

Cruise tourism industry

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Cruise tourism industry has become the most important icon of modern tourism in the 21st century. This has mainly been prompted by the changing human utilitarian demands and globalization which makes it much easier to move and interact with environment and other people. Besides, it has been boosted by vast advancement in technology that makes it easy for the people to move out within the highest considerations of safety, comfort, and precise predetermination of the expected destination.

Cruise tourism industry has given the tourism total revolution making the industry to be one of the most important sectors in the world economy (Kingston, 2006). However the development and future of the industry is highly dependent on the emergent issues that directly affect the world economy as the main source of consumers for the industry, the international peace & stability especially of the destination regions, the environmental considerations for the industry, and the regions of destination. Of greater importance however, is the consumers desire to explore and experience new aspects and phenomenon different from their home settings.

Besides, it forms a direct platform for effective research in different aspects of psychology, natural sciences, social interactions and technological applications (Wood, 2000). Therefore, it depicts a coterminous entity upon where vast applications can be simultaneously applied and studied with ease. Overview of the cruise industry Historical background and development of the industry The current Cruise tourism industry has a long history dating back to the late 19th century when Prinzessin Victoria Luise was finished and commissioned by Hamburg-American Line Company for Transatlantic expeditions.

However, historians argue that cruise voyages have existed since the famous travel of Christopher Columbus. Though scholars have sharply been divided over the issue, a common ground appears to have been reached with re-definition of tourism and characterisation of its different aspects. Most of the ancient voyages were driven by desire to search for new lands and exploit them for economic gains and less concerned with need for pleasure and site seeing of the current tourism (Kingston, 2006).

However, it is very clear that the modern system has directly been shaped by the historical connotations and vastly modified by advancement in technology to reflect its present situation. During the mid 20th century, intercontinental travellers largely used ships for their movement due to the resultant comfort and good experience attached to it (Abraham & Yoel, 1999). However, most of them were directly travel oriented and had less to do with tourism demands. It was due to these experiences that the current systems of massive cruise ships largely establish its basement and progress.

More cruise ships specifically meant for holiday were established with greater emphasis for comfort and satisfaction being given much higher priorities (Charles & Brent, 2006). However, most of the cruise considerations were thought to be reservations for the upper class while the lower classes had no position in the same type of expeditions. The current cruise ships are fully inclusive and entirely meant for all the people as the cost adjusts downwards with the rising suppliers of the services. Organization and management Due to the high returns from the industry, massive investments have been mobilized by the different cruise industries.

Unlike the previous travelling where much smaller and simpler systems operated with greater focus of transferring people from one destination to another only, the current cruise ships are organised much like float hotels with complete hospitality staff. In the Royal Caribbean International, the staffs in the ship are equal or slightly less than the number of tourists on-board. Effective coordination and management with technicians, engineers, security, and astrologists form the technical bench in the MS Liberty of the Seas.

Besides, they are well manned from the land by constant coordination with the base surveillance monitoring unit via satellite. In the Minors of the Sea, several thousand meals are served at any particular sitting. The system has been equated to an ecological unit with all the systems highly interdependent and fully self sustaining with minimal external monitoring. Demand for the cruise tourism Since late 1980s, the demand for cruise tourism has strongly risen globally as different generations change the approach to tourism to become part of their lifestyle demands which sets a strong mark of achievement.

Compared to the demand during the 'rebirth' of the industry in 1980s', the demand had doubled by the year 2005. An average of 500, 000 people in North America took cruises by the onset of 1980s (Zeneth, 2008). However, the industry was marred by uncertainty due to poor development of technology and lack of enough information for the industry. Besides, cruising was mostly undertaken in US and Eastern Europe only with other countries being at the tender ages of developing their systems. Since then, the

demand has been rising at an average rate of 8% annually and is expected to reach a total of 10 million cruises by the year 2007.

This number has been projected to continue rising as more players have ventured into the market shifting the previously upper class venture consideration to an all people exercises for faster expansion of the business. By 2015, it is predicted that the number of people cruising the oceans will reach 17 million a 70% increase on the 2000 total number. According to the cruise lines international (CLIA), the demand from the people is double the current number of the cruisers but strongly restricted by location which hinders accessibility (Chris et al, 2008).

The most visited region is the Caribbean with over 80% of the tourists it every year. Europe regions are also greatly visited especially along the Mediterranean Sea routes. However, fast demand is shifting to the Baltic land along Copenhagen, Tallinn, Stockholm, Helsinki and St. Petersburg ports. Supply of cruise tourism Arguably, the supply of Cruise Tourism has been rising very fast over the last three decades. However, the pace is considered to be a slow one compared to the level of demand by the people for the same services.

As indicated earlier cruise tourism is one of the most expensive ventures in the world. Though most travellers view is as a system of get-enjoy-achievement, the underlying harmonization entails vast demands in terms of engineering, coordination and human labour management, security connotation, and international considerations of environment and related protocols. As a result, only few industries have been willing to venture into the complicated business (Charles & Brent, 2006). This has left the field to

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smaller ships with much lower holding capacities to operate the lucrative business.

The modern carriers are generally much bigger with massive and advanced facilities to hold and secure more consumers with higher levels of comfort during the voyage. Currently, Carnival Corporations is one of the largest cruise companies owning Princess Cruise ship, Swan Hellenic, P& O Cruises and Costa Cruises among others operating US and Europe. By 2010, the company aims at having over 100 cruise ships added to the current 200 operating in the sea. Other major operators and suppliers of the services include Royal Caribbean which is highly established in the North American region.

It serves the tourists even to further destinations like Bermuda regions and the polar areas. Norwegian Cruise Lines serves most of the Europe especially along the Mediterranean sea with extension to the polar regions and the Baltic lands. Currently, cruise tourism is becoming a mass market with other major players like India, China, Japan, and Singapore establishing their cruising tourism systems to tap the fast rising demand. In US, 1/3 of the cruise sails from the port of Miami with others sailing from Port Everglades, Port Canaveral, New York, Tampa, Galveston, and San Juan.

Many of the UK cruise lines operate from Barbados (Zeneth, 2008). Economic aspects of cruise tourism Due to the high demands for the cruise services in the world, most of the countries have greatly reaped from the establishment. With the currently demand being expected to rise to 11. 9 and 5. 3 million in America and Europe respectively, World Trade Organization indicates that the sector will form a strong economic support for the individual countries by

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the year 2015. International Council of Cruise Lines indicates that the industry is riding a strong line of consumer demand improving the economic conditions in North America.

According to Zeneth (2008), an average economic impact of the cruise industry spending is estimated at US \$ 1, 523 million annually including the total consumption of the ship and passengers. Owing to the current growth rate of the industry, the amount is expected to double as the industry becomes more vibrant and more players venture into the business. Most of the seaports where the cruise ships take off have highly developed from the business. Scholars argue that the “flavour and taste” of port cities like Miami, St.

Peters burg and Barbados have fully changed to reflect the new ideals of superiority and expensive derivation. The efficiency of the services and facilities offered in these towns have greatly increased with modern aspects relating to cruise tourism improving with speed to cater for the fast growing business (Chris et al, 2008). In Australia, the Cruise industry is expected to contribute immensely to the country's economy in the next decade. Most of the industries specializing in human services provision have found special niches where they can get fast market for their products and services.

Environmental aspects of cruise tourism Though this industry is fast growing and offering vast promises to the investors and the economy, major concerns have been cited in its application and which requires strong consideration necessary for reducing possible negative effects. Over the years, environment has become a major concern for the cruise tourism industry. Taking into consideration that most of the cruise ships are very

large and hold vast numbers of people, the system is also expected to generate vast wastes and emissions into the environment as it tries to sustain them and itself (Sarah & Claudia, 2008).

Most of the cruise ships are petroleum driven and consume vast quantities of fuel. This is mainly used in production of electricity used in cooking, propelling the ship and maintaining its on-board supportive systems. As a result, it releases vast emissions into the atmosphere contributing to global warming. With the current rise in production and use of large cruise ship in the world, their total contribution into the atmosphere has been projected to surpass vehicles production by 2015.

A large Cruise ship like Royal Caribbean International has been indicated to have higher capacity to produce emissions equal to production of 1200 cars (Zeneth, 2008). Owing to the large numbers of the people involved, vast quantities of food prepared and served, supportive services like cleaning and maintenance of these ships during the voyages, they release a lot of effluents and solid wastes into the sea. Most of the petroleum effluents have high sulphur contents that easily change the properties of the immediate water threatening the vast biodiversity in the cruise ship travelling lines.

Cleaning and maintenance of the cruise ship involves use of chemicals that too end up in the waste stream coming from the ship. The argument that ocean water forms strong and effective dilution mediums that have high capacity to assimilate most of their wastes is totally wrong. The International Convention for the Prevention of Ship Pollution denotes the essence of respecting the ecological integrity and sanctity necessary for harmonious coexistence of all the ecosystems. During the year 2002, the massive death

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of Penguins in the southern polar region was attributed to ship pollution (Sarah & Claudia, 2008).

Solid wastes management has also posed massive threats to the wildlife in the sea. Most of the lines along the cruise ship path ways highly littered with plastic bags and metallic cans for refreshments. Conclusion and recommendation Cruise ship industry has been growing at a tremendous rate since mid 20th century. This has been caused by the fast rising demand and opening up of the industry to all the people as opposed to the prior social classes consideration. As a result more players and investors have entered into the industry opening its lager contribution to the world economy.

Arguably, the last two decades have seen US and Europe dominate the world cruise market with large percentage. However, other players from developing countries have effectively come up to participate in fast growing sector. Cruise tourism holds the key to the future of tourism industry as people change their consumerism patterns for different services (David & Richard, 2008). However, the industry should address issues relating to its negative impacts especially to the environment.

Most importantly, the company owners should establish better ships that have higher fuel combustion efficiency in order to reduce the overall emissions to the atmosphere. Besides, liquid and solid waste treatment systems should also be installed to reduce their poisonous nature to the marine environment along the routes that these cruise ships follow.

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