

DIGITAL DESH DRIVE 6.0



ODISHA

Foreword

Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting, remaining essentially unchanged. It was popularised in the 1960s with the release of Letraset sheets containing Lorem Ipsum passages, and more recently with desktop publishing software like Aldus PageMaker including versions of Lorem Ipsum.

Why do we use it?

It is a long established fact that a reader will be distracted by the readable content of a page when looking at its layout.

The point of using Lorem Ipsum is that it has a more-or-less normal distribution of letters, as opposed to using 'Content here, content here', making it look like readable English. Many desktop

publishing packages and web page editors now use Lorem Ipsum as their default model text, and a search for 'lorem ipsum' will uncover many web sites still in their infancy. Various versions have evolved over the years, sometimes by accident, sometimes on purpose (injected humour and the like).

Jasminder Singh Gulati

Co-founder and CEO,
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*Temple Town
Economics*

From Punjab to Puri

We spoke to Vikram who is one of the many fruit vendors lined along the road to the Jagannath Temple

Insight :

From Punjab to Puri - Smartphone adoption and Internet penetration have resulted in the availability of fruits that were never available in Puri. A Fruit vendor now sources Kinnow from Punjab through IndiaMart, on his own.

Significance :

Puri is home to the Jagannath Temple. Millions of devotees flock to the temple to see a sight of their deity. The temple rules are quite strict; the only items devotees are allowed to take with them as a gift/ offering are fruits.

Fruit Vendors in Puri do an approximate 15 lacs of business on an average day.

Fruits like Apples, Pomegranate, Oranges, and Plums are commonly available.

Importance of the temple :

The temple holds utmost importance for business. If there is no temple, there will be no business. Only the temple and the sea beach drive all kinds of tourism and hence, businesses in Puri.

Business :

Seasonality of business

The temple has many festivals and occasions throughout the year. Fruit being a prime commodity has high demand in all seasons. However, it peaks in the winter months between December and March.

Demand :

Vikram mentions that sourcing a variety of fruits results in increased consumption. Demand has been growing steadily as the number of devotees and tourists has been seeing an upward trend.

Internet Usage :

Vikram's Business is listed on Indiamart. He recently connected to an Onion vendor in Ratlam and deposited money in the bank for 15 tonnes of Onion as soon as the truck arrived.

Besides this, he uses the Home Credit App to get loans and pays them back through PayTM as Emi's. He has done it several times and explains that he wants to take loans for his business in the near future. He mentions that he will take that loan through an app and not a bank, it's much more convenient.



Land-use policies tighten investments

Digital Desh spoke to Surya Inn, a Hotel in Konark which is about 500 meters away from Konark sun temple.

Tourists visiting Odisha cover multiple places including Bhubaneshwar, Puri, and Konark. The best hotels are in Puri and Bhubaneswar and hence, most tourists don't prefer to stay in Konark.

Konark temple not being maintained properly is also the reason for fewer tourists being attracted to this location.

Business :

Due to the freeze in land usage around the temple by the government, hotel businesses in Konark have taken a hit. Aspiring business owners cannot build or even get a business loan as their land won't be accepted as collateral.

Technology :

Owners prefer to order materials needed to run their hotel like bed-sheets, blankets etc. online. There is no problem in items being delivered on time. They also believe that they get it at better prices with good quality.

They also have a WhatsApp group maintained by the Hotel association where they get to discuss legal issues and procedures needed to better run their business.

Source :

About 50% of customers book online or over the phone. Surya Inn is listed online on Tripadvisor, Trivago, MakeMyTrip and also have their own website. In hotel stays, there is no much difference in-season and off-season.

Interesting Facts :

The owners of Surya Inn also have another business. They make stone statues of God's and sell them. They get orders locally and also from other states. Most of the orders are from their contacts. That business is not listed online. From their point of view, the problem here is packaging and shipping. They are willing to sell it online if this part was also handled by the listing or e-commerce company.



Temple Town in Ruins

Vishwajeet runs Aristo lodge in the Konark temple main market, the heart of the town's tourist attraction. He is about 40 years old.

Business :

He works multiple professions to earn his living. He runs the lodge which is active during the tourist season from September to March. Currently, he is trying to renovate the lodge. During the off-season, very few people visit or stay at Konark. Most tourists stay at Puri or Bhubaneswar, with just a day's visit to Konark. That time he works as a web designer, creating websites for clients. He receives his work through his friend circle, or word of mouth.

Significance :

The economy of the town mainly depends on tourists coming to visit the temple. Restaurants, lodges, photographers and guides make up most of the economy of this place. There are about 8-10 lodges in Konark, out of which 5 bigger hotels are advertising on the internet. About 1500 photographers work around the temple.

Internet usage:

Vishwajeet has 2 phones - Lenovo and Oppo make. He retains his old numbers because of his business contacts, but his other phone is used mainly for internet from Jio Sim. Despite being a web designer, he does not have a website himself. His lodge only has 8-10 rooms which get filled during tourist season. So an advertisement board is enough to get walk-ins. His lodge is also listed on google. He is aware of booking websites such as Makemytrip, but needs to upscale his business to list on such websites.

Challenges :

The government has claimed the area around the temple. Consequently, No construction is allowed in this zone and this has been a dispute for many decades. Due to this, he not expand his lodge. or dare to invest in an up-gradation. Even if he takes an investment risk, it's been difficult for him to raise capital because of the land dispute. Most loan agencies ask for paperwork such as IT returns, which he does not have due to the impermanent nature of his business. Vishwajeet attributes the poor condition and maintenance of temple to stagnation of tourists in Konark. Use of harsh chemicals has degraded rather than restoring the temple. The choked drainage lets water block inside the temple complex further compounding problems for few tourists who visit during monsoons.



Tours and Travels

N.N. Tours and Travels

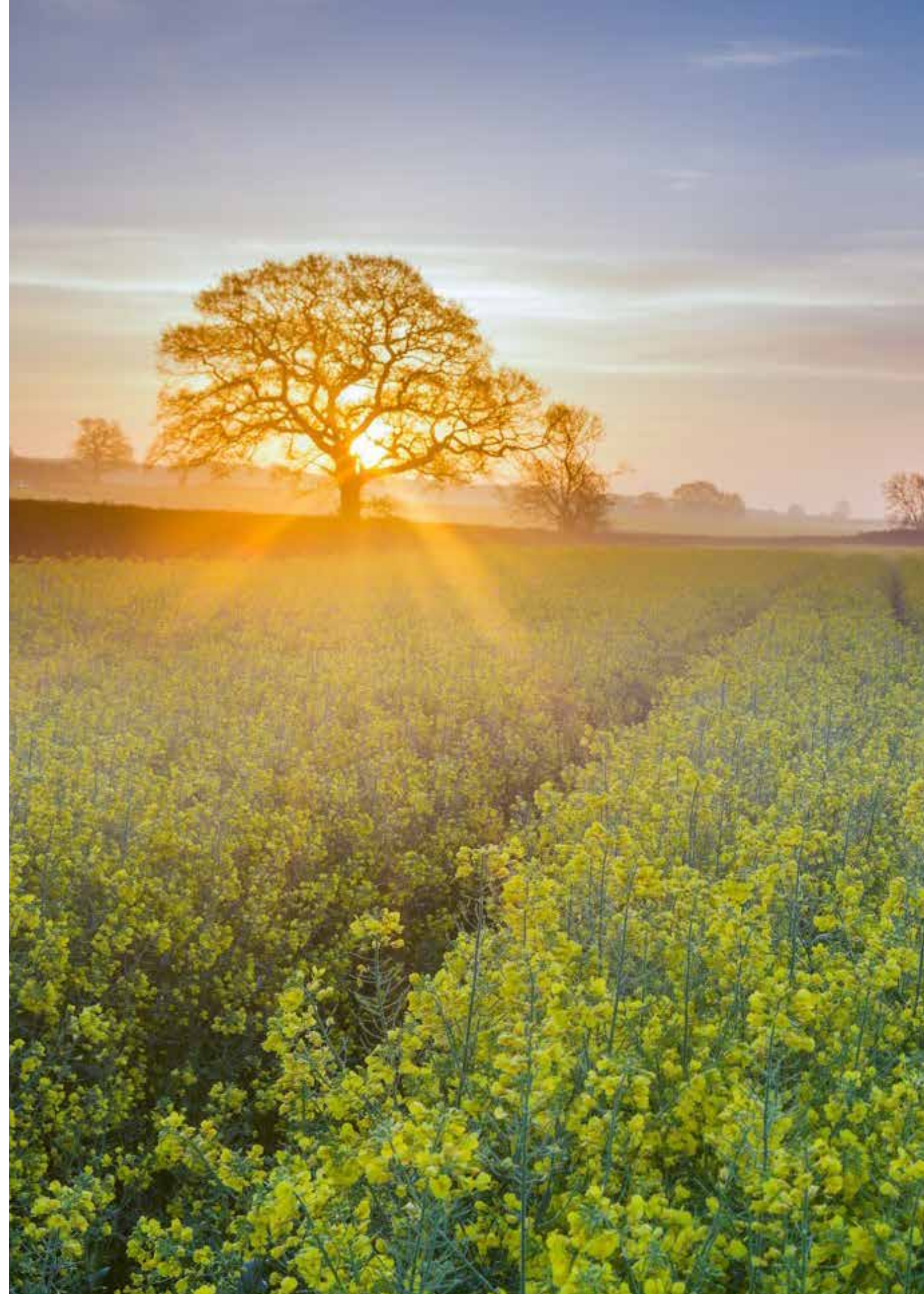
DigitalDesh spoke to N.N. Tours and Travels. The shop is located on the main road right opposite to the beach.

There are between 300-350 Tour & Travel agencies in Puri. Some Hotels also offer travel booking services.

Daily about 25-30 walk-ins lead to 12-15 bookings by a single agency on an average in-season (Dec-Mar). The agencies own an average of 3-4 vehicles themselves. 50% of customers book shared trips (bus) 250- 350 for a day's trip and 50% book private vehicles (winger) 2200- 2500. For instance, there are at least 500 wingers going to a place called Chilika from Puri every day.

There are only about 50 registered travel agencies. Rest do business without registration. The way to grow a travel business for these agencies is to get a proper shop and an agency account in a travel portal.

The business has grown in recent years. Due to the holy nature of this place, more people on the beach and less freedom, foreign travelers decreased a lot.

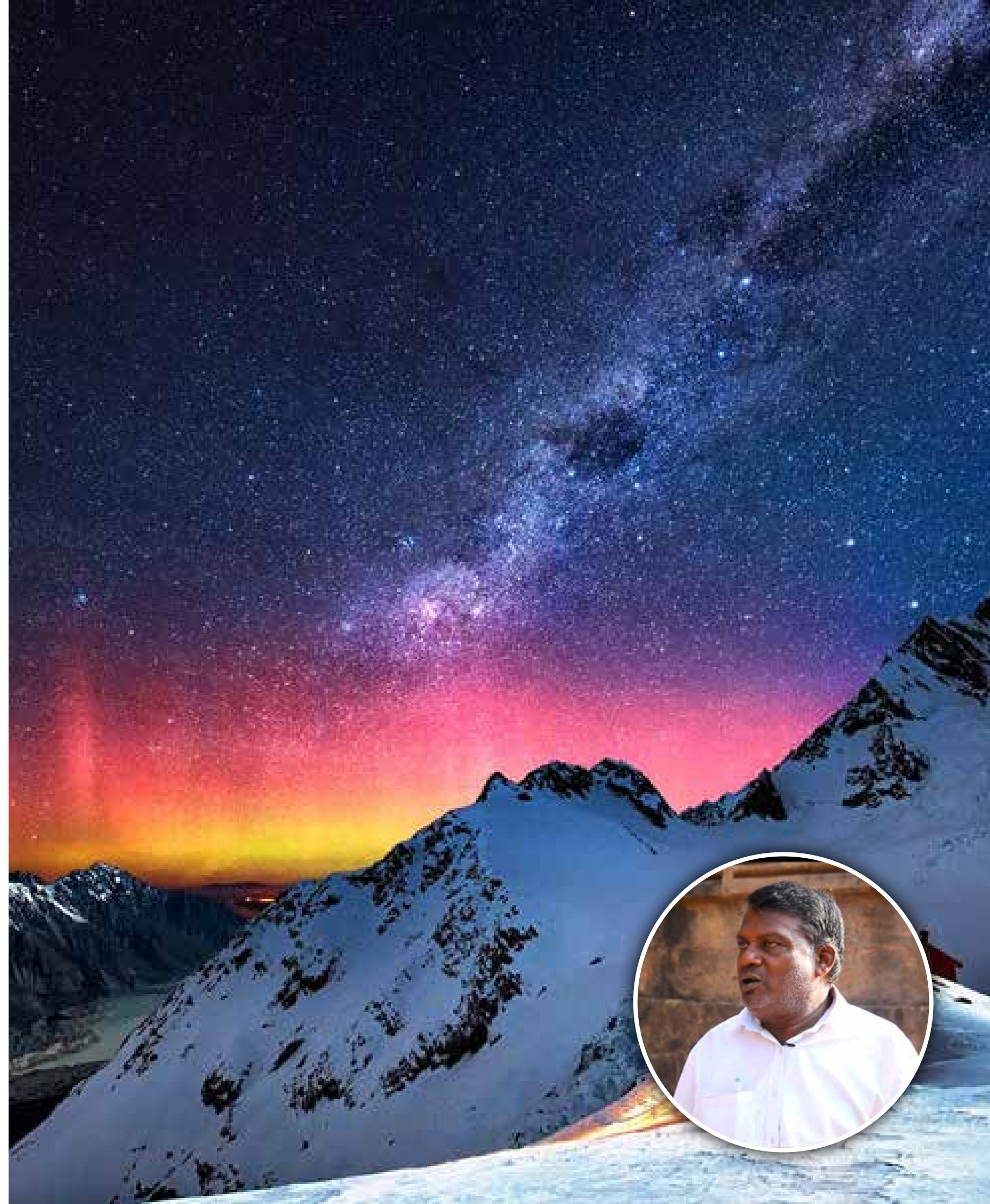


Dependent Economies

English speaking tour guides are rare and command a premium for this thirty-minute tour of the Sun Temple in Konark. We managed to find only one English-speaking tour guide in the sea of tour guides speaking everything from Bengali to Gujarati. A variety of livelihoods is supported by the presence of the dilapidated temple – from sellers of coconut water to sellers of water, and photo printing studios to tiny ‘bhojanalays’.

The tour guide we met has been a tour guide for the past thirty-odd years (at least). To him and his father, the temple has been a source of livelihood. His father performed various odd tasks for the Archaeological Survey of India. This is indicative of the nature of individuals drawn to a career like this one, usually based on familial connections. He learned English merely by interacting with the droves of foreigners that used to frequent the Sun Temple – a number he claims has drastically reduced in the recent past. The monument has been poorly maintained and is no longer as appealing as it once was.

This tour guide does not use a smartphone and relies on simple text message bookings. Bookings often come from tour operators in other towns and are fully based on trust and existing relationships. He also mentioned that a lot of youngsters, with access to the internet, no longer use his services and the service of others like himself. “Everything is available on Google!” he said. All payments are made in cash, both by individual groups of 2-5 people and by larger groups sent by tour operators.



SMALL BUSINESS

Price Regulation by Market Associations

“Market association fine laga degi agar hum rate kum karenge. sabhi dukaan ko same price pe bechna hota hai”

Ajay has mobile phone, accessories and recharge shop in Puri. Oppo and Vivo are the most popular phones in his shop. He attributes the good camera quality to their success. The most popular networks in his region are Airtel and Jio.

Significance: He receives good footfall due to proximity to the bus stand. Almost 50% of his customers are tourists.

Insight : Many local customers come to checkout a phone they have already seen online. he charges 500/- Rs extra from online price, because customers do not want to wait for the extra delivery time. “6-7 din kaun wait karega phone ke liye”. He accepts Paytm and Tez for payments. Personally prefer GTez. He gets regular cashbacks of 10-12 Rs, even remembers getting a cashback of Rs 65. Trust in local vendors is still prevalent, even strong in small towns. This manifested in the fact that customers are more comfortable with peer-to-peer payments, than paying online to large corporations.

Internet usage (for business) : He is in Mid-twenties, uses an Oppo smartphone. He has fixed suppliers to get mobile phones. For accessories, he often tries to find new suppliers through google. He contacts these suppliers through email. The suppliers send pictures of accessories through Whatsapp to Ajay, who then places an order. All transactions with suppliers happen through cash. He is aware that he can source merchandise for his shop online. But he has not tried it yet. Local market associations rules are preventing him from being competitive in the market, or trying to reduce prices.



SMALL BUSINESS

EMI's leading the Digital Revolution

Mobiles phones are popular in Orissa – very popular. Most people we met and interacted with owned more than one mobile phone. It is an accepted practice to own two mobile phones – one for mobile internet and one for phone calls, or one for work and for personal usage. Despite living in Tier II and Tier III towns, phones that cost between INR 6,000 to INR 10,000 are the most popular. Oppo and Vivo have an enviable distribution reach in the region; their phones are also considered superior because they provide all the features of more premium phones/ brands in a much more affordable price range.

Most users purchase these phones on attractive EMI schemes offered by traditional players in this field – Bajaj Finance has a wide presence. The financing arrangement from Bajaj Finance is approved in about an hour. The shopkeeper informs the agent, living in the same town, who then visits the store and completes all necessary formalities while the customer waits. In a sense, this is “instant” approval in many parts of Orissa.

Oftentimes, when phones aren't stocked with the shopkeeper, he has two options. First, to order from the distributor in a larger town. This typically takes about 2-3 hours. Second, to use one of the many e-commerce websites (think Amazon, Flipkart, etc) to place and pay for the order. The second option acts as a concierge of sorts.



INSIDE THE TEMPLE

Economies of Scale - On Demand

Niranjan Mahapatra Mahaprasada Stall at Ananta Basudeva
Temple Old City - Bhubaneswar

“Earlier people used to travel from far places to place orders
with me. Now they message me on Whatsapp, it’s simple and
saves us time.”

Niranjan Mahapatra does not want to take payments online. “It’s
not our habit” maybe later if we feel that it’s convenient we will
adopt digital payments too.





*Artisan
Economics*



Raghurajpur

140 artists homes practicing 9 crafts make up a small village in Odisha. This village has gone through two waves of transformations. In the year 2000, the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage chose this village as Odisha's first heritage village developing murals on the houses, tourists centers, and workshop areas.

In 2017, Bank of India chose it to become the first Digital Village of India. Over 200 savings account and 20 POS machines later, today, the artisans are very comfortable and infact encourage PayTM, Bank Transfers and Credit/ Debit Cards. Raghurajpur is thus, a very unique Heritage Arts and Craft Village. It's known for its Pattachitra painters and Gotipua dancers. It is also home to crafts like Tussar paintings, palm leaf engravings, stone carvings, cow-dung toys, and wooden masks.

Pattachitra is an art form which dates back to 5 BC. They feature intricate carvings of God's, animals, flowers and trees. The paintings are etched onto

the brittle surface of cured and dried palm leaves, using an iron stylus. Once the carving is done, soot from an ordinary lamp is then smeared all over the leaf and then dabbed with water. The black engraving stands out crystal clear in the yellow palm leaf.

Another variant of the paintings is made over a piece of cloth painted with a mixture of chalk and gum. Over the prepared surface, the painting could be either of God's and Goddesses or Tribal art.

A small piece of art takes at least one day to make. This will fetch them between \$5 and \$ 10. While the village makes most of its art in the summer months when tourists are low, their main problem is discovery.

Few hundred meters before the entrance of the village, traders have set up shop and they become the first and often the only stop in their heritage-village journey.

ARTISTS

Award-Winning Artist go Digital

Meet Chandan :

“GoogleMyBusiness isliye kyunki koi map dekh kar aa jayega to, hamara kam ban jayega”

“We the youth of Raghurajpur met, discussed on how to promote Patachitra and collectively decided to use social media as much as possible”

Chandan uses a JIO sim for using the Internet. He asks all tourists who visit him to Like his Facebook Page. He believes this is a good way in to spread the word about Art in Raghurajpur. He recently came to know about Etsy and is excited to join because it is an international market.

“I think 20 years later, most business is going to be online. A lot of people trust the online medium.”

Chandan is convinced that a website can get him online orders but making a website requires a “web-designer”. He has spoken to someone who quoted \$40 for a website. When asked about a \$100 website he believes that the latter will be better.

Chandan does not use a news app, he reads news on UC browser. DigitalDesh saw the same user behavior in Soda (DD 5.0)





Travellers to Odisha



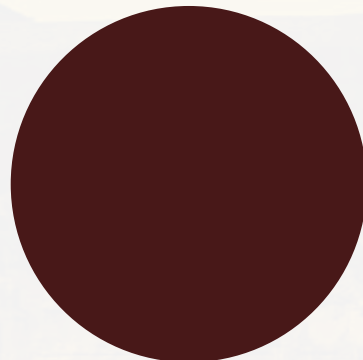
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