

Cancun and the Riviera Maya a destination for all

Judith Cárdenas, Cancun Accesible, Cancún, México (presenter)

SITUATION

Cancun, a tourist destination which emerged about 40 years ago, with beautiful beaches, turquoise tones, internationally known and visited by millions of tourists every year; and the Riviera Maya tourist located 80 km south of Cancun and about 15 years of creation, with luxurious and exclusive resorts and visited by tourists from around the world. At this time we will discuss the lack of services to travelers with disabilities.

Until 10 years ago, Cancun and the Riviera Maya, Mexican tourist destinations, did not have services to meet the needs of travelers with disabilities during their stay at these destinations. Starting from the Cancun International Airport, the ground transportation for visitors, hotels, shopping centers, marinas, natural parks, archaeological sites, and the restaurants were not able to provide quality services or facilities suitable for people with disabilities.

APPROACH

Slowly, after a devastating hurricane named Wilma in 2005, the private sector mainly started to adapt its facilities to welcome this segment of people in these two locations. The Cancun airport opened a new and accessible terminal that is friendly to people with different disabilities, hotels remodeled and adapted their facilities, some parks, marinas and restaurants have been improving every day towards people with a disability or reduced mobility in Cancun and the Riviera Maya.

CONCLUSION

All these conditions were occurring separately and needed a business that would put together all these pieces through accessible ground transportation to wheelchair users. In 2007 the company CANCUN ACCESIBLE started operations. This company provides services for disabled travelers as ground transportation to and from the Cancun airport; we can take them to accessible tours and deliver in their resort any equipment they might need during their stay at the destination. From a manual wheelchair, scooters, amphibious chairs, hoists, hospital beds, medical oxygen to caregivers and nurses. The past 2013 year CANCUN ACCESSIBLE helped around 3000 people (including people with disabilities and their family) to have a worry free vacation in Cancun and the Riviera Maya and they come from United States, Canada and England mainly.

In addition to meeting the demands from disabled travelers arriving in Cancun and Riviera Maya, CANCUN ACCESSIBLE also integrates disabled people to the work force, as almost half of its employees have a disability. This help local to be more productive and able to develop their abilities.