

# Travel Agencies – A Study

Nalayini. S.V.

Research Scholar, University Reg. No. : 18213111052032, Department of History

Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam,

Affiliated M.S. University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India, 627 012.

*Guide and Supervisor*

**Dr. O. Reegan**

Department of History

Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam.

## Abstract

In the Modern period the countries across the world have understood the social and economic significance of tourism. Therefore every country is taking extraneous steps for its promotion. For its radical developments along with central and state governments private participation is also encouraged. Travel agency is one such private agency plays an important role in the tourism sector in several levels and also contribute much for its promotion. They play a key role from the planning of tourism down to undertaking of tourism properly with pleasure, safe and security and to return. For a successful tourism travel agents play a vital role. In developed countries like U.S.A, Germany, France etc travel agencies plays a vital role for the development of tourism in such countries. In the developing countries like India also travel agencies plays a vital role for its functions as well as its development.

**Key Words:** Tourism, Travel Agency, Itinerary Preparation.

## Who are the travel agents?

Travel agents are people who organises tourism on profession. They establish healthy relation between tour operators and tourists and help the tourists in various ways. They help them to plan, to give information, to collect documents to make reservation in transports. accommodation, entertainment etc. on collecting service charge. Their work is similar to the work of an advocate who helps to collect the necessary documents, submit them to the court and argues on behalf of his client and help him to Win the case on collecting service charge. Likewise a travel agent is also tender advices, helps, assistants etc to tourists from the beginning down to the finishing of the trip by collecting service charge. They are invariably called as tour brokers, tour consultants,

tours councillors etc. They play an important role to organize a tour pleasurable without any tension. Without their role tour will be boardom expensive, waste of time, tension and burden. Therefore travel agents helps to collect the necessary documents, tende advices to understand the formalities before begining of the tour also advices the right things to be followed in the course of tour which will help much to avoid wasteful expenses, to choose the right thing, to avoid the waste to reach the right time, to be alert etc. and will protect us in several ways. Therefore the travel agents are considered as the guardians of the tourists.

### **HISTORY OF TRAVEL AGENCIES:**

The travel agency is an indispensable organization in tourism industry of modern times. However it has only a limited history of its own. This organization originated incidently in the second half of the 19th century and grown steadily to reach the present level.

#### **Thomas cook and the origin of travel agency :**

The credit of establishing the first travel agency goes to Mr.Thomas Cook of England. He was an evanjalist, evenjalistic book seller, as well as a social worker. He decided to attend along with his friends numbering 570 to the teetotallers conference to be held at Laborough on July 1841. A man of creative ideas, Thomas cook realized the difficulties in attending the conference by foot, and so he decided to take them by train. Therefore he approached the railway authorities and explained his mission and the social necessity in attending the conference by the people and secured reservation tickets with 25% fare concession to all of them. Later as planned he took all his friends on the fixed date under his leadership from Leicester to Laborough and after attending the conference returned with pleasure. This experience of Thomas cook in taking a group of people under a leadership and travelling with reservation and concession created an awareness about travelling. This incident was widely publicised and it became a boost to Thomas cook who started to organize many more similar travels and earned fame and popularity. Subsequently in 1843 he took about 300 school students from Leicester to Derby in train with concession. Similarly in 1945 he successfully led a big tour in train from Liverpool to Sherniyan. In 1946 he took 350 passengers under his leadership to Scotland. Likewise with pre arrangements and with concession for boarding and lodging he took a huge number of people to an exhibition at Crystal palace in 1851. Thus Thomas cook organised many more long trips in huge numbers in train with concession and earned fame as a successful travel organiser.

## Organising a travel agency:

In the beginning Thomas Cook organised groups travels to distant places under his leadership without expecting any benefits out of it. But in due course he realised the scope and prospects in such activities and so he started to convert travel service into a travel business and organised a travel agency in the name "Thomas Cook and Sons" at London in 1861. This is the first travel agency in the World. He entrusted the task of administering the office with his son John Mason Cook. He with the intention to expand the business he published a book 'Handbook of Liverpool' highlighting the scope of distant travels, concessions and privileges available, benefits etc. This book is the first travel guide of the world. Subsequently he published another book entitled 'Travel around the World in eighty days'. In this book he explained the scope, prospects, privileges, benefits of travel around the world. He then organised several types of tour and introduced several novelties in travel. He started the system of issuing coupons to hotels and railways that was widely used in his time. He introduced new type of travel "Grand European tour" and Travel around the globe and successfully organised.

Thus Thomas Cook and sons contributed much for easy travel to distant places. His travel agency has grown rapidly with thousands of branches around the globe with several thousands of employees. In India also Thomas Cook established two offices on the name 'Eastern princes' at Kolkota and Mumbai in 1987. Thus Thomas Cook created a revolution in travel by introducing several novel features in distant travel and also established travel agency and designed its activities. There fore Thomas Cook is credited as the first travel agent and his travel agency, is considered the first travel agency in the world. The success, fame and popularity of Thomas Cook in organising the travel agency, attracted many others. They also established similar travel agencies and contributed much for travel abroad in due course. Now it is estimated that lakhs of travel agencies in countries across the world. Among them the maximum number is found in United State of America. In India also found several thousand travel agencies with lakhs of employees. It is significant to note that among the private sector maximum number of employees are working in the travel agency business alone.

## FUNCTIONS OF A TRAVEL AGENCY:

Now travel agencies have been recognized as a vital component of tourism industry. They account for more than 90% international and 70% of domestic tourist traffic. Their activities are vital from tourism planning down to completion of the tour and settling of the accounts.

## 1. Travel information:

The most important function of a travel agency is to provide travel information to the tourist. This task is difficult and very much complicated. A travel agency must give up to date, accurate and timely information in a friendly manner regarding destinations, modes of travel, food and accommodation, sight seeing, shopping, immigration, passport, visa, currency and customs clearance procedure, health and security rules and other permits required for travel. As every country follows different currencies and their values changes often, different means of transport and their fares and timing going on changing and other rules and regulation changes it is difficult to provide accurate ever latest information to the tourists. As they provide latest information and guide them and accompany them they are considered as a good teacher, good guide, good friend and good adviser to the tourists.

## 2. Itinerary Preparation

The term itinerary is used to identify the origin, destination and the stopping points in a tour. To prepare a good itinerary the travel agency must have up-to-date accurate information on every aspect of tourism. Time is precious for everyone. Therefore they should prepare the itinerary so as to cover maximum areas in less hours. The travel agents must take into account of the nationality, economic potentiality, age and sex of their clients before the preparation of their itinerary. They must prepare the itinerary by taking into account of their taste and anticipation.

## 3. Reservation

Reservation is a very important function of a travel agency. After formulating an itinerary the travel agents must reserve tickets either in air, rail or road transport at the choice of the tourists in the required class. Getting reservation in countries across the world is a challenging task on the part of travel agency because the difference in currency and the daily change in its value and the daily changes introduced in the schedule of transport operation in countries. Likewise it is also their responsibility to get advance reservation in hotels, in their enroute, tourist spots entertainments etc. However the introduction of computerised reservation system made matters easy.

#### **4. Travel insurance :**

Travel insurance protects the travellers against the personal as well as baggage losses. A tourist who purchases travel insurance receives a contract called a policy issued by an insurance company. The policy is based on the clients needs, price and type of tour etc. A travel insurance generally covers personal accidents, medical and related expenses, baggage loses, trip cancellation and interruption etc. It is the duty of the travel agents to make arrangement for travel insurance.

#### **5. Currency clearance**

Travel agents are permitted by Reserve Bank of India to deal with foreign currency, and also to offer currency services to the intending clients. This is a very important facility to the tourists as it saves their time and energy. No sooner a foreign tourist lands in a country he requires the currency of that country to purchase different services. It is the duty of the travel agents to make necessary pre arrangements to collect the needed currency of the country to spend and also to return the remaining currency if any at the time of their exit from the country.

#### **6. Organization of Conferences and Convention:**

The travel agencies hold conferences and seminars to discuss future plans and also to discuss strategies to develop the travel and tourism.

#### **7. Provision of Shopping :**

Tourists are fascinated to purchase things on their way. Therefore it is the duty of travel agents to illustrate the articles available in the course of their itinerary and should make arrangement for purchase of fancy items of their choice at cheap rate without wastage of time.

#### **8. Services :**

In addition to the above, the travel agents must provide several services to the tourists. The travel agents must arrange to receive the tourist at the airport and he should be explained in detail about the tour programmes, precautions to be taken, and should be advised to check the belongings, documents etc. Further

porters and taxis should be arranged to reach the hotel to take rest and he should be accompanied throughout his schedule.

## 9. Advertisement:

Lastly it is the duty of the travel agencies to make advertisement in Newspapers, Magazines, Cinema, T.V. etc. highlighting the features and prospects of tourism for its growth.

## Travel organizations :

To promote tourism and to eliminate the factors affecting tourism several tourist organizations were established in countries across the world. They also contribute much for the enrichment of tourism.

## Conclusion :

Nowadays, the tourists need the availability of some amenities. While visiting particular destination, they not only wish to see the destination, but also like to enjoy the facilities and the resources available in the particular destinations. They can be provided such facilities, which will provide them enjoyment at the time of tour.

## References :

1. Selvaraj, C., *Principles of Tourism*, Kanyakumari, 2008.
2. *Kerala Companion*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2000.
3. *Souvenir*, Kumari Maha Sabha, Nagercoil, 2018.
4. Hornby, A.S., *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, OXFORD University Press, New York, 2001.
5. Bhatia, A.K., *International Tourism Management*, New Delhi, 1998.
6. *Digest*, Updated fact finder and knowledge builder, Mulagumoodu, January 2015.
7. Biswanath Ghosh, *Tourism and Travel Management*, New Delhi, 1998.
8. Sati, V.P., *Tourism Development in India*, Pointer Publishers, Jaipur, 2001.
9. Gupta, S. K., *Travel and Tourism Management*, Davyagani, 2010.
10. Randall, A. *Resource economics, Second Edition. New York, USA: John Wiley and Sons, 1987.*
11. Stabler, M. J. (ed.) *Tourism and Sustainability: Principles to Practice*. CAB International: Wallingford, 1997.
12. Hunt, Carter A., Durham, William H.; Driscoll, Laura; Honey, Martha (2015-03-16). "Can ecotourism deliver real economic, social, and environmental benefits? A study of the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica". *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. 23 (3): 339–357.