

Now, make your trips online

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: The increasing number of internet users and spread of broadband connectivity has changed the way many travellers plan their trips. The travel and tourism industry has also made changes to cater to the large number of holidaymakers who are planning their trips online.

"We recently planned one million trips online," said Deep Kalra, founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MakeMyTrip.com, during the launch of the company's Bangalore office on Tuesday.

Travel market

Quoting the Phocus Wright's outlook on the Indian online travel market, Mr. Kalra said that its size would grow to around Rs. 9,000 crore by 2008-2009 from the present Rs. 1,200 crore. The travel and tourism industry was expected to create over 2.7 million jobs in the country and constitutes six per cent of the total gross domestic product (GDP). Growing at nine per cent every year, he said, India was one of the fastest developing countries in the field of travel and tourism.

He said it was just not the metropolises that were contributing to the growth of the online travel market in the country, but secondary cities had emerged as a big market too. "Secondary cities such as Manipal, Bha-rauch, Vapi and Vijaywada are contributing to half our sales," he added.



Deep Kalra

On the travel and tourism scenario in Bangalore, Mr. Kalra said that the city was likely to have 6,000 additional rooms or apartments by 2012, and at least five new international carriers had evinced interest on starting operations here.

Opportunities

"The Bangalore market presents huge opportunities to travel solutions' providers. Holiday and leisure travel currently constitutes around 24 per cent of the sector and is expected to grow 2.5 times to Rs. 750 crore over the next three years," he said.

He said Bangalore was one of the leading cities in the country in the travel and tourism sector, which was why his company had decided to set up an office here.