

**A REPORT ON INTERNSHIP TRAINING HELD AT SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS,
TRIVANDRUM FROM 21st AUGUST 2017 – 20th SEPTEMBER 2017**

Submitted To :

**The University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the
Degree of Bachelor of Commerce (Tourism & Travel Management)**

Submitted By :

Name	Register Number
Adarsh C	338 15 171 001
Arya Unnikrishnan	338 15 171 004
Vishnu S	338 15 171 015
Anju Raju	338 15 171 018
Daniya Dominic	338 15 171 023



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
MAR IVANIOS COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
MAVELIKARA
2015 – 2018**

UNIVERSITY OF KERALA
MAR IVANIOS COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
MAVELIKARA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this report on the internship training held at SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS, TRIVANDRUM is a bonafide record of work done by Adarsh C (338 15 171 001), Arya Unnikrishnan (338 15 171 004), Vishnu S (338 15 171 015), Anju Raju (338 15 171 018), Daniya Dominic (338 15 171 023) in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree in Bachelor of Commerce(Tourism & Travel Management), of the University of Kerala.

Dr. K C Mathai

Principal

Mavelikara

29/01/2018

Dr. Abraham Punnoose

HOD Of Commerce

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Adarsh C	338 15 171 001
Arya Unnikrishnan	338 15 171 004
Vishnu S	338 15 171 015
Anju Raju	338 15 171 018
Daniya Dominic	338 15 171 023

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this report is a bonafide work done by us in SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS, Trivandrum from 21st August 2017 to 20th September 2017, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Commerce (Tourism & Travel Management), of the University of Kerala. The findings in this report are based on the internship training done by us and are not reproduced from any other source.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

A travel agency is a private retailer or public service that provides travel and tourism related services to the public on behalf of suppliers such as activities, airlines, car rentals, cruise lines, hotels, railways, travel insurance, and package tours. In addition to dealing with ordinary tourists most travel agencies have a separate department devoted to making travel arrangements for business travelers and some travel agencies specialize in commercial and business travel only. There are also travel agencies that serve as general sales agents for foreign travel companies, allowing them to have offices in countries other than where their headquarters are located. A travel agency's main function is to act as an agent, selling travel products and services on behalf of a supplier. Consequently, unlike other retail businesses, they do not keep a stock in hand. A package holiday or a ticket is not purchased from a supplier unless a customer requests that purchase. The holiday or ticket is supplied to them at a discount. The profit is therefore the difference between the advertised price which it is supplied to the agent. This is known as the commission. A travel agent is supposed to offer impartial travel advice to the customer. There are two approaches of travel agencies. One is the traditional, multi-destination, outbound travel agency, based in the originating location of the traveller and the other is the destination focused, inbound travel agency, that is based in the destination and delivers an expertise on that location.

Origins

The British company Cox & Kings is sometimes said to be the oldest travel agency in the world, but this rests upon the services that the original bank, established in 1758, supplied to its wealthy clients. The modern travel agency first appeared in the second half of the 19th century. Thomas Cook, in addition to developing the package tour, established a chain of agencies in the last quarter of the 19th century, in association with the Midland Railway. They not only sold their own tours to the public, but in addition, represented other tour companies. Other British pioneer travel agencies were Dean & Dawson, the Polytechnic Touring Association, and the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The oldest travel agency in the United States is Brownell Travel; on 4 July 1887, Walter T. Brownell led ten travelers on a European tour, setting sail from New York on the SS Devonia.

As the part of our curriculum we got an opportunity to do an internship programme in SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS, Trivandrum for a period of one month.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know about travel agency functions
- To know about travel agency organization structure
- To study the various departments in a travel agency; their structure, duties and responsibilities
- To know about the marketing and production process in a travel agency
- To know the travel agency facilities and different types of services
- To understand the significance of travel agency and tour operation business
- To know the current trends and practices in the tourism and travel trade sector
- To develop adequate knowledge and skills applicable to travel industry.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(a) Primary data

- Interview
- Face to face conversation
- Customer interaction
- Destination study

(b) Secondary data

- Brochures
- Itineraries
- Website

LIMITATIONS

- Insufficient information in websites
- Less availability of facilities
- Less availability of information about SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS
- Lack of divisional activities In department.

Chapter 2

AN OVERVIEW OF TOURISM BUSINESS INDUSTRY

Tourism is travel for recreation, leisure, religious, family or business purpose usually for a limited duration. Tourism is commonly associated with international travel but may also be referred to as travel to another place within the same country. Tourism is an important, even vital source of income for many countries. It brings in a large amount of income into the local economy in the form of payment for goods and services needed by tourists. There are a number of benefits of tourism for both the tourist and host destination. Tourism helps to create jobs in many different areas like hotels, car rental agencies, tour companies etc.

There is a vast scope of tourism. It is considered as one sector that shall propel growth, contribute foreign exchange, enhance employability and result in community development. The government should encourage private enterprises to promote tourism in various less popular areas. For developing tourism in such areas we need to understand environment, demography, socio-culture, economic and political background for any place for making it an attractive tourism spot.

The tourism phenomenon has attracted almost the entire world. It is not only the economic compulsion to earn foreign exchange, but a sense of social obligation that makes for a sound tourism policy. The tourism industry has taken rapid strides in the recent years as an instrument of all-round economic growth. The wide-ranging achievements in this field have led to a marked improvement in general standard of living. Being a service industry, it creates employment opportunities for the local population. It is a major source of income and employment for individuals in many places deficient in natural resources which cannot readily contribute to the economic prosperity of the local people except through the medium of tourism. Tourism has become a significant factor in redressing regional imbalances in employment and income. This aspect of provision of more employment becomes more important in a developing country where the level of unemployment and underemployment tends to be high. It is also a major source of foreign exchange earnings. It can help to correct adverse trade balance and regional imbalances. It has the advantage of being a painless mechanism for transfer of resources from the high-income developed countries to the low-income developing countries. In economic terms, tourism is both a labor-intensive and capital-intensive industry. It has a vast potential for employment, direct and indirect. The employment generation by tourism development assumes special significance in the present conditions prevailing in India. If properly developed, it can be an effective vehicle for promotion of growth and development of different regions. It gives a direct stimulus to socio-economic development of various parts of the country.

Chapter 3

DETAILS ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS

SOTC Travel Services Pvt Ltd (Formerly known as Kuoni Travel (India) Pvt. Ltd.) is a step-down subsidiary of Fairfax Financial Holdings Group; held through two companies, its Indian listed subsidiary, Thomas Cook (India) Limited (TCIL) and TCIL's subsidiary Travel Corporation (India) Ltd.^[1] Established in 1949, it is a travel and tourism company active across travel segments like Leisure Travel, Business Travel, Destination Management Services and Distribution Visa Marketing Service.

They reckon travelling as an experience in itself hence should be easy and hassle free and so they provide end to end travel services. They are the one stop solution for all travel requirements like air tickets, visa, travel insurance, for-ex and car rentals. They offer customized services as per the need like airport assistance, self-booking tools and many such automated travel solutions. They constantly strive to make travelling a one-of-a-kind experience for you and our completely automated travel solutions are just the thing you need.

The turnaround time and deadlines are critical while dealing with travellers. Delivering the perfect solution to the ever changing needs of our clients is our ultimate goal. Our glorious number of clients and their testimonies can testify to that.

MANAGEMENT

SOTC Travel Limited (Formerly SOTC Travel Pvt. Ltd.) is a step-down subsidiary of Fairfax Financial Holdings Group; held through its Indian listed subsidiary, Thomas Cook (India) Limited (TCIL). SOTC India is a leading travel and tourism company active across various travel segments including Leisure Travel, Incentive Travel and Business Travel.

SOTC was established in 1949. Since then, it has escorted lakhs of travelers across the globe for more than 68 years to various destinations around the world. It is one of the leaders in segments, namely Escorted Group Tours, Customized Holidays, Holidays of India and Incentive Travel amongst others. SOTC's customer focus, innovation and operational excellence has not only tapped the existing market potential but has also created new markets through innovative packages. Its vast array of holiday services is taking holidaying to an entirely new level. A new age innovative holiday maker, SOTC strives to make holidays a priority for every Indian. 'We are for holidays' and we want Indians to prioritize their holidays.

SOTC has been the pioneer in the development of organized leisure travel in the Outbound and Domestic division. Its leisure segment includes offerings namely, Escorted Group Tours, Customized Holidays, Luxury Holidays and Holidays of India. With its extensive and continuously expanding network of sales offices across India, the leisure business has been undertaking path-breaking initiatives to reach out to travelers through innovative products. It has pioneered the concept of one day road shows named Holiday Bazaars that promote international and domestic escorted and group tours in India that endeavor to bring to life our customers dream holidays. Recognizing the importance of language markets, SOTC also pioneered tours conducted in Marathi and Gujarati under the SOTC brand extensions: SOTC Brahman Mandal and SOTC Gurjar Vishwadarshan. The company is an innovator in introducing the co-created initiative in the Leisure Holiday Space. The co-created initiative is a platform which invites customers to spell out their most important expectations from a Holiday so as to enhance and deliver an enriching holiday experience.

SOTC also organizes tours for Non Resident Indians (NRIs) in the US, the UK, the Middle East and Africa.

BRANCHES

There are 22 branches for SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS in India, and they are;

- Delhi – NCR
- Punjab
- Jammu & Kashmir
- Haryana
- Rajasthan
- Karnataka
- Tamilnadu
- Kerala
- Andhra Pradesh
- Telangana
- Gujarat
- Maharashtra
- Goa
- Madhya Pradesh
- Chattisgarh
- West Bengal
- Orissa
- Bihar
- Jharkhand
- Assam

In Kerala, there are for branches for SOTC FOR HOLIDAYS;

- Trivandrum
- Cochin
- Kannur
- Kozhikode

DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR FUNCTION

1. Group Inclusive Travel (GIT)

A travel across India is a rich cultural experience like no other. Touring with a group is a different experience altogether where the travellers get to not only meet new people and but also talk about the culture and traditions that come across as move around in different cities and towns, across the country. Group holidays offer a never before experience where you learn about spectacular monuments and fascinating history and captivating stories that never cease to astound the travellers.

SOTC's GIT packages include:

International Holidays & Tours

Most of the **International tour packages** include return flights, hotel accommodation, meals, sightseeing and the guidance & expertise of the tour experts. The GIT packages of **International tour** to the United States of America (USA), Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia or a New Zealand tour package, the travellers bound to enrich their life by getting acquainted with the people living there, by appreciating different culture, by getting spell-bound with the sheer beauty of natural and manmade creations Bolstered by the wave of positivity unleashed by the new global travellers.

India Holidays & Vacation Packages

tourism in India apart from other countries; it's diversified culture, and the variety of food also makes it one-of-a-kind holiday destination. From breath-taking hill stations in North and South India and gripping waterfalls like Dhuandhar Falls in Jabalpur and Athirappilly Falls in Kerala, to rich heritage culture in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, India tourism offers a unique taste of travel and varied experiences. It is one country that would never disappoint and cease to amaze the visitors.

The mystic beauty and vibrant cultures of tourism in India attract not just the local travellers; tourist places in India are popular amongst foreign tourists as well. Every tourist loves to visit Kerala, Goa, Himachal, and Andaman.

Places like Kerala and Andaman are on the bucket lists of many travellers, and that's the reason Kerala packages, and Andaman tour packages are a hit among people. Ladakh is another destination which is becoming popular amongst the tourists, especially the fearless travellers who love road trips. Apart from the breath-taking views and striking beauty of the place, the distinct Buddhist culture is one of the highlights of the place monks. On the pristine beaches and indulge in lush green coffee plantations, Kerala can be a great holiday choice. Other popular **India tour packages** include the most recommended India holiday destinations like Himachal, Goa, Kashmir, and North-East.

Honeymoon Packages

Honeymoon packages for France will acquaint you with the gorgeous and varied landscapes, warm people and influential culture and history. And of course, the starry-eyed experience of Eiffel Tower – the epitome of love!

. The beautiful islands of Phi Phi and beach resorts of Maldives are just so perfect for newly-wed couples longing to be with each other in a romantic seclusion. The crystal clear waters and white sand beaches of Mauritius can take your romance quotient to another level. Couple looking for an exotic yet budget destination can undoubtedly go for destinations like Ladakh, Bhutan and Kashmir. The **romantic tour packages** to these Indian destinations offer an exotic experience to couples looking for a soothing place to relax their mind, body and soul.

2. Free Independent Travel (FIT)

Individual travel in which a tour operator has previously arranged blocks of rooms at various destinations in advance for use by individual travellers. These travellers travel independently, not in a group, usually by rental car or public transportation.

SOTC's FIT packages include :

➤ **Glimpses of Ireland**

Glimpses of Ireland is a 4Nights/ 5Days package. The destinations cover Dublin and Belfast.

➤ **Russian Wonders**

Russian Wonders is a 5Nights/ 6 Days package. This package cover Moscow and St. Peter'S burg.

1. Darshans

Darshans, a selection of specially designed religious and spiritual experiences across 50 destinations in India. Reach out to us for a hassle – free religious experience and embark on a journey of self – discovery across the divine facet of India. Temple visits and darshans will be arranged through a local person. The rituals such as Abhisheka / Homam will be performed by the local temple priests as per prevailing practices.

Operations and Functions

1. Ticketing

Selling tickets to clients using different modes of transport like air, rail and sea is the most important function of a travel agency. This calls for a thorough knowledge of schedule of various modes of transport. Air carriers, railways and steamship companies have hundreds of schedules and the man behind the counter should be conversant with all these. Computerized reservation system has in the recent years rather revolutionized the reservation system both for air and rail travel. .

2. Preparation of Itineraries:

Tourist itinerary is a composition of a series of operations that are a result of the study of the market. A tourist journey is characterized by an itinerary using various means of transport to link one location with another. Preparation of different types of itineraries is another important function of a travel agency. A travel agency gives advice to intending travellers on the type of programmes which they may choose for their holiday or business travel.

3. Liaison with Providers of Services

Before any form of travel can be sold over the counter to a customer, contracts have to be entered into with the providers of various services. These include transportation companies, hotel proprietors, providers of surface transport like motor cars or coaches for transfers to and from hotels and for sightseeingetc, and also for general servicing requirements.

4. +Planning and Costing Tours

After the contracts and arrangements having being entered into, there comes the task of planning and costing the tours, both for inclusive programs and to meet individual requirements. The job is equally interesting and challenging.

5. Reservation of Hotel Rooms

The Computer Reservation System (CRS) or the Global Distribution Systems have enhanced the simplifications of reservation of hotel rooms. Hotels put up all the necessary information in advance on their web pages. It includes type of hotel, room, facilities and services, meal plans, tariff and seasonal offers. It gives wider options to customers to search, compare, chose and finally book a room of their choice. Online booking can be done with the online transfer of payments through internet banking or debit/credit cards upon the arrivals.

6. Travel Documentations

Travel documentations are processed for international package tours. Travel documents include processing of passport, visa and health certificate along with currency endorsements before the commencement of tours. The most important task is to follow the issue of visa from Consulate Offices Health certificates, vaccination, insurance, foreign currency and restricted area permits are also processed much before the commencement of tour. All these formalities are managed by travel agencies and tour operators to help customers or member and travel comfortably.

7. Currency Exchange

All outbound and inbound tours need authorization from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to do the transactions of receiving and paying through different foreign currencies like US Dollar, UK Pound, Euro, etc. These foreign exchange dealers are governed as per the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). A minimum commission is charged to customers as per RBI rules

8. Immigration related services

It is true that both immigration and emigration are controlled by different laws of the land. Bureau of Immigration (BoI) was setup in 1971 by Government of India to undertake Immigration function in the country. BoI is headed by Commissioner of Immigration for immigration facilitation service at airports and work relating to registration of foreigners under various Acts and Rules. Altogether, there are 86 Immigration Check Posts all over India, catering to international traffic. To strengthen the Immigration system, a modernization programme viz. Mission Mode Project on Immigration, Visa Foreigners' Registration and Tracking (IVFRT) has been undertaken Under the project, all the Indian Missions, Immigration Check posts (ICPs), offices are being computerized and networked to develop a secure and integrated delivery framework to facilitate legitimate travelers.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

- Wide opportunity for the tourism students
- Effective coordination between other organizations
- Good coordination with each department
- Providing good services
- Technical problems run over in each day
- Attractive new packages are prepared according to current trends
- Good working environment
- Provision of inbound, outbound tourism and MICE tourism activities

SUGGESTIONS

- Lack of tourism professionals
- Must create good linkages and effectively make the commissions
- To motivate and give complimentary trip for the employees
- To provide and improve the facilities they already have
- Facilities can be increased
- Must include more facilities for new guests
- Facilities can be increased
- Appropriately recruit employees
- To improve the quality services
- Must build up employees work coordination

CONCLUSION

The Travel Agent Service Industry is undergoing substantial change as a result of environmental and technological changes. Internet usage was the main issue identified in relation to trends and practices that are currently occurring within the industry. The issue, however, is closely linked to the issues of distribution and service. The internet has enhanced the distribution of travel-related content, pricing information and travel planning tools for consumers. In enhancing the empowerment of consumers to conduct their own research, as well as to plan and book their own travel, it has also created transparency, which has resulted in more price-sensitive travelers. The internet also provides travelers with increased options due to the growing number of sites available and the information and services offered. However, it is unsustainable for agents to continue to compete on price. It is important to note that, although the study found a general trend towards the uptake of online bookings, travel agencies still remain the most popular mode of booking overseas travel. Nevertheless, the internet, whether perceived as a threat or a benefit, plays a pivotal role in the distribution and provision of services. The recommendations put forward throughout this report are, therefore, also a reflection of the need to broaden the research parameters beyond the confines of internet usage and more specifically within different markets.

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