



Cruise Operations Management

Philip Gibson

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Philip Gibson's monograph provides a comprehensive overview of the hotel, restaurant and corporate office sides of managing a cruise line and cruise ship and its associated systems. Taken as a whole, this book provides a much welcome addition to the area of management of hospitality and tourism enterprises, and in particular in the cruise sector. With its focus on the service economy, this book meets a long overdue need for a text on hospitality management processes and issues facing the cruise services sector. It is designed for newcomers and veterans alike, interested in developing or shaping their perspectives on cruise tourism and managerial work in tourism studies. It is relevant both as a textbook for degree-level programmes on tourism and as an important reference for human resource practitioners who are keen to be informed of the discussion of impacts and issues in modern cruise tourism management.

This book comprises 12 chapters, each focussing on a key issue within the hospitality, tourism or leisure sectors relating to cruise operations. The tried and proven successful formula for texts, that of providing a theoretical framework, and then enhancing or substantiating by the inclusion of various industry examples, has been used throughout the book. Gibson begins by offering a sweeping introduction to cruise tourism more generally, followed by more specific issues associated with its management, including topics on itinerary planning, customer service systems, passenger profiles, managing food and drink operations

onboard, and health, safety and security. The emphasis on the industry approach to the management of tourism sets the book apart from many introductory tourism textbooks currently available. The opening chapters provide some basic knowledge about cruise tourism from a historical and largely global perspective, and offer an introduction to the principles of management in a way that first-year undergraduates should be able to follow. Subsequent chapters are pitched at a more advanced level, suitable for those who are going beyond the basics and are in need of a more in-depth understanding of the complexities of cruise operations, as would be the case in the middle and later stages of a hospitality degree programme.

Throughout the book, Gibson offers real-world examples, based on his obvious extensive service industry management experience with cruise ships, demonstrating an in-depth awareness of the ways in which modern cruise tourism and associated industry trends have affected the role of hospitality management across the industry. He reinforces a perspective that is becoming increasingly apparent to tourism researchers and practitioners alike. Despite the book's very specific focus on the cruise industry, readers are encouraged to acknowledge that operations management on board a cruise ship is closely involved with all the major functions, processes and procedures that are practised and performed by the various areas associated with the tourism system as a whole. The foundation he lays for tourism and

tourism management is meticulous, but quite readable, understandable and convincing. In this respect, it can serve as a sound basis upon which an understanding of the knowledge and gaps of the management of cruise ship tourism can be built.

Gibson confronts with candour the major strengths and weaknesses of the practices adopted when dealing with cruise operations management, planning, organisation, coordination and control. He is refreshingly honest, and identifies the issues quite succinctly in his quest to define and describe the main objectives and current challenges of cruise tourism management, and to elaborate on how the management process can be made most effective. The writing and layout is accessible for students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and encourages readers to think through issues for themselves and to develop a deeper understanding of the subject. Each chapter contains a number of review questions that help readers to contextualise the issues raised in the text, and, as with many contemporary textbooks, the activities and questions provided make it a handy teaching aid for lecturers, who might wish to develop seminar activities around the book.

The book is well complemented by a series of informative figures, diagrams, tables and photographs. The clear advantage of these additions is that they provide complementary tools to consolidate the learning process and offer empirical evidence of the theory in

practice. A substantial reference list is provided for all chapters. First-year undergraduates and college students will probably find the book's engaging and discursive style helpful, although the industry-specific examples make the text more useful to hospitality management students enrolled in units on business management (with an emphasis on cruise operations), than the more generic literature on mainstream tourism or marketing.

To sum up, the work reviewed is an important and concise contribution to the hospitality and tourism literature, and, as a whole, plays on the recent and renewed scholarly preoccupation with cruise ships and cruise ship travel. This text provides a solid base for students and professionals within the hospitality industry to gain concepts, theory and practical implementation of the key principles presented. *Cruise Operations Management* provides a succinct contemporary resource for practitioners, teachers and students of management within the cruise services sector. The balance of theory and practice of modern cruise services management, together with trends and challenges within the industry such as technology and globalisation provide a comprehensive read for both industry and education.

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