

Customer satisfaction is the key concern of InterGlobe: Parashar

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF 25 YEARS IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY, INTERGLOBE TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT (ITQ) ASPIRES TO CONTINUE TO INNOVATE AND BRING OUT NEW PRODUCTS THAT WILL EMPOWER THE TRAVEL PARTNERS WITH MORE BENEFITS AND EFFICIENCY

Sulagna Ghosh

Anil Parashar, President & CEO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, says that 2014 was a landmark year for ITQ as they celebrated their 'Silver Jubilee' with completion of 25 years of existence in the travel industry. Commenting upon the journey so far, he said, "This journey has been fascinating as over the years we have become a large conglomerate in the travel industry covering every domain of travel. At ITQ in particular, the year has been extremely engaging with Traveport being the first GDS to sign up with world-class low cost airlines-Ryanair, Air Asia and added Malindo Air to its list."

ITQ also launched some ground breaking technology such as the Traveport Smartpoint- an enhanced user-friendly point-of-sale application, which reduces overall key strokes by 15 per cent and brings in immense benefits to the partners and the Traveport Universal API, the first API in India to aggregate content from the GDS (air, car and hotel), accommodation providers, low cost carriers, high speed rail suppliers, and merchandising and ancillary services through a single connection.

Latest developments at ITQ

Recently ITQ have initiated a joint training for soft skills in partnership with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI). "This is very unique considering that it is an opportunity for us to contribute with the industry members. We are reaching out to other federations as well to take this to a broader platform. We would continue to invest in new product and technology that will enhance the productivity and benefits to our customers," said



Anil Parashar

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Successful implementation of TraveportSmartpoint and Traveport Universal API

Parashar believes that the success of the TraveportSmartpoint App and the Traveport Universal API has been clearly shown in the satisfaction rate of their customers who have been using these products. Traveport Universal API saw the evolution of the next generation GDS in India, which re-defined opportunities to unlock potential development and aggregate content from multiple sources to make it available through a single

source. "This provided the benefit of expanding offerings and capabilities while entering new markets and channels at a faster pace," he said.

The success of the Traveport Smartpoint App on the other hand, is its ability to offer users a blend of graphical and cryptic user interaction alongside a range of time-saving features, such as improving the agent-user experience, reducing training costs and speeding up reservation processes.

Marketing strategies

ITQ delivers unmatched merchandising and distribution services for airlines across the globe, says Parashar. The company will strive to innovate and invest in service and support to ensure that they deliver a consistent and reliable service to their customers. "We provide cutting edge travel technology solutions with unmatched inventory options, thus helping customers increase productivity and business efficiency is our prime focus. Our transparencies, integrity in the market, quality of services and providing 24x7 services to our customers outclasses us from our competitors," he added.

Major challenges

According to Parashar, the major challenge is that today's travel industry demands innovation to compete and create awareness about technology companies behind websites which offer consumers the luxury to book tickets online. However, keeping in mind that online booking websites act as the interface between the software developer and end consumer, technology companies deal directly with B2B clients instead of B2C clients.

Future investment plans

Customer satisfaction is the key concern of InterGlobe. "We are consistently updating our technology and launching new tools as a dynamic, on-going process. Our products are constantly being reviewed to evolve with our customers," he said.

Visa reforms to fuel India Travel & Tourism growth by 7.5% in 2015: WTTC

The Travel & Tourism industry in India will grow by 7.5% in 2015, fueled by visa reforms, according to research released by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC). In 2014, the industry contributed INR 7,642 billion and 36.7 million jobs to the Indian economy.

During 2015, the industry's GDP contribution is forecast to grow by 7.5% and employment by 1.8%. This demonstrates the sector's enduring ability to generate economic growth and create jobs at a faster rate than the national economy, which is due to grow by 6.7% in 2015.

By the end of 2015, the Travel & Tourism sector will contribute INR 8,215 billion, 7% of India's GDP, and 37.4 million jobs, almost 9% of total employment, once all direct, indirect and induced impacts are taken into account.

The strong increase in the size of the Travel & Tourism industry in India is fuelled by visa reforms introduced in November 2014, which expanded the visa-on-arrival scheme to 43 nationalities. Visitors from those countries no longer have to queue up at local consulates but can instead apply for visas online. David Scowsill, President & CEO, WTTC, said, "India is one of the biggest Travel & Tourism economies in the world contributing significantly to economic wealth and job creation. Much needed reforms to its visas rules will provide the foundation for very strong growth in the sector during 2015."

WTTC urges the Indian government to ensure the continued prioritisation of the sector, by focusing on four main issues:

- Though recent visa improvements have been welcomed, visa liberalisations

still have a long way to go and the recent insistence upon biometric data for visitors from France and United Kingdom will have far reaching impacts on travel to India from these countries.

- The Incredible India! Campaign should be recast and re-launched to maximize the India's new visa regime.
- Adequate steps are required to ensure safety and security of citizens and tourists. A clear co-ordinated Government strategy is required to offset the damaging impact on the country's international reputation, from the negative perceptions of the treatment of women and women travellers in the country.
- While the recent Budget announcement of greater investment in high-speed rail infrastructure is a positive step, there is still much greater potential for high-speed rail connectivity between destinations, leveraging the massive railway network.

WTTC research also warns that nearly 1.6 million jobs are at risk in India's Travel & Tourism sector, if governments and private sector companies do not act now to address the talent shortage in the sector.

"Travel & Tourism drives jobs and economic growth; well-being and prosperity. It creates jobs at different skills levels and in areas where other employment opportunities are scarce. Failure to plan properly for talent requirements leads to lower growth, reduced investment, less innovation and declining competitiveness."