



Unit 10: Tour Operations Management

CLASS 1 TOPICS

- Overview of the travel and tourism/hospitality industry
- Defining the tour operating business and business activities of tour operators
- Different types of tour operators: mass market, independent, domestic, outbound, incoming, specialist
- The functional roles of the tour operating business including product development, marketing and sales, and operations support

Nature and Scope Of The Tourism and Hospitality Industry

► Definition of Tourism

There are a number of ways tourism can be defined, and for this reason, the **United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** embarked on a project from 2005 to 2007 to create a common glossary of terms for tourism. It defines tourism as follows:

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008).

Using this definition, we can see that tourism is the movement of people for a number of purposes (whether business or pleasure).

Nature and Scope Of The Tourism and Hospitality Industry

► Definition of Tourist

Building on the definition of tourism, a commonly accepted description of a tourist is “someone who travels at least 80 km from his or her home for at least 24 hours, for business or leisure or other reasons” (LinkBC, 2008, p.8). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (1995) helps us break down this definition further by stating tourists can be:

- Domestic (residents of a given country travelling only within that country)
- Inbound (non-residents travelling in a given country)
- Outbound (residents of one country travelling in another country)

The scope of tourism, therefore, is broad and encompasses a number of activities.



Nature and Scope Of The Tourism and Hospitality Industry

Given the sheer size of the tourism industry, it can be helpful to break it down into broad industry groups using a common classification system. The **North American Industry Classification System** (NAICS) was jointly created by the Canadian, US, and Mexican governments to ensure common analysis across all three countries (British Columbia Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 2013a). The tourism-related groupings created using NAICS are (in alphabetical order):

1. Accommodation
2. Food and beverage services (commonly known as “F & B”)
3. Recreation and entertainment
4. Transportation
5. Travel services

Career Pathways in the Hospitality Industry



1

- Airlines, Cruise Companies
- Agencies and tour operators
 - Guiding
 - Retail Travel Sales
- Visitor Information Services

2

- Hotels and Resorts
- B&B, Guest-houses
- Villas and cottages
- Retail Travel Sales
- Conference and exhibition centres

3

- Theme parks
- Spas & Wellness centres
- Museum and galleries
 - Casinos
- Concert and theatre venues

4

- Restaurants
- Bar, Pubs
- Catering

5

- Meeting and Conferences
 - Sport Events

6

- Human Resources
- Logistics Management
- Sales & Marketing
- Luxury Brand Management
- Training and Consulting
 - Education

Nature and Scope Of The Tourism and Hospitality Industry

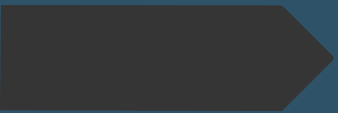
► **The Hospitality Industry**

When looking at tourism it's important to consider the term hospitality. Some define hospitality as "the business of helping people to feel welcome and relaxed and to enjoy themselves" (Discover Hospitality, 2015, ¶3). While many business niches are composed of only a handful of different businesses, the hospitality industry applies to nearly any company that deals with customer satisfaction and is focused on meeting leisurely needs rather than basic ones.

Facets of Hospitality Industry



What are the five sectors of the travel and tourism industry?



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Sectors Of The Travel And Tourism Industry

- Accommodation
- Food and beverage services (commonly known as “F & B”)
- Recreation and entertainment
- Transportation
- Travel services

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Tourism Sector: Transportation

The transportation sector is vital to the success of the travel and tourism industry. Put simply, if we can't move people from place to place — whether by air, sea, or land — we don't have an industry.

Types of Transport

1. Air Transport
2. Rail Transport
3. Water Transport: Cruises and Ferries
4. Land Transport: Rentals and Taxis (Ridesharing Apps Included)

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Tourism Sector: Accommodation

► Hotel Types

Hotels are typically referred to by hotel type or category. The type of hotel is determined primarily by the size and location of the building structure, and then by the function, target market, service level, other amenities, and industry standards.

Hotels can be broken down into various different classifications.

Type of Classification	Examples of Classifications
Size (number of rooms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Under 50 rooms *50 to 150 rooms *150 to 299 rooms *300 to 600 rooms *More than 600 rooms
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Airport hotel *Casino hotel *City centre hotel *Resort hotel
Level of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Economy/limited service *Luxury service *Mid-level service
Market and function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Airport hotel *All-inclusive resort *Bed and breakfast *Business hotel *Boutique hotel *Casino *Conference centre *Convention centre *Extended-stay hotel *Resort hotel *Suite hotel *Timeshare and condominium hotel
Ownership and affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Chain with a brand affiliation *Independent
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Accessibility *Airport *Beach *Casino *City centre *Childcare *Fitness club *Golf *Pool *Ski *Spa *Tennis *Weddings
Industry standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *AAA Diamond Rating *CAA Diamond Rating *Canada Select Star Rating *Canadian Star Quality Accommodation *Green Key Eco Rating *Trip Advisor Traveller's Choice
Brand standards (e.g., Starwood Hotels and Resorts has nine different brands, each with its own set of standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Aloft *Element *Four Points by Sheraton *Le Méridien *Sheraton *St Regis



Tourism Sector: Accommodation

Competitive set is a marketing term used to identify a group of hotels that include the competitors that a hotel guest is likely to consider as an alternative. These can be grouped by any of the classifications listed in the table, such as size, location, or amenities offered. There must be a minimum of three hotels to qualify as a competitive set.

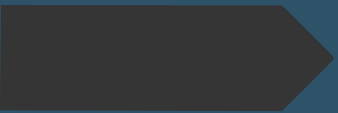
Business hotels, airport hotels, budget hotels, boutique hotels, convention hotels, and casino hotels are some examples of differentiated hotel concepts and services designed to meet a specific market segment. As companies continue to innovate and compete to capture defined niche markets within each set, we can expect to see the continued expansion of specific concepts.

HOTEL CHARACTERISTICS BASED ON MARKET TYPE

Market Segment	Traveller Type	Characteristics
Commercial	Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •High-volume corporate accounts in city properties •Stronger demand Monday through Thursday •Most recession-proof of the market segments •Lower average daily rate (ADR) than other segments
Leisure	Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Purpose for travel includes sightseeing, recreation, or visiting friends and relatives •Stronger demand Friday and Saturday nights and all week during holidays and the summer •Includes tour groups in major cities and tourist attractions
Meetings and groups	Corporate groups, associations, SMERF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Includes meetings, seminars, trade shows, conventions, and gatherings of over 10 people •Peak convention demand is spring or fall •Proximity to a conference centre and meeting and banquet space increase this market
Extended stay	Business and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Often offers kitchen facilities and living room spaces •Bookings are more than five nights •Often business related (e.g., natural resource extraction, construction projects, corporate projects) •Leisure demand driven by a variety of circumstances including family visiting relatives or completing home renovations, snowbirds escaping the winter

Let's now take a closer look at three types of hotel that have emerged to meet specific market needs:

BUDGET HOTELS, BOUTIQUE HOTELS, AND RESORTS.



BUDGET HOTELS

The term budget hotel is challenging to define, however most budget properties typically have a standardized appearance and offer basic services with limited food and beverage facilities.

In Europe, Accor operates the predominant European-branded budget rooms. Accor has four hotel brands that were recently redesigned: hotelF1, ibis budget, ibis Styles, and ibis. These budget brands offer comfort, modern design, and breakfast on site; ibis Styles is all inclusive, with one price for room night, breakfast, and internet access (Accor, 2015).

The budget brands owned by Accor are an example of a shift toward the budget boutique hotel style. A relatively new category of hotel, budget boutique is a no-frills boutique experience that still provides style, comfort, and a unique atmosphere. Starwood has entered this category with a scaled down version of W with the new Aloft brand that debuted in Montreal in 2008 (Starwood Hotels, 2011).





BOUTIQUE HOTELS

These hotels have less than 100 rooms and feature a distinctive design style and on-site food and beverage options (Boutique Hotel Association, n.d.). As a reflection of the size of the hotel, a boutique hotel is typically intimate and has an easily identifiable atmosphere, such as classic, luxurious, quirky, or funky.

According to Bill Lewis, general manager for the Magnolia Hotel and Spa in Victoria, “guests seek out boutique hotels for their small size, individual design style, ... and personalized service.” He feels that “maintaining this service level in a small hotel allows for a very personalized and intimate experience that cannot be matched in large branded hotels” (personal communication, 2014).

Characteristics and Examples ⇔ <https://www.tripsavvy.com/what-is-a-boutique-hotel-definition-and-examples-4172980>



RESORTS

A resort is a full-service hotel that provides access to or offers a range of recreation facilities and amenities. A resort is typically the primary provider of the guest experience and will generally have one signature amenity or attraction (Brey, 2009).

- Examples of signature amenities include skiing and mountains, golf, beach and ocean, lakeside, casino and gaming, all inclusiveness, spa and wellness, marina, tennis, and waterpark. In addition, resorts also offer secondary experiences and a leisure or retreat-style environment.

Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort and Spa, Lucea, Jamaica





Tourism Sector: Food And Beverages

The food and beverage sector comprises “establishments primarily engaged in preparing meals, snacks and beverages, to customer order, for immediate consumption on and off the premises” (Government of Canada, 2012). This sector is commonly known to tourism professionals by its initials as **F&B**.

There are two key types of foodservice operations: *commercial foodservice*, which comprises operations whose primary business is food and beverage, and *non-commercial foodservice* establishments where food and beverages are served, but are not the primary business.

Commercial Foodservice: Quick-Service Restaurants, Full Service Restaurants (fine dining, family/casual, ethnic, and upscale casual).

Non-commercial Foodservice: Institutional (educational institutions, hospitals, prisons, airports, cruise ships etc.), Accommodation Foodservice, Vending and Automated Foodservices.



Tourism Sector: Recreation

Recreation can be defined as the pursuit of leisure activities during one's spare time (Tribe, 2011) and can include vastly different activities such as golfing, sport fishing, and rock climbing. Defining recreation as it pertains to tourism, however, is more challenging.

Key Terms:

Nature-based tourism: tourism activities where the motivator is immersion in the natural environment; the focus is often on wildlife and wilderness areas

Adventure tourism: outdoor activities with an element of risk, usually somewhat physically challenging and undertaken in natural, undeveloped areas



Tourism Sector: Entertainment

When travelling, there's a good chance you will be asked at the border, What is the nature of your trip? Whether the answer is for business, leisure, or visiting friends and relatives, there's a possibility that a traveler will participate in some of the following activities (as listed in the Statistics Canada International Travel Survey):

- ▶ Festivals and Events (Carnival, Coachella, Olympics, Weddings etc)
- ▶ Attractions

There are 5 major types of Attractions:

- ▶ **Heritage attractions**
- ▶ **Amusement/entertainment attractions**
- ▶ **Recreational attractions**
- ▶ **Commercial attractions**
- ▶ **Industrial attractions**

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Tourism Sector: Entertainment

5 major types of Attractions:

- **Heritage attractions:** focus on preserving and exhibiting objects, sites, and natural wonders of historical, cultural, and educational value (e.g., museums, art galleries, historic sites, botanical gardens, zoos, nature parks, conservation areas)
- **Amusement/entertainment attractions:** maintain and provide access to amusement or entertainment facilities (e.g., arcades; amusement, theme, and water parks)
- **Recreational attractions:** maintain and provide access to outdoor or indoor facilities where people can participate in sports and recreational activities (e.g., golf courses, skiing facilities, marinas, bowling centres)
- **Commercial attractions:** retail operations dealing in gifts, handcrafted goods, and souvenirs that actively market to tourists (e.g., craft stores listed in a tourist guide)
- **Industrial attractions:** deal mainly in agriculture, forestry, and manufacturing products that actively market to tourists (e.g., wineries, fish hatcheries, factories)

These activities fall under the realm of entertainment as it relates to tourism.

Tourism Sector: Entertainment

Event Type	Characteristics	Examples
1. Mega-event: those that yield high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community or destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •So large it affects economies •Gains global media coverage •Highly prestigious •Usually developed with a bidding process •Has major positive and negative impacts •1 million+ visits •Capital costs in excess of \$500 million •Considered "must see" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Olympic Games/ Paralympic Games •Commonwealth Games •FIFA World Cup •World fairs and expositions •Economic summits
2. Special event: outside the normal activities of the sponsoring or organizing body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •One-time or infrequent •Specific ritual, presentation, performance, or celebration •Planned and created to mark a special occasion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •National days and celebrations •Important civic occasions •Unique cultural performances •Royal weddings •Diamond jubilees
3. Hallmark event: possesses such significance in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that it provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identified with the location or synonymous with place name •Gains widespread recognition/awareness •Creates a competitive tourism advantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Carnival of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro) •Mardi Gras (New Orleans) •Oktoberfest (Munich)
4. Festival: (as defined above) public celebration that conveys, through a kaleidoscope of activities, certain meanings to participants and spectators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Celebration and reaffirmation of community or culture •Artistic content •Religious or ritualistic •Music, dance, and drama are often featured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lollapalooza •Junkanoo (Nassau, Bahamas)
5. Local community event: generated by and for locals; can be of interest to visitors, but tourists are not the main intended audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Involves the local population •A shared experience to their mutual benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fundraisers •Picnics •Barbeques

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Tourism Sector: Travel Services

The travel services sector is made up of a complex web of relationships between a variety of suppliers, tourism products, destination marketing organizations, tour operators, and travel agents, among many others. Under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), travel services comprises businesses and functions that assist with planning and reserving components of the visitor experience (Government of Canada, 2014).

THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF TRAVEL SERVICES AS IDENTIFIED UNDER NAICS:

1. Travel agencies
2. Online travel agencies (OTAs)
3. Tour operators
4. Destination marketing organizations (DMOs)
5. Other organizations



WHO IS A TOUR OPERATOR?



TOUR OPERATOR

A tour operator packages all or most of the components of an offered trip and then sells them to the traveller. These packages can also be sold through retail outlets or travel agencies (CATO, 2014; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003). Tour operators work closely with hotels, transportation providers, and attractions in order to purchase large volumes of each component and package these at a better rate than the traveller could if purchasing individually. Tour operators generally sell to the leisure market.

For example, a tour operator might purchase bulk airline tickets, hotel rooms, restaurant meal plans and sightseeing activities for a particular destination such as Rome. Then, the tour operator creates different packages that are tailored to families, singles and couples desiring to travel to Rome within a definite time period.



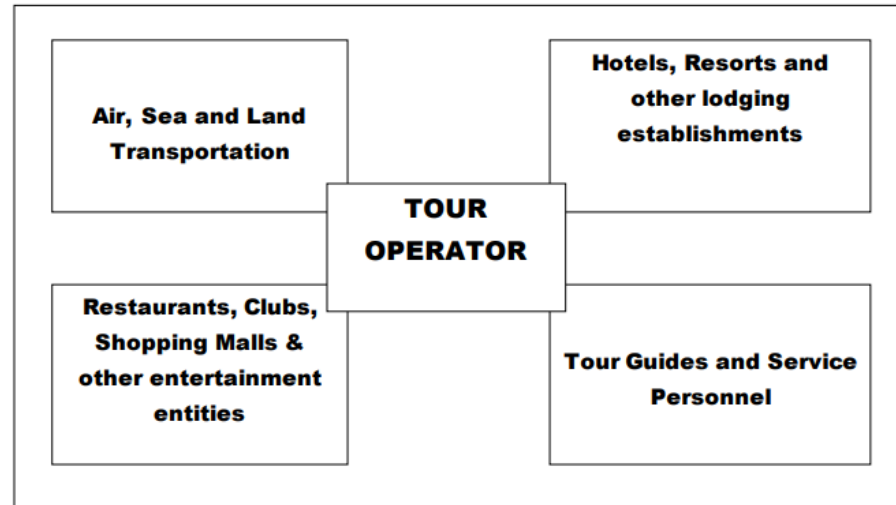
Tour Operator

Tour operators must accept responsibility for all problems that arise after the sale of their travel packages. Therefore, if a customer is mistreated by the airline, hotel, restaurant or sightseeing company, the tour operator is required to help resolve the issue on behalf of the customer.

Tour operators also give shopping, dining, sightseeing and lodging advice to potential customers and tour groups as needed. Tour operators are generally self-employed. Therefore, they must have a physical or online office, hire support employees as their customer base builds and advertise to get customers. Tour operators must have a head for business and have the ability to make quick decisions that affect their customers who might be far away from their homes.

***“The tour operator is the “nut” that keeps all the “bolts”
(suppliers) together.”***

A Tour Operator contacts the separate travel components of transportation, accommodations and their other services, and combines these into a single tour package.



A tour operator has three (3) main functions:

- 1. Plans and develops tour packages that meet the needs of the various markets.**
- 2. Assembles the various travel components as an integral part or component of a single tour package.**
- 3. Delivers the tour package by operating worry-free and secured programs and/or itineraries that are cheaper than when each service is purchased individually.**



Tour Operator | Job Description



Tour operators ensure that tourists have a positive experience by providing hands-on support and organizing elements of tours and programs. They assemble agendas and schedules, contact venues and attractions to arrange for group admissions, and handle the logistical aspects of tours, such as accommodations, transit, and ticketing. Tour operators also tailor tour packages and trips to specific groups based on their interests and abilities.

Many tour operators work within a travel agency or direct the activities of tour leaders, translators, and charter bus drivers, so they need to successfully coordinate teams to provide clients a successful tour experience.



What are the duties and responsibilities of a Tour Operator?



Tour Operator: Duties and Responsibilities

While a tour operator's specific responsibilities can vary day to day depending on the group, location, and itinerary, they tend to have several core duties:

- **Develop Tour Packages:** One of the main duties of a tour operator is developing tour packages and itineraries for a variety of individual clients and groups. Some tour operators work within a specific location, while others provide support to tourists traveling to many locations. In developing tour packages, tour operators select attractions, accommodations, and transportation options that tourists can then choose for visits of varying lengths and budgets.
- **Modify Tour Packages:** Tour operators tailor tour packages and options for specific groups and individuals. They may seek out reduced rates for a large group, for example, and arrange for larger or smaller chartered vehicles depending on the group's size. In this aspect of the role, the tour operator may also consider various factors like mobility and specific interests of group members or individuals to provide a higher level of interest, access, and customization.



Tour Operator: Duties and Responsibilities

- ▶ **Make Travel Arrangements:** In many cases, tour operators make travel arrangements for tour groups or individuals. They may assist with choosing flights, booking train and bus transit, and ensuring that tour groups can successfully travel between attractions. Tour operators also secure lodging, working closely with hotel personnel to arrange blocks of rooms and secure discounted rates. They may also develop dining itineraries.
- ▶ **Provide Tourist Assistance:** Throughout the tour, a tour operator provides direct assistance and answers client questions. For a group traveling abroad, for example, a tour operator may provide assistance with customs, foreign currency exchange, and language translations. Tour operators also provide itineraries and updates, distributing hard copies to tour group members and providing updates if plans or schedules change during the tour.



Tour Operator: Duties and Responsibilities

- ▶ **Coordinate Tour Leaders:** Many tour operators work with a team of tour leaders, coordinating their locations and schedules to ensure that tours are properly staffed and that leaders have the information they need regarding group members, schedules, and destinations. Tour operators often need to consider a specific group's needs, then make staffing decisions based on their tour leaders' skills, abilities, and availability.
- ▶ **Manage Tour Budgets:** Tour operators also ensure profitability by closely managing tour group budgets. For tour operators who work with travel agents, this can mean identifying attractions and accommodations that fit within the tour package's price point and securing lower room, meal, and ticket rates to balance the tour budget with money paid by clients. Tour operators may also provide agents, individual tourists, and groups with quotes related to tour costs.



Tour Operator: Main Responsibilities


The typical tasks carried out on a daily basis by a tour operator include:

- ▶ Providing general and specific advice about different travel destinations
- ▶ Drawing up complicated travel itineraries and ensuring that all the needs of the customers are met
- ▶ Making arrangements for transport, accommodation, tours, and activities
- ▶ Contacting airlines, hotels, and ground transport companies such as coach operators to make suitable arrangements
- ▶ Advising the customer about travel issues including required documentation and financial matters, such as appropriate exchange rates
- ▶ Using the computer database to research information about hotel accommodation fares and hotel ratings



Tour Operator: Main Responsibilities

- Dealing with payments
- Performing general administration tasks
- Dealing with and documenting complaints in an efficient and diplomatic manner
- Planning and advertising different promotions
- Making alternative arrangements for customers who have had their trips interrupted by unforeseen issues
- Evaluating customers' holidays and issuing appropriate feedback forms
- Every now and then, tour operators travel abroad for research purposes
- Making presentations to travel groups
- Creating and putting up displays at trade shows



What are some of the most important skills that Tour Operators need to have?



Tour Operator: Desirable Skills

Desirable skills for a potential tour operator include:

- ▶ Good interpersonal skills
- ▶ Enthusiasm
- ▶ The ability to work well as part of a team
- ▶ The ability to cope under pressure
- ▶ Good IT skills
- ▶ Competent organizational skills
- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ Good sales skills, both over the telephone and face-to-face
- ▶ A competent grasp of geography
- ▶ Good oral and written skills

A Tour Operator's Review Of Their Job

View Review At The Below Link

➤ <https://myjobsearch.com/careers/tour-operator.html>



Types Of Tour Operators



Inbound



Outbound



Mass Market



Specialist



Independent



TYPES OF TOUR OPERATORS

- ▶ Inbound tour operators bring travellers into a country as a group or through individual tour packages (e.g., a package from China to visit Jamaica).
- ▶ Outbound tour operators work within a country to take travellers to other countries (e.g., a package from Jamaica to the United Kingdom)
- ▶ Massmarket tour operators - A mass market tour operator is a tour operator such as Thomas Cook or Thomsons who deal with just about any type of holiday. They put together packages to suit everyone's needs whether it's a wild 2 weeks in party central Ibiza or a romantic weekend get away in the city of love - Paris. They cater for just about everything. A mass market tour operator supplies their customers with accommodation, transfers, transport and extra services.
- ▶ Specialist Tour Operators - specialist operators are more flexible than mass market operator because their customers are able to do what they want to do rather than get a package holiday.
- ▶ Independent Tour Operators – Self Employed.

What are the stages of planning and managing a tour?

There are fourteen stages.

FOURTEEN STAGES OF PLANNING AND MANAGING A TOUR

- 1) Researching and evaluating the potential of the destinations in these five areas:
 - **Airlines And Airports:** the cheapest way to get comfortably and safely to destination. Airports that are closer to the hotel and attractions, will save on cost
 - **Attractions:** the registered sites that will be of interest to the target group.
 - **Visitor Services:** places to eat, park, sleep, go to the restroom, get gasoline, shopping, touring etc.
 - **Organizational Capabilities:** identify the local organizations involving in tourism, preservation, humanities, museums, arts, and economic development for potential support.
 - **Safety And Security:** identify the full array of measures needed to protect the value of historic, cultural, and natural assets.
- 1) Researching and evaluating the potentials and segments of the market to target.
- 2) Negotiating with the selected Tourism Suppliers and Vendors
- 3) Creating the Tour Itinerary
- 4) Costing the package
- 5) Carrying out financial evaluation and pricing of the package – cost-oriented tour pricing
 - Mark-up
 - Total Cost / Absorption Cost
 - Product Cost
 - Rate of return
- 2) Carrying out the required administrative, financial, and supporting operational functions such as: leadership, job design, delegating responsibilities, quality assurance, creating budgets, receipting, booking etc.
- 3) Creating the marketing plan
- 4) Developing the tour operator's brochure
- 5) Marketing and selling the tour package
- 6) Collecting the deposit from the customers
- 7) Paying the vendors and securing the reservations
- 8) Executing the tour
- 9) Carrying out post-tour management and evaluation

Fourteen Stages Of Planning And Managing A Tour





Ryde South Florida Case Study

View The Website:
www.rydesouthflorida.com

View The Case Study:
Pages 1-2, 14-17, and 25.



CLASS ACTIVITY

Using The Promotional Video On Sandals Ochi Resort, Please Answer The Following Questions:

1. As A Tour Operator, Which market segment(s) would you promote this tour package to?
2. What recreation and entertainment activities are offered by the resort?
3. Create a Day 1 Trip Itinerary for customers who have bought your Sandals Ochi Trip Package. Start from their arrival at the airport in Jamaica to the end of the day, include activities for the customers to do throughout the day.

SANDALS OCHI RESORT





Q&A Based On Topics Discussed

- Define The Terms **Tourism** and **Tourist**
- Who are **Domestic, Inbound** and **Outbound** Tourists?
- What are the 5 Facets of the Hospitality Industry?
- What are the 5 Sectors of the Tourism Industry?
- Give examples of commercial and non-commercial foodservices.
- What are the 5 major types of attractions? Give 1 example of each.
- Who is a Tour Operator?
- What are some of the duties of the Tour Operator?
- What are the 5 types of Tour Operators?