

To boost tourism, Africa needs to change its narrative

Africa's Travel Indaba media launch, which was held at The Plant Venue Co., Durban on 3 April 2019, provided the opportunity South Africa's tourism industry to tell their success stories. Speakers included representatives from Jotham's Place and Discover Durban Tours and Transfers, acting head of the department for KwaZulu-Natal Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Siza Sibande and councillor at eThekweni Municipality, Sipho Kaunda.



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Keynote speaker of the day, chief convention bureau officer of South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB), Amanda Kotze-Nhlapo, elaborated on this year's Africa's Travel Indaba theme, Africa's stories, your success, saying Africans must own their narrative so that they can embark on the journey of changing the continent's story. "We no longer look to the world for affirmation or inspiration, the world looks to us. We are real, vibrant and driven to succeed. So, we invite the world to journey with us and tell the new story of Africa."

Kotze-Nhlapo added that the responsibility of safeguarding Africa's narrative is not only up to its storytellers but all Africans. "In this post-truth world, it is up to each of us to be vigilant about the way Africa is depicted. We can be the watchdogs of misrepresented stories and best of all, we have the digital tools to keep the narrative truthful."

She said social media gives everyone the power to engage with media, influencers and other prominent individuals so that "we can change the narrative together and basically set the story straight."

Her insights were backed up by South African storyteller, Victor Kgomoewana, whose presentation ignited what is the new African narrative. "The greatest story for us to tell is our own; the most effective way to tell it is the African way - because the centre of the universe, literally and figuratively, is in Africa."



Africa's Travel Indaba 2019 introduces first-ever Green Stand Awards

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For the first time in Indaba's history, it will host the Green Stand Awards. These awards have been successful at Meetings Africa in recent years and is now making its way to Indaba. It recognises exhibitors who go that extra "green" mile to build and design stands that are environmentally and socially sustainable.

Key numbers for Africa's Travel Indaba 2019 include

- 1,110 – Number of local, regional and international buyers already confirmed.
- 890 – Number of exhibitors already confirmed.
- 104 – Number of African exhibitors from 19 countries already confirmed.

"The above numbers clearly demonstrate that Indaba continues to grow and be the sought after platform for African tourism products," concluded Kotze-Nhlapo.

According to 2018 reports from the United Nations World Tourism Organization and World Travel and Tourism Council:

- The continent's total foreign receipts in 2017 amounted to \$177,6bn, contributing 8,1% of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- In 2017, Africa's share of investment in travel and tourism was \$28,2bn, or 5,7% of total investment in the continent.
- In 2017, direct travel and tourism employment in Africa rose to 9,3 million, the equivalent of 1 in 11 jobs. This is an 11,2% increase from 2016.

South Africa at a glance

- South Africa saw 10.5-million international tourist arrivals in 201, which translates to a growth of 1.8% compared to the previous year.
- The World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC) had recently announced that South Africa has the largest tourism economy in Africa having contributed 1.5 million jobs (9.2% of South Africa's employment).
- Tourism contributes 8.6% to the South African GDP.
- 44% of the tourism spend came from international travellers, amounting to R128bn.
- 56% of spend came from domestic travel, which translates to R163bn.

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