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Tour operation industry is one of the most rapidly evolving industries of the twenty-first century. The economy of many countries all over the world depends on their ability to attract visitors and maintain a distinct edge in a highly competitive market. *International Travel Agency and Tour Operation Management* brings together the best practices for growth, development, travel business strategies/ models and practices for the organizations to obtain a competitive management model at global level within the tourism and hospitality industries. Highlighting comparative research that explores the cross-cultural contexts and societal implications of travel agency and tour operation businesses, this book is an essential resource for professionals, researchers, academics, and students interested in a contemporary approach to promoting, managing, and maximizing profitability of travel agency and tour operation services. This collection is designed to act as a single reference source on conceptual, practical, theoretical, and managerial issues, as well as provide insight into emerging trends and future challenges experts and practitioners to stay apprised of the field's most up-to-date research within the travel agency and tour operation management discipline.

International Travel Agency and Tour Operation Management is organized into twenty distinct chapters that provide comprehensive coverage of important topics. Moreover, Prospective authors have contributed state of the art surveys, as well as in-depth discussions, on the new methods, models, approaches, tools, best practice, and new directions. A valuable insight is also provided into the concept of travel agency and tour operation research that has become imperative for tourism business enterprises in order to attain a competitive edge over competitors. It is worthy to systematically collect such new approaches, models, current thinking and resultant tools to promote their acceptance, foster further developments, and speed up their implications in tour operation industry in the digital age. We are indeed pleased to have selected 18 chapters which have provided us insightful and interesting ideas of the travel agency and tour operation research globally.

BOOK STRUCTURE

Chapter 1, "Building Foundations for Understanding the International Travel Agency and Tour Operation," by Mohinder Chand Dhiman and Ravi Bhushan Kumar sets the scene so that we can begin by defining and build an understanding the global phenomenon called 'travel agency and tour operator'. This chapter discusses the various problems of defining travel agency and tour operator and the ways in which the study of international travel agency and tour operator helps us understand the scale and extent of the growth in travel agency and tour operation business globally

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In Chapter 2, *The Relationship Between Competitiveness-Driven Factors and Travel and Tourism Policy: A Multilevel Study*,” by Anastasia A. Katou and Eleni F. Katsouli examine the impact of environmental-driven, infrastructure-driven and resources-driven factors on travel & tourism policy and enabling conditions.

Chapter 3, *“Sharing Economy and Sustainability in Tourism: New Challenges for the Tour Operators,”* by Nunzia Borrelli and Monica Bernardi focuses on the growing importance that the sustainability issue is gaining in tourism and on the increasing research of sustainable forms of tourism among travelers, looking to the relation with the emerging market of the sharing economy.

Chapter 4, *“Travel Agencies and Tour Operators at KidZania: A Proactive and Innovative Approach,”* by Hugues Seraphin and Frederic Dosquet suggests a new marketing strategy for Tour operator and Travel Agency, as there is a fierce competition in the retail environment. The approach offers an alternative to the existing marketing and distribution channel in the industry.

Chapter 5, *“Idiosyncratic Deals and Organizational Performance: A Study of the Indian Travel Intermediaries Industry,”* by Mohinder Chand Dihman and Anastasia A. Katou examines the mediating mechanism of idiosyncratic deals content in the relationship between core self-evaluations , employee outcomes and the mediating mechanism of employee outcomes in the relationship between i-deals and organizational performance in Indian travel intermediaries industry .

Chapter 6, *“Role, Rules, and Regulations for Global Medical Tourism Facilitators,”* by Anita Medhekar examines the reasons for the growth of global healthcare through medical travel/tourism in developing countries such as India, Thailand, Mexico, Poland and Malaysia and identifies the role, rules and regulations required for accredited medical tourism facilitators to connect patients with the healthcare providers in various countries to meet specific healthcare needs.

Chapter 7, *“Insights Into South Africa’s Travel Agency Sector With respect to Service Quality,”* by Vannie Naidoo employs the qualitative research approach and looks at unpacking literature on the travel agency sector. Service quality in the sector in South Africa is another key theme explored.

Chapter 8, *“Online Travel Trade in India: Challenges and Opportunities,”* by S. K. Gupta, Vijay Prakash Bhatt, and Abhishek Vaishnava emphasizes on the opportunities and challenges of Online Travel Agencies (OTA’s) particularly in India. For the success of e-tourism in India, it is essential to increase operational efficiency of the staff and attributes like attitude/ behavior of the staff, delivery of services as committed, provision of customer data management and insurance coverage services, which are the keys for excellent and prompt service delivery system and eventually affects the success of online travel providers.

Chapter 9, *“Online Competition in the Distribution Chain: The Retailer’s Perspective,”* by Patricia Vieira and Emese Panyik provides an analysis on the advantages and disadvantages of new technologies in the travel agency and strategies and practices that travel agencies can benefit to compete with consumer websites.

Chapter 10, *“Strategic Analysis of the Contemporary Tour Operation Industry: Insights From Emerging Economic Jurisdictions,”* by Zibanai Zhou addresses an underrepresentation in the current tour operation discourse in the period post WW2. To put the matter into context, at the global stage, fundamental changes have occurred since the end of WW2, notably political cum socio-economic and demographic shifts, advances in education, and increases in per capita income due to dual family income among a raft of other variables.

Chapter 11, “Perception of Inbound Tour Operators of India Towards Marketing Strategies of Ministry of Tourism,” by S. S. Boora, Kusum, and Megha Gupta addresses the perception Indian inbound tour operators towards the marketing strategies carried out by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

Chapter 12, “Organizational Barriers to Knowledge-Sharing: Evidence From Egyptian Tourism Companies,” by Mahmoud Ahmed Aboushouk, Hala Helali, and Nashwa Fouaad employs deductive approach and quantitative method to identifying and removing knowledge-sharing organizational barriers in the Egyptian tourism companies.

Chapter 13, “The Role of Public and Private Sector for Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Business Development in Ethiopia: A Case Study in Addis Ababa,” by Yezihalem Sisay Takele investigates the role of public and private sector for sustainable tourism and hospitality business development in Ethiopia.

Chapter 14, “Content Analysis of Online Visual Merchandising for Indian Online Travel Agents: A Case of Makemytrip and Yatra,” by Farah S. Choudhary and Alka Sharma investigates the effect of online visual merchandising elements and identify the relative importance of the various visual merchandising cues to consumer’s visits and booking through online travel agencies.

Chapter 15, “Impact of Consumer-Generated Content (CGC) on Travel-Related Decisions,” by Ankush Ambardar and Himanshu Malik analyzes the factors of motivation for creating, accessing, and using consumer generated content in order to have a better planned travel decision which results in a memorable trip.

Chapter 16, “Marketing Strategies of Travel Agencies and New Technologies Used for the Marketing Strategy,” by Çiğdem Unurlu addresses the importance of travel agencies and tour operators that have important functions in the distribution of touristic products and to evaluate the marketing strategies used by travel agencies in the world today where human mobility has gained momentum.

Chapter 17, “E-Marketing as a Tool to Achieve Competitiveness in Travel Trade Industry,” by Himanshu Malik and Minky Sharma identifies components of E-Marketing that provide competitiveness in travel trade industry and address the use of E-Marketing components that provide competitiveness in travel and tour industries.

Chapter 18, “Sustainable Tourism Development in North India: Perception of Tourism Stakeholders,” by Vivek provides a strong indication that there are significant differences among tourism stakeholders on sustainable tourism development parameters. This research highlights the changes that sustainable tourism development has brought to the community and presents the various perceptions of stakeholders in this particular setting. The research demonstrate that to plan for more sustainable forms of tourism development the subjective perspectives and the roles of all stakeholders need to be understood and integrated into a responsive planning framework.

During the recent decade, the world has witnessed global political & economic crises, rising environmental concerns, corporate social responsibility, inter connections, emerging destination management approaches, e-tourism and many more. As a result of these developments, there has been growing pressure on academicians to pay more attention to flourish the tourism and hospitality education in the volatile tourism business environment. *International Travel Agency and Tour operation Management*, as a comprehensive collection of research on current findings related to the development of interdisciplinary approaches on concepts, methodologies, tools, and applications provides researchers, administrators, and all audiences with a complete understanding of the latest advances, approaches, models, tools, technologies, applications, and concepts in tour operation industry in the digital age. The book will facilitate this need by providing strategic information and clear insights to the world-wide tour operation industry. It aims to be the leading source of information for all those interested in travel agency and tour operation

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management research, models, challenges, approaches, and trends as well as to cover the emerging research topics which are going to define the future of tour operation industry in the modern age.

We have been benefited from the assistance of many individuals, institutions, organisations, colleagues & friends and students; we are deeply indebted to all of them. We acknowledge our indebtedness to various scholars whose work we have cited or substantially made use of in this book. We take the privilege to express our deep and profound sense of gratitude towards chapter contributors without their support the present book could not be completed.

We feel delighted in expressing our deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to our family members for the support and encouragement they bestowed on us during the long period study.

Finally, we would like to thank sincerely IGI-Global staff for this opportunity to edit this book and their help and support during the development of the book.

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