

Use digital marketing to draw travellers, Sabah tourism players urged

By Paul Mu - August 19, 2022 @ 6:41pm



Matta vice president (education and training) Christina Wahida Kong (centre) with Matta Sabah chapter chairman Lawrence Chin (left) and digital marketing consultant Nang Chin Nian (right) together with the workshop participants. -Pic by Paul Mu.

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah's tourism players have been told to go into digital marketing to grow their existing markets as they embark on the road to recovery.

Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (Matta) vice-president (education and training) Christina Wahida Kong said digital marketing would help tourism players to attract international tourists.

"We hope to achieve further coverage and learn to be more effective in promoting our products through digitalisation," she said.

Kong was speaking at a two-day digital marketing workshop organised by Matta in collaboration with Sabah Tourism Board at a hotel here

It was attended by 40 Matta members, including its Sabah chapter chairman Lawrence Chin and travel agents.

"This is the first physical training programme conducted by Matta after the lifting of the movement control order. It is time to improve our websites and contents so that we can get more sales," said Kong.

She said tourism players were still struggling to market and rebuild their offices since the reopening of international borders.

"Sabah is getting a lot of incoming tourists from the domestic side, but for the international markets we need to focus on the right target," said Kong.

She said Matta was eyeing Central Asia as a new market, particularly Uzbekistan, where they would embark on a familiarisation trip next month.

"We want to lure them to Sabah during winter, as many Uzbeks want to escape the cold weather," said Kong.

Among others, she said the workshop covered tips on how to optimise social media to attract tourists.

Digital marketing consultant Nang Chin Nian, who conducted the workshop, said Sabah travel agents were lagging in digital marketing.

"Most of the participants have only 10 per cent knowledge on digital marketing. They are still reliant on outsourcing (promotions to) marketing agencies.

"They should form their own marketing strategy and follow the trend of what is happening in the international market.

"Through digital marketing, they can create an impact to attract customers because now most people are on the Internet," said Nang.

Many travel agencies were not into the right placement of marketing as they were encouraged to employ organic marketing which was cost-effective, he said.