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TOPIC: REPORT OF THE BIG BUS COMPANY

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Introduction

Big Bus Tour is a multinational company that offers touring services in form of open top bus sightseeing, and whose services are offered in major cities of more than thirteen countries in Europe, Asia, North America and Australia. This tour company was formed in May 2011 by Les Cars Rouge centred in Paris and Big Bus Company established in London came together and united as one company of Big Bus Tours. The popularity of this touring company has been enhanced by interesting experiences to the customers in form of hop-on and hop-off at various locations it tours in the city as well as open top sightseeing involvements. It operates under the vision of thinking globally and acting locally while understanding every city, landmarks, character and culture to become successful. Under the current management of the Alex Payne as CEO, the company continuously offers great experiences through innovations and developing novel products to suit their customer's needs. This report will analyse the various operations of Big Bus Company.

Analysis of Big Bus Company

About the company

Big Bus Tours is owned by Merlin Entertainments and has over 3000 employees. Big Bus Tours generates an income of \$581M yearly. Recently, this tour company won the Travolution Award for being a great user of the Search Engine Marketing and Award on Digital Marketing Campaign of the Year after successful consistence in the global paid media campaigns in more than 150 markets. The successful nature of this company has been attributed mainly to the qualified staff who are able to handle and satisfy customer needs.

Services Offered

The open-top sightseeing tour experience is offered by Big Bus Company using more than 90 buses with various tours around London which run at interval of 30 minutes maximally hence enabling the customers to hop-off and hop-on at more than 70 stages (Bigbustours.com., 2019). These buses have been designed that they enable the customers being able to feel the impression of culture and history of London which can be conveyed by live interpreter in English or recorded. The recorded platform gives consumers factual information about the place using the head phones in familiarised language to customer. It is clear that the Big Bus Tours offer beneficial services since the customer can make a choice of staying within the bus for full tour run or make use of hop-off and hop-in in order to discover and experience various interesting things during the tour.

According to (Mumford, 2017), the red tour for Big Bus Company serves as one of the greatest and standard tour which has fascinating and enlightening interpreters who are offered only by expert guides. These individuals in Red Tours are more experienced and talks to customers in an enjoyable on deeper information about the city of London. The routes used by Red Tour has been developed to ensure you to view the well-known sights such the Tower of London, Big Ben and Trafalgar Square. We advise customers to take full advantage of various services such as hop-off and hop-in in order to get more entertainment and experiences from more than 20 stages.

Blue tour on other hand is very expensive but concerns taking travellers to highly established tourist attraction sites in London and interpretation is done in 12 languages. One of the most remarkable site under this is the Kensington Palace and Paddington station. Moreover, individuals will have an access to National History Museums where their entry is (Bigbustours.com., 2019).

The Red Route, Orange Route and Blue Route may be exchanged to have Green Link Route so that customers are able to have visits to those attractive areas not included. It has already recorded interpretation in 12 languages. The great St. Pancras, British Museums and Dickens are the sites viewed under this but it lacks the interpreter or tour guide.

The Orange route have frequency of each 30 minutes in which the whole tour journey takes one and half hour with hop-on and hop-off at nine stages. The tourist benefit from recorded interpretations during the tour in 12 languages and operates between Westminster and Madame Tussauds.

The routine bus tours are affected by certain events that results to road closures such as Summer Streets, Prudent Cycles and Remembrance Sunday which are observed strictly to avoid any accidents.

Price for services

The Big Bus Tour offers tickets for 24 and 48 hours. The classic ticket for one-day hop-on, hop-off for adult is £35.10 when one buys online and £39.00 when bought on streets. For children, the ticket price is £26.00 online and £29.00 while family comprising of 2 adults and 2 children £107.00. For night tour, the ticket is £25.00 for adult while £15.00 for children.

Schedule for Operations

The Red Tour has tour duration of 2 hours, 20 minutes with frequency of each 20 minutes with first bus starting operations at 0800hrs to 1800hrs the being last operation time. The Blue Tour operates at frequency of 15 to 20 minutes with tour duration of 1 hour 15 minutes between the 0820hrs and 1800hrs. The Orange Route has operation frequency of 30 minutes with tour taking 1 hour 30 minutes between 0850hrs and 1815hrs while Green Links Route has duration of 1hour with frequency of 20 to 30 minutes between 0820hrs to 1900hrs.

The Big Bus Tours offers three tours in each night for the three pick stations of London Eye at 1930hrs, 2000hrs and 2030hrs, Victoria stage at 1945hrs, 2015hrs and 2045hrs while the Marble Arch stage at 2000hrs, 2030hrs and 2100hrs. You need to keep time because we work under tight schedule (Mumford, 2017).

Nature of the buses used

The buses used in Big Bus are all double decker with tops that are open. They undergo upgrading yearly as part of growth and satisfying customer needs with some bus have top seat opened or covered. They have guiding language in form of English and with guiding audios in English, Italian, Portuguese, German, French and Spanish. They haven't offered capacity for children entertainment (Burton et al., 1990).



The Big Bus Tour offers the bonus card that enables the customers to access some of the great discounts that may be offered to them by the company in its other business such as shops.

Competitors

Like any other business, Big Bus Tours experiences a lot of competition from other similar business in tourism industry. Their main competitors in UK is City Sightseeing Worldwide that was founded in 1999. According to (Macário et al, 2007), It has put measures to compete with Big Bus Tours but still it has not overturn it since it generates \$554M less revenue than

Big Bus Tour. Original London Sightseeing Tour is another competitor founded in 1992 but still generates less revenue compared to Big Bus Tours. In US market, main competitor is CitySights Dc which however generates \$577M less than Big Bus Tours. Other main competitors are Tiber Creek Private Tours and Urbanbrokers.

Strengths of Big Bus Tours

The Big Bus Tours recently introduced fully electric open-top bus in order to protect environment in the cities it operates in so as to ensure their customers enjoys the cleaner sightseeing experiences (McKinnon, 2007). This was brought about after intensive research and resource investment with aim of improving quality of air in areas they operate in. It has shown to be liked by most of customers since they have almost silent operation, no emissions to air and they are none vibrating. This company has adequate employees with positive attitude towards handling customers. The trade mark of this company is highly accepted in the market having good reputation and many customers prefers their services rather than for competitors (Rohani et al., 2013).

Challenges

Some of the customers have raised complaints on horrible service in which the company has been seen to focus mainly on profit from the customers. Some raised concerns on poor management and incompetent staff without experience in customer management with some being arrogant to customers (Givingassistant.org. 2019).

Some Buses lacks air conditioning, hence are unsafe and critical when temperature is just above 22 degrees. The touring experiences is hindered by traffic jams hence tourists spend most of their time stuck there (Rohani et al., 2017). Most of customers are treated carelessly in that some have seen to wait up to 50 minutes while the bus are suppose to travel at an interval of 20 minutes. Some tourist with family are kept in waiting mode in case the bus that

arrives in the stage is almost full or even others are forced to spend extra money in order to reach the initial stage of this buses (Ladany, 1999).

The employees who sell tickets have raised complaints of not being paid commissions since the company policy claims that payment of such commissions are voluntarily paid. Some employees have low motivation since they involve in making revenues for the company but in return have low returns in terms of payments (Van der Maas et al., 2017). Staffs in Big Bus Tours are mainly appraised based on the position and personnel closeness to the appraiser. Some staffs are end up being favoured on places they can work comfortable while others discriminated on the same. There is also delay in payments at some cases.

Improvements and Developments

Big Bus Company needs to act as per the law in treating every employee equally and fairness. More investment should be in staffs and equipment for maximum profit. Any complaints raised by consumers and employees need to be addressed accordingly in lawful manner. It need to consider the disable people by designing some of the features in the bus which can enable them enjoy the interesting experiences offered by open top facility (Van der Maas et al., 2017). Management of this company can consider call from customers of having toilets within the bus so that they can increase their comfort in their tours.

The tourism industry in London and other cities around the world that experiences the services of the Big Bus Tour have really grown drastically. For example, in London there has have been greater changes in number of tourist received in 2019 compared to last five decades when first sightseeing company was introduced. In the past, traditional means were used which have been advanced to current improved ways of serving customers with quality experiences (Burton et al., 1990). With this high influx of tourist and increased revenue of 6.4% yearly as result of this industry, government has been able to set improve infrastructures

to support growth of this companies. The merging of the two initial different companies has formed more basis for intense growth being experienced in Big Bus Tour (Rohani et al., 2013).

Conclusions

It is very clear that the Big Bus Tour is the best sightseeing tour operator since it foundation in 2011. It has really changed the travel and tourism industry into a higher level and increased government revenue in the auk. For this company to maintain the competitive nature in the market and even tap more market share, invent more current business strategies in functions such as marketing and customer services. It has to consider current innovative techniques of impressing clients in order to attract more current generation. It should invest in training its staffs in order to achieve the desired customer services in all its markets. Lastly, the company needs to focus and target other continents where they would venture into.

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