

# ESTABLISHMENT OF A MARKET RESEARCH UNIT

**Location:** Saudi Arabia

**Client:** Supreme Commission for Tourism

**Services:** Market Research/ Survey Design/ Tourism Satellite Account/ Economic Impact



## Complete design and implementation of a tourism research and statistics unit for the Saudi Arabian Government

### Project Objectives:

- In 2001, the Saudi Arabian government took the decision to pursue tourism as an economic activity, and established the Supreme Commission for Tourism as the public sector body to plan, monitor, market and regulate the sector. Acorn assisted Ernst & Young during this initial master planning stage and produced a 5-year plan for tourism development.
- The next phase, for which Acorn were contracted for 4 years, was to establish a market research and statistics unit within the Supreme Commission for Tourism to measure the volume, characteristics and value of tourism in the country. This involved the establishment of a number of surveys and other primary data collection methodologies, the development of a Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) to measure the economic significance of tourism, and the day-to-day operation of the Unit.

### Our Recommendations:

- We built up the human resource profile of the Unit gradually over the period, initially employing four staff, and increasing to 15 over the period 2001-2005. We put out tenders to market research firms to assist us with the data collection for all the key surveys (measuring, inbound, domestic and outbound tourism, as well as accommodation utilisation).
- A web site was established on which all our statistics and other research findings were published. Whilst we also generated printed reports, the web site provided an ideal vehicle to release the latest statistics without delay. We also held tourism workshops to involve the sector, present our work, and better understand the needs of the industry.
- The Unit continues to measure tourism in Saudi Arabia - [www.mas.gov.sa](http://www.mas.gov.sa)