

Trends shift as travel evolves

 By [Enver Duminy](#)

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Travel is not a static experience - why, how and when visitors want to visit and interact with a destination is constantly evolving. It's up to destinations to shift with the trends to ensure ongoing relevance. 2017 has seen some key trends being developed that are likely to become increasingly relevant in 2018.



Enver Duminy, CEO, Cape Town Tourism

Sustainability in tourism

This is hardly a surprise, with it being the UNWTO's focus for 2017, but it has coincided with an entire movement of awareness in the industry. No longer an option, sustainability in tourism (across the board) has become imperative.

In the Western Cape, water shortages have accelerated efforts to conserve this precious resource, forcing businesses to adopt new measures aimed at doing this. It has led to innovative approaches such as grey water usage, rainwater tanks gathering rain for irrigation and other purposes and visible messaging across all attractions and hospitality businesses. To ignore the threat of being entirely without water is not an option.

Of course, sustainability covers many other aspects of the built and natural environments, as well as job sustainability. In developing the

industry, we must ensure that more people are provided with the skills and resources they need to be able to work in tourism.

My feeling is that 2017 has created a sustainability movement that will continue to grow, with many applications in the tourism industry.

Tech takeover

In order for tourism businesses to remain competitive, it has been essential for them to grow alongside visitor preferences. The time for well-built websites and mobile applications is now. Cape Town Tourism's own website was voted one of the top 25 destination marketing websites in the world by travel publication Skift, for being user-friendly and for innovative use of video, as well as being mobile-friendly. Indeed, the website, as far as I am aware, was the pioneer mobile-first website of its kind on the continent with its launch in 2016. It's the space where you can reach visitors before they travel to your destination, so marketing opportunities are endless. It can be used to take potential visitors right into the heart of our neighbourhoods.



Cape Town Tourism one of the top 25 tourism websites in the world

Enver Duminy 22 Aug 2017



Tech is more than the outward appearance of websites – data-driven business is giving many the upper hand. The insights from the millions of pieces of data produced by interacting with visitors allow you to more accurately predict how they're

experiencing the destination, what they want, and how they want it. This can lead to enhanced marketing campaigns, improved service levels and, in general, a better visitor experience.

Technology is just a means to an end: it's how we use it that matters.

Visitor experience

Just as technology provides access to a more seamless way of doing business, the goals of efficiency and optimisation of service must be aligned with the ultimate target of enhancing the visitor experience.

“ *In the same way that customer experience has dominated the business world and customer relationship marketing environment, visitor experience has become the watchword in tourism.* ”

It's about making sure that your visitor gets what they expect (and how they expect to get it) and more to top it off. Delivering on expectations is only possible if you're monitoring the visitor experience along all aspects of their travel journey. This makes it possible to improve on what you're doing in an agile way. You can listen to complaints, whether through direct feedback or via insights provided in data anomalies.

With all trends, our aim is not to adopt simply to appear trendy but to provide enhanced visitor experiences that see travellers enjoying their time, returning for a second visit and recommending the destination to others. Word of mouth marketing is a commodity that's priceless.

ABOUT ENVER DUMINY

Enver Duminy is the CEO at Cape Town Tourism

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