

Stirred, not shaken: Serving the solo woman traveler segment

Uma Chandrasekaran
Pondicherry University, India

The solo woman traveler represents an expanding segment of the travel market. Women are now travelling on work without being accompanied by their spouses or male partners, taking more trips per year on their own including both short trips to visit relatives and friends as well as longer trips with female friends or within a tour group. In their choices of accommodation, women travelers are perceived to be especially interested in security, cleanliness, communication facilities, style and ambience of space, smooth check-in/check-out procedures and comfortable access and/or transfers. (Marzuki, Chin and Razak). Women represent two thirds of those travelling solo for the purpose of leisure (Chiang and Jogaratnam (2005). Besides that, women only travel is now growing in popularity by looking at the 230% increase in the number of women-only travel companies (Bond, 2005). This paper uses a qualitative approach of text analysis of Consumer Generated Content such as blogs and tips for travel by solo women leisure travelers (to India). Commonly expressed concerns include privacy, security, basic amenities and notes of advice on cultural differences. A dipstick study of Indian women travelling on work is also attempted to bring insights on critical incidents that influence their pre, during and post travel preparedness and willingness to take on travel opportunities that matter to their career advancement. Implications for targeted segmentation of women travelers are enormous if the hospitality industry taps the online space for mining information from spontaneous CGC and posts on C2C mode rather than paid reviews alone.

Biography

Uma Chandrasekaran is an Associate Professor, teaching MBA and guiding Doctoral research in Marketing. She brings 3 years experience in FMCG companies as Product Executive and 26 years' teaching including a year in Dubai, UAE. Awards include Doctoral Research Grant from Aditya Birla Center, London Business School, UK, 2000 in a Management Research Workshop, IIM Kolkata and "Best Professor Teaching Advertising Management" by ABP News, India, July 2012. She is a corporate trainer on Executive Soft Skills, Organizational Behavior, Mentor Development, Sales Training, Customer Relations, Hospital/Healthcare Management. Has presented papers and keynotes in International Conferences, anchored programs and popular speaker on AIR, Prasar Bharati Broadcasting Corporation of India.

uc.atwork@gmail.com