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Relief at last! Government announces 27 March restart

TBM Staff | Mumbai

After a gap of two years, India at last has lifted the ban on scheduled international flights. These flights, suspended because of the Coronavirus pandemic, will be operational from March 27.

"After having recognized the increased vaccination coverage across the globe and in consultation with the stakeholders, the Government of India has decided to resume scheduled commercial international passenger services to/from India from 27.03.2022, i.e. start of Summer Schedule 2022," said the Civil Aviation Ministry.

Hailing the move, Ajay Prakash, President, TAFI, said, "It's a huge relief that our government has finally decided to do away with the air bubbles and to open up the Indian skies to scheduled commercial aviation again. We hope that health requirements will also be tweaked adequately and that all airlines will now move swiftly to restore schedules and capacity." He also said that in view of the anticipated

surge in demand, TAFI has appealed to the airlines through the APJC to come forward and help the revival by agreeing to a 10-day payment cycle instead of the current weekly settlement. "We hope they will accede to this reasonable request," said Prakash.

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, said, "We appreciate the decision of all concerned government bodies, MoCA & MoT for a



positive decision. All associations with their own strength have been collectively advocating for the resumption of commercial flights." Mayal feels that the decision will

soon bring normalcy to the tourism sector. "We have been promised of opening of e-visa soon & look forward to a normalcy of our lives & the sector to quickly recover by wooing the travellers & en-cashing on inbound & also plan for our Indian travellers to have ease of travel, lower costs & more choice, as all countries are now removing strict protocols & opening borders before the holiday season kicks off," she said.

Ankush Nijhawan, Joint Managing Director, TBO TEK Limited, said, "The announcement to resume international passenger flights is a welcome move for domestic and international travellers who have been waiting for a long time to make travel plans. We are pleased that these measures will once again give a big boost to foreign tourism in the country."

Subhash Goyal, President - Confederation of Tourism Professionals, also welcomes the move. "I would like to thank our

Hon'ble Civil Aviation Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia, the Civil Aviation Secretary, Hon'ble Tourism Minister, Hon'ble Tourism Secretary," he said. ♦

India ranks third in visitor arrivals to USA in 2021

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Recent figures released by the United States National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO), have revealed that India ranked 3rd amongst US key source markets globally between January and December 2021. The USA welcomed 433,305 Indians in 2021 marking a 29% rise from 2020.

When the U.S. borders reopened to international travellers on November 8, 2021, the number of Indians immediately shot up to 70,808 arrivals (compared to 17,701 in October 2021) and this continued to rise in December 2021 with 89,301 arrivals. The breakdown of travel reasons to the US for 2021 were: 55.4% leisure, 11.3% business travelers and 33.4% students.

Throughout the pandemic, the Brand USA India team continued to keep the travel trade and media informed, inspired,



and engaged. Through a series of webinars, travel trade briefings, market updates and one-to-one meetings on Brand USA's virtual platform, Global Marketplace, Brand USA was able to successfully provide timely communication and compelling destination stories to the Indian market. The "Chalo USA" destination webinar series and the India Travel Trade Briefing (held in August 2021 with over 100 attendees) covered insights on new products, U.S. protocols and travel regulations post-pandemic and an overall destination briefing. The India Market Update held on November 10, 2021, was aimed at U.S. Exhibitors in preparation for the One-to-One Business

Meetings: Asia, The Pacific & India event. The live update lasted for 1 hour and 20 minutes and was attended by 17 US destinations and suppliers along with a video-on-demand room, which was viewed by many more people post-event. ♦

SriLankan Airlines adorns aircraft livery with 'Raid Amazonas 2022' insignia

TBM Staff | Mumbai

SriLankan Airlines adorns one of its aircraft with customised livery to reaffirm its status as the official airline of the much-awaited 'Raid Amazonas 2022.'

Raid Amazonas 2022 is an annual sporting event that features a large number of French female athletes competing their way to victory through multiple sports events and



activities against the backdrop of an iconic tourist destination. Every year, the event highlights an attractive tourist destination through inherent features such as its ecological beauty, citizens' way of life and culture, which are prominently showcased to the world through global media that follow the athletes in their trail. ♦

ICRA expects INR 25,000-Cr loss in FY22 for domestic aviation

TBM Staff | Mumbai

The domestic aviation industry is expected to report a net loss of INR 25,000-26,000 crore this fiscal with elevated jet fuel prices and fare caps continuing to pose a major challenge for the airlines' profitability, domestic rating agency ICRA said. Domestic airlines, however, are likely to post a reduced net loss of INR 14,000-16,000 crore in the next financial year on the back of a "notable recovery" in air passenger traffic and lower level of debt, ICRA added.

The ratings agency also estimates that the industry will require additional funding in the range of INR 20,000-22,000 crore during FY22-FY24. ICRA said it expects domestic air passenger traffic to witness a strong y-o-y growth of 50-55 per cent in 2021-22 supported by the fast pace of vaccination and gradual

relaxations in restrictions by the regulatory authorities. However, this recovery will be on a much lower base of FY21. Recovery to pre-Covid levels is not expected till FY24.

"Further, elevated aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, (which were 68 per cent higher year-on-year in 11 months of the ongoing fiscal) and continued fare caps continue to pose a major challenge for the profitability of the airlines," said Suprio Banerjee, Vice-President and Sector Head of ICRA. Recovery in domestic air passenger traffic is expected to be supported by pent-up demand in the leisure travel segment and gradual recovery in business travel, ICRA said. The impact of the pandemic has been more profound on international travel compared to domestic travel, it added. ♦

Signature Tours rebrands itself as Away&Co.

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Luxury outbound brand, Signature Tours from the Creative Travel family of brands, has been transformed to its new avatar, Away&Co. The company said that they are taking their deep knowledge and the great partnerships across the world, to rewrite the idea of experiential travel in an ever-changing world.

Away&Co is for a highly cultivated traveller with an appetite for the unusual, who are looking for something enriching and authentic, who like to wander, discover new secrets, and find new stories across the world.

Commenting on this development, Rohit Kohli, Jt. Managing Director, Creative Travel, said, "The Indian outbound market has matured exponentially over the years. Indians are more aware than ever before, and want to explore the world, but not as tourists. Our legacy of 45 years is built on creating amazing experiences, and that's what we're doing at Away&Co as well. The world is ready to welcome a new kind of Indian traveller, one who is immersed in the culture and the people, not just the monuments and sights."

Supported by a global network of the finest curators of travel experience in every destination, and as a part of one of India's oldest tourism companies, Away&Co will deliver the world in the most unique ways, the company said in a release. ♦



ROHIT KOHLI
Jt. Managing Director
Creative Travel

TAAI to organise its 66th convention in Sri Lanka from April 19-22

TBM Staff | Mumbai

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) is set to organise its 66th Convention in Sri Lanka from April 19 to 22. On the invitation from Sri Lankan Tourism Promotion Board (SLTPB) and Sri Lankan Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO), a tripartite Agreement was signed between the parties in Colombo.

Sri Lankan counterparts shall be extending full support in terms of accommodation, logistics and all arrangements to welcome around 400-500 delegates from India's oldest and nodal Travel & Tourism Association, stated Jyoti Mayal, President of TAAI.

This convention shall not only strengthen bilateral tourism ties between the two countries but, will act as a catalyst in reviving the travel industry for both countries post the pandemic, she added. We shall create opportunities to sell products of Sri Lanka as a tourism destination but also shall be promoting Incredible India to



local Sri Lankan stakeholder partners.

Jay Bhatia, Vice President stated that TAAI Conventions (Indian Travel Congress) are the most eagerly awaited events of the Travel & Tourism industry not only in India, but in the overseas markets as well. "The visibility this annual event of TAAI brings to the global tourism stakeholders is fantastic. Generally, 500 to 1,000 TAAI delegates are

offered an opportunity to network; attended B2B interactions, promote or buy and more importantly take home some great learnings from the knowledge sessions and updated information from the destination. We are excited and are looking forward to a great opportunity after nearly 2 decades to come back to Sri Lanka for our Congress," said Bhatia. ♦

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REMEMBER GEORGE PATTON'S FAMOUS LINE?

It's important to think out of the hat as things can get much worse than the virus.

A few days back, an air-borne Air India flight to Kyiv had to return from midway, after Ukraine shut down its airspace. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has the seeds of something much nastier than any virus the world has confronted in recent years.

Just a few weeks ago Ukraine's tourism board was urging tourists to 'keep calm and visit Ukraine'. More simplistic than optimistic in scope, the hastily scrambled campaign was tailored to reassure travellers that things were normal in that country. It, however, unravelled sooner than it unfolded.

The tremulous relationship of business, tourism and leisure with political landscape is deeply felt but seldom considered in strategizing for future. Even the virus reverberations had distinct political rumbles with governments fusing their world vision with business. It's best to accept that times are complicated.

In WW2 General George Patton had famously called for totally outlandish approaches to meet challenges since usual ways wouldn't work. He had said- 'If everyone is thinking alike, someone isn't thinking'.

Now more than ever, tourism businesses will have to recreate their profile, agenda and attitude to expand their scope into unexplored horizons. For a business so kneaded into unhindered opportunities for travel, tourism has to look at itself as a different entity to merely stay alive.

Domestic tourism was touted as the 'sanjivani' that revives and sustains the industry during tough periods. Even this idea has to be revisited. What occurs in one part of the world impacts every strand of business some way or the other. This crisis is much more intertwined with a major part of the developed world than might be generally assumed.

A few days back the Chief of Britain's Defence Staff, had stated that the consequences of a Russian invasion into Ukraine would be on a scale not seen in Europe since the Second World War. Now that it has happened, the airline industry across the world can only say 'brace, brace'.

The point is that unless tourism business steps out of its leisure and even 'business travel' self-image, it might have to read its elegy much more frequently.

Anurag Yadav
Industry Expert

Anurag Yadav is a travel author and columnist, writing on hospitality and design. An avid traveller, he has published five books and divides his time equally between Delhi and London.

The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.

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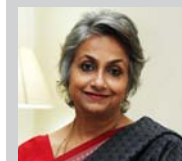
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TAAI Western Region Chapter held a meeting in Mumbai; updates its members on new destinations

Prasenjit Chakraborty | Mumbai

TAAI (Travel Agents Association of India) Western region organised a meeting cum networking session on February 23 in Mumbai. A large number of TAAI members attended the event.

Talking to **TravelBiz Monitor**, Sameer Karnani, Chairman, Western Region, TAAI, said that his top priority is educating the members about new destinations. "Every time in such a meeting we update our members about new destinations. Today, our members gained knowledge on two destinations Saudi Arabia and AIUla," said Karnani.

Talking about his priorities, Karnani said that his aim is to update members about new

destinations. Karnani's second priority is to take grievances and problems of the members to the ministry and get them solved. When asked how many members from the Western



region registered with MoT? Karnani replied, "As of now a few members have registered with MoT. The problem is, our members are not clear about the requirements of the

government. We are trying to streamline it from the government's side so that the process becomes easier," he said.

Karnani is very optimistic about the future of the tourism industry and said that there is a lot of demand for both short and long haul destinations. "Once the scheduled international flights start, we will witness revenge tourism happening. People are eager to travel to both short and long haul destinations," he pointed out.

Anoop Kanuga, Chairman, Tourism Services Council, TAAI, said, it is time to educate members about new destinations. "Customers are constantly asking about new destinations which is a very good sign," said Kanuga. ♦

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Cenizaro Hotels & Resorts appoints BRANDit as its marketing agency in India

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Cenizaro Hotels & Resorts, has commissioned BRANDit as its integrated marketing agency in India following a competitive review process. The partnership will support stakeholders and further enhance the brand's presence in the India market through The Residence by Cenizaro resort collection, with Maldives and Mauritius at the fore. BRANDit will fortify Cenizaro's sales, marketing and PR strategies with a brand-new outlook as part of its mandate.

Commenting on the appointment, Henry Ngo, Chairman, Cenizaro Hotels & Resorts, said "We are pleased to welcome BRANDit as our new partner in India. As we repurpose our strategy, we look forward to working with the team to increase visibility for The Residence by

Cenizaro portfolio and drive operational growth across different target segments of Leisure, MICE and Celebration. India is a priority market for Cenizaro owing to a vast market size and accessibility to many of our resorts, especially Maldives and Mauritius. Outbound travel is seeing a steady upturn and our association will only further bolster our efforts in firming our brand presence in the India market."

"We are delighted to represent The Residence by Cenizaro. I am confident that together we will successfully reinforce the brand's reach in the India market. With comprehensive knowledge of the travel trade and media backed by a dynamic team at BRANDit, we will effectively drive results for The Residence collection in India," said Lubaina Sheerazi, CEO & Co-founder, BRANDit. ♦

Ilker Ayci declines role of Air India CEO

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Turkey's Ilker Ayci has declined to be the chief executive officer (CEO) of Tata Group's Air India, days after the announcement of his appointment led to opposition in India.

Last month, Tata Sons, which recently took over debt-laden Air India, had announced the appointment of the former Chairman of Turkish Airlines Ayci as the CEO and MD of Air India.



Air India was handed back to its founders, the Tata group, in January, almost seven decades after it was nationalised, capping years of struggle by the government to sell the struggling airline. It was a homecoming for Air India which began operations as Tata Air Services in 1932, before it was nationalised in 1953.

Ayci was said to assume his new responsibilities on or before April 1 this year. The statement had added that his appointment to the new position was subject to requisite regulatory approvals. ♦

Thailand agrees for air travel bubble with India

TBM Staff | Mumbai

As per the statement issued by the Civil Aviation of Thailand and the Ministry of Civil Aviation in India, Thai and Indian airlines are now allowed to offer flights through the travel bubble scheme between the two countries, allowing citizens and visa holders to travel. Commercial flights between the two countries have been suspended since March 23, 2020, after the arrival of Covid-19.

According to the arrangement, commercial

flights between the two countries will be allowed to fly passengers of Thai, Indian, Nepal and Bhutan nationalities as well as other nationalities that have visas to enter both Thailand and India.

Foreigners and Thais travelling to India are required to hold a valid Indian visa and Indian nationals and foreigners travelling from India to Thailand must hold a valid Thai visa. According to the Ministry, the airlines must make sure all the passengers meet the requirement for entry before issuing boarding passes to the passengers to prevent the spread of Covid-19. ♦

The no place!

By **Dr Nimit Chowdhary**, Professor of Tourism, Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Jamia Millia Islamia.

How about visiting Agra yet turning your back on the Taj Mahal and visiting the obscure little known places in Agra instead!

Is the city merely a postcard? Or is there more to the personality of the city beyond the popular attractions? Are there any alternate interpretations of what a place is? There are often two places in one. One is the city where we live with our family and acquaintances, where we go to work every day and have choices for our pass time. Furthermore, another is an alternative place in the same physical space where visitors arrive for exploration and discovery.

For many of us, tourism was about travelling out of cities, restricted during the pandemic. However, as we come out of the pandemic and are getting revengeful to our home confinements, we have started visiting places with much scepticism. So, can we explore alternate places in our cities besides the popular attractions? Even the visitors are increasingly interested in knowing and exploring these lesser-known facets of life at a place- the no place.

There are wonderful undiscovered locales in our cities beyond the realm of touristic attractions. Overlooked places, faubourgs, unhip neighbourhood, agrestic colonies or even the abandoned quarters of the city may have quite a charm but are lieus of wonder and potential. With their

traditional or original customs, the nature of these no-places orientates a possible different experience.

The resurgence of tourism is led by visitations to lesser-known destinations that are quiet and serene. People seem to be flocking to rural spaces away from the maddening crowds of cities and popular destinations. However, there is alternate tourism to these no-places beyond the dominant urban mass tourism capturing the imagination of visitors with another philosophical approach involving interaction with locals. People are contemplating visiting these no-places obscure to fellow visitors to a city.

Contretourism is about travelling to tourist destinations and focusing on little known locations instead of popular attractions.

These seemingly charmingly vague psychogeographical explorations are fuelled by a hope of discovery that feeds our primal need to escape, more so after this forced confinement during the pandemic. This exploration of urban environments, also known as *dérive* is about interpersonal connections to places and arbitrary routes that shape the experience during a rapid passage through the varied ambience. *Contretourism* also lends a feeling that the place has not yet been wholly discovered and triggers a sense of possibility.

There could be multiple sources of a visitor's geographical imagination of a no-place. For example, in some cosmopolitans, many jobless, penniless and homeless seek refuge in abandoned concrete sewage pipes or underpasses. This construed normality is an example of no place which captivates a sightseer. In another case, a visitor may be intrigued by a split identity of a place when a city is renamed or reinhabited, and the two identities struggle to co-exit. For example, in a post-partition Punjab in India and Pakistan, many places have renewed identities and are a subject of intrigue for visitors from the other side whose families had abandoned those places. Though not popular tourist destinations, they attract visitors.

Unplanned spaces like slums or ghettos, or places that arise from building



something else like under spaces of flyovers, like AIIMS intersection vista due to building multiple crossing flyovers are no-places that people may like to explore. Similarly, uninhibited ghost villages of Uttarakhand or gigantic murals of Lodhi Garden neighbourhood in New Delhi, or abandoned railway corridors in New York, Chicago, Melbourne, Toronto, and Vancouver converted into public gardens are sites of inspiration.

Another perspective of no spaces is what Marc Augé refers to as "no-lugares". Places like airports, highways, hotel rooms and public transport have no symbolic expression of identity or history, yet they intrigue many visitors. For example, an emerging concept is aerotourism, where people visit airports to explore them without actually getting on a plane. Likewise, railway stations and bus stations have their inexplicable allure. A curious charm lays around wastelands, abandoned factories, the yards and building sites that many people love to visit.

This experiential tourism is built around playfulness in exploring built urban environments. Aimless wandering to feel the place from a non-touristic perspective fuels this *contretourism*.

Wandering seemed no more than the happiness of an anxious man.

-Albert Camus ♦

'The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.'

Dr Nimit Chowdhary is a Professor at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. He has more than 28 years of academic experience, of which he has been a full professor for 15 years in India, China, and Mexico. In addition, he was a visiting faculty at Gotland University (Sweden), the University of Girona (Spain), IIM Sirmaur, IIQM, and EDII. He is a recipient of many academic awards and recognitions who has authored 13 books and more than 150 academic papers. He has travelled extensively to around 40 countries and almost all states.



‘India is critical to the Asia Pacific region for Collinson’

Recent Collinson research in partnership with CAPA – Centre for Aviation showed an increased desire to be ‘away from the madding crowds’ with fast-track access and lounge experiences topping the lists of travel extras, for enhanced peace of mind, says **Priyanka Lakhani, Senior Vice President, Commercial EMEA, Collinson**, in a conversation with **Prasenjit Chakraborty**.

Q How has the airport lounge experience business changed over the years? What is the demand of customers especially after the Pandemic?

Priority Pass, is the world’s leading airport lounge and experiences programme, owned and operated by Collinson. Back in 1992 when it was launched, airport lounge access as a benefit to financial services was a new and ground-breaking way to reward customer loyalty. Fast forward to 2022, while the look and feel of airport lounges may have changed – the importance of rewarding customer loyalty with a life-enhancing experience is ever-more relevant; as consumers’ desires shift from product-focused rewards to experiential.

With the onset of the pandemic, lounge access has in turn provided added benefits over and above an enhanced travel experience. Recent Collinson research in partnership with CAPA – Centre for Aviation showed an increased desire to be ‘away from the madding crowds’ with fast-track access and lounge experiences topping the lists of travel extras, for enhanced peace of mind. With Priority Pass lounge access, it’s possible to enjoy quiet, socially-distanced spaces for a calmer airport experience while waiting to board your flight.

As travel within India restarts, we’re pleased to have recently

launched Priority Pass Access India, in partnership with Pine Labs, a merchant commerce platform. Priority Pass Access India provides access to over 50 premium lounges and airport experiences in India, all at the tap or swipe of a Member’s payment card. Additionally, we have also been enhancing our Priority Pass global lounge experiences for travellers, with the introduction of Be Relax Spas for the ultimate pre-flight relaxation.

Travel is at the top of many people’s wish lists in 2022, and we can’t wait to welcome them back to our lounges and help to make their journey more enjoyable.

Q What are the biggest challenges you face in the airport lounge experience business? What are the innovative changes you brought in this business?

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be the biggest challenge for the travel industry – particularly within the Asia Pacific region. While it has been a challenging time, some positive signs suggest that the worst is behind us when looking through a global lens, with IATA recently announcing that travel industry losses are expected to reduce to USD11.6 billion in 2022 after a USD51.8 billion loss in 2021. For our business, we have taken the opportunity to launch new innovations – such as our Ready2Order solution, offering contactless food and beverage ordering. We also recently launched a partnership with CarTrawler to facilitate members with renting a car, easily accessible through the Priority Pass app, in addition to the afore mentioned launch of Priority Pass Access India.

Q Collinson’s Priority Pass launched a global partnership with Car Trawler. What important leverage points this partnership would offer to Collinson?

Our global partnership with Car

Trawler helps to create a frictionless end-to-end travel experience for our Members. The partnership provides preferentially-priced access to CarTrawler’s network of over 2,200 car rental and mobility providers from 56,000 locations worldwide including Hong Kong, Singapore and India and can be booked seamlessly via the Priority Pass app.

Q How important is the India market for the overall business of Collinson?

India is critical to the Asia Pacific region for Collinson, as demonstrated by our investment in the domestic lounge experience solution, Priority Pass Access India. Priority Pass Members now have seamless access to Priority Pass’s extensive lounge network in India, as well as the largest lounge network globally; all through one single provider. To supplement the existing domestic network of over 50 premium lounges and airport experiences located across all major cities in India, lounge coverage will continue to be expanded, with additional airport lounges and lounge experiences being added in the coming months – further strengthening our offer for our Indian Members.

Q Any new exclusive partnership with lounge operators on the cards?

While we can’t announce new lounge operators yet, we have exciting upcoming launches to add to the 183 airport lounges and experiences we added to our global Priority Pass network in 2021 alone. Travellers now have access to over 1,300 lounges and airport experiences – so they can indulge in at least one experience at 90 of the top 100 airports globally.

Q What is your plan to increase Collinson’s market share in APAC?

In 2022, we look forward to further expanding our network to more locations and adding new experiences and services globally. A focus will be the provision of more premium, digitally enabled experiences and luxury services to help travellers regain confidence when taking to the skies. ♦

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Travel Insurance Market to grow at over 11% CAGR during 2021-2027

The growing demand for travel insurance is fuelled by growing uncertainties, especially after Covid-19. After a slowdown in travel, the market for travel insurance gained traction in the second half of 2020 after the gradual relaxation of the lockdowns imposed, states a report by Global Market Insights. **TravelBiz Monitor** offers excerpts of the report to get a sense of the market potential.

The Travel Insurance Market size exceeded USD 15 billion in 2020 and is projected to grow at over 11% CAGR from 2021 to 2027, suggests a Global Market Insights report by Preeti Wadhvani and Saloni Gankar. The growing number of international tourists demanding financial protection while travelling is likely to fuel the industry growth. The rising demand for reimbursement of expenditures incurred due to misplaced belongings, trip cancellations, and medical problems will propel the market revenue. The expenses of such incidents are significant when travelling abroad, and travel insurance provides several compensation benefits that minimize the risks during travel.

Travel Insurance Market

Supportive initiatives by governments will boost the business expansion. For instance, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and International Air Transport Association (IATA) have developed a dashboard on travel restrictions and health-related travel requirements. The aim is to support the recovery of tourism by providing real-time information and insights to the travellers.

The COVID-19 pandemic impeded growth of the travel insurance market in the first half of 2020 owing to strict lockdown measures enforced by the government. The number of domestic and international tourists significantly decreased in 2020. The market gained traction in the second half of 2020 after the gradual relaxation

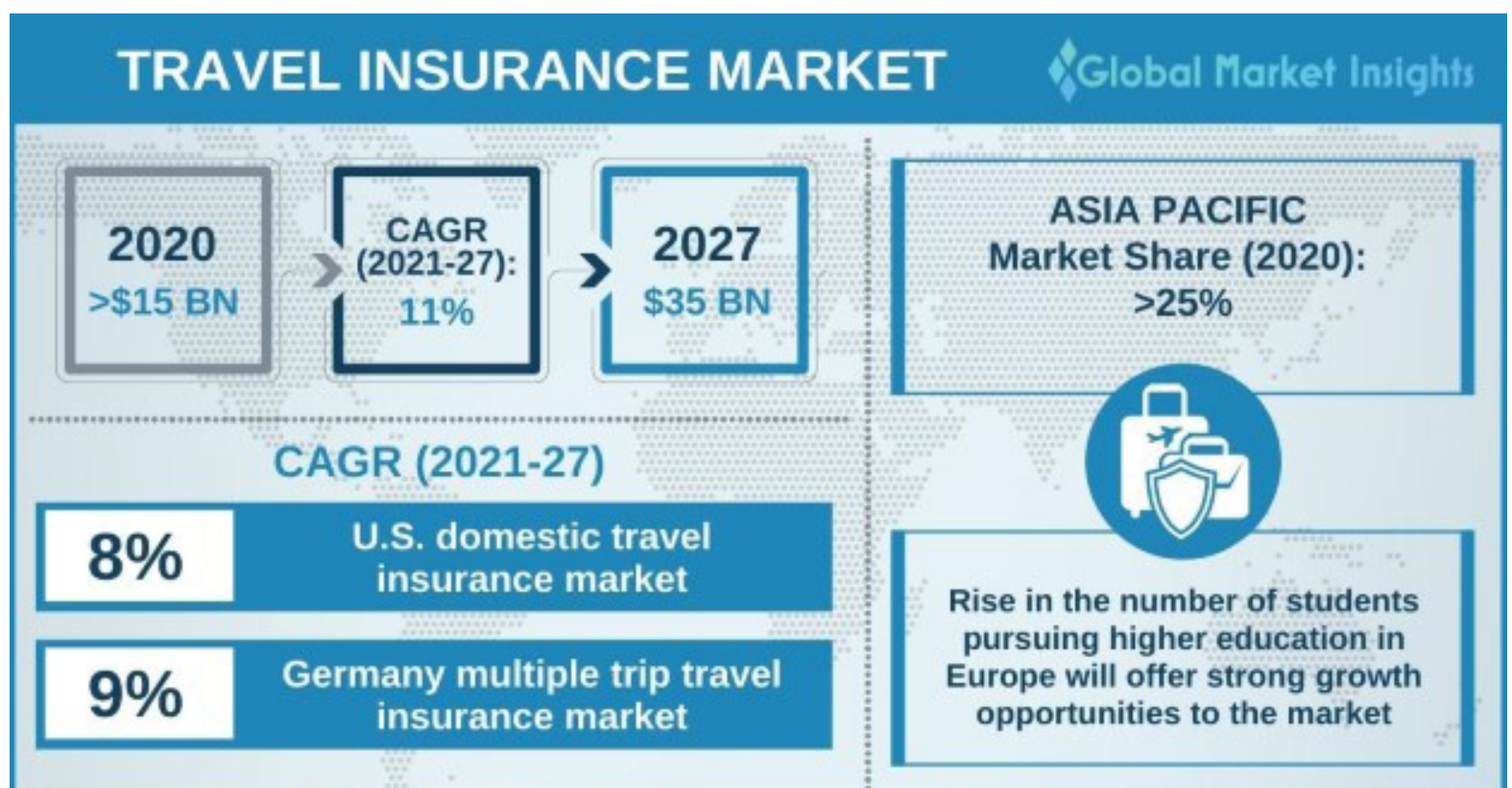
of the lockdowns imposed. In the coming years, there will be a rise in the number of travellers because various industry participants offer coverage for medical expenses related to COVID-19

Robust automotive market in Germany to augment the multiple trip travel insurance demand

The Germany multiple trip travel insurance market is anticipated to see 9% gains through 2027 fueled by the strong automotive sector. Market players are expanding in this country, leading to a rise in the number of business trips. Multiple trip insurance eliminates the hassle of buying a new plan for every trip, acting as a one-time comprehensive solution. These insurance plans offer easy renewability, financial support, and clearance of documents. Industry participants including American Express Company and Allianz Partners are offering multi-trip insurance policies for frequent travelers to gain a higher market share.

Corporate travellers undertaking regular business trips helps in market development

Various organisations are buying travel insurance to provide insurance coverage to their employees who travel overseas for business purposes. Globally, business travel recovery is occurring in stages as people are currently getting vaccinated and government travel restrictions are relaxed. Corporate travelers are becoming



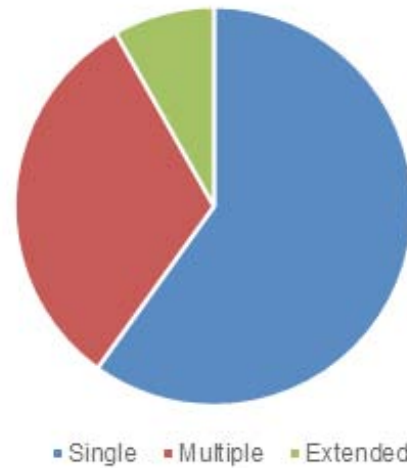
Travel Insurance Market Report

Base Year : 2020
 Market Size in 2020 : 15 Billion (USD)
 Forecast Period : 2021 to 2027
 Forecast Period
 2021 to 2027 CAGR : 11%
 2027 Value Projection : 35 Billion (USD)

Growth Drivers

- High cost of medical treatment overseas
- Increasing spending on travel protection plans in North America
- Mandatory travel insurance policies in North America & Europe
- Development of international trade and overseas business expansion in Asia Pacific
- Growth in the tourism industry in Latin America
- The flourishing business tourism industry in the MEA

Germany Travel Insurance Market, By Trip, 2020



Source: www.gminsights.com

of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, allocated USD 36.35 million for Digital Transformation (DX) in local governments in its FY 2021-22 budget. The aim is to attract visitors to Japan and promote tourism through DX, increase the productivity & sustainability of regions, and create an internationally competitive tourism sector.

Focus on launching new insurance plans forms a key strategy amongst

The key players operating in the travel insurance market include Allianz Partners, American Express Company, American International Group, Inc. (AIS), Arch Capital Group Limited, Aviva PLC, AXA Travel Insurance, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance, China Pacific Insurance, (Group) Co., Ltd., Chubb Limited, Generali Group, Groupama Sigorta AS, HanseMerkur Reiseversicherung AG, InsureandGo, Ping An Insurance Company of China, Ltd., Seven Corners, Inc., Sampo Holdings, Inc., Travelex Insurance Services Inc., and Zurich Insurance Group AG.

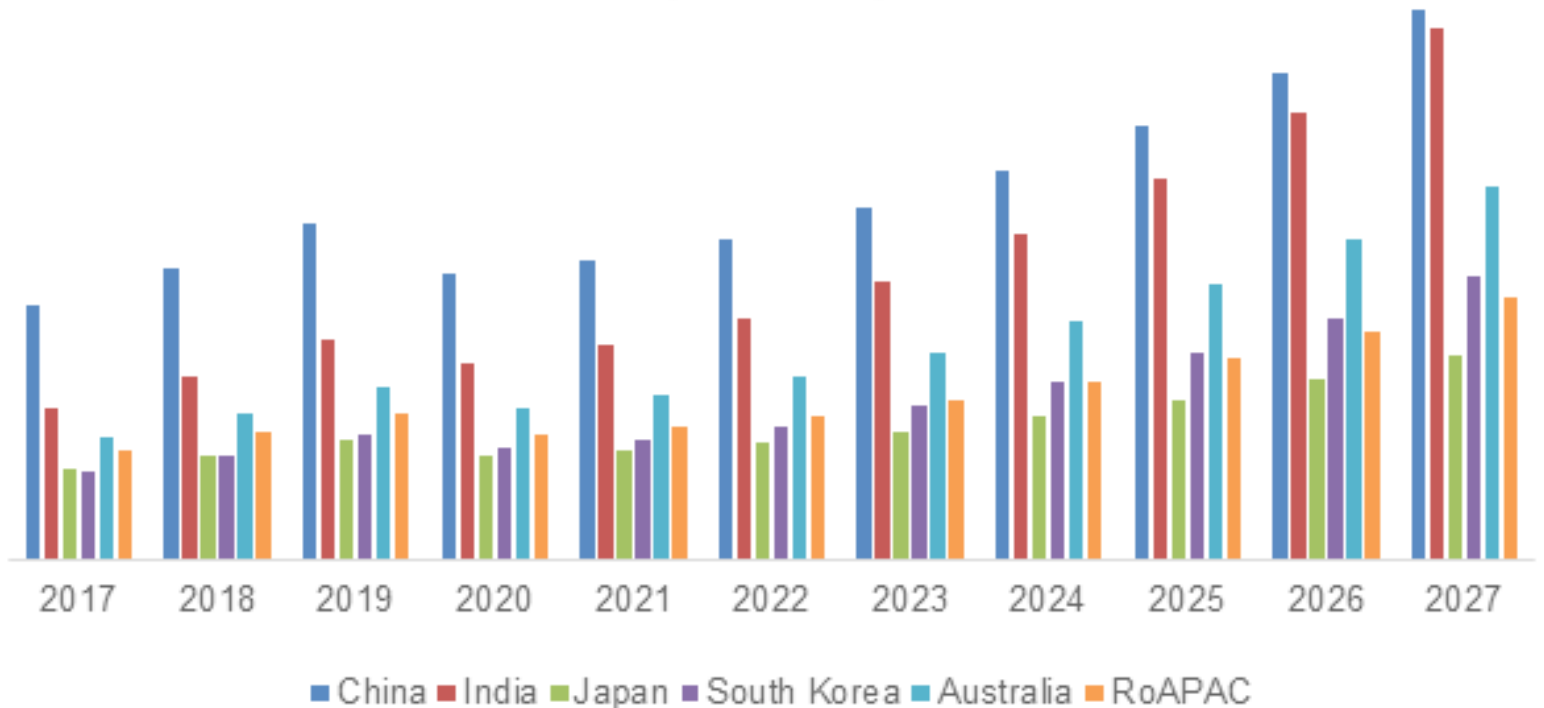
Industry participants are focusing on expanding their global footprint by introducing new insurance policies to their product portfolio. The travel industry is witnessing a surge in international trips that will help companies to introduce tailored travel insurance policies. ♦

comfortable returning to their normal work lives, which is helping the market growth. According to the Global Business Travel Association, the rising annual spending in the travel industry is expected to be slow in 2023 and 2024 and remain above the historical average rate, with annual business travel spending crossing USD 1.4 trillion by 2024.

Supportive government initiatives spurring tourism in Asia Pacific

In 2020, the Asia Pacific travel insurance market accounted for about 25% of the revenue share impelled by increasing government investments in tourism projects. The government intends to develop measures for a full-fledged inbound recovery while boosting travel demand, depending on the situation with the coronavirus and the recovery of the travel industry. For instance, in July 2020, the Ministry

Asia Pacific Travel Insurance Market, by Region, 2017- 2027 (USD Million)





Indian Aviation, Are we Poised for a Resurgence?

Is the aviation sector in India entering a new and exciting era with important developments like Tata Group taking over Air India, Jet Airways (2.0) starting operations, and Akasa Air taking to the sky? **Prasenjit Chakraborty** tries to find out.

The Indian aviation industry met with a back breaking set back by Covid-19, and the Omicron variant of the virus further aggravated the situation.

After concerted efforts by the Centre and State governments the virus was contained substantially. Interestingly, before Omicron hit, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), had announced that the industry is returning to pre-Covid levels and airlines have reached 90 per cent of the pre-pandemic peak traffic in November 2021. Not only that, the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) India, in a report titled 'India Airline Outlook 2022', has indicated that 2022 is expected to witness a surge of 52 per cent in domestic and 60 per cent in international air traffic. This speaks volumes of the potential of the sector.

According to Amit Dutta, Managing Director – BLADE India, the civil aviation industry has emerged as one of the fastest-growing industries in the country, and has become the third largest domestic aviation market in the world. "It's expected to surpass the UK to become the third largest air passenger market by 2024," opines Dutta. In this direction, the government is also putting sincere effort in

terms of developing airport infrastructure across the length and breadth of the country.

If airlines can reach 90% of pre-Covid traffic levels at a time when protocols were different in different states, it clearly shows the demand is high. And naturally this augurs well for the industry. Ajay Prakash, President, TAFI, and also an aviation expert, says, "There is a lot of pent up demand and so once the government reopens the Indian skies



Amit Dutta
Managing Director
BLADE India

for normal business, we should see a spurt in travel. The restrictions on account of the air bubble arrangements are keeping international fares at inordinately high levels." This is a temporary situation and increase in frequencies and capacity will make airfares more affordable and spur demand. "Most countries have done away with restrictions, its high time our government did the same," points out Prakash.

Sunil VA, Regional Vice President-APAC, Oman Air, also feels that demand for both domestic and international flights has increased. "The demand is high, considering the current capacity available for international flights," he said.

In that sense, the year 2022 could be a beginning of a new era for the aviation industry of India. The year started on a very positive note with Tata Group taking over Air India. Apart from this, Jet Airways and Akasa Air are set to take off.

Air India & Challenges

Can Air India bring a perceptible change in the aviation scene of India? "This is a million dollar question," says a person associated with the aviation industry on condition of anonymity. However, travel agents are hopeful that there will be a significant change after Tatas taking over Air India. "The travel agent fraternity is hoping that Air India will once again resurrect itself to provide competition to the foreign carriers that have dominated Indian skies for some time now. The demise of Jet Airways ended the Indian challenge. We earnestly hope that Air India will fill the void," says Prakash.

Delhi's T3 never became the international hub it was conceived to be. "Air India has the slots, but it will need more than just an airline to catapult India into the big league where international travel is concerned. It will need the government to create an enabling environment so that the dream of "Udey Desh ka Aam Nagrik" can become a reality," points out Prakash.

Is it that easy for Tatas to make a complete overhaul of Air India? The answer is No. This is also evident when Ratan Tata tweeted after the bid was accepted last year, "Admittedly it will take considerable effort to rebuild Air India."

While there is a lot of goodwill for Air India under the Tata fold, the first major challenge is to bring back trust. "The aircraft are aging, staff morale is at an all-time low; the employee unions have their own grievances which need to be addressed," points out Prakash.

“ The travel agent fraternity is hoping that Air India will once again resurrect itself to provide competition to the foreign carriers that have dominated Indian skies for some time now. The demise of Jet Airways ended the Indian challenge. We earnestly hope that Air India will fill the void. ”

Staff attitude is critical for the well-being of a service industry and every front line staff is an Ambassador for the airline. But that has to be complemented with new age technology and hardware. So there's a need for massive investment all round; hopefully the Tata Group is up for it.

Another person, who prefers to be

they hope to regain the support of the travel agents, Jet Airways, under the new owners, will have to make a special effort to reach out to agents," categorically states Prakash. The same goes for Akasa Air. "We have seen new airlines launch and then go bust a few years down the line. Network and integrity of schedule are the key issues in building trust and credibility. That said, we welcome competition as it benefits everyone," says Prakash.

ATF tax structure a Deterrent?

Can we have a robust aviation sector with the existing tax structure of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF)?

The demand to bring ATF under the ambit of GST is a long standing one. This needs to be implemented. "Oil prices are not coming down in a hurry and fuel accounts for over 40% of all Indian airlines' operating

costs, this needs to be brought down through a price rationalisation. And it's not just ATF, the entire travel and tourism industry is being crippled by the current GST rules that impose multiple taxes on the same product," laments Prakash.

It is high time to address the issue. When the aviation industry is showing signs of recovery, it simply cannot afford further casualties like the high price of ATF. Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Aviation Minister, appealed to states and Union territories to reduce tax on ATF. This will provide momentum to the industry. "With the current tax structure on ATF ...you can't have a robust civil aviation sector. I'm very clear on that," says Scindia.

It's time for everyone to come forward and have a consensus for the betterment of the aviation industry and make Ude Desh ka Aam Nagarik a reality! ♦

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in



Ajay Prakash
President
TAFI



Sunil VA
Regional Vice President
APAC, Oman Air

anonymous says, "The huge expectation from millions of people from Tata itself is a big problem."

Sunil feels that Air India has to focus on on-time performance and also make sure that there is minimum cancellation of flights. "They also have to improve ground or airport services," he says.

With Jet Airways (2.0) resuming its operations, and Akasa Air taking to the sky, what would be the likely aviation scene in India? Apparently it is good for passengers as they will have more choices, and airfares are also likely to come down. And of course, it will help create jobs.

For any airline, travel agents play an important role for its success. But it seems they are unhappy with their past experience with Jet Airways. "The agent fraternity is seriously miffed with Jet Airways because our members have lost crores of rupees when it folded up. If



‘We will welcome Indian travellers to Japan as soon as borders open up’

The Japan National Tourism Organization is hopeful that travellers are eagerly waiting to experience new locations. **Yusuke Yamamoto, Executive Director, Japan National Tourism Organization**, in an interaction with **Disha Shah Ghosh** shares his views on resuming tourism once restrictions are lifted and scope of MICE travel from India.

Q The tourism industry is under tremendous pressure since the onset of the Coronavirus. How optimistic are you about inbound tourism to Japan in 2022?

I believe travel and tourism will start with full throttle at the right time. I am very optimistic about it. My study and insights say that ‘travel’ is indeed most awaited activity in the post pandemic era. Travellers are eagerly waiting to connect and spend time with family and friends, explore and experience new locations. Basically, travellers want to rejuvenate and make up the loss of banned travel. Besides, “Osaka, Kansai Expo 2025” is scheduled to be held in Osaka, Japan, and JNTO plans to take advantage of the opportunities presented by such mega events.

Q Any update on restarting tourism to Japan from India, and the SOP for travellers?

While Japan has not yet reopened its borders to overseas traveller, the Government of Japan announced to open its border to overseas visitor except travel purpose from March with some condition. We hope that with the situation getting better, restrictions will be lifted soon. We

update latest travel restriction on our website so please check out it. <https://www.japan.travel/en/coronavirus/>

Currently travellers can't enter Japan, but the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) and the country's many local attractions are preparing for the resumption of international travel.

Q Instilling confidence in travellers is the most challenging task at this point of time. What strategies JNTO has taken in this regard?

JNTO re-invigorated its global “Enjoy my Japan” campaign, originally launched in 2018, signalling Japan's readiness

lovers to return and experience the goodness of Japan. These are few steps that we as a team have taken towards promoting tourism in a safe environment. And it is the 70th anniversary of Japan-India diplomatic relationship. We are considering how to enhance this relationship through tourism during this celebratory occasion.

Q It is forecasted that MICE will lead the travel recovery, with meetings, with Asia taking the lead. Your comments on this.

At this moment, we feel MICE, especially incentive tour will be a huge market in India. Not only MICE but slowly and steadily there will be a rise in family travellers and group departures. Indians are eagerly waiting to travel to their favourite destination, however, the fear of pandemic still exists; hence it will be time till tourism flourishes.

Q What will be your target audience (Family, MICE) from the India market in 2022? Elaborate

We are planning to target families and MICE groups in Indian

“ We are planning to target families and MICE groups in Indian market. Our research result shows that Indians like to travel with family and friends group. Japan has a wide range of attractions to attract family groups and MICE travellers, such as theme park, city tour, experience of technology, museum of traditional art, shopping and cuisine and so on. ”

different aspects of Japan. The #GoodnessofJapan marketing campaign resonated with the model worth of security, cleanliness, and sanitization; all of that are extraordinarily essential in the present situation. The marketing campaign showcases not simply the fascinating locations, tradition, and delicacies that Japan gives, but additionally the very best practices and security requirements which might be being maintained for journey

market. Our research result shows that Indians like to travel with family and friends group. Japan has a wide range of attractions to attract family groups and MICE travellers, such as theme park, city tour, experience of technology, museum of traditional art, shopping and cuisine and so on. India is an important market for us and we will welcome Indian travellers to Japan as soon as borders open up. ♦

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Start-Up Forum

Bringing Innovations to the Forefront

DcodeAI

By TBM Staff | Mumbai

Anticipating the impact of technology, 14 years ago, **TravelBiz Monitor** introduced an industry-first live news portal, with hourly online reporting on travel, tourism, aviation and hospitality industries. Since then, we have created a niche for ourselves by providing analytical stories and statistical information to the travel trade on a regular basis. To keep this momentum going, the Editorial team has decided to showcase new-age technology products and services every month that have the potential to disrupt the market further. Moreover, the time now is also appropriate as the on-going pandemic has further widened the scope of using technology.

For this unique initiative, TravelBiz Monitor has partnered with 'Start-up Mentor Board', a visionary platform with credentials in business, technology, e-commerce, digital market place, payment solutions and IT infrastructure, to highlight the stories of new-age technology ideas. Start-up Mentor Board has been set-up as an initiative to mentor and guide the travel technology driven start-ups and facilitate collaboration in the larger travel ecosystem.

Website – <https://startupmentorboard.vgmtechsolutions.com>

The Board is spearheaded by well-known thought leader Ashish Kumar, who is also the Co-Chairman of FICCI Travel Technology Committee. It comprises Bharti Maan, who has led start-ups to scale rapidly; Patrick Richards, an experienced travel industry leader in the UK; Chetan Kapoor, an analyst with deep understanding of the travel and tourism business and trends; Kartik Sharma, an artificial intelligence practitioner; Karthik Venkataraman, a digital transformation & an e-commerce visionary; Jure Bratkic, who led innovative solutions in the USA and Kyasha Bhoola, with expertise and advanced insight into the travel industry across Africa.

*One can register for the SMB Program at

<https://startupmentorboard.vgmtechsolutions.com/form.html>

Startup Name: DcodeAI

Core Team: Kartik Sharma (Co-Founder)
Ashish Aggarwal (Co-Founder)

Founding year: 2020

Company Website: <https://www.dcodeai.com>

Description: DcodeAI is making the next generation of learners equipped with AI without having even a coding background. With the focus on low code/no-code tools and using AI to make the learning of AI concepts and fundamentals easy, intuitive and personalized, even those without any coding background can start to learn and implement AI models. We offer DIY modules on Data Science, Computer Vision and Natural Language Processing for age groups 12-18. The content is enabled through a web and mobile-based platform and is device agnostic. We use specialised orchestrated containerization to help learners run AI models without the need for any special computing resources or GPUs. The venture was started in mid-2020 by Kartik Sharma and Ashish Aggarwal who have been running successful Edtech businesses with a network of more than 10,000+ schools. Kartik is an IITian and Artificial Intelligence Practitioner while Ashish graduated from NTU, Singapore and has significant experience with the education business. The venture has raised USD 500,000 as Angel round from Sultan Chand & Sons (P) Ltd. and is in the rapid product development and expansion phase. The company is looking to raise its Series A in the coming year.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_43StdK0zYI



‘Global Market Highlights India, Asia MICE Opportunity’

We are here to gain a share of India's tourism pie," was a common statement one heard just two years ago, at any industry event or a tourism conference. The voice was loud and clear, India had emerged as a huge potential market for tourism, and the spotlight on its tourism potential was only shining brighter.

This sentiment wasn't just restricted to the leisure segment. In fact, it would be correct to say that overseas tourism boards, large hotel chains, exotic and stand-alone resorts, tourist attractions and cruise liners were all looking at the larger pie, the MICE segment. This was because improving air connectivity, domestic and international, competitive airfares amid demand for exploration aided attractive group tour packages. So much so that travel suppliers had dedicated teams to handle special F&B requirements of Indian client groups. Not ones to be left behind, even properties in India had started pitching their facilities for variety of MICE programmes. Just when the sentiment had started gaining

After having dealt a body blow in the past two years, the MICE segment in Asia in general, and India in particular has started afresh with a mix of in-person and hybrid events. A dedicated MICE Bureau in India and aggressive marketing spend, however, continue to remain key challenges, writes **Disha Shah Ghosh**.

active momentum, Covid struck and all MICE plans came to a grinding halt.

While leisure travel took a complete pause,

MICE continued albeit virtually and through some domestic and an occasional overseas movement. However, technology came to the rescue and brought about a refreshing change with hybrid events in the otherwise docile months.

Scope for MICE post Covid

Now with markets opening up, there is much banking on the MICE segment. Businesses are yearning for in-person interactions and meetings with employees, suppliers and clients alike. The two long years of the pandemic have been back breaking and nerve biting for a segment dependent largely on physical movement of people. With tourism players now banking on pent up demand, an added push is needed to drive the segment back towards its former growth path. This will be supplement by the various new applications and software available for cost optimisation and tracking movement, eventually augmenting MICE.

Talking about this, Todd Arthur, Vice President, Asia Pacific, Travel Solutions Agency Sales, Sabre, said, "Given that corporate travel



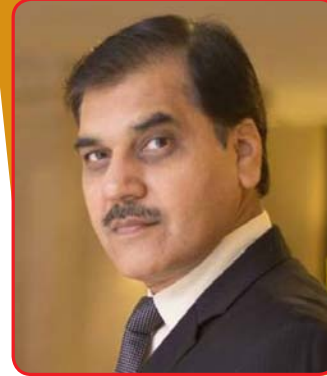


Todd Arthur
Vice President
Asia Pacific,

Travel Solutions Agency Sales, Sabre



Rajeev Kohli
Jt. MD
Creative Travel



Amaresh Tiwari
Chairman
ICPB



Manpreet Bindra
President
Leisure and MICE Travel,
FCM Travel India

has been stymied for so long, there's now strong competition among countries around the globe to attract the lucrative MICE traveller. India already has a strong reputation in the corporate events space and will be building on this to win business as corporate travel ramps up. We're also seeing that India's travel ecosystem continues to develop with new airlines starting-up, routes ramping up and talk of new travel bubbles, making India an even more attractive place to do business."

Sharing his views, Rajeev Kohli, Jt. MD, Creative Travel, said, "Obviously, infrastructure plays a role and we in India can compete with the best with what we currently have. Therefore, we don't need to be apologetic. We need to be confident and go after the customer base. We need to serious PR management, and need to look good before the customers. Most certainly we need a MICE-focussed PR and marketing campaign targeting MICE media only."

The Asia Opportunity

According to a report by Research Drive, the global MICE industry is anticipated to witness remarkable growth during the 2021—2028 timeframe. Rising adoption of virtual MICE meetings by businesses is driving the growth of the market, and the meetings sub-segment is projected to lead.

The Asia-Pacific market is anticipated to be at the forefront valued at USD 295.1 billion in 2020, and is estimated to observe speedy growth with a CAGR of 6.7% and hit USD 501.3 billion in the forecast period. As per this report, the growth of the region market is mainly because Asian nations have undergone speedy globalisation, significantly boosted infrastructure development, and surged the development of the hospitality industry. Moreover, reasonable hotel rates, easy access to transport facilities, and rapid technological advancements in the region are some other factors boosting the market's growth.

Asserting that Asia is the dark horse for

MICE, Amaresh Tiwari, Chairman, ICPB (India Convention Promotion Bureau), stated that it is indeed a fact that the future lies with Asia, which is reporting the highest growth rate. "The top 3 MICE segments where growth is the fastest is Medical (22.2%); Technology (17.3%) and Science (11.8%). These three segments combined hold 51.8% of MICE events worldwide. India, being market leader in all these segments and having huge human capital and knowledge know-how will definitely take a lead in coming years and play a major role in driving the growth."

"The meetings segment is also estimated to account for the major share in the Asia-Pacific MICE industry. Virtual exhibitions cannot replace face-to-face interactions, and given the need for economic recovery, physical exhibitions will be back once travel restarts and organizers

“We must target global congress, conventions and conferences, and social events. We need to create a global MICE bidding fund with a corpus for INR 500 crore to enable our entrepreneurs undertake techno economic bids for events which have a bid cycle of two years plus. We need to create city convention bureaus in each of our main cities which will work with ICPB as their hub to carry out a global bidding activity.”

align with the evolved requirements. Domestic tourism is also providing a boost to help sustain many tourism destinations and businesses, and will continue to be a key driver of recovery in the short to medium term," stated Manpreet Bindra, President, Leisure and MICE Travel, FCM Travel India.

Echoing similar views, Arthur said that given that many of us haven't travelled for so long, there is also an increased desire in the MICE sector to create interesting experiences for participants as well as a trend to combine business travel with leisure. "India, and the wider APAC region, is well-positioned to seize opportunities created by these emerging

trends."

Kohli said that MICE can indeed be a very strong driver of growth and recovery for the region. "But that will take special attention to be paid on the buying behaviour of this segment. I think specialist meetings, incentive travel and exhibitions can be cajoled to consider India as a venue. Also, association meetings have to meet by their constitution, and we should encourage them to get back to physical events at the earliest. Exhibitions may take longer."

The digital adoption has only further supplemented the need for MICE movement by enhancing the scope for marketing through virtual reality, and supported by AI. Arthur said there is also a slow and steady return to in-person conferences and trade shows in the region, with many offering the hybrid option to join virtually.

However, in all this glory, there are some challenges that need a reality check. India still doesn't have a stand-alone MICE Bureau despite being home to a plethora of technology start-ups and unicorns, and its improving infrastructure and last mile connectivity.

Suggesting some measures, Tiwari said, "We must target global congress, conventions and conferences, and social events. We need to create a global MICE bidding fund with a corpus for INR 500 crore to enable our

entrepreneurs undertake techno economic bids for events which have a bid cycle of two years plus. We need to create city convention bureaus in each of our main cities which will work with ICPB as their hub to carry out a global bidding activity."

ICPB does the best it can within its limitations, Kohli stated. "The government needs to fund ICPB as a Public Private partnership. A MICE Bureau needs to be neutral, helping all stakeholders equally." Besides, Indian corporate entities need to host their MICE events domestically instead of going overseas, he suggested. ♦

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Digital Innovations for DMOs

By Ansoo Gupta, Founder, OneShoe Trust

The other day I was a part of a Twitter chat organised by leading sustainable travel & tourism professionals in Africa and the discussions were very intense. Everyone knew what needs to be done, the problems with the current way of operating tourism businesses, opportunities lying ahead if they could make that paradigm shift and yet the vision and execution will-power to bring about those shifts were glaringly lacking. This brought light to the harsh reality that when a sector has been doing well for too long, the spirit of innovation and adaptability starts decreasing. This was the case till the end of 20th century. As a result, big disruptors came, mostly from outside, and were able to make quick



The first thing that needs to be done is to change the operations from a linear model to a network model with information and feedback flowing in all directions. This is the start point for a successful digital transformation.

Let's take DMOs (Destination Marketing Organisation) as a case in point. Traditionally, these organizations source their inventory (creation), then go through a vetting process (optimization/management) until they eventually promote and expose (market) the curated 'lists' of experiences, hotels, restaurants, retailers, venues, places etc. Value here is produced upstream and consumed downstream. Income is generated in multi-faceted ways.

The key problem with this type of value creation is that it is slow — and performance relies heavily on a smaller team's human capacity and their ability to manage — mostly analogue — multiple stakeholders and assets in a controlled, closed 'ecosystem'. Decisions are made by a few people, often behind closed doors, about a few select promotables, and performance data is only captured on the demand side, but not on the supply side, because of the analogue value creation chain. This is apparent also in the way that marketing and PR takes heavy precedence in the DMO operations.

Instead, what if we turned the system upside down and look at it as a digital platform business. Digital networks like social media, mobile devices and accessible information enable destination marketers to engage with consumers and stakeholders on a larger scale than ever before. In an environment such as this, to stay relevant, DMOs can consider a transformation into a hosting model, from broadcast to engagement, and from marketing to active dialogues.

It is widely known that the digital networks have turned content consumers

into content producers. According to TCI Research, 81 per cent of sharing economy users regularly share their travel experiences on the web, even outside their circle of friends and relatives. This opens up an opportunity for DMOs to engage with a visitor through all stages of their experience, from awareness to interest to booking to visiting to post-visit. Digital social networks also allow word of mouth to reach exponentially larger audiences providing scaling opportunity like no other.

Consider the usage of smart API and NLP algorithms to tune into thousands and millions of conversations that could be happening on the internet about the destination a DMO is managing, and the ability to be a part of each such conversation and make necessary connections as needed. This is what personalisation-at-scale looks like. This is what has made Amazon, Tripadvisor, Zomato so big so quickly. The days of running marketing and PR campaigns for outreach are over. Today, marketing does not end with the consumer, it starts with the consumer. And thanks to digital technologies available, a DMO can now sit with the consumer and bring her to a destination rather than sitting at the destination and calling the consumer to come.

Such technologies are already available and are being used by consumer-tech businesses in a big way. What is needed is to consider how they can be plugged into a DMO system and allow for a rapid, scalable, transformation for a DMO business. I will be happy to participate in such a discussion and help evaluate this shift if any DMOs are interested. I can be reached on LinkedIn or on Twitter at my handle @ansoogupta. ♦

'The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.'

Ansoo Gupta is founder of OneShoe Trust which is a global advocacy platform for Responsible & Mindful Travels. Gupta a Science graduate in Physics and Mathematics with a post graduate in business management and a certification in Data Science & Machine Learning from HarvardX.



strides, changing the whole game in the process. The digital revolution was the core driving factor for these disruptors. And today, everyone knows that they must embrace digital one hundred percent, big business or small, and yet this adoption is slow, or misguided or both.

Most businesses look at their current operations and processes and then seek ways to add a digital layer at as many points as they can visualise. Mostly the solutions consist of websites, mobile apps, booking systems of course, CRM suites, perhaps a chatbot and leveraging social media. However, the real breakthrough comes when the entire linear system is upended and a tech lens applied to it.

KTO brings the spotlight on new destinations through two webinars

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Using the opportunity to educate the Indian travel trade about the varied facets of South Korea, Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) in association with TravelBiz Monitor organised the first and second editions of South Korea Webinar Series 2022 on February 25 and February 28, respectively.

The first webinar was focused on Daegu Tourism Organization and Corsomotion Tour (Local DMC). The webinar widely spoke about Daegu as a destination and about its famous tourist spots.

Daegu is the third-largest urban agglomeration in Korea after Seoul and Busan. The webinar informed that Daegu offers K-pop tours, one of them is Daegu Purple Tour Sites. The city also offers various architectural marvels such as Gyesan Catholic Cathedral, which is also a popular filming site; other than this various shooting spots can be explored such as Drama filming site - Cheongna Hill, Ayang Railroad, E-World, and Keimyung University.

Along with these tours travellers can shop at Seomun Market, which is the largest traditional street market in Daegu with 4,000 shops. Seomun Market is particularly known as a source for textiles and sewing services, a key ingredient of Daegu's fashion industry. While travelling and shopping, tourists can also experience the famous Korean Fried Chicken from Tang Tang Chicken only at Tang Tang Land, which is a theme park. The park also offers cooking classes for tourists



and students.

The second webinar in the series introduced the agents to the region of Gyeongsangbuk-do, the largest in South Korea, and US Travel Korea DMC presented itinerary options to best explore the region.

Gyeongsangbuk-do is a year-round destination offering a taste of the Korean way of life. Its city of Pohang offers water leisure activities, and the option to indulge in the

beach and enjoy some picturesque views since it boasts of one of the most beautiful sea views in Korea. One can visit traditional markets and try seafood and unique dessert options as well.

The city of Mungyeong is known for its extreme sports like paragliding and hang-gliding over the Baekdu-daegan Mountains for some amazing aerial adventure. One can visit the traditional market for some barbecue cooked on herb stone. One can also enjoy the Korea retro café and enjoy a stay in a tent or a caravan or sleep with a shining star.

In the historic city of Andong, one can wear traditional clothes 'Hanbok', and take pictures with gorgeous lights. The Andong Hahoe Village is a living history museum presenting parts of the traditional Korean community and culture. One can visit the traditional market and try Korean food, try a chicken dish never experienced before and enjoy tasty dessert in the Korean traditional house 'Hanok'. The Andong Gu Market is famous for a small alley filled with lots of Andong Jjimdak restaurants.

South Korea has a plethora of wonders to entice the Indian travellers. This month, KTO will host more such webinars like, Incheon Tourism Organization and Jane DMC Korea on March 17 and Gangwon-do Tourism Organization and FNF Korea Travel on March 22. ♦



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<https://bit.ly/2Pt4UJ8>



*GST ready accounting solutions for travel and retail industry in association with Infozeal E-Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

<https://bit.ly/32wS2q2>



*New Distribution Capability (NDC) API's to IATA travel Agents across India in association with TWAI

<https://bit.ly/3i8NeLE>



*Global Sim-Free WiFi Device in partnership with TripperWiFi

<https://bit.ly/37v9TQb>



Increase in savings on your card spends in partnership with Enkash

<https://bit.ly/2PJkNeK>



Accommodation Management Solution in partnership with StreetGooser

<https://bit.ly/3fVxj5T>



Affordable and comfortable stay solutions to leisure and corporate travellers

<https://bit.ly/3hTrjLG>

All are cloud based solutions. GPS 10X Membership, Booking Engine, NDC solution and Accounting software are subscription based.

*Nominal One-time integration charges applicable based on membership level of GPS.

For more information and exclusive product presentation Contact us

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