

Lookback at Year 2022 and Wishes for New Year 2023: CEO Speaks

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year to all our employees and readers of our in-house magazine, "Expressions", a small media face of Caesars Travel Group.

I hope you celebrated the start of 2023 safely and in good health with your loved ones.

2022 was a year during which we had to deal with a series of challenges from the remnants of Covid-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine to inflation, and to soaring energy prices, while the world was still recovering from the lingering impact of the pandemic. Yes, this made a negative impact in all fields of the human life and of course, the aviation field and as a whole, the entire industry itself. At the same time, I have to agree that the last year was also a year in which we gradually felt the normalization of economic activity compared to 2020 & 21 as everyone started slowly experiencing the social life after COVID-19 pandemic eventually started settling down, travel restrictions have been eased almost all over the world, which means that we started moving free to everywhere.

As I look ahead to the New Year, I am filled with a sense of optimism at the prospect of a brighter year than the one to which we have just bid farewell. As per my last mail to you about your new resolution for 2023, we aim to be one of the leading travel companies not only in Kuwait but in the entire Middle East that is trusted and earns high regard from our valued clients from every aspect, including quality of services offered, our profitability and utilize the advanced technological capabilities, which means, a Caesars Travel Group employee should work with a strong sense of duty and great pride. Ultimately, I have to say that the future of Caesars Travel Group



will depend on our family members and their contribution towards the organization by offering our unmatching services to the public.

Outlook for 2023

Looking ahead to the business environment in 2023, I believe the nearly three-year-long turmoil caused by COVID-19 will be over, and the world economy and society will gradually normalize. This year, we expect a return to a moderate expansionary trend in the not-too-distant future, to achieve record high profits, benefiting from strong demand again for travel and tourism around the globe, which means once again a renaissance to the aviation industry.

As you know, Caesars Travel Group always have a planned and strategically structured policies to closely pursue our future business development in line with its unique visions, simultaneously strengthening our travel, GSA for passenger/cargo, holidays and shipping & logistics business. As we are a group of diversified activities under one roof, our ongoing efforts will continue to explore the potentials of all

talents in aviation industry to further enhance our scope of operations with a dignity and status wherever our name should be protected in golden letters.

Earning recognition as an excellent company from all aspects

Let me share my sincere wish to everyone, "I want Caesars Travel Group to be viewed as an excellent company in every aspect, that is my goal and I expect your whole-hearted participation to achieve this goal". Every one of us has an important role to play in accomplishing this mission successfully and I am confident that together we will achieve great things.

While thanking you one and all for your continued commitment and effort, I look forward to the same continuous teamwork with all of you on many initiatives of our organization for this year as "One Team".

As a responsible member of our family, I want to pledge my commitment to all of you that a shoulder-to-shoulder support will be guaranteed on behalf of the management and in person for the development of our business and to further enhance our reputation and credibility among the business family of Kuwait. Always please keep in mind that "Caesars Travel Group" is a transparent organization without any hidden agenda other than giving true, trustful and faithful services to our valued clients.

Finally, I wish you and your families a very happy New Year, as well as good health, happiness, success, and prosperity.

Kind regards,

P.N.J. Kumar

Arriving at the Airport 'Ready to Fly' is Closer to Reality with New Industry Standards

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has developed industry standards which will bring the aim of having travelers arrive at airports ready-to-fly one step closer to reality. The newly released Recommended Practice on Digitalization of Admissibility will enable travelers to digitally prove admissibility to an international destination, avoiding a stop at the check-in desk or boarding gate for document checks.

Under the One ID initiative airlines are working with IATA to digitalize the passenger experience at airports with contactless biometric-enabled processes.

Programs are already in use in various airports enabling travelers to move through airport processes such as boarding without producing paper documentation because their boarding pass is linked to a biometric identifier. But in many cases travelers would still have to prove their admissibility at a check -in desk or boarding gate with physical checks of paper documentation (passports, visas and health credentials for example).

The Digitalization of Admissibility standard will advance the realization of One ID with a mechanism for passengers to digitally obtain all necessary pre-travel authorizations directly from governments before their trip. By sharing the "OK to

Fly" status with their airline, travelers can avoid all on -airport document checks.

"Passengers want technology to make travel simpler. By enabling passengers to prove their admissibility to their airline before they get to the airport, we are taking a major step forward. The recent IATA Global Passenger survey found that 83% of travelers are willing to share immigration information for expedited processing. That is why we are confident this will be a popular option for travelers when it is implemented. And there is good incentive for airlines and governments as well with improved data quality, streamlined resourcing requirements and identification of admissibility issues before passengers get to the airport," said Nick Careen, IATA's Senior Vice President for Operations, Safety and Security.

What travelers will be able to do in future:

- Create a verified digital identity using their airline app on their smart phone
- Using their digital identity, they can send proof of all required documentation to destination authorities in advance of travel
- Receive a digital 'approval of admissibility' in their digital identity/passport app

- Share the verified credential (not all their data) with their airline
- Receive confirmation from their airline that all is in order and go to the airport.

Data Security

The new standards have been developed to protect passengers' data and ensure that travel remains accessible to all. Passengers remain in control of their data and only credentials (verified approvals, not the data behind them) are shared peer-to-peer (with no intermediating party). This is interoperable with the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) standards, including those for the Digital Travel Credential. Manual processing options will be retained so that travelers will have the ability to opt out of digital admissibility processing.

Timatic

IATA's Timatic offering is helping deliver the One ID vision with trusted entry requirement information for airlines and travelers. Integrating Timatic into the apps providing entry requirements registry model brings with it an established process for the global collection, verification, updating and distribution of this information.

News Courtesy: www.iata.org

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Editorial

How to Increase Your Sales

Company, especially as travel begins to return, should be the number one priority for any travel business.

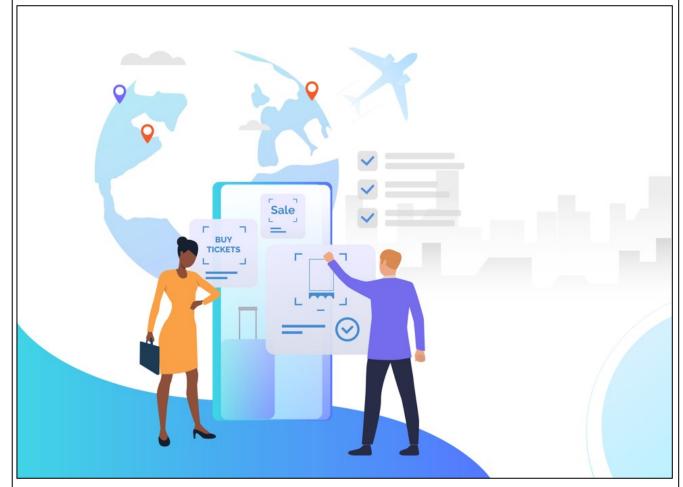
The competition is rough and plentiful – and even now the new tour operators, OTA-s and travel agencies are popping up as you're reading this. On the other hand, the ones that survived the crisis are hungry for new revenue and are putting a lot of effort into making sure they get their own piece of the cake on the travel rebound market.

and manage special offers and complementary products.

Package travel components into unique travel products and multi-day tours

Combine different products into a unique travel experience. Create multi-day tours and try to offer a better price by selling hotels, flights, and activities together to create a unique experience.

But with many incoming inquiries, the



We've talked to many of our customers going through the same situation and compiled 8 tips you can use to keep the customer in focus, increase sales in your travel agency or tour operator business, and build a reputation that will help you book more trips.

Highlight the benefits of your product/service

Instead of trying to compete with your competitors, focus on pointing out the unique benefits of your service. Ask your existing, satisfied customers for a review, highlighting all the positive aspects of the experience they've had with your agency.

Most satisfied customers won't hesitate to give a testimonial – some might even be glad to. Post it proudly on your company's website and watch as you attract new potential clients.

Always remember – focus on providing the best experience to your customer! That ensures returning customers and good word of mouth.

Upsell products – provide an experience

Suggesting additional products on top of a standard package is the most straightforward method of increasing your revenue per customer. For example, if your customer is going on a city tour of Madrid, offer lunch and dinner options to go along with it.

On the other hand, an observatory tour operator who offers private telescope viewing sessions might offer a glass of wine and tapas prior to the viewing to make the experience more romantic for a couple who booked it.

Explore and test to find out what your customers want, and use travel agency software to easily track

process of creating a package has to be quick and simple. With the help of tour operator software, creating a multi-day tour or a package is completed in just a few steps.

Find a travel niche market

One way to be a successful travel company is to establish your business in a niche market. The travel niche doesn't need to be complicated or rare – but the more unique it is, the better. Niche travel means you are selling something that no one else sells, and that your product is different in some way.

That can mean you're specializing in a certain demographic area, like organizing trips for senior French couples, a type of travel – like hiking through the mountains off the beaten path, or doing trips only for one particular destination. This type of segmentation is rising in popularity as the competition rises significantly, too.

Extend your B2B network

It is no big news that your business relationship with partners is very important. Business partners help you reach new markets, acquire new customers, get new ideas for further product development, and more. When your work is supported by good travel technology, you're able to focus on the relationship with your B2B partners, and not administration that comes with it.

But remember that finding a new B2B partner is just the tip of the iceberg, and keeping one is what requires hard and honest work.

Compiled by Mantra

Corporate Arena

Oman Air Named Top in Middle East and Africa for Punctuality in 2022 On-Time Performance Review

Oman, has been named top in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) for punctuality. As per the results of the 2022 On-Time Performance Review by global aviation analytics leader, Cirium, the airline's on-time arrivals stood at 91.38%, almost 5% ahead of the region's second highest ranking airline.



The annual Cirium On-Time Performance Review is considered the global gold standard for airline and airport performance, its results based on data collected from more than 600 sources of real-time flight information. It defines on-time flights as those that arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled gate arrival.

Captain Nasser bin Ahmed Al Salmi, Chief Operating Officer at Oman Air, said, "During 2022, the global operational environment has been challenging, with many airports affected by disruptions and resource challenges, as well as the lingering effects of Covid-19. Despite such a backdrop, we have continued to maintain an excellent service record. To have achieved this recognition for on-time performance against some of the world's most reputable airlines is a testament to the dedication and hard work of all Oman Air staff across our global network. As we enter into 2023, we look forward to continuing to pursue excellence in all elements of our guest experience, from punctuality to convenience, our products and services, and of course our signature Omani hospitality."

Continuing to position itself as a major international carrier, Oman Air has set several benchmarks for quality, comfort and hospitality in the last year, earning itself the 2023 Five-Star Major Airline rating by the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX), among others. Evolving to meet the demands of a rapidly shifting market, the airline has made increasing investments in its products and services, offering guests innovative cabin design, exceptional hospitality, and a growing range of destinations from its hub in Muscat.

Oman Air (WY), the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman, began its operations in 1993. Initially founded to serve key domestic routes, it has since undergone rapid growth and is today recognized as a major international carrier connecting cities around the world to Oman's spectacular natural beauty, captivating charm and genuine openness. A Five-Star COVID-19 Airline Safety Rating from Skytrax and two consecutive (2021 and 2022) Five-Star Major Airline Ratings from the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) are among its many industry accolades.

News Courtesy: www.breakingtravelnews.com

Xpressions

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL: TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMING TOURISM

Travel technology promises more efficient adventures to explore an increasingly connected but equally amazing world. The travel industry emerges from the pandemic more convinced than ever of the importance of developing and integrating new technologies that streamline passenger transit, streamline connections between major cities, improve traveler safety and protect the environment.

From airport security systems and programs to personalized experiences for each reservation, to sales tools and platforms to connect travelers, these are some of the ways in which the future of travel is being designed today.

Hotel Evolution

The hotel industry is putting control of the stay in the hands of its guests. After the success of online agencies and the emergence of rental property platforms, hotels are perfecting their mobile apps to promote their amenities and consumption centers.

Robotics is also transforming the hotel sector. It is increasingly common to find automated hosts welcoming guests upon arrival at the facility, receiving and delivering room service orders, taking care of room cleaning and transporting the guests' luggage.

Next Station

Technological innovations are driving our journeys.

By car: Driven by technologies such as data science, artificial intelligence and the internet of things, the evolution of automobiles, which today incorporate different computer systems in each vehicle, promotes simpler, safer, more efficient and environmentally friendly road trips.

By plane: Among the technologies that are transforming aviation and the future of travel, identified by the International Air Transport Association in its report Future of the Airline Industry 2035, are cybersecurity, robotics, Virtual Reality, alternative energy sources, 3D printing, internet of things, and geospatial technologies.

By train: Thanks to the emergence of alternative



fuels and the convenience it represents for travelers, many experts have pointed to trains as one of the means of transportation that will define the future of tourism. Its advantages? The increase in high-speed rail cars and the possibility of automating them are on the horizon.

On cruise ships: After the pandemic, cruise ships are incorporating more contactless technologies and mobile applications integrated with biometric

Tourism highlights

information to streamline processes such as check-in. They are also opting for better designs and renewable energy sources to lessen their environmental impact.

On the Horizon

Four ways technology is transforming travel habits.

Security

While new recognition technologies - powered by travelers' biometric information - are streamlining security checkpoints at airports and hotels, emergency services are also better prepared to respond to an eventuality.

Robotics

In addition to finding new functions in the different areas of a hotel, robots are transforming other stages of our travels, such as in airports, where it is increasingly common to see them taking care of security functions and answering passengers' questions.

Artificial Intelligence

Hotel chains, airlines, travel agencies, tour operators and shipping companies are taking advantage of rapid data processing and artificial intelligence to obtain information and conclusions about their customers' preferences and manage their inventories.

Virtual Reality

The travel industry has been quick to embrace virtual reality as a tool to inspire our next adventures around the world: whether it's travel agencies inviting customers to "visit" a destination before making a reservation or hotels offering tours of their properties.

News Courtesy: www.tourism-review.com

REPORT ON TRAVEL IN 2023 REVEALS NEW THEMES

Hilton's 2023 Global Trends Report reveals an interest in seamless travel, the search for more motivating experiences, a sense of being cared for and enhanced wellness offerings. If 2022 was the year of the changed traveler, 2023 will be the year of the evolved traveler.

The report reveals the latest consumer expectations at the conclusion of a year that saw a record amount of travel. According to a global survey and analysis of current trends, what today's travelers want is to balance technological and human innovations, have deeper and more caring connections, and achieve wellness experiences as part of the journey and more.

In 2022, motivated travelers are seeking new experiences around the world and reconnecting with the people and places they love.

The new report on travel in 2023 is derived from a survey of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis collected from more than 7,000 travelers worldwide, sponsored by Hilton and developed by Material, a global strategy, insights, design and technology partner. The survey identified four recurring themes for travel in 2023 based on travelers' experiences over the past three years.

People will turn to travel in search of deeper, more motivating human connections and experiences: Travel is a gateway to discovering different perspectives and rich traditions. In 2023, travelers will focus on creating deeper connections with family, friends, colleagues, customers, cultures and the planet. Nearly half (49%) of respondents want to be immersed in local culture and products when they travel, and another 40% want personalized access to unique experiences and activities, such as art performances, events, spa treatments or classes.

From destination-focused culinary interest travel packages to impactful programs like Travel with Purpose, which helps guests make a positive impact on the communities they visit, travelers are looking to be agents of change through more immersive travel experiences.

People will recognize that travel is an essential part of their wellness routine: Wellness continues to be top of mind for travelers. Half (50%) of respondents want to have travel experiences in 2023 that align with their wellness priorities and goals, encompassing mind, body and spirit.



For about one in two (47%) travelers, physical wellness and access to fitness amenities and services, such as gyms or activities, will be the primary focus of travel in 2023. Guests will also want to have moments of connection with their communities, such as ideas and solutions that improve their mental and emotional health. Taking care of mental health while traveling will be a priority for 35% of global respondents. On the other hand, 49% of working travelers will seek to travel to disconnect from work.

More than ever, travelers will want to be taken care of: Experts predict that in the coming year,

travelers will place even greater value on experiences where they feel cared for. Eighty-six percent of respondents said they want recognition and personalization when they travel, and 25 percent said they want travel and hospitality companies to be able to meet their unique needs in 2023. Specifically, 54% want personalized food and beverage options and 50% want activities and experiences that are tailored to their needs.

Travelers know how important it is to be rewarded for their loyalty, both financially and personally. In fact, 42% of respondents indicated that loyalty benefits, such as being able to accumulate and redeem points, will be important to them when they travel in 2023.

The importance of providing reliable and welcoming service to all guests at all times is well understood, whether it's providing excellent care for families who value staying in touch or also hosting a traveling pet.

Travelers want seamless travel innovations that are both technologically advanced and humane: The year 2022 revealed unexpected friction points in travel. The survey worldwide showed that more than half (56%) of travelers will prioritize the adoption of solutions that make travel easier by 2023. Nearly nine in ten (86%) of respondents will want to have at least something personalized during their travel experiences and interactions, and 26% of respondents believe that the technology offered at the hotel will be important to their hassle-free stay.

To reduce the biggest stress points in travel, guests will look for the most logical and useful solutions. They will want the service and hospitality they craved before the pandemic, whether it's personalized restaurant recommendations, adjustments to their reservations or smart mobile apps.

News Courtesy: www.tourism-review.com



The Company Album

Caesars Invaders lift SalamAir Super Six Season 1 trophy

Caesars Invaders, the official cricket team of Caesars Travel Group, become champions in SalamAir Super Six Season 1 cricket tournament held in Kuwait. A total of 16 teams participated in the tournament, and the final match was between Caesars

Top 2 Teams.

Mr. P.N.J. Kumar, CEO of Caesars Travel Group said "This was possible only with the dedication of the team and at the same time, our supported cheering spectators who gave them Travel Group, the entire staff, and myself, please accept and convey our pleasure and gratitude to you, the team, and the supporters for keeping the pride among the other travel agencies that participated in this tournament that reflects our group's dedicated



invaders and Waseet Boys. The spectators appreciated the Final match between Waseet Boyz and Caesars Invaders since it was so close and might have gone either way. In reality, all of the teams who participated are Winners in our eyes along with the inspiration at every second while they are on the pitch, thanks to each and everyone for the same and special regards to Mr. Derwin for the best coordination.

On behalf of the management of Caesars

efforts in not only the business but spreading to the other wings of various human-touched day-to-day activities. We look forward to continuing progress to even greater heights of achievement in the coming days ahead."

Farewell to Senior Employee: Mr. Derwin Sequeira

Parewell...It's not easy to say goodbye to highly dedicated employees of our company. Here we have a difficult time when we must say goodbye to one of our favorite employees Mr. Derwin Sequeira. A thank-you note is not enough, but we believe it is just a farewell, not a goodbye.

Farewell was organized in Caesars Travel Head office with cake cutting function. Caesars Travel Group CEO, Mr. P.N.J. Kumar quoted "I am sure that everyone must be heard of the news, Mr. Derwin and his family are leaving Kuwait for good, migrating to Australia. Mr. Derwin was the Branch Manager of Salmiya (1) after transferring from a senior position at the head office.

In this context, let me start by thanking him for his 17 wonderful years of incredible service and loyalty to our organization. I understand that It's hard to say farewell to such a dedicated and motivated employee as his passion for the profession, drive, teamwork, excellent communications, and above all, cheery smile and positive attitude will be deeply missed.

Life is full of challenges but it is the steps that you take to overcome, move around, or transform them into opportunities that give you strength and ultimately settle down peacefully. Accordingly, may God bless Mr. Derwin & family to find his new country and the environments there, give an



abundance of opportunities and prospects for a happy family life.

May luck and success be always with you and your family. This occasion, I remember a quote from Mr.

Adlai Stevenson which is very meaningful:

"It is not the years in your life but the life in your years that counts."

Goodbye!!!!!"



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The Loyalty Effect: Hidden Force behind the growth of Caesars Travel Group (An interaction with a Senior Staff)

Loyal employees are always an asset for our company. In this edition, we would like to spare an interactive session with one of our very senior staff, Mr. Sanjiv Kumar, Group Financial Controller - Caesars Travel Group, who led a way to different developmental activities of our organization.

As a first question, would like to know about your educational & professional background?

I completed my graduation in Bachelor of Commerce from Punjab University, afterward, joined the company Vardhman Yarns and Textiles Ltd., as an Assistant Account in 2006. I started my professional degree in Cost Accountant from ICWAI, while working. Unexpectedly, I got an opportunity to come to Kuwait in between.

What makes you passionate about to travel domain?

This industry is a new subject for me to study and to understand that it is an exciting factor for me. My interest started increasing gradually more and more while working in this industry. It helps to develop your personality. Furthermore, this helps you get to meet and be friends with people from all across the globe. This results in worldwide networking and overall exposure to various people, cultures, and talents.

How was your first job experience in this travel domain?

Yes, it was very exciting and challenging for me. I was curious to learn about the travel industry. I faced many challenges at the initial stage to understand the terms, for example, IATA is having very strict payment schedules where you don't have a chance of mistakes. Likewise, it was very interesting to learn all the other things.

How is your experience with our company, better you can share your likes and dislikes?

No doubt, it is amazing. This is the second company in my career. There are so many good and bad experiences but I learned a lot here. Here, I get a chance to deal with the various types of bookkeeping i.e., Travels, Airline GSA's, Leisure Division, Shipping, OTA, and Cargo. This company is having a wonderful culture which always makes you feel that you are in the second family which is very important. All the staff is very cooperative and well educated. Discipline is this company's key point regardless of designation or position, and everyone is following the

How was your career ladder in Caesars as you are one of the senior employees?

I joined this esteemed company in 2009 in a very junior position as an Assistant accountant. Thereafter, I got appreciation from time to time on the basis of my performance and got the designation of Group



Sanjiv Kumar

Group Financial Controller - Caesars Travel Group

Financial Controller in 2013. In between so many challenges came but with hard work and the guidance of Mr. P.N.J. Kumar, all become easy.

What are your major achievements and contributions to our company till date?

I witnessed the progression of this company from 13 offices to 40 offices and in the same way of myself which started as an Assistant accountant to Group Financial Controller. Whenever I have seen behind, it always amazes me because the path was not so easy.

What is your expectation regarding the travel domain in the future?

The travel domain is a business which is having endless demands. The trend is also changing day by day instead of personally visiting Travel Agents, people prefer to use technology to get their desire by using the OTA platforms or WhatsApp chats. Also, innovative technology will play a vital role in the future for example Artificial intelligence to enhance customer experience or virtual travel planners that offer personalized advice about destinations.

Travel market is getting more challenging due to Corona outbreak, as a senior staff what is your plan or idea to tackle the situation?

Yes, we are going through a Covid 19 pandemic which has given an immense shock to the travel market and changed everyone's mindset toward business. People become very conscious and take their steps very carefully. In my point of view, we need smart investments in the market, especially for corporate deals, and choosing the right suppliers to get some competent rates with better services. Furthermore, each company should keep some reserves as current assets which can be used in such

situations and try to cut short all miscellaneous expenses. High time to incorporate the latest technologies in business which will help to run the show smoothly and meet the requirements of the customers.

Who is your role model and what is your dream?

There is no particular personality that I am following as no one can be perfect in this world but I am always trying to learn positive things from my surroundings. If I can say about the person who inspired me a lot in my life that is the CEO of our company. I always admired his passion for the work, caliber to handle the problems, and affection for all the employees. He is a complete book of knowledge, especially for this travel industry and accountancy.

I don't have any dreams, to touch the skies but live a simple life where can fulfill all the basic needs of my family instead of borrowing from someone. Always, remember the parents' words, "Always live life with honesty, dignity, and hard work".

What is the advice to the new staff who joined Caesars?

There is no advice to the new staff but can share my views and feelings with my own experience that Caesars will not let you down until you are loyal, sincere, and working hard. No worries, maybe you don't have something today or get things little late but one surety is always there, you will get what you are deserving. I have never seen a company like this anywhere, most of the companies' humans are working as robots but here you will feel like a family and recognized as an asset of the company. Here you have access to share your point of view or feelings with the higher management that something is great by itself. So, be honest and work hard.

HOW YOU CAN BE A PART OF "Xpressions"

By sending your submissions to "Xpressions" newsletter, including articles, photographs, aviation updates, personal information which can be released in our newsletter, etc. The next issue will be out in April 2023. Please send us your article or similar texts as soon as you can and it should reach us on or before 15th March, 2023. The contribution Articles should be submitted in Word format. All articles which are selected for publication will be proof read for content, spelling and grammatical errors. Also please note that it is not mandatory that these articles will be published in "expressions" newsletter as it is strictly subject to screening before publishing. Furthermore, we may make minor editorial changes or correct spelling mistakes. To establish the identity of the authors, your name will be published with your article.

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