

Introduction to big bus tour tourism essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Big Bus Tours is the largest operator of open-top sightseeing tours in the World, providing sightseeing tours in thirteen cities across three continents.

Big Bus Tours was formed by the merger of two established sightseeing tour businesses. The Big Bus Company Ltd – based in London, and Les Cars Rouge – based in Paris. The two businesses, each with over 20 years of successful tour experience, decided to combine their expertise, creating Big Bus Tours in May 2011.

Big Bus Tours' sightseeing formula has been designed to provide a flexible approach to city discovery. Each open-top bus tour provides a hop-on, hop-off facility at a variety of interesting locations and, wherever possible, Big Bus Tours looks to enhance the visitor sightseeing experience by providing complementary experiences.

Big Bus Tours is currently planning further expansion in the US, Europe and Far East, and welcomes all enquiries about possible franchise or partnership opportunities.

Source: http://www.bigbustours.com/eng/international/custompage.aspx?id=about_us

INTRODUCTION TO THE ORIGINAL TOURS

The Original London Transport Sightseeing Tour was the first sightseeing tour of its kind in London, formally introduced by London Transport as 'Service J' on 11th June 1951, when thousands of visitors descended on the capital for the Festival of Britain. It was described at the time as a non-stop circular tour

of London operating with double-decker buses from Buckingham Palace Road, South Kensington Station and Bloomsbury Place.

The tour was promoted with the slogan ‘ around the town for half a crown’. As part of the tour, visitors were given a free London Transport Guide Book with the aid of which they had to identify the major sights of London for themselves. By the early seventies the service had expanded to offer conducted coach tours in the City, Windsor & Hampton Court, all “ live guided” by the renowned Blue Badge Guides. Back in 1971 the fares for an ‘ Around London Sightseeing Tour’ were 50p for adults and 30p for children, whilst the conducted coach tours in the City cost £1. 40 and £1. 10 respectively.

The first live guides were introduced on the Around London Tours in 1984, with taped commentaries in French and German following the next year. In 1990 the service was further improved with digitally recorded commentaries, in up to eight languages. 1991 saw the launch of the most popular hop-on, hop-off service allowing passengers the freedom to get off and explore the sights they passed.

Over the years there were several name changes from the initial uncharismatic Service J until 1992 when the name ‘ The Original London Sightseeing Tour’ was finally adopted. In the same year the company was sold to the Pullmans Group Limited and traded as London Coaches Ltd.

In December 1997, The Original London Sightseeing Tour Ltd was taken over by Arriva, one of the largest transport service organisations in Europe. In

In addition to the provision of bus and train services, Arriva plc also operates a Bus and Coach dealership; and holds the Cross Country rail franchise.

In March 2001 London Pride Ltd was acquired and merged with The Original London Sightseeing Tour, creating the largest single operation of its kind anywhere in the world.

In August 2010 The Original Tour's parent company, Arriva plc, officially became a part of DB UK Holding Limited (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Deutsche Bahn AG) for £1.5bn. The Deutsche Bahn group has 295,000 employees in 130 countries.

Today, over 60 years later, trading simply as "The Original Tour", this multi-award winning company continues to provide visitors to London with a relaxed and enjoyable view of the capital's famous landmarks from open-topped buses operating throughout the year.

Source: <http://www.theoriginaltour.com/info/about.htm>

http://www.isecard.com/images/featured/original_london_tour_logo.gif

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY BOTH THE COMPANIES

BIG BUS TOUR:

The Big Bus tour provides open-top sightseeing tours of London. The company has a fleet of 90 buses and tours run every 5-15 minutes, enabling visitors to hop on and off at over 70 stops. The carefully devised tour provides an overview of the history and culture of London, delivered by either a London guide in English or a recorded commentary.

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-big-bus-tour-tourism-essay/>

The digitally recorded commentary allows you to listen to facts and stories in any of 8 languages. Head phones are provided enabling you to listen in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese & Russian.

As with all Big Bus Tours, you can stay onboard for the full tour or make use of the hop-on hop-off facility, a great benefit of the London bus tour that enables you to stop and explore the sights at your leisure. Take advantage and visit the top London attractions at your own pace.

The Red Tour

The classic open top sightseeing tour of London. The interesting and informative commentary provided by the professional guides is just one reason why the Big Bus Red Tour is the best thing to do when visiting London.

All Big Bus Red Tours are led by our experienced guides – London enthusiasts who will talk you through the history of the city and give you a personal and entertaining commentary on London and its tourist attractions.

The route has been carefully devised to enable you to see London's most famous sights. Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and The Tower of London are just some of the fabulous attractions.

Stay on board for the full circuit or make use of the hop-on hop-off facility, a great benefit of the London Bus Tour that enables you to stop and explore the sights at your leisure. Take advantage and visit the top London attractions at your own pace.

Discover the wondrous history of London as you learn and laugh with live commentary provided by our professional guides. The tour takes in all the key sights of Central London with great views and interesting facts at every turn.

Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and The Tower of London are just some of the fabulous attractions on the red tour.

The Blue Tour

The most extensive sightseeing route through London takes you to all the top attractions and features an informative recorded commentary in 8 languages on all buses. The bus tour takes in all of Central London as well as Kensington and Hyde Park

On Board the Blue Tour you will also be able to discover the shopping havens of Harrods, Harvey Nichols and Kensington High Street, take in the elegant Kensington Palace and the fashionable Notting Hill. In addition to the many sightseeing attractions of Central London, the Blue Tour travels West to the Victoria & Albert, Science and Natural History Museums - all free to enter, plus the world famous Madame Tussaud's.

The Green Link

The Green Link is an interchange between the red and blue Big Bus tours. It allows you to visit London attractions that may not be covered by either of the other tours. It connects the popular hotel of Russell Square and Trafalgar Square, where you may interchange with the Red and Blue Tours. The Green

Link also provides the opportunity to visit both the Dickens and British Museums.

It takes just ten minutes to travel between the three stops on one of our open top tour busses. The journey is without a tour guide commentary and departures are every 30 minutes.

River Thames Pass

Enjoy a leisurely cruise on the River Thames with entertaining commentary and superb views of London's riverside. Take a short trip through central London or travel to Greenwich and visit the National Maritime Museum and the Greenwich Royal Observatory.

Three Walking tours

Join an entertaining walking tour lead by one of our experienced guides. There are 3 to choose from, enabling you to discover more of London. Led by a friendly Big Bus Guide, these relaxed walking tours reveal the heart and soul of this great city. With your Big Bus ticket you may take as many guided walks as you like.

The guided London walks last approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes to 2 hours and leave from the Big Bus Trafalgar Square stops 10 and 37 (outside the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery).

Royal London Walking Tour

Beatles Walking Tour of London

Ghosts London Walking Tour

Big Bus Bonus Card

The Bonus card provides great discounts and added value offers in some of London's most popular restaurants, shops and attractions. The Bonus Card can be used for a week after your Big Bus Sightseeing Tour and can be used repeatedly.

Highlights

- The houses of Parliament
- St Paul's Cathedral
- The Tower of London
- The London Eye
- Westminster Abbey
- Tower Bridge
- Buckingham Palace

Includes

- Hop on Hop Off sightseeing Tour
- 2 Routes with the option of a personal audio commentary or a live guided tour
- 3 Walking Tours, River Cruise and Big Bus Bonus Card (Discount card)

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-big-bus-tour-tourism-essay/>

– Unlimited use of all components throughout ticket validity

Things that are excluded from the tour are:

- Meals and drinks
- Personal expenses
- Tips and gratuities
- Optional activity costs

THE ORIGINAL TOURS:

Customize your own tour by hopping on and off the bus at any stop, as many times as you like. There's a choice of sightseeing routes, including the Yellow Route which features live onboard commentary. If you're traveling with the family, take the Red Route – relax while your children are entertained and informed by the highly acclaimed Kids Club commentary and their free London activity packs.

Each route makes frequent stops – simply hop off where you want to, and return to the same stop to continue your tour.

Highlights:

Madame Tussauds

Piccadilly Circus

Leicester Square

Trafalgar Square

Downing Street

Big Ben and Parliament

London Eye

Covent Garden

St. Paul's Cathedral

Tower Bridge

Tower of London

Shakespeare's Globe

Westminster Abbey

Buckingham Palace

The City Sightseeing Tour (Red Route)

Madame Tussaud's and the London Planetarium, Regent's Park, Oxford Street, Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus/Eros Statue, Leicester Square, The National Gallery, Nelson's Column and Trafalgar Square, Horse Guard's Parade, Downing Street, Big Ben and Parliament, Lambeth Palace, Imperial War Museum, The London Aquarium, London Eye, South Bank Arts Center and BFI Imax Cinema, Covent Garden, Fleet Street, St. Paul's Cathedral, Monument, London Bridge, London Dungeon, Tower Bridge, The Tower of London, Shakespeare's Globe, Tate Gallery Bankside, Millennium Footbridge,

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-big-bus-tour-tourism-essay/>

Catamaran Cruisers, Sherlock Holmes Pub, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park, Speakers Corner.

The Original Tour (Yellow Route)

English-speaking fully qualified live guides.

The National Gallery, Nelson's Column and Trafalgar Square, Horse Guards' Parade, Downing Street, Big Ben and Parliament, Lambeth Palace, Imperial War Museum, The London Aquarium, London Eye, South Bank Arts Center and BFI Imax Cinema, Covent Garden, Fleet Street, St Paul's Cathedral, Monument, London Bridge, London Dungeon, Tower Bridge, The Tower of London, Shakespeare's Globe, Tate Gallery Bankside, Millennium Footbridge, Catamaran Cruisers, Sherlock Holmes Pub, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace and the Changing of the Guard, Hyde Park, Speakers Corner, Ritz Hotel, Royal Academy of Arts, Fortnum and Mason, Piccadilly Circus/Eros Statue, Leicester Square.

The Museum Link (Blue Route)

Main attractions: Kensington Palace, Baden-Powell House, Natural History Museum, Science Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, Brompton Oratory, Harrods, Knightsbridge, Harvey Nichols, Hyde Park, Ritz Hotel, Piccadilly Circus, Shaftesbury Avenue, British Museum, Russell Square, Wellington Museum, Royal Albert Hall, Albert Memorial, Kensington High Street and the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain.

Capital Connector (Purple Route)

Holland Park, Notting Hill, Bayswater, Kensington Gardens, Pet Cemetery, Paddington Station, Madame Tussauds.

St Pancras Station Connector (Black Route)

St Pancras – King’s Cross Station – Marble Arch – Paddington Station – Marylebone Station – Euston Station.

The bus leaves St Pancras International at 10. 05, 11. 05 and 12. 05pm; and departs from Marble Arch at 3. 50pm, 4. 50pm and 5. 50pm. Speak to our staff on the day for the latest timetable information.

Central London (Green Route)

Leicester Square – London Eye – Westminster – Piccadilly Circus – Leicester Square This circular service provides a handy link in central London across the Thames.

It operates daily between 09. 15 and 15. 45.

Kids Club

The Original Tour is the only tour operator to offer commentaries specially designed for children. History made fun – for kids, by kids ... plus the voice of the ghost of London! Every child also gets a “ passport” to London and a fantastic free fun pack with activity/quiz book. Look out for the great Kids Club competition in the back of the book where you could win a souvenir of London. The Kids Club Channel is available on the red and blue route.

Members of the Kids club will receive their own free activity pack and a Passport to London. Don't forget to get your passport officially stamped before you board the bus!

Thames River Cruise

Enjoy this hop-on-hop-off cruise down the River Thames with professional commentary. Hop-on-hop-off cruises are available from Westminster, Waterloo, Tower and Greenwich Piers. A great way to explore London's riverside attractions in greater detail... and its completely free.

FREE Walking Tours

On non-guard change days walks go to Buckingham Palace and to St James's Palace where you can take photos of sentry boxes. The guard change does not take place if it is raining. All tours take approximately 90 minutes. Please note that the Jack the Ripper walk will finish at Aldgate East tube station and not at one of our bus stops.

1. The Changing of the Guard Walk
2. Rock ' n' Roll Walking Tour
3. The Jack the Ripper Walk

SOURCE: <http://www.viator.com/tours/London/The-Original-London-Sightseeing-Tour-Hop-on-Hop-off/d737-3302OT?pref=02&aid=g305>

Comparison between the big bus tour and the original tours

Original tour and The Big Bus are the established operators and are arguably the mirror images of each other in terms of the product that they offer to their customers.

PRICE COMPARISON

At large both the companies go head to head on the price department.

But if one has to compare which company has a more cheaper ticket it's the original tours with just a fraction.

Big Bus has a 24 and 48 hour tickets that they offer but this is not the case with the original tours, they just offer a 24 hour ticket.

COMPARISON OF THE BUSES

In the last couple of years both the companies have upgraded their buses.

All the buses are double deck, open top vehicles.

The difference in both the company's buses is how open top they are, some of the top rows in the front are covered.

ENGLISH GUIDES & AUDIO GUIDES

If you are fluent in English it is preferred that you take the guided bus tour which is provided by both the companies.

Of the audio guides all have English, French, Spanish, German and Italian.

Big Bus doesn't have Japanese, the other two do. Big Bus & OLT have Russian. OLT have a Kids Channel. Big Bus has Portuguese and Mandarin.

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-big-bus-tour-tourism-essay/>

Source: <http://www.londontoolkit.com/blog/tours/comparing-londons-hop-on-hop-off-sightseeing-buses/>

http://t3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQG6Om3ceMVQp8TJ57fRpl6-qUNxCeNe9XP6WMIpBvZMdfPIE_jDw

COMPARISON OF THE FACILITIES PROVIDED

The original tour provides KIDS CLUB facility which makes it more fun for the kids, the same is not provided by the BIG BUS TOURS.

Bonus card, one of the main facility provided by the big bus tour.

In this the customers can avail great discounts and value offers in some of London's most popular restaurants, shops and attractions. The Bonus Card can be used for a week after your Big Bus Sightseeing Tour and can be used repeatedly.

This is NOT provided by the ORIGINAL TOURS.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS ON THE BASES OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1. Which bus tour did you opt for?

According to the data collected 70% of the respondents opted for the Big Bus tour where as only 30% of the people opted for the original tour.

Were you given ample time given to you for sightseeing?

According to the data collected people who opted for the Big Bus tour said that they were given time to see all the sights but some of the people were

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-big-bus-tour-tourism-essay/>

not satisfied with the time provided by the tour companies' but this is based on their personal requirements.

Was there any entertainment for your children during the tour?

The original tour is the only bus tour company that provides entertainment for the kids.

Families who opted for the big bus tour were really happy with all the facilities and the value added services provided by the company the only thing that they were not content with was that their kids were not given any special treatment.

Whereas the families who opted for the original tour were really happy with the services specially with the kids club facility for their children, this made their tour more enjoyable.

Was the guide able to answer your questions?

The guides of both the tour companies were well informed and were able to tackle all the questions very easily.

Did the tour match upto your expectation?

Big bus tour was able to match upto the customers expectations as all the things that the company mentioned were provided to them. The most important thing that they were excited about was using their BONUS CARD facility.

The original tour was also able to meet the expectation and the people with kids were the ones who were really happy and satisfied as their kids were able to enjoy the tour because of the KIDS CLUB facility provided by the original tour company.

Would you recommend this tour to your friends?

Customers, whether they opted for big bus or the original tours , they were certain that they will recommend the tour service to all their friends as they were extremely happy with the services provided to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the data collected and the survey conducted I have reached the following conclusion:

According to the information and my personal experience BIG BUS TOUR is the best and also most of the respondents that were interviewed were the ones who had gone for the same.

Personally I would recommend both the companies to install toilets in the buses as it would make the trip more convenient for the customers.

According to the suggestions given by the respondents , buses should install some moving platform with the help of which people with a wheel chair can make use of the open top facility provided , otherwise they have to sit at the lower level

Original Tours should start a facility similar to the BONUS CARD which is provided by the Big Bus Tour , as it is one of the major differentiating point between them.

If the Big Bus tour wants to attract couples with kids, they should start a KIDS CLUB facility or something on the same lines as it would increase their customer base, even though it is still very high.

CONCLUSION

With the help of the data collected through the questionnaire and the information gathered from the internet I can easily say that big bus tour, with all the hype around it and being started recently ie in May 2011 takes the lead in the hop-on hop-off bus tour providing companies.

Original tour company, even though started about 5 decades back, has lost to the new kid on the block.

In order for the original tour company to gain more market share and once again be on the top it has to start some aggressive marketing strategies, give more discounts, provide 48 hour tickets as done by its competitors.

Big bus tour company, in order to maintain its lead in the market, should introduce some kids entertainment or start a tour specially for the younger generation which would attract more families, as the main motive of the family is that their kids should have a great time and at the end increase their knowledge about the city.