

Analysis of gold coast tourism and sunshine coast tourism essay



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The rapid growth of tourism industries over the last few decades has seen the emergence of new tourist attraction destinations and this has had quite a number of significant importances in various regions. For instance, in Australia, there are various tourism attraction destinations which have in the past spearheaded the economic growth of this country in the sense that they offer employment opportunities, attract foreign investment, result into the preservation of the natural environment, and allow communities to enjoy the utilization of their regional natural resources and conserve their heritage.

However, there are variances in the levels of economic importance as is apparent with Gold Coast Tourism and Sunshine Tourism which are both found in Queensland region. A comparison between these tourists' attraction destinations revealed that Gold Coast attracts numerous visitors which make it to incur many expenses as compared to Sunshine Coast. All the same, Sunshine Coast Tourism has gained a higher level of economic importance in the Australian region as compared to the Gold Coast tourism. This report intends to offer a comparative analysis of these two Australian tourism industries and offer recommendations that would spearhead tourism growth in Queensland region.

Comparative Analysis of Gold Coast Tourism and Sunshine Coast Tourism

Introduction

Tourism plays a very significant role in the economy of Australia where it contributed about 2.6% to the Australian gross domestic product (GDP) and 4.5% to the employment of this country in the fiscal 2009-2010. With about 46% of the tourism expenditure in Australia being spent in various regional

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areas, coastal tourism is deemed to be of considerable significance to Australia's many regional communities. Thus, to establish the degree of tourism importance in Queensland, this report intends to estimate the economic importance of Gold Coast Tourism and Sunshine Coast Tourism across the Australia's tourism regions. The report will:

Compare the value of each of these tourism industries to the local economy, and

Rank each of them with respect to their relative importance to the local economies

Composition of Australia's tourism regions

Basically, Australia has eighty four tourism regions and each tourism region comprises of quite a number of SLA (statistical local areas) as the Australian Bureau of Statistics defines in consultation with territory and state tourism organizations. Despite the availability of various other tourism regions, this report yearns to conduct a comparative analysis between two of the Queensland Australia's tourism regions namely the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Queensland regional tourism industries seem not to be of equal size, tourism expenditure, output or even visitors' numbers (Pambudi, 2009). In fact, all these comparative factors can greatly vary from a given region to another as will be discussed in the following sections.

Gold Coast Tourism

Gold Coast has traditionally been celebrated by the holiday makers because of its stunning natural environment and various man-made attractions. The

Gold Coast leisure assets currently seem to be the key market drivers in the capital popularity with many corporate delegates seeking multidimensional business event experiences. The impressive modern event and convention facilities are merely the starting point for the Australia's Gold Coast. The professional and infrastructural support services in this tourists region are comparable to the other cities in the world. However, Gold Coast is regarded exceptional when the overall tourism experience is perceived (Page & Connell, 2006). For instance, this tourism attraction centre offers business integration pristine coastline equivalent to 70 kilometers, 100, 000 hectares of universally listed heritage rainforest; more theme parks when compared to anyplace in the southern hemisphere; huge chunks of private islands, over 600 cafes and restaurants; 800 accommodation venues as well as canals of about 500 kilometers, which are all found within forty minutes drive from each other.

In essence, the duality of the eminent tourist attractions and infrastructure which cater for both meeting and leisure segments have made Gold Coast to be considered as one of the most desired Asia Pacific's resort destinations.

Gold Coast Tourism towns and products

Gold Coast is remarkably known for its broad beach, Burleigh Heads, Coolangatta, Main Beach, Southport, and Surfers Paradise. Basically, the broad beach offers quite of restaurants, cafes and large shopping malls. The broad beach also has a beautiful sandy beach that is backed by attractive Kurrawa Park which is considerably perfect for everybody. In fact, there are parklands and pathways where tourists can relax and wander as well as an affordable children's park coupled with enduring waves for the surfing

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enthusiasts (Jones & Phillips, 2011). More often, there are live entertainments within the parks along with appealing art and craft markets where books, clothes, bric-a-brac, crafts, jewellery, and gifts are sold. However, key to the Gold Coast Tourism success in the past years has been the visiting friends and relatives alongside the business markets.

Furthermore, holiday visitation is deemed to remain the most dominant source for the regions domestic visitors. Over the last years, the holiday visitations has significantly remained to be the prevailing source of domestic tourist or visitors for the Queensland region with the level of visitation marginally increasing (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010a). Truly, tourism serves as the fundamental backbone to the Gold Coast City's lifestyle, community, and economy. From golf courses and international resorts to theme parks, this city has attracted many tourism entrepreneurs worldwide to come and capitalize on the Australia's leading excitement ventures and sunny-days tourism destinations.

Gold Coast Competitive Advantage and SWOT analysis

The resort and hotel skyline of this famous surf city is very iconic. There exist accommodation which cater for all budgets starting from mountain retreats and luxury resorts to camping ground and backpacker accommodation. Gold Coast vast tourism infrastructures are underpinned by unrivalled arrays of built and natural attractions. The pristine rainforest regions serve as the home to the health retreats, mountain trails, art galleries, craft shops and wineries which await visitors seeking for a peaceful green shake off from the city's world famous beaches commonly found at the Gold Coast. This city's tourism industry is widely supported by dedicated programmed events which

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exposes the tourism operators to ample business opportunities. The events include blues on broadbeach, tastes of the Gold Coast, Gold Coast marathon, and the New Year eve celebrations (Page & Connell, 2006). Moreover, Gold Coast is also seen as a fashionable destination for the business tourists who recognize this coastal city as a vibrant, safe, and friendly place to partake in meetings and conferences.

According to Lee and Spisto (2001), the strength of this tourism attraction center also rely on the strategic location which allow it to utilize the city's two comparative international airports that permits visitors access into the city via the Brisbane airport and Gold Coast airport. In fact, the Brisbane airport provides the passengers a direct connection to 39 domestic and 26 international destinations. With its diverse leisure and business products offerings, Gold Coast often attracts international and Australian visitors year round thereby negating the seasonal troughs and peaks traditionally experienced by the seaside locations. The entrepreneurial investments culture in this city, sub tropical climate, community support for ideal tourism development together with the profile and size of the tourism industry set the Gold Coast Tourism to be in a less competitive operating environment.

However, Gold Coast tourism is faced with weaknesses such the shortage of cultural tourism experiences and products; over reliance on fine weather condition experiences; much concentration on the development of accommodation infrastructure as well as the misperception of the Gold Coast City as being too touristy, surfers' paradise and only belongs to surf and sun.

Despite having weaknesses, there are numerous opportunities in Gold Coast tourism (Tourism Research Australia, 2010). These include innovative and <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

new tourism icons and products; nature based tourism in Gold Coast city coastal and Hinterland regions; niche market development; innovative retail experiences; emphasizing the links between Gold coast lifestyle and beach culture as well as growing the international air services and leisure focused airlines.

Regardless of the robust domestic market, Gold Coast Tourism is threatened by the high volume and low yield markets which results from urban sprawl, population growth and loss of the valued major events. There is equally the absence of crisis and disaster management tourism plans; lack of inventive, world class tourism infrastructure and products; safety and crime problems alongside the global market competition in relation to the other tourism destinations both in overseas and in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). The environmental degradation resulting from the failure to effectively manage the Gold Coast assets carrying capacity, also poses significant threats to the available tourists' attraction destination.

Sunshine Coast Tourism

Just as the name suggests, in Sunshine Coast, there are sparkling waters, intoxicating views, warm weather and seductive sunsets which only wait to welcome the tourists from Coolumberr, Noosa, and Caloundra along the coastal line to the enchanting Montville, Mapleton, Mary Valley and Maleny all which are found on the hinterland. With some of the globally best beaches in addition to the picturesque hinterland which is only a few minutes away, this tourism attraction destination offers naturally refreshing sites that friends and families would probably long to see and enjoy. For example, being

located about 100 kilometers north of Brisbane; Sunshine Coast incorporates <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

various beach side towns which extend to the Glass Mountains. Furthermore, this tourist attraction destination offers a vast variety of leisure and tourism products which range from waterways and coastal beaches to national parks, quality restaurants, world class resorts, scenic hinterland areas, and various other well built tourists' attractions. Sunshine Coast is found within the easy reach of Brisbane which can be accessed through road or rail via the Bruce Highway (Buckley, 2011). Actually, the region supports the domestic airport at Maroochydore while Sunshine Coast airport hails the direct flights from Melbourne and Sydney.

Sunshine Coast Competitive Advantage and SWOT analysis

Sunshine Coast region is deemed to be amongst the rapidly growing regions found in South East Queensland. This coastal region faces multifaceted challenges in servicing the future visitors and residents' needs particularly with regard to the basic infrastructure services and transport. Despite the fact that tourism is seen to be the largest current contributor to the gross regional product by about 16.4% in Sunshine Coast region, investment in tourism related infrastructure alongside tourism products has not been fully utilized to meet the regional visitors future needs. Nevertheless, in Australia, Sunshine Coastal region has a rapidly expanding tourism industry and population base which ideally provides domestic market for the offered tourism products.

This tourists region surfaced over the last few years from a very predominant rural community to a vastly developed and urbanized region. All these occurred due to coastal areas increasing development which paved way to the growing tourism industry. Moreover, Sunshine Coast tourism is a <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

renowned leader in delivering diverse tourism experiences in a stylish, natural and friendly environment where the visitors can reconnect, relax and re-energize. The Sunshine Coast tourism attraction destination has further been recognized both globally and domestically for its sustainable development and management of the various natural attractions and assets along with its lucrative tourism ventures (Jones & Phillips, 2011). Finally, the effective planning and policy coordination; strong community support; an integrated cohesive industry and the consumer service culture of the Sunshine Coast tourism has enabled this industry to deliver the visions long embraced by most tourism industries, and these form the basis for its competitive advantage.

Although Sunshine Coast Tourism offers beautiful tourism destination attractions and opportunities to all parties, the industry equally has weaknesses and threats that revolve around its daily operations. Essentially, the strengths of this tourism appealing destination is seen in the series of proffered cultural activities such as the museums, historical places, galleries in addition to the quality and number of surfing beaches, rivers, national parks, and the stylish sub-tropical coastal destination. The increasing occupancy rate in the past six years for all types of accommodation coupled with fast access to the island has immensely created an increased demand for the commercial accommodation as well as tourism products and facilities. However, this tourist destination point has numerous weaknesses including fragmentation of the transport services which emerge due to deficiency in integrated transport networks; lack of diversities in the provision of

accommodation options like the high end and low end accommodation options, and poor signage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010b).

The eminent higher proportions of unoccupied private dwellings, lack of critical mass tourism attractions besides the closure of most tourist attraction centers over the last years has significantly contributed to the overall weakness of the Sunshine Coast tourism. Conversely, there are looming opportunities such as the positioning of Sunshine Coast Tourism as a global head in sustainable tourism; the strong natural attractions which lend themselves to the product development opportunities that consists of the experience based nature activities and attractions; opportunities to invest in the preservation and protection of the natural attractions alongside the emanating opportunities to develop more conferences, events and meeting venues that encompass potential cultural precincts. More tourism opportunities also arise from the development of an assortment of accommodation options to suit and meet the individual target markets needs, and building up further cycle tourism infrastructure within the region to furnish the connecting networks like the cycle paths, trails, trip end facilities, and bike lanes which link the activities centers to the tourists' attraction regions (Tourism Research Australia, 2010)

The high population growth rate coupled with potential environmental degradation seems to be some of emerging threats that Sunshine Coast Tourism faces. Nonetheless, this coastal tourism region also lacks quality products to adequately support the beach and coastal lifestyle image. The lost momentum to develop commitments on improving the transport infrastructure and the competition from market rivals such as Gold Coast and <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

various other competitors equally prove to be viable sources of market and operational threats for Sunshine Coast Tourism.

Market segmentation and dominance

Since Australia's local tourism industries are not of equal size, the number of visitors, tourism expenditure and outputs tend to vary significantly from one region to the other. However, in the entire Queensland region, the Gold Coast is seemingly one of the Australia's most lively tourism destinations. For instance, in the fiscal 2010, the international and domestic tourism expenditure totaled to \$4.528 billion which could be slatted into \$2.1 billion and \$2.428 billion respectively. In terms of economic importance, Gold Coast Tourism had a rating of 6.4% when compared 6.7% accorded to the Sunshine Coast Tourism (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009a). Further, the total tourism expenditure for Sunshine Coast was \$2.458 billion despite having a higher market rating in terms of economic importance of tourism in Queensland region.

The total output for both of these coastal tourism destinations also differed in the financial year 2010 based on the fact that the amount recorded by Gold Coast Tourism nearly doubled that which was recorded by Sunshine Coast Tourism. In the fiscal 2010, Gold coast had a basic price total output equivalent to \$51.870 billion whereas Sunshine Coast Tourism had \$27.056 billion. Therefore, in terms of regional importance, Sunshine Coast is ranked number sixteen, one point above the Gold Coast which is placed number eighteen whereas the expenditure and output rating saw Gold Coast Tourism ranked first in Queensland region. Moreover, based on the domestic regional comparison for the year ended December 2010, the total number of visitors <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

in the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast were 3, 396, 000 and 2, 604, 000 respectively. This gave rise to an annual change in the number of visitors of 6% and -3% for Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast in that financial year (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009b).

The holiday percentage for these tourism destinations were equal at 59% while some variances were witnessed in their business undertakings whereby, Gold Coast had a business advantage percentage of 9% as compared to 6% reported by Sunshine Coast. The number of nights spent by the visitors also significantly varied across this fiscal period where Gold Coast had a total of 13, 755, 000 nights which brought about 1% annual change and -0. 1nights change in comparison to Sunshine Coast 2010 annual record of 10, 186, 000 nights which resulted into -12% annual changes coupled with -0. 4 nights change (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010c). Further differences were noticed in the levels of length of stay and holiday visitation percentages in which Gold Coast reported 4. 1 and 59% by the year end 2010 whilst Sunshine Coast had 3. 9 and 59% in that order respectively. Finally, the domestic regional comparison showed that Gold Coast accounted for 20% of the total percentage share of visitors to the Queensland while Sunshine Coast only justified 16%.

At the international levels, Gold Coast had an annual change of 0% in the number visitors; 5% annual change in the number of nights and a holiday visitation percentage equivalent to 78%. On the other hand, Sunshine Coast had a 2% annual change in the number of visitors; 3% annual change in the number of nights alongside a holiday visitation percentage equivalent to 80%. Nevertheless, in terms of international business operations, Gold Coast <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-gold-coast-tourism-and-sunshine-coast-tourism-essay/>

and Sunshine Coast reported business growth percentages of 5% and 2% while at the same realized 40% and 14% in the number visitors percentage share in Queensland. Annually, the estimated total revenues for Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast are \$1. 2 billion and 0. 9 billion (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010c).

Recommendations and conclusions

While coastal tourism is perceived to significantly contribute to the Australian economy, the actual degree of tourism importance tends to vary from one region to another. Basically, the level of importance seems not to entirely depend on size of that particular regional tourism industry as has been witnessed in the case of Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. In terms of the annual business operations, Gold Coast Tourism appears to be in the forefront in every undertaken activity as compared to the Sunshine Coast Tourism but they are all globally recognized tourism destination attraction points. It is therefore recommended that Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast tourism products should avoid being too touristy by only offering surf and sun experiences but the aim should be to offer nature based experiences like rainforests, wildlife and beach experiences amidst allowing for opportunities to meet the local characters, connect with the local communities as well as experience local hospitalities.