

Opinion **MBA blog**

Shuffle up and deal

Monica Dee, Chinese University of Hong Kong JANUARY 2, 2015

One of the perks of being in Hong Kong for my MBA is the proximity and accessibility to one of the world's top tourist destinations – Macau. Then again, the reality of actually being an MBA student sinks in. Do we really have the time and the luxury for that escape to Macau when the stress of the MBA life gets too overwhelming? Probably not, but luckily for me and some of my classmates, we had the chance to go on a trip to Macau which was co-organised by the CUHK MBA office and the Luxury and Retail Club.

In the past, I have gone to Macau purely for leisure, such as watching events, trying my luck in the casino, going on a food trip and shopping. However, this trip was not the fun and games I was used to. This particular trip was insightful as it provided me with a view into the business side of Macau's tourism, as well as the entertainment and gaming industry. After all, these sectors are the major significant drivers of the Macau economy.

One of the items on our agenda was attending a presentation on the historical aspect of the various heritage sites and buildings, which have created a deeper appreciation of these magnificent works of art. Macau has effectively preserved the Portuguese influence on its local culture and this rich culture, along with the diversity of art and history and the openness to religious freedom, has been attracting many visitors from all corners of the world.

In addition to a deep historical foundation, the gaming and entertainment industry also plays a significant role contributing to Macau's strength in tourism. Thus, another activity in our itinerary was participating in a company and industry business presentation delivered by a few executives, including one of our CUHK MBA alums from one of Asia's leading corporations in the gaming, leisure and entertainment industry.

The growth of this sector has been substantial in recent years, surpassing Las Vegas several years ago in terms of casino revenue. Furthermore, one of the things I found fascinating is that the University of Macau offers an undergraduate degree in gaming management. I believe this only goes to show how much importance is placed on preserving Macau's status in this industry.

Although we are currently seeing a slump in gaming revenue and GDP in Macau, which analysts believe stems from the anti-corruption campaigns taking place, it will be interesting to see how the industry and the region rises to this challenge to focus on further economic growth and development.

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