are the country's most striking cultural landmarks and a major draw for visitors today. There were over 500 forts stretched along the long coastline of Oman. Walk up to the gates of the Sultan's ceremonial 'Al Alam Palace' which was built in 1972 and admire the stunning gold-leaf and turquoise mosaic facade that stands behind impressive black gates.

10 **Glamping in the desert** - Honey, Russet, Orange, Sorrel, Chestnut, Sienna, Copper, Ochre, Amber - pick any shade of brown from the palette and you might just find it in Sharqiyah Sands, Oman's longitudinal dunes that sprawl 200 km long and 100 km wide. Engage yourself in exciting activities like Sand Boarding, Dune Bashing, Quad Biking and Camel Safari among others.



Oman-Visa On Arrival for Indians - *Simplified!*



Reunion Island introduces Visa on Arrival for Indians

Oman has relaxed its visa rules to attract more tourists by granting Visa On Arrival (unsponsored tourist visa) for citizens of India. A citizen of India residing in or holders of any entry Visa to any one of these countries namely United States of America, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Japan and Schengen States to enter the Sultanate of Visa on arrival can also be availed by the spouse (husband/wife) and children of the visa holder of any of these 6 mentioned countries as long as they are accompanying him/her, even if they do not hold a visa from these countries.

Terms And Conditions To Apply For Visa On Arrival

- The applicant shall hold a passport valid for not less than six months from the date of expiry
- The applicant shall have a return ticket and a confirmed hotel reservation in order to be granted the visa
- The applicant for the Omani Tourist visa shall be a resident in or holding an entry visa to one of the following countries (Unites States of America, Canada, Australia, Japan, United Kingdom and Schengen States) provided that his/her residence or visa in these countries is valid upon filling the visa document
- The visa shall be granted for a period of one month against a fee amounting to OMR 20
- The competent authority may prohibit the citizens of these countries who meet the terms and conditions for obtaining a visa from entering the Sultanate if the public interest so requires
- Any person who avails of such a visa facilitation and breached the regulations will be blacklisted and prohibited from entering the Sultanate of Oman and will be compelled to pay fines in accordance with the terms and provisions for the Foreigner's Residence Law and the Executive Regulations thereof

Log on to the website and pre apply for the e-visa on *https://evisa.rop.gov.om/en/visa-eligibility*

Muscat International Airport - The new gateway to the Sultanate of Oman.

The new $1.8b Muscat airport opens. Oman's new Muscat International Airport officially opened on Tuesday, 20th March, 2018. This brand new Airport is designed as ICAO category 4F airport and shall be able to accommodate the world`s largest aircraft, the Airbus A380. The passenger terminals are designed to the latest "state of the art" technology. The total gross area for the new Muscat International terminal building is 580,000 sq. meters with an overall airport land area of 21 Sq. Kms. The Airport will have the capacity to operate 40 flights per hour with 86 check-in counters, 40 gates, and 29 aircraft stands with jet-bridges, as well as a new control tower. Out of ten carousels for bag handling, eight will be used for international flights. The decision to build a new airport was taken as research projected a 40 per cent increase in Oman's number of visitors by 2019. The grand opening marks the completion of the first phase of expansion which increases passenger capacity to 12 million - up from the previous 1.2 million passengers recorded in 2017. The airport will undergo further upgrades in three consecutive phases which aims to boost the number of passengers to 24, 36 and 48 million passengers respectively. Presently the Muscat International Airport is ranked in the top 10 airports in the Middle East, with an average annual growth forecast of 8 per cent.



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- ☑ Personal Assisted Service (Greeter service, Form Filling Assistance, Visa Application Document Checks)
- ☑ Walk-In Without An Appointment
- ☑ SMS + Auto Call Back Service
- ☑ Courier Service

Cost - INR 5600

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Call: + 91 22 6786 6031 | **Email:** userpayservicesindia@vfshelpline.com | **Visit:** www.vfsglobal.co.uk/india

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VFS Global is **the world's leading outsourcing and technology services specialist** for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. VFS Global is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the **Swiss Kuoni Group**, which belongs to the **Swedish private equity company EQT**, one of Europe's leading private equity houses. With **2675 Application Centres**, operations in **139 countries** across five continents and **over 175 million applications** processed as on 30

Yunnan Province: A Magnificent Destination



Lugu Lake, northern Yunnan, photo by Doron - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0

The **Yunnan** province in southwest China is its most ethnically diverse. It is home to 25 of the country's 56 recognized ethnic groups. And each has a unique culture and cuisine. Then there's dramatic landscape and breathtaking views that are rumoured to have inspired the Shangri-la of James Milton's "Lost Horizon." The Yunnan Province has multiple cities that include Kunming, Dali, Lijiang, Jinghong, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture and Qujing among many others. Kunming is the capital of the Yunnan Province.

POPULAR ATTRACTIONS

Hani Rice Terraces

When the Hani ethnic group built the rice paddy terraces in Yuanyang County more than 1,300 years ago, little did they realize the irrigation system would become such a hit among sightseers.

The terraces cover 166 square kilometers in southeast Yunnan. When the sun rises and sets, its light reflects off the pools of water, creating spectacular views and colors that change almost every minute as the sun moves.



Photo by Jialiang Gao, www.peace-on-earth.org - Original Photograph, CC BY-SA 3.0



Lijiang Town, photo by Lukacs in 2005 in China, CC BY 2.5

Lijiang's Old Town

A fascinating and sometimes confusing maze of cobblestone streets lined with souvenir shops, cafes, restaurants, bars and guesthouses make up Lijiang's Old Town. Though most of the truly ancient buildings are long gone, new structures honouring the town's 1,000 years of heritage still have an old-world charm.

UNESCO inscribed Old Town as a World Heritage Cultural Site in 1997, saying it "represents the harmonious fusion of different cultural traditions to produce an urban landscape of outstanding quality."

At night, the bar street is a rowdy party destination. Indie musicians playing original works and Chinese and Western covers can be found in smaller bars.

The bluest water ever

The highest peak of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain is said to have been summited just once. Maybe because it's a tough climb or maybe because of the time-sucking scenery on the way up.

More than 5,500 meters, this lofty destination has mystical significance for the local Naxi ethnic minority. On a clear day, the majestic mountain can be seen from Lijiang. A cable car up from the base of the mountain gives breathtaking panoramic views of the valley below.

Blue Moon Valley, halfway up the mountain, has some of the bluest water known to humans. There are four lakes in the valley, all different shades of blue. The valley has become a popular destination for Chinese couples taking pre-wedding photos.

Relaxing in Xishuangbanna

The palm tree-lined streets of Xishuangbanna's capital Jinghong feel more like Thailand than mainland China. Xishuangbanna is an autonomous prefecture, sitting in the south of Yunnan near the border with Laos. Even in December, daytime temperatures climb to nearly 30 C. The region is home to the Dai ethnic minority, which makes up about 30% of Yunnan's population.

Buddhist temples, the Mengla Tropical Rain Forest and ethnic minority parks are some of the places to visit. There's also a pedestrian path that stretches for kilometers along the bank of the Mekong River.

Tiger Leaping Gorge

Named a UNESCO World Heritage natural site in 2003, Tiger Leaping Gorge is one of the world's deepest canyons. It's where whitewaters of the mighty Yangtze River roar beneath cliffs that tower up to 3,790 meters high.



The Yangtze River near the Tiger Leaping Gorge photo by Peter Morgan from Beijing, China - Flickr, CC BY 2.0



Once you have travelled
the voyage never ends,
but is played out
over and over again
in the quietest chambers.
The mind can never break off
from the journey.

~ Pat Conroy

Kunming
The City of Eternal Spring



Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province, is known as 'the City of Eternal Spring' for its pleasant climate and flowers that bloom all year long. With a history of more than 2,400 years, Kunming was the gateway to the celebrated Silk Route that facilitated trade with Tibet, Sichuan, Myanmar, India and beyond. Today it is the provincial political, economical and cultural center of Yunnan as well as the most popular tourist destination in southwest China. With convenient transport links in and out of the city, Kunming welcomes and sees off tens of thousands of visitors every day. As southwest China's transportation hub, the city plays a significant role in connecting Southeast Asia and China. The city also provides links to many popular destinations elsewhere in Yunnan such as Dali, Lijiang, and Shangri-La.

The beautiful natural scenery, glorious historical heritages, and colorful folk customs make Kunming one of the first excellent tourist destination cities in China. Kunming has become a comprehensive tourist destination with tourism, holiday-spending, sightseeing, and entertainment combined as one.


1

The city center is an attraction with its two squares (Jinma Biji Square and Dongfeng Square) and five intersecting roads (Dongfeng Road, Jinbi Road, Zhengyi Road, Renmin Road and Qingnian Road). Of these, Jinma Biji Square (also known as Jinbi Square) has the most eye-catching archways and stylish architectures. Qingnian Road, Zhengyi Road and Renmin Road are the main commercial areas. The most popular pedestrian streets are Nanping Street, Jingxing Flowers and Birds Market, and Jinma Biji Fang. The city is also the focal point of Yunnan minority culture. Some 26 ethnic minorities such as Yi, Bai, Miao, Dai, and Hani inhabit this region.

Kunming attractions include:
The Stone Forest, West Hill and Yunnan Minority Village which exhibits the province's 25 ethnic minorities. The "spring city" also has three museums, three temples, two parks, a cave, a lake, and some spectacular countryside, including Dongchuan Red Land and the Yuanyang Terraced Fields.

The Stone Forest Scenic Region boasts numerous scenic areas and spots, such as the Greater and Lesser Stone Forests (also known as the Lizijing Stone Forest), Naigu Stone Forest, Zhiyun Cave, Long Lake, Moon Lake, Qifeng Cave and the Dadie Waterfalls.

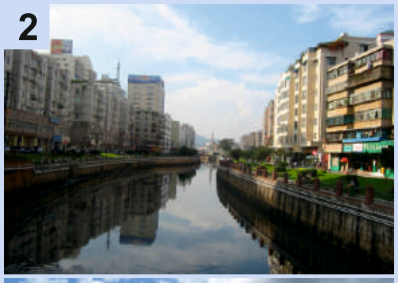
The Greater & Lesser Stone Forests - Like a Theme Park
The Greater and Lesser Stone Forests, covering an area of 12 square kilometers (5 sq. miles), are the main scenic areas. The stones there are oddly shaped, with peaks magnificently standing erect like a forest. You will be amazed at the natural stone masterpieces and be bewitched by the intricate stone formations that are in the shapes of columns, cones, pagodas, and mushrooms, as well as animals, plants, and even human figures. The stones are scattered both densely and sparsely, and some look elegant while others are rugged. The magnificent, strange, and steep landscape creates countless sights, including Lotus Peak, Ashima Rock, Sword Peak Pond, Shilin Lake, and 'a Gleam of Sky'.

Dongchuan Red Land
Dongchuan Red Land is a new rising tourist destination near Kunming, loved by photographers and backpackers, and praised as "God's palette". These red lands, extending for nearly 50 kilometers (30 miles), are **the most striking and distinctive in the world**. Dongchuan Red Land is about 250 kilometers (155 miles) northeast of Kunming, with an altitude of 1,800–2,600 meters (5,900–8,500 feet). It is located in Huashitou Country, Xinxiang Town, Dongchuan District, Kunming, Yunnan Province.



Green Lake Park - "a Jade Gem in Kunming"
The park consists of about **four small sub-lakes and four islands** that are connected with elaborately decorated bridges. These are Mid-Lake Islet, Goldfish Islet, Bamboo Forest Islet, and Palm Islet. Each islet has its own unique delights to offer.

Mid-Lake Islet: This islet is comprised of the **Lotus Temple, Fish-Viewing Pavilion,** and **Mid-Lake Pavilion.** Here you can admire and feed the resident koi carp, or join the locals' recreational activities, like singing, dancing, practicing tai chi, playing traditional instruments, and rehearsing plays.


2


3

Goldfish Islet: It is called Goldfish Islet, but there are no longer any fish there. It is very nice to take a **stroll around the islet**, which is covered with lush cedars and camphor trees. Colorful plants and abundant shade provided by the larger trees make walking around the islet a very pleasant experience.

Bamboo Forest Islet: Situated to the northeast, the Bamboo Forest Islet boasts about **40 categories of bamboos** including the rare Chimonobambusa. Apart from the sea of bamboos, you can also see folk artisans gathering there to put on plays, sing, and dance. Near the Bamboo Forest Islet, you will find the Nine-Dragon Pond. It is actually a spring and the water trickles from nine holes, which the locals believe are home to nine dragons.

Palm Islet: Palm Islet is located in the southwest of the park. There you can find **a variety of subtropical plants**. This sudden burst of color in the middle of the city provides locals with a welcome slice of nature and is also a perfect place to have a picnic.

Western Hills (Xishan): This is a forest park blending **beautiful natural scenery, Taoist temples, and grottoes.** Stretching along the bank of Dianchi Lake, this mountain range looks like a "sleeping beauty" lying on the lake with her hair flowing on the water. *Western Hills offer spectacular panoramic views*. The Western Hills are 2,350 meters above sea level on the shore of Dianchi Lake. The deep blue sky, limpid lake water, and grand mountain peak create a magnificent picture. Standing on top of the mountain, you will enjoy **spectacular panoramic views of Dianchi.**


4

Lake and Kunming City: The tranquil surroundings, lush vegetation, clear streams, and numerous historic sites make it a wonderful place for local people and tourists to go.

The Dragon Gate Grottoes: The Dragon Gate (Longmen) Grottoes are **the most important part** of Western Hills Forest Park. The grottoes were carved out of the steep cliffs, featuring danger, tranquility, and uniqueness. The construction spanned 72 years during the Qing Dynasty, more than 200 years ago.

The Yuantong Temple: It is at the foot of Luofeng Hill in the northern part of the city. It is the largest Buddhist temple in Kunming, where the Yunnan Provincial and city's Buddhism Commissions are based. The temple was built during the Tang Dynasty, with a history spanning over 1,200 years. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the temple was reconstructed and repaired several times to its present size and appearance. The temple is now one of the most important Buddhist temples under State special protection. Differing from most other temples that were built with an ascending entrance, visitors enter the Yuantong Temple from above. The temple's great hall is at the lowest point of the temple. The temple's layout, along with the Buddhist

scriptures inside, follows the Yuan and Ming styles. Its brilliant appearance, grand building complex, and tranquil surroundings have intoxicated generations of poets and painters who have written poems and brushed scrolls about it. The temple is particularly crowded during the Qingming Festivals held on the first and fifth days of each lunar month.


5

Dining: Kunming is also renowned for its many delicious dishes. Due to the multi-cultural nature of the province, the city brings together the most representative food of the various nationalities residing in Yunnan, so eating here is an experience not to be missed. The famous food includes Steaming-Pot Chicken, Across Bridge Rice Noodles, and Xuanwei Ham. The night market is the best place to sample and enjoy the local snacks.

Shopping: Do not forget to purchase some locally produced souvenirs for your friends or family before leaving this charming city. The local wood carvings and minority tie-dye products are highly recommended. Jinma Biji Square is considered the best place to go for your purchases


6

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6. Mixian rice noodles being prepared, photo by Pratyeka - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=54408566

Dali - The Mystical Ancient City

Dàlǐ is in the northwest of Yúnnán, a city close to Kuming. A breath-taking location flanked by mountains on one side and the scintillating Ěrhǎi Lake on the other. The Ěrhǎi Lake is an alpine fault lake and has been given this name due to its "Ear-shaped Sea" as noticed by locals and travellers in this region. Surrounding Dàlǐ there are fascinating possibilities for exploring, especially by bicycle and in the mountains above the lake.


Erhai Lake, photo by Ariel Steiner, CC BY 2.5

Dali Ancient Town is about 13 kms away from Xiaguan in Dali City and is one of Dali's Three Ancients - ancient city, ancient pagoda and ancient steles. The history of Dali dates back to 1382 during the Ming Dynasty and it has been listed among the top historic cities of China.

Unlike any other Chinese town, the traditional Bai ethnic folk houses gives the town a distinctive feel. Besides the Bai houses, the houses with gray-green roof tiles, peculiar workshops, temples, schools and churches with antique flavour are scattered. Traditional marble artworks, like pencil vases, striped screen, and a variety of woven handicrafts of fine straw are laid chockablock on both sides of the street to be appreciated and purchased. Dali is so famous for the stone that the name of marble in Chinese is literally Dali Stone. Its grand city wall, traditional Bai houses and marvelous scenery attracts many visitors.



Pphoto by Wuzhongz, CC BY 3.0

Dali Ancient City: Dali's newly finished administrative district that houses the newly opened Dali International Convention Center is in Longshan District. The Dali Government's urban planning keeps its old and new districts separate, so those coming here for the first time often feel they have entered a time tunnel.

The new city is known as Xiaguan and is south of the old city. The old city was built during the Ming Dynasty Emperor Hongwu's reign (1368–1398). Owing to the distance between them, the old city is still peaceful and quiet.

ATTRACTIONS

The Three Pagodas of the Chong Sheng Temple are an ensemble of three independent pagodas arranged on the corners of an equilateral triangle, near the old town of Dali.



The Three Pagodas of Dali City, photo by Swordqiu - Own work (Public Domain)

The first gate of the ancient city: Wenxian Building is located 1 km away from the south gate of Dali Ancient City, which is known as the first gate of the ancient city, Wenxian Building stretch across the road which leads to Dali Ancient City from the south, and on both sides of the road lined with willow trees which is quite picturesque.



Photo: CC BY - SA 2.5 es

The world's first building of ancient Nanzhao kingdom: Wuhua Buidling, also called the Five Flowers Building, is the state guesthouse of an ancient Nanzhao king.



Photo by Yves Picq http://veton.picq.fr - ownwork, CC BY SA 3.0

Foreigners' Street: The east-west Huguo Road in the Dali Ancient City is known as the "foreigner street" with Chinese and western restaurants, cafes, tea houses and gift stores.

Dali Christian Church: Located on the intersection of Dali Ancient City Fuxing Road and Heping Road, the Church was founded in June 1904. The major structure of the church is timberwork, hip roof, which maintained the style of the western church, but also has strong Bai architectural characteristics that is a combination of Chinese and western church.

Dali is an essential part of the Yunnan experience and a popular tourist destination known for its natural serenity, historic and cultural heritage and vibrant festivals.

TAAI TRAVELOGUES
DESTINATION AWARENESS

kerala
God's Own Country

EXPERIENCE SERENITY IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Kerala is South India's most serenely beautiful state. A slender strip shaped by its layered landscape: almost 600 kms of the glorious Arabian Sea coastline, pristine beaches; a languid network of glistening backwaters; the lush green hills of the Western Ghats covered by tea plantations… just setting foot on this swathe of soul-quenching, palm-shaded green will slow your sub-continental stride to a blissed-out amble. Kerala is a world away from the frenzy of elsewhere.

Besides its famous backwaters, elegant houseboats, ayurvedic treatments and delicately spiced, taste-bud-tingling cuisine, Kerala is home to wild elephants, exotic birds, and the odd tiger, while vibrant traditions such as Kathakali plays, temple festivals and snake-boat races frequently bring even the smallest villages to life. No wonder Kerala is known as 'God's Own Country'.



Photo Credit: Vivek Kumar on Unsplash

Kochi

Kochi is a city in Kerala's coastal strip and offers an intriguing mix of giant fishing nets from China, a 400-year-old synagogue, ancient mosques, Portuguese houses and the crumbling remains of the British Raj. It is an unlikely blend of medieval Portugal, Holland and an English village grafted onto the tropical coast. Kochi is also a centre for powerful art forms and one of the best places to watch the classical dance form, Kathakali and its martial art Kalaripayattu.



Alappuzha

Alappuzha is a city on the Laccadive Sea and is best known for houseboat cruises along the rustic Kerala backwaters, a network of tranquil canals and lagoons. Alappuzha Beach is the site of the 19th-century Alappuzha Lighthouse. The city's Mullakkal Temple features a traditional design. Punnamada Lake's snake boat races are a well-known annual event.



Munnar

Munnar is a hill station and former resort for the British Raj elite. It is surrounded by rolling hills carpeted in emerald-green tea plantations, contoured, clipped and sculpted like ornamental hedges established in the late 19th century. Eravikulam National Park, a habitat for the endangered mountain goat Nilgiri Tahr, is home to the Lakkam Waterfalls and 2,695m-tall Anamudi Peak. The hiking trails along the low mountain scenery will lead you above the clouds, where you can marvel at the veils of mist clinging to the lofty mountaintops.



The Tea Museum at the Nallathanni Estate presents the region's history of tea production. Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary is home to numerous animal species. Fields of blue Neelakurinji flowers bloom there once every 12 years. En route to Top Station, reservoirs at Mattupetty Dam and Kundala Dam are popular for boating and picnicking. Aside from Lakkam, the region's many picturesque waterfalls include Attukal and Chinnakanal.

Thiruvananthapuram

The capital city of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram is distinguished by its British colonial architecture and many art galleries. It is also home to the Kuthiramalika Palace, adorned with carved horses and displaying collections related to the Travancore royal family.

Mahatma Gandhi Road is the main boulevard, lined with art and antique shops, carpet sellers and sari stalls. To the north, the ornate Napier Museum houses ancient Indian carvings, bronzes and natural-history specimens, while Sri Chitra Art Gallery holds miniature Indian paintings and work by the legendary artist Raja Ravi Varma. Thiruvananthapuram Zoo is a habitat for Bengal tigers, Asian elephants and Indian rhinos. To the south, the giant Dravidian-style Padmanabhaswamy Temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, with a 7-tier entrance tower. Along the coast are the popular beaches of Shankumugham and Kovalam.

Kovalam

Kovalam is a small coastal town in Kerala. At the southern end of the Lighthouse Beach is a striped lighthouse with a viewing platform. Some of the pristine golden beaches with coconut palm trees include Hawa Beach and Samudra Beach. Heading south, Vizhinjam Juma Masjid overlooks the busy fishing harbor.

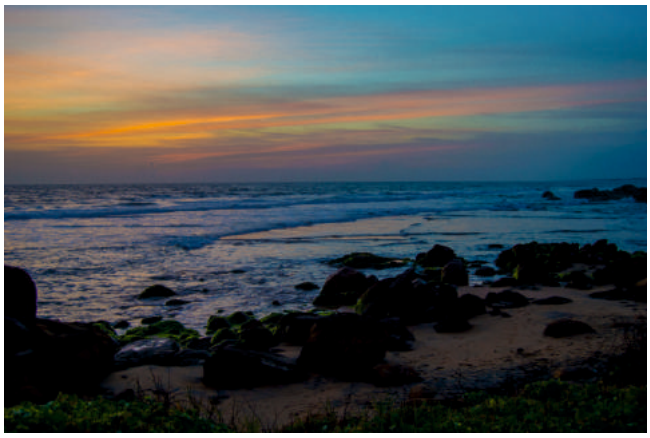


Photo Credit: Anfal Shamsudeen on Unsplash

Kumarakom

Kumarakom is a village on the Vembanad Lake in the backwaters of Kerala. It's laced with canals, where houseboats ply the waters. Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary is home to many species including cuckoos and Siberian storks.



Photo Credit: Nandhu Kumar on Unsplash



Photo Credit: Janu Prasad on Unsplash



Blue Star Flying high in the Online Travel Business

This issue's 'Trailblazer' space is offered to learn from our member - Blue Star Air Travel Services Pvt Ltd. Their growth has been phenomenal and the path they have chosen can support learning. Importantly, the impact the agency could create due to its online presence (Digital Empowerment) is more relevant in the current times. Here is an update on Blue Star Air Travel Services Pvt Ltd.

BLUE STAR
Air Travel Services (I) Pvt. Ltd.



Brief Profile of The Trailblazer Agency:

Blue Star Air Travel Services Pvt Ltd. has been established in 1987, over 3 decades of industry expertise. They are a dominant player in Airline Ticketing Business and today stand the position of five top B2B Agencies involved with Airline Ticketing in India.

According to them "Our company values are to treat each person with respect and enable people to reach their optimum potential." **They add** - "Our Excellence is in Client Service, Products, and Operations. Integrity is at the core, everything we do is guided by a moral compass that ensures fairness, respect for all stakeholders and complete transparency."

Blue Star Air Travel Services Pvt Ltd have been members of TAAI since **1994** and are affiliated with other Associations as well. Their two accredited representatives to TAAI are Mr. Nachiketa R. Oza and Mr. Madhav R. Oza.

Here are some responses which will be of great learning to many agencies…

How much you have grown?

We have grown about 20% every year

What is your staff strength today?

Our staff strength is close to 200 employees in total. We have dedicated staff to serve customers 24 x 7; Trained staff with subject matter expertise; dedicated destination management team and more.

We specialize in:

- Automated operations
- High customer satisfaction score
- Presence in 30 cities across India
- Wide sales network of over 30,000 Agents
- Deep penetration within India
- Travel partners across India with specialization.



> Our goal is to be present in all the cities of India which have a population of above one million. We intend to reach this target by March 2019.

What made you go online?
India is a huge market. Today's passengers want a well-informed and expert travel agent who has the technology advantage. At Blue Star our idea is to provide a platform to our travel agents which will enable them to possess these qualities and help them comfortably compete in the market. This is one of our greatest motivations to go online.

How much have you grown in the last four years ?
In the last four years we have grown about 100% as per the graph below:

Year	Revenue in Crores	Staff
2014-15	₹114	113
2015-16	₹282	138
2016-17	₹446	142
2017-18	₹595	162

How has your status as an 'Online Travel Agency' supported your industry leadership and your large growth?
Being an Online B2B Agency has helped us reach out to every corner of India. It supported us to share our pricing, seamless services and variety of online products like Air Tickets, Railway Tickets, Hotels, Bus Tickets, Travel Insurance... All these helped us to grow more.

What other products could you market because of your online empowerment?
As mentioned earlier, due to an active online presence, we are able to offer a wide variety of products that go beyond just Air Tickets. Today we can help customers book Rail and Bus tickets, book accommodation, get insured and more.

What are your future plans?
We have ambitious plans for the future. We propose to be present in almost 79 cities with our sales team serving these locations. We are soon adding our online tours. Our target is to register 50,000 agents across India by March 2019. (We already have 30,000 agents registered with us).

What are your goals?
Our goal is to be present in all the cities of India which have a population of above one million. We intend to reach this target by March 2019. Another crucial goal is to associate with all major Airlines and Hotels across the globe.

Any special achievements to share?
We have won approximately 250 awards.



TOP 5 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TRENDS IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

There is no denying that the role of digital technology is rapidly shifting, from being a driver of marginal efficiency to an enabler of innovation and disruption. Moreover, the travel and tourism sector has been at the forefront of digital disruption for decades, constantly changing the way people travel. Every day, new and innovative travel technologies are being developed to make travel and tourism an even more exciting and adventurous industry.

Here are the top five emerging digital transformation trends in the travel and tourism industry in 2018 that are sure to bring a new revolution in the sector.

1. Integration of Internet of Things(IoT)

The Internet has played a pivotal role in the transformation of the travel sector over the last decade, creating new businesses around everything from sharing economy to mobile apps. However, more dramatic transformation looms on the horizon: The Internet of Things (IoT). While IoT has been beneficial for all types of industry verticals in varying degrees, travel and tourism are recognizing a crucial impact on both the front end as well as the enterprise operations side.

IoT's rapid digitization of machines or physical things as smart connected devices is significantly impacting service offerings, business models, and traveler expectations. As more and more devices get connected to the IoT, the travel and hospitality sectors can harness this data to improve customer experience significantly. Through IoT devices, the opportunities for up-sells and better CX are endless.

Suggested readings:
IoT in Education: Changing the Way We Learn

2. Artificial Intelligence and Chatbots

The evolution of the travel and tourism industry has been remarkable. Initially, people could book flights on the Internet. Then came online travel agents. Today, travelers can do anything from asking smartphone if the flight is on time to have their queries answered by a chatbot. This is made possible with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Travel service providers can provide all the information via AI-powered apps and technology.

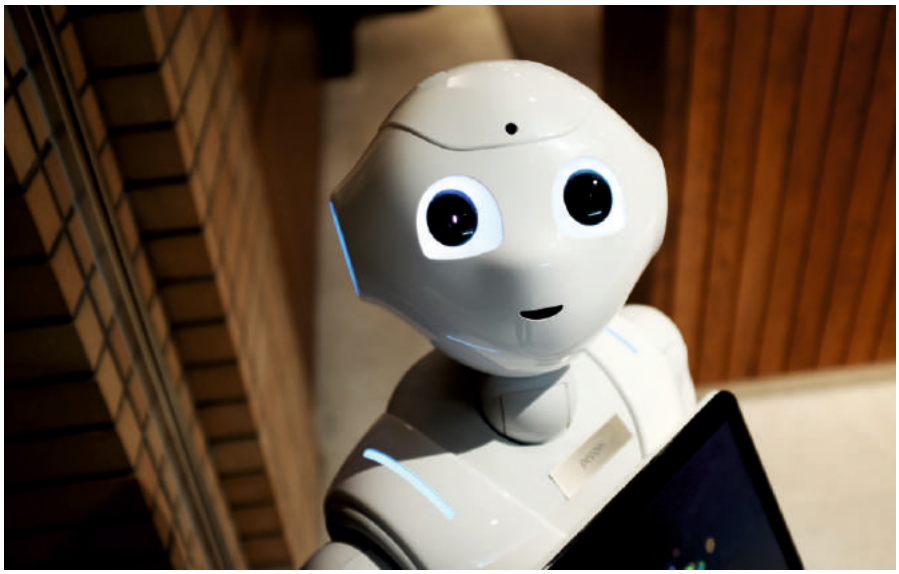


Photo by Alex Knight on Unsplash

By merging historical data with sophisticated machine learning algorithms, travel companies can now predict when and where travelers might want to go and generate personalized ads, thereby boosting sales. AI and chatbots may seem like the bane of some futuristic, dystopian society, but we already have come into contact with them in something as simple as booking a hotel or flight.

Suggested readings: Artificial Intelligence: The Solution to a Host of Industry Challenges

3. Virtual Reality is changing the game

Although Virtual Reality (VR) may have its origins in the gaming market, it is by no means confined to it. Today, one of the industry verticals in which VR has looming implications is the travel and tourism industry. VR technology is the ideal supplement to travel brands marketing and promotional campaigns. With the immersive experiences that are readily available, travel companies can offer customers an opportunity to see new sights or enjoy exotic adventures without leaving the comfort of their own space.

The possibilities of VR technology in travel are endless. So much so that it can transform the travel industry like never before. No longer confined to flat tours with descriptions and two-dimensional photographs, travel companies will have to adapt to the fact that travelers are now able to view the destination and hotel for themselves from home before making a booking, and VR is a key enabler for this.



Photo by Samuel Zeller on Unsplash

Suggested readings:
Is Virtual Reality Gaming the Next Big Evolution in the Gaming Industry?

4. Redefining travel with Big Data Analytics

A traveler leaves behind a vast quantity of data from multiple devices and channels at several stages including planning, research, price search, booking, cancellation, and feedback. New players, as well as old vendors in the travel domain, are looking for innovative ways to leverage the data generated from consumers to offer them more targeted and eventually profitable products and services. To identify travel patterns, consumer trends, and business opportunities, a sound Big Data Analytic strategy has become indispensable.



Photo by rawpixel on Unsplash

The industry has realized the capabilities of big data analytics on the variety, velocity, veracity, and volume of travel data to bring in actionable business insights. Many players in the travel domain have already adopted big data analytics to deliver real-time, personalized and targeted travel experiences.

5. Wearable technology

Wearables are no longer a simple concept that gadget lovers can sport under their collar. They are fast becoming a reality for billions of people around the world. Moreover, the travel industry is expected to get significant benefits from wearable technology. Wearable devices are being designed with consumer convenience in mind, and their fundamental goal is to enhance the overall experience of the traveler.For travel, wearable devices become a mini-screen that can perform many of the same functions as a smartphone. Boarding pass reminders, reservation information, gate updates, QR codes, and all the associated information that fuels a traveler's trip would be available right there on the wrist.



Photo by David Preston on Unsplash

The trends projected in Travel & Tourism industry is a great education to make us to pro-active and be prepared to face this most opportune times. The trends published here are from an article on https://www.technavio.com/ blog/top-5-digital-transformation-trends-travel-tourism-industry, by market research firm Technavio (www.technavio.com)

Technavio has been in business for over 14 years and has published over 10,000 reports, receiving coverage from publications such Forbes, the BBC, Bloomberg, and more. According to them "Our analysts are some of the best in their field, and I'd be delighted to put them at your disposal"

GST Analysis for Travel Industry

Updates from our GST Consultants

This column on GST has been an ongoing effort to address member queries. Members are encouraged to write back to TAAI (namastaai@taai.in) with their queries and the same will be forwarded to our consultants M/s GMJ Associates, who will respond to all questions to the best of their ability.



We present the GST updates for Air Ticketing and Tourism Industry - for the member agencies to refer to and be guided. However, we urge readers to consult your own tax advisors/practitioners. What is shared here is based on our GST Gurus' interpretation. TAAI and GMJ cannot be held responsible for any unintended error of interpretation or any action taken on the basis of this note.

GST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can Basic Fare Model and Commission Model be used simultaneously in the same Financial Year by an Air Travel Agent?

Yes, under the GST Law, there is no restriction on following only one model for the entire Financial Year. Hence both the models i.e., Basic Fare Model or Commission Model can be followed simultaneously in the same Financial Year. The models can be changed on a transaction to transaction basis. However, we recommend not to follow different models to avoid accounting difficulties.

In case of only a Hotel Booking does a Tour Operator have to charge GST at the rate as that charged by the hotel?

The hotel may charge GST either at the rate of 0%, 12%, 18% or 28% depending upon the declared tariff of the respective hotel. However, irrespective of the rate which the hotel charges, the Tour Operator or Agent can charge GST at the rate of 18% in case of only hotel booking.

Can the Rate of 5% be charged if we are providing the services of only booking the hotel?

A Tour Operator is a person who provides various bundled services such as Accommodation + Transportation or Sightseeing, arranging for tours, etc. If a person is providing services of solely booking a hotel for accommodation it will not fall under the definition of packaged tour and hence in that case the benefit of charging at a lower rate of 5% cannot be availed. Hence if you are providing services only with regard to booking of hotel, 18% rate of GST has to be charged.

Can a Travel Agent charge GST at the rate of 18% only on our commission amount in case the invoice of the hotel is in the name of the Travel Agent and not in the name of the guest?

No, in this case GST at the rate of 18% will have to be charged on the entire bill value and not only on the commission amount because the invoice of the hotel is in the name of the Travel Agent and not the guest. In case if a Travel Agent wishes to charge GST only on the Service Fees, then the invoice of the hotel should be in the name of the guest, in the invoice of the Travel Agent the amount of Service Fees has to be mentioned separately on the invoice of the Travel Agent. Further for the commission to be recovered from the hotel the Travel Agent has to issue a separate invoice to the hotel.



In case of Bad Debts can we issue a Credit Note and reduce the amount of GST already paid?

As per GST Law, Credit Notes can be issued only under certain circumstances which have been listed under the Law. Bad Debts is not one of the reasons mentioned under which Credit Notes can be issued. Hence, in case of Bad Debts Credit Notes cannot be issued and the tax already paid cannot be claimed as Refund.

The above responses are from our consultants
M/s GMJ Associates
Mr Manish Gadia and Mr Sumit Jhunjhunwala.
We thank them for their review and
sharing updates with the industry.

Disclaimer

The discussions and interpretations set forth in this material are based on the statutory laws and draft rules in public domain as of the date of this material i.e., 18th July, 2018. If there is a change, including a change having a retrospective effect, in the statutory laws, the discussions and comments expressed in this material would necessarily have to be re-evaluated in light of the changes. TAAI and GMJ do not have responsibility of updating this note.



5 Top Travel & Tourism Trends

~ Elaine Lyerly and Melia Lyerly

Photo by Joel Sparks on Unsplash

1 Making room for millennials

The millennial generation has overcome the baby boomers as the largest living generation. That means that they are also the largest generational group currently feeding their need to tour the globe. As a result, travel and tourism's sometimes stalwart approach is undergoing rapid change in order to keep up with the demands of this influential group.

How is this group going to continue to affect the industry in 2018? Look for more convenience in booking online, more options in overnight stays and more of a push toward responsibility and sustainability, two words that carry a lot of currency with this group.



Photo by Fancycrave on Unsplash

2 The rise of themed travel

Food vacations. Females-only weekends. Ecotourism. Adventure travel. All of these categories are subsets of the larger umbrella of themed travel opportunities that are on the rise in travel and tourism. As Sara Napier Burkhard at Trekk Soft notes, each of these categories offers the opportunity to tailor a travel experience specifically to a person's distinct interests and to give the traveler the opportunity to get to know the story of a place rather than just to see the sights. What does this mean for entrepreneurs? More opportunities for your business to offer individual, customized experiences for travelers who are looking for a unique take on a vacation spot (or on one of the many towns they pass through on the way to their final destination). It's in your best interest to figure out how your business can fit into that landscape.



Photo by aquachara on Unsplash

3 Photo opps galore

The rise of digital photography has helped to revolutionize the travel industry in numerous ways. But the rise of smartphone photography has been a game changer. The vastly improved cameras on mobile phones have given tourists the chance to capture images of a coveted vacation spot and post it immediately to social media, generating nearly instant interest. But what's also true is that communities looking to snag some tourism dollars can use mobile phones to do some self-promotion as well. In an article on Travel Massive, photographer Andrea Rees shared how a workshop she taught in the town of Khayelitsha in South Africa was able to help the women in the community develop a postcard series and bring in much-needed additional revenue. The next step, said the women, is to expand their project so that it reaches people overseas (which is where it's already headed). Expect to hear more and more of these kinds of stories in 2018: from regular tourists to Instagram travel bloggers to small communities, all of these groups are learning how impactful a good photograph can be on the mighty tourism dollar.



Photo by Nadine Shaabana on Unsplash

4 Integration of virtual reality



Photo by rawpixel on Unsplash

It may sound like the stuff of science fiction, but virtual reality is becoming more and more of an industry shaker in travel and tourism. That's because of its flexibility and the vast possibilities it opens for helping potential guests visualize themselves in a desired destination spot before they even arrive. Virtual reality can, among other things, be used by hotels and venues to give guests a three-dimensional tour of a rental location (room, conference venue, wedding spot) or to highlight features and point out places of interest in a dazzling locale. These benefits can give people the details they need to make an informed decision before laying out their cash. It can also help to raise expectations before a visit and encourage people to finalize their booking.

5 The changing landscape of overnight stays

Most travel and tourism trendspotters agree that Airbnb will continue to disrupt the hotel industry, but it's unlikely that it will fully supplant it in 2018. That's because, although Airbnb has unique offerings, the new business model has also forced hotels to change up their approach to overnight stays. Some hotels have created boutique locations to tailor to niche groups; others have simply upped their perks and made their rates more competitive to counter the Airbnb effect. Expect this competition to drive continued innovation in the industry - and to bring continued benefits to travelers.



Photo by rawpixel on Unsplash

Whether you're headed to Copenhagen, Cooperstown or Kinshasa, you'll see these travel and tourism trends taking off this year. It's good news for both travelers and businesses, so pack your bags - and keep those storefronts open.

Sisters Elaine Lyerly and Melia Lyerly have more than 40 years of experience in marketing, advertising, brand strategy and public relations. Lyerly Agency is at 126 N. Main St., Belmont, N.C., USA and can be reached at 704-525-3937 or www.lyerly.com.)

Acknowledgement: gastongazette.com, North Carolina, 28054, USA



Some journeys can only be travelled alone" said Ken Poirot. And it's a view that is being endorsed by more and more people today. In fact, Solo Travel - a relatively new phenomenon - was one of the hottest trends in 2017 and promises to capture the imagination of travellers in 2018 too. And if you think Solo Travellers are largely young males out for an adventure, think again. While women seem to be driving this trend, Solo Travellers are breaking all stereotypes; they are men and women, young and old, married, single or divorced, travelling for work or leisure... What is common to them is a desire to explore new places at their own pace, seek new experiences and soak in new cultures without anybody looking over their shoulder.

A quick glance at Facebook feeds or Instagram accounts will reveal how quickly this trend is picking up. There's that shy and timid colleague transformed into a daredevil bungee jumper in Costa Rica, the aunt who never shopped alone traipsing the streets of Milan, the best friend off on a foodcation to Mexico, the grandfather sipping a cup of Turkish coffee in Istanbul...





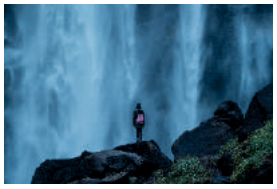
Acknowledging this trend are cruise lines, hotels, restaurants, and tour operators. There is a marked shift to not just accommodate this trend, but celebrate it. Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Epic, for instance, was the first ship in its fleet, to accommodate 128 Studio Cabins targeted at Solo Travellers. Royal Caribbean, Costa Cruises, Cunard, P&O Cruises, Fred. Olsen Cruises also feature single-occupancy cabins for solo cruisers. Hotels are giving the trend a nod, by offering greater benefits and enhanced safety for those going it alone. Alternative accommodation like AirBNB and CouchSurfing have also come as a blessing to solo travellers especially women travelling alone. Wellness Resorts are also making changes in their offerings to cater to singles. And of course, there are singles group holiday experts and support groups mushrooming across the globe - both online and offline.

So, what accounts for this increase in Solo Travel?

Travel is much cheaper and easier to organize. Technology has not just shrunk the world but made it easier to traverse. Solo traveller-friendly apps, blogs and websites offer valuable information, reviews and a helping hand wherever required. Besides new technological tools, accommodation too has seen a sea-change. The traditional hotel rooms are today complimented by home stays, service apartments and of course, the increasingly popular way to stay: AirBNB. The Solo Traveller never had it so easy or so good!







While these are major factors that have led to an increase in Solo Travel, there is also the fact that more people simply want to do things on their own. Single women are no longer willing to wait for the right companion to turn up and spirit them off to a romantic holiday. Married women who had put their life on hold for families are choosing to re-discover their passions by going on themed vacations like writing retreats, meditation camps or cycling tours. Men – young and old – are escaping from the stress of their careers and going for a digital detox in serene foreign locales. The elderly find time to finally indulge themselves and enjoy some 'me time' away from it all.

The social media revolution has also played its part. Seeing a best friend posing in front of the Pyramids, a favourite cousin being serenaded by a gondolier in Venice or an aunt smiling down from a cable car in Switzerland increases one's awareness of what is out there. This can be truly inspirational! The world's exotic destinations don't seem so unreachable anymore.







Discovering the joys of travelling alone

Solo Travel can be a little frightening for the first time traveller. There may be anxious moments, doubts and fears. But discovering new places at your own pace can be truly exhilarating. You decide the itinerary. You go where you want to, eat what you want and when you want to, spend more time at one spot or skip the touristy places all together. You can choose to lie in late, take a detour to a place that the stranger you met in the restaurant told you about, do whatever you wish to do! In short, you make your own plans – without having to consult others, consider the likes and dislikes of friends or family, or make any compromises whatsoever. You are truly the master of your fate when you are travelling alone.

It's adventurous, yes. It's liberating. It's also life-transforming. While learning to navigate a new terrain can be challenging, it can build your confidence like nothing else can. The "me time" that you spend helps you get in touch with yourself, connect with your innermost thoughts and recharge your batteries. You make new friends, you spend more time absorbing the local culture and doing what you want and here's the best part – in discovering new destinations on their own, Solo Travellers end up discovering a great deal about themselves!

With so many pluses, we can be quite sure that this is a trend that's here to stay!



Of 20,500 global travellers surveyed, **40%** of global Baby Boomers had taken a solo trip in the last year, and a further **21%** are planning to take one in the future.

Source: Booking.com

Roughly **1 in 4 people** say they will travel solo in 2018, according to a survey of 2,300 people by marketing firm MMGY Global.

Source: www.mmgyglobal.com

In their survey of a thousand customers, Solitair Holidays found that **72.4%** of women are likely to travel alone, compared with just **27.6%** of men.

Source: www.solitairhols.co.uk



SPORTS TOURISM
A Growing Niche Market

Photo Credit: Tom Grimbert on Unplash



You've probably heard of sports tourism, but perhaps you're not sure exactly what it means or why it's gaining prominence in recent times. **Lets Travel** clues you in on the definition and scope of sports tourism and examines its tangible benefits in this article.

Guess what could be more fun for sports lovers than participating in a sports event or watching one? Combining it with a holiday in a new place! And that's exactly what sports tourism is all about. It's about blending the magic of sports with the excitement of touring a new destination.

Since the last two decades, the number of people travelling great distances, even to far-off locations, to play their favourite sport or support their favourite teams and players is increasing by leaps and bounds with each passing year. But as compared to international sports tourists, Indians are still far behind. Even so, the good thing is that their number is on the rise. Faces with the tricolour painted on their cheeks are a familiar sight in the stands of cricket stadiums across the world. But now Indian fans are making their appearance at other sports events as well.

Since the last two decades, the number of people travelling great distances, even to far-off locations, to play their favourite sport or support their favourite teams and players is increasing by leaps and bounds with each passing year. But as compared to international sports tourists, Indians are still far behind. Even so, the good thing is that their number is on the rise.

Today, all the main international sporting events such as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the Grand Slam events, the Grand Prix events and the ICC Cricket World Cup are major tourist attractions. Not surprisingly, we see cities and countries competing vigorously with one another for the rights to host various sporting events, including amateur sports. So why this sudden surge of interest in sports tourism? What are the main categories of sports tourism? Why are countries keen to attract different types of sports tourists? Let's find out.

There are many who barely know anything about sports tourism even though it has been around for more than two millennia. Yeah, that's how long this sector of the tourism industry has been in existence. So, if you think sports-oriented travel is a modern phenomenon, think again. According to available historical records, it dates back to 776 BC when the Greeks held the first Olympic Games on the plain of Olympia with participants and spectators travelling from the various city-states of Ancient Greece. Between 200 BC and 480 AD, the Romans too staged a number of popular sporting events like contests between gladiators and chariot races, and sports lovers travelled to the different venues and thronged the sports stadiums on such occasions.

Forward-looking Governments across the world have realized the potential of hosting sports events and investing in sports facilities, and are marketing them for attracting international sports tourists and stimulating their tourism industries.

So, as you can see, sports tourism is an activity that hasn't gone out of fashion even thousands of years down the line. But, in essence, what we are witnessing today are modern adaptations of an ancient practice. The end of the 19th century saw the advent of the modern Olympic Games. Then, in the 19th and 20th centuries, the rapid development of team sports set the stage for ample spectator opportunities for the masses. And from then onwards, sports tourism took off in a big way, specially since the last two decades.

Although sports-related travel has been around for a long, long time, the actual term "sports tourism" was coined only a few decades ago. The term was first mentioned sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s to define a specific kind of tourism oriented towards sports. Interestingly, the definition of the term has evolved over the years. Sports tourism was once defined as "Travel for non-commercial reasons to participate in or observe sporting activities away from the home range." Later on, the definition was broadened to include "All forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from the home and work locality." Some experts define sports tourism as all forms of active or passive involvement in sports activities, be it for professional purposes, for the sake of amateurism or for visiting famous sporting venues or sports museums, the pre-requisite being travelling away from the place of permanent living. If you cut out the jargon, all of this simply means **"Tourism related to or involving sports."**

Since sports tourism encompasses a wide variety of activities, it is classified into the following categories:

Participatory or Active Sports Tourism

This refers to active participation in sports by travelling to a place away from home. Sports persons, including amateurs, professionals, and official support personnel, travel individually or in groups to take part in or provide services at sporting events or competitions in their own country or abroad. Such activities provide sports persons with opportunities to compete with their counterparts from other states or countries. Besides, the exposure enables them to gauge how they measure up against their competitors and consequently raise the level of their own game.



Incidental Sports Tourism is a sub-category of this form of sports tourism. Here, people choose a vacation destination based on the availability of sporting facilities. Although the main intention is to enjoy a holiday, sport plays a minor, yet significant, role in the vacation plans. Holiday resorts, business hotels, and other segments of the hospitality industry are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of providing sports and fitness facilities to attract sports-loving tourists. Nowadays one often hears of resorts providing a range of water sports, tennis courts or even access to golf courses.

Event or Passive Sports Tourism

Most sports tourists travel not to take part in, but to watch sports events either as connoisseurs of a game, as sports fans, or as casual spectators. And it is this segment of sports tourism that is big business today and has the maximum economical impact. With the growing popularity of national and international sporting events, sports enthusiasts are willing to travel even halfway across the globe to watch their favourite sport. Tourism providers are waking up to the potential of this lucrative segment of the tourism industry and are offering increasingly attractive sports-related tourism packages to sports tourists.



Nostalgia-based Sports Tourism

Another popular activity among sports enthusiasts is visiting sports halls of fame such as the Basketball Hall of Fame in Massachusetts, USA, renowned sporting venues such as Wimbledon and the Lords Cricket Ground in the UK, the Colosseum in Rome, Olympic venues of the recent past, prestigious sports retail stores and famous sports museums. Another recent trend is travelling to meet sports personalities or to visit their hometowns.









1 2 3 4

1. The Colosseum in Rome. *(Photo Credit: Willian West on Unsplash)*
2. All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, London - the venue for the Wimbledon championships *(Photo Credit: Cmglee - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=42749469)*
3. Olympic Park, Munich, Germany - venue of the 1972 Summer Olympics *(Photo Credit: Tavis Beck on Unsplash)*
4. Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame *(Photo Credit: Rizha Ubal - DSC04206, CC BY 2.0)*
5. Lords Cricket Ground, London *(Photo Credit: Natesh Ramasamy from Bangalore, India, CC BY 2.0)*

5



How Sports Promotes Tourism

Forward-looking Governments across the world have realized the potential of hosting sports events and investing in sports facilities and are marketing them for attracting international sports tourists and stimulating their tourism industries. Today, more and more governments are using sports events to promote their country or cities as tourist destinations.

Governments that recognize the interdependence between the sports and tourism sectors and ensure their integrated development in the form of sports tourism, bolster the generation of valuable revenues by way of a high volume of domestic and international tourist traffic even as they simultaneously promote sports in their countries.

How Tourism Promotes Sports

By encouraging and facilitating the participation of budding local talent in national and international competitions, local governments can promote excellence in sports and assist their youngsters in raising the standard of their game. Excellence in sports, in turn, enhances the sense of personal achievement and national pride.

Governments that recognize the interdependence between the sports and tourism sectors and ensure their integrated development in the form of sports tourism, bolster the generation of valuable revenues by way of a high volume of domestic and international tourist traffic even as they simultaneously promote sports in their countries.

In fact, one of the enduring benefits of sports tourism is the infrastructural improvement through new roads, sports facilities, etc., that governments invest in while preparing to host national or international sports events. In our own country, we all know how the capital city of New Delhi has benefitted from the modern sports infrastructure the government had invested in for hosting the Asian Games in 1982 and Commonwealth Games 2010. Millions was spent on constructing stadiums, flyovers, and other infrastructure. Many new hotels too were constructed to accommodate sports tourists.



Photo by null0 - https://www.flickr.com/photos/null0/5047797283/, CC BY 2.0

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium the main venue for the Delhi Common Wealth Games 2010

Why do we have such a dismal sports record when even smaller or poorer third world countries are doing much better than us in the international sports arena? Is it because of a lack of government support to budding talent, lack of facilities or a lack of international exposure? Could it be a combination of all three or something else? Maybe we as a nation lack the hunger or zeal to produce real sports heroes. Or maybe it's time the Government of India, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the Indian Olympic Association, and all the other official bodies linked to sports in India took our abysmal performance in sports seriously.

Of course bringing in some major sports events, sports tourism will not only help us to improve our sports image and reputation, but will also be a superb business opportunity for the tourism, sports and other related industries. Today, with better co-ordination between the different organizing bodies involved and more aggressive marketing of sports events, sports tourism is a different ball game altogether. Therefore, experts are of the opinion that hosting big events will give India excellent returns on all its investments in addition to boosting the pursuit of sports in the country.

We acknowledge contribution of this article by Mr Ramesh Mansukhanni of Lets Travel.



Technology Transcending the Barriers of Front Office, Mid Office and Back Office

Travel businesses in India has been mostly established in the front-office, middle-office, back-office model, each department with its own set of work. Traditionally, the model split included client-facing, work from supporting functions and transactional data-heavy tasks.

While the original separations were logical and sensible when they were first established, they also took advantage of the only currency of work output: Employees. Given the evolution of process transformation and agile process technologies, processes that have not adapted have become discontinuous with handovers becoming clunky, illogical and definitely not customer centric. The model, whilst making sense twenty years ago, is outdated and limiting today.

In the age of automation, the concept of better customer facing responsibilities have grown, supported by strong technology in the backend. It allows us to remove tedious and repetitive work from employees, help leverage those same employees to focus on problem solving, customer-facing and high-value skills to manage difficult or unusual issues and support the customer directly. This is of much greater benefit to the business, its customers and just as importantly the employee base.

As a result of this gradual evolution, travel technology companies have designed softwares that automate and deliver intelligent solutions in each step of their businesses. There are smart booking tools from Global Distribution Systems which has helped the customer facing executive to altogether skip the tedious learning process of cryptic commands and directly start booking travel for their customers through point and click features. There are advanced software solutions which offer customizations, big datas that deliver intelligent choices and finally smart tools that helps review the chosen product.

Today's travel agents have smart solutions in response to almost all of their travel business related hurdles with latest technology offerings. From efficient booking processes to Void, reissue, refund and revalidations, extraction of business intelligence reports, tracking missed revenues and error free accounting processes and much more, they can deliver better in shorter time.

Even for online players, smart online templates are readily available for making changes and starting their businesses. It's just time and motivations for individuals that matters today. With the help of technology any student can become an entrepreneur, and our ever flourishing travel industry has numerous successful examples of the same pedagogy. The technology has enabled each one of us, especially in the travel industry to remove the barriers of manual processes and achieve our goals seamlessly through advanced travel solutions.

Article contributed by:

INTERGLOBE
TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT



A Growing Digital Divide

Traditional Agencies need to urgently understand the importance of technology

Some of the largest online travel companies in the world are spending millions of dollars on tech development especially in the area of Artificial Intelligence, personalization and big data. This digital divide between tech centric travel companies and traditional agencies is growing at an exponential pace. It's become imperative that traditional agencies adopt technology at a rapid pace in order to stay relevant.

Traditional agencies are finding it hard to compete with tech enabled agencies who offer a lot more for a lot less. The operational savings that comes with technology adoption goes directly to the bottom line or can be passed on to the customer. Traditional agencies also find it difficult to scale operationally due to their heavy reliance on manpower.

One of the first areas that traditional agencies need to look at closely is their operations. Adoption of the right technology solution to automate operations completely will make agencies more efficient and lean.

We believe future of travel will revolve around personalization of service and product. The ability for travel companies to offer a specific product to a consumer based on his past behaviour and buying pattern will become a critical business requirement. Additionally, the new age consumer demands information instantly which being made possible through AI powered chat bots. Service level expectations are higher than ever before and agents will need to be able to respond to service queries quickly and accurately.

In conclusion change isn't new, what is new is the degree of change. Traditional agencies need to urgently understand the importance of technology and the role it will play in the future.

Gautam Ramanujan
Chief Commercial Officer
Infiniti Software Solutions and
Infiniti Travel Services

"We believe future of travel will revolve around personalization of service and product. The ability for travel companies to offer a specific product to a consumer based on his past behaviour and buying pattern will become a critical business requirement."



"Change isn't new, what is new is the degree of change."

Back office functions in a travel agency A tangible customer service differentiator



Customer Service - an oft repeated phrase. The ability to render impeccable customer service has been well understood as 'sine qua non' for success in a service industry like travel. However, experience suggests that the current practices and processes of the industry play out the concept in a limited manner. Customer service, by and large, is understood as a way of extending services for options for provisioning and reservation of travel products. The holistic understanding of customer service extending beyond reservations, etc., still eludes a large cross section of the industry players. Travel fulfilment is not the be all and end all of what customer service is all about. Although the large TMCs with demanding customers have perhaps begun to understand the importance of the back office processes play in extending a differentiated customer services to the customer, it is still a long way to go for the industry in general, to understand.

The holistic understanding of customer service still eludes a large cross section of industry players. Travel fulfilment is not the be all and end all of what customer service is all about.

The front office technology has equipped the travel businesses with requisite finesse and capability to meet one set of the demands of customers. However, the expectations of customers and that of corporate customers in particular, go beyond the reservation process. It is imperative for industry players to recognize that various other expectations of customers must be met, which in turn, shall ensure the survival in today's competitive business environment and ever-changing business dynamics.



The various other expectations of the customers are:

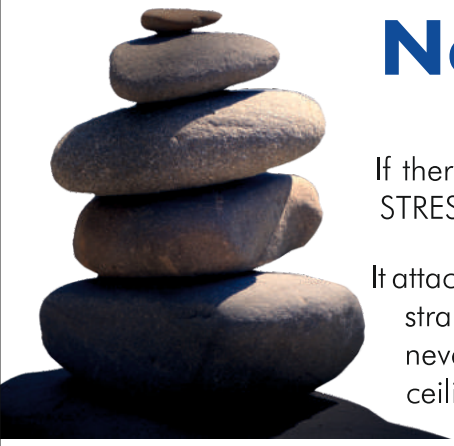
a. Correct billing for the purchase of various travel products. This would include interalia correct pax name and description of product/service purchased.
b. Compliance with pricing contracts negotiated and agreed. This would include interalia correct application of discounts/handling, rebates, service fee - management fee and/or transaction fee, any other service charge and nett fares.
c. Correct application of statutory levies (only if applicable to the customer) and correct depiction thereof on the invoices.
d. Correct refund of services not utilized with correct reversal of service fee and other statutory levies.
e. Compliance with agreed travel policies.
f. Submission of invoices through such delivery mechanisms as may have been agreed to.
g. Invoices to have such details viz, employee code, cost centers, business unit, project id and other MIS input as may be mandated.
h. Correct linking of payments as mandated.
I. Submission of correct and timely outstandings along with such supports as may be mandated.
j. Submission of such MIS at such time interval as may be required by the customer for his own business through textual and graphical representation.
k. Ability to provide real time information about customers travel spend on 3D dimensions.

A competent back office system alone can ensure that these expectations of the customer are adequately addressed. This way back office systems are supplemental to front office systems. A harmonious blend of these two shall alone ensure delivery of superlative holistic services to customer. The choice is not between these two technologies. Rather an appreciation of back office as a valuable differentiator of service delivery capability is required.

The adoption of competent back office technologies shall also equip the travel businesses with much-needed capability to analyze the nature of customer business. Such analysis will provide the agencies with meaningful insight into its profitability, which in turn, will allow them to focus and re-focus their efforts optimally. The back office technologies will provide 'agility' to the travel businesses with respect to the ever dynamic customers' needs. A robust back office system will allow the travel business to reorient themselves which while cutting costs on one hand and making the organization lean and efficient, will on the other hand, propel the organization to identify - and comply - with customer needs and expectations.

Ashwani Sondhi
Founder & Promoter
GazeBo





New Age Stress Busters

If there's one thing that is on a constant rise, irrespective of any other factor, it is STRESS.

It attacks one and all in various forms and sizes. A demanding boss, deadlines at work, strained relationships, lack of sufficient funds, the troublesome neighbour, the never-ending traffic woes, the nagging girlfriend, the leakage from your bedroom ceiling, your children's hard-to-meet demands and their spiraling expenses... there are dozens of instances that threaten to invade our peace of mind.

These situations are certain to arise in life but how we tackle them is the key. With advances in every other field today, be it technology, medicine or rocket science, it is heartening to know that mankind has innovated some fresher ways to combat stress and has reinvented the old tried and tested methods in the present day context. We call them the 'New Age Stress Busters.' Here is the glimpse of the diverse ways to alleviate your stress levels, heal alternately and keep disease at bay.

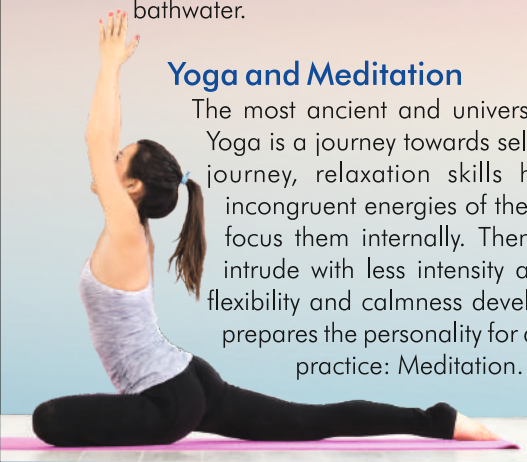
Aromatherapy





We are known to have unstable and unpredictable temperaments. Our moods and feelings keep changing constantly according to various internal and external factors. However, research has proved that fragrances can alter your mood effectively. Aromatherapy is a form of alternate healing that makes use of essential oils and other aromatic compounds for the purpose of improving the person's mood and health. Ingredients such as lavender oil are known to help a person get better sleep and reduce stress levels considerably. Eucalyptus oil is used in spas and workplaces to make people more alert, aware and active. These aromatherapy oils can be utilized by massaging directly into the skin or by adding a few drops of the oil to bathwater.

Yoga and Meditation



The most ancient and universally popular activity, Yoga is a journey towards self-awareness. On this journey, relaxation skills help us gather the incongruent energies of the body and mind and focus them internally. Then mental distractions intrude with less intensity and a sense of inner flexibility and calmness develops. Relaxation also prepares the personality for an even more interior practice: Meditation. Through meditation, we can safely enter the quiet and inward places of the mind and heart. Many centuries ago, the sage Vasistha had taught his beloved student Rama: "The self is not realized by any means other than meditation." Daily practice of *yogasanas* will do wonders for your body and mind. Practicing meditation regularly will help you attain a sense of oneness with your mind and spirit.

Tai Chi

Though Tai Chi is becoming increasingly popular as a system of self-defense, many people are unaware that it is also a great stress reliever. Based on the ancient Chinese philosophy of Taoism, this system is picking up fast as a modern day stress buster. Apart from the physical benefits of strengthening muscles, joints and organs, regular practice of Tai Chi helps lower blood pressure and direct energy (also known as 'Chi') to flow through the points where energy is getting blocked. It is also known to improve blood circulation and raise energy levels.

Sound Therapy

Music is known to have healing properties and subconsciously, we always respond to different types of music in different ways. Sound therapy consists of listening to therapeutic, soothing sounds, which is known to lower blood pressure and reduce stress levels. Many doctors recommend patients with acute depression to listen to such music for at least two hours a day to a total of 100 hours. Apart from these specially created sounds, you can easily utilize the sounds from nature that are known to soothe like, the sounds of the ocean, the rustling of leaves and the chirping of birds. It has been proven that meditating on the sound of 'Aum' can have a calming effect on the mind. For instance, listening to the Gayatri mantra daily is soothing to the mind and you feel more centered.

The Power of Aum

Aum is one of the most popular mantras in the whole world.



It is a scientific and universal sound and has many benefits. Chanting Aum can have a healing effect on individuals. The ease with which it can be chanted, its instant effectiveness and its sweet intoxicating feeling, almost like a tranquillizer, makes it a favourite amongst people all over the world. In Yoga Sutra, Patanjali says that by repeating and meditating on Aum, one can be cured of stress disorders and disease. Chanting Aum and meditating on it, will not only make the existing disease disappear, but will also protect one against any future ailments.

Creative Visualization

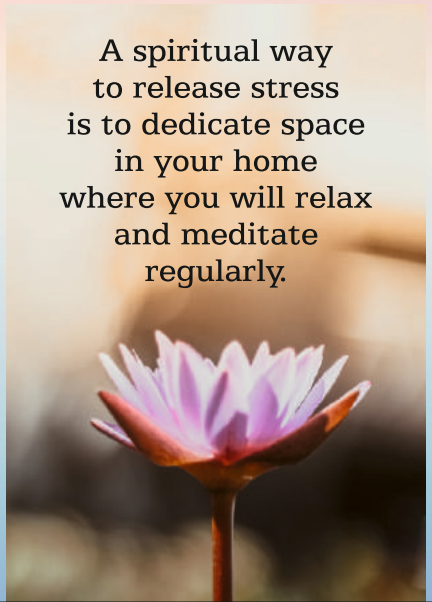
Many self-healing visualization techniques have been developed and have been successful in stress busting and have, in some cases, even known to have cured cancer. This method constitutes visualizing images such as beautiful and peaceful places like a calm lake or a beach, fruit-laden trees or colourful chirping birds. The technique of creative visualization was elaborated in the path-breaking book and movie 'The Secret.' Research has proven that visualization practiced under the guidance of an expert lowers pain, reduces blood pressure, and cures phobias while speeding up the healing process.

Dancercise

As the name indicates, dancercise is a combination of dance and exercise. Along with the various forms of dance, it is fast catching up as a fun-filled stress beating activity. A half hour session of dancercise, complete with warm-up and cool-down sessions gives your body a complete cardio workout. A person can choose jazz, hip hop, Bollywood or masala bhangra dance forms. This form of exercise is more of a liberating experience - a release for all pent up emotion.

Peaceful Corner

A spiritual way to release stress is to dedicate space in your home where you will relax and meditate regularly. In this space, place two or three objects which represent peace to you. Soft music, soft lights, using aroma oils, or lighting an incense stick or fragrant candles, can make the ambiance soothing and relaxing.



However, it is not practically possible to always define space for your meditation since space is limited in most houses, creative visualization could also be used to create a peaceful corner. You could visualize an imaginary 'Inner Peace Room' where you can go anytime with the power of your mind. Always use this space when you can.

Creating a Relaxing Atmosphere at the Workplace

A workplace is often where most souls are under the influence of negative emotions like stress, anger, jealousy, hatred and ego which cause the atmosphere to be charged with negative stressful vibrations. You need to insulate yourself from this negativity and purify the surroundings with positive thoughts which spread in across your workplace in the form of positive vibrations and have a positive influence on your colleagues too. As a result you can maintain your relaxed state even amidst heated interaction.

Crystal Healing

For thousands of years, healers have used crystals to treat and elevate a number of ailments. These gifts of nature are richly endowed with a number of properties that affect our lives positively. Crystals need to be cleansed and energized in an effective manner for them to work their best. Holding them under running water or keeping them out in moonlight are some of the easiest ways to cleanse them.

Art Therapy

Art can be an effective tool in mental health treatment. As an expressive medium, art can be used to help communicate, overcome stress and explore different aspects of one's own personality. Art therapy integrates psycho-therapeutic techniques with the creative process to include mental health and well-being. It has also proven to be an effective medium for children, especially with learning disabilities, behavioural problems and dealing with traumatic events.

Laugher Therapy

The famous adage "Laughter is the best medicine," has more to it then these simple words. There is a reasonable amount of evidence to suggest that laughter has tremendous psychological and physiological effects. Laughter is also known to keep away negative emotions like anxiety and depression, which tend to weaken the immune system. It improves lung capacity and oxygen levels in the blood and thus alleviates complaints of asthma and bronchitis. It also releases endorphins, the body's natural painkillers, thus reducing the frequency and intensity of arthritic pain and muscular spasm. Many laughter therapy classes have mushroomed across the world where people gather with one simple agenda 'Laugh Out Loud.'

5 simple ingredients from your kitchen shelves that can boost your immunity!



When our immunity is great, our body can adapt better to the changing weather conditions and external factors. However, due to reasons like unhealthy lifestyles, food choices, stress etc. our immune system weakens resulting in frequent illness, headaches, allergies, infections etc. We need to keep our immune system absolutely functional so that our body is capable of fighting anything that comes its way. Here are some common ingredients that can be included regularly in our intake that can boost our immunity and can protect us from various diseases and infections.

1.Ginger



Ginger contains natural antihistamine properties thereby protecting one from allergies and is a natural decongestant helping one to ward off cold and cough. Ginger is highly protective in nature and can also keep our digestive system free from any infections. Its a natural immunity booster.

Dosage: Include a cup of ginger infused water or herbal tea everyday can keep your immune system active.

2.Garlic

Many research indicates that regular consumption of garlic can boost the immune cell function. Garlic also helps in reducing production of stress hormones resulting in high cell performance by keeping them alert and active. Garlic contains antiviral, antibacterial and anti-fungal properties thereby being a single ingredient that can fight multiple infections. The sulfur compounds in garlic are believed to enhance zinc absorption which is also a great immunity booster.



Dosage: Include 4-5 pods of garlic slightly sauted in olive oil and include this along with your meals.

3.Honey

Pure honey is a natural immunity booster and provides many other health benefits too . Honey also contains polyphenol & flavanoid compounds which are powerful antioxidants, prevents cell damage and protects one from lifestyle disorders and even cancer. It protects one from



allergies and contains healing properties thereby making the cells more active and healthy.

Dosage:Take 1 teaspoon of raw honey every morning to keep our digestive system healthy and boost our immunity.

4.Turmeric

Turmeric contains curcumin compounds which which helps to fight any inflammation. They are extremely powerful and can ward off or prevent aggravation of any kind of infections such as common cold, joint pains, skin infections, arthritis, cancer etc. Just a little bit of it each day, can act as a great immunity booster.

Dosage: Mix 1/2 tsp of organic turmeric with warm water and consume every day just before bed time.



5.Curd

Curd is a natural probiotic that aids in enhancing the gut flora/microbes thereby strengthening our immune system. Curd when consumed in room temperature is extremely beneficial and maintains a healthy digestive system. With inclusion of healthy bacteria, our immune system gets much more active and protective.



Dosage: Include 2 cups of curd everyday can add a good dose of healthy bacteria that can fight disease causing organisms.

These natural immunity boosters are easily available in our kitchen shelves and are definitely easy to include every day as a part of our intake. Every ingredient that nature provides, is bestowed with multiple health benefits and its up-to us to be aware and make use of it.

Lets keep our immune system strong and fight out every attack that comes our way!

Note:
If you have a medical condition, then your dosage may differ and hence its better to talk to your physician/dietitian.

Ranjani Raman is the founder of Nutrition Tattva - a team of expert dietitians and nutritionists on a mission to make the world a healthier place. A practicing dietitian by profession, Ranjani s also a Pediatric Nutritionist, Certified Diabetes Educator, UGC certified for lectureship and a life member of the Indian Dietetic Association (IDA). She has counseled over 2,500 individuals, conducted more than 30 workshops, worked with 15+ health oriented businesses as a nutrition consultant and conducted Corporate Nutrition Sessions for reputed companies.

To know more about what she does, please visit: ***www.nutritiontattva.com***



What's in your stars?

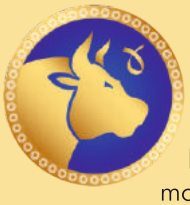




ARIES

Mesha, Ashwini, Bharani, Krutika (1)

Professionals will notice an increase in their profits as Bhagyadhipati jup is in the 7 house is in direct motion. Another factor that will be instrumental for monetary gain which will help Aries is the position of Venus being two lord aspecting 11 house labhsthana eloquence. Business people will prosper as they will get new assignments and lead to extra work load. This will probably be the cause of delay in completion and delivery as Mars and Ketu is in 10th house; electronics and publications related work can be completed as Mercury separates from Rahu's conjunction.



TAURUS

Vrishabha, Kritikka (2,3,4,) Rohini Mrigasira (1,2)

A slightly dull period is expected for Taurans because of adverse planetary positions. Sun has moved in 3rd house; those in share markets are advised to keep away from speculation and gambling; future and options and only consider long term investment. For professionals, transit Saturn 9 and 10 lord in eight asthamshani will have to work very hard. However, the results may not be in line with the efforts. There is no need to go into depression. Saturn in 8 patients having irritable bowel syndrome need to be careful.

Suggestion: *Worship Lord Shiva and do Abhishekam on Monday and Friday. Recite Shani Mantra 108 time daily.*



GEMINI

Mithuna, Mrigsara (3,4) Aadra and Punarvasu (1,2,3)

Generally the financial position is not good as the 2 house is in the grip of Rahu and JanmaRashi. The moon is aspected by Saturn but Jupiters aspect on moon would find some avenues for money inflow. Family expenditure would increase, house and repair works will consume a part of your income. Venus in 3rd is aspecting 9 house those into travel business, cosmetics, salon and garments would fetch a good amount of money. Health as Mars is in 8 house with Ketu and Saturn aspecting, health to be taken care of.

Suggestion: *Wear green color clothes on Wednesday, Recite VishuSahstraNama and feed cow with green fodder.*



CANCER

Kataka, Punarvasu (4) Pushya Aslesha

Transit Venus in 2nd and 3rd house is a good indication of money inflow; eloquence and pleasing communication would make these two months a remunerative one. 10th Lord Mars is in exalted nature though with Ketu is good for doctors, surgeons, pharmacist and those dealing in sanitary and building material.

Suggestion: Wear 10 carat pearl in the last finger and drink water in silver glass. And do abhishek to Lord Shiva with milk.



LEO

Sinha, Magha, Poorvaphalguni, Uttaraphalguni (1)

Financial position will be slightly affected, control on your spendthrift nature. 10 Lord Venus in 2nd and 3rd house simultaneously would kindle interest of starting own business. For those in Food products, Grocery, Gift Items, perfumes and cosmetics will dogood. Sun in cancer with Rahu is not good for patients having high blood pressure and heart problems, a routine check on blood pressure and ECG is recommended.

Suggestion: *Please worship Lord Surya, Om hrimsuryaaynamah, Feed cow with jaggery and wheat*



VIRGO

Kanya, Uttaraphalguni (2,3,4) Hasta Chitra (1!,2)

4rd Lord Jupiter in 2nd house is an indication of gains through property matters for getting benefits from inherited property from mothers side in particular. Those into publishing and law would flourish well as transit mercury in Virgo and Jupiter in Libra. Hard work will be well paid for those working in the area of machinery and by products of machinery.

Suggestion: *Wear 3 carat emerald on the last finger on right hand side in silver, feed cow with palak and worship Lord Ganesh with doorva green grass.*



Mr Jayesh Shah, an astrologer with 15 years of experience throws light on the future predictions for the month of August - September. Mr.Shah's predictions are based on the Indian System of Astrology which takes into account moon signs and planetary positions.



LIBRA

Tula, Chitra (3,4) Swati, Vishaka (1,2,3)

Orators of religious topics would find this a prosperous period as Venus would compensate to the previous financially dull period and can give better income to those into advertising, media and glamour industry. This is a fruitful period as far as financial position is concerned. Insurance related income and the long pending inheritance property benefits will load up your bank account.Joints oriented problem, deficiency of D3 & B12 and uric acid be taken care of in this period.

Suggestion: *Wear opal of 10 carat on the first finger on right hand side, worship Goddess Mahalaxmi on Friday, offerkheerto kids below 9 years of age.*



SCORPIO

Vrischika, Vishaka (4) Anuradha, Jyestha

Jupiter in 12th and Saturn in 2nd house would not allow you to save money. It can lead to unwanted expenses like investment in prop erty matters and even on rental agreement. Obstacles are likely to take place on the work front. Those dealing with government department may experience delayed payments. Tonsilitis, eye allergy and skin infections to be taken care of.

Suggestion: *Worship Lord Hanumanji, recitation of hanumanchalisa and donating red fruits on Tuesday will help*



SAGITTARIUS

Dhanus, Moola, Poorvashada, Uttarashadha (1)

Transit Jupiter in Libra in 11th house would fetch you sufficient amount of money for property matters like acquisition or disposition and wait till Jupiter enters into Scorpio.Transit Saturnaspectingmoon would lead to consuming medicine in one form or other.

Suggestion: *Wear 3 carat yellow sapphire in first finger on right hand side, apply kesar as tilak and donate yellow fruits to temple.*



CAPRICORN

Makar, Uttarshada (2,3,4 Sravana Dhanistha (1,2)

Income through speculation is likely to take place. Expenditure for repairs and maintenance or for children's education might increase. Jupiter in 10th as 12 Lord is not favorable for those in job maximum tolerance only could save your job. You may notice some financial crunch in this period. Businessmen dealing with iron and steel should be cautious in investment. Saturn in 12 can cause numbness, joint problems and calcium deficiency.

Suggestion: Worship Lord Saturn,worship pipal tree, light a mustard lamp below pipal tree



AQUARIUS

Kumbha dhanistha (3,4) satabishapoorvabhadra (1,2,3)

Transit Saturn in 11th house and Jupiter in 9 is very good for finance inflow of money from various sources. 10 Lord Mars with Ketu in 12 would delay projects and execution would be challenging but Jupiter blessing from 9 will save you from all obstacles at the last moment. Patients having osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid, arthritis to be very careful

Suggestion: Light a mustard oil lamp below pipal tree, donate mustard oil, donate uradvada and dahi on Saturday.



PISCES

Meena, Poorvabhadra (4) Uttarabhadra, Revati

Transit Jupiter in 8 does not indicate a good bank balance. Deposits might have to be withdrawn. Jupiter in 8 is good for those in property markets; acquisition and disposition can take place. Export import dealers can get a better opportunity. Stomach disorder, liver problem and those having sugar issues to be extra careful.

Suggestion: *Chant omnamobhagavatevasudevay, offering tulsi garland to lord hanumanjis and donate food items on amavasya*

Please contact the astrologer for any further queries at ***shah_jayesh33@rediffmail.com***



Favourite Travel Books for those with wanderlust!

There's something magical about both books and travel. They both open up our minds, teach us new things, give us new perspectives and transform us by taking us into new – sometimes unimagined - worlds.

Every traveller has their own favourite book - one that fuelled their wanderlust, got them started and kept them discovering.

Here's a list of some of the most popular Travel Books curated for you!

On The Road By Jack Kerouac
A classic American travel book, this semi-autobiographical story traces the cross-country hitchhiking and train-hopping journey of Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty across rural America in the 1940s.

Eat, Pray, Love by Eliza Gilbert
Talk about travel and this is the book that comes to mind. This inspirational tale follows a modern American woman as she journeys to Italy, India and Bali in an effort to discover herself.

Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman by Alice Steinbach
This book is an exquisite record of Pulitzer prize-winning novelist Alice Steinbach's journey of self-discovery as she travels around some of the most exciting places in the world.

Vagabonding: An Uncommon Guide to the Art of Long-term World Travel by Rolf Potts
A must-read for those wanting to travel alone but are still gathering the courage to take that step, this book contains practical information from a man who has been called as the Godfather of Vagabonding.

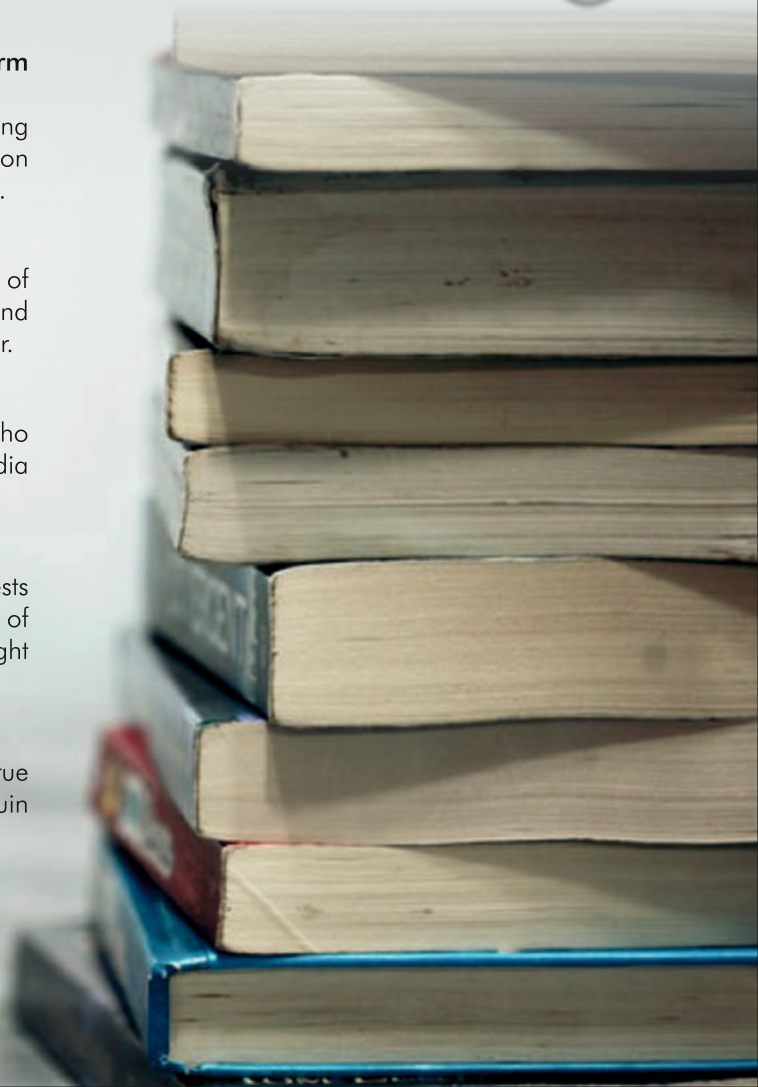
How To Travel The World On $50 A Day By Matt Kepnes
This New York Times bestseller shares the author's experiences of travelling on a shoestring budget. The stories are interesting and relatable and packed with many take-aways for the intrepid traveller.

A Long Way Home: A Memoir by Saroo Brierley
A # 1 International Bestseller, this memoir of a man in Australia who used Google Earth to get reunited with his biological mother in India has since been made into a movie called Lion.

In a Sunburned Country by Bill Bryson
A chronicle of the author's travels across the towns, cities and forests of Australia, this book beautifully captures the many faces of Kangaroo Country and you are tempted to book your tickets right away!

The Penguin Lessons by Tom Mitchell
A book that will want you to pack your bags to Argentina, this is a true heart-warming tale of a young expat teacher who rescues a penguin from an oil slick and ends up making an unexpected friend.





Get Connected
Join TAAI Today!



Join TAAI and get prominently connected with industry leaders. About 2,300 companies, organisations, agencies make TAAI formidable and India's oldest and largest travel and tourism association, TAAI membership is open to all Travel Companies, Tour Operators, MICE Specialists, Airlines, Tourism Boards including National/Regional Tourism Authorities, Hotels, Technology Companies, Transporters, Cruise Companies, Educational Institutions, Service providers in the areas of Visas, Foreign Exchange, Consulting, Media and organisations involved with any activity that is related to travel and tourism industry. TAAI also offers 'Overseas Membership' to those beyond India to get connected with the most trustworthy.

Benefits of TAAI Membership

- Your company is no more a standalone one in our endeavour to strengthen Principal-Agency relationship.
- TAAI is on board of APJC and actively deliberates on behalf of travel agencies on all policy matters concerning day-to-day business activity. TAAI is in active relationship with IATA and helps formulate industry policies.
- TAAI is actively involved with United Federation of Travel Agents Associations (UFTAA), which is represented on PAPGJC (Passenger Agency Program Global Joint Council) where association matters pertaining to governing resolutions by IATA are taken forward.
- Through its programs, TAAI helps promote highest standard of professionalism and ethics among members in their dealing with the public and among each other.
- TAAI offers numerous opportunities in training, skill development and tourism certification including destination education - for owners, managers, frontline staff and all those who have chosen travel and tourism as their career.
- TAAI is active in updating members on evolving visa formalities and maintains a close connect with embassies, high commissions and consulates.
- TAAI offers B2B opportunities through jointly held road shows and familiarisation trips in cooperation with Tourism Boards and National Tourism Organisations, through active networking at conventions and through several events including active partnership and support status with trade exhibition organisers.
- TAAI's annual convention, popular as 'The Indian Travel Congress' is an excellent opportunity for members to take home updates and learning through our business sessions, strong networking, interaction opportunities with overseas Destination Management Companies and invaluable connectivity that supports greater success in business.
- TAAI works closely with Government of India Tourism Offices and States Tourism Boards and is active in events/meetings organized to further the promotion of Indian tourism globally. TAAI is invited for 'Hotel Classification' and 'Airport Advisory'. TAAI also endeavours to closely work with Ministry of Civil Aviation, on aviation matters.

Become A TAAI Member!

To register, visit www.taai.in



Look no further! Advertise in NAMASTAAI

Print media is an effective form of advertising. NAMASTAAI from TAAI is aimed at drawing attention of our agency members and their personnel. NAMASTAAI is now before you to support you in reaching your target audience. NAMASTAAI has unique features that will reflect the strength of TAAI and its dynamics, combining quality of sound-byte editorial with the fascination of new happenings and topical news of the industry.

DO JOIN US IN THIS FANTASTIC JOURNEY OF PROMOTING YOUR ORGANISATION

NAMASTAAI has high quality images for internal and external news represented with full colour and gloss, allowing a clearer picture of your product, giving the trade a better idea of your company and its portfolio. Whatever your demographic, rest assured that NAMASTAAI will guarantee that your advertisement reaches your intended audience. And remember the Shelf Life! Exclusive magazines are typically kept for a longer period of time and re-read often because of their excellent printing quality and content.

NAMASTAAI's REACH

Over 4,000 copies of TAAI's NAMSATAAI are sent to key leaders of our Travel and Tourism industry, besides TAAI members.

Our reach includes Travel Agencies, Tour Operators (Domestic, Inbound and Outbound), National Tourism Boards, Airlines, Hotels, Excursion Agencies, Government Tourist Offices, GDS Companies, Travel and Tourism Educational Institutes, Industry leaders in Government and Media.

There is an E-form of NAMASTAAI as well. It is placed on our popular website www.taai.in/ www.travelagentsofindia.com to help our reach go beyond India and to our overseas members/partners including Tourism Authorities.

Great advertising value to promote your product/services

You have an excellent opportunity to gain value for your investment.Reserve your space in advance to get the best position

Your investment can be cost effective, when you advertise in at least three issues.

NAMASTAAI is your opportunity **Grab It!**

Advertising Rates

Here is a special offer for our members

Back Cover:	₹2 Lakhs
Inner Covers:	₹1 Lakh each
Full Page:	₹50,000
Half Page (Horizontal/Vertical):	₹30,000
Quarter Page Box:	₹15,000

Special rate for a minimum of 3 issues; 6 issues; or 12 issues

Magazine Specifications

Print: Offset
Colours: Multi-colour Printing
Paper: Cover - 250 gsm Art Card
Inside Pages - 90 gsm Art Paper

Advertising Specifications

Full Page: A/4 size (22 cm x 29 cm)
Advertisement Size Full Page (W x H)
Non Bleed Size: 18 cm x 26.7 cm
Bleed Size: 21.5 cm x 30.7 cm
Half Page (W x H)
Non Bleed Size: 18 cm x 13.5 cm
Preferred Advertisement file format:
High-resolution PDF, EPS or TIFF Format
For centrespread: Avoid text and visuals in centre

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