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Supply chain reference model for Sri Lankan tourist industry

The composition as well as global dispersion of world tourist population is changing with diversified needs, markets and destinations. With minimal investment on tourism for the past several decades, the Sri Lankan tourism industry lacks sound ground to compete both in service quality and growing capacity. It needs a paradigm shift in the provision of services in emerging markets.

The value chain of any business plays a major role in identifying, creating and delivering the desired value to the customer. The service providers in tourism industry must be vigilant about the changing tourist expectations and volatile competitive environment. There are less structured business processes in this industry which make most of the traditional controls and measurements weak. However, a good supply chain model can lead the industry towards improved competitiveness and thus boost the economic contribution from tourism. Such a model should enhance communication links between all stakeholders, promote good coordination, lead in the competition and facilitate collective growth.

Even though business process modelling and usage of supply chain reference models are well established management practices, Sri Lankan tourism industry is currently lagging behind in applying these models. In this research, the applicability of alternative reference models in the tourism domain have been critically compared in a comprehensive literature survey for the purpose of developing a fitting reference model for the industry as current best of breed management practices. The theoretical framework of supply chain management has been enriched with a validated strategic best practices model and strategies are proposed for addressing problematic areas in the industry. Primary and secondary data related to hoteliers, travel agents and tourists have been analysed. The study prioritizes best practices and proposes a score card for the measurement of performance.

Keywords: Tourism management, Supply chain reference model