



VACATION INDUSTRY AND CUSTOM BOARD – an overview

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Abstract

Defining tourism is not a simple matter, as it is a complex industry of many different businesses, the common theme being that they provide products and services to tourists. Tourism is a rapidly growing industry across the globe. The tourism industry has become a significant part of the global economy, with many people traveling to different countries and becoming more interested in visiting new locations. Tourism is the largest and fastest-growing industry in the world. It is a source of revenue and employment. It also gives the opportunity for people to understand the culture, civilization, and religious aspects of a country. There are many countries whose main source of revenue is Tourism. It creates good bonding among people of different languages and cultures. It also paves the way to understand and explore an unknown place's rich heritage and ancient history. World tourism organization played a significant role in promoting tourism. When people make travel plans and visit different places, they contribute directly or indirectly towards the livelihood of millions who work in this industry. To protect, heritage places are the important duty of our Government. These heritage monuments reflect our culture and society of the people.

Keywords: Tourism, culture, languages, rich heritage, livelihood, government

Every day all over the world, innumerable people make their travel plans for a pleasure or business-related trip. The trip may be of a short or long duration, for the forthcoming weekend, or for a longer holiday sometime during the coming year. Visas are applied for, flights are reserved, accommodation is booked, cars are rented, train tickets are purchased, itineraries are planned, and the World Wide Web is surfed for travel-related information and availability of seats. Thousands of people are working round-the-clock to provide these services and interact with the traveler, while another couple of thousands working behind the scenes to help the traveler have a safe and memorable holiday.

The International Dictionary of Tourism, published in 1953 by the International Academy of Tourism at Monte Carlo, points out that tour in English and in French means a journey, a trip. The nineteenth-century dictionary defines a tourist as “people who travel for the pleasure of traveling, out of curiosity; and because they have nothing better to do and even for the joy of boasting about it afterward”

The International Union of Official Travel Organization, now called the World Tourism Organization (WTO), has defined a tourist as a temporary visitor staying for at least twenty-four hours in a country visited when the purpose of the journey can be classified under one of the following headings:

- (a) leisure recreation, holiday, health, study, religion, and sports;
- (b) business, family, and mission meetings. Travelers staying less than twenty-four hours according to WTO are ‘excursionists’. The United Nations accepted the above definition of a tourist provided by IUOTO in their Conference on International Travel and Tourism in 1963.

Tourism industry

Tourism is one of the leading economic sectors in the world and represents a major source of income, employment, exports, and taxes. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2011 the tourism sector (domestic and international) contributed almost 5992 billion USD to the global economy. With confirmed strong linkage effects, the tourism industry also provides almost 260 million job opportunities, accounting for nearly 9% of global employment. In addition, according to the World Bank Carbon Finance Unit (CFU), the tourism sector is relatively eco-friendly compared to the manufacturing sector and has led to more sustainable development. Therefore, many countries are emphasizing the development of tourism to drive their ‘green’ economic growth. Arrangements of services such as travel, accommodation, and food with ease and comfort helps in attracting repeat visitors and providing effective publicity by word of mouth. Tourism in the past was regarded as a religious or leisure activity. Now, improved connectivity, quality roads, and easy access to tourist attractions, booking, etc. have made travel easier. The monotony of work, stressful lifestyle, and desire to explore new places have necessitated travel and tourism. The free trade and OpenSky aviation policies have also contributed to tourism growth. The pace of growth in recent times has left the infrastructural facilities and availability of human resources lagging behind, thereby leaving a challenge to match the growth and have futuristic and prospective plans in place.

Tourism Heritage Sites

1. Angkor Wat, Cambodia

Angkor Wat is the world’s largest religious monument and it contains impressive remains from the 9th – 15th century Khmer Empire. Hosting more than two million visitors a year, this artistic masterpiece is one of the most-visited historical sites in the world.

2. Taj Mahal, India

One of the most renowned attractions in the world, this ivory-white mausoleum was commissioned by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan to hold the tomb of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It’s a great symbol of India’s history and you’ll experience Mughal architecture at its finest when you visit the Taj Mahal.

3. Great Barrier Reef, Australia

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the most colorful places on Earth and the planet’s largest coral reef system. This fascinating system is home to 400 kinds of coral, more than 900 islands, more than 2,000 types of plants, and even some endangered species of marine life like the sea cow. Stretching around 133,000 square miles, the massive Great Barrier Reef can even be seen from outer space.

4. Great Wall, China

Stretching almost 13,171 miles, more than ten million people visit the Great Wall of China every year. Building began in the 3rd century BC, and by the time it was finished in the 17th century AD, it was the largest military structure in the world and had great architectural and historic importance.

5. Vatican City

The world's smallest country has huge significance. Not only is the Catholic holy city home to the pope, but it also houses countless pieces of prized art and many years of great history. Baroque and Renaissance art and architecture characterize Vatican City and are displayed perfectly at one of the world's largest religious buildings, St. Peter's Basilica.

Challenges in Tourism

In spite of numerous factors listed above favoring tourism development, there is some that act as barriers to travel. These fall into the following categories:

Cost: People are subjected to monetary restraints and cannot afford the expense of travel. According to a study on the subject, in the United States alone, over fifty percent of people cannot undertake holiday travel due to high costs. In India, it is 90%.

Time: This is characteristic of those who are not in a position to leave their business or profession to take time off from work.

Health: Many people, especially old people, cannot travel due to poor health and physical limitations. **Family:** Parents of small children are not in a position to travel due to the family responsibilities and inconveniences of travel.

Lack of interest: Ignorance and lack of information about other places and other people can be a major barrier to travel.

Tourism is seen as an engine of development, a catalyst for the economic prosperity of a country. Tourism refreshes the mind, brings happiness, relaxation, and enjoyment, and gives new experiences to the tourists. Tourism ensures an all-round growth through an economic multiplier effect which percolates to various stake-holding sectors like the airlines, railways, surface transport, cruises, hotels, telecommunication, etc. Apart from generating direct employment, its indirect effect ensures inclusive growth of the local community. From a service sector, tourism has emerged as a leading export industry like the Gems and Jewellery Industry, InformationTechnology, and Engineering Products. Therefore, priority is accorded by both Central and state governments to give a major fillip to the tourism sector. A new thrust is being given to providing tourist infrastructure of international standard and marketing of destinations.

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