



HONG KONG
TOURISM BOARD
香港旅遊發展局



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Becky Ip
Deputy Executive Director

Securing Industry Development for Trade Partners

“ *Having worked so closely with our trade partners in various sectors over the past year, I believe all businesses have understood that no sector is independent, and only in partnership can we overcome challenges.* ”

The HKTB both collaborates with and supports the travel and related trade to fuel the growth of Hong Kong tourism. Describing her team's work over the past year, Becky Ip, the HKTB's Deputy Executive Director who leads the Business Development department, said, "In early 2019, the team was proactively finding new business opportunities for our trade partners, particularly through promoting deeper cooperation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area) and in cultivating the Muslim segment. We also engaged Google to increase exposure for our Quality Tourism Services (QTS) merchants to facilitate their expansion of business network. When the social incidents began in June and took place through the rest of the year, we swiftly changed tact to focus instead on programmes that would help relieve the operating pressure on the trade and tide them over through the challenges."

Exploring new segments

Following the opening of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the Business Development team hosted the Greater Bay Area Experience Tour for overseas trades between April and June 2019 to propel the development of multi-destination travel products. Close to 100 travel agency representatives and product managers from Australia, Japan and Southeast Asia joined the tours.

Trade networking sessions were also organised by the team in Turkey and Kazakhstan for the first time in June and September 2019, as the HKTB sought to grow the Muslim segment in the Belt-and-Road countries. The sessions were well received in both countries and opened up new business opportunities for the Hong Kong trade.

Ip added, "Back in Hong Kong, we held the 'Exploring the Opportunity: Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Hong Kong' seminar to prepare our local partners for serving this fast-growing segment. After learning about the basic requirements for becoming more Muslim-friendly establishments at the seminar, over one-third of the trade participants completed a self-assessment and considered that they are well equipped to be Muslim-friendly."



Strengthening trade presence in strategic cities

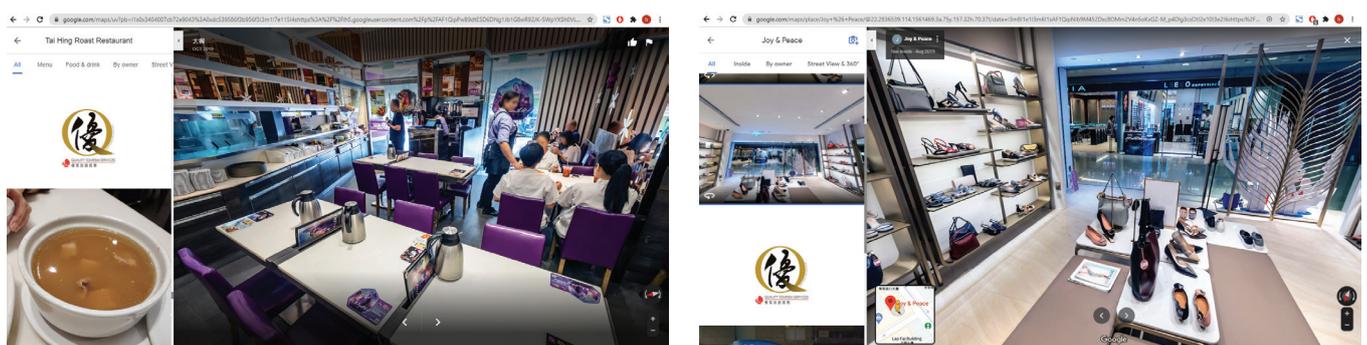
In other markets, the team continued to establish Hong Kong's trade presence. For instance, the HKTB curated an immersive cultural experience for the travel trade in the Hong Kong · Live in Los Angeles – Greater Bay Area Showcase, which was officiated by Mr Edward Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development and Dr YK Pang, Chairman of HKTB. Likewise, an award-winning pavilion was set up at the China International Import Expo in Shanghai to emphasise Hong Kong's strategic value as the gateway to the Greater Bay Area.

“Having worked so closely with our trade partners in various sectors over the past year, I believe all businesses have understood that no sector is independent, and only in partnership can we overcome challenges, and it is the HKTB's continuous mission to drive the healthy growth of this lively, fun and joy-sharing industry,” affirmed Ip.



Syncing high-quality services with trailblazing techs

To extend the digital footprints and enhance the competitiveness of the QTS-accredited merchants in an increasingly tech-dominated world, the HKTB went into partnerships with the tech giant Google. “We assisted the accredited merchants in setting up and verifying their Google My Business accounts and offering 360° virtual tours of their shops on Google Maps. Prior to these, we organised the Smart Tourism Seminar to explain the benefits of the partnerships with members of the trade.



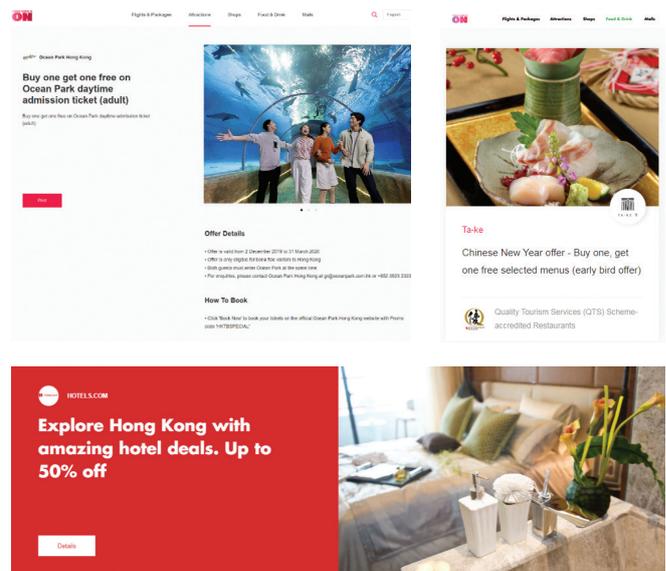
Supporting the trade to get through the difficult times

In the second half of the year, the HKTb spared no effort in establishing “Hong Kong is ON”, a powerful common business-to-consumer marketing platform serving all tourism-related sectors, to help the trade drum up business as the market situation became unclear.

Ip explained, “When we solicited offers from our trade partners, we had to make them understand the power of collective marketing. Our team’s job was to ensure that the amount of offers on the one-stop platform and the offers themselves were appealing to consumers, and it relied on the trade partners’ trust towards the HKTb’s ability in helping them drive patronage. We closely communicated with the trade to gain their support for the campaign, and they responded very well.”

More than 7,000 outlets in Hong Kong supported the campaign, with hundreds of offers on dining, shopping, hotels, flights and attractions. “Through this industry-wide campaign, the HKTb shared the marketing efforts of our trade partners, and sent them the message that they were not fighting alone.”

“Besides the local trade, our Worldwide Offices gathered our international network and promoted the platform aggressively to trade partners in the short-haul markets such as Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, South Korea, and India, to help lure visitors back to Hong Kong. Some of these markets, such as the Philippines, saw a high conversion rate in flight ticket sales, which showed the trade that our joint effort paid off.” Ip concluded.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019/20

Greater Bay Area Experience Tour

- Attracted 98 trade representatives from Australia, Japan and Southeast Asia

Trade networking sessions for Muslim communities

- Joined by 76 overseas trade partners in Turkey and Kazakhstan

“Exploring the Opportunity: Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Hong Kong” Seminar

- Attracted about 90 representatives from hotels and attractions
- A total of 34 hotels and 5 attractions completed the self-assessment and fulfilled the basic requirements to be considered Muslim-friendly

Quality Tourism Services Scheme

- As at 31 March 2020, registered merchants count stood more than 1,200, covering over 8,250 outlets

Smart Tourism Promotion

- Over 110 representatives attended the “Smart Tourism Promotion” seminar
- 250 QTS-accredited merchants verified their Google My Business accounts and 145 360° virtual tours were deployed on Google Maps

Hong Kong is ON

- Solicited 500 offers from 7,000 retail and dining outlets

Hong Kong • Live in Los Angeles – Greater Bay Area Showcase

- Achieved publicity value of over HK\$4 million