

MakeMyTrip Limited: Travel made easy

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Introduction

MakeMyTrip Limited is India's largest online travel company. The online travel sector started gaining momentum in early 2000, as consumers started getting attracted to the more convenient option of checking confirmation of railway and air tickets online, rather than standing in long queues. The Indian online travel space witnessed an upward trend. The space exhibited a year-on-year growth of 17 per cent in the online booking of railway tickets, while online booking of air tickets grew from 1.45 million bookings in 2012 to 1.70 million bookings in 2013.

(http://www.exchange4media.mobi/Story.aspx?news_id=52357§ion_id=4).

MakeMyTrip Limited is the parent company of MakeMyTrip (India) Private Limited, India's largest online travel company, MakeMyTrip Inc. (USA), MakeMyTrip FZ LLC (UAE), Luxury Tours & Travel Pte Ltd (Singapore), Luxury Tours (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, the Hotel Travel Group (Thailand) and the ITC Group (Thailand). MakeMyTrip.com was founded in the year 2000 by Mr. Deep Kalra (Bagchi, 2010). It is India's leading online travel company which was started with the objective of empowering the Indian travellers with instant booking and comprehensive choices. The company began its journey in the US-India travel market with a range of best-value products and services (Rauch, 2011). The strength of the company has been its cutting-edge



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technology and dedicated round-the-clock customer support. In 2005, MakeMyTrip started its operation in the Indian market (http://www.makemytrip.com/about-us/company_profile.php)

Some of the acquisitions made by MakeMyTrip are listed below (<http://www.greenworldinvestor.com/2013/01/01/makemytrip-tripping-made-easier/>):

- In 2010, MakeMyTrip acquired ticketvala.com, an online bus ticketing platform provider started in 2006.
- In March 2010, it acquired certain assets of Travis Internet Private Limited.
- On May 9, 2011, it acquired approximately 79% of Luxury Tours & Travel Pte Ltd.
- In July 2011, it incorporated Luxury Tours (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd.
- In August 2011, it acquired 19.9% of Le Travenues Technology Private Limited.

Operational Details of the Company

The primary websites of MakeMyTrip are www.makemytrip.com and www.hoteltravel.com. The Company provides access to all the major domestic full-service and low-cost airlines operating to and from India, all major airlines operating to and from India, over 11,300 hotels and guesthouses in India, more than 102,800 hotels outside India, Indian Railways and several major Indian bus operators. The products offered by MakeMyTrip include:

- International and Domestic Air Tickets, Holiday Packages and Hotels
- Domestic Bus and Rail Tickets (Kalra, 2007)
- Private Car and Taxi Rentals
- MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions)
- B2B and Affiliate Services

In 2012, MakeMyTrip launched travel-centric mobile applications (Apps) for iPhone, Android, Blackberry and other types of basic phones (Gupta, 2012).

The company is affiliated with USTOA (United States Tour Operator Association), IATA (The International Airlines Travel Agent Network), ASTA (the American Society of Travel Agents), recognized by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (<http://www.pata.org/members/6347>).

MakeMyTrip commands a market share of 48%, followed by Yatra at 24% and Cleartrip at 18%, based on gross bookings for 2009 (<http://www.quora.com>).

MakeMyTrip also developed and nurtured the growth of its offline businesses like, its franchises and affiliates. It also started augmenting the brand's strong retail presence further. Today, MakeMyTrip is much more than just a travel portal or a famous pioneering brand - it is a one-stop-travel-shop that offers the broadest selection of travel products and services in India.

MakeMyTrip is the undisputed online leader, with its share of the travel market extending to more than 50% of all online sales, a fact demonstrated by the trust placed in it by millions of happy customers. MakeMyTrip's commitment and customer-centricity allows it to better understand and provide for its customers' diverse needs and wants, and deliver consistently. MakeMyTrip's dedicated 24x7 customer support and offices in 20 cities across India and 2 international offices in New York and San Francisco allow it to remain accessible to its customers 'a click's away'.

(http://www.makemytrip.com/franchisee/company_profile.php).

Major Competitors

MakeMyTrip has the following major international and domestic competitors:

International Competitors:

Expedia -

Expedia is an Internet-based travel website company headquartered in Bellevue, WA, with localized sites for 29 countries, India being one of them. Originally it was a division of Microsoft and was founded in 1996. It was spun off in 1999, and was later purchased by TicketMaster in 2001. TicketMaster changed its name to USA Networks in 2001 and then InterActiveCorp in 2003. IAC spun off its travel group of businesses under the Expedia, Inc. name in August 2005, including Expedia, Expedia Corporate Travel (now Egencia), TripAdvisor, Classic Vacations, eLong, Hotels.com, and Hotwire.com (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expedia,_Inc.).

Orbitz Worldwide -

Orbitz Worldwide, Inc. is a company that operates a web site used to research, plan and book travel. It is headquartered in the Citigroup Center in Near West Side, Chicago, Illinois, United States. Orbitz Worldwide is a publicly traded company listed on the New York Stock Exchange following its initial public offering (IPO) in July 2007. Other Orbitz Worldwide online travel companies include: CheapTickets, and the Away Network in the Americas; ebookers in Europe; and HotelClub and RatestoGo, based in Sydney. Orbitz Worldwide also owns and operates Orbitz for Business, a corporate travel company (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orbitz>).

Domestic Competitors

Yatra.com-

Yatra.com is an Indian online travel agency and a travel search engine based in Gurgaon, Haryana, founded by Dhruv Shringi, Manish Amin and Sabina Chopra in August 2006. In April 2012, it was the second largest online travel website in India, with 30 per cent share of the 370 billion (US\$5.9 billion) market for all online travel-related transactions, it also launched a “holiday-cum-shopping

card” with State Bank of India (SBI) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yatra.com>).

Values of the Company

MakeMyTrip consciously nurtures the following corporate values to uphold its unique edge over the competitors:

Excellence: MakeMyTrip makes the best attempt to achieve excellence, in all their areas of operation. Specifically, the company focusses on continuous improvement in interactions with people, efficiency of processes, and the wellbeing of the organization.

Integrity: MakeMyTrip ensures consistency between the words and actions by delivering ‘what we promise’, and, therefore, maintains transparency, trust and accountability.

Innovation: MakeMyTrip constantly applies intelligence, reason and technology to the work and environment. This allows the company to take informed risks & champion new ideas to improve the business and the community.

Passion for Winning: MakeMyTrip encourages a “can do” attitude, does not take “no” for an answer and believes that nothing is impossible. This allows MakeMyTrip their to work relentlessly toward achieving the goals and honouring their commitments.

Respect for People: MakeMyTrip believes that everyone, with whom it interacts, deserves respect and consideration.

Empower: MakeMyTrip gives freedom to the fellow colleagues to think and the opportunity to act in ways that will allow them to get the job done, and yet be consistent with the processes laid down.

Teamwork: MakeMyTrip fosters an environment wherein the abilities of all team members to achieve goals are efficiently utilized. It works on the premise that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Accountability: MakeMyTrip believes that it is responsible and accountable for the commitments it makes and the quality of the results it delivers to all the stakeholders.

Customer Centricity: MakeMyTrip focusses on its customers, both internal & external, by giving them priority.

(http://www.makemytrip.com/about-us/our_values.php)

People Management at MakeMyTrip

MakeMyTrip has to operate in the highly dynamic online travel industry. Therefore, it becomes imperative that the people associated with this industry remain agile and adoptable to the changes, constantly. Constant learning and upgrading of knowledge is essential to maintain a competitive edge. This poses a challenge for HR to ensure that people remain motivated to actively engage themselves in constant knowledge up gradation. Hence, there is an imperative to focus on people and ensure they are given plenty of growth and learning opportunities. According to Mr. Deep Kalra, CEO, MakeMyTrip focuses on acquiring and developing people rather than on retaining and believes that the first two ensures that the third is managed (Kalra, 2011,).

Recruitment at MakeMyTrip

The major challenge for the HR in MakeMyTrip has been to manage growth. The company grew by more than 100%, each year. Considering the unique nature of business of MakeMyTrip, the recruitment process followed in the company is very selective and intricate. The applicants have to qualify on a very highly set bar of requirements. The company looks out for smart people in selected college campuses and also from high performers in the travel sector. Over 25% of the new recruitment happens through campus recruitment. The training procedure for the new recruits is very detailed and intense and it extends over a period of 2 months. The quality of the employees at the company is maintained as a result of the high standards and targets set by them right in the recruitment process.

MakeMyTrip focusses on hiring the right people for the right job. The emphasis is to hire for people who love challenge and can constantly bring their best and also challenge themselves, each time, with a bigger goal.

Another concern is that being a growing company, people have their hands full and are constantly multi-tasking, which makes it difficult to pay much attention on investing in knowledge - enriching activities, do not provide instant visible gains. Thus, there is a challenge to motivate them to upgrade their existing knowledge base. Further, its nascent nature also makes nurturing of talent important because, the required talent is not readily available in the market.

MakeMyTrip do not only focuses on the performance of the employee but, also on their potential and inherent talent. It believes that performance is a function of circumstances and situations. But, the ability for learning can be exhibited anywhere and that is the right judge of the person's potential and performance capabilities. Therefore, MakeMyTrip trusts in identifying and acknowledging the learning ability of the employees. It tries to inculcate the culture of flexibility and adaptability among the employees in accordance to the situational demand and people with whom they are working.

According to Mr. Kalra, as MakeMyTrip establishes itself as the market leader, it is imperative for it to leverage its position as an 'Employer of Choice' and also offer the employees the appropriate growth opportunities. Managing talent is a prime focus which ensures that the people development strategy and HR processes are in line with organizational needs. As a part of this initiative, MakeMyTrip has identified the first batch of leaders in 2011 who underwent a critical talent development initiative. In consultation with the KornFerry Group, the driving factors were identified which were required to take the organization to the next level and subsequently develop those capabilities to equip them to meet those needs.

Culture at MakeMyTrip

To keep a balance between the company's unique business goal and the people-centricity as a policy, the company offers the employees a culture of freedom, empowerment and excitement. Special care is taken to keep employees engaged and motivated, despite the hectic work schedule. All three HR functions - recruitment, operations and organization development work in tandem to ensure that employees are kept happy and engaged at the workplace. The HR department is highly responsive and follows the philosophy of "happy employees make happy customers". The SPOC (single-point-of-contact) model is followed in the organization, wherein at least one HR person sits at every floor. This ensures that the employees always have someone within their reach to put forward their queries to and get an instant direction/ resolution.

MakeMyTrip maintains a very amiable atmosphere for all its employees. It has introduced an 'Open Door Policy', wherein any employee has the liberty to meet the CEO without appointments. Most of the processes are informal. The organization has a flat structure and the culture is very open. This is what makes MakeMyTrip, one of the Best Places to Work and results in a low attrition rate for them.

(<http://iimsushr.wordpress.com/2010/06/20/interview-mr-rohit-hasteer-head-hr-makemytrip/>, accessed on 20.5.2014, <http://www.peoplesmatters.in/article/2011/05/15/c-suite/cover-story-intervoeew-deep-kalra-ceo-make-my-trip/947>) accessed on 20.5.2014)

The company has been consistently ranked among the Top 10 "Great Places to Work for in India" by the Great Place to Work® (GPTW) Institute, a study by The Economic Times, for four years in a row starting from 2010 to 2013 (*GreatPlacetoWork.in*)

Work Life Balance at MakeMyTrip

MakeMyTrip believes that work life balance is a very crucial requirement to extract effective performance from the employees.

It ensures that when the Trippers (employees) are at work, they put forward best of their mind and heart. After work, they are expected to leave and live a life. Keeping this in mind, the company has designed employee benefits, such as, daily catered lunch, free air-conditioned cab service, flexibility of working from home, casual dressing, and so on. Some of the benefits given to the employees, are:

- Top-of-the-line technology
- Owning shares of MakeMyTrip
- Work from home flexibility
- Comprehensive benefits to meet life needs like transport, healthy meals, fitness program
- Holistic development
- Team trips, company retreats, and Happy Hours!

(Source: <http://careers.makemytrip.com/lifeatmmt.php>)

Training and Development

MakeMyTrip undertakes a whole lot of initiatives to sharpen and enhance the skills of the employees through various training and development activities, across the operational areas. Some of the key initiatives are:

- Grow Leaders program
- Classroom sessions
- Experiential Learning offsites
- Self-Initiated Learning sessions
- Leadership Connect Sessions with eminent personalities across walks of life
- Study program with listed B-Schools across the country

(Source: <http://careers.makemytrip.com/development.php>)

The talent hunters search proactively for qualified candidates. Internal employee referrals and internal movements are extensively used to fill most of the vacant positions in the company.

Rewarding the Employees

At MakeMyTrip, employees are appreciated and recognized, not only for the great results, but also, new and innovative projects are recognized irrespective of its outcomes. Some of the awards are:

Peer to Peer Award - It empowers employees to recognize their peers for behaviors that reflect the company values and help achieve strategic objectives.

Bravo Award - It is for those Trippers who inspire others to follow their lead and work as an example to the rest of the team.

Raving Fans - This is for the Trippers who have succeeded in creating a fantastic experience for the external customer.

CustoMore Awards - These awards recognize superior customer service by an individual or collectively by a team.

Einstein Award - This award appreciates and rewards innovation at work.

Appreciations Unlimited Award - This award appreciates individual who has received the most positive and encouraging customer feedback.

Town Hall Meets - At the bi-annual THMs, the company felicitates the Star Performers, Exemplary Managers, Stand Out Leaders and Team Extraordinaires, to name a few.

Rookie Award - This award is to appreciate outstanding contribution made by a new Tripper.

Long Service Award - This award felicitates trippers who have spent a considerable number of years with the company

Study and FAM Tours - A unique way of rewarding the top performers by sponsoring a visit to the destinations and they are expected to drive the sales for that destination.

Making A Difference (M.A.D) Award - This award recognizes the efforts of their trippers towards committed community service

(Source: <http://careers.makemytrip.com/rewardsatmmt.php>)

Corporate Social Responsibility at MakeMyTrip

MakeMyTrip has an active club that is committed towards Making A Difference (MAD) in the lives of the under-privileged. The club comprises of the Trippers and is chaired by the CEO, Mr. Deep Kalra. The focus of this initiative is towards volunteering work for the various NGOs. MakeMyTrip encourages its employees to take a day off from work to contribute towards the social service. The “Giving Back” program involves working for causes related to Children - Education & Health and Environment. MakeMyTrip is actively involved with the following:

- Udayan Care
- Million Trees Gurgaon
- Parivar Society
- Genesis Foundation
- Give India Payroll Giving Program
- Goonj

MakeMyTrip is also the first online travel company to have launched a Carbon Footprint green initiative. This initiative allows air travellers to book tickets on the website to offset their carbon footprint for the journey by contributing towards an afforestation programme run under the aegis of GiveIndia by Seva Mandir in Rajasthan. The CEO and Founder, Deep Kalra is the co-founder of “I am Gurgaon”, an NGO that focuses on improving the quality of life in Gurgaon through environmental and civic initiatives.

(Source: http://careers.makemytrip.com/social_resp.php)

Conclusion

This case is a depiction of a truly unique company, which pioneered and changed the course of the travel industry in the country. The ease of extending hassle-free ticketing and travel bookings (transportation and hotel stay) to customers from the comfort of their homes/offices without requiring to physically stand in stressful queues and endless lines gave this company a pioneering edge in its line of business.

To augment the company's hard core business model, where employees may need to work demanding and stressful conditions, the company seems to have taken adequate care to form sound HR policies. The HR policies reflect, not only the focus the company has, on the comfort and welfare aspects of their employees, but also balances the same with a sound recognition and reward policy to motivate them, adequately.

The company also give attention to environment and issues of corporate social responsibility and, therefore, believes in operating as a sustainable business enterprise with a view to serve the society, in a holistic manner. This is a truly marvellous and dynamic business enterprise and reflects how strategic Human Resource Management can be implemented to create business sustainability with the help of people as drivers of organizational goal in a dynamic and challenging business environment.

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