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| Target research report (bagan) | Sai Sitt Paing Hmu Khant |

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# Target Market Research Report (Bagan) and Demographic characteristics and travel analysis of Australian tourism

In this report, Bagan has been picked up as a destination to be promoted. Here is an introduction about this wonderful ancient city. It is an old ancient city which is also known as the great archeological wonder of Asia that has a thousands of temples, pagodas and monasteries scattered throughout the vast landscape as far as the eye can see. Its greatest archaeological sites and famous for its ancient pagodas and temples has been vastly attractive to visitors all over the world.

# Introduction

Around 4,500 temples were built by the Kings of Bagan from time between 1057 and 1287. An estimated 2,200 temples were destroyed when Kublai Khan’s invasion happened in 1287. Over 2,000 temples, pagodas, monasteries and other religious structures still standing up strongly above the ground. The buildings you will see now are all remained after all tragic war. Even all those wars happened in these past centuries, much of ancient Bagan has survived until today. The whole region would have been destroyed completely if they were made of weed but the temples and pagodas were all made of stone which made them still standing up in a good condition surprisingly.

It is a verdant 26 square mile plain, all covered up in stands of palm and tamarind caught in a bend of the lazy-flowing Ayeyarwady river which is the biggest and longest river that flows from the north part of the country to the south. UNESCO has been preserving superbly most of the buildings and those include frescoes and carvings and statues of Buddha, no matter big and small. Although the number of tourists visiting are remarkably increasing, this city is still standing up as a gloriously unsullied destination.

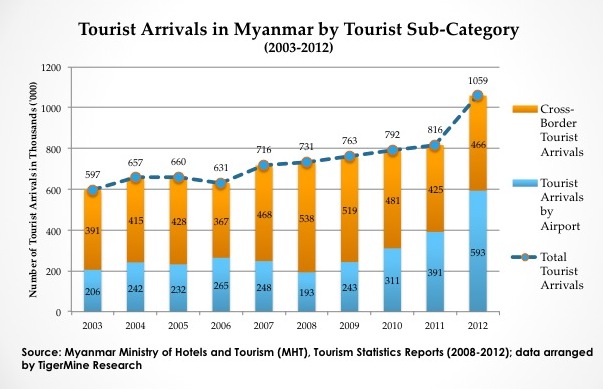
When it comes to weather, Bagan is hot and humid most of the year. The best time to take a visit there, take a bike and go around the city and enjoy the most marvelous views is November and February, when temperatures is mostly 30’C. Mostly, Tourists avoid coming to Myanmar during March to May when the temperature goes up 43’ C. During June and October, it is kind of annoying and intimidating to go around on bike while being ret. visiting during full moon time would be a better time to explore more since it is a popular time for locals to held festivals.

# Target Market

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According to the research report done by Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MHT), Germans, Australians, French, Italians, and Chinese tourists are the top ones on the list of the number of tourists in Bagan each year. Based on the statistics that mentioned above, we can narrow it down to which nationality we are going to target. It would be wise if we target cultural tourists and religious tourists. It cannot be denied that among other nationalities tourists, Australians tourists are known as cultural tourists and they are keen on experiencing difficult cultures, the world heritage sites in the country, explore the experience of the diverse ways of life of other people, reflecting all the social customs, religious traditions and the ancient architectures. Most of the Australian tourists come to Bagan are photographers, architectures, and journalists.

Here is the diagram that illustrates the number of tourists’ arrival



# Demographics characteristics and Travel Style

How do these Australians go on a trip? They rarely go independently. They like to go with families, friends, or tour group. When it comes to age that we need to target, they even bring their 2 or 3 years old kids with them to Bagan. But, we will be targeting mainly on 2 age groups. First one is between 30-45 years old which are mostly business men and women. And, second age group will be between 50 years old and above which are normally just old people who would like to spend the rest of their time with their partners or companies on visiting around other countries, exploring new things, catching sunset scene on the beach and etc. And, the reason why we focus on 30-45 age group is because when they are on holiday breaks such as summer break and December Christmas break, they go on a trip with their families. And, coincidently, those times are the best times to make a trip to Bagan. And, when it comes to income, even an Australian tourists with average income can visit Bagan without burning a hole in his pocket.

There are so many regions in Australia to target. And, we planned to focus on Melbourne, Perth and Sydney regions. The people from those regions seem to be the ones most likely to visit Bagan. Why? They want to have the various types of travel experiences which take the place of particular destinations that they are going to visit. They are less likely to visit if their destination lack one of those. What are the travel experiences they want to have? The first primary experiences are arts, culture, history and heritage. Entertainment, nightlife and shopping come into second place. Events and festivals are in third place. So, these are the experiences they want to have in their destination. Luckily, Bagan is one of the cities that check on every single list of those experiences. And, this is how Australians choose holiday destinations and experiences.

And, another interesting fact about Australian tourists is when they plan to go on an oversea trip, they rarely spend their whole holiday break on only one destination. They love to spend their holiday break in at least three different locations. And, these different locations have to be close to each other geographically. For example, if they are planning to go to Bali, Indonesia, there is a higher chance that they would pay a visit to Singapore, Malaysia, or Vietnam. So, we have to know this fact and use it as an opportunity if we are going to target Australian tourists to travel Bagan.

Here is a table that indicates how many percent of Australians from different regions are interested in which kind of experiences to have



# Key Travel motivations

What factors motivate them to travel a particular destination? Here is a list of seven motives.

1. Nature
2. Social and self enhancement
3. New experiences and knowledge of destination
4. Beautiful scenes
5. Relaxation
6. Adventure and excitement
7. Family, friends and fun

# How to Travel?

As you know, Myanmar has been known as a difficult place to travel around especially independently. But now, Noble Laureate Aung San Su Kyi and the government have sanctioned responsible tourism, the surge of visitors has made their problems. And, reputable outside tourism companies with many years’ experience still trying to struggle to guarantee providing rooms and services.

There are still old problems unfixed remaining such as the poor infrastructure, sudden travel restrictions to tourists, the lack of ATMs and mobile phone and internet speed, and the big problem for tourists came from developed countries will find some hotels disappointing since payments by credit card is not still acceptable. But, the authorized people are working on it and most of the tourists are there for looking around the temples and pagodas, so this will not be a big deal for the tourists. And, hotels are progressing in a good way.

Packages

Most of the tour operators provide Bagan as part of a longer Burmese itinerary, usually coming to Bagan by flight, by river, or by car from Mandalay. And, the last transportation is highly recommended since you can explore and experience random crazy things that gone wrong something like involving spending time with locals, find out what do those local people do for a living that cannot be found on any guide book. And, try to get package that includes a balloon flight over the temple site which is really superb and priceless.

Budget

You will need at least from $1,100 per person if you are planning to visit at least four different locations in Myanmar and stay for 10 days. But, if you are planning to come to only Bagan, there will not even be a burning hole in your pocket. Everything is cheap there.

Promoting Bagan as a tourism destinations to Australians

When it comes to promoting Bagan to Australian tourists, we will use methods through advertising and digital marketing. We will try to avoid direct marketing and personal selling as these methods has negative effects such as aggressive salespeople, high cost-per-action and training costs. We will try to publicize Bagan images through print advertisements, websites, and airlines.

(For example, since our target market has a habit of going to at least 3 different locations when they are on a trip. For example, most of the Australians tourists come to Myanmar transit from Singapore or Thailand. They will surely take Myanmar airlines. So, we have to advertise and promote Bagan through those airlines. Another method to promote is via website or video commercials. People will try to Google search to know more about the destination before they go or they decide to go there. Last, but not least, we will try to work with overseas travel companies. For example, Burma has been a long associate with explore.co.uk, Abercrombie & Kent, Audley Travel, and Orient Express. Those companies have been arranging transportations to Bagan. This method is really efficient since tourists go to these companies’ websites to find out more about destination, how much they need to go there, how can they go there, the safety of location, what kind of experiences they can get if they go there and etc., because on those sites, the details of destination is clearly mentioned.

# SWOT Analysis

Strength

As a tourist destination, Bagan can provide many good and strong assets. First, it provides so many attractions that caters to every tourist. Here is the list of attractions available for tourists with different preferences and interests.

* Cultural Events – cultural festivals, fairs at least one in month
* Cultural Places- antiques, art museums, thousand years old pagodas and temples
* Historical places- memorials, museums, thousand years old pagodas and temples
* Nature – Mountains, river, state and national parks

Secondly, Bagan offers three different weather all year round. During March to July, Bagan’s weather can be categorized as either very warm or very hot. If you hate the hot, it is not recommended since it will be very frustrating to go around the city under boiling hot conditions, but its mild climate makes it an ideal place for outdoor activities. During winter period, I would say it is the best time to visit Bagan because every morning you can wake up to the scene of thousands of pagodas with mists, and snow and sit beside the river, enjoy your breakfast and catch the most beautiful scene. Needless to say for the rest of the day.

Third, Bagan’s geographic location can provide many good opportunities for outdoor activities. It is located near the Ayeyarwady River and surrounded by mountains.

Fourth, Bagan’s location is easily accessible by every transportation car, airplane, and boats. It has 2 highways and one airport. Plus, it has so many restaurants and lodgings to make the tourists stay comfortable and convenient. So, it really is a lovely place to visit.

Weakness

It has the main weakness which is from the tourists all over the world how they perceived the state and the country. Most of the people all over the world assumed Bagan as being unsafe, old, dirty and unhygienic place. It is kind of true because not only the country leaders but also the responsible people such as Tourism Department itself doesn’t provide security service to the tourists, which does not necessarily mean that there are life threats, robbery happening. It is just tourists have to take care of themselves instead of relying on the police. When it comes to unhygienic place as mentioned above, since it is still developing country, there are some people who throw rubbish anywhere without caring the environment. Bagan should definitely repair these weakness if it wants to have more tourists coming. And, it has poor country infrastructure left to make it better such as airports and railways.

Opportunity

Bagan has so many opportunities to take up if they are considering to boost their number of tourists. Here is the list

* Protect and preserve cultural heritage conservation efforts
* Give more protection and repairs to thousand years old temples and pagodas
* Implement and develop environmental protection processes in the industry such as Blue Flag, Green Key)
* Try to gain more investments into quality and standard accommodations for tourists such as international standard hotels
* Try to gain more investments into shops, food, museums, and theaters

Threats

Luckily, it has only a few threats. Here is the list

* Government is not using enough funds to rehabilitate and repair the historical pagodas, protect the environment
* Loss of intangible heritage
* Absence of international standard tour operators
* Discouragement of future and foreign investors

# Conclusion

Needless to say, Bagan has the potential to become one of the top 10 tourism attraction place if the government and tourism department put enough funds into rehabilitating the historical pagodas, protecting the environment, promoting the Bagan’s image more, encouraging foreign and future investors, and etc.

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