



The Dubai HFTP Research and Innovation Center at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management has decided to briefly discuss the developing tourism source markets, and utilizing partnership ecosystem. The HFTP Research and Innovation Center hopes this sparks conversation amongst HFTP Dubai Chapter members.

## **Dubai's Source Market: The Growing Influence of India as a Source Market**

*By Dyno Duque, Research Scholar*

Dubai's current tourism landscape has been evolving. The Emirate's source market has been changing. With the recent change in tourism levels in Russia, due to the stabilized nature of the Russian rouble. The number of Russian tourists travelling to the GCC in 2020 is expected to be 38 per cent higher than the arrival figures recorded for 2016, according to data published recently by Arabian Travel Market, ATM 2018, which takes place at Dubai World Trade Centre from April 22 to 25. Russia's links with the GCC strengthened in 2017 with the introduction of additional airline routes, visas on arrival in the UAE for Russians, a new generation of leisure attractions, retail destinations and a broad range of hotels and resorts right across the GCC region

India's inbound tourism has also been increasing for the past few years. India is currently the top source market for Dubai with over 1,316,000 inbound tourists being accounted for YTD in 2018. The changing tourism landscape has also caused a change in the currently accommodation supply in the country. Hotel Apartments and 1 – 4 star properties have been increasing. In terms of supply the average occupancy of these accommodation segments have also been generally increasing at an average of 3-4% in

the last year according to the DTCM (2019). The average occupancy for serviced apartments is 77%. While the lower segment of hotel supply is around 755 in 2018 YTD.

It is important for Dubai to adapt to the changing market demands. With India being the top source market in Dubai this year, and with notions that India's growing middle-class, this trend may prove to be lasting.



## Utilizing The Partnership Ecosystem

*By Mercy Kiprotich, Research Scholar; Naftali Tanyongana; Research Scholar*

With more competition in the hospitality industry it can be difficult to capture an audience with a 'wow' factor. This is where partnership ecosystems come in. They allow hotels to invest in an all-in-one solution that caters to guest needs and experiences. This article explores the different kinds of partnerships that hotels can employ in their pursuit of customer satisfaction.

Guests have become more self-sufficient and want to experience some semblance of control in their decision making, be it in making reservations or ordering an Uber, taxi etc. Hotels can capitalize on this by creating an "enabler partnership ecosystem"<sup>1</sup> that focuses on the "empower me" stage in the guest experience journey. They can do this by partnering with other companies and application developers to capture guest dining preference or create pickup areas for ride sharing. These partnerships already exist in popular night-spots in Dubai, with establishments offering iPad booking for ride sharing options in simple but effective partnerships. Providing such ride sharing options in hotel lobbies could lead to greater customer freedom in selecting their mode of transportation.

A partnership ecosystem is a good opportunity for hotels to create a competitive advantage by providing more varied and personalized service than their competitors. Hotel concierge applications offer a significant opportunity to connect with guests and utilize the prevalence

of smartphones. Apps like ALICE and Connect CMS allow for interaction with concierge services regardless of location, requiring minimal staffing and resource allocation to maintain and operate. The effect is that of a highly personalized, easy to use, clutter free system of communication. Systems like these are intuitive, as they play similar roles to social media applications like WhatsApp in a more official capacity. The benefits of partnering with applications like these can be observed in companies like the Woodside Hotel Group, which reported an 18% increase in speed of service score since implementing the ALICE concierge system.<sup>2</sup>



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What hotels can learn from this is that they can perform better by incorporating external services into their day-to-day operations. To set their brands apart from others, hotels can shape the guest experience by altering the way they communicate and interact with the guest. The engagement offered through these partnership ecosystems create an overall more positive experience for the guests as is demonstrated in Fig. 1. ALICE and Connect CMS only cover the concierge service, however, if hotels are willing to engage in more partnership ecosystems, they can increase efficiency and spread these benefits amongst the rest of the guest experience.





## List of References

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