



TAPMI
(A constituent unit of MAHE, Manipal)



SEVA PROJECT REPORT

FAS-2, HRM

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SEVA COORDINATOR - Aniruddha Chatterjee

1. PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Journeys with Meaning (JwM) project aims to promote sustainable travel and change people's perception towards the environment. The project provides trips to Ladakh, Goa, and Uttarakhand, which are designed to immerse clients in local cultures and educate them about sustainability. However, the project faces several challenges such as customers' expectations not aligned with the motto of JwM and difficulty in attracting customers with the USP of JwM.

To meet the client's expectations, the team was required to come up with innovative and authentic marketing ideas that avoid the use of social media. Additionally, the team needed to understand the mindset of college-going students on the concept of sustainable travel. Therefore, a survey was conducted across TAPMI, with 80% of the respondents showing interest in taking a trip with environmentally conscious consumption. The survey also revealed that respondents were open to trips lasting between 4-7 days.

The client was hesitant to use social media for marketing, but the team proposed collaborating with social media influencers who promote sustainability. However, finding influencers who align with the JwM motto was challenging. Interviews with potential travelers in TAPMI revealed that they were looking for a unique and authentic travel experience that aligns with sustainability, indicating that JwM has the potential to attract its target audience with the right marketing strategy.

2. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

PROJECT DELIVERABLES	DELIVERABLES ACHIEVED
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Innovative ideas to market Journeys with meanings● Use authentic marketing ways .● Understanding the mindset of college-going students on the concept of sustainable travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● We found social media marketing effective. The client gave inputs for the same. We emphasized on influencers who are working under the same theme for social media marketing and provided the details to the client.● We have done Surveys and interviews of college going students to understand their mindset about sustainable travel.● Discussed potential ways to grow the business of JwM with client and mentor.● Reached out to the academic committee of TAPMI with a proposal to incorporate a JwM trip as a part of SRME (Sustainability, Responsibility, Managerial Ethics) course.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The sustainable travel industry is a growing sector that promotes responsible and eco-friendly tourism practices. It aims to minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment, conserve natural resources, and support local communities and economies.

Sustainable travel involves various practices and initiatives such as eco-tourism, responsible tourism, community-based tourism, and ethical tourism. It also involves reducing the carbon footprint of travel by using eco-friendly modes of transportation such as cycling, walking, or public transport. Another important aspect of sustainable travel is supporting local communities and economies. This involves engaging with local people, supporting small businesses and cooperatives, and contributing to the economic development of the region.

Overall, sustainable travel is a holistic approach that encompasses various practices and initiatives to promote responsible tourism. It is important for ensuring that tourism is sustainable and beneficial for both the travelers and the destinations they visit.

Journeys With Meaning (JwM) is an India-based social enterprise that offers earth-friendly journeys featuring inspiring environmental and social solutions. Their vision is to inspire a transformational shift in people's beliefs about sustainable living and to encourage them to adopt a lifestyle that protects and conserves Earth's biodiversity — a lifestyle that works not just for people, but for the planet as well.

CHALLENGES FACED BY JwM

- Environmental factors- At the occurrence of any natural calamities, it would affect the entire travel plan scheduled by the organization for the customers. Also, it would create scarcity of resources.
- Political turbulence- Any political issues in and around the travel locations create hesitation in customers.
- Perception issue- The news of any disturbance in the neighbouring cities/states affect the perception of the customers regarding the trip.
- Travelers' expectations are not aligned with the motto of JwM, as most of them would demand for certain amenities which cannot be provided as they would be residing in the homes of localites.
- Since the customers demanded certain resources which lacked mindfulness, it is an indication that the website needs more detailing and information to communicate the purpose, USP and mission of the trips.
- Attracting customers with the USP of JwM is difficult as most of the target audience look at trips as a leisure experience.

4. SOLUTION/ ACTION CHOSEN & JUSTIFICATION

SURVEY:

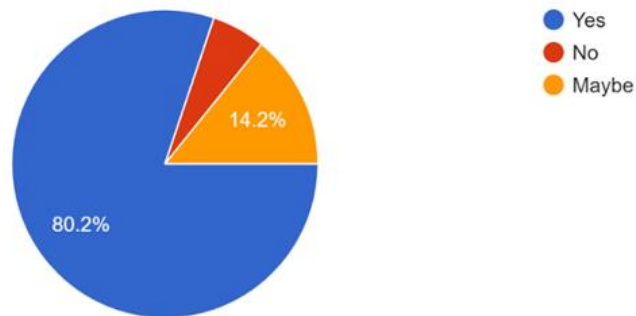
The client wanted to understand what ideas and expectations the prospective audience i.e college-going students have about sustainable travel. A google form was floated across TAPMI with questions related to travel and awareness about sustainable travel.

Insights from the Survey:

Question: Will you be interested in taking a trip with environmentally conscious consumption?

Will you be interested in taking a trip with environmentally conscious consumption?

106 responses

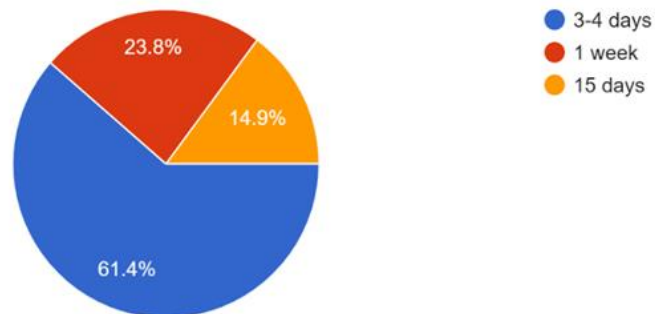


Out of the sample audience, 80% of them said 'Yes' to taking a trip with environmentally conscious consumption, which is a positive sign for the client. Keeping in mind that the target audience comes from geographically diverse areas, it can be concluded that people from diverse backgrounds are open to taking on new experiences. For the remaining 20%, the breakup was 14% maybe and 6% said no. From the data, it can be concluded that a very small proportion said no, and the ones who are not sure about the same can be convinced by showing the plan details as many of them might not be completely through with the idea of environmentally conscious travel refers to.

Question: If yes, for how many days will you be interested to take this trip?

If yes, for how many days will you be interested to take this trip?

101 responses



For the ones who were interested, the next question was the number of days they will be interested in the trip, and for the sake of uniformity, to give rough time windows, 3-4 days, 1 week, and 15 days were given as options.

The findings suggest that most of them are willing to take up the trip for 3-4 days. So the recommendation in the plan structure would be to keep it short, rather than stretched. From the survey, it could be inferred that although people are interested in the trip, at the same time they would not be interested in devoting a large amount of time.

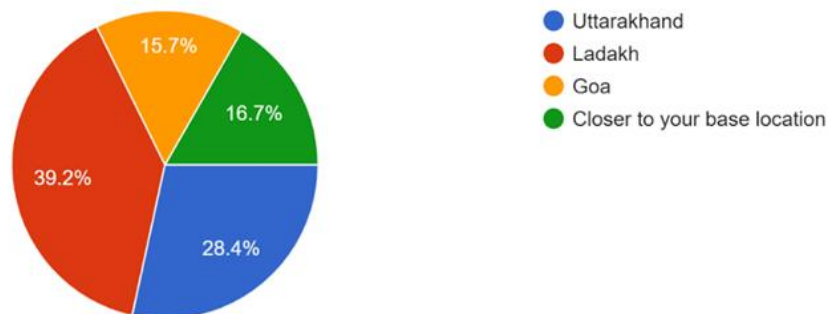
Recommendation:

To ensure to get maximum converts, it is suggested to keep a short time window while making the trip itineraries. Another recommendation would be to create a bundle of plans catering to different target audiences. As observed from the survey, while the majority of the people would prefer a trip for 3-4 days, there are a considerable number of people interested in trips for a week or maybe 15 days. Thus, to gauge the audience, it is recommended to create separate plans with customized durations that the customers can select accordingly.

Question: Which place will you prefer for this experience?

Which place will you prefer for this experience?

102 responses



The next area of focus was the location that the trip should be focused on. As mentioned earlier, Journeys with Meaning is currently operational in 3 locations, Ladakh, Goa, and Uttarakhand. They plan to expand in locations like Meghalaya and in addition to that, they are also willing to provide recreational sustainable trips in areas near the base locations.

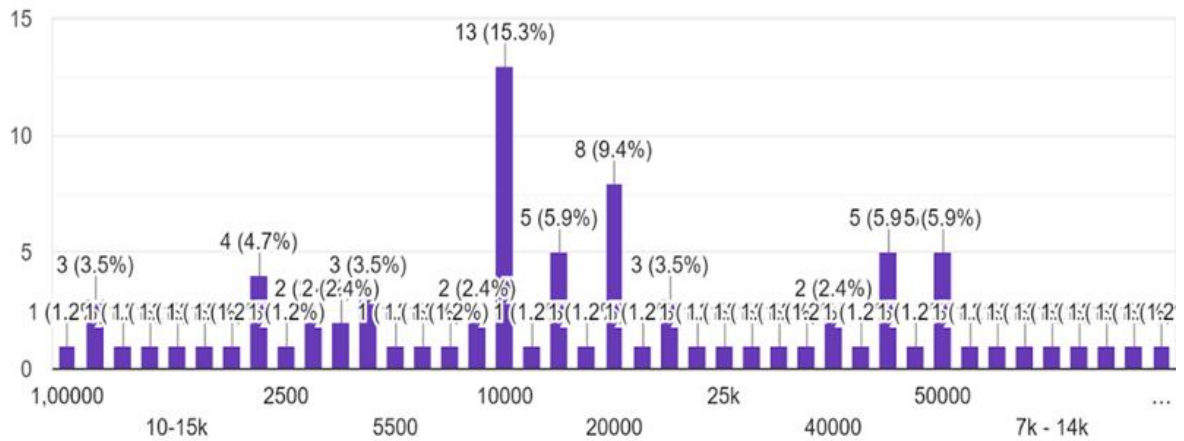
Out of the survey responses, it is evident that the majority are interested in Ladakh, which happens to be the best getaway people look forward to. Ladakh turns out as the most voted place, and it makes sense as the geographical inclination of the place caters best to the ideas that

Journeys with meaning cater to, exploring the local lives, living with minimalist resources, and keeping a check on the conscious consumption of resources among the recreational value the place holds. After Ladakh, the next most voted location was Uttarakhand, and it can be said that seeing the similarities in the places geographically, people tend to associate travel or break with scenic beauties close to nature. The other 2 locations, Goa and someplace near the base the location had similar numbers of votes so it can be said that these 2 locations are somewhat the safe choice that the people who are not so sure about the plan would look up to.

Question: How much are you willing to spend?

How much are you willing to spend on this trip (in Rs) ?

85 responses

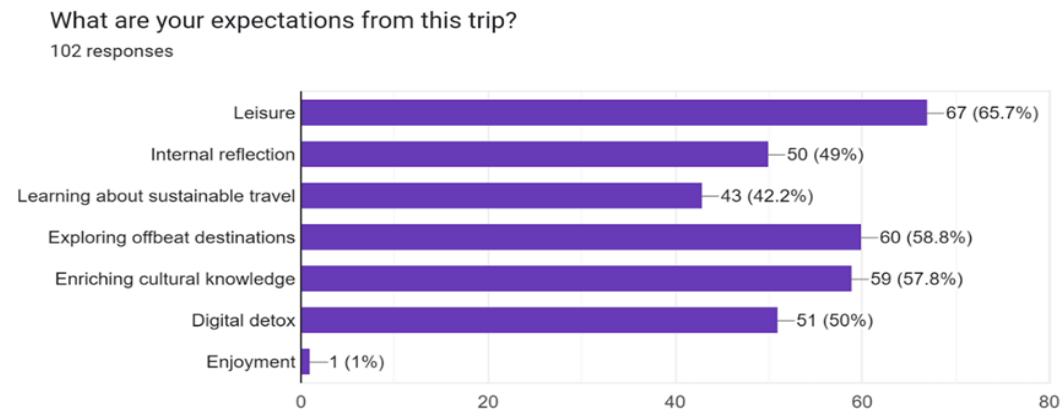


The form had an open-ended question about the expenditure i.e how much people are willing to spend on this trip. Multiple ranges were received as an answer with the maximum amount to be spent as 1,00,000.

Recommendation:

For the package cost, the recommendation would be to keep multiple price options open based on the amenities provided, so that interested people can select based on their desired budget. If a price range is on the higher end, the people who might be willing to try the concept on a trial basis won't be interested. The main idea behind having a survey was to understand and gauge the desired interested audience, and the better way to do the same would be to provide trial options, without asking or going for an expensive priced package otherwise. If the concept appeals to people, they are more likely to return to us for future excursion plans.

Question: What are your expectations from this trip?



The concluding question that was asked was what the expectations people had in mind while going on such a trip. Alternatives to select from include Leisure, Internal reflection, Learning about sustainable travel, Exploring offbeat destinations, Enriching cultural knowledge, Digital detox, and enjoyment, and all the options received close responses, (people could select more than one option).

Recommendation

The takeaway from this would be that while the basic idea behind our trips would be promoting sustainable travel, there's a need to include the expectations people have in mind while planning the trip packages.

Interview Summary:

In addition to taking the responses through the google form, interviews of some students were also conducted to get a brief idea about their thought process of sustainable traveling and recommendations for JwM. From the interviews, following inferences were made:

- The basic idea of travel for people is exploring new places, experiencing the culture, learning about the local life, and having a break from the daily monotonous routine.
- People have traveled to or are interested to travel to mountains, beaches, and places that offer closeness to nature and tranquility.
- Regarding the frequency, most people travel once a year, and the more frequent travelers are open to taking a trip once in 3 months.
- Out of the people interviewed, the majority of them were aware of the concept of sustainable travel and were up for taking a trip concerning the same.
- On the discussion about if their current way of traveling was sustainable or not, many of them agreed that at times that sustainability is not followed in the trips. But since they are aware of the concept, they try to adopt the idea as much as they can.

- If it were to be concluded about the idea of an expected package for the interviewed people, the same would be a trip of 7 days, either to Ladakh or a place near to base location with an average spending of 15-20 thousand. The takeaway they look forward to is exploring new cultures, learning about sustainable traveling, and having a change of pace from their daily routine.

- In addition to their idea about travel, they were also introduced to the idea behind Journeys with Meanings. When asked for recommendations, the main recommendations were:

1. Focus on the marketing of the concept as lesser people are aware of the website.

2. The travel time should be kept short, keeping in mind that people won't be able to take off for longer periods.

3. The location should have more options closer to the base location.

4. There could be concept classes to understand what minimalist traveling means, for people to understand and implement the same.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Proposal to college

From the list of ideas that we collated and submitted to the client, he was majorly interested in reaching out to colleges to incorporate a sustainable trip as a part of curriculum. This would help students delve into the depths of rural areas and understand business initiatives that can help the community. From the clients perspective, he gets to interact with a larger, newer audience.

Hence to start with, our group reached out to the academic committee of TAPMI with a proposal to incorporate a JwM trip as a part of SRME (Sustainability, Responsibility, Managerial Ethics) course, so that students learn and understand the essence of the course better through practical experiences.

Proposal Document:

Dear Academics Committee,

I, Devika Ajith, am writing this mail on the behalf of FAS-2 (HRM). The purpose of this mail is to propose the inclusion of a sustainable travel trip in collaboration with our SEVA client, Journeys with Meaning as a part of the Sustainability, Responsibility, and Managerial Ethics course curriculum.

As we continue to face climate change and environmental issues, it is crucial that we incorporate sustainable practices and ethics in our daily lives, including our travel habits.

The sustainable travel trip would provide an opportunity for students to learn about sustainable tourism, explore different cultures, and experience sustainable practices first-hand which can be later applied to their business strategies and requirements. The trip would be designed to align with the course objectives, including understanding the role of businesses in promoting sustainability and corporate responsibility.

The proposed itinerary could include visits to sustainable tourism destinations, such as eco-lodges, organic farms, and exposure to the local environmental issues being faced by existing communities. Students would have the opportunity to engage with local communities, learn about sustainable practices, and explore the challenges and opportunities of sustainable tourism.

Furthermore, the trip would be an excellent opportunity for students to reflect on their own travel habits and their impact on the environment. Through discussions and activities, students would develop a deeper understanding of sustainable tourism and how they can make more responsible choices in their future travels.

In terms of logistics, the trip could be organized during the semester break, and the duration would be approximately 5-7 days (the client has specified that a span of minimum 5 days is required to gain a holistic experience). Students would be responsible for covering the costs during the trip, which could be made affordable through group discounts and fundraising. However, it would be beneficial if the institution covers the travel cost of the trip as it would be minimal.

The learning outcomes from the trip could be evaluated through a project report which would be formulated two days following the completion of the trip. It can include the reflections of the student and individual learnings, including what changes they would make or want in the future of a business to create a more sustainable environment.

We believe that the sustainable travel trip would be an enriching and transformative experience for students and would complement the course objectives. I urge the academic committee to consider this proposal and incorporate the sustainable travel trip as a part of the Sustainability, Responsibility, and Managerial Ethics course curriculum.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Devika Ajith

(On behalf of)

FAS-2 HRM

Social Media Influencers:

Journeys with Meanings has a limited presence on social media, and to increase the same the team suggested working on integrating social media marketing with influencers in a similar field. A list of prospective travel influencers has been prepared, keeping in mind the sustainability motive. The team has reached out to influencers to popularise the initiative and increase the reach.

After the proposal of adding the sustainability trip in the curriculum with integration of the SRME course, the further batches can take forward the initiative and work on ways we can develop the idea of sustainability in masses. Additionally, the success of the implementation of the trip in TAPMI can be used as a prototype to be used in other colleges of MAHE and throughout India.

Moreover, the incorporation of including the trip in the curriculum can be a way to improve the PRME ranking of the college.

6. MAJOR CHALLENGES

- *Marketing without the use of social media*

Nowadays social media is omnipresent. It is the major tool used by companies to market and promotes their brand. Print media like newspapers, pamphlets, and brochures are becoming obsolete. But the client was reluctant to use social media as a means of marketing and promoting JwM. It was difficult to find ways other ways through which this could be done faster, capturing the attention of a larger audience.

- *Aligning the social media marketing plan with the client's ideologies*

The client agreed to collaborate with social media influencers to market JwM. But it was under the condition that the influencers' motto should align with the motto of Journeys with Meaning, i.e they should believe in sustainability and promote the same through their posts. Even if sustainability is a widespread idea, it is not much popular among common people. Hence, it was difficult to find influencers under the given condition.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals and organizations who have played a vital role in the successful completion of this project:

Firstly, we would like to thank our project mentor, Prof. Rahul Sukumaran, for his invaluable guidance and unwavering support throughout the project. His expertise, insights, and constructive feedback have been instrumental in shaping our ideas and providing us with a proper direction.

We would also like to thank Prof. Aniruddha Chatterjee for his constant encouragement, guidance, and motivation. His timely feedback, constructive criticism, and expert suggestions have helped us in every step of the project.

We are grateful to Prof. Purnima Venkat for her valuable inputs, suggestions, and for clearing all our doubts related to the project.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr. Vinod Sreedhar, the founder of Journeys with Meaning, for his cooperation and understanding during the project. His industry insights and experience have been valuable in shaping our ideas.

Finally, we would like to thank TAPMI for providing us with the opportunity to work on this project and for supporting us throughout the process.

Once again, we extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the successful completion of this project.