



Amit Kishore

Co-founder & Director, Eastbound Group

The travel industry has taken a massive blow and we're all feeling the heat. It's challenging times for everyone. Not only the inbound segment but also outbound and domestic tourism has been adversely impacted, so the crisis is across the board. Our inbound destination management companies Eastbound, Distinct Destinations and Eastbound Discoveries saw a substantial drop in numbers due to cancellations starting from November, first owing to anti-CAA riots and then by dint of the spread of coronavirus. Similarly, our outbound and finally, our domestic businesses have borne the brunt of the pandemic. Having said that, we're hoping that the situation will improve in due course and the next season should help the industry cover some lost ground. It's now just a matter of who has the wherewithal and reserves to ride out the storm.

I think the best thing we can do right now is to not do anything at all. Our honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi has outlined strong contingency measures and instructed us to batten down the hatches. It's heartening that the Indian government is taking timely and responsible steps keeping the larger interest of humanity at heart. Over here at Eastbound Group we have handed a detailed advisory to our employees to remain safe during the coronavirus outbreak. We've asked them to install certain communication tools on their systems for uninterrupted internal and external meetings while they're working from home. Above all, our leadership has been given the responsibility to keep team spirits high during these times to maintain a positive attitude among employees.

The government of India along with its medical research team have been trying their best to impede the virus from spreading through various measures, a nationwide lockdown for 21 days being one such example. However, nothing can be said with utmost certainty at the moment. Since the crisis is of a global scale, the resolution will have to be at a global level too. Hopefully, the situation will be better in the next few months. Keeping an ear to the ground and fingers crossed.



Arjun Mukundd

Senior Engagement Manager, T&A Consulting

The tourism industry currently accounts for 10 percent GDP and about 50 million jobs. Covid-19 has taken the centre stage and we have already lost the first half of 2020. The world was facing the looming existential threat of climate crisis and this has added fuel to the fire. The hotel industry predicts the impact to be worse than post Great

Recession of 2008.

A health advisory has been issued to all our team members to work from home, restrict all non-essential business travel and switch to virtual meeting platforms to enable smooth business transactions. Team T&A remains committed to ensure communication with clients remains uninterrupted and all contingency plans with regards to the safety of colleagues and client data have been put in place.

We are grappling with the escalating situation. Things are fast developing and it's difficult to keep pace. So let us take one day at a time and hopeful that we come out of this the soonest. I am very optimistic that this unprecedented shutdown has already resulted in boredom.

As much as technology is a bane how long can one sit inside the four walls and flip movies on netflix and order from Big Basket or Zomato? We all are waiting for that day to get back to our normal fast paced lives. Let us take a moment and look at it in a positive light, this is certainly making people realize the importance of socializing and of course the need to travel and we are certain that we can see a considerable pent up in the demand shortly.

TTJ's view: This year, all tourism businesses are going to have to fight just to survive. It is hard to imagine people travelling abroad for the next six months even after the lockdown due to the extremely fearful environment. Further, economic conditions are likely to leave less disposable income in the hands of the people and restrict spends to only essential purchases. Government intervention is desperately needed to bring relief to this sector in the near future. As the entire travel industry has been pushed to the verge of collapse, the government must come out with a set of measures to aid and revive the sector. These are testing times and we all have to be resilient in this period of great stress and uncertainty.

"The corona virus has forced us to pause and figure out how we run businesses, how we travel and how we treat each other, and most important of all how we treat the world and the species present in this world." - Shoba Narayan.

