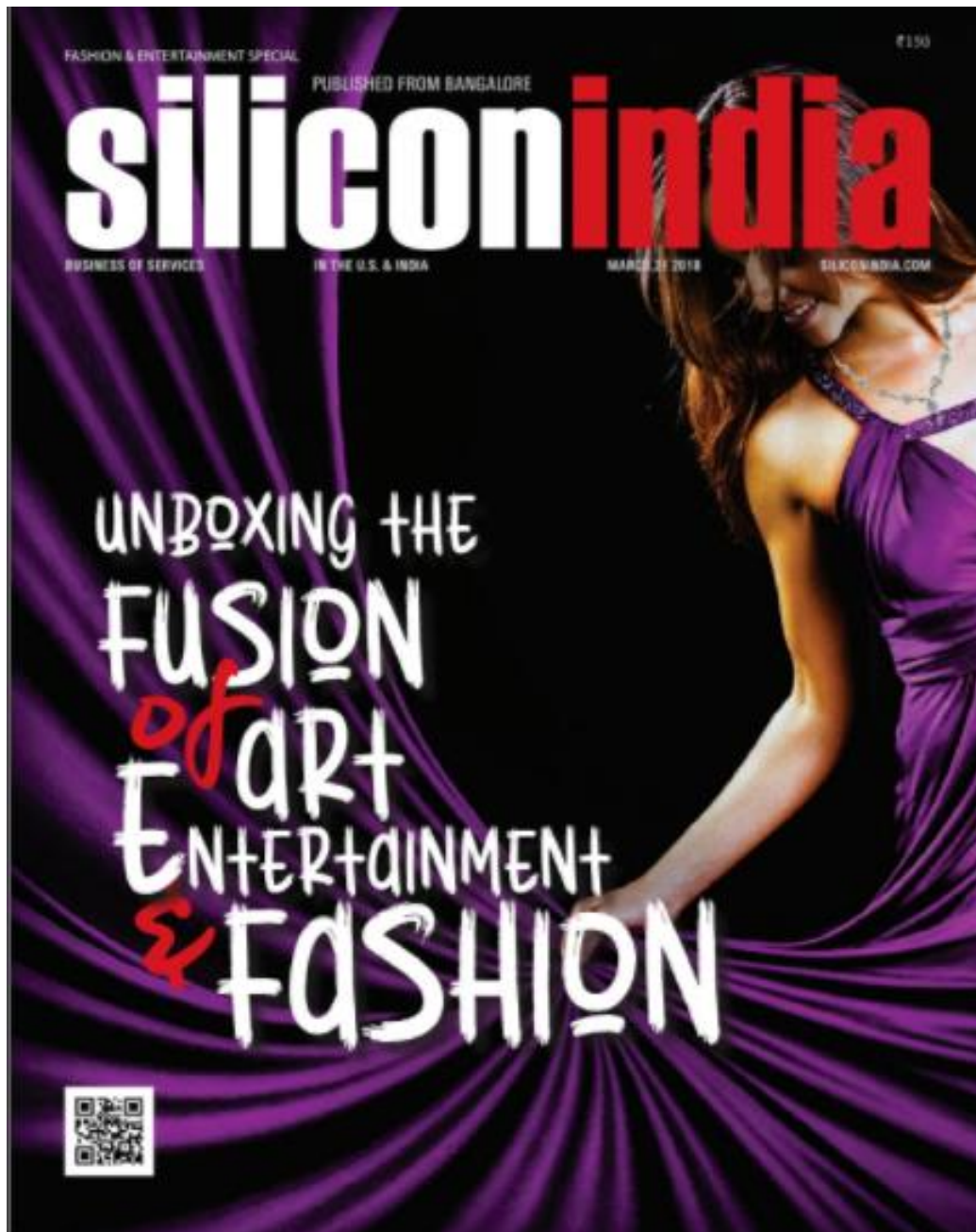


Publication: Silicon India Magazine

Edition: March 2018

Headline: Opening the European Doors of Fiesta

Link: <https://www.siliconindiamagazine.com/magazine/fashion-and-entertainment-special-march-2018/#page=36>



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OPENING THE EUROPEAN DOORS OF FIESTA **FOR THE** **WORLD WHICH IS SPAIN**

By **Shikhar Aggarwal**, Joint Managing Director, BLS International Services Limited

An acknowledged leader in the provision of Government to Citizen (G-to-C) services, BLS International Services Limited has earned itself an impeccable reputation for setting benchmarks in its domain of expertise.

From an epicurean exuberance to fiesta, Spain has long been a perfect offering for tourists all over the world. From mountains like the Pyrenees and the Picos de Europa, to the snow-capped Sierra Nevada, the country offers an incomparable timeless beauty that has smitten travelers for generations. Perhaps, this warrants the 4.4 million travelers visiting Spain in November of 2017, up 7.4% on an annual basis.

Spain attracts a large number of tourists from Europe and it perhaps, triggers a need for companies providing visa, passport and attestation services to boost their work for the country, which heavily depends on tourism to boost its GDP. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's report in 2017, the total contributions of travel and tourism to Spain's GDP stood at EUR158.9 billion (\$177.2 billion). This contribution increased 14.2% over 2016 and is expected to reach EUR 196.5 billion (\$219.2 billion) to contribute 15% of Spain's GDP in 2027.

Amidst high stakes where travel and tourism plays a crucial role in betterment of the economy of the country, it bodes well that the country too has a lot to offer. From mountains that huddle villages in their valleys to beaches that can take one's breath away, Spain offers a perfect blend of a destination for travelers. Mixed with its cuisine, that bores tradition at its best, the country offers a culinary delight to travelers with simplistic recipes, handed down over generations that touch the soul. The country has also been a big attraction amongst sports lovers, with its varied

offerings of football, basketball and bullfighting. Football has a special recall in the country, with the most registered players and club among all Spanish sports federations. The sport further impacts hotels, restaurants, smaller businesses etc. It thus, becomes important to leverage the offerings of the country to boost the tourism industry, which has a direct economic impact on country's progress.

One effective way is to ease the process of arranging visas to travel to the country. The correlation between these visa application centers and the number of tourists visiting

For a country like Spain, which has plethora of offerings up its alley, it becomes imperative that travellers be attracted more to boost country's tourism sector

the country, becomes evident after BLS made the entire visa application process easy and convenient for people travelling to Spain. Factual figures suggests that between January and July, Spanish tourist destinations accounted



◆ Shikhar Aggarwal

for 4.5 million more international visitors than in the first seven months of last year, to a total of 46.9 million tourists which is about 11% more. It clearly validates company's success in delivering quality service through 124 visa application centers spread across 49 countries.

With such estimates it is vital to say that application centres play a crucial role in boosting the travel and tourism for a country. It boosts country's vitals of employment, exports, new businesses, transport and the key aspect of all investments.

Estimates suggest that in 2016, the travel industry attracted a capital investment of EUR 9.5 billion, and this was further expected to rise by 0.3% in 2017. By 2027, the same figure is expected to rise to EUR 11.3 billion. This puts more onus on countries' governments to increase their efforts in making the process of attaining visas easier and more efficient. Outsourcing the process comes a crucial way to ensure that the process is conducted in an expedited manner and reduces the hassles for travelers. While for the country, it helps to boost its tourism sector and attracts more visitors, who can essentially contribute to growing country's economy.

For a country like Spain, which has plethora of offerings up its alley, it becomes imperative that travellers be attracted more to boost country's tourism sector. It would give good reason for the country to showcase its beauty that peers into the souls of the tourists from all over the world. 