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editorial

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Dear Reader,

Malaysia has always been a popular destination for MiCE. In this outbound focussed issue we revisit the Malaysian state of Penang. Listed as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 2008, this virgin paradise has no shortage of cultural sights and natural scenery. Penang was once known as the "Isle of the Betel Nut" also nicknamed the Pearl of the Orient. It is famous for its soft sandy beaches of Tanjung Bungah and the landscape from the summit of Penang Hill. Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) brought the Penang Sales Mission to India with a view to promote it as the preferred destination for corporate and association meetings, incentive trips, and leisure travel. We find out more about connecting with Penang for MiCE from **Ashwin Gunasekeran**, Chief Executive Officer, PCEB.

Turkey's ACE of M.I.C.E. Exhibition by Turkish Airlines, successfully concluded its fifth edition, where a high volume of business contacts in the global MiCE sector were established. The exhibition took place from February 21-23 in Istanbul. At the event 112 national and 57 international exhibitors from 33 destinations met with 15,872 professional visitors from 40 countries under one roof. Meanwhile, the 2018 event of IT&CM China saw in attendance over 3000 MiCE professionals from sectors including DMCs, PCOs, corporate travel, and associations. With as many as 528 Chinese and international buyers from across 42 Chinese cities and territories, 41 international markets, and 810 exhibitors, the exposition recorded 14,000 business appointments over three days. We bring you reports from these international exhibition events. Safety in travel is essential. Keeping in mind the political, economic, and social dynamics across the world, anything can happen anywhere, anytime. Therefore, safety of travellers remains paramount. In a feature, we find out from experts why considering 'risk management' and 'Duty of Care' is essential for travel companies as they try to ensure safe business travel for corporates.

Retention strategies can bring immense benefits to an organisation, **Shivani Misri Sadhoo** shares tips on how to retain the good ones.

Keep reading and giving your feedback to us at:
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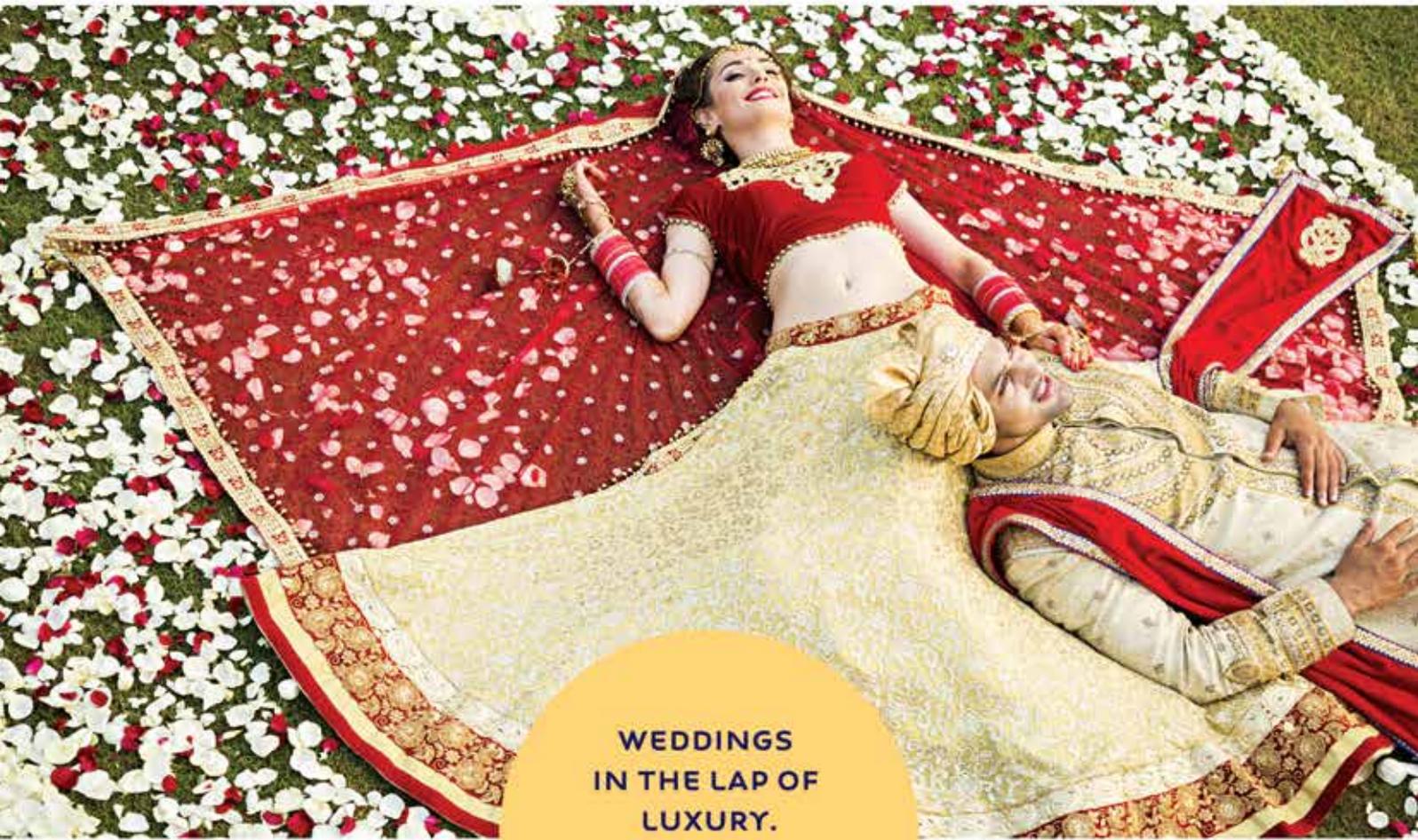
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Gala dinner held during Ace of M.I.C.E., at Hilton Istanbul Bosphorus Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey

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NEWS

EUROPE

flydubai launches flights to Dubrovnik & Kraków

flydubai will now operate Dubrovnik as a seasonal summer route, offering four flights a week between April 10 and October 25, 2018, as well as a daily service to Kraków, becoming the first UAE carrier to offer direct flights from Dubai to the Polish city. Emirates will codeshare on both routes. The routes will be served by flydubai's young fleet of Boeing 737 aircraft. With the launch of other flights to Catania in Italy and Thessaloniki in Greece, flydubai's route network in Europe will reach 26 points with 135 weekly flights.

Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President Commercial Operations (UAE, Middle East, Europe & CIS) at flydubai, says, "Our new service reflects flydubai's commitment to open up 71 previously underserved markets on our network of more than 90 destinations. We offer affordable travel options in both Business and Economy classes."



MIDDLE EAST

Tamarind Global expands operations in Dubai

Tamarind Global will now offer a bouquet of event and wedding services to support its domestic and international operations from the Dubai office. Apart from this, MiCE events will also be supported. A team of two will start the base of operations at the Dubai office. Kunal Rai, Vice President – Events and Weddings, will head the Dubai vertical. He says, "We aim to lead the market by providing an all-inclusive bouquet of services to make each event unique."



Kunal Rai

AFRICA

Tourism and MiCE masterclass in June

The Southern African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI) and the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) have joined forces with Africa Tourism Partners (ATP) and Grant Thornton to host a capacity-building 'Business Tourism and MICE Masterclass' course in Johannesburg from June 13 to 15, 2018. The masterclass aims to upskill African business tourism and MiCE professionals, practitioners, entrepreneurs, and the youth. "Leading global incentive houses, renowned event organisers, and corporates now have positive perceptions about the continent, as African member states continue to successfully host more large-scale events and leading incentive programmes," says Kwakye Donkor, Chief Executive Officer, ATP.



Kwakye Donkor



ASIA

Singapore Airlines unveils new regional cabin products for B787-10

Singapore Airlines has launched the next generation of regional cabin products for its new Boeing 787-10 fleet, which will redefine travel on flights up to eight hours. The new cabin products feature fully-flat beds and direct aisle access for all Business Class customers, ergonomically-designed contour backrests with six-way adjustable headrests in Economy Class, and personalised in-flight entertainment experience for all customers through myKrisWorld.



INDIA

Conference visa to go online

Post efforts by India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), the Ministry of Home Affairs will soon launch an online module for submission of application by organisers of international conferences. The clearance will be generated through the online system. **Chander Mansharamani**, Vice Chairman, ICPB, said, "We are sure this will help us bring more international conferences to India." Prior clearance of the Ministry of Home Affairs for holding an event is required only:



Chander Mansharamani

- (a) If there are participants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, foreigners of Pakistani origin and stateless persons; and
- (b) If the participants of the conference/seminar/workshop are required to visit 'Restricted' or 'Protected' areas in India, or areas affected by terrorism, militancy, extremism, etc., viz. Jammu & Kashmir and the Northeast states (other than the states of Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland).



ASIA



Global Exhibition on Services to focus on ASEAN

The fourth Global Exhibition on Services (GES) is set to take place from May 15-18, 2018, at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai. This year, the focus is on Northeast India and ASEAN region as it is themed on 'The Northeast India-ASEAN Opportunity'. Exhibition and event services, and tourism and hospitality are among the 22 sectors that the government aims to focus on through GES. A curtain raiser for the event was held in New Delhi at the Shangri-La hotel. Organised by Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, GES is meant to promote the services sector, including tourism and education.

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NEWS

SOUTHEAST ASIA

IT&CMA Asia from September 18-20, 2018

IT&CMA Asia is set to take place from 18-20, September in Thailand at the Bangkok Convention Centre at Central World Bangkok. Incentive Travel & Conventions, Meetings Asia (IT&CMA) and Corporate Travel World (CTW) Asia-Pacific is Asia-Pacific's Only Doublebill



Event in MiCE and corporate travel. Both events have been co-locating since 2004, offering its delegates an unparalleled platform to do business, learn and network with industry players from around the region and beyond. Since 2012, the event has incorporated luxury travel in its ambit. 2018 will see the 26th and 21st instalment of IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific respectively. IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific is organised by TTG Events.

EUROPE

Etihad Airways and SWISS ink codeshare agreement

Etihad Airways and Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) have launched a new codeshare partnership. Under the agreement, Etihad Airways will have its EY flight code on SWISS services between Geneva and Zurich. SWISS will market its LX code on Etihad Airways' services between Zurich and Abu Dhabi, offering its passengers codeshare flights to and from UAE's capital city. **Peter Baumgartner**, Chief Executive Officer at Etihad Airways, says, "This codeshare deepens Etihad Airways' commitment to the SWISS travel market and Switzerland, a key destination for travellers from our UAE home, neighbouring Gulf countries, and across our Asia Pacific network. The partnership further strengthens the historic, cultural, business, and tourism ties that the UAE and Switzerland have enjoyed over many decades."



EUROPE

Cyprus offers incentives for MiCE

In order to attract the growing conferences and incentives segment from India, Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) is offering attractive financial incentive schemes so that MiCE agents and corporates choose Cyprus as their preferred destination. Speaking about the schemes, **Michalis Metaxas**, Director, Cyprus Tourism Organisation and Cyprus Convention Bureau, said, "We have four different types of schemes for corporates depending on who they are and what their aim is." The scheme for MiCE is directed at non-profit organisations, associations, and academic institutions; the second is to support conference bidding and sales calls to attract conference and incentive tourism to Cyprus. CTO also offers incentives for inspection visits of the destination.



Michalis Metaxas



EUROPE



Travelport joins hands with Air France-KLM

Travelport and Air France-KLM have signed an agreement for the distribution of content through Travelport's platform and deployment of new technology with the airline. Air France-KLM and HOP! content on Travelport's platform will include Travelport's leading rich content, branded fares, fare families, and multiple ancillaries. This is an extension of a long-term relationship which has delivered greater choice to customers.

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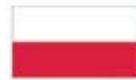
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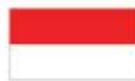
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Planning meetings in PENANG

For the first time, Penang Sales Mission was held in India. Listing the MiCE possibilities and upcoming convention centres in Penang is **Ashwin Gunasekeran**, Chief Executive Officer, PCEB

Dhruvi Trivedi and Kanchan Nath

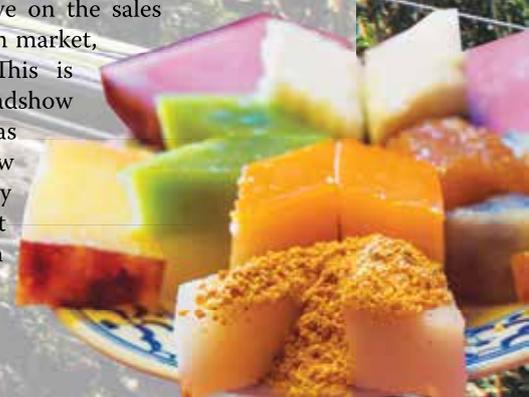
Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) brought the Penang Sales Mission to India with a view to promote Penang as the preferred destination for corporate and association meetings, incentive trips, and leisure travel. The four-city sales mission kicked off in Kolkata, followed by New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru.

With a good mix of leisure and MiCE, Penang offers good connectivity and numerous facilities to the industry. Among the three

convention bureaus, PCEB is the one that facilitates the programme.

THE INDIAN MARKET

Sharing his perspective on the sales mission and the Indian market, Gunasekeran said, "This is Penang's inaugural roadshow in India, and PCEB has organised it. We now aim to do this every year and expect about 200-300 agents in





“ We have the world’s first and only hybrid, solar-powered convention centre ”

every city. The key reason we selected the Indian market is because India has been among the top five markets and is still growing for Penang. It was time we did a roadshow that was Penang-specific and we needed to bring our partners in.

This is a two-way tool to engage the market and to introduce what we have and what will entice the Indian market. We have 17 partners here.

We started in Kolkata, and New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru followed suit. We have set a PSA

appointment system. The turnout has been very good and fruitful. We do have a lot of take-backs: ideas to improve both ways, ideas on marketing, and how perception is driven to a destination.”

Indians are attuned to exploring new destinations, be it for business or leisure. This makes Indians one of the most sought-after travellers across the world.

“MiCE numbers from India easily range between 25,000 and 30,000. The one conference that came in has taken up about 18,000 pax. We have again confirmed this conference for the next year; we are told that the numbers this year would be touching 20,000 to 32,000,” added Gunasekeran.



NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Talking about new tourism developments, especially in terms of MiCE, he said, "One of the largest facilities that any MiCE operator would ask for is a convention centre. So, we have the world's first and only hybrid, solar-powered convention centre, which can easily take up to 20,000 people.

They are part of the mission here as well, showcasing their products and services. Besides that, Penang has approximately 20,000 keys. By 2019, we are expecting another nine hotels opening and they will contribute another 3000 keys to the existing inventory. The interesting part of this is that every new hotel is injecting meeting

facilities into its construction model. This indicates growth of the MiCE industry."

The Malaysian state also has a convention centre coming up in 2021, the Penang Waterfront Convention Centre. This would support a heavy exhibition module as well as conferences. Penang is open all year long; the calendar year is full of festivals and travellers to the region get a chance to experience the colours, culture, and festive atmosphere of Penang.

"Penang is not a new destination; MiCE itself has been a mature market for Penang. We are reintroducing and redefining MiCE for the Indian segment. There are so many more activities and products that have been introduced in the market and more are mushrooming every year. We encourage agents to relook at Penang. Home to a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Penang has so much more to offer in an island city destination," said a zealous Gunasekeran.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Penang is in the northwest of Malaysia, and has attractions for all types of travellers.

Talking about these attractions, Gunasekeran said, "There are attractions that support pre or post-tours for MiCE. We have the Penang Hill; there is a train that takes you up there. We have a canopy treetop walk, Curtis Crest, which has breathtaking sunset views. More development is taking place on this hill. A lot of customisations can be done to support MiCE. Recently, we had a cocktail reception and a presentation for a group of 200, just below Curtis Crest. Imagine this kind of an event in the open air, cool weather, and an amazing view of the stars. By the end of this year or beginning next year, we are also opening the world's longest water slide."

RISE IN EVENTS, ARRIVALS IN PENANG

The tremendous growth in global travellers, especially from backpackers to flashpackers who spend a little more and explore further, has also fuelled travel from Tier-II and III cities to Penang. In 2016, Penang recorded 1251 events with an estimated economic impact of \$200 million. From January to September 2017 it hosted 1731 events with an estimated economic impact of \$230 million.

This translates to a 27.7 per cent increase in the number of events, and a 7 per cent increase in the estimated economic impact. For good connectivity from India to Penang, PCEB recently signed an MoU of strategic partnership with Malaysia Airlines to facilitate flights from India to Penang via Kuala Lumpur. It will also be introducing more incentives in this partnership.



Ashwin Gunasekeran



Head to **TURKEY** for **INCENTIVE TRIPS**

Volkan Ataman, President, TMG, talks about the recently-concluded ACE of M.I.C.E. exhibition in Turkey, and how the country is a key attraction for Indian incentive groups

Kanchan Nath

How was the participation in ACE of M.I.C.E.?

We had 15,872 professional visitors and 617 hosted buyers from 40 countries. From 33 countries, there were 169 exhibitors, and some 3,896 B2B meetings took place. There were 29 speakers for the 19 fruitful sessions.

How do you plan to attract Indians to Turkey?

There has been a growing interest from India over the years. We would be very happy if we can increase this and attract more MiCE professionals from India to participate in the ACE of M.I.C.E. Turkey has become a lucrative destination for those who want to have their wedding abroad. Hence, in the future we intend to bring wedding organisers from India to our exhibition.

Which new exhibitors were the focus at the exhibition?

This year's theme of meetings and events technology provided the perfect backdrop for an event that focused on future opportunities and examined technological growth, developments,

and trends. Technology will address the challenges faced by our dynamic industry, and will explore the trends and shifts that impact us all. Apart from digitalisation, in Turkey, events are becoming more creative through inspirational experiences for the attendees.

How relevant is Turkey for inbound MiCE from India?

Nowadays, the Indian outbound segment is the feeding sector in Turkey to some extent. However, given the trade opportunities between the two countries on this level is not enough. We hosted several buyers from India and these buyers conducted efficient B2B meetings. In general, there is a visible interest of incentive groups lined up in Turkey from India in 2018. Antalya appears as the leading destination for these incentive groups.

What's in store for ACE of M.I.C.E. in 2019?

ICC (Istanbul Congress Center) remains as the most suitable venue for the exhibition given its central location in Istanbul. We are now working on changing the date of the exhibition and considering the month of March. In addition to this, we are now considering several changes on the concept as well as strengthening the speaking sessions more.



Volkan Ataman

“*In the future, we intend to bring wedding organisers from India to our exhibition*”

The world converges at **ACE OF M.I.C.E.**

Istanbul played host to ACE of M.I.C.E, attended by participants from a number of countries, networking and attending knowledge sessions

Turkey offers a great opportunity and inspiration to the congresses, meetings, and events industry. The region's most extensive B2B event, ACE of M.I.C.E. Exhibition by Turkish Airlines, successfully concluded its fifth edition, where a high volume of business contacts in the global MiCE sector were established.

The exhibition took place from February 21-23 in Istanbul, with the motto: Everything You Need for Your Meetings & Events Organization is at ACE of M.I.C.E. Exhibition. With support of AME's 170 sponsors and partners, 112 national and 57 international exhibitors from 33 destinations met with 15,872 professional visitors from 40 countries under one roof. The participating exhibitors were from Afghanistan, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Cyprus, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malta, Morocco, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Rwandese Republic, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Ukraine, UAE, and the UK.

Meeting and event organisers from European and Middle East countries, USA, Canada, Argentina, India, China, and Russia also collaborated with exhibitors to bring their global events to Turkey in the upcoming chapters.

A GREAT POTENTIAL FOR MiCE

Top officials inaugurated ACE of M.I.C.E. on February 21 at the Istanbul Congress Center. They included **Volkan Ataman**, President, Tourism Media Group and TETKID; **Pervin Zeydanli Yalazan**, General Manager, Istanbul Congress Center; **Elif Balci Fisunoglu**, ICCA Director for Europe; **Mat Johnson**, Founder of White Fox Consultancy; **Corbin Ball**, Founder of Corbin Ball & Co.; **Valerio Festi**, Founder of Festi Group; **Halil Ibrahim Polat**, Turkish Airlines President of Domestic Sales; **Ismail Gültekin**, Deputy Governor, Governorship of Istanbul; **Ziya Taskent**, Assistant Undersecretary, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey.



“ 169 exhibitors from 33 destinations met with 15,872 professionals from 40 countries ”





Some of the foreign speakers at the event spoke of the rich potential they saw in Turkey's dynamic MiCE sector.

In his speech, Ataman said, "A total of 617 international hosted buyers came to ACE of M.I.C.E. They will make 1300 B2B meetings in a day, which means an average of 3.6 meetings per minute. We are very proud to organise Turkey's largest B2B event."

Polat explained that transportation in the events industry was indispensable and that they will support the sector with new flight networks. Gültekin stated that Istanbul was a safe harbour for the global MiCE industry and so, they would mobilise all the facilities for the development of the MiCE industry in Turkey. Taskent, on the other hand, stated in his speech that they will keep their tourism activities in all seasons in order to

increase tourism income and will strive to further increase the MiCE sector's achievements.

HOSTED BUYERS FROM 40 COUNTRIES

Thanks to Turkish Airlines and 21 hardworking buyer group co-ordinators, 617 MiCE industry buyers' high-level decision-makers from 40 countries (Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Lebanon, Lithuania, Netherlands, Oman, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Ukraine, UAE, UK, and the US) connected with the exhibitors. According to the AME hosted-buyer policy, 70 per cent of buyers are renewed every year and AME 2018 had a success of hosting 3896 B2B meetings three days in a row.

GALA DINNER

At the gala dinner hosted at the Hilton Istanbul Bosphorus hotel on February 21, hosted speakers, buyers, and members of the press participated. The official exhibition gala dinner held by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism began with a message by **Numan Kurtulmuş**, the Minister of Culture and Tourism since 2017. Guests, while enjoying delicious food at Hilton Istanbul Bosphorus hotel, continued their networking meetings.

MOTIVATIONAL SESSIONS

Within the scope of the fair, 29 famous speakers from around the globe inspired the audience in 19 sessions held concurrently on two occasions over three days. Numerous seminars over the last three days shed light on some interesting subjects relevant to the meetings and incentives industry. World-renowned speakers presented their knowledge in creative ways.

“1300 meetings were held in a day,
an average of 3.6 meetings per minute”

ATTENDEES speak

Buyers and exhibitors at ACE of M.I.C.E. share their opinion on the advantages the show had for them and provide their feedback for improvements that would help strengthen it

Exhibitors



“ The show is getting more and more useful for our properties and this year it is the first time that Marriott has participated as a group, earlier we were coming as independent hotels. The previous year was great for Marriott hotels in Turkey. We hope to continue this success. In the coming three years, Marriott’s portfolio will grow by 50 per cent in Turkey and we are planning 14 new openings. The market is growing and it is promising.

Pinar Baykal
Director of Sales & Marketing
Renaissance Izmir Hotel, Marriott International

“ This is the second year that we are attending ACE of M.I.C.E. and we have to say that we are very happy with the show. It was a great opportunity for us and was very productive. We have many products that we are showcasing, including textile products that we can ship anywhere in the world. We have a factory in Istanbul that is producing these textile products that include jackets, raincoats, hats, bags, etc. Anything that can be used in an event can be tailored and produced here.

Ajda Göknil Pazarlı
Founder and Managing Director
AGP Group



“ The exhibition was good for us; we made a lot of connections for our product. We are exhibiting our robot for marketing, promotion, and sales. It has been well-received; it’s entertaining, can play videos, and can get people dancing. Sanbot is an intelligent robot for hi-level scenarios in the hospitality, retail, and public service. This robot can elevate the front desk to a more advanced level, making it more splendid and classier.

Okay Keser
Technical Manager
Sanbot, Pro ITS AS



“ We have been working with ACE of M.I.C.E. since its first edition, which had more than 150 buyers. The first year was good and then again, we had more interest this year compared to the last. Evintra is a platform for events and incentive trips, where the MiCE travel industry can find the right suppliers. We have 153,000 people in 183 countries, and we have more than 16,000 qualified buyer contacts. We work for more than 30 exhibitions each year, bringing these buyers to the exhibitions. We have been doing this since 2011.

Andreas Thölken
CEO and Founder
Evintra



“ Since we are already working with most of the companies here, the exhibition has been a good platform for networking. We are a 29-year-old company focusing on corporate MiCE, and are doing inbound as well as outbound business. We mainly work with leading companies of Turkey in every sector. For outbound, Turkish travellers mainly like to go to Europe. For inbound business, companies like to come to Istanbul. Business was much better for us in 2017 as compared to 2016, but given the market scenario, we are a bit weary of how business will be this year.

Berk Atli
Procurement Manager
TOURISMO event & more



Buyers



“ This is our fourth time here; the last three years have been on an upward curve. Any new event grows year-on-year and ACE of M.I.C.E. has also been on the same curve. This year was better than the previous editions. We have made connections here that will help us grow our business. From the perspective of the Turkish market, there has been a good build on product knowledge. That said, I do feel that a lot more international products would have helped, the approach this time was centred on the domestic market. We bring football teams from India to train in Antalya with European teams, and there weren't a lot of participants from Antalya. Cappadocia is also very sports-centric and has luxury offerings, there weren't many participants from there either. We have sent a few golfers here, but MiCE groups are a little weary. I will come back to ACE of M.I.C.E. every year.

Arun Raghu
Director
Fansonstands.com

“ It was my first time here and was beneficial to some extent. Of the meetings I had, I would say only few were productive, which is not bad. Istanbul has been enlightening and Turkey, in general, on the MiCE front. From the perspective of western Europe, it is a bit of a challenge at the moment though. There are challenges in terms of stability that make it harder to sell. It needs more convincing to do for our B2B clients. Things will change for sure. Attending these shows and investigating new products, new venues, new partners, and new contacts will be just like it was before. Turkey has always been a profitable destination with excellent services and plenty of products. The market will surely get buoyant in the future.

René de Brouwer
Chief Executive Officer
Pink Elephant International



“ ACE of M.I.C.E. is a great opportunity to again bring Turkey to the right position in the tourism field; unfortunately, there are some issues that still remain unsolved. I felt that the exhibition was more focused on the local market. Sellers were keen to network with domestic buyers and so, for international buyers it was difficult to be able to collaborate with them. I also felt that the organisation of the event could have been better; some improvements can be made for a bigger and better event next year. I feel more staff conversant with the English language would go a long way in being helpful.

Antonio D'Agostino
President
I Viaggi del Bassotto



“ There was a lot of MiCE information available at the event, however, I would have liked to see more luxury and leisure travel products. We will try and bring more business to Turkey. This was my first time here and I will come back next year. I was expecting even more participants at ACE of M.I.C.E., especially buyers. In my opinion, there is still some scope for the level of organisation to be improved when compared to standards set by other international shows as WTM, ATM, and IMEX. I would also request for better organisation of transport.

Nadim Lahham
Travel Manager - Holidays and Corporate
Gezira Travel

ISTANBUL puts on a SUCCESSFUL SHOW

We share with you some glimpses from the ACE of M.I.C.E. exhibition which witnessed a mix of both domestic and international participants in B2B sessions



MiCE in focus for the PHILIPPINES

Tourist numbers from India to the Philippines have grown immensely. **Dakila F Gonzales**, Head, Office of Product and Market Development, India, Department of Tourism, Philippines, tells us more

Kanchan Nath



Dakila F. Gonzales

The Philippines is coming up as the most preferred destination for the Indian market. The country saw a considerable growth in the number of Indian arrivals last year.

GROWING INBOUND FOR THE PHILIPPINES

Elaborating on the demand for the Philippines as a destination, Gonzales said, “In 2017, we surpassed the 100,000 mark, making India the 12th largest source market for inbound in the Philippines and continue to have the second most significant growth rate in terms of inbound arrivals from a country. We are expecting further growth from the Indian market by 25 per cent or more.

We have attained a point where we perceive the interest of the Indian travellers for the Philippines. We have unique characteristics as a nation.

Apart from the spectacular beaches, it is the warmth and friendliness of the Filipino people that makes us stand apart. Speaking the English language is also an advantage.”

PHENOMENAL INCENTIVES

MiCE as a segment has shown significant growth in the past years in the Philippines. The growing interest in MiCE, especially the incentive trips, has surged over recent months.

Talking about the meetings, incentives, conferences and events market, he added, “Our strongest market segment is MiCE and we are going to continue to focus our efforts on the sector.

While strengthening our efforts in the MiCE market, leisure is also coming in strong. New segments that are really growing for the Philippines are the family segment, golf travel, and experiential travel. We are continuing to put efforts in the wedding segment as well.”



Elucidating on improving infrastructure, he said, “The island of Boracay is continuously increasing its capacity. There are new developments in the western coast of the island. Recently, an inventory of about 3000 in terms of accommodation was added. The infrastructure is being worked on while the domestic connectivity is being improved.”

On the cruise infrastructure, he highlighted, “The cruising infrastructure in the Philippines is being improved. We have put tremendous effort into providing a home porting facility for some of the cruise partners and this increases the capacity of island destinations in the Philippines.”

DEMAND GROWS FOR SOFT ADVENTURE

The Philippines is a vibrant archipelago with 7,107 islands. Talking about the strong points of soft adventure that the country has in store, Gonzales added, “The feedback we have

“In 2017 we surpassed the 100,000 mark, making India the 12th largest source market for inbound”



got from the market is that the people who have gone to the Philippines on a MiCE trip would want to go back and revive the same experience they have had, with the family.

Also, in the four-city roadshow that we have conducted, we have experienced very strong interest in the segments of golf, diving, and learning how to dive. The strongest products that Philippines has are its numerous islands, beautiful beaches, hospitable people, nature, and much more.”

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

On improving air-connectivity between the two nations, he said, “All efforts are being made to promote connectivity between the Philippines and India. We are continuously talking to partners here in the India as well as in the Philippines to make this vision come true. We believe that the demand is on an

upward trajectory. Once the direct connectivity becomes available to the market, we have the capacity to double the arrivals that we have.”

INDIAN FAMILIES AND FOOD

“Filipinos put their best efforts into making travel experience successful. The options for shopping for all members of the family are ample and varied. It relates with the local culture, where the family is the most important unit that we have.

This is something we share with guests from all over the world. There are certain privileges that we provide to family travellers at hotels.

Indian food is widely available in the Philippines. Everyone knows now how to deal with Indian guests. If guests want to have food elsewhere; concierge services are ready with the directory to lead you to the closest facility,” he concluded.



IT&CM ups China's

IT&CM China, held at Shanghai Exhibition & Convention Center of International Sourcing, was underscored by an overwhelming response from over 1395 delegates

Ankita Saxena

The 2018 event of IT&CM China saw in attendance over 3000 MiCE professionals from sectors including DMCs, PCOs, corporate travel, and associations. With as many as 528 Chinese and international buyers from across 42 Chinese cities and territories, 41 international markets, and 810 exhibitors, the exposition recorded 14,000 business appointments over three days. Marked by prominent industry support and backed by local endorsing associations, destinations, and brands, the exhibition floor this year boasted of a significant expansion, from 50 to 100 per cent,

of international exhibitors. The 810 exhibitors were represented by 289 new and returning exhibiting destinations, corporate brands, and organisations, as informed by **Darren Ng**, Managing Director, TTG Asia Media, the organiser of the event. He further added that Hong Kong SAR was the largest exhibiting pavilion with Macao SAR in close second, followed by the Philippines, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Hangzhou, Hainan, Ningbo, and others.

The corporate zone showcase comprised a balanced mix of international and local brands, including AccorHotels, Air China, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, Chimelong, Gloria International Hotels, Hard Rock Hotels, the Millennium Hotels and Resorts Group, Minor Hotels, Royal Caribbean, Tempus Group, and TravelSky, among many others. This year's new and returning exhibitors included Best Western International, China Meeting Best Group, Frasers Hospitality, Hilton, and Turkish Airlines.

“IT&CM China, 2018 recorded 14,000 business appointments over three days”



Jason Ng, Executive Director, MP International, believes that the show has come a long way since its debut in 2007. He said, “Looking back on the past 11 years, IT&CM China is proud to have witnessed the boom in the MiCE industry in Asia Pacific and we are honoured to provide an international trade platform for the MiCE industry to meet and explore new business opportunities.”



competitiveness

He further explained that over the years, China has emerged as one of the world's highest spender for MiCE activities. Jason discussed statistics from a study conducted by Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), and pointed out, MiCE activities worth \$110 billion made up 42 per cent of China's total domestic business travel spending. MiCE activities comprise at least 45 per cent of the total international business travel spending. "This is a far cry from a decade ago when MiCE was a relatively new concept for most in the local market. Stepping into its second decade, IT&CM China is optimistic about the rapid and healthy growth of the MiCE industry. The MiCE industry in Asia Pacific is expected to rise to \$200 billion by the end of 2018 and this is a good time to focus on and expand the Asia Pacific market," said Jason.

EDUCATION HUB

Besides IT&CM China's structured business appointments, business-driven networking programmes, the educational sessions are also key highlights that attract participants from across the world.

This year, the popular specialised programmes like the dedicated Association Day Forums were also hosted in collaboration with American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA), SITE, and World PCO Alliance. Some of the key topics under discussion included the power of alliances, global strategies, DMC and PCO relationships, and how associations can leverage on China's 'Belt and Road' initiative. Jason opined that in the new digital age, MiCE professionals



must urgently figure out how best to leverage on opportunities availed by digital platforms so as to meet the needs of buyers.

"Our commitment to deliver education at the highest levels sees the debut of the China MiCE Conference, a MiCE-focused line-up of topical sessions during exhibition days that will discuss trending industry tracks like cruises, inbound, incentive and luxury travel within a purpose-built education hub in partnership with Tempus Group," said Darren. The three-day education programme saw an influential panel of speakers from the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), China Business Event Federation (CBEF), Global Chinese Marketing Federation, and CTS MiCE, which deliberated on the rapid expansion of China's MiCE footprint to compete globally.

BUYER SCREENING

Li Zhuyuan, Vice General Manager, CITS

Attendees Speak

Attendees at IT&CM China provide feedback on their experience at the event and how beneficial it was to them



“ Apart from being a hosted buyer at IT&CM, we also exhibited at the show for our inbound business in India. The show looks very promising, though it is much smaller than many of the other trade shows. Chinese buyers have shown keen interest, but knowledge about India is very limited. India needs more presence in the China market to grow tourism and provide a face-to-face platform for interaction. An increase in direct flight connectivity and ease of business visa for Chinese groups can boost MiCE from China to India.

Yusuf Poonawala
Senior Vice President - Dekho India
Cox & Kings



“ This show has been a very fruitful platform for us. The objective is to meet new suppliers, see new products, and learn about what value additions can be provided to our guests in China. It is a very well-organised and focused show which leverages its local market. I feel, India should also participate at IT&CM China, as all major Asian countries display their MiCE products here and India can leverage this market with its diverse offerings. It is also a great platform to network with potential clients.

Vikrant Grover
Sales & Marketing India
PASHA Travel



“ We expected a much better attendance at the show, both in terms of buyers and exhibitors. We were not very convinced with the show since many destinations and products that we had hoped to see were unfortunately not present. However, China is a huge potential market for MiCE since it has a very good hotel inventory and state-of-the-art infrastructure. There is a lot of variation available across destinations in China when compared to other Asian destinations.

Phani Chakravarthy
Director
Xotic Getways



“ The show is a very well-organised platform for the MiCE industry to come together. However, we were hoping to find more hotel groups, DMCs, and ground transport providers in China, which were missing. The show has been able to showcase some well-known destinations, but it would have been great if we could explore some other destinations beyond the usual. China offers excellent infrastructure for corporate travel, exhibitions and fairs, and being an industrial market can also cater to incentive tours. Though DMCs help with language barriers, food remains a challenge in China.

Rupali Nanda
Director
Chalo Chale Adventures and Holidays

International M.I.C.E, elaborated on the special efforts made to screen the buyers at the exhibition this year. He said, “This year, we have devoted even more efforts to broaden the breadth of our buyers, leveraging on our 12 years of extensive acquisition and validation experience. We achieved this through enhanced buyer screening, resulting in breakthroughs in both quality and quantity. The year 2018 produced a significant increase in the number of association and business buyers, made possible in part because of the support from Corporate Travel World (CTW) China, CBEF and our various association partners.”

Jason felt that through the years, IT&CM China has gained a reputation amongst MiCE industry professionals as a bridge between the Chinese market and the rest of the world. He said, “The successful showing of IT&CM China in the past years has drawn new and returning exhibitors, with many establishing a bigger presence this year. The biggest pull is the high quality of MiCE buyers we invite every year, connecting them with industry partners through our advanced business match-making and scheduled appointment system, as well as presenting a conducive networking environment.”

He further added that IT&CM’s ability to constantly improve delegate’s experience and keep abreast with trend developments and market demand is critical for its success.

He explained, “An improved business matching formula was launched years ago to enhance delegates’ experience. Since then, the pre-show appointment scheduling system has continued to benefit the participants as it allows them to schedule up to 100 per cent of their appointments prior to the show, maximising their time for their business conversations.”

According to Zhuyuan, the show’s ability to deliver on preferred buyers will result in an improved retention of exhibitors as it consequently brings about business opportunities through well-organised business negotiations, exhibitions, workshops, social events, as well as pre-show and post-show city tours that are set to benefit both buyers and exhibitors.

Glimpses from an eventful **CONVENTION**

The three-day convention held in China amidst a pack of keen buyers and exhibitors helped form successful alliances. We share with you snapshots from the same



MARINA



MANDARIN

Singapore allures MiCE

Eileen Khew, Director of Sales and Marketing, Marina Mandarin Singapore, elucidates on the what the hotel offers in its MiCE platter for groups and what makes it stand out

With corporates now focusing on incentives with MiCE events, what are the unique offerings Marina Mandarin Singapore has for MiCE groups?

To allow MiCE organisers greater flexibility in their planning, we offer MiCE groups the additional option of room upgrades to suites for discerning travellers. We also provide healthier food alternatives for meeting coffee breaks.

What technological advancement tools does Marina Mandarin Singapore use for its events, keeping it on a par with contemporary trends?

In terms of technological advancement tools for meetings, each meeting space is enhanced with advanced audio-visual equipment and high-speed internet access at Marina Mandarin Singapore.

How has the year fared for Marina Mandarin Singapore in terms of MiCE?

The MiCE segment did well in the first quarter of 2018, largely due to the increased number of events, like the Singapore Airshow. Marina Mandarin Singapore has also forged a strong partnership with the newly-renovated Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre. Leveraging our close proximity to the exhibition centre, this symbiotic relationship allows for greater collaboration, entailing increased business opportunities for both parties.

Highlight some popular corporate events at Marina Mandarin Singapore

The Singapore Airshow, Food and Hotel Asia, Sibos, and the Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix are some popular events that have been held at the Marina Mandarin Singapore.

What is your USP in terms of a MiCE venue and corporate getaways?

Marina Mandarin Singapore offers over 20,000 sqft of function space, including the grand, pillar-less Marina Mandarin Ballroom that can accommodate up to 700 people. Located on the ground floor, the Marina Mandarin Ballroom is easily accessible from the driveway – one of the widest amongst Singapore hotels and capable

SELECTION OF COMPLIMENTARY OFFERINGS

- 1 x Room night for every 50 rooms materialised per night (up to 2 rooms per night)
- 1 x Upgrade to next room category for every 10 rooms materialised per night (up to 8 rooms)
- 1 x Upgrade to Atrium Suite with a minimum materialisation of 40 rooms per night
- VIP amenities (up to 5 rooms per night)
- 1 x Meeting package for every 30 full day meeting package guaranteed (up to 3 meeting packages), and welcome coffee break for meeting package Secretariat room at Business Centre (up to 2 days)
- 1 x Way group transfer (19-seater)



Eileen Khew



“The hotel offers a total of 19 function spaces spanning over 20,000 sqft”

of fitting multiple coaches and vehicles. The newly refurbished Pool Garden Pavilion boasts a gorgeous view of the Marina Bay skyline and has an accompanying outdoor area that is perfect for teambuilding activities or an evening corporate barbecue. There is a total of 19 function spaces. Every function space in the hotel has a suitable audio-visual equipment.

Experience MiCE at Anantara

Shannon Creado, Area Director Sales & Marketing, Anantara Resorts, Sri Lanka, throws light on how Sri Lanka is gaining popularity as a MiCE destination



Shannon Creado

Kindly tell us about your property and its MiCE offerings.

Anantara Kalutara is situated on the southwest coast of the island, only a 60-minute drive from downtown Colombo. The architecturally stunning resort offers a naturally exclusive setting, with the sacred Kalu River on one side and the Indian Ocean on the other. The hotel consists of 141 rooms, suites, and pool villas that dot the manicured grounds. Facilities to unwind include the Anantara Spa, an on-site water sports centre, and fine-dining options.

The resort recently unveiled its purpose-built two-storey meeting complex comprising a 630 sqm grand ballroom, three meeting rooms in the main building, and expansive indoor and outdoor pre-function areas. The floor-to-ceiling windows maximise natural light and give way to stunning sunsets. A perfect setting for conferences and events, the ballroom can accommodate 400 guests for a reception or 350 for banquets and meetings in a classroom or theatre style. The pillarless ballroom can be divided into two equal soundproof spaces, both equipped with mood lighting and audio-visual systems.

“The resort has a two-storey meeting complex comprising a 630 sqm grand ballroom”

What makes Sri Lanka a booming MiCE destination?

Sri Lanka is a beautiful, year-round MiCE destination for weekend getaways, weddings, celebrations and more. Given its proximity to India and easy flight accessibility from across the subcontinent, this destination holds a lot of promise, especially given that it is as yet undiscovered by the discerning Indian client.

There is a plethora of activities possible on the southwest coast itself, to justify choosing Sri Lanka over other destinations for any type of event or celebration. Sri Lanka has a vast array of attractions to offer to MiCE visitors through pre and post-tours, team-building and group excursions to the local sights and much more. With nearly 1600 km of a palm-fringed coastline surrounding the country, Sri Lanka is the ideal destination for beachgoers and those looking for water sports. The ocean around Sri Lanka is home to large families of marine mammals, including the blue whale, sperm whale, and dolphins.

Sri Lanka's heritage that the islanders take pride in is another great attraction. With a history expanding over 3000 years, the country has some of the world's ancient cities, including five UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Another important element is Sri Lanka's landscape and





nature. Wildlife is preserved in sanctuaries all around the country. Anantara Kalutara can be used as a hub for exploring the treasures of Sri Lanka's southern coast and the diversity of the island to get acquainted with the essence of the country.

With spa and wellness tourism on the rise, along with an increased number of visitors interested in Ayurveda, Sri Lanka's native healing system is growing steadily. Paying tribute to the country's ancient wellness heritage, Anantara Spa offers guests an opportunity to experience the 5000-year-old science offering a range of treatments curated by its resident doctor. The resort gives unique, local, and authentic experiences.

What experiential activities can MiCE travellers try here?

Sri Lanka has an alluring landscape of golden shorelines, cultural richness and genuine, warm smiles. An increasingly popular destination for weddings and honeymoons, the island is easily accessible with direct flights from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. We see a trend wherein delegates attending an event are interested in exploring the destination.

Connecting guests to the rich details, interesting history, and captivating scenes of Sri Lanka, Anantara Kalutara offers a range of inspirational and authentic explorations to the island's natural and cultural attractions. The colonial era can be relived with a visit to the UNESCO World

Heritage Site of Galle's Portuguese and Dutch fort, offering a charming enclave of boutiques, museums, modern bistros, and bars. The 200-acre Handunugoda Tea Estate offers a pleasurable low-country tea experience and serves as a working private tea museum. Guests interested in wildlife conservation can meet day-old baby turtles at a nearby turtle hatchery.

A larger-than-life experience takes place at Mirissa Harbour, where visitors set sail for Weligama Bay to spot majestic whales between December and April each year.

What is a must-try for guests at the property

We can easily create memorable team-building initiatives within the resort. We try to move beyond the norm of just tables and chairs with themed experiences. For instance, guests can indulge in raft-building and kayak races in our lagoon, or break the monotony of a meeting with a synchronised drumming session for team co-ordination.

Productivity and team spirit can be boosted in many inspirational ways. We can energise a MiCE group with a morning yoga session on the beach or on the culinary side, nurture a competitive edge by going head-to-head in a spicy Sri Lankan cooking contest. Influenced by Sri Lanka's rich culture and heritage, the ballroom complex offers a unique setting for weddings, meetings, events and corporate retreats, combined with authentic luxury matched by world-class dining facilities.



Converge & Connect in Hyderabad

The Indian Exhibition Industry Association's seminar from May 9-11 at HITEK, Hyderabad, is set to be a well-suited conglomeration

The flagship annual conclave of the Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) is themed as 'Converge & Connect'. Exhibition industry stalwarts from India and across the globe will participate in the event, which will be attended by more than 600 exhibition industry professionals of which close to 100 delegates will hail from different countries, providing a one-of-its-kind networking opportunity for all participating organisations.

"This year, we are targeting to host 100-plus international delegates at our event. Delegations from all reciprocity partners of IEIA and other leading international associations of the exhibitions industry have confirmed their participation," says KV Nagendra Prasad, CEM, President, IEIA.

IEIA Open Seminar 2018 will be a platform to meet peers, share knowledge, discuss collaborations and developments, address industry challenges and most importantly, network with members and participants to build successful business alliances. The event will feature a series of international events, including knowledge sessions that will have panel discussions, case studies, and keynote speeches; IEIA Exhibition Services Expo; Business Match Making session; board meeting of Asian Federation of Exhibition & Convention Associations (AFECA); IEIA Awards ceremony; BRICS MICE Forum Meeting; IAEE's India Chapter meeting; CEM Graduation Ceremony; as well as Young Professionals Meet-up.



Leading global forums of the exhibition industry also participating in the event include UFI that is headquartered in Paris, International Association of Exhibitions & Events (IAEE) headquartered in Dallas, Asian Federation of Exhibitions & Conventions Industry (AFECA) headquartered in Singapore, Singapore Association of Exhibition & Events (SACEOS), Small & Independent Show Organisers (SISO) headquartered in the US, Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA), The Italian Exhibition and Trade Fair Association (AEFI), Brazilian Association of Trade Fairs Organisers (UBRAFE), and many more.

IEIA is the national apex body of the Indian exhibition industry that includes organisers, service providers, and venue owners with over 150 leading national and international players as its members.

“
We are targeting to host 100-plus international delegates. Leading international associations have confirmed participation
”

They have Signed up



"The show was instrumental in bringing us together. It is a unique event that is educative, network-oriented, and a platform to exhibit all products."

Vinod Bhandari*
Wedding
Xtraordinaire



"This is our second time at the show and the format of the show in particular is its highlight. Well-timed meetings allow us to interact with every exhibitor without missing anyone."

Rajeev Jain*
Rashi Entertainment



"This show acts as a bridge between the wedding, travel, and hospitality industries. I feel this is the only show that has adopted the format of offering one-to-one interactions."

Serrao Francis
Socorro*
Cross Craft



"The show is instrumental in building personal connections with various suppliers which is very helpful for future business opportunities."

Rakesh K Harjai*
Harjai's Indian
Wedding Planners



"It is an important platform for us to meet key players in the industry, and learn about new products, destinations, deals, and packages. Enthusiasm amongst participants is encouraging."

**Santosh Kumar
Chunduru***
Kakatiya Events



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BOOK like a PRO

Taking travel booking a notch higher is **Balaji Ramakrishnan**, Founder and CEO, Insteract Technologies, a portal that even takes company policy into the booking matrix

Tripti Mehta



Balaji Ramakrishnan

Please explain how business travel booking is undergoing transformational changes in your opinion.

In the past, companies mostly focused on controlling cost. Processes were designed and automated to control cost instead of addressing how trip choices were made and how approvals were done. The problem with the old way is that it was very transactional in focus, inefficient, and did not deliver the desired result.

Companies today have moved their focus from getting the transaction right to improving the overall travel spend. They are looking at ways to optimise their sourcing options and finding solutions that will help them manage their core

asset - people. We see that the burning question for companies is no longer how they can automate their travel management process, it is how they can have a transparent and personalised travel management process where every employee is taken care of without compromising on the company's objectives. This outlook is the biggest transformational change.

What is the inspiration behind Insteract's design for business travel solutions?

We observed from our experience of designing business travel solutions that there were two fundamental issues that were not effectively addressed. One, the search was not transparent and two, the search was not personalised.



Travellers and bookers tend to sidestep the rules if they know that the options presented to them are incomplete and do not include their preferences. The solution components were all there; what was needed is integrating them with an experience that is intelligent and convenient for the traveller. It also meant that the underlying business model of how companies need to be served needed to change. We saw this as an opportunity and started Insteract in October 2015.

Please give a brief explanation of the functioning of Insteract that will help new users get their way around.

Insteract is a cloud-based travel solution that brings transparency and convenience to business trip planning. It helps travellers find and book the most relevant travel option that is benchmarked with market alternatives and curated as per their preference and company rules. Using data analytics, insights, and real-time market data from airlines and online travel agents, Insteract provides a cost range for the trip. It shows seven logical options that are curated based on parameters related to preference, traveller comfort, risk profile, and company rules. The user can select options to generate a travel request for approval or book directly with Insteract.

If the business is using a travel desk, the travel request can be emailed to the TMC with all the information related to price cap and approved option(s) for booking. Lastly, the business can use Insteract’s data platform to benchmark the overall spend and find insights to optimise their travel.

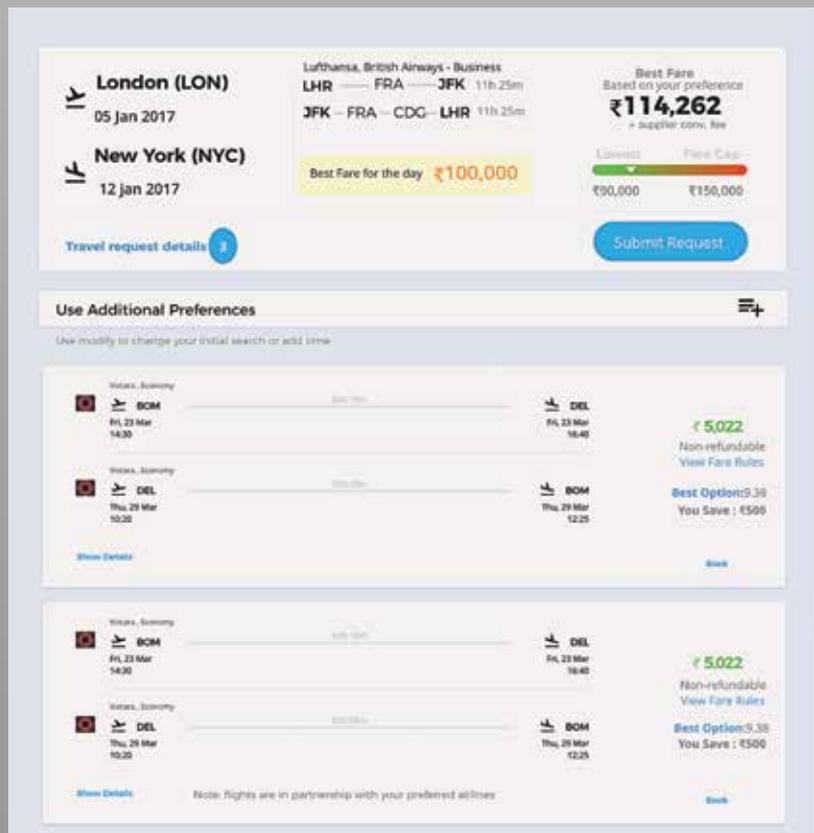
What is the USP of Insteract? What makes it different from other corporate travel booking technology in the industry?

Insteract is different in three ways:

- **Transparent:** Insteract uses data analytics and real-time market data to offer a transparent benchmarking on cost and available trip options.
- **Personalised:** Using a unique profiling algorithm, Insteract evaluates each option on dozens of parameters related to savings potential, comfort, risk, and company rules.
- **Value-based pricing:** It is a success-based business model where no service fee is charged per transaction. A company pays only if a saving is realised on the booking, that is, only when Insteract’s fare is lower than the benchmarked fare.

How will corporates/MiCE operators benefit from this technology?

With Insteract, corporates take control over their product selection process in an unbiased way. Our focus at the moment is to offer an affordable solution that can help corporates reduce time



“Insteract helps travellers book travel options benchmarked with market alternatives”

in benchmarking trip fares, eliminate iterations in approving trips, and find insights to optimise their travel buying.

That said, Insteract can help TMCs that are looking to present their content in the best possible way. Our unique profiling algorithm can help corporate customers of TMCs align their travellers with policy, and our analytics platform can help corporates find ways to optimise their travel spend.

What is your client mix?

Close to 60 per cent of our customers are small teams and independent business professionals, 40 per cent are SMBs, and 10 per cent of them are large business undertakings.

What is the growth you foresee?

We see a clear trend towards cloud-based solutions that are cheaper and easier to implement; solutions that are content-agnostic and focus on achieving the corporate goals. We see two types of customers for us. One, those who want transparency in their sourcing and approval, and others who are looking to find and book their trips in a transparent and personalised way. Currently, we are focused on features to serve large enterprises. In the next couple of months, we will be expanding our web experience to book different types of products like accommodations and transfers.



Unpacking business travel risks

Vikram Kohli, President, FCM Travel Solutions, on the concept of Duty of Care Management for safe corporate travel and what organisations must do to procure it



Vikram Kohli

With more workforce travelling for business, there is no doubt that the corporate travel risk landscape has drastically shifted over the years. Business travel these days, whether international or domestic, exposes employees to higher levels of risk.

The increased level of risk for travelling employees heightens the corporate liability of employers that have a legal and moral duty of care to their staff.

Faced with the pressure to comply with industry guidelines, legislations, budgets and client

expectations, corporate leaders are being urged to take a company-wide and strategic approach to travel risk management. This is where many in the corporate travel community use "duty of care" and "travel risk management" interchangeably, but the two have distinct meanings.

Duty of Care, put simply, is a 'moral and legal obligation' to take serious responsibility for the safety of travellers, while travel risk management is the course of action to provide that. In simple words, the moral and legal obligation should be the reason why companies implement risk management practices.



'management' of 'travel risk', it does not eliminate it. Some key process areas for a relevant and effective TRM programme include:

- **Policy/procedures:** The TRM policy should address mitigation steps for 'general' risks as well as risks that are specific to the operation or travelling employees.
- **Training:** Training ensures corporate travellers can perform their roles efficiently, effectively, and as safely as possible.
- **Risk assessment:** Assessing risk is the foundation of any TRM programme. Every assignment, travel journey, or event should be assessed for the potential threat of risk.
- **Risk disclosure:** The purpose of risk disclosure is to be able to produce relevant and timely information related to your risk assessment so that all stakeholders are aware of the potential threats that may be encountered.
- **Risk mitigation:** By proactively monitoring incident alerts, disclosing potential risks and advising travellers on how to stay safe or get help via training and/or services such as emergency hotlines, employers can better mitigate risks in conjunction with their company policies and procedures.
- **Risk monitoring:** Effective risk monitoring ensures your company has visibility and the intelligence to drive TRM processes that provide the best level of support for your staff.
- **Response:** TRM programmes must have guidelines for travellers to access travel advice and booking support, medical services, evacuation help, and security-related services.
- **Notification:** This ensures that the appropriate people are informed of any relevant travel risk information before, during, or after a trip to make rapid and thoughtful risk-related decisions.
- **Data management:** Data management is critical for TRM processes. Companies need to have the right technology and systems in place to be able to use traveller data for a range of activities such as identification, collection, storage, accessing, monitoring, and notification.
- **Communication:** Effective communication of the programme ensures that everyone understands what is expected of them.

Corporates are defined by those excelling at Duty of Care and those that are failing. Those without a realistic Duty of Care policy and an effective travel risk management programme are sitting on a ticking time-bomb.

DUTY OF CARE

Complying with Duty of Care obligations means protecting the health, safety and security of an employee, so far as practically possible. Many countries have some form of employer duty of care legislation in place. However, India being the 10th largest business travel market in the world, does not have any such legislation in place. The lack of a specific Duty of Care law in a jurisdiction does not necessarily mean there are no legal obligations for the business in relation to employee health and safety while travelling. Organisations need to consider the laws of the jurisdiction where their employees are travelling to, and where they are a citizen of. An organisation's Duty of Care liability can extend to situations such as:

- Enforce mandated booking channels
- Educating employees on foreign health risks
- Ensuring access to adequate medical treatment while working overseas - best travel insurance
- Having a business continuity plan
- Providing pre-trip briefings of political unrest and other risks in areas where employees are
- Providing evacuation whenever required
- Staying connected with employee on work visit

TRAVEL RISK MANAGEMENT

'Travel risk management' defines the

TMCs: Custodians of safe business travel

A company must ensure their travelling employees are safe. In this part of the series, we decode the role of and challenges faced by TMCs

Ankita Saxena

While Travel Management Companies (TMCs) provide seamless travel solutions, considering the uncertainty in the world, market and economic scenarios, it becomes essential for them to also take into account risk management. How would a company take care of its travellers during crisis time? Do they consider the dynamics of Duty of Care? Let us find out more from few experts in the field.



Greeley Koch

A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMME

According to **Greeley Koch**, CEO, ACTE, there are four critical components to not only a successful Duty of Care programme but also one that caters specifically to the modern business traveller. He says, "Travel managers must plan now versus react in the moment. According to a recent ACTE study underwritten by American Express Global Business Travel, travel managers can address both ongoing and emerging traveller concerns by engaging with key stakeholders to ensure alignment on not only travel policies, but crisis responses, leveraging the latest technology

to continually improve risk management, educating travellers and engaging with TMCs on budget and other needs so that they can work to craft solutions that provide more proactive training, as well as real-time communication and efficient traveller support."

ROLE OF TMCs

Travel Management Companies (TMCs) provide helpful solutions for the travel management processes of business, points out **Rakesh Bansal**, CEO, Amadeus India. Whether employees are consistently on the road or only fly occasionally, travel management is time-consuming and can be costly if not managed correctly. Some TMCs also analyse the business travel spend and identify areas where one can save money. This is achieved in a number of ways such as negotiating discounts with airlines, hotels, etc., analysing trends and educating travellers to alter buying behaviour. He further explains that TMCs can also help track corporate travellers, so the company is always aware of the traveller's location and can make contact. "Companies such as Amadeus enable leading TMCs to run their business efficiently and effectively. From global network airlines to low cost carriers, from multinational travel agencies to independent hotels, Amadeus technology is used by a wide array of sectors to create successful commercial environments. Amadeus applications streamline and enhance the value of business processes for both travel providers and users, and deliver a decisive competitive advantage to them," says Bansal.

Gaurav Sundaram, President, ProKonsul and Regional Director, GBTA India, believes that the role of a TMC is integral to the success of the Duty of Care initiatives of a company. "This would require all reservations for flights and hotels to be made using the official corporate travel agency; the official TMC would then be mandated to deliver an in-house traveller tracking and security suite or integrate their PNR records with global travel risk and security provider system; subscription



“TMCs can also help companies track corporate travellers, to the location”

to a 24x7 news alert system that tracks travel risk and security instances across the world and share this in real time with the client company and its employees.”

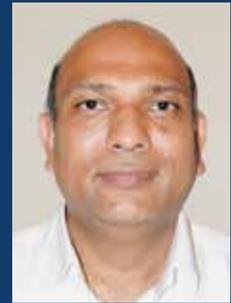
Koch further elaborates that travel management companies are there to support the travel manager in finding solutions to develop the right travel programme for their business. He says, “TMCs can leverage their extensive industry knowledge to help travel managers refine their policies, select booking systems, provide traveller tracking data, and identify the latest technologies to help keep travel affordable, safe, and effective.”

According to **Rebecca Daniels**, Senior Director—Sales Management, Global Commercial Sales at Sabre APAC, TMCs add value by providing their clients with technology, like Tripcase and Safepoint, which are fully integrated to the traveller experience, ensuring peace of mind. “By taking on the Duty of Care component of a corporation, TMCs ensure that all risks are monitored, and that

employees and managers alike are well-informed of any security risk while travelling on business and can respond accordingly,” she says.

THE INDIA MARKET

Providing insights into the Indian market with regards to Duty of Care programmes, Koch feels that currently in India, Duty of Care has gained momentum because of the disruptions faced due to climatic changes, terroristic activities, pollution, and increase in road accidents among other factors. Sundaram states that according to some public statistics shared online, it is believed that Indian outbound MiCE and leisure will generate 6.5 million travellers by 2020. However, there is no validated statistics to indicate the quantum of these travellers who travel for business and MiCE versus VFR and/or leisure and other purposes. “Regarding MiCE as a homogenous segment is erroneous as this has very specialised sub-segments. In general, BT MICE - MICE business related to the business travel portfolio of a company like conferences/events and incentives



Rakesh Bansal



Gaurav Sundaram





“The interface to the traveller must be efficient, easy to use, and universally accessible”



Rebecca Daniels

for employees, is a large and growing segment. However, Indian companies tend to manage their BT MICE in a largely reactive manner. Very few companies plan annually in advance; they rarely work with hotel groups /National Tourism Offices and airlines directly; they don't consolidate their BT MICE programmes across regions/globally and across user tiers like luxury and budget and almost never conduct post event CSAT/VOC in a structured manner.”

He further explains that the general tried and tested approach of incentive buyers in India is to put together an event with a gala evening/Indian food and some entertainment. He says, “The focus on technology to optimise events, evaluating user experiences through a CSAT/VOC initiative is missing as is the desire to provide travellers with unique and different experience. This is where a

lot could be done to improve BT MICE in India.” Sundaram also points that most tour operators and travel agencies operate in a largely opaque manner where they negotiate prices with vendors and place an undisclosed markup when they invoice the client. “In trying to secure the lowest price, Indian incentive managers don't focus on specific areas like cancellation penalties where they eventually lose significantly. Today the globally accepted best practice is that tour operators operate on a fixed transaction fees and transfer all negotiated benefit to the client, who pays the hotels and airlines directly,” adds Sundaram.

CHALLENGES

One of the key challenges is that travellers sometimes break the rules, and instead of booking through the TMC they book their flights and hotels through various websites online, points out **Vishal Sinha**, CEO, India, Carlson Wagonlit Travel. “Booking data of these ‘rogue travellers,’ often doesn't get captured by the TMC. When an incident takes place and we try



range of business travel support services. Much of the Indian travel managers and procurement professionals place a far higher value on pricing and financial benefits rather than the qualitative aspects of their vendor's technology capabilities, account management, risk management and management reporting capabilities."



Vishal Sinha

He further points out a unique situation seen with Indian companies that is many of them don't consolidate their hotel reservations with their TMC. "Bookings for hotels especially

“Key challenge is that travellers break the rules, instead of booking through a TMC”



to track all the travelers who are in that city, these travellers won't show up in our tracking reports," he says. Resonating the same sentiment, Koch also believes that travel managers can put in place policy enforcement mechanisms, discourage off-policy behaviors (such as booking outside of approved systems), and provide education, but they cannot completely control what travellers do, especially when they're at their destinations.

Sundaram's comments relate to the broad general community of corporate travel buyers and companies and not on global MNC's who may have a globally consolidated travel programme in India and some Indian trans-nationals who have evolved their travel programme to actively include traveller risk and Duty of Care. He explains, "Most companies in India execute their corporate travel programme with 'travel agencies' and not 'travel management companies.' 'Travel agencies' are generally non specialists in the business travel domain and generally win business on price/service attributes but don't deliver the full

international hotels are done through rate consolidators, directly with the hotel concerned/ through secretaries and at times on reaching the destination from the airport by the traveller. Tracking and consolidation of hotels booked and where the employee is staying is hence missing," concludes Sundaram.

SOLUTION

Daniels explains the possible solutions to a successful travel risk management programme and elaborates, "The most up-to-date information must be collected, regardless of the traveller visiting a highly central location, or a very remote one. The interface to the traveller must be efficient, easy to use, and universally accessible. In today's fast changing world, natural, political and social events that impact security can happen very quickly. Our technology helps the traveller to check-in when needed rather than having to track their location. There is a need for mobile and convenient access for the travel manager, TMC and the travelling employee."

Express Inn Nashik stands out for MiCE

Vikas Shelar, Director, Express Inn Nashik, on the advantages the hotel enjoys as a stand-alone MiCE property in Maharashtra while being apt for international travellers



Vikas Shelar

What venues do you have on offer for MiCE groups?

Express Inn Nashik is the only property situated in northern Maharashtra. It is a member of PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) and ICPB (India Convention Promotion Bureau). The property is adorned with a pillarless convention centre of 10,000 sqft. It also has four banquet halls that can accommodate anywhere between 50 to 1000 people. We also have an open area that can accommodate 2000 people. Lush, the lawn adjacent to the swimming pool, can accommodate up to 350 people. For MiCE groups we provide end-to-end solutions of venue, decoration, audio-visual equipment, generator backup, sitting arrangements, stage, as well as F&B services.

What makes these venues stand out in the market?

The USP of Express Inn Nashik is its convention centre of 10,000 sqft that can accommodate 1000 people. The hotel has a backup of the highest inventory of 197 rooms for residential conferences as well.

How do you ensure meetings and events run smoothly?

Our pillarless convention centre has technologically advanced facilities like high-tech audio-visual equipment, including light and sound systems. There is availability of uninterrupted power supply through the day. The centre has high-speed wireless internet,





digital signage, and a soundproof partition during meetings.

Highlight some popular corporate events at Express Inn Nashik.

Some of the popular corporate events that took place in the hotel include Mahapedicon, Maharashtra's leading conference for doctors; Mahindra, John Deere tractor launch; and Nashicon doctor's conference.

Kindly elucidate on the offerings for international MiCE groups.

We offer international MiCE groups the option of our state-of-the-art rooms that can together accommodate 600-plus people. There is a

“ Our USP is the convention centre of 10,000 sqft that can accommodate 1000 people ”

well-equipped gymnasium, a sports complex, as well as service apartments for foreign delegates.

For CEOs and Directors of companies, there is the Presidential Enclave; for relaxation and rejuvenation, there is a well-equipped spa.

How has business fared in terms of MiCE for Express Inn Nashik?

We have achieved our budget for the last year in terms of MiCE events and revenue. So, I would say it has been a good year.





Fly high with Emirates



Essa Sulaiman Ahmad

Essa Sulaiman Ahmad, Vice President – India & Nepal, Emirates, talks about connectivity to the southern states of India

Kanchan Nath

Tell us about Emirates' flight connectivity to southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala.

Emirates has 21 weekly flights to Hyderabad, 21 weekly flights to Chennai, 14 weekly flights to Kochi, and 11 weekly flights to Thiruvananthapuram.

What makes Emirates' Business Class stand out?

Business Class passengers from India can enjoy a staggering choice of up to 3500 channels of entertainment on our in-flight entertainment system Ice, with a large selection of regional content from Bollywood, Indian television, and music channels across nine Indian languages. Passengers can also look forward to a host of culinary offerings prepared by gourmet chefs, as well as experience Emirates' renowned in-flight service from the airline's multinational cabin crew, some of who speak Hindi as well as Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, and Punjabi.

Furthermore, our customers on board can also connect to Wi-Fi to check in on their social media accounts, send emails, or to just stay connected with their loved ones.

Are new routes on the cards for the southern states?

We constantly monitor the performance of our existing routes in India, as well as evaluate new route possibilities. This is contingent upon demand, market dynamics, available aircraft that can fly ultra-long-range missions, along with a number of other factors.

Do you offer special incentives for MiCE groups travelling from the UAE to southern India?

We usually don't offer an incentive for MiCE groups travelling from the UAE, but we sometimes give a discount based on the number of delegates and the destination at offer. The MiCE segment is rapidly growing and we are always looking to connect our customers to what matters to them.

At Emirates, we are well-positioned to cater to the needs of business travellers worldwide with the latest facilities we offer on our modern wide-body aircraft and excellent on-board service from our international cabin crew.



“ We look to connect customers to what matters to them ”

For MiCE or corporate travellers from India we also offer some discount, upgrades, and give excess baggage in Business and Economy Class for specific exhibitions. This has to be booked through the Emirates website or their preferred travel agent, and in return we ask that Emirates be featured as the official airline partner of the event.

What can be done to enhance inbound connectivity to South India?

Emirates endeavours to enhance inbound connectivity to all its destinations by constantly improving and innovating to offer the best travel experience to customers. We continue to invest heavily in developing the most innovative and high-quality products on board.

Your comment on the growth of the Indian aviation segment in the last five years, especially in the South?

Over the last five years, the Indian aviation segment has shown tremendous growth and potential. India is rising as a huge travel market. Like fellow world travellers, Indian travellers are not just travelling to tick places off their bucket list or see friends and relatives, but are travelling for business purposes and to explore and experience world cultures, food, seek adventures, and are demanding curated experiences and itineraries planned by professionals.

Visa Requirements



Malaysia

- Passport:** Original Passport with the validity of six months upon arrival in Malaysia and minimum three blank pages for visa stamping.

Please Note:

 - a) Two copies of the Bio data pages of Passport.
 - b) Attach old passports (if any).
- Malaysia Visa Application Form:** One visa application form printed back to back, duly filled and signed by the applicant.
- Photo Specification:** Two recent passport size coloured photographs with matt finish. Photo should have a close up of your head and top of your shoulders so that your face takes up 60-70 per cent of the photograph, white background and without border (Size: 3.5 cm x 5.0 cm)

Please Note: Photographs should not be more than 3 months old, scanned/stapled and should not be used in any of the previous visas.
- Covering Letter:** Covering letter from corporate with naming list and passport details of all applicants. The letter should be duly signed by the authorized signatory and addressed to address to – The Visa Officer, High Commission of Malaysia, New Delhi.
- Airline Reservation:** Confirmed Return Air Ticket of all applicants.

Please Note: Applicant travelling outside the country for first time or new passport with no prior travel stamps must submit three months recent bank statement (Self or Sponsor's) with original endorsement from bank and support letter from sponsor stating relationship to applicant (exception for minors 17 years and below).
- Malaysia e-Visa Requirements:**

 - a) Passport with validity of at least nine months
 - b) Latest passport sized photo, size (35mm x 50mm) taken within last six months. The facial image must be from chin to crown
 - c) Confirmed Return flight booking
 - d) Hotel Booking
 - e) Birth certificate - for underage children
 - f) NOC signed by the parents for children below 18 years
- Malaysia ENTRI-** Electronic Travel Registration & Information (eNTRI) has to be applied online. An eNTRI note will be issued as proof of the registration and is required to be presented upon arrival in Malaysia. It is issued for a single journey to Malaysia within three months for the stay of up to 15 days. Each application can only be used once and no extension is allowed.



Turkey

- Passport:** Original Passport with the validity of minimum six months from the date of return and minimum two blank pages for visa stamping.
- Turkey Visa Application Form:** One visa application form to be duly filled and signed by the applicant.
- Photo Specification:** Two recent passport size photographs with matt or semi matt finish, 60-80 per cent face coverage, white background and without border (Size: 50mm x 50mm).
- Covering Letter:**

 - a) Covering letter from corporate. The letter should be duly signed by the authorized signatory and addressed to – The Visa Officer, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, New Delhi.
 - b) Covering Letter from applicant, mentioning his/her name, designation, passport number, purpose and duration of visit in brief. The letter should be duly signed by the applicant and addressed to – The Visa Officer, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, New Delhi.

Letter from Tour Operator: A letter from the tour operator on letter head with naming list & passport details of all applicants.
- Financials:**

Corporate:

 - a) Company's registration certificate.
 - b) Bank statements for last six months with stamp and signature.
 - c) ITR for last three years.

Individual Applicant:

 - a) Copy of Personal Bank statement for last six months with stamp and signature
 - b) Personal ITR for last three years.
 - c) **If Self Employed:** Company's Registration certificate/ Original Memorandum of article association of the Company with proprietor's name / Copy of Import Export License attested by Notary Public.
 - d) **If Employed:** Salary slips for last three months along with original NOC from company.
- Accommodation Proof and Airline Reservation**
- Insurance:** Travel insurance of each applicant covering duration of stay. Travel insurance must be valid for minimum 30 days from the date of travel.

Please Note:

 - a) If a minor is accompanied, a NOC signed by the parents is required.
 - b) Embassy may ask for additional documents.
 - c) Applications will be applied as per the jurisdiction

Source: Udaan

Have you Nominated yourself yet?



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A recall for **OPPORTUNITIES**

Our counsellor, **Shivani Misri Sadhoo**, throws light on why retention of employees is necessary for corporates and for the employee as well



Shivani Misri Sadhoo
Founder
Saarthi Counselling
Services

Retention strategies can bring immense benefits to an organisation; they can help in the development of a positive work environment and strengthen an employee's commitment to the organisation. On the other hand, poor retention rates result in additional expenditure on frequent hiring and training. How can corporates then encourage benefits for retention of the employee?

- Encourage promotion from within existing team members as much as possible. This gives employees a clear path of advancement. Otherwise, employees may become frustrated and start to look for change if they see no clear future for themselves in the company.
- Arrange employee development and training programmes that can upgrade employee skills for current and future technology changes. These steps not only encourage employees to stay, but also help companies to use existing employees, rather than search for talent from outside, when there is a new job profile that demands new skills.
- Research has shown that one factor that causes maximum attrition in Indian

companies is unbearable seniors or managers. Employees quit their job in India because they feel they are unheard, their ideas are not valued, and their contribution to the company's growth is unrecognised. Hence, companies should create open communication between employees and the management. They must hold regular meetings in which employees can offer ideas and ask questions, and implement an open-door policy that encourages employees to speak freely and frankly with their managers without fear of repercussions. Such actions will remove miscommunication between managers and employees, and will allow the employee to express their grudges and gradually feel happy with their work.

- Companies should get managers involved in spending more time in coaching employees, helping good performers move to new positions and minimising poor performance.
- Companies should communicate their mission of the business to every employee, as this lets employees feel connected to the organisation's goals and helps keep them mentally and emotionally tied to the company.



Companies should create open communication channels





MEA Conference	Adelaide, Australia	6-8
GTM 2018	Dresden, Germany	6-8
TRENZ	Dunedin, NZ	7-10
INDABA Durban	South Africa	8-10
ILTM Latin America	Sao Paulo, Brazil	8-11
IEIA Seminar	Hyderabad	9-11
South India Travel Awards	Bengaluru	14
IMEX	Frankfurt, Germany	15-17
ITB China	Shanghai – China	16-18
PATA Annual Summit 2018	Gangneung, Korea	17-20
ILTM Asian Pacific	Singapore	21-24
International MICE & Wedding Forum	Antalya, Turkey	28-June 1

JUNE 2018

IATA AGM 2018	Sydney, Australia	3-5
Posidonia 2018	Athens, Greece	4-8
FIEXPO	Santiago, Chile	4-6
Meeting & Incentive Forums - Europe Dubrovnik	Dubrovnik, Croatia	5-9
BITE	Beijing, China	15-17
Meeting & Incentive Forums - Tour de MICE	Lisbon, Portugal	15-18
Telangana Tourism Conclave-2018	Hyderabad	28-30

JULY 2018

Hotel Operations Summit India (HOSI)	New Delhi	2
GPS	Ahmedabad	5-7
TTF	Kolkata	6-8
Travel Wedding Show	Jaipur	7-8
ACTE Global Summit	Singapore	17-18
MICE India & Luxury Travel Congress	Mumbai	25-26



Travel Wedding Show in Jaipur

This year, the show will be from July 7-8 at Jaipur Marriott Hotel

The fifth edition of Travel Wedding Show will be held in Jaipur Marriott Hotel from July 7-8. Following a table-top format, the show provides a suitable opportunity to exhibitors to showcase their products and services, demonstrate expertise, and increase awareness, generating sales from a qualified audience with maximum exposure. The buyers are hand-picked and are qualified wedding planners who can be met in a closed-door professional business environment through prefixed B2B meetings.

Last year, the Travel Wedding Show concluded with over 2000 meetings conducted among 32 exhibitors and nearly 64 buyers. Representatives from hotels and tourism boards exhibited their products for the wedding tourism industry. On day one of the show, travel agents and tour operators from across the country interacted with exhibitors while day two of the event saw the bigwigs of the wedding industry in India attend the show to meet and network with exhibitors.

Stalwarts of the wedding, tourism, and the hospitality industry, including **Hemant Mendiratta**, Senior Vice President-Sales, The Oberoi Hotels; **Saurabh Bhargava**, AVP Sales-North, Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris; **Hema Hariramani**, Director, National Sales-India, Marriott International; **Rajeev Jain**, Vice President and Treasurer, EEMA and **Vinod Bhandari**, Partner, Wedding Xtraordinaire, graced the show with their presence and addressed the different challenges faced by these industries, in a panel discussion.

Sarika Bhambani Rawal, Vice President, Travel Wedding Show, said, "The show made headway in connecting the right partners to take the industry forward. According to the feedback received, the buyers and exhibitors found the show very fruitful for their business and the connections they built at the show are seeds for their progress."

movements



Samir MC
Managing Director
Fortune Park Hotels

Fortune Park Hotels has appointed Samir MC as its Managing Director. With full responsibility for the leadership and development of Fortune Hotels, he will play a key role in meeting the company's aggressive growth objectives as well as building on the brand's outstanding reputation of providing efficient service to customers and promoters. Prior to joining Fortune Hotels, he has worked with the InterContinental Hotels Group for 22 years in operational and leadership roles at various locations in India, Southeast Asia, and Korea.



Romil Pant
Senior Vice President, Leisure -
Domestic & International
Thomas Cook (India)

Thomas Cook (India) has appointed Romil Pant as Senior Vice President for its leisure business, both domestic and international. Pant comes with 21 years of experience in sales, marketing and product management, operations and credit management across sectors, including telecom, financial services, and travel. In this role, Pant will provide leadership and functional expertise to drive productivity and results across the company's leisure business. He has previously worked with MakeMyTrip, Capital First, HSBC, Citi Financial, and Essar cell phones.



Jayakrishna Bhaskaran
Manager - Key Accounts &
OTAs (India)
Oman Air

Oman Air has appointed Jayakrishna Bhaskaran as Manager - Key Accounts & OTAs for its India operations. He will be working with the current 11 India station teams of the airline to ensure maximum growth and contribution. Bhaskaran has been with Oman Air for eight years and was the District Sales Manager in Chennai and Kochi prior to this new assignment. With an experience of 21 years in the international airline passenger domain, he has worked with airlines including KLM, Northwest, United, Kingfisher, and Kuwait Airways.



Bandish Mehta
General Manager
Novotel Hyderabad
Convention Centre & HICC

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC have appointed Bandish Mehta as the new General Manager. He brings with him over 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry. Mehta has held multiple roles for over 19 years with the AccorHotels Group across Asia Pacific. Being a proficient hospitality professional, he has expertise and valuable insights on augmenting brand standards for the company. In his new leadership position, Mehta will be responsible for spearheading operations at this dual property. He will be in command for accomplishing corporate objectives, and developing procedures and service standards.



Vinay Singh
DoSM, Renaissance Mumbai
Convention Centre Hotel &
Marriott Executive Apartments

Vinay Singh has been appointed as the Director of Sales & Marketing for Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel and Lakeside Chalet, Mumbai - Marriott Executive Apartments. In this new role, Singh will be responsible for spearheading the marketing and sales function of both the hotels. Prior to this, he was associated with the St. Regis as the Director of Sales & Marketing. He has also worked with The Westin Mumbai Garden City, Hilton Worldwide, Le Méridien Mumbai, and The Orchid Mumbai.



Himanshu Kumar
Director of Revenue
DoubleTree by Hilton
Hotel Pune - Chinchwad

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pune, Chinchwad, has appointed Himanshu Kumar as the Director of Revenue. Kumar has an experience of 17 years, primarily in the hospitality sector, and has worked with various international brands, including Crowne Plaza - Bahrain, Fraser Suites - Dubai, Oakwood Asia Pacific, InterContinental Hotels Group, and Marriott International. In his current role at DoubleTree by Hilton Pune, Kumar will be responsible for consolidating the hotel's RevPAR, positioning and driving innovative strategies.

MEET AND STAY IN THE HEART OF ORCHARD ROAD



Mandarin Orchard Singapore has been a landmark of Asian hospitality on Orchard Road since 1971, preferred by discerning international travellers for its service excellence and prime location in the heart of Singapore's most prominent shopping district.

The hotel boasts some 1,077 spacious guest rooms and suites distributed across two towers, and offers panoramic views of the city skyline from higher floors. All rooms are equipped with advance in-room technologies including a smartphone solution that provides registered hotel guests complimentary local and international calls, as well as access to unlimited 4G data throughout their stay. Guests can also enjoy the latest blockbuster movies through the hotel's complimentary in-room movie platform.

Leading the hotel's award-winning lineup of food and beverage outlets is the all-time favourite *Chatterbox*, home of the legendary

Mandarin Chicken Rice; and *Shisen Hanten* by *Chen Kentaro* which was awarded two stars in the Michelin Guide Singapore 2016 and 2017, making it the highest Michelin-rated Chinese restaurant island-wide.

Mandarin Orchard Singapore offers over 30,000 square feet of versatile meeting spaces featuring state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, intelligent lighting system, and efficient connectivity. New meeting suites were completed at both towers of the hotel, allowing it to attract and cater to a wider range of banquet and conference requirements.

For travellers seeking bespoke business amenities, Mandarin Orchard Singapore offers an executive club lounge facility, *Meritus Club Lounge at Top of the M*. Other facilities in the hotel include an outdoor swimming pool, a fitness centre, a tennis court, and a medical clinic.

True to the brand's signature Asian hospitality, a dedicated Meetings and Events team is on hand every step of the way to ensure that attention is paid to the finest detail in delivering a successful Meritus Meeting Experience.

In 2017, Mandarin Orchard Singapore scored its sixth win as Best City Hotel—Singapore for the sixth year at the 28th Annual TTG Travel Awards, Asia-Pacific's most prestigious annual travel industry awards honouring the best organisations and individuals in the industry for their outstanding achievements and contributions. The hotel was also named Best Upscale Hotel—Singapore at the Travel Weekly Asia Readers' Choice Awards.

For more information on Mandarin Orchard Singapore or to plan your next meeting, visit www.meritushotels.com/orchard.



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