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## News Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## INTERNET PRESENCE ESSENTIAL FOR DESTINATION MARKETERS AS MORE INDIANS SOURCE TRAVEL INFORMATION ONLINE: NIELSEN

**December 11, 2008, Mumbai** – With over half of Indian travellers using the internet to search for information about destinations abroad, travel operators and tourist bodies need an effective online presence if they are to capture India's early adopters and increasingly affluent travellers, according to the latest India Outbound Travel Monitor conducted by The Nielsen Company in partnership with the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).

The survey shows that while traditional media like newspapers and magazines remain the primary source for travel advertising and information for many, the internet has become a popular advertising channel - drawing greater attention among Indian outbound travellers. The online platform is also gaining in popularity among travellers from India's smaller cities.

"The convenience of comparing prices and easy access to more detailed information makes the internet a popular go-to source for travellers," said Vatsala Pant, Associate Director, The Nielsen Company, India.

An effective online presence ensures optimal deployment of marketing strategies, yet a standard online advertising may not be enough to capture the attention of increasingly technology-savvy Indian travellers.

"It is critical for marketers to establish an early presence online as well as develop an effective engagement model with their target travellers, long before they start actively planning their trips," said Oliver Martin, Associate Director-Strategic Intelligence Centre, PATA.

Conducted via face-to-face interviews with a fully structured questionnaire during July – August 2008, the Nielsen India Outbound Travel Monitor is a nationwide study<sup>1</sup> surveying 2,000 male and female consumers aged 18+ who have travelled outside of India in the last 12 months and stayed at least two nights away from home. The Monitor studies traveller behaviour, attitudes and opinions about travelling and provides insight into decision making processes, information sourcing, booking choices, accommodation and more.

While the majority continues to turn to conventional channels - travel agents and tour operators - for their travel arrangements, Indian outbound travellers (12%) are increasingly booking their travel online. "India's outbound travel market is recognised as one of the key emerging sources of tourism for the world, as internet penetration and adoption of the web as a commercial channel increase so will online travel bookings," added Pant.

According to Nielsen, Nepal, Singapore and Thailand are the most popular destinations for online bookings among Indian travellers.

"It would seem that, for many, face to face interaction with a bricks-and-mortar travel agent is still preferred to the ease of booking over the internet. Relationships established with travel agents and the trust that has been built with an offline entity over the years win out over the fear of the unseen or unknown," continued Pant.

#### **About The Nielsen Company**

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com).

#### **About PATA**

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) is a membership association acting as a catalyst for the responsible development of the Asia Pacific travel and tourism industry. In partnership with PATA's private and public sector members it enhances the sustainable growth, value and quality of travel and tourism to, from and within the region.

PATA provides leadership to the collective efforts of nearly 100 government, state and city tourism bodies, international airlines, cruise lines and many hundreds of travel industry companies. Thousands of travel professionals belong to more than 30 PATA chapters worldwide.

PATA's Strategic Intelligence Centre (SIC) offers unrivalled data and insights, including Asia Pacific inbound and outbound statistics, analyses and forecasts as well as in-depth reports on strategic tourism markets.

For more information, please visit: [www.pata.org](http://www.pata.org).

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<sup>1</sup> 10 cities across India including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Lucknow, Ludhiana, Nagpur, and Ahmedabad were covered by the Survey.