

# Integrating Heritage Marketing and Entrepreneurship to Revitalize Communities and Economies in India

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## Abstract

Heritage, a legacy from the past, holds immense historical and cultural significance and offers a unique value proposition in the contemporary market landscape (Rodney, 2010). Heritage Marketing emerges as a pivotal strategy, blending the preservation of cultural and historical assets with innovative marketing practices that aim to generate value for customers and establish lasting relationships (Kotler, 1993). This approach not only fosters an appreciation for a nation's cultural and historical attractions but also plays a crucial role in their preservation.

This article explores the potential of Heritage Marketing, coupled with entrepreneurship, as a robust strategy to alleviate unemployment and stimulate sustainable economic growth in India by capitalizing on the country's vast and diverse heritage. While India possesses unique cultural assets that can attract tourism and create employment opportunities, the underutilization and deterioration of heritage sites present significant challenges. Thus, the article advocates for a holistic action plan that integrates marketing efforts with entrepreneurship, focusing on infrastructure development, cultural preservation, job training, and sustainable tourism practices. Through this integrated approach, India's cultural treasures can be transformed into engines of economic prosperity and job creation.

The entrepreneurial dimension includes leveraging traditional crafts, creating immersive heritage tours and experiences, celebrating India's culinary diversity, and innovating with upcycled heritage products. This strategy illustrates the vast potential for entrepreneurial ventures in the heritage sector to create jobs, revive traditions, and contribute significantly to the economy.

The findings suggest that leveraging heritage through a marketing and entrepreneurial lens holds the potential for significant economic upliftment, job creation, and infrastructural enhancement, while also ensuring the engagement and empowerment of local communities. This study underscores heritage not just as a reservoir of cultural wealth but as a dynamic catalyst for sustainable development and employment generation in India.

Through this integrated approach, the article aims to highlight the challenges, lessons, and potential impacts of harnessing heritage marketing and entrepreneurship. It advocates for a concerted effort to acknowledge and appreciate India's heritage, transforming it into a cornerstone for economic prosperity and a beacon of cultural preservation.

**Keywords:** *Heritage Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Employment, Sustainable Development*

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## INTRODUCTION

Historically, India's tourism sector, a significant destination on the ancient Silk Route, has attracted global travelers due to its diverse landscapes and rich traditions. Today, the sector offers a wide array of tourism opportunities, including cultural, heritage, nature, adventure, medical, wellness, and religious tourism, boasting 38 UNESCO World Heritage sites and numerous natural attractions. Contributing around 9.3% to India's GDP, the sector provides employment for millions and contributes to foreign exchange earnings. Despite challenges such as infrastructure deficiencies and skill development, domestic tourism is on the rise, fueled by factors like increasing disposable income and social media promotion. (ITDC, GoI, 2022)

Looking ahead, the sector holds immense potential. Government initiatives like "Incredible India" aim to promote the country as a tourist destination. Projections indicate that by 2030, the sector may contribute \$250 billion to India's GDP, generating employment for millions and foreign exchange earnings of \$56 billion. Efforts are underway to improve infrastructure, bridge the skill deficit, and leverage technology for safe and hygienic tourism.

(Ministry of Tourism India, 2022)

Heritage marketing, which generates fascination for a nation's culture and historical attractions, plays a crucial role in this context. It not only entices people to explore these attractions but also contributes to the preservation of the country's heritage, aligning with the key objectives of heritage marketing.

## **HERITAGE MARKETING**

Heritage marketing, a dynamic strategy in the tourism sector, harnesses India's rich cultural and historical assets to unlock job creation opportunities. It capitalizes on India's diverse heritage, including UNESCO World Heritage sites and age-old traditions, transforming them into tourist attractions and driving economic growth. This strategy enriches the workforce by extending the reach of the tourism and hospitality sectors, leading to increased job prospects. (WTTC, 2023)

Infrastructure development, the backbone of heritage marketing, involves developing historical sites, establishing visitor facilities, and improving connectivity, thereby boosting job creation. Skill development and training programs, driven by heritage marketing, ensure the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills.

In the digital era, heritage marketing transcends conventional methods. Government initiatives, such as the e-tourist visa, open new channels for promoting heritage sites, creating job prospects in content creation, online marketing, and technology. Sustainability initiatives, such as eco-friendly accommodations and responsible waste management, contribute to job creation while ensuring the long-term preservation of heritage sites.

Public-private collaborations, a key feature of government initiatives, play a pivotal role in heritage marketing. By partnering with travel agencies, airlines, and tour operators, tourism packages are created, leading to expanded job opportunities. Government support in streamlining regulations further facilitates these efforts.

In essence, heritage marketing is a multifaceted strategy that drives economic growth, safeguards the nation's unique identity, and creates employment opportunities, transcending the mere promotion of historical sites. (International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science, 2014)

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

S.N O.	AUTHOR	TITLE	YEAR	FINDINGS
1.	SM Pusalkar	Branding the Image of Religious Heritage in India	2023	This study scrutinizes the branding and placemaking of India's cultural and religious landscapes through current tourism efforts. It references the highly successful "Incredible India" campaign and various state tourism campaigns, focusing on key tourism initiatives launched in the country over time. The research employs the 'tourist gaze' concept to analyze numerous visuals that represent cultural and intangible religious heritage, aiming to comprehend their underlying meanings and the fresh viewpoints they intend to present to prospective tourists.
2.	TS Maini	G20, Dharamshala declaration and Northeast: The trident to boost incredible India's tourism	2023	Undeniably, India's G20 Presidency presents a significant chance to invigorate its tourism industry. This is expected to provide a crucial stimulus to the nation's hospitality sector and overall economy. The initiative to highlight underrepresented cities and concentrate more on the North-Eastern region by hosting meetings there is a commendable approach.
3.	RC Sethi	Global Rise of India: Evidence from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals	2023	This research aims to assess the substantial progress in public health that has propelled India's global standing through the adoption of international policy agendas such as the MDGs and SDGs since 2000. The study's outcomes indicate that India's various initiatives have facilitated the achievement of global objectives. The research also emphasizes the enhancement of institutional capabilities to implement public policies that ultimately advance the welfare of the populace.
4.	BJ Bhattacharjee	Quantifying Tourism Performance of Select States of India: A Comparative Study Using Composite Weighted Index	2023	This study uses 12 parameters to assess state tourism performance, categorized into visitor presence, tourist facilities, and environment and economy. Maharashtra ranks first in visitor presence, while Nagaland ranks last. In terms of tourist facilities, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Kerala rank in the top three, while Mizoram, Sikkim, and Nagaland are at the bottom. For environment and economy, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Himachal Pradesh lead, while Haryana, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh trail. The study concludes that states with superior infrastructure should guide policy for underperforming states like those in the North-East and Bihar, considering statistically significant parameters.

5.	<b>Suman Billa</b>	The Responsible Imperative for Incredible India: An Approach to Adopting Responsible Tourism as a National Policy	2022	The study highlights the transformative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in shifting consumer preferences and consequently, government policies towards a more sustainable model. Given India's burgeoning economy and swift infrastructure development, a corresponding surge in its tourism sector is anticipated, necessitating a responsible tourism approach. The chapter evaluates Kerala's Responsible Tourism initiative, anchored on the triad of environmental, economic, and social responsibility. It suggests pilot projects at specific national destinations, prioritizing carrying capacity. The chapter advocates for a shift in focus from the state to the destination level, necessitating the establishment of an administrative and financial framework. It also introduces a responsible tourism categorization for tourism businesses, aligning incentives and subsidies to promote participation.
6.	<b>Chris Zhu</b>	Understanding augmented reality marketing in world cultural heritage site, the lens of authenticity perspective	2022	As AR tourism experiences evolve, destination managers are beginning to recognize AR's crucial role in tourism marketing, concurrently with a growing demand for authenticity in AR among tourists. This study aims to discern the correlations between Objective Authenticity, Constructive Authenticity, and Existential Authenticity, and their influence on the tourist experience and behavioral intentions during AR-based World Cultural Heritage site tourism experiences. The findings suggest that Constructive and Existential Authenticity positively influence tourist satisfaction, thereby affecting the intention to visit. Conversely, Objective Authenticity does not significantly affect tourist satisfaction in the AR tourism experience. The study concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and managerial implications.
7.	<b>D Buhalis</b>	Metaverse as a disruptive technology revolutionising tourism management and marketing	2023	The Metaverse is poised to significantly disrupt tourism, transforming tourist behaviors and management practices. This paper, through a review of scholarly works, media articles, and industry reports, discusses how the Metaverse can revolutionize tourism experiences and management. It defines the Metaverse in tourism, explores the disruptions it brings, and suggests managerial actions. The study provides a framework for understanding Metaverse disruptions in tourism and outlines research directions to leverage its capabilities. As one of the first comprehensive studies on the Metaverse's potential in tourism, it aims to enrich knowledge and inspire future research.

8.	<b>R Baber</b>	Influence of social media marketing efforts, e-reputation and destination image on intention to visit among tourists: application of SOR model	2023	The study findings indicate a substantial positive correlation between SMME, e-reputation, and destination image. Furthermore, the results suggest that the destination image completely mediates the relationship between e-reputation, destination image, SMME, and the intention to visit.
9.	<b>Q Qiu</b>	Intangible cultural heritage in tourism: Research review and investigation of future agenda	2022	While this literature review has been successful in identifying numerous high-quality publications for analysis, we posit that the scope of ICH extends beyond the 85 keywords utilized. Furthermore, the term “tourism” used in keyword searches may be too restrictive to encompass all definitions and activity domains within the tourism industry. As such, alternative review methodologies and diverse perspectives could be employed to examine varying research trends and future trajectories. Additionally, this article exclusively reviews literature in English, thereby excluding a significant body of research, which could potentially introduce a major limitation in the subject of ICH tourism. Consequently, supplementary review articles in multiple languages are recommended for a more comprehensive understanding of ICH tourism.
10.	<b>M Hasan</b>	Heritage tourism marketing: status, prospects and barriers	2014	Heritage tourism marketing is crucial for attracting tourists to heritage sites. Bangladesh, rich in historical and archaeological sites, has the potential to be a significant heritage destination. Effective marketing is essential to attract tourists. However, barriers such as lack of stakeholder coordination, inadequate funding, and neglect of tourist needs can hinder successful marketing. To implement effective heritage tourism marketing in Bangladesh, it's necessary to develop creative promotional programs, ensure stakeholder coordination, conserve heritage sites, and encourage both private and public sector participation.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-method approach in its research methodology, combining qualitative content analysis and utilizing secondary quantitative data from government reports to conduct a thorough investigation into heritage marketing in India. Qualitative information was collected from a variety of sources including over 20 reputable journals, newspapers, and government reports. Thematic content analysis was applied to this qualitative data to identify significant themes and patterns in the strategies of heritage marketing.

Additionally, secondary quantitative data from government reports were utilized to complement the qualitative findings. The research strictly adhered to ethical considerations throughout its process. The systematic content analysis and analysis of secondary data aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of heritage marketing practices in India. It's important to note that while this study relied on secondary quantitative data, it acknowledges potential limitations in the scope of primary data collection.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

**RO1** To explore the untapped potential of heritage marketing within the Indian context

**RO2** To conduct a comparative analysis of India's tourism sector with those of leading countries worldwide

**RO3** To evaluate the hurdles and obstacles in the path of implementing heritage marketing strategies in India

**RO4** To devise a strategic action plan for the sustainable implementation of heritage marketing, aimed at stimulating economic growth and promoting job creation

## DISCUSSION

**RO1** To explore the untapped potential of heritage marketing within the Indian context

According to a report published by the Press Information Bureau 2023, heritage marketing possesses considerable potential in the Indian context, given the country's abundant and diverse cultural heritage. The following key points elucidate this:

- **Cultural Diversity:** India, a confluence of various races, ethnicities, and cultures, presents a multitude of marketing opportunities due to its growing population and cultural diversity.
- **Heritage Assets:** The richness of India's heritage is prominently displayed in its numerous temples, palaces, monuments, and forts. These heritage assets can be strategically marketed to attract both domestic and international tourists.
- **Economic Benefits:** The heritage industry yields significant economic benefits by fostering tourism development, job creation, and domestic business expansion.
- **Government Support:** The Government of India, along with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, promotes heritage tourism by providing several incentives to Indian states renowned for attracting tourists.
- **Digital Revolution:** The rapid pace of digitization heralds a transformative era for the marketing communication landscape. Increased internet penetration will inevitably stimulate the growth of content in local languages.

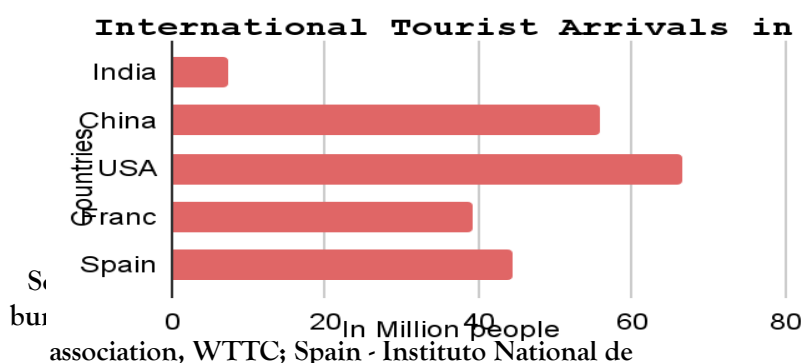
**RO2** To conduct a comparative analysis of India's tourism sector with those of leading countries worldwide

International tourism is a substantial industry, involving millions of global travelers annually. Its impact extends to the economies of host and origin countries, as well as the environment, society, and culture of visited destinations.

Following is the comparative analysis of the tourism sector of 5 countries, namely - USA, China, France, Spain and India

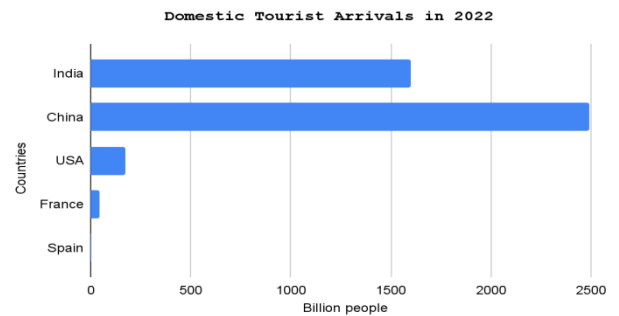
### 1. Number of Tourists:

International Tourist Arrivals in 2022	
Countries	Million people
India	7.4
China	55.9
USA	66.5
France	39.2
Spain	44.5



Domestic Tourist Arrivals in 2022	
Countries	Million people
India	1598.6
China	2490.1
USA	172.9
France	42.4
Spain	0.9

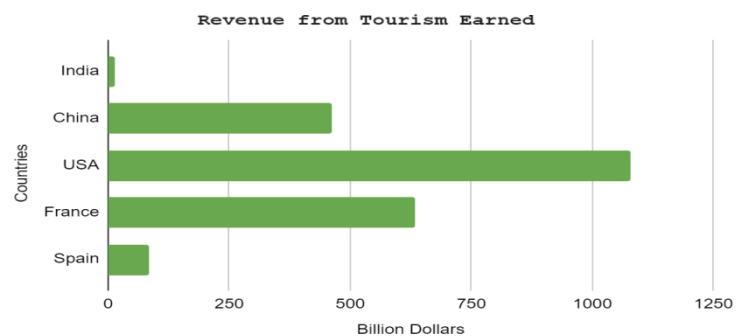
Estadística (Spain), Statista; France - World Tourism Organization, Campus, France



Source: I bureau travel association, WTTC; Spain - Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Spain), Statista; France - World Tourism Organization, Campus, France

## 2. Tourism Revenue:

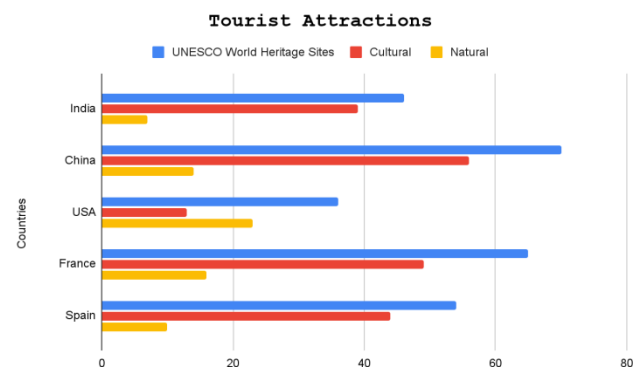
Revenue from Tourism Earned	
Countries	Billion Dollars
India	13
China	463
USA	1,080.00
France	634.1
Spain	83.9



World Travel & Tourism Council; USA - U.S. Travel Association; France - Atout France; Spain - Statista

## 3. Tourism Attractions:

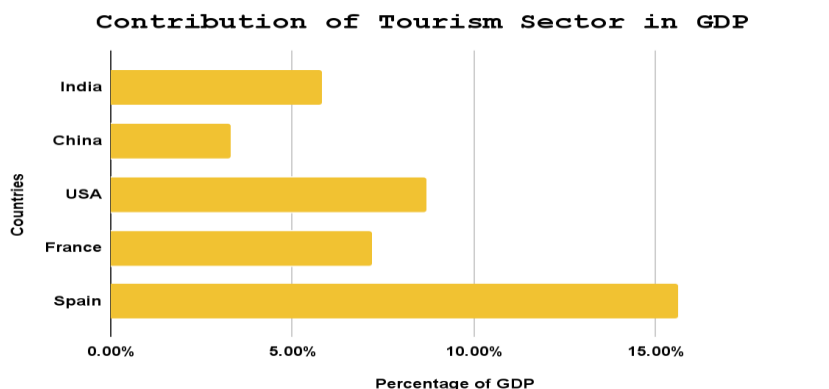
Tourist Attractions			
Countries	UNESCO World Heritage Sites	Cultural	Natural
India	46	39	7
China	70	56	14
USA	36	13	23
France	65	49	16
Spain	54	44	10



contribution in their GDP:

Contribution of Tourism Sector in GDP			
Countries	Percentage of GDP	Total GDP	GDP of Tourism Sector
India	5.83%	3.61 Trillion	210.7 Billion
China	3.30%	17.9 Trillion	580 Billion
USA	8.70%	23.14 Trillion	2.02 Trillion
France	7.20%	2779.1 Billion	234 Billion
Spain	15.60%	1710.6 Billion	260 Billion

Source: World Tourism and Travel Council



In the above tables and graphs we have used the following parameters to assess the position of India on world tourism index and create a comparison with the countries who always remain in the top 5 of this index, these are USA, Spain, France & China

This is done in order to understand that despite India being an ancient civilization boasting of rich heritage and culture in every nook & corner is lagging behind.

The parameters for evaluation have been:

- The footfall of tourists in the country both in terms of domestic & international tourists.
- The revenue earned by country from tourism activities
- Tourist attractions where the focus has been on UNESCO world heritage sites
- The percentage contribution of the tourism industry in the GDP of the country.

To draw out inferences from it we need to understand the policies/initiatives of these countries that promote tourism

**1. Infrastructure & Accessibility** - Development of high speed and convenient public transport networks to assist tourists in various languages as well as amenities in hotels and restaurants that provide them comfort. Disabled people suffer the most as there are very few places in India which provide infrastructural support to them. Some more examples can be; Air connectivity issues between domestic and international airports.

**2. Sustainable Tourism** - This is the need of the hour as we need to promote our heritage wonders and culture to the whole world but not at the cost of environmental degradation. We can learn from energy conservation measures by Spain, Ecotourism and reforest and conservation efforts by China, Encouraging outdoor activities, green certification programs for hotels and National Park services by USA and France does this by promoting local tourism, doing eco labeling and preserving cultural heritage. Also it includes the use of digital mediums to take virtual reality experiences of the heritage sites that will promote tourism as well as prevent damage to the fragile ecosystem.

**3. Awareness towards local communities** -Engaging local communities in order to promote the rich local heritage and making them a part of the policies so that both our tourism sector and the local communities can grow simultaneously.

**4. Communication & Information Accessibility** - Investing in signage boards and translation services, streamlining online information and booking procedures.

**5. Safety & Security**- One of the most crucial aspects of traveling that helps in making or breaking the image of the nation. Tourists often like to visit places where they feel secured with their belongings, life and dignity. Though in India we do have this belief that “**Atithi Devo Bhava:**” but we do find some cases where there is any misconduct that has happened with a tourist, especially females.

**6. Niche Tourism** - Developing specialized tourism experiences to promote the cultural heritage and uniqueness of the culture, this will also attract tourists to gain special and unique experiences.



### **RO3 To evaluate the hurdles and obstacles in the path of implementing heritage marketing strategies in India**

The implementation of heritage marketing strategies in India encounters several obstacles:

- **Lack of Awareness and Appreciation:** A considerable number of individuals, encompassing locals and tourists, remain uninformed about India's rich cultural and historical heritage. This unawareness can impede the effectiveness of heritage marketing strategies.
- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Numerous heritage sites in India are devoid of the essential infrastructure to host tourists, including basic amenities such as clean restrooms, food and beverage facilities, and comfortable accommodations.
- **Preservation and Maintenance:** A significant number of India's heritage sites are deteriorating due to neglect and inadequate maintenance, deterring tourists and complicating the marketing of these sites.
- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Regulatory challenges may arise concerning the preservation and commercialization of heritage sites, including construction restrictions near heritage sites and land ownership issues.
- **Language Barriers:** The management of language diversity poses a challenge when implementing any marketing strategy in India.
- **Natural Calamities:** Natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and epidemics can hinder the implementation of marketing strategies.

These challenges necessitate a comprehensive approach that encompasses infrastructure improvement, awareness enhancement, preservation and maintenance of heritage sites, regulatory hurdle navigation, and disaster preparedness planning.

### **RO4 To devise a strategic action plan for the sustainable implementation of heritage marketing, aimed at stimulating economic growth and promoting job creation**

Taking inspiration from the report by the Niti Ayog titled - "Heritage Management in India", the authors have devised a plan which can be used to implement heritage marketing in India effectively.

#### **PHASE 1: LAYING THE FOUNDATION**

**Stakeholder Engagement (Months 1-3):** Initiate dialogues with key stakeholders including local communities, heritage site authorities, and government bodies. Their involvement and support will be crucial for the successful implementation of the plan.

**Assessment and Strategic Planning (Months 1-3):** Conduct a thorough assessment of India's rich heritage assets, identify target markets, and establish clear objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the upcoming heritage marketing campaign.

**Heritage Promotion (Months 4-6):** Launch an aesthetically appealing website and create a robust presence on social media platforms dedicated to heritage and cultural tourism. Execute a digital marketing campaign focusing on key markets, leveraging Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social media advertising, and content marketing.

**Infrastructure Development and Budgeting (Months 7-9):** Allocate considerable funds and resources for infrastructure enhancement at selected heritage sites. Commence construction and improvement projects. Outline the estimated costs for each phase and identify potential sources of funding.

#### **PHASE 2: BUILDING MOMENTUM**

**Cultural Experiences and Preservation (Months 10-12):** Introduce a wave of cultural experiences and heritage walks, actively engaging local communities. Simultaneously, preservation initiatives will gain momentum, focusing on the restoration of historical monuments.

**Tourism Training and Job Creation (Months 13-15):** Collaborate with local educational institutions to design training programs encompassing skills in hospitality, guiding, language proficiency, and various tourism-related fields.

**Monitoring, Evaluation, and Risk Assessment (Months 16-18):** Rigorously oversee the performance of the campaign, gather valuable feedback, and make data-driven decisions. Continuously optimize marketing strategies and infrastructure development. Identify potential challenges or obstacles that might arise during the implementation of the plan and propose strategies to mitigate these risks.

### PHASE 3: SUSTAINING PROGRESS

**Sustainable Tourism Practices and Long-term Sustainability (Months 19-24):** Champion the cause of sustainable tourism practices, encompassing waste management, eco-friendly accommodations, and the promotion of responsible tourism guidelines. Intensify efforts to minimize the environmental impact. Elaborate on how to ensure the long-term sustainability of the heritage sites beyond the two-year plan.

**Celebrations and Events (Months 19-24):** Meticulously organize a series of heritage-themed festivals, events, and exhibitions. Collaborate with local artists, musicians, and performers to showcase traditional arts and culture.

**Collaboration and Promotion (Months 19-24):** Foster strong partnerships with travel agencies, airlines, and tour operators, solidifying these alliances to promote heritage tourism packages. Governmental support will continue to play a crucial role in streamlining regulations and policies.

### FINDINGS

After the study authors can conclude the following findings:

1. The diverse cultural heritage of India presents substantial marketing opportunities due to its cultural richness, including numerous temples, palaces, monuments, and forts. The heritage industry contributes significantly to economic growth, job creation, and domestic business expansion.
2. Despite India's rich cultural heritage, it lags behind leading countries like the USA, China, France, and Spain in terms of international tourist arrivals, domestic tourist numbers, tourism revenue, and the contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP.
3. The evaluation of India's tourism position includes footfall of tourists, revenue earned, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and the contribution of the tourism industry to GDP. Factors such as infrastructure, sustainability, awareness, safety, and niche tourism play crucial roles in determining a country's standing.
4. India faces challenges in infrastructure and accessibility, including issues with air connectivity, language barriers, and amenities for differently-abled individuals. There is a need to develop convenient public transport networks and amenities in hotels and restaurants.
5. Learning from leading countries, India needs to prioritize sustainable tourism practices, including energy conservation measures, ecotourism, reforestation efforts, outdoor activities, green certification programs, and the use of digital mediums for virtual experiences.
6. Engaging local communities in the promotion of rich local heritage is crucial for the sustainable growth of both the tourism sector and local communities. Policies should involve local communities in decision-making processes.
7. Investments in signage boards, translation services, and streamlined online information and booking procedures are essential for improving communication and information accessibility for tourists.
8. Ensuring safety and security is crucial for the success of any tourism strategy. Addressing concerns related to misconduct and enhancing the overall safety perception can positively impact India's image as a tourist destination.

9. Developing specialized tourism experiences that showcase India's cultural heritage and uniqueness can attract tourists seeking special and unique experiences, contributing to the diversification of the tourism sector.
10. The proposed three-phase action plan focuses on stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, infrastructure development, cultural experiences, tourism training, sustainable practices, and long-term sustainability to stimulate economic growth and job creation through heritage marketing in India.

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. **Taking Advantage of India's Cultural Diversity:** Tourism industry managers ought to make the most of India's cultural diversity by highlighting a range of historical sites, including forts, temples, palaces, and monuments. They can also concentrate on creating distinctive and specialized tourism experiences that highlight India's cultural legacy. This entails creating specialized marketing plans that draw attention to the distinctive cultural experiences that are offered throughout India.
2. **Investing in Infrastructure and Accessibility:** Managers should give priority to making improvements to heritage sites' facilities, boosting air connections, and offering amenities to those with disabilities, given the shortcomings in infrastructure and accessibility. This will draw more tourists and improve the entire tourism experience.
3. **Encouraging Sustainable tourism Practices:** It is recommended that managers implement sustainable tourist practices, which include energy conservation, environmentally friendly lodging, and conscientious waste management. By doing this, they may lessen their negative effects on the environment and draw in eco-aware tourists looking for genuine and sustainable travel experiences.
4. **Engaging Local Communities:** Local communities must be involved in the promotion of heritage assets to ensure long-term tourism growth. To improve the visitor experience, managers should form alliances with nearby communities, provide them the authority to participate in decision-making, and highlight the region's cultural legacy.

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