
AN INNOVATIVE SERVICE - DELHI TOURISM HOHO BUS SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry in India is substantial and vibrant, and the country is fast becoming a major global destination. India's travel and tourism industry is one of most profitable industries in the country, and also credited with contributing a substantial amount of foreign exchange. Tourism contributes 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. Delhi, the capital of India has a rich cultural heritage and a variety of tourist attractions. To boost tourism in Delhi, Delhi Tourism & Transportation Development Corporation Ltd (DTTDC) was set up by the Delhi government. It initiates lot of marketing and promotional activities to boost tourism in recent years. Recently DTTDC have introduced a unique bus service (HOHO) under Public Private Initiative. The "hop-on, hop off" bus service, commonly known as "HOHO" service, is just the perfect answer to sightseeing in Delhi. One can plan and explore the city at his convenience. The tourists can avail of the hop-on, hop-off bus service to visit historical monuments, museums and other tourist hotspots in the city. This paper tries to analyse the opportunities and service offered by HOHO bus. The article also gives some suggestions that can be used in forming a right strategy to promote Delhi tourism as an attractive tourism destination on the domestic and international platform.

Key words: Tourism , Travel , Delhi , Growth , HOHO

TOURISM INDUSTRY- A SPECIAL FOCUS ON INDIA

India's tourism industry is experiencing a strong period of growth. Tourism is the largest service industry in India, with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India. India witnesses more than 5 million annual foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourism visits. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. The tourism industry in India is substantial and vibrant, and the country is fast becoming a major global destination. India's travel and tourism industry is one of most profitable industries in the country, and also credited with contributing a substantial amount of foreign exchange. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India will be a tourism hotspot from 2009–2018, having the highest 10 year growth potential. The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2007 ranked tourism in India 6th in terms of price competitiveness and 39th in terms of safety and security. The Tourism Ministry has also played an important role in the development of the industry, initiating advertising campaigns such as the 'Incredible India' campaign, which promoted India's culture and tourism attractions in a fresh and memorable way. The campaign helped create a colorful image of India in the minds of consumers all over the world, and has directly led to an increase in the interest among tourists. Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, has allowed 100 per cent foreign investment under the automatic route in the hotel and tourism related industry. Government of India has announced a scheme of granting Tourist Visa on Arrival (T-VoA) for the citizens of Finland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand and Singapore. The scheme is valid for citizens of the above mentioned countries planning to visit India on single entry strictly for the purpose of tourism and for a short period of upto a maximum of 30 days.

KEY REASONS IN GROWTH OF TOURISM INDUSTRY

Research studies have indicated several factors responsible for the sudden growth of tourism industry in India like:

- Tremendous growth of Indian economy has resulted in more disposable income in the hands of the middle class, thereby prompting increasingly large number of people to spend money on vacations abroad or at home.
- Aggressive advertising campaign "Incredible India" by Tourism Ministry has played a major role in changing the image of India from that of the land of snake charmers to a hot and happening place and has sparked renewed interest among foreign travelers.
- India is a booming IT hub and more and more people are coming to India on business trips.



- Availability of Low air fare by Low Cost Airlines.

OVERVIEW OF DELHI TOURISM & TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD

Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC) is an undertaking of the Government of Delhi, which was established in December 1975 for the purpose of promoting tourism and related services in the city of Delhi. It has an authorized share capital of Rs. 10 crores and a paid up capital of Rs. 6.28 crores. It is involved in several other activities, some of which do not fall under the core activity of promotion of tourism, such as the selling of liquor. This particular activity, however, provides the corporation with revenue that can be utilized in tourism or other related development activities for the National Capital Region of Delhi. Delhi has created waves in Indian Tourism Industry with its Arts & Crafts, Cuisine, Festivals, Fairs & Festivals, Pilgrimage, Wildlife and numerous attractions lying scattered throughout the state. Looking at the need of tourist and provide best facility to visitor, Delhi Tourism Development Corporation (DTTDC) has added an array of services to its operational task. DTTDC not only provides transportation and operates tours but to show commendable performance, it provides facility of Accommodation, Catering, Leisure Cruises & Pleasure Boating, Water Sports, Sound & Light Shows and Adventure Tourism.

Efforts have been made to arrange high standard accommodation in hotels through the private sector, and for this a rational tax structure is in place. The Department is trying to provide accommodation at affordable rates to pilgrims at the religious places. To encourage investments; tourism has been declared an industry. Main aims of the Department of Tourism are as follows:

➤ Publicity literature

The Corporation promotes tourism, published literature for publicity and promotion of tourism. The Corporation publishes the following: Tourism Map of Delhi

- Eicher City Guide
- CD-ROM on Delhi to provide vital information for the tourist
- Annual Calendar and Diary
- First Mini Booklet for Distribution in inbound flight

➤ Tourist facilitation

A large number of tourists arrive at the capital of Delhi every year. Activities provided to tourists include:

- Package Tours - limited to very few choices, or sometimes to only one destination.
- Travel Services - travel services in the form of international air ticketing and foreign exchange banking.
- Tourist Transport - taxi services are also provided by the transport division.

- To do proper publicity about such places, which; because of their historical importance, may attract tourists.
- To maintain the historical, religious and cultural traditions of Delhi and to promote them.
- To provide cheap, clean and satisfactory facilities to tourists in matters of transport, accommodation, food and recreation.
- To organize cultural shows on occasion of different fairs festivals and seminars with a view of attracting more and more tourists.
- To enhance and encourage the participation of the private sector in efforts of the state Government for providing necessary facilities to domestic and international tourists.

Delhi has a rich cultural heritage and a variety of tourist attractions. Delhi is a city that bridges two different worlds. Old Delhi, once the capital of Islamic India, is a labyrinth of narrow lanes lined with crumbling havelis and formidable mosques. In contrast, the imperial city of New Delhi created by the British Raj is composed of spacious, tree-lined avenues and imposing government buildings. Delhi has been the seat of power for several rulers and many empires for about a millennium. Many a times the city was built, destroyed and then rebuilt. Interestingly, a number of Delhi's rulers played a dual role, first as destroyers and then as creators. The city's importance lies not just in its past glory as the seat of empires and magnificent monuments, but also in the rich and diverse cultures. No

wonder chroniclers of Delhi culture - from Chand Bardai and Amir Khusro to present days writers - have never been at a loss for topics. In Delhi, one will discover that the city is sprinkled with dazzling gems: captivating ancient monuments, fascinating museums and art galleries, architectural wonders, a vivacious performing-arts scene, fabulous eating places and bustling markets. Delhi has been the political hub of India. Every political activity in the country traces its roots here. The history of the city is as old as the epic Mahabharata. The town was known as Indraprastha, where Pandavas used to live. In due course eight more cities came alive adjacent to Indraprastha: Lal Kot, Siri, Dinpanah, Quila Rai Pithora, Ferozabad, Jahanpanah, Tughlakabad and Shahjahanabad.

Modern Delhi, popularly known as Lutyens' Delhi, bears a striking contrast to Old Delhi with respect to architecture, building materials and layout. However, Modern Delhi itself dates back to over a century when the British shifted their capital from Calcutta to Delhi. New Delhi, as it is known today, designed by Lutyens, has wide-open lanes, avenues and buildings that are worth traveling across the globe. Besides the usual tourist attractions of Modern Delhi - India Gate, Rashtrapati Bhavan, National Museum, Parliament House, North and South Block - which are stunning examples of British architecture, one can also visit the various museums, temples and memorials that provide a comprehensive and entertaining insight into the lives of Delhites. Modern Delhi has some popular temples of Modern India that are known not only for their religious significance but also for their experimental designs that challenge conventional architectural standards. The Lakshmi Narayan Temple (Birla Temple), built by the Birlas, is dedicated to the worship of Lord Lakshmi Narayan (Vishnu). Another temple worth a visit on your tour of Modern Delhi is the Lotus Temple built by followers of the Bahai faith. Built in the shape of a blooming lotus; the temple draws thousands of tourists each day. Iskon (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) Temple boasts of a vegetarian restaurant, library, animatronics center and an upcoming museum besides the prayers and meditation facilities. The newly built Akshardham temple is a very popular destination for tourists and Delhites. The temple is situated on the banks of Yamuna River, and is besides the Common Wealth Games village. New Delhi has memorials of famous freedom fighters and National leaders. Raj Ghat, Shanti Van, Shakti Sthal are the resting place of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi respectively. One can also visit the Teen Murti Bhavan (Nehru Memorial Museum), Gandhi Smriti and Indira Gandhi Memorial. The capital has a charming mix of old and new world. On one side you can see Old architectural sites, buzzing streets and exotic markets, and on the other side Delhi has magnificent Malls, swan by overbridges, modern opulent high rise buildings and lots of greenery.

HOHO BUS SERVICE: CITY SIGHTSEEING

Delhi Chief minister Sheila Dikshit launched the “hop-on, hop-off” bus service on 27th September 2010, to provide tourists visiting the capital a smooth and hassle-free ride as they go to visit historical monuments in the city. The HOHO bus service in Delhi is a unique PPP initiative. Delhi Tourism & Transportation Development Corporation Ltd (DTTDC) has selected Prasanna Purple Mobility Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (PPMSPL) and Urban Mass Transit Company Ltd. (UMTC) for introducing this unique service. Together, PPMSPL and UMTC have formed a Joint Venture called Purple UMTC Transit Pvt. Ltd to operate HOHO buses in Delhi. The “hop-on, hop off” bus service, to be commonly known as “HOHO” service, has been modelled on similar transport plans existing in various European cities. HOHO bus service is just the perfect answer to sightseeing in Delhi. One can plan and explore the city at his convenience. HOHO buses follow a loop system, which is organised in such a way that these buses continuously move around a fixed route, all day long. So one can board or get off a bus at any of the earmarked points on the way. As per the scheme of things, the tourists can avail of the hop-on, hop-off bus service to visit historical monuments, museums and other tourist hotspots in the city. Delhi tourism department is also ensuring that popular restaurants can also be accessed by the tourists through this service during their stay in the capital. The department has planned a continuous service with buses on the route scheduled every 30 minutes so that the tourists can spend as much time as they wish at a particular site without bothering about transportation arrangements.

Organized tours are expensive, rigid and need definite planning in advance. The Hop-On/Hop-Off Bus service provides sightseeing options to tourists who are willing to explore Delhi with a more flexible schedule. Tourists can hop on and hop off at any of the 19 stops on the way as per their convenience. The starting point of the hop-on hop-off bus service will be the Baba Kharag Singh Marg in Connaught Place. The buses ply from 8 AM – 8 PM at a frequency of approximately half an hour. All the 'HOHO' buses are spacious, air-conditioned and have on-board entertainment facilities like digital video screen and GPS systems. Every bus has a guest relations executive who

give tourists information about all the sites which are part of the tour. The route of these buses covers monuments, museums, galleries, gardens, shopping malls, hotels and bazaars. The service is designed to provide a complete experience of the city to a tourist. The following are the salient features of the Hop On/Hop Off bus service :

- Air-conditioned environment friendly luxury buses
- Frequency- every 30 minutes
- Flexibility - tourists can hop on and hop off at any pick up/drop off point
- Entertaining and knowledgeable tour guides
- Route covers all major tourist destinations in Delhi
- Audio guides
- Online booking Facility
- Onboard ticketing facility
- Covers more than 19 tourist locations
- Monument entry tickets are available to save time



The tourism locations covered by HOHO bus service are:

Feroz Shah Kotla

In 1360, Emperor Feroz Shah Tughlaq built the citadel “Feroz Shah Kotla” for his new capital city called Firozabad on the banks of River Yamuna. Much later, in 1883, a cricket stadium by the same name was built near the site remains. The stadium has hosted numerous international Cricket matches and is one of the venues for the 2011 Cricket World Cup.

Red Fort

The Red Fort was built in 1648 by Shahjahan the Mughal King who also built the famous Taj Mahal. The Mughal Royal family lived here and it served as their capital until 1857, when Bahadur Shah Zafar was exiled by the British. It was then used as a British military camp up till India's independence in 1947.

Rajghat

A memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, Rajghat marks the spot of Mahatma Gandhi's cremation on January 31, 1948. The memorial has an epitaph 'Hey Ram' (meaning Oh God) which were Mahatma Gandhi's last words when he was assassinated. The site also has a museum dedicated to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi.



National Gallery of Modern Art

Located in Jaipur house, former residence of the erstwhile Maharaja of Jaipur, the National Gallery of Modern Art today has undeniably the most significant collection of modern and contemporary art in the country.

India Gate

Designed by Edwin Lutyens in 1931, this 42 metre high monument was erected as a memorial in honour of the Indian and British soldiers who lost their lives during World War I and the Third Afgan war, 1919. The names of the 13516 martyrs are inscribed on this monument.

Purana Qila

It is the oldest monument in Delhi and was built at the site of the ancient city of Indraprastha founded by the Pandavas some 5000 years ago. Later at the same site, Mughal emperors Sher Shah Suri and Humayun built their citadels during the sixteenth century.

Humayun's Tomb

Humayun's Tomb is a complex set of buildings built by the Mughal emperor's wife Haji Begum in 1565 AD. It was the first garden-tomb built in the Indian subcontinent. Humayun's tomb was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993.

Lajpat Nagar Market

Located in South Delhi, Lajpat Nagar market is one of the most popular commercial areas of Delhi. From branded showrooms to small local retailers, this market is a hub for shoppers.

Lotus Temple

The Lotus temple is one of the most remarkable architectures of Bahai faith built in 1986. The temple looks like a lotus flower and is made of marble, cement, dolomite and sand. It is among the most visited monuments in India. There are no restrictions for visitors and the temple is open to people from all religions.

Malls of Saket

The hub of malls in South Delhi, Saket boasts of some of the finest mall complexes in Delhi. With four major malls in place and two more under construction, Saket provides a unique shopping and leisure environment..

Qutub Minar

The world's tallest brick minaret, Qutab Minar is one of the earliest and most prominent examples of Indo-Islamic architecture. It is made of fluted red sandstone and is covered with intricate carvings and verses from the Quran.

Hauz Khas

The Hauz Khas (meaning royal tank) complex was developed during the 13th century. The complex houses a water tank or reservoir, an Islamic seminary, a mosque, a tomb and pavilions built around an urbanized village. Today Hauz Khas is a shopper's paradise with several designer outlets, restaurants and art galleries.

Dilli Haat

Dilli Haat is an upmarket version of a traditional Indian village or rural market. It is a Mecca for craftsmen selling Indian handicrafts and ethnic wear. There are a number of shops selling Indian souvenirs and interesting gift items. There are also numerous food stalls offering local cuisines from different parts of the country.

Safdarjung Tomb

An eminent example of Mughal architecture, the Safdarjung Tomb is a garden tomb in a marble mausoleum in South Delhi. Built by Nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah in 1753, it is a remarkable tribute to his father Safdarjung.

Santushti Shopping Complex

The Santushti Shopping Complex, situated in Delhi's diplomatic neighbourhood of Chanakyapuri, is a cluster of up market boutiques, restaurants and bars gathered around a carefully tended garden courtyard. Shops range from exclusive fashion and jewellery to art and design.

Nehru Museum

On Teen Murti Road near Chanakyapuri, the colonial residence of the first Indian Prime Minister, Teen Murti Bhawan, has been converted into a museum. Several rooms remain as Nehru left them at the time of his death in 1964.

Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum

Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum was the residence of the former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi. After her assassination, the bungalow was converted into a museum.

National Museum

The largest museum in India, National Museum has over 200,000 works of art, of both Indian and foreign origin, covering more than 5,000 years of Indian cultural heritage.

Jantar Mantar

Jantar Mantar consists of 13 architectural astronomy instruments, built by Maharaja Jai Singh II of Jaipur, from 1724 onwards, and is one of five built by him. The primary purpose of the observatory was to compile astronomical tables and to predict the time and movements of the sun, moon and planets.

CHALLENGES WITH TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

1. Lack of Government support to promote tourism.
2. Lack of Infrastructure.
3. Strong competition.
4. Terrorism problem.
5. Inadequate Promotion & Marketing

SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Development of tourist facilities and infrastructure at places of interest to international and domestic tourists. Involve the private sector in the upgradation and maintenance of heritage sites.
- Double Decker open top buses can be implemented in HoHo service.
- To cater lower income group Non AC HoHo bus service with on-board entertainment facilities and guide can be introduced to increase the market share and to compete with existing private operators.
- For smooth and hassle-free riding within Delh, Delhi Tourism department can think for introducing common ticket / card for all mode of transport available in Delhi like DTC bus, Metro and EMU's for tourist. The ticket / card can be made available with validity of 1 day, 3 days or 5 days, as per tourist requirement.
- The frequency of bus service can increased from the existing 30 minutes to 15 minutes.
- The bus should be equipped with on-board audio guide in multiple languages to give tourists information about all the sites which are part of the tour on head phone for every tourist. The languages available can be decided based of tourist profile visited during the last three months.
- The most important is availability of good, familiar and quality food which will attract more tourists.
- Government should declare Tourism as a 'Priority Industry' like Information Technology.
- Quality information dissemination through contemporary & innovative means using multiple channels e.g. Select Indian restaurants in target markets, airlines and other channels.
- Outsourcing promotion and marketing activities to private players based on target fulfillment criteria can be done.



- Tourism Infrastructure and address areas of prime concern (e.g. security, language, cleanliness, safety, hygiene quality of tour guides, etc.) should be upgraded in order to make the tourists' experience memorable.
- Effective system of communication for promotion of Delhi Tourism can be made. Different websites like, www.tourismofindia.com, www.delhitourism.nic.in, www.tourism-india.in and www.medicaltourismindia.com are fully operational for effective e-marketing of tourism, more services can be provided online like, circulating e-brochures, online ticketing facilities in other web site, etc. This will not only benefit the target customers but also increase awareness about the Delhi tourism facilities.

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