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ITINERARY PLANNING AND TOUR PACKAGING

The core business of travel companies, especially wholesalers and tour operators, is derived from selling tour packages. For any tour package to be designed, a well thought planned itinerary is most essential. Itinerary is central to any tour package around which all the other features are incorporated. A lot of planning, additions, deletions go into the process before final itinerary and the route along which a tour should be organised. The next stage is to design and package a tour around this itinerary which is developed into a final product for sale to prospective clients. Travel industry offers listless tour packages from tailor-made, customised to specialised. Hence, itinerary planning and tour packaging are considered to be central to the business of travel companies. In this chapter, we will learn about all that is necessary in formulating a feasible itinerary and designing a marketable tour package.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and types of Itinerary;
- develop steps for preparing Itinerary;
- provide background information for preparing Itinerary;
- list Do's and Do Not's of an Itinerary;
- prepare Itinerary for FIT and GIT Tours;
- explain the meaning and types of Tour Packages;
- prepare Package elements and how to deal;
- identify with Package Tour Formulation Process;

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- prepare Tour Brochure Designing; and
- prepare about Tour Voucher, Docketing and Programming of tours.

22.1 MEANING AND TYPES OF ITINERARY

22.1.1 Meaning of Itinerary

An itinerary is a plan of a journey showing the route and the places that the visitor will visit. Thus, it is a schedule or timetable produced in association with a package tour. It is basically designed to identify the route, day-by-day journey format, origin, destination, and all the enroute halting points, period of halts along with accommodation, mode of travel, activities and other services offered during a visitor's tour.

An itinerary is not just a piece of information but a selling point aimed at convincing potential customers. Itineraries are also produced for travellers' booking flights; it then includes departure time, airport, terminal details, flight number, baggage limits, transits, seat allocation and minimum check-in time, which doesn't really include any marketing element. But package tour itineraries play a key role in attracting clients.

The quality of a tour package is determined by the suitability, nature and comprehensiveness of a tour itinerary. It is generally printed in tour brochures but only after the clearance from the expert team as it includes logical inclusion and sequential arrangement of a variety of features.

22.1.2 Types of Itinerary

A package tour itinerary may be divided into five types with the primary objective of reminding the duties and responsibilities of different stakeholders involved in organising a package to such as tour managers, vendors, coach drivers, interpreter, escorts and guides. Thus, the five types of itinerary can be tourist's itinerary, tour manager's itinerary, escort or guide's itinerary, vendor's itinerary and coach driver's itinerary. Another classification of itinerary may also be done keeping in mind the needs of tourists and convenience of tour operators such as GIT itinerary, FIT itinerary, Tailor-made itinerary and special interest itinerary. Let us now learn the nature of these types in detail.

Classification to remind individual responsibilities:

- **Tourists' itinerary**

Tourists' itinerary is given to a particular tourist for his reference as part of the package tour. A tourist expects the tour to be organised as per the itinerary mentioned in the package tour he/she has purchased. For planners

it is important to check its feasibility. Generally planners organise FAM trips in advance to have the feel of the itinerary and identify the limitations and they are rectified before they are incorporated into a package tour and made available for the reference of the tourists. Hence tour planners should take into consideration various aspects such as purpose of tour, budget, accommodation, transportation, choice of destinations and attractions, activities at destinations, legal issues, host and guest behaviour and so on. They may also keep certain things as optional.

Basically, a tourist itinerary is a reference for the tourist to follow during his journey like points of halt, hotel, time taken between two points, meal plans, activities, attractions to visit etc. apart from arrival and departure points/time and check-in check-out time. Tour operators are expected to strictly follow the itinerary. If they intend to change or modify it that should be only in the interest of safety and security of the guests. And they should take their client into confidence before doing that.

- **Tour manager's itinerary**

The role of tour manager is crucial to any package tour as he/she has to perform different duties from planning to actual operation of the tour continuously on the spot. Professional expertise, knowledge of different travel issues, crisis management and his/her own personal experiences matter a lot in organising a tour. Tour manager's itinerary includes the complete details of the whole tour from day one to the last day. Apart from the general details as listed in a tourist's itinerary a tour managers itinerary also carries information about alternative arrangements, contact details, quick references, differential rates and tariff details, details of coach drivers and escorts and guides. This helps him/her to have complete control over the smooth conduct of the tour as well as to execute contingency plans if required at times.

- **Escort or guide's itinerary**

An escort or guide should know in detail where the group is being taken to, what activities and events are to be organised, time management of the tour and other group details. Vast experience, knowledge of practical ground difficulties, presence of mind and readiness to handle crisis of an escort or guide adds to the successful conduct of a tour. The escorts being physically with the group/tourist all through the journey, they are more than expected to deliver and keep the image of the company in high esteem.

- **Vendor's itinerary**

Vendors play a major role in delivering what is mentioned in the clients itinerary. Hence it is unavoidable but to be aware of the specific parts of the itinerary so as to make the necessary arrangements in advance and delivery to the fullest satisfaction of the guests when they arrive at their

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place. For instance, a hotel may organise a surprise welcome event when the group arrives as per the nature of the group and time of arrival, may offer special services and enhance the service satisfaction and value addition. It is possible only if the vendors know at least the specific part of clients itinerary which is expected from them.

- **Coach driver's itinerary**

A typical coach driver's itinerary includes group arrival point and time, pick-up points and time, turn around points, restricted areas of driving, sightseeing activities, other entertainment activities, parking spaces, entry points, drop-in points all with specific time. For instance, it may be seen that at places a driver is asked to drive slow which is mentioned in his itinerary so that tourist may have a better view of a monument and take photographs. A copy of the client's itinerary resembles a coach driver's itinerary with the above mentioned additional informations. This helps the driver in coordinating with the escort and managing the group.

22.2 STEPS IN DEVELOPING/PLANNING A TOUR ITINERARY

Step 1 – Research other tours in the market place

Careful planning is required when developing an itinerary for your tour. A helpful exercise is to take a tour which will be similar to the tour you wish to develop and obtain copies of other tour brochures for comparison. This will help you develop ideas for your tour, give you an idea of what is already in the market, give you detailed information on terms and conditions and provide possible ideas for brochure design and its content.

Step 2 – Name your tour:

Step 3 – Map out the duration, frequency and departure point of your tour

When will your tour depart? am/pm

When will your tour return? am/pm

How often will your tour operate? per/ wk

Where will the central departure point be?

Will you offer accommodation pick up? Yes No

Step 4 – List the major locations and highlights of your tour

Where will your tour travel to?

What are the main highlights that visitors are going to experience?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-



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Step 5 – Research your tour content and commentary

List the main topics you wish to include in your commentary, such as flora, fauna, history, culture, as well as the main points to consider with each of these topics and the resources you will use to find the information.

| Topic | Main points to consider | Resource |
|-------|-------------------------|----------|
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Step 6 – List any third party activities, attractions, entrance fees and inclusions

List any activities offered by other companies or entrance fees and determine if they will be included in your tour price or offered as extras. For example cruises, bike rides, entry into national parks, caves etc...

| Description of activity | Supplier Details | Cost per Person | Included in price YES/NO |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
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Step 7 – Obtain permission to access private and public properties

Whether you are passing through, stopping for meals or visiting attractions, it is imperative that you obtain permission in writing from the property owner prior to accessing any private property. If travelling through property managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation, you will need to apply for a *Commercial Operator’s License*.

If your itinerary includes entering Aboriginal Land, restricted area you will be required to apply for Entry Permits for which you will need to gain access approval.

Step 8 - Perfecting your tour timing

It is crucially important to map out your tour itinerary accurately to ensure that you arrive on time for activity and meal stops and return to your original destination at a reasonable time.

| Stops | Time | Location | Type of stop – scenic, meal, activity |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|--|
| Start | | | |
| Stop one | | | |
| Stop two | | | |
| Stop three | | | |
| End | | | |

Step 9 – Test driving your tour itinerary

It is very important to do several ‘try runs’ of your tour itinerary to ensure you get the timing right. It is also a good idea to invite people who have some knowledge of the industry and are prepared to give you constructive comments, to do a tour.



ACTIVITY 22.1

Prepare a model itinerary for a local tour in your state for 5 Nights/6 Days follow all the procedures and formulation process except for permissions and test drive. Discuss with friends in making it more viable.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.1

1. What is an itinerary?
2. Name the types of itinerary.
3. What is the difference between client's and vendors itinerary?
4. List the steps in planning an itinerary.
5. What types of permissions are required before finalising an itinerary?



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22.3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR PREPARING ITINERARY

1. Duration of the tour.
2. Minimum time for visiting each city.
3. Purpose of travel and special interest.
4. Selecting cities to be included in the itinerary.
5. Mode of intercity travel. (by road, rail, air)
6. Selection of any special air fare or rail fare.
7. Selecting the hotels to be used.
8. First arrival and last departure from international airport.
9. Inclusion of places requiring restricted area permits.
10. Best time for visiting

22.4 DO'S AND DO NOT'S OF ITINERARY

Do's

- Do add all places of halt with date and time.
- Do provide a brief summary of the city(s)/country and the sights.
- Do provide name of the hotel, type of vehicle, time of arrival and departure.
- Do include meal plans.
- Do provide links for additional information about the city, country, sights, restaurants, hotels.
- Do provide as many relevant maps as possible.
- Do provide names and places written in the local language.
- Do provide unique information about the destination (Ex: scams and customs).

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Don'ts

- Don't add too many details which might cause confusion.
- Don't leave directions ambiguous. There are lots of distractions when coming into a new city, be as specific as possible.
- Don't forget about the nature of group, age group, physical disabilities, eating habits and language barriers.
- Don't go overboard on the hotel recommendations. Most hotels are pretty similar in a given price range.
- Don't include shops which are not registered, restricted areas without availing permits etc.
- Don't forget about restaurant recommendations.

22.5 ITINERARY FOR GIT AND FIT TOURS

GIT

A Group Inclusive Tour itinerary religiously follows the fixed itinerary and adheres to schedule. Any GIT package tour has no other option but follow it. The reason behind it that there is no scope for alterations as it is attached to several other pre-arrangements. Any change in the existing itinerary will cause complete disturbance in the total tour and affect the entire distribution channel. Services of a package tour along the itinerary like hotel room, cars, guide, flight, event entry etc. are fixed much in advance and any modification results in chaos and the entire schedule spoils. Then it becomes very difficult for operator as well as supplier to rectify or rearrange schedule. Immediate alternative changes may not be possible and it incurs loss for all the participants in the process. Groups with specific travel limits or individuals being part of such groups may tend to prefer such itinerary based tours since this also works on cost benefits to them.

FIT

Foreign Independent Tour itinerary leaves enough room for modifications. In a sense it is flexible and may help clients meet their personal requirements. Clients may ask the operator to make certain changes as per their interest and preferred activities. Operators may do the needful against the availability of flights, trains, vacant rooms and other services. Such an itinerary lends good space for tourists to do activities of their personal choice and interest. An immediate change in the schedule and alternate arrangement is possible here unlike GIT. Thus independent travellers prefer FIT tours as there is a lot of scope for additions and deletions to the itinerary. But such a flexibility always comes with an additional price.



ACTIVITY 22.2

Visit a major tourist place in your locality and meet a group on a package tour. Interact with them on inputs related to a package tour and write a note.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.2

1. What background information is required while preparing an itinerary?
2. List out some major do's of itinerary preparation.
3. List out some major don'ts of itinerary preparation.
4. Mention any two features of itinerary for FIT.
5. Mention any two features of itinerary for GIT.

22.6 MEANING AND TYPES OF TOUR PACKAGES

22.6.1 Meaning

Package tour is a package of transport and accommodation with some other services, which is sold as a single holiday package for an all inclusive price.

Packaged tours have revolutionised the way people travel in the modern day. The concept of package tour is as old as the introduction of paid holidays, annual paid holidays and Thomas Cook holiday programmes. This concept has received rapid attention in the world. Packaging is the combination of related and complementary services into a single price.

Package tour is the sum total of variety of services offered to the tourists in one price, which normally is less expensive than that of each individual items. Such tours largely include the services of accommodation, transport, food, guide and other ground and miscellaneous services. Transport and accommodation form a significant proportion of the cost and service of any organised package tour.

In short, package tours are very economical and convenient for tourists as they help them locate tourist spots, hotel and modes of conveyance with ease and at the opportune moment.

Package tours not only save time and money tourists but also help suppliers to ensure sale of their services thus balancing the demand and supply in the travel market. Tour operator being a consolidator or wholesaler assembles primary and miscellaneous services with his own price tag. However, packages are designed



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for the independent and group tours after comprehensive research and analysis before it is launched in the market.

22.6.2 Types

Package tours are generally classified on the basis of their operation and types of services included. These are basically classified into independent tour, escorted tour, incentive tour, hosted tour and freedom tour.

- **Escorted Tour:** An escorted tour is conducted sending along with the group/ individual a well trained, experienced and qualified, guide/escort to provide information and assistance to the group at the origin, en-route and the destinations about flight boarding, baggage handling, hotel check-in, meal arrangements along with interpretation about the places of tourist importance during sightseeing and all along the trip. The tour escort helps the group in check-in procedures, hotels, food facilities and provide timely assistance and advice wherever and whenever required. Escort is expected to have the requisite knowledge, presence of mind and crisis management skills.
- **Independent Tour:** A package tour is called as independent tour when tourists want to travel independently. It is designed for such people who want the services of their interest to be included as part of the package. These tourists are very much particular about selecting mode of travel, types of attraction at destinations and accommodation as it suits their time, comfort and budget. Either individual service is purchased or combination of services is bought by the client which is then packaged. One or more of the components may be changed as per the taste of the tourists. Such tour packages give a free hand to the tourists. Because these tours are designed as per their desire they ought to be costlier than the group tours. But the element of flexibility makes them more interesting. With the increasing awareness in this regard more tourists are now showing interest in such tours.
- **Hosted Tour:** A hosted tour refers to a tour handled by another agency, ground operator or destination management agency as their representative of the tour operator, wholesaler or principal provider. They actually play the role of a host on behalf of a tour operator away for making ground services like cab, coach, guide, confirmation of hotel rooms, toll taxes, entry tickets, etc. as per the agreement. The wholesaler may not have its presence in a particular destination and thus takes the help of another agency to host the tour. A tour operator operating from outside the country may have a different host at different destinations in host country. Hosting agencies take care of all the requirements of the tourists as per the contract.

- **Incentive Tour:** Incentive tour is an organised package tour conducted for employees usually sponsored by the business firms or corporate houses as incentives to their employees. These tours are also all-inclusive package tours that include all essential components of a standard package tour. Sponsoring firms bear all the costs on behalf of the groups/individuals for incentive tours to further encourage their employees as rewards or incentives. For example, if a team successfully completes a project for XYZ company and brings cash inflows, the management may send the team for a weeklong incentive tour to Singapore and bear all the expenses.
- **Freedom Tour:** Working class, these days, is inclined to travel but have limited disposable income. Such tours are designed as per the choices of the tourists. Tourists, individuals or groups of common interest, select services like travel mode, hotels, destinations, meal plans and activities etc. and plan for a tour. Such very flexible planning is assisted by tour operators and then they organise freedom trips. These are suitable for those people who want to decide where, when and how they want to travel and what they wish to do at destinations.



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Do you know

Luxury Package Tours in Luxury Palace on Wheels!

Luxury rail packages have come a long way in India since the introduction of Palace on Wheels train in 1982. These days, there is an array of luxurious tourist trains offering extravagant luxury rail tour packages across selected destinations and regions for enchanting Indian holidays. Train tours offered by *Palace on Wheels*, *Maharajas Express*, *the Indian Maharaja*, *Deccan Odyssey* and *the Golden Chariot* are talk of luxury travel circuits around the world.

A typical luxury package on say Palace on Wheels may cost anywhere between US\$ 500 to US\$ 770 varying with seasons. The itinerary spanning over 7 nights and 8 days, is no less than a surprise box that makes you relish a new surprise every day. The journey lets you spend a fabulous week in India and bask the immortal grandeur of Taj, the mystical sand dunes of Jaisalmer, the romanticism of Udaipur, the historical magnificence of Jaipur, the adventure of Ranthambore and the never dying charm of Delhi the capital of India.

22.7 PACKAGE ELEMENTS AND DEALS

A package tour is a sum total of travel and other related services assembled to make it feasible and attractive to tourists. In designing package tours several

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elements play a vital role. These elements can be listed as transportation (means of travel such as flights, railways, buses, ships etc.), accommodation facilities to stay at different points of halt, ground services such as luxury and other coaches, car rentals. Guides and interpreters, entertainment and activities, attractions at the destinations, insurance cover etc. The elements of a package tour hold the success and sale of package tour in the travel market. In order to make a package tour more appealing and attractive, wholesalers examine the buying ability of customers and the cost of components of the package tour, and finally add a profit margin to arrive at the final price of the package tour. Pricing of a package will also determine its sale and it's done after a proper costing and demands in the market.

Following elements play a major role in planning, designing, marketing, selling and attaining success and acceptance:

22.7.1 Accommodation

Accommodation is an important element of package tour and it shares a good amount of the total cost of package. Accommodation can be of primary and supplementary in nature. Primary service providers are the category star hotels, resorts, business hotels, and international hotels. They are the conventional accommodation operators with the provision of providing room cum food and allied services. Lodges, homestays, guest houses, bungalows, service apartments, etc. are supplementary service providers. Depending upon the nature of the groups package, operators include the right kind of a hotel accommodation into the package. Comfortable and safe stay is always a serious concern of tourists and this element determines the strength of a tour package.

22.7.2 Attractions/Sightseeing

Adding the most appealing attractions in a package tour sightseeing is one of the most important elements of a package tour. The best of experiences are counted on the kind of sightseeing conducted and not to forget inclusion of attractions to a package tour must be sequenced in such a manner that the customer satisfaction is enhanced from point to point. The most exciting should always be listed last and the itinerary needs to be planned in such a way. Sightseeing is, no doubt, the backbone of the whole tour package as it serves the prime objective of the tourists visit to a destination.

22.7.3 Transportation

Travelling is part of any tour. Transportation thus becomes yet another focal component of a package tour. The journey of a tourist from origin (place of

residence) to destination (host country or place of visit) involves tourists' movement and it requires a suitable means of transport. Safe, comfortable and quick modes of transport are wanted by the tourists. Quicker means help tourists spend more time at the destinations and at the same time can visit more places in a country. Transportation modes can be air travel, railways, buses, ships, cars etc.

- **Airways:** Air transportation in the modern days has great influence on the travel industry. Package tours especially international tours have benefitted a lot. This is a quick mode of transport and most foreign tourists prefer travelling by air. The component of air travel includes international and domestic flight tickets and on-board services.
- **Railways:** Railways are most used form of transport for package tours in countries like India and also Europe. Railways connect destinations which are away from airports or where air services are not available. For example, the Indrail pass, Eurail Pass, Brital Pass and AMTRAK are booked in advance to provide alternative and quickest mode of transport and different experience to the visitors. IRCTC in India is offering a variety of package tours such as Bharat Darshan.
- **Ships, Cruise or Ferry Services:** Passenger ships and ferry services are used for water transport. For example, ferries ply between Chennai, Vizag and Kolkata to Andaman and Nicobar islands. Certain operators are using this mode for package tours to these islands. They include room, food, drinks, sightseeing, entertainment, casino, etc on-board.
- **Bus services:** Bus services are mostly utilised in domestic tourism for short distance package tours. This is being used by regional tour operators to take tourists to interior destinations as well which otherwise can not be accessed either by air or train. Though there isn't much craze for bus services, they are part of any destination tour for group tours.

22.7.4 Ground Services

Ground services are also an equally important element of package tours. Tourists can not do away with ground services when they are at a destination. For local conveyance they need coaches, cabs, to know about places they may need guides and interpreters to help them convey in the language of the land. Car rentals, luxury coaches, other motor vehicles services are an active part of package tours enabling better travel with and around a destination.



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22.7.5 Events and Activities

Events are of different kind at destinations. Entertainment parks, theme parks, sports and leisure clubs are used for a variety of events and activities. Events such as meetings, incentive tours, conferences, conventions, exhibitions etc are some times part of certain package tours or package tours of such events are also offered by operators. Events and activities may be offered as complementary to tourists to add value to the package.

22.7.6 Insurance

Loss of baggage, loss to life and sudden withdrawal of tour or complete break of tour due to natural or manmade interruptions are issues related to travel. Insurance covers this loss and tourists can ensure safe journey plus surety against loss. Insurance companies have customised travel insurance for the foreign outbound travel for Indian travellers. Insurance now-a-days is included in the total cost of the package or otherwise one can choose from the travel insurance policies available in the market. Many nations have made it compulsory for the visitors to have insurance before entering their countries.

Monsoon Package Tours!

Monsoons may stop you from going out but there are good number of tourists preferring go on a holiday while it is raining all over especially Western Ghats in India. Monsoon tourism is now seriously being promoted by tourism departments of southern states Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and also Maharashtra. Monsoon tour packages are selling and people from drier regions are showing more interest just to have the feel of rain amidst lush green forests of Western Ghats.

Major destinations for monsoon packages are Agumbe, Shimoga, Coorg, Munar, Yercaud, Dindigal, Amboli, Mandu, Ooty, Kodaikanal, Kudremukha, Mahabaleshwar etc. Inbound craze for monsoon tourism is also seen over the years especially from gulf countries and Europe. Though rain in many places is interruption for touring, in this case it itself has become an attraction and selling proposition for Western Ghats!

22.8 GROUP INCLUSIVE TOURS AND TAILOR-MADE PACKAGE OR FITS

22.8.1 Group Inclusive Travel (GIT)

Group Inclusive Travel (GIT) comprise groups of travelers that share a particular mutual affiliation, such as belonging to the same club or business

organisation. This type of tour is mostly conducted with fixed itinerary. There can be short-halt and long-halt travel in case of the GIT. The former is meant for the MICE activities and the latter is apt for the leisure and pleasure activities. Group tour packages are comparatively cheaper as compared to the FIT tour packages. There is bulk of sale of hotel rooms, airline seats, and coach services in group organised as package tours. This type of tour differs from an escorted tour in that the travellers in a GIT share a commonality, while the members of an escorted tour share no common bond other than perhaps living in the same region. Tourists on special-interest tours travel to a particular destination for an experience that reflects their mutual interests, and travellers in GITs form a group merely to pool their purchasing power and realise savings.

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22.8.2 Free Independent Tours (FIT)

Tour packages are customised with personalised services for the Free Independent Tours. Such deals offer flexibility in selecting services of their choice and interest and added to a tour package. They allow travellers more freedom to vacation on their own without following a scheduled itinerary or travelling with a group, yet these tours offer the traveller the convenience of paying for all facets of a trip prior to departure, including transportation, transfers, lodging, sight-seeing excursions and often some meals. The business of FIT is operated to reach out the niche customers as it satisfies the lifestyle and travel behaviour. Those tourists travelling on an independent tour outside their home country are referred to as FITs, and those free independent tourists traveling inside their home country are referred to as Domestic Independent Travellers (DITs).



ACTIVITY 22.3

Visit travel portals of top travel companies, study the salient features and note down the similarities and differences of various tour packages.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.3

- (a) What is package tour?
- (b) Name the types of tour package.
- (c) What is an escorted package tour?
- (d) List some major elements of package tours.
- (e) What is the major difference between an FIT and GIT package tour?

22.9 PACKAGE TOUR FORMULATION PROCESS

Notes

Formulation of a package tour involves managerial approach and the process involves proper planning, itinerary preparation, designing, costing and marketing. Research and development of firms invest time, money, experience and knowledge in the formulation of package tours. Before they are launched on full scale, marketing divisions do pilot launch and check the feasibility and possible acceptance of their new package tours. Below is a detailed sequence of steps followed in the formulation of tour packages:

- **Market research:** Marketing research involves study of the economy of the country to be visited, foreign exchange rate, demand for the product, consumer profile, competitors in the market, studying the product components like sightseeing, transport, baggage allowance, ground service etc., sales status, channels of distribution, and promotional measures.
- **Prepare an itinerary:** A well planned itinerary holds the key for success of a package tour. It needs to incorporate exciting places of interest and enough scope for events and activities.
- **Identification:** Identify and decide on mode of travel, hotels, destinations, dates, capacity and others.
- **Contracts:** Sign contracts with principal service providers. Agreements with various service providers well in advance is important. Contracts for timely delivery of services by hotels, transportation, entry permits, ground handler etc. has to be signed.
- **Costing of the package:** After having signed contracts and designing of package systematic costing of the package will be done, which includes cost to be incurred towards all elements of a package tour are summed up and then package is given a mark-up price before a price tag is decided upon.
- **Tour Brochure:** Promotional material is another important aspect in the formulation process. Both print and electronic media are widely used but brochures are an integral part of it which play a major role. Hence designing and printing attractive brochures and other material is very essential for marketing.
- **Marketing of the product:** In line with demand requirements of the markets right kind of marketing strategies are framed and then the product is marketed through the above listed means of promotional material.
- **Documentation:** This last step in formulation process includes copy of the clients itinerary, tour vouchers, travel and other entry tickets, luggage labels and other useful information for the clients.

22.10 TOUR BROCHURE DESIGNING

Brochures are an important means of conveying your image and message to potential customers.

Brochures should do more than describe the how, what, where and when of your business; to stimulate interest and demand. They need to be:

- visually appealing;
- convey the right amount of information; and
- brochure should be comparable to other brochures in the industry.

When drafting the copy of a brochure, one should make sure not to include any unacceptable (illegal) clauses or misleading information.

There has been an increase in the number of legal actions brought against operators for loss of enjoyment or deceptive and misleading advertising.

It is essential to honestly represent product/service in promotional material. It is advisable to seek legal advice in this regard to avoid any inconvenience later.

22.10.1 Tips for Designing Brochures

- White space is GOOD! Avoid the folded lines!
- Get a professional print job.
- Use simple, easy to read fonts.
- Make your text conversational and use bullet points and minimal text - be concise!
- Be consistent with your design.
- Use high quality, exciting images and use 'hero' images, don't overcrowd with photos.
- Make your headings and sub headings clear and bold.
- Maps can be very useful, but be sure to make them clear.
- Clearly explain the product or service, and what all is included.
- The top third of a brochure is the most important - make it count!
- Determine your unique selling features and highlight.
- Include all details - prices, times, location, validity dates, booking etc.
- Clearly display contact details for bookings (phone/fax, email and web addresses)
- Leave room on the back of the brochure for a travel agent's stamp.



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22.11 TOUR VOUCHER**Notes**

Tour vouchers/travel vouchers are ‘proof of payment’ for the services by the clients in advance to the tour operators. The client pays a lump sum amount to a tour operator for their entire package or parts of the package that are organised by a tour company. The tour company is responsible for paying each service provider (supplier) in the package.

As per the agreement vouchers should be accepted by the supplier as proof of payment, retained and submitted to the tour operator along with an invoice for payment, after the service has been provided. Payment for the service may not be provided before the clients make use of the service or participate in the supplier’s tour. Collected vouchers or the voucher codes are sent to the issuer for payment. Vouchers may be issued in the form of tickets or in the form of printed notes. Voucher should carry on them key information such as what service is being provided by whom, so there is a clear understanding between the clients and the supplier when the service promised is availed.

22.11.1 Docketing the Documents

Docketing in package tours is integral to the whole process. All the necessary documents pertaining to a particular package tour are added to the list of docket and given to each tourist. Documents such as package purchase receipts, permit certificates, tour vouchers, special entry tickets, package tour client’s itinerary, brochure of the package tour, copies of deal agreement, sheets of terms and conditions, do’s and don’ts during the tour etc. These documents, certificates and travel material are actually put into either a bag or wallet and handed over to each client before the commencement of the tour. This enables the clients to have clear-cut prior knowledge of the tour, their terms of agreement and helps them in a safe and comfortable tour having with them documents for immediate reference whenever and wherever required. These documents may also form basis for claim incase the operator fails to deliver the promised service in the package.

22.11.2 Tour Programming

There is more to a package tour than the core activities of sightseeing and excursion. Better programming of a package tour adds value to it and makes it more appealing. This is done by adding attractive elements to a package. In the process including itinerary with attractive programmes makes the clients feel the worth of it in purchasing the packages. It is important for tour operators to make their packages more appealing and attractive by adding value so as to

motivate tourist to buy their products. This is only possible with programme. Today people are inclined to avail pre-arranged trips; this segment has been growing rapidly and opened doors of opportunities for tour operators.

Programming increases the quality of packages as a variety of activities added such as angling, dancing, photography, music, painting, sculpting, swimming, fishing, rowing, trekking, cooking, cultivating, surfing, canoeing, etc. While on a tour a lot of tourists show interest in participating, learning and experiencing these activities. Annual or seasonal cultural events, fairs, festivals, around visiting places of tourist interest are generally included as special ones by the tour operators in the itinerary. Mentioned below are some of the benefits of tour programming for both tourists as well as operators:

- Brings in professionalism into tour operations.
- Adds value to products resulting in value for money for the customers.
- Opens opportunities for several service providers on the ground.
- Boosts industry with business opportunities for tour operators.
- Helps in creating new segments and also catering required services to them.
- Gives added advantage in marketing packages.
- Meets a variety of demands of tourists.



ACTIVITY 22.3

Visit an office of the nearby travel agency/tour operator, collect as many package tour brochures, study them and design a brochure of your own.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.4

1. List the steps involved in package tour formulation process.
2. Who should the operators sign contracts with?
3. Mention some tips for a good tour brochure.
4. What is tour voucher?
5. What is the benefit of tour programming?
6. What is docketing in tour packaging?



Notes

MODULE – 6A

Travel and Tour Operation
Business



Notes

Itinerary Planning and Tour Packaging



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- The meaning and importance of itinerary.
- The different types of itinerary their features and salient differences between them.
- Steps to be followed in the research and preparation of any itinerary.
- The do's and don'ts to be taken into consideration while preparing an itinerary.
- The meaning and importance of package tours.
- Understanding of the elements and deals of package tours such as transportation (means of travel such as flights, railways, buses, ships etc.), accommodation facilities to stay at different points of halt, ground services such as luxury and other coaches, car rentals, guides and interpreters, entertainment and activities, attractions at the destinations, insurance cover.
- Understood the relevance and importance of brochures and other promotional material for package tours.
- Obtained information on the importance of programming in packaging and the concepts of docketing and tour voucher.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Elaborate on the meaning, importance and types of tour itinerary.
2. Describe in detail the background information required for drawing a good itinerary and the steps involved in it.
3. List out the do's and don'ts of itinerary preparation.
4. Explain the meaning, types and elements of package tours.
5. Explain the steps involved in the tour package formulation process.
6. Design a brochure of your own for a domestic tour package.
7. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Tour voucher.
 - (b) Docketing for package tours.
 - (c) Tour programming.



ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS



Notes

22.1

1. Itinerary is a schedule or timetable prepared in association with a package tour.
2. Client's itinerary, tour manager's itinerary, escort or guide's itinerary, coach driver's itinerary, vendor's itinerary.
3. Client's itinerary is given to the client or tourist which carries actual route, points of halt, activities, stay etc. Whereas vendor's itinerary is given to vendor of his specific portions so as to provide the agreed services when the group arrives at his point.
4. Research other similar tours in the market, naming the tour, list major locations and highlights, researching tour content, list third party activities etc., obtaining required permits, perfecting the timings and test driving the itinerary.
5. Permissions such as access to private property, forest, sensitive zones, aboriginal lands, restricted areas etc.

22.2

1. Duration of tour, visiting time required, purpose, city and attractions information, mode of travel, special fares, cuisines of areas, special permits, nature of the group etc.
2. Add all places of halt, summary and details of places of visit, hotel, vehicle information, route maps.
3. Don't add too much of information, not to leave directions confusing, not to include shops, places and services which are not registered.
4. Flexible for changes, designed with inputs of tourist's interest, enough space for tourist's personal activities.
5. Fixed itinerary, religiously follows the schedule, no room for personal choice, cheaper than FIT, travel time limits.

22.3

1. Package tour is the sum total of variety of services offered to the tourists in one price, which is normally less expensive than that of each individual item.

MODULE – 6A

Travel and Tour Operation
Business



Notes

Itinerary Planning and Tour Packaging

2. Independent tours, escorted tours, incentive tours, hosted tours and freedom tours.
3. An escorted tour is conducted sending along with the group/individual a well trained, experienced and qualified, guide/escort to provide information and assistance to the group.
4. Transportation (means of travel such as flights, railways, buses, ships etc.), accommodation facilities to stay at different points of halt, ground services such as luxury and other coaches, car rentals. Guides and interpreters, entertainment and activities, attractions at the destinations, insurance cover.
5. FITs are customised, flexible in changes and are generally costlier where as GITs follow fixed itinerary and provide only pre-decided services, cheaper compared to FITs and are based on common interest of a group.

22.4

1. Market research, itinerary preparation, deciding on type of services and suppliers, signing contracts, costing, designing brochures, marketing and documentation.
2. With service providers such as hotels, transportation, ground handlers etc.
3. Visually appealing, convey the right amount of information, consistent, simple to follow.
4. Tour vouchers/travel vouchers are 'proof of payment' for the services by the clients in advance, to the tour operators.
5. Programming adds value to a package and makes it more appealing. This is done by adding attractive elements to a package. In the process including itinerary with attractive programmes makes the clients feel the worth of it in purchasing the packages.