

Tourists want to be travellers with local knowledge

 By [Enver Duminy](#)

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It's natural that as tourists take advantage of being able to book their own trips online, an increasingly popular trend, they'll also be adapting their travel expectations. Not content with sticking to the guidebooks, these travellers want to take control of their experiences and explore a city like a local.



The hungry tourist can track down where the hottest pop-up burger bar is in town, or the craft beer which is getting local tongues wagging simply by checking out social media.

The largest segment of active travellers globally is millennials (individuals aged 18 - 34). This dynamic demographic is constantly online and sharing experiences via social media channels; the immediacy offered by social media is enhanced when experiencing destinations and offerings off the beaten track.

Personalised trips

Services like Airbnb allow what the industry has dubbed Do-It-Yourself (DIY) travellers to organise and personalise their trips. Startup online apps are gaining ground in the industry; the adoption of this self-booking trend can be seen by the decrease in bookings done via traditional travel agents, which now only consists of only 22% of travellers to South Africa, while 30% use online agents and 33% use airline sites, according to thesouthafrican.com. Self-booking gives the traveller the sense of being immersed in the authentic experience of travel rather than leaving the itinerary to a formal, predictable booking system.

Adapting to this tourism trend means that agencies around the world need to facilitate these visitors'. Cape Town Tourism (CTT) realised that they could not wait for visitors to find their information centres and had to go to where the visitors are: that's why they introduced the first Mobile Visitor Information Vehicle in Africa.

This vibrant mobile resource can be seen at many local events, enabling visitors to browse the internet and book accommodation as well as tickets to events. Nicknamed #Thando, this environmentally-friendly vehicle also appeals to the demographic by being socially conscious. #Thando helps travellers to get more information and explore more local spots.

Local tips and recommendations

Another offering that has been introduced is the Cape Town Insider's Guide mobile app which gives visitors local tips and recommendations on what to do and see in the City. Users can download it for free from the [Google Play](#) or [Apple App](#) stores and find an intimate local offering that's current, allowing for a customised itinerary.

Word of mouth research is still the most popular: 47% of all visitors use this method. This isn't surprising considering the largest travelling demographic share their experiences on social networks, with 56% uploading images to Facebook and 31% to Instagram during their holiday, according to a white paper entitled [Digital Trends for the Travel Industry in 2015 and Beyond](#). [The boom in social media has allowed foreigners to tap into local knowledge of attractions and experiences not always mentioned in formal guidebooks.](#)

[This trend's main catalyst has been the influence of social media FOMO \(Fear of Missing Out\). Where in the past, experiences could only be shared after the trip by flipping through photo albums, now journeys are shared straight to social media timelines throughout the course of the journey and appear alongside the trendiest local uploads.](#)

[CTT is responding to this trend and will be releasing multiple Neighbourhood Guides online to areas around the Mother City. We understand that we're appealing to the main target audience, but also that with this new trend we can actively spread the positive affect of tourism.](#)

[Being exposed directly to travellers allows local businesses, especially the smaller ones, to be showcased on a global platform. This will also allow for a direct injection of funds into areas beyond the traditional tourist routes or sites. This will ultimately lead to increased job creation and wider spread of the tourist rand. We encourage all our visitors to download the Official Guide to Cape Town app and visit our website for a host of info on the city, plus have a look at our latest videos showcasing Cape Town.](#)

[For more, got to \[\\[\\[www.capetown.travel\\]\]\(http://www.capetown.travel\)](#)

ABOUT ENVER DUMINY

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