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Online transactions in Japan are largely conducted online. A pan Asian player has yet to emerge. It is more likely that international players will continue to align themselves with national companies that hold majority market share and build their pan Asian presence in that manner.

Another trend identified is that technology providers of travel distribution are heavily retail driven in the online space; they provide a merchant business model associated with commissions. Increasingly, from a supply and demand perspective, the business model will be driven to adapt to local market conditions and aggregation software will provide a direct sales model. It was also felt that as majority players open up to accepting, for instance, local credit cards in China for payment, that consumer online bookings would increase.

Participants, who in the majority were supplier based, felt that online travel agents needed to provide simple tools and more product choices online to help small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) book their travel requirements online. SMEs account for the majority of businesses in many Asian countries and seen as a growth engine for the region.

Participants in the discussion were senior executives in marketing and sales from hospitality, travel management and travel technology companies across the region who met last week to discuss a select range of issues posed to them at a roundtable hosted by the Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management and the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMIA) Asia Pacific chapter. The roundtable was sponsored by the Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau.

Facilitators of the breakout sessions included Bernadette Dennis, Director of BD Concepts, Dr Judy Siguaw, Dean,

Cornell Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management, and
Christine Toguchi, Managing Director of MacroVision
Network and HSMAl Asia Pacific

Participants at the Marketing Roundtable were:

Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts, Mr Michael Lee, VP of
Marketing
Expedia Asia Pacific, Cyril Ranque, VP Asia Pacific
Hyatt International, Mr Grahame Carder VP, Sales &
Marketing-Asia Pacific Division
Movenpick Resort - Karon Beach Phuket , Mr Craig Fong,
Director of Sales and Marketing
Preferred Hotels Group, Mr. Mark Wong VP, Marketing &
Development - Asia Pacific
Raffles International Limited Ms Jeannette Ho,
Vice-President of Marketing & Sales
Raffles International Limited, Mr Shalabh Kayastha,
Executive Director, Marketing and Distribution Services
Rendezvous Hotels International, Mr. Michael Meade, Senior
Vice President, Sales & Marketing
Singapore Tourism Board , Ms Adeline Lim, Business
Development Strategic Cluster II
TravelCLICK, Mr. Paul Southey, Regional Director – Asia
Pacific
UOB Travel Planners, Alicia Seah, Vice President Leisure
Travel
Terra Firma Groupe, Jinou Park , Managing Partner

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