

A photograph of a traditional wooden building facade. The wall is made of vertical wooden planks. A window with a dark frame and vertical slats is visible. A terracotta hanging pot with green foliage is suspended on the left. In the foreground, there are several plants, including red flowers and green foliage.

# The Top 10 Ways to help bring more Chinese Visitors to your attraction

# Get ready to welcome groups and individual Chinese visitors with this information

You might not be getting a lot of Chinese group tours now, but they are coming. Statistics show that close to 2.2 million Chinese visited the U.S. in 2014. When these groups first started arriving in 2007, most of them stayed in our largest cities, visited major attractions and shopped at high-end shops and outlet malls. While that trend will continue for the foreseeable future, there is now interest in second- and third-tier cities, as well as states that haven't been on the international visitor radar map before. Your destination, attraction or hotel has an opportunity for new business. I have listed some steps for everyone to consider as they contemplate entering this market which is expected to continue growing double digits between now and 2020.

# The Top 10 Ways to help bring more Chinese Visitors to your door

1. Becoming a player in this market requires both time and money, and that usually requires support from management. It helps to build the case by assembling packets of information that include data from the [Office of Travel and Tourism website](#). Find out what tour companies already visit nearby cities and include relevant pages from their brochures in your packet that you will share with management. Start by asking to attend tradeshow that offer appointments with Chinese tour operators – NTA Travel Exchange is one of the best. Because this market is built on relationships and relationships take time, make sure your manager knows this will be a 2-3 year commitment before results will begin to show.
2. The language barrier does not have to be a problem. There are many small steps your organization can take to seem more welcoming to Asian visitors. Having basic signage in Mandarin is both helpful and a sign of hospitality. There are many online companies that will do translation.
3. Social media and photos are a key way to document their vacation. Does your attraction have great places for photos – that includes your name? Encourage visitors to tag your business in their photos. Word of mouth through social media is even stronger in Asia than it is in the U.S. Have your guests help you promote your business.
4. The UnionPay card is the most important form of payment in mainland China. If your business accepts credit cards, it should start to accept UnionPay. This credit/debit card is how many Chinese prefer to make their purchases. Just seeing the UnionPay logo on a cash register is a welcoming sign for Chinese. For more information about working with the Union Pay credit card, visit their website <http://www.unionpayintl.com/en>. WeChat pay and Alipay will become even more important in the next few years.

It's easier than you think!

5. Small culinary changes can make a big difference. Our café at the [Corning Museum of Glass](#) began to offer international entrees such as beef or chicken lo mein and that has made a big difference in our sales. We sell instant noodle bowls and offer jasmine tea bags, and provide hot water for free. These small changes have made a big impact. Buses that used to go to a local Chinese Buffet before visiting us now join us for lunch as well as the museum tour.
6. Mandarin speaking staff is a huge asset, but how do you find staff that are bilingual in rural areas? Start with your nearby colleges. Most of them have Chinese students. While many of them cannot work for wages, they can have internships. Several Chinese tour companies are beginning to set up internship programs for college students and they work to secure the lodging for the students.
7. Relationships are important in this market. Unlike some markets, Chinese business people want to take the time to get to know you and feel like you are working with them as a partner. That is best accomplished over time with a consistent plan. Target the companies most likely to bring you business and plan on visiting them, meeting them at events and keeping in touch. These activities will pay huge dividends.
8. Provide staff training. Asian visitors have different behaviors than most Americans. The Chinese government released information for its citizens on how to conduct themselves overseas after hearing horror stories in many destinations. It is helpful if your staff is informed on what to expect and how to respond to situations. We often have individuals pushing their way past others to get to our popular Hot Glass Show. Our frontline staff has been trained to be polite yet assertive in stopping that behavior. We also take the time to teach all our staff a few important words in Mandarin every year (hello, thank you, bathroom and goodbye) so they can interact with the visitors.

9. Build relationships with tour guides. As an attraction, we are not always a mandatory stop on a tour. It is often up to the guide to decide whether to stop for a tour. We recognize that and take the time to get to know the tour guides that come through our doors every week. I know other attractions that do that as well and it makes a difference. Just think, would you rather stop somewhere where they know your name, or another attraction where they just take your money and hand you tickets? Believe me; friendliness with the tour guides pays off.

10. Enjoy learning a new culture. Once I began to see the potential in this market for the Corning Museum of Glass, I spent a lot of time meeting with tour companies over lunch and dinners. I have learned how to eat with chopsticks fairly well and have tried foods I never would have attempted on my own. All in the name of building business, making friends and learning what Chinese visitors are looking for in America. And I still have a lot to learn!

I originally wrote this [article](#) for NTA's Courier Magazine in September 2014. Check out the link below to receive a weekly email with information on how to be a better tourism professional- and how to get more visitors through your doors!

# Be the smartest Tourism pro in the room

I have been in the tourism industry for over 20 years and love to learn, read research and try out new technologies. Let me do the work to help you be successful. Sign up below and you will get a weekly blog post. My website, [SallyDavisBerry.com](https://SallyDavisBerry.com) has other resources as well. Check it out! Thank you for your interest.

[Learn more](#)

Don't forget to check out [SallyDavisBerry](https://SallyDavisBerry.com) for more information!