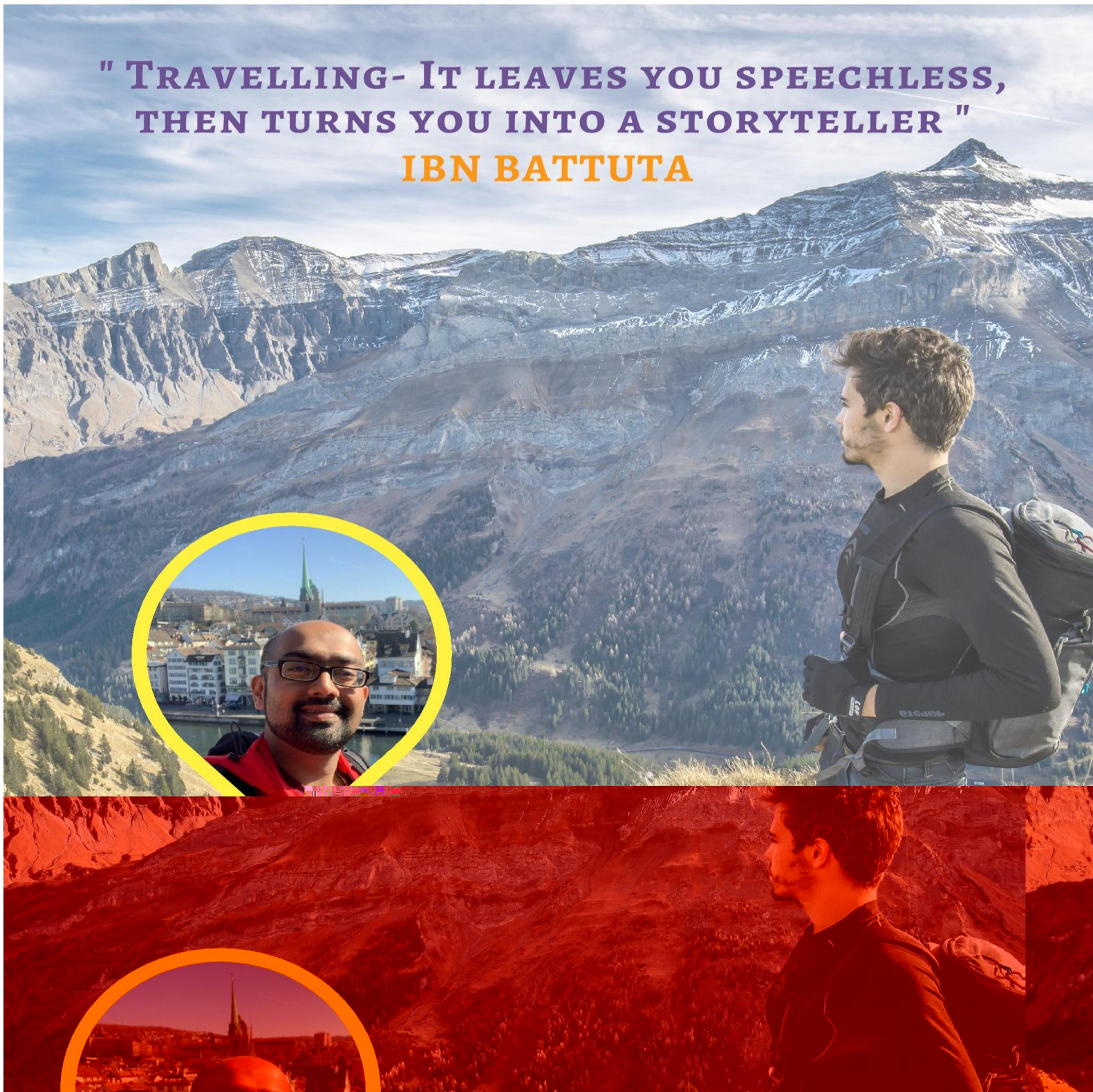# TOURISM INDUSTRY

" TRAVELLING- IT LEAVES YOU SPEECHLESS, THEN TURNS YOU INTO A STORYTELLER "
**IBN BATTUTA**

# ABOUT US



## OUR VISION

**"To nurture thought leaders and practitioners through inventive education"**

## CORE VALUES

**Breakthrough Thinking and Breakthrough Execution**

**Result Oriented, Process Driven Work Ethic**

**We Link and Care**

**Passion**

*"The illiterate of this century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."* - Alvin Toffler

At WeSchool, we are deeply inspired by the words of this great American writer and futurist. Undoubtedly, being convinced of the need for a radical change in management education, we decided to tread the path that leads to corporate revolution.

Emerging unarticulated needs and realities require a new approach both in terms of thought as well as action. Cross-disciplinary learning, discovering, scrutinizing, prototyping, learning to create and destroy the mind's eye needs to be nurtured and differently so.

We school has chosen the 'design thinking' approach towards management education. All our efforts and manifestations as a result stem from the integration of design thinking into management education. We dream to create an environment conducive to experiential learning.

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

It gives me great pride to introduce SAMVAD's edition every month. Our SAMVAD team's efforts seem to be paying off and our readers seem to be hooked onto our magazine. At WeSchool we try to acquire as much knowledge as we can and we try and share it with everyone.

**Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe**
**Group Director**

As we begin a new journey with 2019, I sincerely hope that SAMVAD will reach new heights with the unmatched enthusiasm and talent of the entire team.

Here at WeSchool, we believe in the concept of AAA: Acquire Apply and Assimilate. The knowledge that you have acquired over the last couple of months will be applied somewhere down the line. When you carry out a process repeatedly it becomes ingrained in you and eventually tends to come out effortlessly. This is when you have really assimilated all the knowledge that you have gathered.

At WeSchool, we aspire to be the best and to be unique, and we expect nothing but the extraordinary from all those who join our college. From the point of view of our magazine, we look forward to having more readers and having more contributions from our new readers.

SAMVAD is a platform to share and acquire knowledge and develop ourselves into integrative managers. It is our earnest desire to disseminate our knowledge and experience with not only WeSchool students, but also the society at large.

**Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe,**
Group Director

# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the October Issue of SAMVAD for the year 2020!

SAMVAD is a platform for "*Inspiring Futuristic Ideas*" and we constantly strive to provide articles that are thought provoking and that add value to your management education.

With courses pertaining to all spheres of management at WeSchool, we too aspire to represent every industry by bringing you different themes every month. We have an audacious goal of becoming the most coveted business magazine for B-school students across the country. To help this dream become a reality we invite articles from all spheres of management giving a holistic view and bridge the gap between industry veterans and students through our WeChat section.

The response to SAMVAD has been overwhelming and the support and appreciation that we have received has truly encouraged and motivated us to work towards bringing out a better magazine every month.

We bring to you the October Issue of SAMVAD which focuses on "**Tourism Industry**".

Ah, Travelling and Tourism! No one can deny the importance of this activity in our lives! Since we have all been cooped up in our houses for more than just a couple months, this industry has taken the biggest hit with the repercussions being witnessed worldwide.

So, dear readers, our Edition of October 2020 is an ode to Tourism and everything you need to know about how management impacts, shapes and drives this industry even through an apocalyptic pandemic like COVID-19.

We hope you read, share and grow with us!

Hope you have a great time reading SAMVAD!


Best Wishes,

Team SAMVAD.

# WECHAT

## Mr. Ameya Kamath
## Business Development Manager - Leisure, Switzerland Tourism

*Team SAMVAD*

**1). Could you please take us through your journey from being a Welingkarite to date?**

**Ans:** I was part of the 2009-2011 PGDM Business Design batch at Welingkar. My time there was extremely interesting as well as an enriching experience. I learned a lot both in class as well as outside. We had great faculty teaching and guiding us. Some of the projects/assignments that I took up during the course gave me great insights into many aspects of management as well. Welingkar provided me with that holistic learning opportunity.

I was always inclined towards marketing and advertising, so when it was time for placements in 2011, I managed to secure a job at the Times Television Network. I was part of the ad sales and branded content team for Zoom TV, which was India's leading Bollywood channel at the time. The objective was to maximize revenue for the channel through ad sales and innovative customized content and brand solutions for clients that went beyond the scope of vanilla advertising.

Post Zoom, I joined NDTV Good Times in 2012, which was a well-known lifestyle channel, followed by Star TV in 2015, which was my final stint in media for the time being. At Star TV, I worked in sales and handled the English channels under the network's umbrella like Star Movies, Star World, National Geographic Channel and Fox Life.

Throughout my tenure in Media, I have worked with amazing clients across different spheres such as FMCG, food and beverage, automobile, jewelry, home décor and of course, travel and tourism!

Working with various Tourism Boards and interacting with them gave me a great perspective on the industry and the kind of work that they do to market their respective destinations to the Indian audience. So, when I finally got the opportunity to join Switzerland Tourism in 2017, I could not let it pass.

I currently work with Switzerland Tourism as a Business Development Manager for leisure travel. I work at a B2B level, i.e., with the Indian travel trade (travel agents, tour operators, online travel agencies, etc.), to promote Switzerland as the ideal travel destination for their clients in India. Working closely with the travel trade is important as it helps to keep them and their clients updated with the latest news and information about Switzerland and its various tourism products and services. We use a wide variety of tools such as sales calls, workshops, roadshows, training programs, webinars, etc., to highlight our communication.

**2). What, according to you, are the major forces shaping the tourism industry?**

**Ans:** The only constant in the tourism industry is the need for travel.

In an article published by Business Standard, over 74 million Indians have passports. Indians can enter around 50 countries with free visa or visa on arrival. The potential for tourism from the market is immense.

The industry dynamics are changing rapidly.

Thanks to easy access to information via the internet, travellers are more aware and are well researched. Whether it's domestic or international travel, travellers want to explore new destinations and have unique experiences. Mono-destination itineraries are therefore gaining popularity along with experiences and activities such as adventure sports, culinary trails, self-drive, hiking and biking, etc.

Travel is not only restricted to the big cities and metros but thanks to a rise in disposable income, you see a lot of travellers coming from smaller cities as well. India's 350 million youth and fast-growing middle-class population are travelling too. In fact, according to a report compiled by Pickyourtrail (one of Chennai's leading online travel companies) in 2018, the Indian youth love to travel abroad, resulting in a 25% year-on-year growth in the leisure travel segment.

Indians are willing to spend on travel. According to an article published in the Times of India on 24th April 2017 revealed that as of FY 17, India's remittances overseas towards travel have increased 3.6 times to $2.3 billion.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWO), the average travel spend by Indian travellers is approximately $2334 against APAC's $1677 & US's $700, thereby making Indian travellers one of the highest spenders in the world.

The continuous rise of popularity of Social Media has also created a major aspiration within Indians and influenced them to travel. Social Media is a great tool to market travel and destinations to potential travellers and create that need in them. Everybody wants to travel and put up pictures and stories for their followers to see.

**3). In your opinion, how has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted the tourism industry?**

**Ans:** Unfortunately, the tourism industry was one of the first ones to get impacted by the global pandemic as countries closed their borders and restricted inbound and outbound travel to curb the spread of the virus.

Various guidelines and rules coupled with quarantine measures were put in place making travel difficult not only internationally, but domestically as well. This had a significant impact on providers of various tourism products and destinations that are economically dependent on tourism.

However, this has not dented peoples' inclination to travel. People are very keen to travel, and with restrictions slowly being lifted for domestic tourism, there is some traction being seen and the industry is slowly beginning to restart.

The industry is adapting to the new normal and looking towards post-Covid recovery. People have begun traveling locally but are being cautious. A large emphasis is being laid on health, safety, hygiene and sanitation.

**4). How have digitization and emerging technologies impacted this industry? Also, we have seen a rise in the adoption of virtual tourism in the last few months. Do you feel Virtual tourism is here to stay after the pandemic?**

**Ans:** Digitization has enabled information to be accessed very easily, keeping the industry attuned to the latest trends, new products, etc. Travel agents use this information to cater to their clients.

The tourism providers can understand what travellers want and tweak their offerings accordingly. The travellers can easily learn about new destinations and offerings. Digitization has

ensured that information is flowing and getting updated constantly.

Technologies such as online booking portals (MakeMyTrip.com, EaseMyTrip.com, PickYourTrail.com, etc.) or AirBnB, Vista Rooms, etc. are being used by travellers to book and customize their holidays as per their requirements. The convenience of not only accessing information with a click but also ease of booking, has made these platforms quite popular and frequently used by travellers.

In today's digital-savvy world, the best way to reach out to travellers is through digital marketing or social media. Brands, products as well as destinations can be easily highlighted through mediums such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. One can engage with travellers / customers through these mediums learn about the latest trends as well as put forth the brand's communication in a seamless manner.

Also, post-Covid-19, there will be a strong need for technology as travellers will want to make their experiences as contactless as possible.

With regards to Virtual tours, they are a great promotional tool. They can be used as great visual representations of the actual destination and its various travel products and services. But, in my opinion, nothing beats the excitement of actually experiencing a destination in person!

### 5). How do you think domestic tourism will increase in the aftermath of this pandemic?

**Ans:** In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, it looks like domestic tourism will be the first to resume. Travellers will look inwards, to their own country first.

In fact, domestic tourism is already seeing some traction. Destinations like Rajasthan, Goa and Karnataka have already begun receiving tourists, keeping in mind all the safety protocols!

Travellers want minimum risk in these times and hence are opting for smaller and secluded destinations. They prefer to travel with family or a small group of friends. Safety is the number one priority.

Road trips, weekend getaways and staycations are what many travellers are opting for currently. Some also want to explore the outdoors, experience nature or even go on a safari. The demand for luxury hotels and properties, as well as private villas, is also on the rise at the moment.

### 6). How can tourism marketers work on re-shaping consumer behavior towards travel in the post-Covid-19 scenario?

**Ans:** Post-Covid-19 travellers would look out for destinations and experiences with assurance with regards to health, safety and hygiene. Such destinations will attract travellers the most. This is the first thing that should be marketed to travellers. The perception that a destination is clean and safe would play an important role in making travellers decide on whether to travel there or not. One would need to talk about all the guidelines / protocols / SOPs in place and the various initiatives that are being taken to ensure these as well as assure travellers that it is safe to travel.

The second aspect would be to sensitize the travellers as well. When travel does resume, they need to also ensure that they take all the necessary precautions and follow all the guidelines such as wearing marks, washing hands, social distancing, etc.

### 7). Do you think Covid-19 has played a role in fast-tracking the need for sustainable tourism?

**Ans:** Sustainable tourism was always important

and is being talked about constantly, even before Covid-19.

Ensuring a healthy and sanitized environment, minimizing pollution, efficient utilization of natural resources, locally sourced materials, and unspoiled natural surroundings are some of the important factors relating to sustainable tourism. They need to be intact for tourism to thrive.

Pandemics such as Covid-19 and factors such as Overtourism do reemphasize the need for sustainability and will hopefully push the concerned authorities to improve upon the relevant to ensure the same.

**8). What, according to you, is the future of the tourism industry?**

**Ans:** In my opinion, Covid-19 is going to change how people travel. It is also going to change the way people look at destinations.

There will be a strong emphasis on safety standards and hygiene practices in destinations. Travellers will want to travel to destinations or experience tourism products that assure them cleanliness and ensure the risk of contracting infection is minimum. Tourism providers are striving towards ensuring health and safety standards to assure travellers that they are safe and welcome to travel there.

Destinations whose brand stands for or is perceived as clean and safe will be the winners. Bodes very well for Switzerland as it has always had that perception amongst travellers!

There will be a tendency to move away from crowded places, explore new destinations and experience new activities and attractions. When it comes to accommodations, travellers may even look at moving away from the prominent/main city establishments and towards the outskirts or suburbs.

Luxury and safety go hand in hand. An accommodation, destination or experience considered as "luxury" assures travellers that it is well taken care of, clean, safe and sanitized. The quality standards for such products are also high. The demand for such tourism offerings will be stronger post Covid-19.

Technology during lockdown has shown the world that business meetings and conferences can be down through virtual platforms. This may reduce the need for business trips. However, travellers have been in lockdown for 7 months in India and are keen to travel. It seems therefore that leisure trips will commence first.

Regarding meetings and incentive-related travel, the lockdown pushed many organizations across the world into a more conservative state-of-mind. This form of travel will recover slowly and steadily. Contactless technology will play an important role in tourism, right from booking your trip to boarding your flight to making payments. Travelers would want the risk to be minimized.

Given how the pandemic has impacted the world, value-for-money will be the mantra for travelers. They will be looking at activities and experiences that can be maximized for the price that they pay. Great deals, offers, festive discounts, etc., would be something that would interest many. Travelers would also look at options such as shorter trip durations or mono-destination trips. The post-COVID-19 travel scenario will provide some interesting trends that the industry will need to adapt to.

**9). What is your advice to the young professionals who will be starting their careers soon?**

**Ans:** For me, it is essential to know what fields or subjects one is passionate about. If you are interested in something, you are more likely to

pursue it and work towards it in a more diligent and focused manner.

Yes, salary is essential, but your career needs to be aligned with your interests as that is where your strengths lie.

And most importantly, when you start, try and gain as much experience and knowledge as you can. That forms the foundation of your career and will help you with all your future endeavors. This can be done through primary research, on-the-job training, or even by networking with your colleagues, peers, clients, or those who have relevant experience across various fields.

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# OPERATIONS

## Innovations in Traveling: Post COVID Scenarios

*Harshita Sharma –PGDM Rural Management 2019-2021, Prin. L.N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Mumbai*



*"Travelling — it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller."*

**IBN BATTUTA**

It feels like yesterday when we all decided upon our next travel destinations, itineraries, looking for AirBnB and hotels for stays, researching about a region's must-visit list of food and places, its culture and traditions. It feels surreal now when we look back at it. We get a whole rush of nostalgia and end up hoping this pandemic to vanish from our planet so that we can finally pick up our bags, clean hose favourite pair of shoes, and start packing up clothes that have been lying somewhere in the corner of our house. But the whole situation is in front of us, and we know that it won't be the same again. If planning to visit someplace, we must follow a set of rules and regulations given by different states in our country.

India's tourism economy is the world's 7th largest economy in terms of its contribution to the GDP and is one of the key revenue contributors to the overall Indian economy. The pandemic has impacted all segments of the tourism chain. Travel organizations have suffered in terms of bookings and transportation, employee reduction, cancellations of tours, and packages already sold by companies. The overall occupancy of accommodation and hospitality in branded hotels has declined by 20%. Local communities who are engaged in tourism are facing negligible demand during these times. The tourism sector value chain comprises various schemes availed by travellers and customers. This supply chain has four key segments- Accommodation, Transport, Ground Handling, and Food and Crafts. Each component is directly impacted by footfall in that segment. Managing supply chains in the tourism sector are very important since it helps remove "extras" from tourism services, like waiting time, over costs, etc. It also improves customer services and better competition among companies. It is the abrupt stop and limitations on development that have influenced the businesses. The industry will have to wait for at least a year to see some restorations in the industry. Post-COVID situations will not be the same; people are now looking for better hygiene options for food and accommodation.

But now, as some businesses are opening up their places to accommodate with some ease in restrictions, the main question that arises is how they will increase the demand for their services as making customers return is the foremost priority for them to survive as a business. However, few businesses can manage the situation well. One such example is Zostel, a backpacker's hostel chain across India. Since the first week of March, they have enforced some regulations at all their hostels and homes. Hand

sanitizers have been equipped in all common areas; staff has been advised to use face masks and gloves for maintaining hygiene protocols.

They are also communicating about travel advisories with their interested guests via mails. They are also providing disposable masks at reception for purchase. Another company whose major part of the business aligns with operations is India Hikes, a trekking organization. They are following a number of protocols for the safety of hikers. Sanitizing transportation vehicle before use, asking hikers to bring their food, arranging bubbles for isolating trekkers at camp areas, sanitizing rooms at base camps, following physical distancing on the slopes, regular safety checks at base camp, providing sanitized equipment to trekkers, and a lot more.

While many other companies are urging all travelers to have a mandatory COVID 19 checkup before booking holidays and stays, it is advisable for travellers to avoid any unnecessary traveling during this time.

The past few months amidst the pandemic, we all have craved to be among forest, mountains, sea, and ocean, and it has been an emotional roller coaster ride for all of us sitting at our homes. But during this period, we realized our wrongdoings towards our planet, and everyone around us eventually has now started to embrace the idea of sustainable living to become kinder towards Mother Nature. We realized there is a way of development without polluting our planet. And of course, we can't forget the happiness and positivity we felt after reading the news that people of Jalandhar, Punjab can witness the beautiful sight of Dhauladhar range of mighty Himalayas through naked eyes. And the incredible view of never-seen-before species of wildlife animals and birds on the road while we were locked inside our homes and wished to go out in fresh air. All this initiated the talks around the nation on how we can adopt a sustainable lifestyle. Traveling is a vital part of our lives; this concept applies to tourism and its environmental, socio-cultural, and economic aspects. To promote sustainable tourism, we have to progress towards optimal utilization of environmental resources while maintaining essential ecology and conserve natural heritage as well as biodiversity. There is a need to show respect towards host communities' socio-cultural authenticity while preserving their cultural heritage and traditional values. We have to ensure long term and viable economic operations and provide benefits to all the stakeholders linked with the tourism industry.

Sustainable tourism is the need of an hour, and many enterprises and tour companies are now coming forward to offer holidays and experiences for exploring the true essence of 'Incredible India.' Many sustainable tourism projects, scattered across countries, are run by individuals in partnership with local communities. From 'Green People Project' in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, encouraging reverse migration of farmers of the area- by developing supply chains for the listed superfoods they grow, to 'Grassroutes Journey' - offering unique travel experiences across rural Maharashtra, enabling locals to host the travelers to help in increasing their income while keeping their sustainable and traditional way of farming alive. From a chain of eco-luxury resorts 'Evolve Back' in Karnataka, setting a benchmark of sustainable luxury tourism in India, to Project' Kipepeo' - providing fascinating travel experiences across unexplored regions of North East India. The list is continuously growing, and these enterprises are promoting sustainable and innovative ways to accommodate travellers and helping them experience the authentic taste of real India.

Although it was being said that the tourism sector won't recover until a vaccine for this virus is available, but with the constant decline in Indian GDP, it has become necessary to open up the sector slowly and gradually for tourists and travellers with a prescribed set of rules and norms to be followed while traveling to other states. The successful implementation of a recovery plan is in the hands of Central and State governments, the private sector, and the

consumers. Promoting the tourism sector in this difficult time is challenging but possible. The government can lift travel restrictions from business travel by applying health protocol for safe travels and operations. It can also organize virtual tours by promoting the destinations through social media and developing a protocol document indicating the guidelines for operations of hotels, restaurants, tourist spots, pilgrimage, and monuments to curb coronavirus spread. Travel organizations should take strict measures for the usage of masks and hand gloves. Adhering to social distancing norms and considering all the health precautions, they can organize short distance tours for a small group of people (excluding children and old age groups). Consumers have an important role here; they must follow the guidelines properly,

apparent negatives of this situation, positives are also there, like the self-realization of what was going wrong before in the name of development.

Hopefully, when we get back to our ordinary everyday lives, we will understand the importance of sustainable tourism and make it a new standard in the tourism sector.

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go for regular medical check-ups, and take care of them while going out in public.

Everything has two sides like a coin, and this pandemic has proved that. While there are

# FINANCE

## Recovery of Domestic Tourism Sector Post COVID-19.

### *Kunaal Saraogi- MBA (Finance), Alliance School of Business, Karnataka*

A pandemic situation like Covid-19 has given an entirely negative approach towards each & every sector. But the most affected industry is the Tourism industry.

Despite being such a negative impact of Covid-19, it can be turned into a rare opportunity to fix the pandemic challenges.

Consolidating the data, one in every eight jobs in India is indirectly linked to the tourism industry. As soon as the country went into lockdown, the Tourism industry has been hit the hardest. In India, tourism is expected to lose around 10 lakh crore revenue, and estimates of around four-five crore people are losing their jobs.

It's no surprise that both state & central government are in a rush to start domestic tourism in India. As the country is moving towards the new normal & learn to live with Covid-19. The government must create a Covid ready destination, one which is sustainable & resilient in the long run.

#### A) Assess & Maintain Social Distancing:

Hill stations such as Manali, Shimla, Darjeeling, Mussoorie & Leh are such places which are overcrowded with people as with many shops, street vendors. These places have chaotic constructions, traffic jams, etc.

Covid-19 gave a breather to these places to assess their infrastructure, capacity of persons traveling to the hill stations, and more. The World Tourism Organization has defined carrying capacity as "the maximum number of people who may visit a tourist destination simultaneously, without destroying the physical, economic, socio-cultural environment and an

unacceptable decrease in the quality of investors. In this case, the places can implement & maintain through prior registration, travel permits, limiting the number of rooms available, or a tiered tourist tax.

As we move ahead with the new regular, social distancing is a must & it becomes essential for any tourist destination. If social distancing is not possible, people will think to visit such crowded places. Simultaneously, the crumbling popular destination can reclaim their original charm to fix the ecological imbalance while emerging destinations can be saved from the looming due to the threat of over-tourism.

#### B). Ramp Up Waste Management:

Having a significant belt of Himalayan ranges, white desert, charming historical cities but behind that lies excellent trash. The trash is of food packets, beverage bottles &, etc.

In India, especially in the mountains, tourism spots have become very difficult to deal with waste management. After collecting waste from different places, the problem of recycling has become a challenge nowadays.

The Challenge ahead for tourism destinations would be maintaining & controlling the disposal of masks, face shield kits, etc. If these wastes are not maintained appropriately, then contamination among locals & tourists alike will only increase.

If we take an example of tourism-oriented cities like Bangkok, they have already started an awareness program, so taking into that they Indian tourism destinations can follow their strategy.

It becomes essential for the tourist destinations to take quick actions if any of the hotels are not following the guidelines in these challenging situations.

| Year | Domestic | Foreign |
|------|----------|---------|
| 2010 | 97.66 | 2.37 |
| 2011 | 97.79 | 2.21 |
| 2012 | 98.28 | 1.72 |
| 2013 | 98.28 | 1.72 |
| 2014 | 98.29 | 1.71 |
| 2015 | 98.40 | 1.60 |
| 2016 | 98.50 | 1.50 |
| 2017 | 98.41 | 1.59 |
| 2018 | 98.47 | 1.53 |

*Percentage of Domestic & Foreign Tourists Visit to India.*

This data shows how the tourism sector has attracted what percentage in the last many years. If we want to have a remarkable comeback like this, we need to follow all the precautionary measures and look at the people's safety. For this, we need to go for Glocal instead of Global. Thus, the government needs to focus on the region to boost tourism because many areas are entirely based on tourism.

## C). Use Tourism as an Essential Source of Development.

In India, tourism plays an important role, and therefore it is necessary for sustainable development in the tourism sector; the development may be from having proper facilities like waste management if we take the example of Ladakh as it receives less than 4 inches of rainfall so that they have to save water like a gold reserve so that agriculture can happen quickly, and ingenious dry composting toilets were used earlier. Now, as the urge & demand of using flush in the toilets has increased, there is water scarcity in the region. If tourism places can create better & great living culture for the local community & urban

population, then the site will be worth visiting. It will make long-run sustainability. In this case, we can say that tourism needs to evolve and come back with a new normal.

## D). Initiate a Campaign for Travelers.

India should launch a public awareness campaign at these tourist places to be continuously aware of this Covid-19 situation. If tourism shifts towards better living, then that place can be called slow travel destinations so that people can stay at a single place for longer days. The Challenge of covid-19 can be created as a rare opportunity that has plagued the sector.
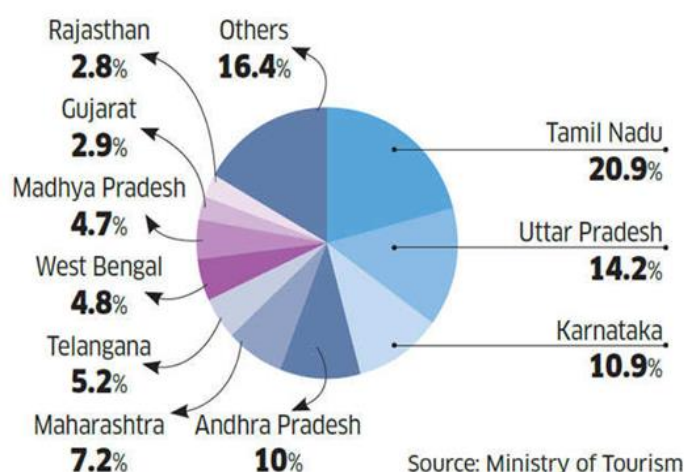


The data shows clearly that which state has more percentage of tourist attractions in India. These are the places of utmost importance in the tourism sector. If we take UP Agra, Ayodhya is some prominent places where the people are willing to visit. In Karnataka there are major hill stations such as Ooty, Gokarna is famous for its coastal line & many other places. Maharashtra, famous for its temples, hill stations such as Lonavala, Mahabaleshwar, Matheran & other prominent locations, are also renowned for their rich experience.

So, it becomes necessary to start the tourism sector as soon as possible because India gets significant revenue from tourism itself. Since the lockdown of every tourism company, agents are in deep crisis. To recover their losses, they need to think of such great packages that the tourist

will have confidence in travelling with them. The package should contain all the safety measures mention whether we can say a type of health insurance for them which is valid till only a particular time so that they will have a mindset that the company is thinking for us. This can be happening only in the case of big tours of many days.

India needs to start its tourism for the revival of the economy.

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# MARKETING

## Rise of Virtual Destination Marketing During COVID-19

*Vanshika Choudhary & VishnuMK – PGDM E-Business 2020-2022, Prin. L.N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Bangalore.*

**Tourism Sector**

All sectors of the economy play an important role in making it stable. Nonetheless, tourism is one of the most significant sectors, as it plays a crucial role in economic development and generating foreign reserves.

As per the reports by UNWTO, out of every 1/11 jobs globally, one is supported by the Tourism Industry. It is a significant source of employment for millions of people in both the developing and developed economies.

After fuels and chemicals, it is the third-largest export category in the world. In some small Island Developing States, it accounts for as much as 80% of their exports.



**Living in a Post Covid-19 World**

Ever since the first strain of SARS-Covid-19 was identified in China, the world was put into a tailspin. Nothing has been the same ever since the pandemic began; work from home became the new normal, and as per the United Nations, around 25 million jobs could be lost worldwide because of this pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected every sector worldwide, from airlines, the hospitality industry, Auto manufacturers to the IT sector. Some have been hit very badly, and some have been even brought down to a virtual standstill one such industry is the travel and tourism industry. As per an article by McKinsey and Company, it could take until 2023 or later for the travel and tourism industry to bounce back to pre Covid-19 levels.

Despite this, after the first few months, we can see industries across all sectors are trying to get back to carry out their business in one way or another. IT industry has made Work From Home the new norm till June 2021 in countries like India and the USA.

More local eateries and hotels are allying with food delivery services like Zomato and Swiggy to sell their foods. More and more industries like the hospital, educational, and financial are switching to cloud services so that their employees can carry out most of their work from home.

Similarly, the travel industry also needs to adapt to these changing times. In a world where people are spending more than 10 hours glued up to their laptop screens, with their only refreshment being binge-watching the latest series on Netflix and prime, it is high time people got a change of this scenario.

What if you could step out of your city to go to the beach or the mountains, or even a beautiful resort in France surrounded by water on all sides in a helicopter from the comfort of your home. Thanks to the latest advancements in Virtual Reality technology, people can embark on an immersive journey through the Bolivian Amazon Jungle now.

**Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Tourism Industry**
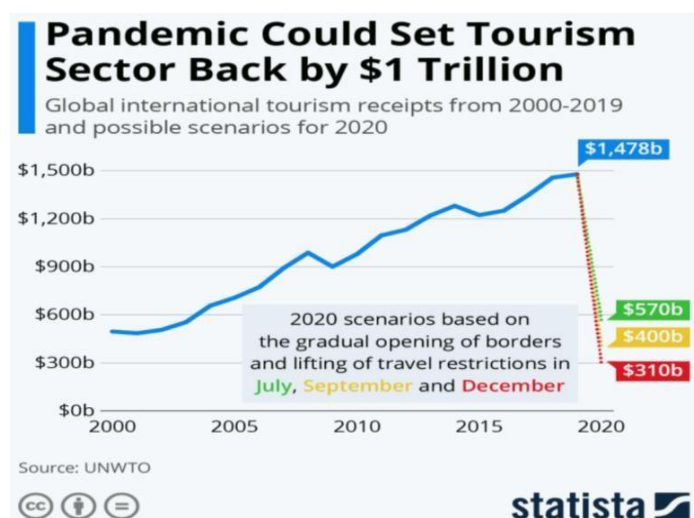


Due to the restrictions imposed in March after the virus started spreading worldwide, international travel throughout the world came to a screeching halt. Compared to the last year's statistics, International tourist visits dropped by 60% from the first five months after the pandemic started.

Tourism is one of the world's major economic sectors, and in 2019 accounted for 7% of Global Trade. Export revenue from tourism could fall by 910 billion to 1.2 trillion in 2020, reducing the global GDP by 1.5 to 2.8%.

**What is Virtual Reality, and How Does it Work?**

Virtual Reality is a simulated experience that can be like the real world or something else entirely. VR app developers make two different images of the same object and place them at slightly different angles from each other.

These images will change based on eye movement than by using a VR headset like Occulus rift or Google cardboard and VOILA! We can have a 3D model near our eyes.



**How the Tourism Industry Can Use VR**

By combining the videos, images, and photos of destinations on their websites, the user can get all the information they require for one immersive experience.

Talking about the current status, companies like Airbnb are offering virtual traveling experiences like tours, events, activities hosted by local individuals, and travel companies worldwide, thereby allowing the users to be part of these activities around the world.

With catchy hashtags like **#dreamnowtravellater**, countries like Switzerland are releasing videos that show the country's stunning landscapes and picturesque view assuring everyone that country awaits more travellers in the future once the pandemic settles.

With the 360 degrees views offered by these VR heads, the users can embark on an immersive journey through these resorts' corridors where they can explore the rooms, surroundings, and various facilities. They even get an opportunity to understand more about these destinations before they make up for the trip for the wholesome experience.

In a recent study carried out by a popular travel

and tourism magazine in Australia, around 80 % of people who used Virtual Reality to explore a destination felt they were transported there.

With the Pandemic showing no signs of slowing down, Virtual Reality Tourism provides a way for each of us to experience a change of scenery without leaving our fortresses of solitude.
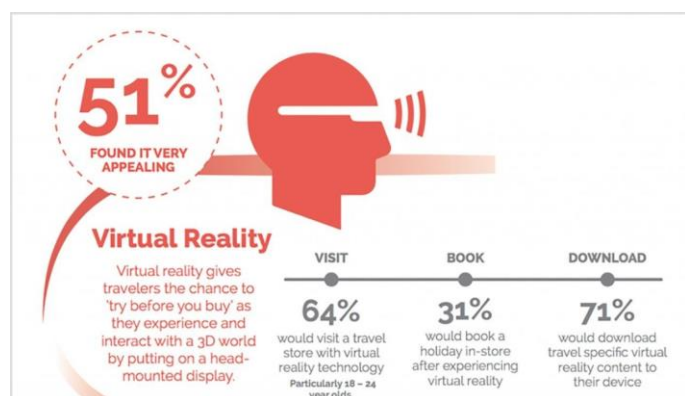


## What is Destination Marketing?

Destination Marketing is a type of marketing that promotes a destination like a town, city, region, country, etc.

Destination Marketing is demand-driven research, advertising, and communication activity that focuses on visitors' attraction like-tourists, investors, skilled labourers, etc.

## What is Virtual Destination Marketing?

Virtual Destination Marketing allows businesses in the hospitality sector to enable their customers to experience the products and services they are offering with the help of VR technology.

## Rise of the Travel Potatoes

None of us could foresee 2020 could have been such a disaster of the year, or we can say a decade. People hoping to take the much-cherished trip to France or the UK to see the marvelous Sistine Chapel or explore London's streets leading up to the Buckingham palace were left dejected.

But thanks to the vast libraries of virtual travel media held by new-age travel companies like YouVisit where people are getting a chance in one way or the other to experience their favourite destinations. With well-informed and interactive guides, people will see and know much more about their favourite destinations like Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, and Uffizi Gallery in their comfortable armchairs back home. Companies like Expedia offer international tours that last for like 60 min or more with as little as 1300 per person.

According to a Vacation Deprivation study conducted by Expedia, the positive impact on traveling's mental well-being can be experienced without the physical act of traveling.
Some examples of Virtual Destination Marketing

- **Haunted Village**

In this virtual destination marketing, the tour guide will take you through a tour into the most haunted village in London called Pluckley, a small village having a population of around 1000 just outside Ashford.

By taking the virtual tour, the users can experience popular spots in the village like St Mary's Ruins bombed by Germans, The white lady, and the red lady, Screaming woods, etc. in the comfort of your own bed, wrapped up in your blanket so that you won't feel the chills.

So once the pandemic horror is over, haunted house explorers who have experienced the Haunted Village VR experience can take a trip to the Guinness World Records most haunted village in London.

- **Diving into the Red Sea**

If you are a Scuba driver, one spot you want to explore in the world will be the Red Sea, which is home to 20% of the world's marine life. If you wish to explore famous sites like Sharm el-Sheikh in the north or the travelled sites of the south, it's an experience you wouldn't want to miss.



According to users who have used VR goggles to experience deep-sea diving and exploration, they felt it was a very relaxing and soothing experience.

**Light at the End of the Tunnel**

It is October, and the world is slowly starting to open its doors. Even though sectors like Tourism might take a while to bounce back to full swing but till then, Virtual Destinations can prove to be an alternate for the Hodophilia's among us, as

a window to the wider world from the four corners of our rooms.

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# HUMAN RESOURCES

## COVID 19 Impact & Future of Employment in Tourism Sector

*Aishwarya Mishra & Gayathri S- MBA HRM 2019-2021: Xavier Institute of Management (XIMB), Bhubaneswar*

Tourism stems from the natural urge of every human being for adventure, wellbeing, education, entertainment, religious, and business calling as well. It is a composite sector, employing and generating income via accommodation units, travel agents and tour operators, transport services, tourist resorts and complexes, shopping facilities including sales outlets for curious, handicrafts, souvenirs, etc. and the advent of travel technology has only propelled the creation of **4.2 crore** jobs the tourism sector, which was **8.1 %** of the total employment in India in 2019. But according to the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality, **3.8 crore** people in the country faced unemployment due to the pandemic and resulting lockdowns.

**Tourism Industry Snapshot**



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Inclusive | Direct & Indirect Employment | Lifeline for 30-80% Income | |
| • Women (54%) | • Ports and Airports | • Small Island Developing States | ~10 % Of global jobs and GDP were in travel and tourism in 2019 |
| • Young | • Labor (Hospitality) | • Least Developed Countries | ~100 m Direct tourism jobs at risk due to COVID-19 |
| • Migrant | • financial services | • African Countries | ~3% Global GDP loss due to COVID-19 |
| • Rural | • Food and alcohol | | |
| | • Domestic Travel | | |

Source: UNWTO 2020 Report

The travel & tourism industry is crippled and experts still can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. The coronavirus has been a death knell for travel and tourism, and the countries that depend heavily on it.

Experts predict that it would take a minimum of ten months for the industry to recover and gain normalcy, affecting women and marginalized migrant workers the most.

### Initiatives & Change Adoption Witnessed Globally

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry, airline, and ground transportation has altered the way the tourism sector functions and manages its operations. Some initiatives are:

1. **Collaborations:** With OYO developing and designing the course materials, The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry has developed an online training and certification course specifically for the hospitality industry, focusing on redesigning the sanitization protocols and minimizing person-to-person contact for a hotel chain.

2. **Government Interventions** such as providing a moratorium on term loans and value-added tax (VAT) exemptions could also help ease the financial burden on those struggling with insufficient business activity.

3. **Re-engineering Business Model:** Alternate seating arrangements in airplanes and other modes of transport helped revive travel. Higher focus on the use of cashless payment methods and contactless food deliveries is an effective strategy to win the trust of customers.

4. **Travel Bubbles:** This requires an agreement between countries or regions within a state that allows for travel across borders for non-essential trips without the requirement of a 14-day quarantine upon arrival. If planned with finesse, can create a safe passage for travel and normalize economic activity, without employment taking a hit. Ex: Japan

with Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Taiwan; Singapore with New Zealand and Australia. India is negotiating with 13 countries to create air bubble arrangements.

5. **Employment via Digital Solutions:** Virtual tours are boosting the confidence of tour operators and guides, while also incentivizing users to travel when the pandemic subsides. Ex: AndBeyond, Singita, Lewa Wildlife (**Virtual Safaris**), BSocial (offering **virtual Hajj pilgrimages**). Amped up with **3D modelling** by Harvard University, Egypt offered authentic vicarious travel, a tangible sense of finest tombs in antiquity coupled with information.

6. **Luxury Quarantine:** Thailand introduced a new visa, which will require travelers to spend at least 90 days in the country - the first 14 of which will pass in quarantine. The motive being in the quarantine period tourists can splurge freely for the rest of their stay in the likes of Four Seasons, Kempinski, and Capella.

7. **Hospitality-Tech Industry:** With access to technology and remote working infrastructure people are willing to relocate to new accommodations for long-term stays. Millennials are also looking at staying at places that are great to photograph and bring them some love on social media. Ex: AirBnB is planning to cash on the 'Live Anywhere' trend by mandating 24-hour vacancy between each stay, adding safety protocols by working with leading experts in health and hygiene to offer, manage, and enjoy cleaner accommodations.

8. **Domestic Tourism:** The Ministry of Tourism is working with Adventure Tour Operators Association of India to introduce guidelines on how to sanitize camps, run trekking lodges and related issues, and ensuring that social media captures the imagination of potential travelers, bringing back the livelihood of tourism-dependent states of India. Ex: Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh which has majority employed in the tourism and handicrafts sector.

9. **UNWTO:** The Expedia Group have signed a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with The United Nations World Tourism Organization to strengthen the ties between private and public sectors to drive and accelerate tourism recovery from the COVID-19 impact.

**The International Labor Organization's Policy Response For COVID-19**

The four pillars for the tourism industry as a response to the COVID-19:

I. **Stimulating the Economy and Employment**- Includes an active fiscal and monetary policy.

II. **Extending Support for Enterprise, Jobs, and Incomes**- Includes implementation of employee retention measures in the tourism sector

III. **Protecting Workers in the Workplace**- Includes adapting to teleworking and expand access for paid leave to people working in this industry

IV. **Relying on Social Dialogue for Solutions**-Includes working on strengthening labor relations, capacity and resilience of workers in the workplace, and the capacity of government.

One KPMG study says, "Appetite for travel exists, but employment can only be ensured if reassurances can be given regarding security". The fatality rate in India is considered low, given the vast young population less susceptible to the virus.

As they say, in a blind man's world, the one-eyed man is king. **Hence India must focus on**

**looking inwards,** be domestically directed. This can be achieved through the proposed model:



The "Cope-Ability" VS "Capability" Model
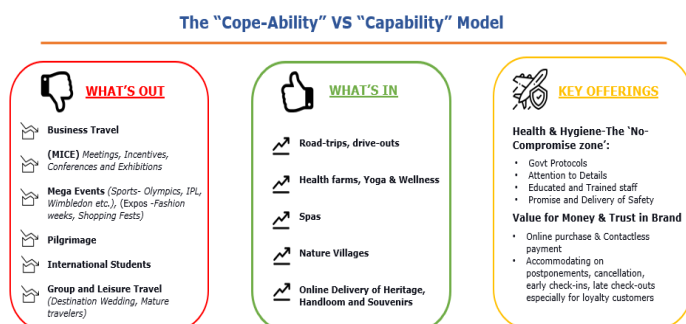
**HR strategy:**

a. **Focus on Wellbeing:** Motivate, train (e.g., new hygiene procedures on hand wash frequency, high touch-point surface sanitization every 30 minutes, luggage sanitization protocols, and ultra-low-volume misting (ULV) for deep-cleaning) and reassure the team after this challenging period.

b. **Talent Exchange:** Identify core-staff and collaborate with related sectors which might require staff for a temporary purpose. Ex: Hilton planned teaming up with 30 leading companies to provide temporary jobs, in addition to the common practice of covering health benefits.

c. **Maintain Psychological Contract:** Mishandling labour-related issues quickly propagate and damage the employer branding of hotel chains. Ex: Accor has allocated EUR 70 million from unpaid dividends to cover those employees without medical insurance or social security.

d. **Overhauled Workforce Plans:** COVID-19 people's strategy-Use this COVID-19 as learning and maintain something of a critical incident diary sort to be adept and agile to face such unprecedented times in future and have a workforce plan in hand ready.

e. **Marketing the Tourism Industry as a Destination for Employment:** With the unemployment rate increasing, the tourism industry can seek Govt. support be portrayed as a vehicle to welcome employment by reinforcing the message of safe travel/ good service standards.

f. **Tailored strategies for a Segmented Audience:** Train and develop workforce strategies targeting specifically to international students, honeymoon packages, etc. This will have a defined skill set and will be an always busy subset of the travel industry.

There is a critical need to adopt tourism policy based on a **customer-centric scientific approach** by maximizing the **utilization of technology and integrating this with the governmental practice** so that relief measures are consistent. This can safeguard not only numerous jobs but also fasten recovery. Though rapid industry growth and an evolving workforce remain vital drivers, without the **joint effort of industry associations,** travel providers, and the public sector all focused on **attracting talent, retaining the best core talent, and adapting emerging tech** to empower smarter workforces, wishing for revival is farsighted.

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# GENERAL MANAGEMENT

## Rise of Contactless Technology in Tourism Sector

### *Swastik Sovan Panda– PGP 2019-2021, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Gujarat (IIM-A)*

The Covid-19 pandemic has pushed the world economy back by 100 years. With international and domestic travel locked down, the tourism industry has been most significantly hit by the pandemic. The tourism sector provides a vital contribution to GDP and employment in every country. In 2019, the tourism sector accounted for 29% of the world's services exports and about 300 million jobs globally (UNCTD, 2020).

"The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN WTO) estimates a loss of 850 million to 1.1 billion international tourist arrivals, $910 million to $1.1 trillion in export revenues and 100-120 million jobs, depending on whether the borders are opened in July, September or December" (UNCTD, 2020).
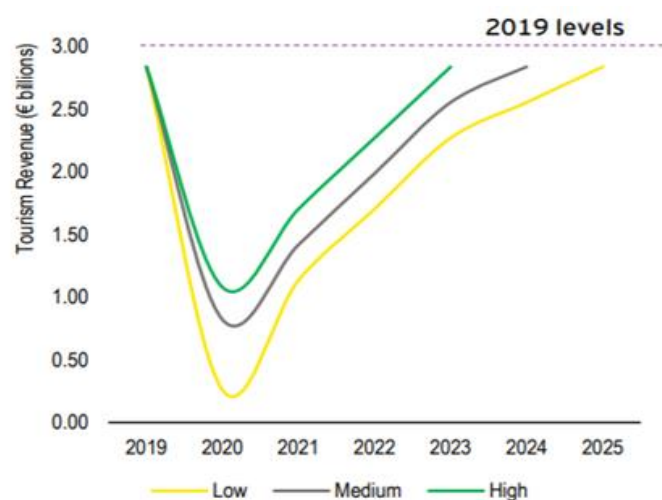


*Figure 1: Impact of COVID 19 on tourism revenue, low, medium & high (EY, 2020)*

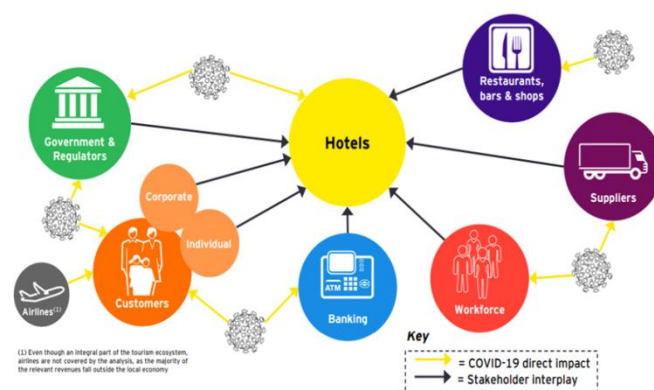**Key Stakeholders in the Tourism Industry and the Impact of Covid-19**



*Figure 2: Key Stakeholders (EY, 2020)*

**Hotels**: There has been a significant reduction in occupancy and revenue due to the cancellation of old bookings/events and no new bookings. The high fixed costs aren't helping. The post-COVID response will lead to increase investments in safety like regular sanitizing, further increasing costs.

**Tourists/Customers:** Customers have been under lockdown for a long time. Even after lifting of lockdown, people are apprehensive of travelling and are taking routine safety precautions like sanitizers and PPE kit. Temperature checks at every junction have become the norm. Adding to that, concerns over job security has adversely affected the spending capacity of most people.

**Government & Regulators**: Most governments have either imposed a complete lockdown on hotels or allowing them to operate at reduced capacity. This has led to a decreased collection of taxes. The lack of customers has also reduced the exchange of goods. There is pressure on the government to support the economy and local

employment.

**Workforce Suppliers & Restaurants/Eateries**:
The workforce in the hoteling industry has been reduced due to the pandemic, leading to mass unemployment concerns in the sector. The pandemic has adversely affected suppliers (food, toiletries, etc.) to hotels, and even restaurants have had a significant reduction in revenue.
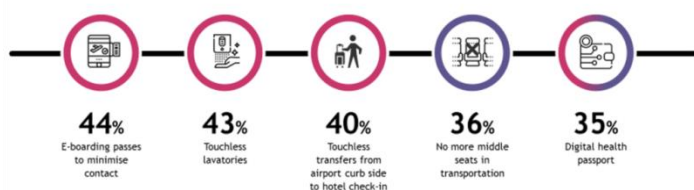
**Uses of Contactless Technology**



*Figure 3: Top contactless technology people want (Blackbox, 2020)*

A recent survey indicated that nearly 76% of travellers would prefer destinations that offer more contactless experiences (Blackbox, 2020). In a bid to make the travel experience safer, contactless technology can be implemented in the following touchpoints:

1. **Hotels and Rentals:** It is expected that most hotels will start implementing some mobile app to improve the consumer experience. Customers can enter their rooms, control room temperature, adjust lights and operate the TV using their phones. Room service requests like cleaning, extra amenities etc. will be done through the same app. Chatbots, robots, automatic check-in kiosk can reduce face to face contact significantly.
   The dining experience in hotels is also very likely to change. Room service will be the primary mode of ordering food. The paper menu is a hotspot for germs; it needs to be replaced with a digital menu in the mobile app or through a QR code.
   Methods of payment have been going digital for a long time, and the pandemic will push this further up.

2. **Corporate Travel:** Historically, corporates hand employees a company credit card to cover their payments. An upcoming technology is the use of a virtual card (O'Neill, 2020). A virtual card can be initiated in a traveller's phone, and a limiting value can be set as well. Spend limits can be set on food, drinks and recreation; it will work exactly like a credit card but without any kind of contact.

3. **Airlines & Airports:** Airports can use contactless technology like facial and iris scanning for bag drops, boarding gates, access gates and duty-free shops. Digitalized passports can reduce contact at checkpoints. Making e-boarding passes compulsory and introducing sensor-controlled touchless lavatories can make airports a lot safer. Crowd management can be automated through Lidar (used in Apple iPad pro) that can check the distance between people and sound automated alerts when people camp close together (O'Neill, 2020).
   The inside of aeroplanes can be automated by linking the seat and table trays with Bluetooth and adjusting through an app.
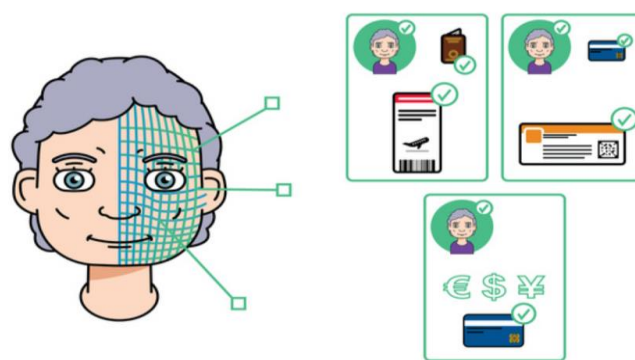


*Figure 4: Facial Recognition and its uses (Bhattacharya, 2020)*

**Contactless Technology around the world (TN Bureau, 2020)**

**Biometric Boarding:** A partnership between Beijing Capital International Airport and the Swiss tech company SITA has automated entire

passenger journey through biometrics. Several processes from check-in and bag drop to security clearance and final boarding have been made automatic and contactless through facial recognition systems.

Contactless check-in: Kiosks integrated with infrared proximity sensors have automated the check-in process in Singapore's Changi Airport. The system can recognize the motion of a passenger's finger while pointing at the screen and can complete the process without needing to touch the screen.

**Contactless Elevators:** Gesture controlled elevators have been installed in Abu Dhabi International Airport in partnership with UAE tech startup Meta Touch. People can operate the elevator without having to touch anything.

**Contactless Hospitality:** Dutch hotel chain citizenM has instituted a smartphone application that can help guests to check-in and out digitally. Guests can even also control lights, blinds, and temperature inside their rooms through the application.

**Disinfection Robots:** Several intelligent sterilization robots have been deployed by Hong Kong International Airport to disinfect airport premises and areas at a rapid pace. The robots have been equipped with ultraviolet lights and air sterilizer, which are capable of sterilizing the surroundings in 10 minutes with 99.99% accuracy.

The rise of contactless technologies is empowering stakeholders across the tourism value chain to get back to business. Digitizing the whole end to end journey through biometric boarding, automatic check-in and contactless hospitality when combined with regular sanitization measures can create assurance among the travellers and reignite the tourism economy. Automating each checkpoint will help in the collection of real-time data that can improve and customize the travel experience. But this also raises concerns regarding data security and privacy. The industry needs to embrace the technology at a rapid pace and address these concerns of privacy to bring back stability and accelerate the resurgence of the industry post the pandemic.

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# CALL FOR ARTICLES

We invite articles for the November 2020 Issue of SAMVAD.

The Theme for November month- **"Renewable Energy"**

The articles can be from Finance, Marketing, Human Resources, Operations or General Management domains.

You may also refer to sub-themes on Dare2Compete.

**Submission Guidelines:**
o   Word limit: 1000 words or a maximum of 4 pages with relevant images.
o   Cover page should include your name, institute name, course details & contact no.
o   The references for the images used in the article should be mentioned clearly and explicitly below the images.
o   Send in your article in .doc or .docx format, Font size: 12, Font: Constantia, Line spacing: 1.05' to **samvad.we@gmail.com. Deadline for submission of articles: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**
o   Please name your file as: <Your Name>_<title>_<section name e.g. Marketing/Finance>
o   Subject line: <Your Name>_<Course>_<Year>_<Institute Name>
o   Ensure that there is no plagiarism and all references are clearly mentioned.
o   Clearly provide source credit for any images used in the article.
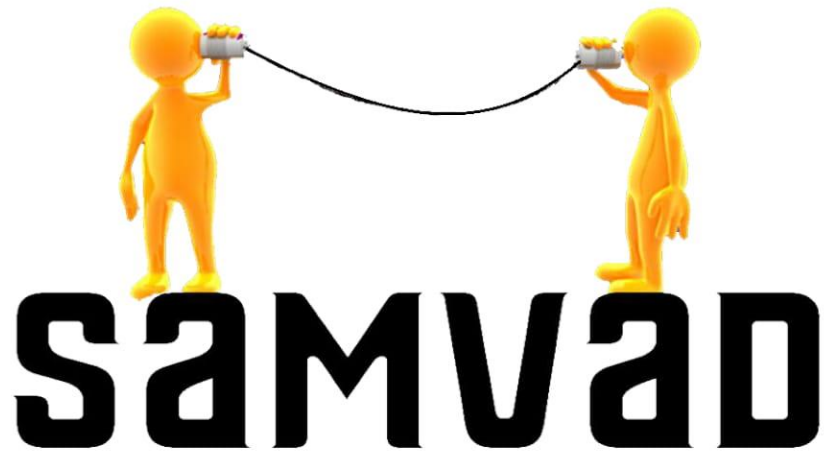
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# BE SO GOOD THEY CAN'T IGNORE YOU

~STEVE MARTIN