

China's Tang Dynasty Tours Awarded ISO Certification

By Serena Zhu

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Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd has successfully completed the documentation processes of its Quality Management System and Operation Manuals, in compliance with the latest ISO 9001:2008 standard and based on this successful completion has been issued with the ISO standard certificate. The scope of the certification covers in-bound travel services and domestic travel services, making Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd one of the first tour companies in the region to achieve the latest certification - ISO 9001:2008 standard which supersedes the previous standard ISO 9001:2000.

About Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd and Tang Dynasty Travel

Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd is a China-wide tour operator with its head office based in Guilin city. Licensed by the China National Tourism Bureau (License Number L-GX-GL00080), Tang Dynasty Tours is led by a group of people who aim to provide the most satisfying service to clients. The company offers complete tour packages, customized trips covering regional flights, transfers, hotel bookings at competitive prices, yet never compromises on their dedicated services to clients. Tang Dynasty Travel is one of the main brands owned by Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd.

Tang Dynasty Travel (<http://www.tangdynastytravel.com/company.html>) is a reputed tour operator and event organizer in China, offering complete travel solutions and Meeting-Incentive-Conference-Event services to organizations and agencies.

Not many travel agencies are willing to apply for ISO certification as the quality management in tourism industry is much more difficult than in general industry. Why did Tang Dynasty Tours insist on applying for this? With this question, I held an interview with the Vice-President of Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd and Tang Dynasty Travel's sales director – Candy Yu.

1. What made you want to implement the ISO in your company?

Although we have operated China tours for over 15 years, Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd is a newly registered young company. Our business has grown very quickly especially in the past few years. This has put greater demand on the management.

Before we established Tang Dynasty Tours Co. Ltd, we used Guilin Shanhu International Travel Service's license and only had around 20 employees. Now we have around 70 employees. We believe the most important requirements for a travel agency are "Service" and "Quality". So, we have used our experience to manage our business efficiently, to select the best suppliers, train new staff, etc. But as the company has grown, we need an advanced management method to guarantee our service quality. We found that the ISO helps us to establish a standardized management system and helps us to better control the quality of our service.

2. What did you do during the ISO authentication?

We start this in early February this year. First, the ISO management professor communicated with our management board regarding the blueprint of our company, then gave all our employees a lecture to introduce ISO.

Then we set up an ISO project team to prepare all the necessary paperwork, standardize all our work procedures, company regulations, analysis methods, etc.

In doing this, we also made many improvements to our work and company regulations.

Finally we completed the standardized procedures and company regulations and had everything inspected by the ISO authority.

We are happy to say we passed and were awarded certification.

3. What improvements have you made during the ISO project?

The main improvements we made mainly in these areas:

Setting the company goals of service standard, satisfaction rate, complaint rate, business growth rate, etc.

We standardized our regulations for selecting suppliers such as hotels, local tour operators, vehicles, restaurants, etc. We also standardized suppliers' inspection methods.

We standardized the service standards of Travel consultants, tour guides, drivers, etc.

We standardized working, training, recruitment, and employee examination processes.

We standardized our customer service inspection and analysis method and process.

4. What is your company goal?

Our utmost goal is to provide the best possible service to clients and make sure clients have a memorable China trip with us. We want those who travel with us to see and experience the REAL China; to learn about our history, our culture, meet the people, enjoy the tasty food and return home understanding that we all are "People of the World".

5. What is your goal of quality control?

Our customer satisfaction rate has to be higher than 90%, dissatisfaction rate lower than 3%, operating errors lower than 3%,

6. How about the standardized supplier selecting process? Can you give us more detail about this?

Let's take the selection of hotels as an example. Some clients choose their favorite hotels, but in many cases we have to recommend hotels to our clients. When we select a hotel, we first gather feedback from different resources such as the Internet, our old clients' recommendations, our partner's recommendations, etc. After a comprehensive consideration, we choose a few hotels as our options.

Then we organize an inspection trip to visit these hotels, talk face to face with their sales staff, inspect the rooms and facilities, and complete our "hotel inspection form". After the inspection trip, we evaluate each hotel from our inspection forms and choose the best one to cooperate with.

When we cooperate with a hotel, we collect feedback from service evaluation forms and from our clients. Every August and February, we will make a customer satisfaction report and give improvement suggestions to the hotel according to our analysis of our customer evaluation and clients' feedback.

This is the process for hotels. Similar processes are in place for other suppliers such as local operators and some directly cooperating restaurants.

7. One last question. As Sales Director of Tang Dynasty Travel, what advantages do you think that ISO certificate can bring to Tang Dynasty Travel?

Well, Tang Dynasty Travel's clients are wholesalers, travel agents and organizations from all over the world. We realize that it is extremely important to build up our partner companies' brand while cooperating with each other. We believe that is a Win - Win Partnership.

We always keep in our mind that the most important element of tourism is quality of service. So with ISO we have a better management standard and can be better and better in the future.

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