Tourism Bits & Bytes

MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2008

Working in the Exciting World of Hospitality & Tourism

As reported by the World Travel and Tourism Council in their 2007 publication, the hospitality and tourism industry have grown by 500 percent in the last 25 years and it was estimated that up to the year 2007, more than 100 million people worldwide were employed by this truly exciting globalised career.

Very often I get invitation to pen down my thoughts or address students on what the hospitality and tourism career is all about. Is it a career that you as a parent would encourage your kids to get into? Thus, I would start my blog with my thoughts on what this exciting vocation can offer you. This thought of mine was penned down for the upcoming Doctorjob's Courses Now magazine.

Introduction
The hospitality and tourism industry has grown dramatically in recent years and today is widely regarded a major creator of jobs. Hospitality and tourism is one of the most interesting career fields in the world. It can be exciting, stimulating, dynamic, stressful, challenging, frustrating and most importantly FUN! Hospitality and tourism is a serious business, representing millions of jobs and billions of dollars. The hospitality and tourism industry helps people get to business engagements and make more money, take vacations, see the wonders of the world, go for honeymoon, study abroad, visit health centres and spas, or even gamble their money away if they so choose!

So, what is this dynamic hospitality and tourism industry? “Hospitality", a term derived from the Latin word hospitale, meaning to receive a guest, it is a phrase that implies a host is prepared to meet a guest’s basic requirements while that guest is away from home, which include the food, beverages or lodging. Thus, the business of hospitality industry comprises businesses that provide the services of food and beverages, food processing industry, culinary, lodging industry which include hotel and other accommodation sector, or some combination of these, to travellers.

“Tourism” on the other hand comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes. Thus, tourism is the temporary movement of people to

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Welcome to my blog...

About Me

Vikneswaran Nair

A full bred of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), I completed my BSc. in Horticulture in 1994, MSc. in Environ. Systems Engineering (1997) & PhD. in Ecotourism Systems Engineering in 2003. At present, I Head the Centre for R&D of the Taylor's University College in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia. My specialisation is on application of ICT in Hospitality & Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Ecotourism & Environmental Management. I am also currently the sole

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destinations outside their normal places of work and residence. The travel and tourism industry comprises businesses providing primary services to travellers, including the traditional hospitality businesses and others closely linked to them in such fields as entertainment, recreation, shopping and retail sector, sports, event management (this include organising meetings, incentive travels, conventions and exhibitions), transportation (airline, rail, cruise and road transportation) and travel/tour operations management (include tour guiding).

In general, four of the most common career cluster in the hospitality and tourism include, (i) Lodging and Housekeeping Services, (ii) Food Production and Services, (iii) Travel and Tourism Services, and (iv) Recreation, Gaming and Sports.

**Current Trend and Scenario**

With the escalating increase in the price of the fuel cost worldwide, the effects on the tourism industry has been paramount. Nonetheless, this service related industry will stay resilient and will be able to overcome the inflation that is setting in most countries across the globe including Malaysia. Malaysia’s Travel & Tourism economy employment crossed 1.2 million jobs in 2007 (11.4 percent of total employment in Malaysia or 1 in every 8.8 jobs). According to the 2007 report of the World Travel and Tourism Council, by 2017, this should total 1.8 million jobs. Similar trends are also seen worldwide. In countries like the Caribbean, tourism provides 25 percent of all employment.

Tourist arrivals to Malaysia, have shown dramatic recent increases that are continuing to make Malaysia the largest Southeast Asia tourism marketplace despite the economic downturn that is engulfing the whole world. Despite the economic slowdown, this upwards trend of the industry is expected to continue steadily in years to come.

**Career Opportunities**

Nonetheless, the popular career in the hospitality and tourism industry still revolves around the core business of servicing the tourist (both domestic and international). Most institution offering this programme prepares students for range of careers in the industry. Some programme will give students solid foundation of both the hospitality management (which include hotel management and may specialise in rooms division, i.e. front office and housekeeping, food and beverage management and culinary arts) and tourism management. Courses in these programmes will equip students with both industry and practical knowledge.

**The Future of Hospitality & Tourism Industry**

With the growing demands of the consumer, the tourism market is also evolving accordingly to the scope and direction away from the traditional 3S (sun, sand and sea) vacation to a wide range of diverse and new activities such as sports and leisure activities, cultural and...
industry has also begun dipping into other industries like health (medical checkup and cosmetic surgery in private hospitals), agriculture and ecology (farm-stays, home-stays, wildlife conservation and eco-tourism) and education (education trips, student exchange and internships).

For the period of 2007, Malaysia recorded 20.97 million tourist arrivals with RM46.1 billion in receipt, which makes the industry the second largest income earner for Malaysia after the manufacturing industry. In a developing country like Malaysia, the potential for the industry to grow further is undeniable. As the world seem to be getting smaller by the year with the advent of newer technology and the fierce marketing and competition between the low cost carrier and the full service carriers, people are travelling for pleasure, business and also VFR (visiting friends and relatives) more than ever in Malaysia and internationally. As people travel, they need to be serviced and their needs need to be taken care off. Hence, it is projected that more than 260 million people worldwide will be employed in this sector by 2011 (as reported in the 2007 WTTC Report).

The booming gaming industry in Macao, the integrated resort projects in Singapore and the multi-development projects in Malaysia (Northern Corridor Economic Region, Southern Corridor Iskandar Development Region, East Coast Economic Region, Sabah Development Corridor and finally the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy) have tourism as the main catalyst. Despite the inflation setting in most part of the world due to the increase in fuel cost and the environmental degradation in many parts of the world, the resilient nature of the hospitality and tourism industry will certainly make a career in this sector none regrettable.

Conclusion
In short, the hospitality and tourism is an exciting industry that will attract the extroverts. You may consider studying either Hospitality or Tourism Management as individual programme, or enrolling into a programme that is dedicated and specialises in one of the two. For those who have completed a degree in a programme other than hospitality or tourism, courses at Masters level are becoming increasingly important for the industry. Career prospects are good. A lot of hard-work and commitment are required to succeed.

Hospitality and tourism, in all its areas offers great potential for job opportunities, career advancement and job satisfaction than any other industry. Clearly there is and will be considerable international demand for highly skilled and qualified young people to manage the growth of the industry.

*Hospitality and tourism is one of the most interesting career fields in the world. The upwards trend of the industry is expected to continue in years to come. Thus, the potential for a career in this industry almost guarantees success for those who are hard-working and resilient in being successful in climbing their career*

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path.

Add to your people skill, a willingness to get the necessary training and education, to start at the beginning, to work hard, to keep an open mind, be creative, to be flexible, to learn and explore something new about the world every day and you will fit the description of a hospitality and tourism professional headed for success in the world biggest industry. No other industry satisfies so many needs, both personal and professional.

(c) drV. 1 July 2008

Welcome to my blog...

Hi there. Welcome to my blog.

So, I have finally managed to get my blog up. I always wanted to do this but just could not find the time or maybe was just too intimidated with the thought of writing freely in cyberspace. No more turning back from here on.

Signing out for now. You will be hearing from me soon.

Cheers,

drV

July 2008

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