

**BUSINESS****In conversation with Hemant Mediratta, Founder – One Rep Global**

Hemant shares his insights on on business grown, trends, luxury representation business in India and luxury segment of Indian travellers.

by Hemant Mediratta, Founder - One Rep Global June 14, 2022

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Hemant Mediratta, Founder, HM Corp.

1. What urged you to start One Rep Global and how has the business grown so far?

That's an interesting question and always makes me smile reminiscing of my time when I would travel extensively on business trips where I would meet fellow luxury hoteliers from around the world. Being passionate about India tourism , to each, I



never acted on this. On deeper understanding I gathered that they had certain perceptions of the Indian traveller which were non complimentary and most of them avoided getting into this market.

This made me think that perceptions have coloured reality and both sides were at a loss. The hotels, which were losing the revenue opportunity and on the other side, the Indian consumer, who was being denied the privilege of experiencing such great hotels. Hence One Rep Global was born with the idea that we want to bring the best of luxury hospitality and tourism brands to the Indian consumers and in our own way tell the world that there is a strong community of Indian consumers that is discerning, evolved travellers who appreciate finer things in life and value service.

One Rep Global is a company of hoteliers, by hoteliers for hoteliers. We are one of the very few companies that are focused only on luxury and ultra-luxury hotels in the representation business. Some of our accreditations include Traveller Made (now rebranded as Serandipians) – the only representation company in this part of the world to have this, XO Private, Forbes verified partner and Connections to name a few.

We have a strong advisory board of some very respected names in the business who constantly guide and mentor us. What differentiates us from others is our people and the culture of the organisation. One Rep Global is built on trust and transparency that empowers to perform and encourages meritocracy. We like to attract talent based on attitude and not skills as skills can always be taught, hence if you look at our team, they come from diverse backgrounds. We also hire based on talent availability and not necessarily position availability. The common thread amongst all of them is that they are intrapreneurs and have the zeal to be the best in the business. Our people philosophy has three parts – hire right, train extensively and empower to perform.

We have doubled in size through covid times and continue to grow at a steady pace. Our clients include luxury and ultra-luxury independent boutique hotels, luxury private villas, private jets and tourism boards spread across 18+ geographies and territories ranging from Japan to the Caribbean. Whether you want a room facing the ocean at Caesars Palace Dubai or serene surroundings of Bhutan at Gangtey Lodge, whether it's the bustling city of Amsterdam or the eclectic Soho district in London, we have a One Rep Hotel partner hotel ready to welcome Indian guests.



were able to deliver some exceptional ROI. A few of our clients saw as high as 75X to a 100X return on their investment.

2. How has the representation business evolved over years?

Every business is continuously evolving and so has the representation business. It all begins with when your consumer begins to change that in turn leads the suppliers to change as well. The Indian consumer is continuously evolving with more younger consumers coming into the fold and seeking newer and meaningful experiences. This has happened in the luxury space as well. As compared to a few years ago, when going abroad for a holiday was a luxury, this is no longer the case and consumers are now seeking more meaning in their travel, experiencing finer hotels and unique activities. Immersive travelling is gaining traction. On the supplier side with digital distribution, social media outreach and easy accessibility the market has opened up and brands are now talking to consumers directly. This has brought about a fundamental shift on how brands are influencing and sourcing business from India.

Given all these changes, the representation business has also evolved and brands are looking at companies that can provide them the insight into the market and can help them achieve 360 marketing – digital, sales, marketing, integrated communications et al. The real growth of future from India is going to come from Tier 2 and 3 cities, where the thought process of consumers is very different from Delhi or Mumbai. Hence, representation companies that understand the ethos of luxury business, have an insight into the consumers mind along with a wider reach especially into non metros see a good future. We cover 25+ cities in India through our network and that is going to be another game changer for brands that are with us as we help them reach the heart of the India and get aspirational consumers who want to experience the best of the best.

3. What trends do you foresee in this segment?

The market will soon see a shake up and only good quality, well-resourced and funded companies will be able to excel in this business. Some individual entrepreneurs and 'solopreneurs' have done well in the past but it will become increasingly difficult to hold on to accounts and service them effectively.

Sales is essentially about the reach and distribution and strength of relationships. For this you need an infrastructure of offices, talent and processes/technology to



For **One Rep Global** with offices in New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and a team of 14 plus enthusiastic members we cover 25 cities. There are more than 100 cities in India that have the potential for luxury hospitality products. We are constantly improving and expanding our infrastructure to enhance our reach.

As bigger teams bring in their relationships and contacts, the organisation grows from strength to strength. Like any other business today, scale has its advantages and especially in sales. The industry will witness some key players emerging as large players. At One Rep Global, we keep our customers at the centre of our decisions and our over-arching goal is to provide our clients a sales and marketing eco system that is best in the world. For this, we have always followed a collaborative approach and invite individual entrepreneurs to join hands with us to together achieve success.

4. What opportunities and challenges do you see for the luxury representation business in India?

The opportunity is immense and as India emerges among the top travel markets of the future, we see a lot of international brands making an investment in the country and a representation company with distribution, connections and expertise is always a good first step to assessing the market. We see the luxury business segment growing well for India.

India still hasn't seen scale in the representation companies as in other parts of the world. Our roadmap is clear and we are building an efficient, ROI driven sales organisation that will be amongst the top representation companies of the world in luxury and ultra luxury space.

5. How well is the outbound luxury market recovering?

The flight fares are at an all time high, visas for Indians is taking an inordinate time for processing. To the extent that for certain countries you have to wait for two months to get a visa appointment. These are all indicators of the consumer demand for outbound. The luxury business was the least affected even during the pandemic and its back with a bang.

With air fares being high and covid still somewhere at the back of our minds, travellers are preferring short lead bookings to short and mid-haul destinations. We



Al Khaimah which is an exceptional value destination providing superior level of experiences and great quality hotels.

6. What trends are you witnessing in the demand for outbound travel from the luxury segment of Indian travellers?

The pandemic has changed the way travellers are thinking. They are seeking more meaning in their travel. From being destination hoppers where they would earlier tick boxes of covering 5 countries in 5 days, they are now taking it slow. A longer length of stay at each destination, travel with a purpose and more immersive travel that is experiential are gaining prominence.

Travellers preferring offbeat destinations as part of their itinerary and staying at private villas is not uncommon any longer. Multi-generational holidays were always popular with Indians and it's gaining further traction now. Closer home to India, we are seeing Nepal as an experiential destination. The combination itinerary of Dwarikas Kathmandu and Dhulikhel has the perfect blend of luxury, experience and value for the Indian consumers.

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