

# Growth is on the cards

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**Jyoti Mayal**  
President  
TAAI

“Our agenda in 2020 is very clear: we want TAAI to be recognised as an association, which is one move that I will make immediately. Unless the government recognises us as one nodal body, I don't think we can move forward. All our issues and problems can only get solved if there is a proper channel and flow of information. Other than this, there are a lot of things I want to do, one of which would be more revenue-oriented things for our members. The business of agents is bleeding and I think, there is something wrong in the basic fundamentals.”



**Ankur Bhatia**  
Executive Director  
Bird Group

“In 2020, we look forward to a situation where the economy and aviation industry improve and improvise the yield for business. Bird Group enjoys the position of being among the largest Indian conglomerates, and has been making strides and immense growth in travel technology, aviation services, hospitality, retail, and education. Year 2019 began with opening of 'The Roseate Ganges' in Rishikesh. Towards the end of 2019, the brand launched 'Upstage Club', luxury co-working space at Roseate House New Delhi. Amadeus also completed 25 years in India.”



**Sandeep Dwivedi**  
COO, InterGlobe  
Technology Solutions

“Innovation is going to take precedence this year. We are excited to make 2020 more technically advanced not only for our travel partners, but also for the industry, especially for the end consumers. Our priority will remain personalising and customising travel solutions for agents and travellers by integrating modern technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. We are aware of the needs of the modern traveller, including the need for a better digital experience, and we are committed to delivering the same.”



**Riaz Munshi**  
President  
OTOAI

“We want to focus on three main areas, which can be termed as our primary goals for now. Firstly, we want to strengthen our relationship with the government, tourism boards, and embassies; secondly, we must double the membership base of the association to anywhere between 1000 and 1500 in a year's time; and thirdly, we need to do more product trainings and workshops for our members. I will continue to contribute to the success of OTOAI and growth of the outbound industry in India.”



**Rajiv Mehra**  
Vice President  
IATO

“Our expectations are always in sync with the needs of our industry and to facilitate the stakeholders. Our major focus area would be withdrawal of the facility of airport entry passes for representatives of tour operators for entry at the airport. If this facility is withdrawn, it will have a negative impact and the efforts being made by MOT and Government of India to increase tourist arrivals will go in vain. Another area would be working on the cascading effect of GST on tour operator services, which needs correction.”



**Pradeep Saboo**  
Managing Partner  
Guideline Travels

“Every new year comes with its own challenges and opportunities galore, and the same is expected out of 2020 as well. While this year, too, we shall continue and keep up the promotion and work on our existing products and cruises, we will also dedicate ourselves to handcrafting new experiences for our esteemed customers, giving them more to look forward to. For us, new itineraries and destinations as well as new cruising routes shall be the norm for 2020. I wish all my trade partners a very happy and fruitful 2020!”



**Rashmi Ahuja**  
Commercial Coordinator  
MSC Cruises India

“We are preparing for the launch of our new ship - MSC Virtuosa - in October 2020. The growing demand for cruise holidays globally is being experienced in India as well. Our new products will give our guests a unique opportunity to see on-board two original shows by Cirque du Soleil, the world leader in live artistic entertainment: VIAGGIO, SONOR, VARELIA, SYMA, COSMOS and EXENTRICKS shows. Our ability to adapt to changes and cater to requirements globally has been our main strength. FIT bookings for 2020 started early in 2019, which is a sign of an evolving market. We look forward to continuing our growth consistently by penetrating Tier-II and Tier-III cities.”



**Alefiya Singh**  
Director  
Iris Reps

“Year 2019 saw terror attacks in Sri Lanka, protests in Hong Kong, and big tour operators shutting down, which has definitely redefined the travel business. It has been challenging for Iris Reps to expand the portfolio, but we have managed to stay afloat with our current principals and short-term campaigns. Iris Reps has witnessed marginal growth with Furama Hotels, Danang and tie-up with renowned DMCs such as One Above for certain destinations. Our focus for 2020 would be to expand our portfolio with not just more clients, but also diverse ones so we can come closer to being a one-stop shop for the trade.”



**JB Singh**  
President & CEO  
InterGlobe Hotels

“We enter 2020 with enthusiasm and hope. We expect the operating performance to generally improve, as the fundamentals of the industry remain strong with a slowing supply graph and an improving demand curve which has historically been in the 8-10 per cent range. We have six hotels with a total of 1000 under active development, and are currently pursuing some very promising fresh deals in Pune, Goa, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru. On the policy front, we have been in dialogue with the government and MOT on several aspects of the industry, especially around the GST levied on civil structure and parking norms.”



**Pradip Lulla**  
Acting President and VP  
TAFI

“Some unfortunate events in 2019 like Jet Airways going under, Cox and Kings closing down, growth in November for aviation being minimal, and tourism in Kashmir going down by 85 per cent due to withdrawal of section 370 have made us consolidate and cut costs. We have also become more vigilant in our joint bank guarantee arrangement. We hope that in 2020, our government gives more impetus to our industry by reducing GST and increasing publicity spends on the Incredible India brand. The opening of new routes is a welcome gesture, and we hope the bullet train project is not shelved.”



**Kishan Biyani**  
Managing Director  
Ark Travels

“As we cruise into the new year, it looks both promising and challenging. We anticipate a demand and supply gap, particularly for the Singapore sector. With the size of Indian travellers opting for Singapore, major cruise players will look forward to encashing on these vacationers and fill the demand-supply gap. Also, cruise MICE movement is expected to be at its peak in the coming year. It will be challenging to see how cruise conglomerates take care of Indian MNCs and corporates taking on the high-seas. We also aim to tap and promote other products such as Rail Europe and Europamundo Vacations, in India.”



**Captain Swadesh Kumar**  
President  
ATOAI

“We are expecting growth in adventure tourism. If everything goes well, we should move at a seamless speed. What we need now is that the government spend some energy to promote adventure tourism, which is a niche segment. The need of the hour is for them to spend money, especially in regions like Northeast. There is hardly any infrastructure in places like Imphal; only parts of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh have some development. The government should create new circuits, take the industry there, and push them to perform with incentives. We are planning to have our convention in March, probably in Dharamsala.”

Inputs by Nisha Verma,  
Hazel Jain and Manas Dwivedi