



CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Myanmar Tour operators

Crisis manual

**CBI project Myanmar
sustainable and
community tourism development**

April 2020

Prepared by:
Version:

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April 8, 2020



INTRODUCTION

This manual is prepared by CBI experts in tourism development and based on many years of experiences in this sector, both in and out times of crisis. The worldwide corona crisis is an unexpected and severe shock for the tourism sector, and will demand full force and creativity for tourism businesses to survive. Fortunately, the urge to travel will always stay strong and bounce back. The CBI team wishes for the tourism sector in Myanmar to be able to manage this crisis, overcome the difficult times and be able to once again take your visitors on an unique and enchanting journey in Myanmar!

The objective of this manual is to provide guidance, tips, and advice in times of the corona/COVID-19 crisis. It is an open document and will be further enriched with useful materials to give guidance and support to the tourism sector during this huge challenge.

“The tourism sector is currently one of the hardest-hit by the outbreak of COVID-19, with impacts on both travel supply and demand. This represents an added downside risk in the context of a weaker world economy, geopolitical, social and trade tensions, as well as uneven performance among major outbound travel markets.

Small and medium sized enterprises (which make up around 80% of the tourism sector) are expected to be particularly impacted. This might affect millions of livelihoods across the world, including vulnerable communities who rely on tourism as a vehicle to spur their development and economic inclusion.”

(UNWTO, 2020)

Corona/COVID-19 latest news - Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism
Click [here](#)

*“Know just one thing – Tourism is Resilient and Rebounds – ALWAYS!
If we can afford to weather this storm, we want to be ready for it!”*

Raj Gyawali (Social Tours, Nepal)

**For questions & suggestions,
please contact Marlon van Hee at:
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MYANMAR TOURISM – scenarios

The current COVID19/Corona-virus crisis is different from other crisis that we had (SARS in 2003, Avian Flu (2005 and 2013), MERS Flu (2015)). All these past crisis had a sharp V-shape recovery (read: relatively quick recovery, no economic recession). The current crisis comes together with a global recession which means that recovery might take longer than previous crises (> 6 months). Deep economic recession is expected to delay recovery.

Being a leader in turbulent times can be nerve wracking. If you act too fast, it might turn out that you overreacted. If you act too slow, the business might go under. Going through a downturn and making tough decisions to keep your company afloat is hard. However, if you lead with compassion you will touch the lives of your employees in an extraordinary way and come out of this potential slowdown stronger than ever before, enhancing the shared values of your staff.

At the moment it is hard to predict what is going to happen. Based on different research, recovery for Myanmar should be planned around these scenarios:

The Less-optimistic scenario

- ✓ Domestic travel starts up October 2020.
- ✓ Recovery of domestic demand mid 2021.
- ✓ International travel starts up December 2020.
- ✓ Recovery of international demand mid 2022.

The Pessimistic scenario

- ✓ Domestic travel starts up January 2021.
- ✓ Recovery of domestic demand end 2021.
- ✓ International travel starts up March 2021.
- ✓ Recovery of international demand end 2022.

Tourism experts – when talking about Myanmar – do NOT expect that the European/international market will return in 2020. It looks like Myanmar needs to plan recovery around the pessimistic scenario.




SURVIVAL GUIDANCE & STRATEGIES FOR TRAVEL BUSINESSES

There is a lot of information out there for tour operating businesses to deal with the current crisis. Following is a selection of action plans, tips, guides and crisis survival kits that could be useful for you.

- ✓ [CBI - Managing the catastrophic effect of Covid-19 on the tourism industry](#)
- ✓ [CBI – How to manage risks in tourism?](#)
- ✓ [COVID-19 Immediate Response Action Plan for Tourism Businesses](#)
- ✓ [Inc.'s Essential Business Survival Guide for the Covid-19 Crisis](#)
- ✓ [South Africa \(SATSA\) – measures-checklist for SMEs.](#)
- ✓ [Treksoft - Covid-19 Guide: Resources for tour and activity operators](#)
- ✓ [Faillte Ireland – guidance for tourism business to deal with COVID 19](#)
- ✓ [Typically Swiss Tours – 13 things this TO does to get past COVID 19](#)
- ✓ [Resilientdestinations.com – TO crisis survival kit](#)
- ✓ [Tourmageddon – recovery plans \(tools, ideas, plans\)](#)
- ✓ [Tourpreneur - actionable tips on what tour operators need to be doing in order to protect their tour businesses – by Peter Syme](#)

Articles on strategies for travel businesses

- [Surviving COVID-19 Through Tourism Resilience](#)
- [Supporting Tour Guides During The COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Supporting Your Customers, Staff and Business Through Coronavirus 2020](#)
- [Lead Your Business Through the Coronavirus Crisis: 12 actions for businesses in general to consider](#)
- [Disaster is Just an Opportunity in Hiding: considerations for action plan for adventure travel businesses](#)
- [COVID-19: Implications for business: includes 7 actions your business can take now.](#)
- [IHG Is the Model for Hotel Chains on Cancellations as Crisis Mounts](#)
- [How hotels should set room rates now and after the coronavirus crisis?](#)



The CBI is planning
a crisis webinar for you
to further support you with
next steps and strategy



WHAT TO DO NOW?

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Following are the priorities indicated by the Myanmar companies

- Funding opportunities / info about how to get a bank or government loan
- How to deal with financial problems?
- Opportunities/best practices during times of crisis (generate income)
- Manage the company without cash – flow
- Operational stability during crisis

Useful information

- Build and manage your cash reserve in order to navigate the crisis.
- Reforecast your business with various downside scenarios (see above scenarios).
- Instead of forcing your employees to second-guess what might be in store for them, be utterly clear with them about the financial health of your firm and what goals you will prioritize.
- Accelerate revenues through packages, incentives, discounts and/or prepayments.
- Execute on cost-reduction strategies (see below cost-reduction measure tips in red color from CBI expert Clive Bishop).
- Postpone all hiring and when possible reduce staff (this may be an opportunity for some staff to work part time as they care for children at home). Consider across-the-board temporary salary cuts as an alternative to cutting staff at this difficult time.
- Maintain accurate and updated financial and accounting records so that you have a complete and accurate picture when you need to make hard decisions fast.



The aim of the campaign is to provide immediate, even if only symbolic, support for companies and entrepreneurs in the current crisis situation....by asking tourists not to cancel their trips, but just postpone...



CASH FLOW

If business is slow, you have ample time to find ways to generate cash-flow. Get your staff, family, and friends together and brainstorm ways to see the silver lining! You will be surprised how quickly the mood of your organisation can change for the better.

Cash flow analysis

A cash flow analysis is to check how long the cash flow will sustain the company when there is no business. Click [here](#) for further explanations about cash flow. Schedule and conduct standing meetings with your core management team in order to assist with rigorous cash flow management.

Government aid Myanmar

Under the decision of the meeting 2/2020 of the Task Force to Remedy the Economic Impact that may cause by Coronavirus (COVID-19), CMP enterprises, hotels and tourism services and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are designated as priority sectors that need remedy, and a COVID-19 Fund of Ks 100 billion has been set up to disburse loans to them.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Applications are also available on the following websites:

www.mopfi.gov.mm; www.mi.fer.gov.mm; www.msme.gov.mm; www.tourism.gov.mm;
www.dica.gov.mm; www.umfcci.com.mm

Finding capital

(Emergency) loans are not the only way to protect your business during the corona-crisis. Here are some examples on how to get cash flow relief and other help....you will have to check what is possible in your country/in your situation:

- a) Withdrawing money from retirement-fund-accounts and ask for waiving penalties for early withdrawing.
- b) Tax relief (e.g. social security tax).
- c) Ask for grace periods (rent, loans).
- d) Check for possible (tax) refunds.

Managing debt

- a) Negotiate with landlords on rent payments.
- b) Manage salaries! It is possible to cut salaries the right way, while keeping morale high and, hopefully, the company afloat.
- c) Pause everything non-essential. Pause on new software or equipment. Pause on interesting ideas that might one day make money. Pause especially on hiring. This is not the moment to expand.
- d) Look into other cost-reduction measures ([see below cost-reduction measure tips in red color from CBI expert Clive Bishop](#)).



COST-REDUCTION MEASURES

Cut overheads by 20%-30% immediately

Unfortunately, the easiest cut is often staff. Possibly cutting staff forces a business to become more efficient, by either using technology or by stopping work that has no real benefit. Every working practice gets revisited and staff simply don't have time to "do it the way it's always been done". You should also look at how else you can cut costs as well, cancelling any new vehicle orders or at least delaying things and looking at time management for staff.

Implement 4 day week and home-working

It is important to keep key staff so you can expand again once the crisis recedes and to manage the business through tough times. However, these people are often your most expensive resource. Moving to a 4 days week and giving key staff an extra day off a work a week, greatly softens the possible 20% wage cut you need them to take. It is not going to be easy to do this and so openly discuss things with them as a small / medium sized business in tourism cannot afford to be generous by keeping things normal and so it is better for them to have 80% than 0% work / wages. If you have regional staff then setting up full home-working capabilities by video conferencing is also a must. This will save on travel costs and time etc. I know many of you do this with customers / tourism partners and it may only effect a minority but day to day business can be done this way.

Stop ALL IT spend immediately

Businesses need to worry about today and not tomorrow in a crisis. If it works now, don't try to fix it! Expenditure on IT is often one of the major cost of a business and of course some expenditure will be locked in contractually with third parties, but most can be postponed. So if you have competent computers, clean them out of junk and use them to their best potential instead of buying new, or if you have to look at "used" but make sure they can do what they need to do!

Marketing

Cut back to the essentials that drive 60% of your current traffic. Cancel any costly marketing such as above the line TV, radio, newspaper etc and focus on immediate calls to action, which have the lowest cost. Google advertising costs should fall as companies cut back, but we are not convinced Google will allow this easily, so it needs to be driven as the tourism markets cut back and this maybe will force Google and social media to cut their costs. You still need to keep people positively informed about what they can do and if you have changed your booking policies for anyone booked for now and moved the dates to later this year or next year then use this as a positive reminder.

Chasing every lead and maximizes margins per booking

With less leads for the future, it's vital to increase conversion. It's vital that every lead gets chased down with reassurance and understanding. Maximising margins by yielding higher products and up-selling is probably also a good idea – so take control and don't let them book different things with different companies/ countries.



Removing reasons not to book

Customers will clearly be worried about booking at the moment, in case they need to cancel their holiday because of Corona Virus. Make sure they have full travel insurance for this purpose as well, especially if they are booking direct. Revise your terms and conditions...see below section 'Cancellation Policy' for a model that many are using in South Africa and similar are being brought in across the Caribbean and Asia.

Cut the number of Suppliers

In times of reduced demand, it's important to cut the number of suppliers you have and work more closely with a smaller number who you can negotiate better payment terms or terms with. The more fixed assets a level of the travel chain has, the more they will be feeling the pain. For example, Hoteliers will be desperate to fill rooms and will offer lower rates and/or higher commissions. Make sure your business benefits and make sure part of this is also terms and conditions regarding cancellation. This is the time that you all have to work together. The larger / major chains will be doing their own things so maybe this is the time to strengthen the relationships with your partners you can work with.

Manage cash brutally

Revised forecasts for trading 50%, 75% or 100% down are required, with a realism level about cancellation. What you thought was in the bag, may not be for long. Every business needs to ensure that they stock pile cash as much as possible... think "do I need to do it or do I want to do it" there is a big difference.

Renegotiate everything

In times of crises, the 20 biggest expenses need to be reviewed and if at all possible "renegotiated". For example, will a high street landlord / office rental give a "rent holiday" rather than losing a tenant, they are unlikely to be able to replace in the short term. The same applies to office rents, equipment rental and all third party contracts. It may even be time to negotiate a delay in payment of rates to the local councils. Just remember having something is better than nothing to most suppliers, when they are unlikely to be able to resale the assets your using. Some have also come together in international regions and negotiated diesel / petrol costs of a group of them in a specific area all use the same supplier?

by Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert

MONEY SAVING AND MONEY MAKING TIPS

8 actionable money-saving and money-making tips


Where possible – accelerate revenues through packages, incentives, discounts and/or prepayments.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Following are the priorities indicated by the Myanmar companies

- How to maintain current staff?
- How to motivate current staff?
- How to select / maintain core staff - essential for continuity
- Is it right decision to lay-off and cut the salary ?



The CBI is planning a webinar for you with support from Debbie Dale

Useful information

- Plan ahead for how the pandemic will impact your team.
- Immediately require all at-risk staff (over 50, immune-deficient, pre-existing conditions, etc.) to work from home and shelter in place.
- Before layoffs, consider all your non-obvious options for reducing cost.
- Consider rotating staff between on-site and working from home.
- You can also offer employees the opportunity for unpaid leave if they so wish — framing this leave as a “sabbatical” can help take some of the stigma of the absence away.
- Manage salaries! It is possible to cut salaries the right way, while keeping morale high and, hopefully, the company afloat.
- Pause especially on hiring. This is not the moment to expand.

- ✓ Keeping teams motivated during a crisis
- ✓ UK – best practice - A free-to-use jobs portal has been launched to help hospitality and tourism workers displaced by the coronavirus outbreak.

Implement 4 day week and home-working

It's important to keep key staff so you can expand again once the crisis recedes and to manage the business through tough times. However, these people are often your most expensive resource. Moving to a 4 days week and giving key staff an extra day off a work a week, greatly softens the possible 20% wage cut you need them to take. It is not going to be easy to do this and so openly discuss things with them as a small / medium sized business in tourism cannot afford to be generous by keeping things normal and so it is better for them to have 80% than 0% work / wages. If you have regional staff then setting up full home-working capabilities by video conferencing is also a must. This will save on travel costs and time etc. I know many of you do this with customers / tourism partners and it may only effect a minority but day to day business can be done this way.

by Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert



What else?

If you have staff in on four days, what else can they do or you can do with them. Do your vehicles need maintenance / cleaning. Now is the time that they can be cleaned up and also any minor / low cost repairs can be done. This could be as simple as washing out the insides / cleaning the seats etc. Maintenance on lodges can be done and remember anyone can clean / paint etc. So even essential workers can join in.... I know it sounds petty but this could be the chance to get all those things that couldn't be done or were forgotten before.

Redundancy / Retrenchment

This is an automatic reaction which is why I have suggested that where possible you reduce hours first. But if you have a high staffing costs and many of these people will be in a work drop level as you have no clients then all I would ask is that you consider things carefully as to who and why. I only say this as there have been other situations before where companies have retrenched staff and when things have improved they have been unable to get them back and have had to hire lower grade people and start training them again. What some companies have done elsewhere has collaborated with non-tourism companies in their region to share staff so that they are still working but for two separate sectors – a favourite one in Asia has been tourism and agriculture / food production....this is purely an idea of lower level staff, who are also probably more in need of the wage for more than their direct family.

by Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert



CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Following are the communication-priorities indicated by the Myanmar companies

- How to communicate positively and professionally.
- How frequent to communicate?
- Best practice crisis communication.
- Need for up to date info about the situation.
- Communication plan.

- Post crisis communication: Myanmar is safe again.

- Effective email marketing B2B
- Effective email marketing B2C

Useful information

Crisis communications are vital, and regardless of the nature of the event, companies need to be ready to respond without delay. From a communication perspective, you need to consider who is most important to reach and what to say to them. Use of social media channels like Facebook and Twitter is a valuable way to reach people and show your desire to communicate with them directly, creating positive dialogue. Speed of communication is important! The speed with which you issue your first communication can indicate how prepared your organization was to respond to the crisis, that there is a response in hand and the appropriate action is being taken. If people are not aware you are responding to the crisis event then as far as they are concerned, you are not responding. People will lose confidence. It is vital to establish trust and credibility with your key audiences (customers, suppliers, business partners, office staff, staff in the field). All written and verbal messages during a crisis should contain these elements:

- Empathy and caring.
- Competence and expertise.
- Honesty and openness.
- Commitment and dedication.

The worst mistake you can make in crisis communication is to allow management to be seen as cold, heartless and calculating. People will accept mistakes if management can admit to being less than perfect. A heartless company is not forgiven.



Crisis communication plan

When a crisis takes place, **quick, proactive, and detailed communication is critical**. Whether it's a global issue like COVID-19 or a local emergency, businesses must have a crisis communication plan in place. Displaying the sense that you are in tune with your customer and providing specific messages can instill a sense of trust and value that will be long lasting! It is less about advertising now and more about trying to be helpful, useful and informative. This is actually a good time to build trust. The advertising you do today will help you over the next year, the next five years and beyond. The companies that are most successful in a crisis situation are those that are able to implement successful loyalty campaigns, customer retention campaigns. Digital marketing is a well-known playground for accomplishing this.

Sources: <https://www.adexchanger.com/strategy/the-dos-and-donts-of-marketing-during-a-global-crisis/>;
<https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2020/03/customer-communication-crisis.html>; <https://www.business2community.com/inbound-marketing/marketing-strategy-adapt-times-crisis-01780890>

Popular crisis communication channels

- Social media (particularly Facebook and Twitter)
- Company website (either as a separate domain or part of the main company site)
- Intranet (useful for keeping the employees up to date with information)
- Mass notification systems (mass emails, texts etc.)
- Conference calls (shareholders might dial-in to a call to be updated)
- Press releases and media interaction (gives the organization an opportunity to tell their side of the story)

Source: <https://virtualspeech.com/blog/crisis-communications-and-management-guide>

Effective email marketing in times of crisis – best practices, do-s and don't-s

As the spread of the coronavirus evolves into a global health pandemic, many marketers are struggling to understand what the crisis means for their B2C and B2B email marketing programs. Can you keep sending promotional emails or do you need to adjust your email marketing?

- Click [here](#) for an 8-step checklist to guide you through creating sensitive, thoughtful emails during the Coronavirus crisis.
- Click [here](#) for a YouTube video about email marketing during a crisis.
- Click [here](#) for the 'Complete Overview to Crisis Email Marketing and the Coronavirus' including lots of best practice examples.



Overview of communication DOs and DONTs

- **Do: Provide specific updates** on how normal service is impacted. Reassure customers about precautions to keep people safe. Give specifics.
- **Do:** Provide information about online options or alternatives. Most people cannot or do not want to leave their house so help them with a different solution. Now is the time to offer online services if you haven't started.
- **Do: Adjust your language to the situation.** Avoid edgy humor, technical and legal speak. Instead, use a positive and reassuring tone.
- **Do: Direct people to your website.** To keep emails simple and easy to understand, place more information on your website. Consider creating a page specifically for updates and FAQs.
- **Don't: Try to re-engage.** Don't send to people in your database who you have not contacted in years or who are not engaged. Send to individuals who are active with your emails or company.
- **Don't: Send emails without purpose.** If you don't have an update or information to communicate, stay out of their inbox. Review any new campaigns and decide if they are appropriate in regards to the situation.
- **Don't: Take the challenges lightly** or encourage people to ignore health advice. View customers' concerns seriously and don't try to profit from the hardships everyone is facing.
- **Don't: Use the wrong words in subject lines.....** don't use either "coronavirus", "COVID-19", "pandemic," or "virus" in email subject lines. If you do, the email may well be marked as spam. Subject lines that included words such as, urgent, rush or hurry, now have a negative association, instead words like, free, home and delivery are receiving more opens. Click [here](#) to use the subjectline.com rating tool to evaluate your subject line for free.

Source: <https://www.emailmonday.com/guide-crisis-email-marketing/>

- ✓ Guide by Guido on how to communicate on your website and through email with your clients about the corona-virus
- ✓ Forbes – crisis communications for beginners
- ✓ Tourism crisis communication plans/toolboxes
 - UNWTO
 - ASEAN
 - Centre for Sustainable Tourism (East Carolina Univ.)
- ✓ Corona-virus marketing battle plan by Chris Torres
- ✓ YouTube - COVID Marketing, Facebook Ads, Marketing, Growth by Chris Torres



Useful Articles on what to say and what not to say

- [11 Ways To Support Your Favorite Travel Businesses From Home](#)
- [What You Can Do Today to Help the Travel and Tourism Industry](#)
- [Scared about Coronavirus? Stop Telling Customers “But We’re Clean!”](#)
- [A Guide to Preventing & Addressing Social Stigma Associated with COVID-19](#)
- [Please Postpone, Don’t Cancel Your Trip—Keep the Travel Spark Alive](#)

Examples from the tourism industry:

- [Rios Tropicales](#)
- [G Adventures](#)
- [Wilderness Travel](#)
- [Indy Guide](#)
- [OARS Response to COVID-19](#)
- [Odysseys Unlimited](#)
- [Journey Mexico “Escape the Crowds”](#)
- [Bike Tours: I’m 65 and I’m Not Staying Home](#)
- [Ethical Travel Portal, Norway](#)

Effective email marketing – difference B2C, B2B

Email marketing, either B2C or B2B, is still essentially the safest and the most cost-effective marketing channel. You need to make sure it’s leveraged the right way. B2B: these emails have to be informative and address the pain points of the business they are targeting. B2B emails need to educate the recipient and pre-sell the product or service that will meet the customer’s needs and pain points. The aim is to build a relationship rather than quick-sell a product. A B2C email campaign has to tap into the emotions of the buyer. A B2C sales funnel may simply involve a consumer: 1) opening an email, 2) clicking a call to action in that email, 3) being taken to a landing page, and 4) making a purchase.

Don't be a robot, it is important to add a personal touch to the way you communicate in both B2C and B2B emails. Personalize your emails! In the end, whether you are selling B2B or B2C, you are selling to people. It is important to find out what matters to them and stick to it when writing your emails.

- ✓ Click [here](#) for an 8-step checklist to guide you through creating sensitive, thoughtful emails during the Coronavirus crisis.
- ✓ Click [here](#) for a YouTube video about email marketing during a crisis.
- ✓ Click [here](#) for the ‘Complete Overview to Crisis Email Marketing and the Coronavirus’ including lots of best practice examples.



Post crisis-communication and importance of safety and hygiene

Through employing effective post-crisis communication strategies, an organization will not only survive, it will thrive. It can play a role in how quickly and how successfully your company moves beyond a crisis to reflect a new goal or vision. In the post-crisis phase, the organization is returning to **'business as usual'**. The crisis is no longer the focal point of attention but it will still require some attention. Everyone in the tourism industry are going to have to change how they monitor and clean the environment that consumers interact with and communicate that back to guests in order to increase their comfort level. Whether that means hand sanitizers everywhere or regularly disinfecting hard surfaces, "there will be a clearly communicated regimen to let the customers know, 'here's what we're doing to keep you safe!

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/coronavirus-travel-industry-changes/>



YOUR STRATEGY

Should I just give up now? I am not making any profit

When you don't know whether you should give up or continue, you need to ask yourself "***If this went on in the long term, would it work? Is it sustainable?***" And the only way to answer that question is to collect data (figures, number). Click [here](#) to read more on DestinationCTO.

Domestic and Regional markets to bounce back first

For now, we don't know when or how the pandemic will pass. But once the public health crisis improves, travelers will be back. It is expected that the **domestic market** will bounce back first followed by the **regional market** and finally the European/international market. Tourism experts – when talking about Myanmar – do NOT expect that the European/international market will return in 2020.

Focus on your home and regional market as your primary markets, not international tourists. Permission (or desire) to travel internationally kicks in later. It would be advisable to look at what promotions or products can be developed that would stimulate the domestic or regional tourism receipts, even if as an operator you have not previously done this. This is the time to come together not as competitors but as allies (Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert).

Australia – article [Domestic tourism driving recovery](#)

Myanmar and domestic tourism

When the newly-elected government took power in 2016, domestic tourists paid a visit to festival en masse across the country during holidays-short or long- reflecting in the media as a sign of public interest on domestic tourism. In the past in Myanmar few domestic tourists went on a pilgrimage or holidays to the whole country. After new government took power in 2016, domestic tourism has increased considerably: people casually paid a visit to famous destinations even on normal short holidays, making hotel rooms full and run short of food and drinks in restaurants. Myanmar recorded some 7.1 million domestic travelers from August 2016 to April 2017, according to the Domestic Pilgrimages and Tour Operators Association. The domestic travelers prefer to stay at hotels instead of monasteries and guest houses. Domestic tourism used to be structured by religious events, however, more-



individual, hedonistic practices are gaining popularity including: romantic getaways; shopping, leisure, beach. It seems that the logic of religious visits widely differs between foreign and local visitors. The former favor authentic, photogenic pagodas, and lifestyles which exceptionalism is clearly and quickly comprehensible, whereas the latter favor the sacred features and the legendary significance of a place. These days, four main, whole-year travel regions appear on the map of Myanmar, drawing a geography of domestic tourism structured by religious highlights: Mandalay and Pyin-Oo-Lwin region; Bagan and Magway region; Southern Shan State; Mon State and its surroundings (Kyaikhtyoe, Mawlamyine, Bago). Yangon might also be added: destination of many rural travelers. Foreigners and Domestic tourists have widely different touristic expectations, and hence practices.

Sources: <https://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/myanmar-outbound-tourism-rising-year-on-year/>;
<https://www.mmtimes.com/lifestyle/travel/26640-domestic-tourism-growing-faster-than-foreign-visits.html>;
<https://asiantourismresearch.cmu.ac.th/Vol3%20No.1/Chapter5.pdf>; <https://www.oecd.org/dev/asia-pacific/saeco-2019-Myanmar.pdf>



**The CBI is planning to further
provide you with
market intelligence
for domestic and regional
markets**



WHAT'S NEXT? – USE TIME WISELY NOW!

Your future development!

Don't forget about future development, whether it is new marketing ideas, new products, tourism sustainability or even compliance issues such as [GDPR](#) or the [European Package Travel regulations](#), especially as on that last topic, the USA and other source markets are looking at similar business models. - This last point, will be hard to swallow especially when so much is going on at this time and resources are stretched you will still need to come out with strong motivators for now and in the future (by Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert).

Sustainable travel is the future...

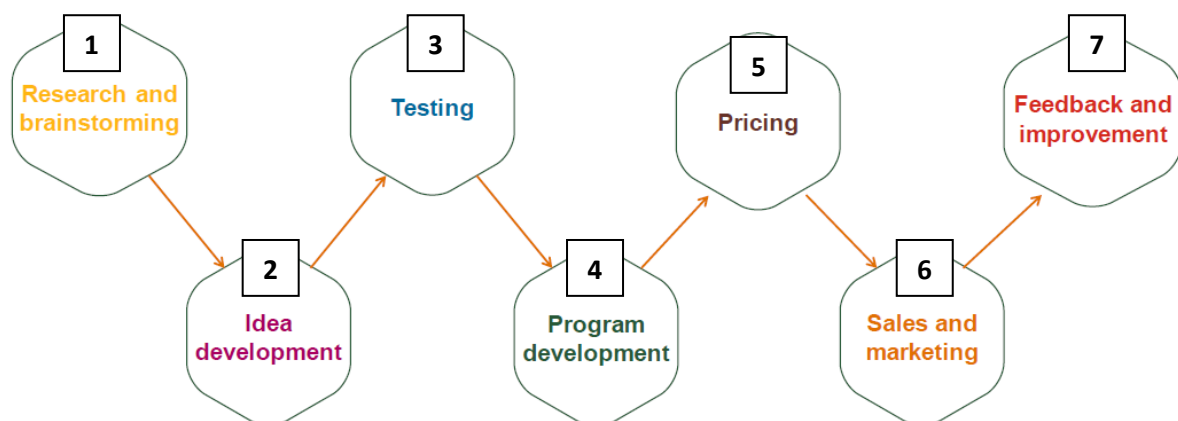
Before the crisis started, following were the main topics of discussion in the tourism sector:

- a) Over-tourism
- b) Sustainable travel
- c) Environment

As a Myanmar company you can go back to the above b and c in a much more responsible and ethical way! International outbound tour operators prefer to work with sustainable partners and are increasingly looking for this! The majority of you already have the Travelife Partner status...but use your time to look at your CSR-practices as well as your tour programs and integrate sustainability in your existing tours as well as new products (remember the May and September 2019 trainings from Mr. Ameer Virani?!). When including (more) sustainability into your tour programs you will have better selling points when the crisis is over and things are getting back to normal (e.g. local food, local guides, real community based tourism experiences).

Your tour programs – product development process

Use your time wisely now: 1) look at your current programs and 2) think about new programs. Your products are your number 1 marketing tool. They define the customer's experience and differentiate you from the competitor. Following the product development process.





1	Research and brainstorming	Be creative to generate as many ideas as possible
2	Idea development	Be more critical to make sure your product is feasible
3	Testing	Inspection trip to test the product (knowledge is power)
4	Program development	A well written developed and presented program is a key to a sell. Details are important and help to sell a product effectively.
5	Pricing	<p>Competitive and accurate pricing is key to financial sustainability.</p> <p>Don't go cheap now! The temptation is to slash prices on your tours right now to encourage future bookings. If your tours are not amazing, maybe that will work. Otherwise, don't do that. Instead, do two things in this difficult economic time: 1) Price your Tours Better, 2) Add a Wow factor and Charge More.</p>
6	Sales and marketing	<p>People need to know about your great new product(s) – staff, partners, customers.</p> <p>Sales and marketing in times of crisis! If you are considering cutting your marketing budget to save your business, you may be throwing the baby out with the bathwater. As a rule of thumb, 5-8% of your total annual revenue should be spent on marketing when times are good, and 10-15% when times are bad. . There may be less people out in public, but there's almost certainly more people online. In times like this, you need to get creative. Click <u>here</u> to read more.</p>
7	Feedback and improvement	Actively welcome feedback to become better!





Popular crisis communication channels

- Social media (particularly Facebook and Twitter)
- Google Ads
- Company website (either as a separate domain or part of the main company site)
- Mass notification systems (mass emails, texts etc.)
- Conference calls (shareholders might dial-in to a call to be updated)
- Press releases and media interaction (gives the organization an opportunity to tell their side of the story)

- ✓ [Why marketing is critical in times of crisis](#)
- ✓ [9 Tips to write the best Facebook Ads ever](#)
- ✓ [YouTube - COVID Marketing, Facebook Ads, Marketing, Growth by Chris Torres](#)
- ✓ [Blogging – how to start a travel blog?](#)
- ✓ [How to be a successful company online?](#)
- ✓ Click [here](#) for an 8-step checklist to guide you through creating sensitive, thoughtful emails during the Coronavirus crisis.
- ✓ Click [here](#) for a YouTube video about email marketing during a crisis.
- ✓ Click [here](#) for the 'Complete Overview to Crisis Email Marketing and the Coronavirus' including lots of best practice examples.

Ask your CBI digital coach for advise!

MARKET ANALYSIS SUPPORT / ADVISE

Following are the priorities indicated by the Myanmar companies

- Market trends after crisis
- Market analysis

Useful information – market analysis

What will the future market look like?

- **Christian Watts (Magpie)** - Tours & Experiences - the Rebound – [Click here to find out more](#)
- **Alex Govoreanu (Questo)** - Tours Are at an Absolute Low — Here's how they can recover - includes predictions for the future of tours – [Click here to find out more](#)



- **Stephen Joyce (Rezgo)** - The long tail of travel may get cut off - automation is one way to get it back up – [Click here to see the article](#)
- **Christopher Elliot** - What Will Travel Be Like After The Coronavirus? – [Click here to see the article](#)
- [Looking Past This Crisis - The Future State of Travel](#)
- [Travel after corona – can it be more sustainable?](#)
- [CNN - What will travel look like after coronavirus?](#)
- [Travelperk – the future of travel after COVID](#)

Market analysis

- European outbound market - make use of the CBI Tourism Market Intelligence Platform! Click [here](#).
- **Regional (Asian) markets** – the CBI will soon be preparing some materials for you.





CANCELLATION POLICY

Updated cancellation and transfer policy examples:

- [Travel Advisors: Gate1 Travel](#)
- [Tour Operator, Italy: CycleEurope](#)
- [Tour Operator, Nepal: Social Tours](#)
- [How Top Tour Operators Are Reacting to Coronavirus Crisis](#)
- **See below cancellation policy model**

CANCELLATION POLICY - model

Time to work together as suppliers to each other and work out a more compliant policy for customers. Many lodges, hotels, tour operators are already looking at this to see what they can do to differ bookings and not lose them totally or to make it as easy as possible for them to work with overseas partners. This is a serious option that all should be looking at and do not be afraid to ask your international partners as to what they would need or what are they planning to do to handle the current situation.

CORONA CANCELLATION POLICY EFFECTIVE 16 MARCH 2020 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Existing bookings:

1. Confirmed bookings for which we have received a deposit or full payment, will be secured should you (or your clients) decide it unsafe to travel.
2. Bookings can be amended up to 12 (twelve) months from the original arrival date. Please note only one amendment to travel dates may be made and should the season change to a higher rate season, the new rate will apply.
3. In the event that you (or your clients) do not travel within 12 (twelve) months of the original arrival date, the 50% deposit would be forfeited – always assuming the Corona Epidemic has been contained by then.
4. Any travel changes to bookings within 14 (fourteen) days of the travel period will incur 100% cancellation fees.
5. The above will only apply if we have received the required deposit or the full payment to confirm your reservation.



New bookings:

1. Any bookings made from 12 March 2020 will be subject to the following Special Conditions which will be subject to change as things normalise.
2. No deposit will be required at the time of booking.
3. 4 (four) weeks prior to arrival a 50% deposit will be required to confirm the reservation.
4. The balance of 50% will be required on arrival.
5. If a booking is cancelled within 4 (four) weeks of arrival a 50% cancellation fee will apply.

Exceptions:

We will have the following exceptions where bookings are cancelled within 14 days of travel, whereby clients will be offered the same deferral policy as above:

1. If the country of the clients' residence prevents the client from leaving (for example, Italy and China's current lockdown situation),
2. If South Africa issues an inbound travel ban, banning clients from entering, or forcing arriving clients into quarantine.

Refunds:

1. In order for us to ride out this global epidemic storm as a privately owned travel & tourism business, we are unable to offer any refunds at this time.
2. We trust that our partners and guests understand our situation; we are doing all we can to work with our guests and partners to find mutually agreeable solutions.
3. This step is necessary to ensure that your business can continue to operate through these difficult times so that we will be here for you when the storm blows over.
4. We reserve the right to make changes to these new terms and conditions at any time and will send out notifications.
5. As soon as the Corona Virus epidemic has been contained we will revert back to our original terms and conditions for bookings.

In conclusion, we urge all guest choosing to travel at this time to please follow all possible protective hygiene procedures during their journey to ensure their own safety and the safety of our staff and other guests. All guests are required to disinfect their hands on arrival and we will provide anti-bacterial wipes for this purpose. Refusal to do so will mean guests will not be allowed entry, for the safety of our staff and other guests.

by Clive Bishop, CBI Tourism Expert



CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**This manual has been prepared by CBI
to provide guidance, tips, advises in times of the corona/COVID-19 crisis.
It is an open document and it will be further enriched with useful materials that, we hope,
are useful for you!**

**For questions & suggestions,
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