“I was not born for one corner. The whole world is my native land.”

— Seneca

“Not all who wander are lost — some are escaping what they were never meant to be.”

— Tolkien & *DNN*

Carlos Grider

ABROTHERABROAD.COM · SOVEREIGN EXPAT SERVICES



POKHARA NOMADS BASECAMP 2026

Beyond the Backpack

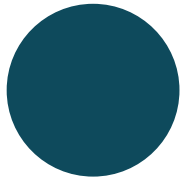
Who Digital Nomads Really Are
& How to Build the Nomad Hub You Actually Want

Carlos Grider

Author, Digital Nomad Nation · Cross-Border Financial Planner · Researcher, 2022 Global Digital Nomad Study · 65+ countries

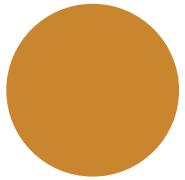
LET'S START WITH A HABIT WE ALL SHARE

Assumptions get us through the day



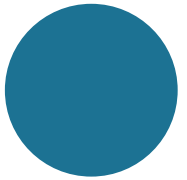
AMERICAN

Burgers. Big trucks.
Loud opinions.



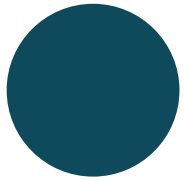
IRISH

Leprechauns. Guinness.
Smiles.



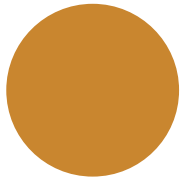
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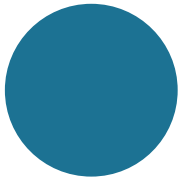
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DIGITAL NOMADS

??

So what do you assume about a digital nomad?

You can only build for a community once you understand beyond the assumptions.

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT WE'LL COVER

Three big things we'll cover

01 The **nomad need most destinations aren't meeting**

02 The **two growing demographics** among digital nomads,
and how they could anchor a stable, lasting nomad hub and community.

03 Pokhara's **two major competitive advantages** right now.

Let's start with an intro...

A life as a traveler & independent researcher



1

**MARINE &
CULTURAL ADVISOR**

Explored remote locations,
asked questions,
helped decision makers understand
places and people.

2

**MANAGEMENT
CONSULTANT**

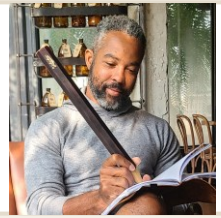
Took the problem-solving instinct to
Fortune 50 companies,
focused on marketing.



3

**WANDERER
2017**

Left to travel the world, and
became a digital nomad without
realizing it.



4

**WRITER
INDEPENDENT RESEARCHER
2018–22**

Ran the Global Digital Nomad Study:
4,000+ responses, 60+ countries.

NOW: WRITER AT ABROTHERABROAD.COM; CROSSBORDER FINANCIAL PLANNER WITH SOVEREIGN EXPAT SERVICES

Four lenses at once: independent researcher · cross-border financial planner · marketing consultant · nomad in 65+ countries

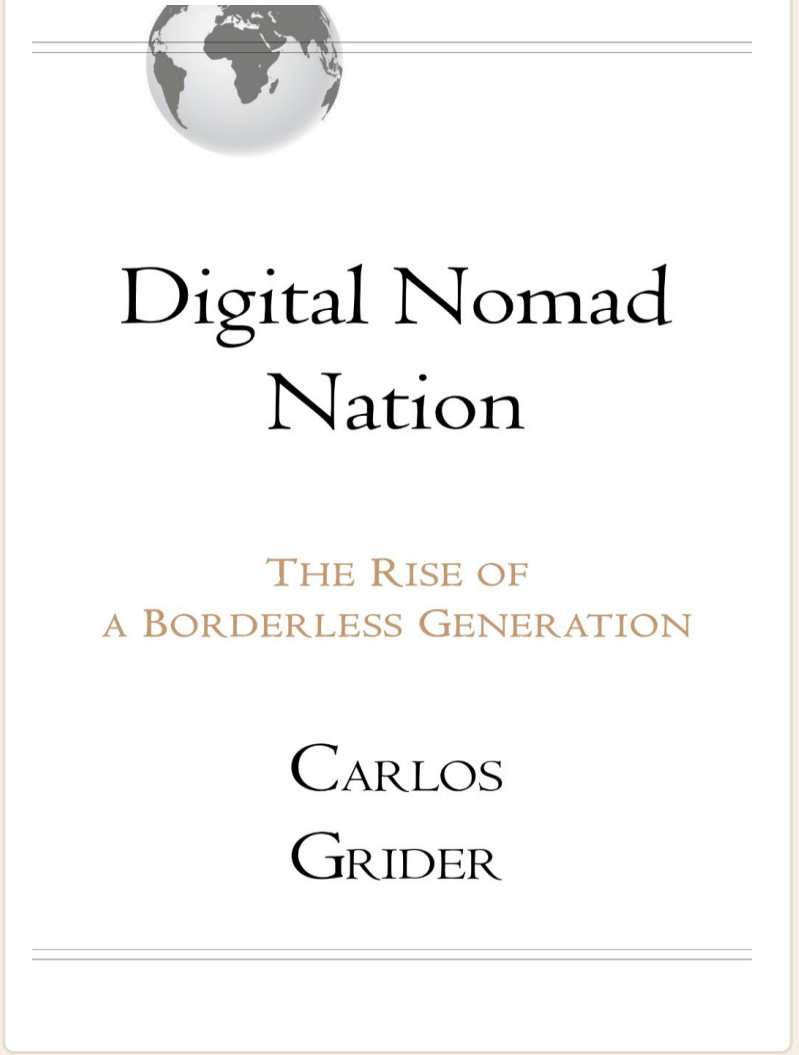
The result of this path…

The 2022 Global DN Study

& the book Digital Nomad Nation

A mixed methodology study of hundreds of digital nomads across dozens of countries and 4 years, informing a 4,000+ response survey to understand digital nomads around the world – and present a picture of the global DN

Today's presentation is built on insights from the Global Digital Nomad Study — and the updates and continued observation since 2022.



A SNAPSHOT FROM THE STUDY

Let’s review those assumptions…against reality

ASSUMPTIONS

✗ *Aged 20 something*

✗ *Works from a beach on permanent vacation*

✗ *Tech bro running an SEO or sales funnel*

✗ ***Forever solo, wandering the world***

REALITY

A SNAPSHOT FROM THE STUDY

A snapshot from the 2022 Global DN Study

ASSUMPTIONS

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REALITY OF THE "DIGITAL NOMAD NATION"

35 million digital nomads worldwide — about the size of Canada

$787 billion in economic value (after Switzerland with $800 billion)

$1,875/mo average nomad budget

51% work in marketing, IT, design, writing, or e-commerce

80% stay in one place 3–9 months — 6 months is the sweet spot

83% are self-employed, not company employees

40 Years old is the average age

49.81% female / **50.19%** male

Top-rated nomad destinations, 2022: Portugal, Indonesia, Mexico

The most insightful fact…

Sources: The 2022 Global Digital Nomad Study; ABrotherAbroad.com/digital-nomad-statistics

01

PILLAR ONE

Loneliness is the #1 reason digital nomads return home

SOLVING FOR LONELINESS IS A DIFFERENTIATOR

Continued connectedness is the key, And the highest value product.

instead of just selling coworking space desks

instead of just a booking or a transaction

instead of one more one-off event

- **A weekly dinner, that continues for years**
- **A guest feels welcomed back, as part of a family**
- **Recurring community wide gatherings that continue in their absence, and welcome them back with familiar faces and feelings**

Think of neighborhoods you've loved, friend groups that last for years, and family that keeps you grounded.
These are the missing experiences that are in search of.

The Takeaway: The connectedness and community must be visible and felt from the outside — outside the WhatsApp groups, outside the social circle, outside Nepal itself — and reliably returned to

Solve for loneliness with welcoming, reliably recurring community

that can be seen from outside

and nomads will come

02

PILLAR TWO

The markets next door: Emerging & overlooked, yet significant

THE HEADLINE NUMBER

The “35 million digital nomads worldwide”...overlooks China and India

This population estimate was built entirely on English conversations, English surveys, on Western platforms — missing 35% of the world's population in India and China.



WHAT THAT MEANS FOR POKHARA

China + India = ~35% of the world's population, within reach

Increasing purchasing power. Increasingly traveling. Increasingly nomading abroad.

WHY IT WILL WORK

- **Global instability** is driving more Chinese tourists & nomads to prioritize regional travel.
- **Desires for low-visa friction** — and India/China visa arrangements — make Nepal a natural fit.
- Geopolitical centers of gravity shifting east, growing economic centers, increased earning and spending.

But the opportunity next door requires *intention* to capture

03

PILLAR THREE

Digital nomad demographics are splitting — creating more valuable, more stable opportunities

NEW NOMADS

- *Less than two years of travel.*
- *Still searching for stability*
- *Still “in the adventure.”*

THE FIRST GENERATION OF DIGITAL NOMADS ARE EVOLVING

The community is maturing, fragmenting into addressable segments

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SEASONED "FLEXPATS"

- *Slowing down.*
- *Prefer 6-9 months in a place*
- *Creating bases to return to.*

The alternative to going home.

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RETIREE NOMADS
"FIRE NOMADS"

- *Technically retired.*
- *Using geoarbitrage for a tight retirement.*
- *Still working online for purpose and passion.*

With the required logistics,

Flexpats and longstaying nomads

can be points of continuity, and international bridges

04

PILLAR FOUR

Legacy nomad capitals offer a valuable lesson:

Decide in advance how nomads will integrate

NOBODY DECIDED ON PURPOSE

Three nomad hubs that grew faster than they planned

LISBON

WHAT HAPPENED: PRICING OUT LOCALS

Rents and property prices climbed sharply in nomad-dense neighborhoods, created economic and displacement issues

THE ISSUE

Locals priced out of their home neighborhoods by demand surge nobody planned for

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CANGGU, BALI

WHAT HAPPENED: INFRASTRUCTURE OVERLOAD

Roads, water, and waste infrastructure buckled under population it wasn't built for, while vague regulation enforcement created social/legal disagreements

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Growth outran infrastructure capacity and regulation enforcement before anyone measured the maximum capacity

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WHAT HAPPENED: SELF SEGREGATION

Visible cultural friction, and de facto segregation by nomads from local residents

THE ISSUE

Nomad numbers and footprint grew faster than integration happened, and risk pushing the local culture out

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THE ISSUE

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Bottom line: *despite the "nomad opportunity," not one of these three cities can honestly say the presence has benefited the whole community.*

This leaves Nepal with the advantage of foresight

...and a bonus advantage

BONUS INSIGHT: POKHARA'S ADVANTAGE

Pokhara was the cheapest livable nomad city in 2024

among 6,744 cities analyzed

...and has the foresight none of those cities had before the nomad wave came

The Advantage: Having the cheapest livable city for nomads in the world + knowledge of what could happen when the global nomad community finds out

Source: ABrotherAbroad.com/cheapest-cities-to-live-in-the-world

Now for the big question…

THE QUESTION THIS TALK IS REALLY ASKING

When the nomads come…
How do you want them to integrate?

If you had 500,000 nomads in Pokhara tomorrow — what would that ideally look like?

RECAP

Three ideas I want you to walk away with

01 Solve for loneliness.

02 Leverage long staying flexpats and nomad retirees to anchor a stable, lasting nomad base in Pokhara.

03 Use Pokhara's advantages of low cost and foresight to design the Pokhara nomad community, integrated into the local community for long term success.

HOW TO START

Four ways to begin

1

Build connectedness intentionally, ensure it can be seen from outside Nepal

Loneliness is the gap nobody else has filled. Whoever builds real community first owns the nomad relationship in this city.

2

Consider the markets next door

Build the language, advertise visa clarity, and share a welcome to the Chinese and Indian remote workforce on your border.

3

Design for flexpats, not just short-stayers

Longer-staying nomads want stability, not novelty — leases, schools, visas, local services. A different infrastructure conversation.

4

Decide *your* integration terms now, and enforce them from Day 1

Housing policy, neighborhood balance, local-business protections — before the wave hits, not after.

Don’t leave the development path to fate:

Build what’s needed.

Build for who is searching.

Build intentionally.

Thank you. Let's open it up for questions.

Carlos Grider

abrotherabroad.com · Digital Nomad Nation · 2022 Global Digital Nomad Study

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— Seneca

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