

# Question us if we don't deliver on our promise: OTOAI President

Less than a month into existence, OTOAI has already formed its Western chapter and is in the process of finalising its chapter in South India.

**SHAYAR MALICK**

**O**utbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI), the newly established industry trade body representing the outbound trade in India, has now opened its Western chapter and is expected to finalise its chapter in Southern India sometime soon. The associa-

tionship drive for the same. We will finalize the South India chapter soon. In the Eastern India, although most of the tour operators are based out of Kolkata, however, we are also looking at cities like Patna. We hope to have all the chapters in place by March end," he said.

Saboo also said that OTOAI will only work with serious professionals who are keen to take the association to the next level. "We are looking at establishing very powerful regional chapters but that does not mean we are limited to board members. We are not in the number game. We are very particular about the membership. It will only go to agencies who fit in the criteria and are willing to enhance the level of customer service," said a confident Saboo.

He said that OTOAI has a very dynamic team and is confident of leading a powerful voice to India's outbound trade under the aegis of OTOAI. "Let the industry and media keep us under the scanner and question us if we do not deliver on our promise," he said.

Among a host of initiatives that the association is



**Gurbaj Singh Sahai**  
President  
OTOAI

Let the industry and media keep us under the scanner and question us if we do not deliver on our promise

along side our website that will have an information on destinations. The website content can be useful to both, the OTOAI members

## Seven Pillars of OTOAI Ideology:

- Creating a knowledge base for its members
- Encouraging innovation in the industry
- Providing support to its members
- Implementing ethics and standards in the industry
- Participative management
- Fostering entrepreneurship
- Collaboration with stakeholders

tion is also in close contacts with the outbound trade in the North and East India and is working on its plan to have strong chapters there.

## Membership Criteria

Applicants will have to fulfil stringent criteria before active membership is granted. There are 12 criteria as listed below:

- 1 CA certificate with a total outbound remittance/billing of Rs 15 lakh per annum
- 2 Copy of Pan Card
- 3 Proof of one year in business existence from date of application.
- 4 Copy of MOA or partnership deed etc.
- 5 Minimum 150 Sq ft of office space.
- 6 Letter of recommendation from overseas supplier.
- 7 Letter of recommendation from NTOs in India.
- 8 One staff / owner to have destination specialist certification such as Canada or Aussie Specialist programme.
- 9 Certification from FTMC (Full Fledged Money Changer, authorized by RBI) for purchase of form for claims/reimbursements.
- 10 Office inspection by OTOAI.
- 11 The active membership must be renewed after every 2 years.
- 12 The applicant/owner has to complete 20 hrs of training or has attended seminars conducted by NTOs.

OTOAI had announced its launch on December 28, 2011. As part of its agenda outlined on the occasion, it has said that the association will have four regional chapters across India.

Informing about the initiatives taken since its launch, **Gurbaj Singh Sahai**, President, OTOAI informed that the association has already initiated the membership drive and is also in the process of appointing regional chapters. "We have appointed the office bearers for the Western chapter and have also launched the mem-

bership drive for the same. We will finalize the South India chapter soon. In the Eastern India, although most of the tour operators are based out of Kolkata, however, we are also looking at cities like Patna. We hope to have all the chapters in place by March end," he said.

## Western Chapter

**Chairperson**  
Hemant Patil,  
Mumbai

**General Secretary**  
Mahendra Vakharia,  
Ahmedabad

**Treasurer**  
Narinder Pal Singh Marwah,  
Nagpur

bership drive for the same. We will finalize the South India chapter soon. In the Eastern India, although most of the tour operators are based out of Kolkata, however, we are also looking at cities like Patna. We hope to have all the chapters in place by March end," he said.

Saboo crossed that OTOAI is not a closely controlled entity. "We want the continuous infusion of new ideas. We have been receiving overwhelming response from the outbound trade in India.

There are agencies contacting us not for the membership but to contribute their bit to OTOAI vision." **en**