

Invitation to the Japanese market

In 1990, the number of Japanese overseas, travellers reached almost 11 million — 474,132 of whom visited Canada. Clearly, the total Japanese overseas travel market continues to expand at a rapid rate. With the completion of additions to Tokyo's Narita Airport and the planned opening of the new Osaka International Airport in 1994/5, the number of overseas Japanese travellers to Canada could increase considerably from the 1990 figure. Some predict that Japanese overseas travellers will number 20 million by the year 2000. If Canada held its share, this would mean a million Japanese visitors by that time.

Two key questions emerge: can we hold our share against increasing numbers of sophisticated marketing competitors? and can we provide a suitable product and services?

Two years ago, Tourism Canada began its five-year Winter Wonderland Canada strategy to increase travel in the November to April period, in order to get around the major problems of summer peak travel, and to begin the shift of image of Canada to one of a year-round destination. The Japanese travel trade has encouraged this shift and actively support it. It is now the suppliers' challenge to provide the product and service needed to attract Japanese outbound travellers.

We ask marketers to keep the above in mind when weighing the long term benefits of participation in the Japanese travel market: in summary they point to our ability to "manage growth".

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