



Cooperative Education Report

Tourism as a Development Strategy in Regions of Nepal

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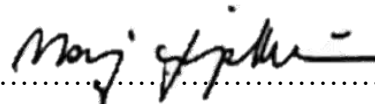
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Abstract

This cooperative report entitled “Tourism as Development Strategy in Regions of Nepal” has the goal to examine the potential scope of Tourism as an underlying opportunities in the untapped areas of Nepal. Objectives of the study include: (1) researching on the primary activities of recruitment process including of collection of applications, selecting the short listing, training and development, etc.,(2) obtaining knowledge of the research and development program undertaken by the company to boost the quality and management of human resources occupied to improve the performance, and(3) acquiring real scenario of the total value chain process and making analysis of deviation and required improvement accordingly to prolong the brand image. With the company, I was assigned to work as assistant operating manager in the department of Sales, Accounts and marketing. Main responsibilities are to get insight on handling the client relationship, creating new corporate customers, and getting in touch with hotels for timely bookings.

Upon the completion of the internship, it found that the problem was resolved by means of coordination among the team with systematic flow of information and with the proper direction of the supervisor including other senior members of the organization. In this matter, student is able to learn more about working in a team structure and coordinating with seniors in order to achieve the objective. It creates a healthy working environment where student is able to achieve organizational goals and also enrich his public relations, which are very important for future career development and profession.

Keyword: Ticketing, Client Relationship, Market Scope

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Hamro Tours and Travels Ltd. is a familiar name in the travel and tourism sector of Nepal is engaged in the healthy growth of travel trade in the country. It is run by a team of young and energetic professionals fully conversant with modern day's travel trade and its practices, which have, background with various reputed Airlines and travel Agencies. Hamro Tours and Travels Ltd. an IATA accredited Travel Agency in Nepal. The office of Hamro Tours and Travels Ltd. is centrally located in the hub of Kathmandu commercial area, within close proximity of major Airline offices in Kathmandu. The office is well appointed with the internal and external communications, being effectively maintained by telephone, fax, internet, computer networking and computer reservation systems (CRS) to meet up the demand of our Clientele. The company, one of the units in a group is based on a solid foundation with multi-discipline business experience, such as travel and tourism, IT sector, software developing, hotel reservation, campaign organizers etc. (hamro holidays, 2019)

1.1 Company profile

Hamro Tours and Travels, is a fully licensed and registered travel agency / company in Nepal and recognized by the tourism authority of the Government of Nepal, Nepal Association of Tour & Travel Agent (NATTA) and Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) as providing comprehensive Travel Package for leisure, Group, Charters & small-business traveler, backed by real-time Website & unmatched products. Since its beginning in 2003, they have been growing at a fast pace aspiring to emerge as one of the leading travel company in Nepal. (discover nepal, 2006) The very fact that they are a young company, they are open to new ideas, flexible & adaptable to client's needs. The organization is headed & professionally managed by people having vast experience in hospitality business. With central location in Durbar Marg, they are equipped with requisite infrastructure & an excellent network of ground handling agents covering all of Nepal and its Sub Continent. The organization is handling tours and trekking to Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan and also promoting India, Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Maldives and Sri Lanka. We are committed towards offering a full range of products and services to cater to the specific needs from escorted group and free and independent packages for the general public to incentive and conference packages for corporate firms. (government of nepal, 2009)

1.2. Organization Structure

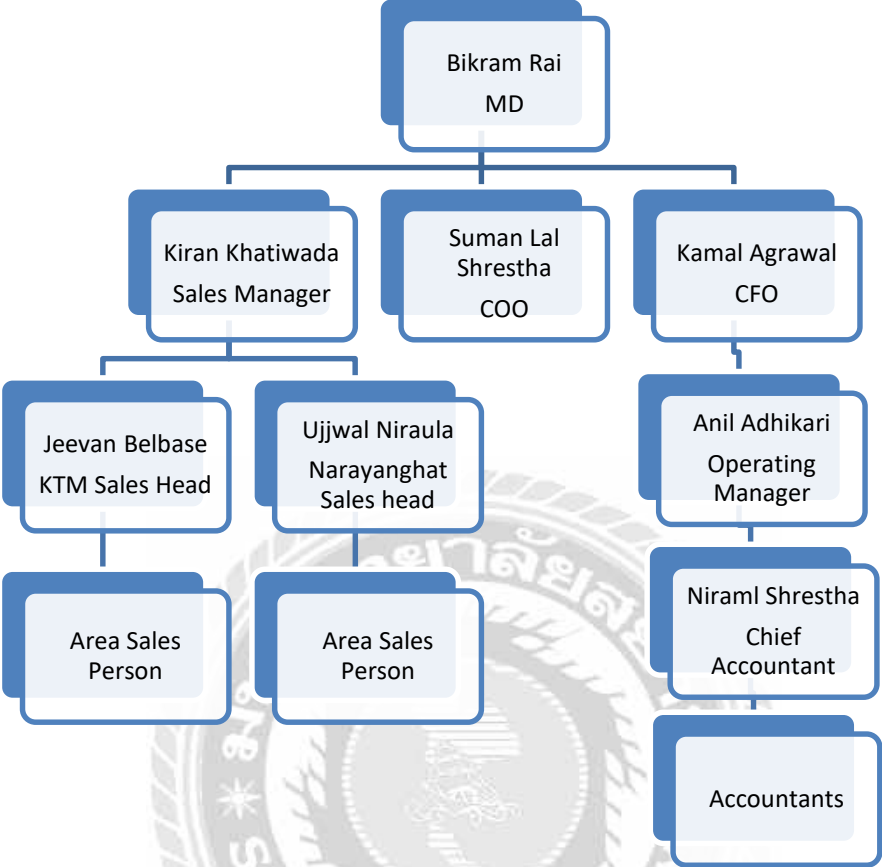


Figure 1. Organization Structure

1.3. Statement of the Report

Nepal with rich ancient cultures set against the most dramatic scenery in the world is a land of discovery and unique experience. For broad minded individuals who value an experience that is authentic and mesmerizing, Nepal is the ideal destination. It is unsurpassed that the sheer diversity Nepal boasts, from steamy jungle and Terai to the icy peaks of the world's highest mountains means that the range of activities on offer. Trekking, mountaineering, rafting in spectacular scenery are just three things Nepal is famous for. Activities as diverse as Elephant Polo and a micro-light flight through the Himalayas show that in Nepal, the only boundary is your imagination. With 15 National & Wildlife Parks (two are UNESCO Heritage sites) (UNESCO, 1994) Nepal is one of the last places on earth you can spot the Asiatic rhinoceros and the Royal Bengal Tiger.

For many, Nepal's greatest attraction is its people. The traditions and famous hospitality of its many different groups are indeed a major part of what makes Nepal so special. From remote mountain villages to medieval hill-towns and the ancient cities of the Kathmandu Valley, the people of Nepal are always welcoming. Come and experience the strong and unique flavors of Nepalese cuisine, prepared with love and a depth of flavor or join in and celebrate at one of the many festivals year round. In fact, with more festivals than days of the year, there is nowhere else in the world that can offer as many festivities as Nepal. Tourism is one of the mainstay of Nepalese economy. It is also a major source of foreign exchange and revenue. Possessing 8 of the 10 highest mountains in the world, Nepal is a hotspot destination for mountaineers, rock climbers and people seeking adventures. The Hindu, Buddhist and other cultural heritage sites of Nepal, and around the year fair weather are also strong attractions. (Visit Nepal, 2004)

Nepal is the country of the Mount Everest, the highest mountain peak in the world, and the Birthplace of Gautama Buddha- Lumbini. Mountaineering and other types of adventure tourism and ecotourism are important attractions for visitors. There are other important religious pilgrimage sites throughout the country for the followers of various sects and religions.

According to statistics from Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), a total of 598,204 foreign tourists entered the country via aerial route in 2012. The government of Nepal declared 2011 to be Nepal Tourism Year, and hoped to attract one million foreign tourists to the country during that year.

1.3.1 Problem Statement

The problem that is thoroughly being faced in this business is lack of infrastructure to capitalize over the increasing tourism industry. Unmanaged roads, transportation bring big loopholes for the travelers and demotivate them to stay for long period in Nepal. Secondly, the labor is a very big problem due to the lack of require skill set, incentives and payment so as a result each year thousands of labor in search of good pay leave Nepal and travel abroad to find a job and lastly, the political problem there is no set rules or a systematic process on business laws and regulations and most of the bureaucrats are corrupt.

1.4. Objective of the study

- Researching on the primary activities of recruitment process including of collection of applications, selecting the short listing, training and development etc.
- Obtaining knowledge of the research and development program undertaken by the company to boost the quality and management of human resources occupied to improve the performance.
- And finally, acquiring real scenario of the total value chain process and making analysis of deviation and required improvement accordingly to prolong the brand image.

1.5. Roles& Responsibilities of Student

The report is prepared on the company Hamro Holiday which talks about tourism as a development strategy.

- Managing cash book
- Booking hotels and managing transport vehicles
- Ticketing
- Accounting for sales
- Visiting bank for withdrawal and depositing cash
- working as a receptionist

Chapter 2: Internship Activities

Talking about the internship activities I was basically assisted to all departments so as to have a look on how each and every department is operated and the primly focused areas were the sales, marketing and accounts so as to have a full knowledge on about how to market products, how to handle and maintain the finances and how to have the sales increased through market visit, client relationship so as to have a rich distribution network, so I got insight into all these handy areas as it's the driving wheel of any business as the roots of all these prime departments are connected with each other.

2.1. Assignments and Responsibilities of the Student

On Hamro Tours and Travels Ltd. I was appointed as the assistant of the director. My job was to handle the application, recovery the client list, day to day data sources transaction and taken participation on their different group discussion.

Everyone from interns to top level employees has a specific role and responsibility to full fill and they must adhere to it. Being an intern for Three months tenure I too had been assigned with assignments, duties which are as:

1. Keeping a track of all financial accounts such as daily sales, purchase, and cash collection.
2. Keeping a track of transportation expenses on daily basis
3. Provide designs or schemes for marketing and advertising campaign.
4. Going for field visit so as to know about current market situation and finding new possible opportunities to expand in.
5. Monitoring and keeping record of competitor activities and their market standing on about what are they planning and on what basis.
6. Look after the overall operation internally too about how is the backhanding operation and maintenance done.
7. Handle day to day data sources transaction.

Basically my internship was also divided in three phases primarily according to three months periods in which My first week in the company was among the most important as I was trained to carry out my assignments.

The second month was all about hotel bookings, every morning, I had to make sure that the dates where there were no more allocations were closed out to avoid any additional booking. If a booking is made in a hotel in which we don't have any more allocations, we would have to ring the hotel and we would have 3 options. Firstly, the hotel sells us the room at our contacted rates which is the best solution, or the hotel can sell us the room but they offer us higher rates or the hotel is fully booked and we would have to find an alternative hotel which matches the same criteria such as location, star rating and amenities to provide options to our agents. This task is of almost importance if we want to sell as many rooms as possible in the best way, especially during the high season when there are many events such as concerts, sports matches and festivals.

Also in the second month my role was basically to assist company in quickly booking flight tickets and making hotel bookings. This phase helped me to directly deal with the customers and get in direct touch with them. Also I was able to be in touch with hotels and resorts of Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.

The last months the most important for me, was focused on overall activities of business in the final month I was not specified to a specific department, I was to work under different departments every other day at first it was a bit hectic but with time it was a great learning experience as it taught me to manage my time and handle various kinds of job at a same time.

In overall, these three departments helped me know basically how the business of Ticketing and Booking is done whether it is any business field and also helped me understand the importance of three wheels i.e. Finance, Sales and Marketing in practical and allowing me to use some of my learning and insight of theoretical knowledge in real world business place.

Chapter 3: Identification of Problems Encountering during the Internship

It's basically natural to have faced with problem anywhere you head to work. What problem does is it helps you gain experience and at the end that is what you look in an organization to learn because the other thing you can learn but experience is something you gain with the phasing time and work you do with the problem you encounter.

3.1. Problem Solving

In Travels industry most of the tasks are to be done at the very last hour, which can be dangerous at time. The quick decision making might turn out to be advantageous or dangerous at the same time. Ticketing in tours and travels is considered to be a major source of revenue, but yields less of margin. For working in ticketing department one needs to be aware and quick on booking tickets, wrong bookings or mistakes can make a huge loss. At the reception when you are in direct in touch with customer it is necessary to be calm and composed and keep a proper understanding of their demands and execute there package accordingly. For healthy profit hotels need to be pre booked in off season itself, so it is required to analyze the upcoming demand in the forthcoming season, I was assigned to book hotels and also be in contact with them and also execute the pickup and drop. Pick up and drop for foreign tourists should be executed by English speaking agent as in Nepal most of the drivers cannot speak English language. I was also assigned to cash department and was responsible to maintain cash balance, this job is mostly assigned to trustable employees and even a deviation of a penny is not considered while settling cash. I was also assigned to go banks and makes withdrawals and make deposits. As my project topic suggests Tourism as a Development Strategy, I also researched on increasing tourism and how it can be used as a development strategy. Lack of infrastructure and facilities to tourists has been a great problem restricting the flow of tourists in Nepal. With developing infrastructure such a roads, bridges, airport. The tourism industry can do wonders in Nepal and can boost up the speed of development. in the internship period there was a mistake I made where I mistakenly booked a wrong flight ticket, I quickly informed it my supervisor who then cancelled the wrong booking and made me aware of the carefulness required and asked me not to make any mistake from now onwards.

3.2. Some examples

While working in customer service department,

Some of the customers were uneducated and wanted a foreign trip. It was necessary to hire a local language speaking guide and make itinerary in Nepali language. So I was designated to create an itinerary that was in Nepali language. For the same I need to learn how to type in Nepali language, I was able to learn how to type in Nepali language and also created a well labelled itinerary in Nepali language.

Once our tours and travels office was assigned a group of tourists visiting Nepal, they needed a vehicle for inland transportation, we assigned a driver and a 12 seater vehicle for their inland transport. Later when they were traveling the tourists were finding it difficult to communicate with the driver as they didn't book a guide. Later, I was assigned to act as a mediator between tourists and the driver, and help tourists to convey their message.

In the span of 5 months I was also assigned to travel to Lumbini, it's an heritage site located around 250 km west of Kathmandu, I had to travel with a group of tourists and also act as a guide. I was also told to manage their accommodation and also travel with them on every touristic spots. Here I encountered with a problem, the accommodation booked was providing only Indian Cuisine while the guests were urging for an American meal. The hotel was not able to provide an American meal, to resolve the problem I asked the guests to pay extra and helped them to a restaurant nearby in order to get an American meal.

Chapter 4: Contribution and Learning Process

As a freshman you always have an objective to contribute something remarkable for the company and expect same in the return from the company that in the given tenure they teach you something remarkable so that at the end both of you feel i.e. from the company and the intern part you feel both gained something better from each other and ended in a win-win situation. Confidence, integrity, sincerity, your character, commitments and intendments towards your work determine your learning and contribution towards the work you make. Theoretical knowledge is one thing but applying it in practical is another so it takes effort of the company and individuals to carve out the best from you so that you are able to make the best possible contribution to the company and learn most things out of it as an intern at the end of the tenure.

4.1. Contribution made during the Internship

In my tenure of internship in Hamro Holidays there were quite a few things where I contributed as an intern such as in the initial first month I was asked to look into accounts as I have had a control over books of accounts I was able to find errors in the books of accounts of Hamro Holidays and also helped the company to rectify it and set up a new system in order to control errors and mistakes.

Also I was only person in the company who was able to speak in fluent Hindi, there was a customer who was from India and was not able to communicate in English, my supervisor appointed me to deal with him and I was successful to fix his tour and the customer was very happy from my work and also praised me for it.

I had a good connection with Golchha group and with the PR I was able to bring the Golchha group and organize a trip to Europe for their 60 staffs which is considered a very big tour and a profitable one for Hamro Tours.

I was appointed in all departments in a rotation basis which helped the supervisor to fulfill problem of absenteeism as I was appointed in the department when some staff was unable to make it to the office, and also at time of rush in some department I was appointed to manage the rush.

4.2. Details of Learning process and Knowledge Received

Thanks to Hamro Tours, I learnt a lot both as an employee and as a person. Each of the 3 months was an amazing opportunity to acquire experience. At the beginning of my internship in January, I was introduced to every permanent worker of the company and I have to say that it was difficult to remember each person I met and which department they were working for. My first couple of weeks consisted mainly in taking note and learning how to deal with my daily tasks. At the same time, I became more familiar with everyone in the company. May was actually a very good month to start working in the company as it was not the high season yet so I had a bit of time to adapt myself to my role within the company.

January and February were of course very busy months for the company as it was the high season in Nepal. We had to deal with last minute bookings and the cancellation of Tours. When you work in tourism industry you realize how important for the economy and business an event can be.

My daily assignments made me become more responsible, learning how to work under pressure and to be organized. It was not easy at the beginning because the high season arrived quite quickly but ultimately it forced me to organize my time better to be on top of my assignments. It was an exciting part of the internship which made me feel how it is to work and not only be a student. It also confirmed my desire to work in the tourism industry.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1. Self-assessment as a professional

My internship has proven to be very constructive for me. Hamro Tours has offered me opportunities to learn and grow in many areas. I gained a lot of experience, particularly in the Tourism sector in Nepal. It gave me the chance to discover which areas I want to work when I finish my studies. My mentor, Suman Lal Shrestha, taught me a lot during the past three months. As a supervisor, he has lots of knowledge in ticketing and booking. He was very helpful and always willing to give me advice and feedback which I appreciate. He also helped me a lot on how to best phrase English professional document. His depth knowledge writing was a great help in allowing me to adapt and learn from all of the tasks he assigned me.

This internship was a total immersion in the tourist sector for me. I have learned to work in a business organization and apply my knowledge practically. I also became more confident in orally and written communication. I also have achieved this by writing emails and communicating with the hotels and my colleagues, and writing my internship report in English. Besides the English language, I had the chance to use my other language, Nepali with others trainees and even with permanent staff. It was a good way for me to improve a little of my oral skills and I really appreciated the multicultural atmosphere at work.

This internship was definitely beneficial for me and I feel extremely fortunate that I had the opportunity to experience and learn so many things. But my work in Hamro Tours was more than just a way to enriching my experience as an employee. It was also an unforgettable personal adventure that allowed me to discover a totally different way of seeing things. I think that it is only when you are separated from your familiar habits that you can really enjoy life for what it is. In Nepal, I discovered an extraordinary increase in tourism both inbound and outbound, which the industry of tourism is still not able to capitalize. Company such as Hamro tours should work in a larger scale to capitalize on healthy tourism industry.

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Annex

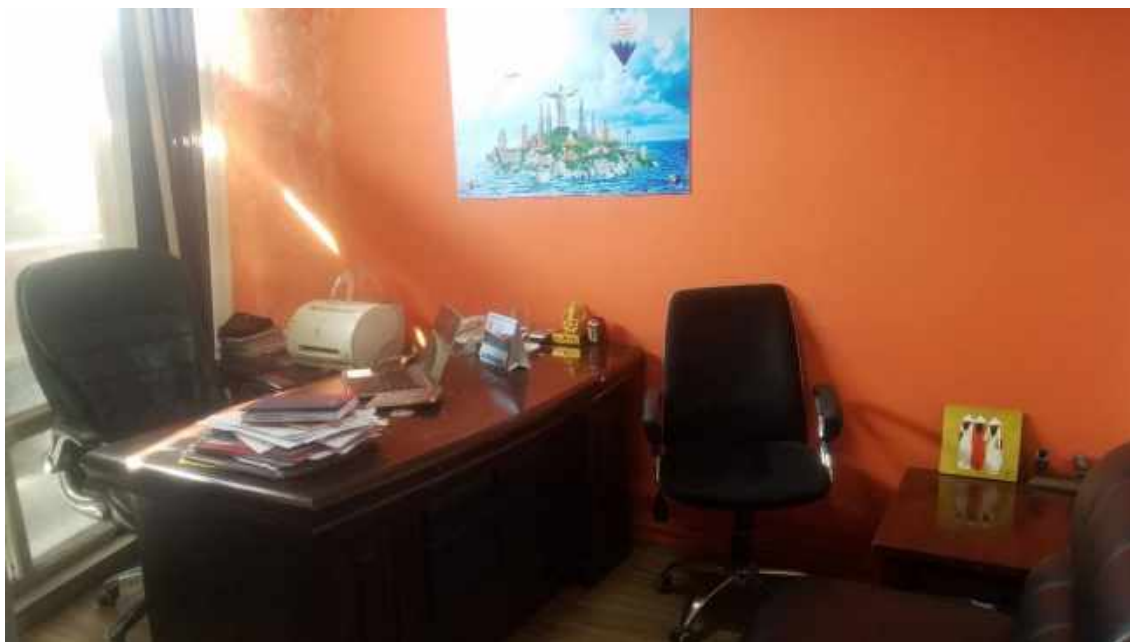


Figure2. Work Place



Figure 3. Advertisement



Figure 4. Working at Assigned Workspace



Figure 5. Office Reception



Figure 6. Office Location Board



Figure 7. Head Office Location