

DAILY NEWS

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MINISTER FLAGS BUSINESS EVENTS AS A VITAL LEVER FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH



Africa's warm embrace... Minister Tokozile Xasa hugs exhibitors during her walkabout yesterday.

Opening Meetings Africa yesterday, the outgoing minister of tourism, Tokozile Xasa, emphasised the need for the business-events industry to empower new entrants and embrace partnerships in order to play a leading role in advancing Africa together.

Not doing things alone, she said, tied in with the Meetings Africa 2018 theme of shared economies as a tool to stimulate collaborative economic growth on the continent.

The theme of partnering for growth and transformation, she noted, also dovetailed with President Cyril Ramaphosa's vision of tourism as a growth sector with the potential to increase the current direct 700 000 jobs it currently supports.

"The president has challenged us to put all our wheels and cogs together to ensure that we don't let the country down ... that we bring in new life to the sector and change the lives of many South Africans," she said.

Minister Xasa said that business events alone contributed R115-billion to the South African economy every year, making it a vital contributor to gross domestic product.

She invited all delegates to engage, network and collaborate at this year's show. "Explore commonalities, share expertise and forge partnerships with each other to bring about prosperity for your business, the industry and the continent as a whole. This is in line with the spirit of advancing Africa together, especially in 2018, the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, a global icon rooted right here in this continent."

At the opening ceremony, Gauteng MEC for Economic Development Lebogang Maile expressed his delight that Johannesburg had won the bid to host Meetings Africa at the Sandton Convention Centre for the next five years. "We are indeed glad that this prestigious event has found a home in our province," he said.

He added that the Gauteng city region was particularly excited about the potential of the business-events industry to create jobs for people in the areas where they live. "One of the things we would like to see going forward is events of this nature being hosted within our townships, and we have been working on ensuring that we create a conducive environment for our township economy to attract such flagship events, which bring in much-needed inflows of capital into the townships."

The Johannesburg City Council's member of the mayoral committee for economic development, Leah Knott, said during the opening ceremony that Johannesburg was determined to

entrench its position not only as Africa's most visited city, but also the continent's premier business-events destination.

"The City of Johannesburg continues to go from strength to strength and, according to studies, saw a 13% increase in tourism during the previous financial year. I am extremely positive and believe that this trend is set to continue and that 2018 will be a great year for events in Johannesburg, South Africa and, indeed, the entire African continent," she said.

Referring to her change of portfolio to Sports and Recreation Minister, with Derek Hanekom taking up the reins of the tourism ministry again, Ms Xasa said this did not mean she was leaving her tourism "family".

"Sports is integrated into tourism, and therefore one of my key focus areas will be to integrate sports tourism into our economy. I wish [the tourism industry] the best as it continues to champion the repositioning of Africa as one of the best business-to-business destinations in the world," she said, before ringing the bell to symbolically open the 13th edition of Meetings Africa.

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SEE SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION AT THIS VIBRANT VILLAGE

“It’s such a great opportunity because together, we are advancing Africa,” says Fentse Mokale, an artist and designer of accessories and wall art at **Marabou Essentials**. She is one of the SMMEs that form part of Meetings Africa’s Sustainability Village this year.

The Sustainability Village (in exhibition hall level -2) initiative gives Mokale and others a prominent platform on which to showcase and grow their businesses.

This is the first time that **Henry&Viv**, the creators of high-quality modern essentials such as wallets and card holders, have exhibited anywhere, and offers an opportunity to gauge the market’s response to their product, test their pricing and make contacts.

Tokyo Ntombela has been creating fine art ever since he can remember. A regular at a well-known market in Bryanston with exhibition space in Arts on Main in central Johannesburg, he hopes to use Meetings Africa as a springboard to expand and exhibit in different places.

Ubuntu means oneness and humanity, says Tebatso Maisela, owner of **Ubuntu Crafts**, which produces decorative wire items. “The name touched me. I want people to feel and love the craft for what it

is, not just buy the product.” She hopes the visitors at Meetings Africa will recognise the care that goes into each handcrafted item.

Love garlic? Then you have to visit **Nyathi Art Creations**. Its owner, Leonard Nyathi, worked as a porter for 29 years until 2010, when he turned his love of ceramics into a full-time occupation. He hopes Meetings Africa will not only increase sales but also be educational. “I hope to find out more about different production and business methods.”

Pone’s African contemporary designs find expression in their handmade products, while **Africa Mama Crafts** offers trendy African art and crafts sourced from crafters’ co-operative groups.

Shinga Trading Enterprise produces Afrocentric clutch bags, handmade sandals and a variety of fabric neckpieces using beads, buttons, fabric and nylon thread. **Skills Village 2030** uses events as a tool for young people to have a central “head office” for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Galago is a fashion-forward brand crafted and inspired around Africa, drawing on craft and traditional techniques such as beading, braiding and leatherwork. Its signature product is its “Create Your Sandal” shoes.

Eco Smart is passionate about job creation and makes beautiful products



Galago’s distinctive designs have attracted much interest from visitors to the Sustainability Village.

out of recycled and “upcycled” materials and fabrics. **Rain** sustainably harvests indigenous plants used since antiquity and blends them with locally-grown natural ingredients to create luxuriously soft, delicately fragranced bath and body treats.

The South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB) is encouraging all

international clients hosting business events in South Africa to use the Sustainability Village concept to replace corporate gifts for delegates and speakers at their conferences. This concept will ensure that local crafters benefit directly from the economic impact that business events generates for local communities.

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Mahmood Khatib (left) says the TIP programme has catapulted his business to the 'next level'.

HOW SA'S HIDDEN GEMS ARE DAZZLING THE WORLD

South Africa's Hidden Gems tourism development and market access programme doesn't just walk the talk – it talks the talk too.

A total of 15 small businesses from around the country are exhibiting in the Development Zone at Meetings Africa 2018, courtesy of the Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) offered by South African Tourism and the National Department of Tourism in partnership with the private sector.

Here's a Hidden Gems success story, in the words of MK Tours and Travel owner Mahmood Khatib:

MK Tours and Travel started out primarily as a transport and logistics supplier to the travel desks of some of the five-star hotels in Cape Town. We employed about 50 staff members and were proud to extend our services as a successful level one BBBEE supplier.

We were very fortunate to be chosen as part of the TIP programme to attend IMEX Las Vegas, the South East Asia Roadshow as well as IBTM World in Spain. These

opportunities were priceless and catapulted us to the next level of being a tour operator.

We immediately secured groups and conferences as a direct result of attending these shows. This has had a huge impact on our company and instantly transformed our enterprise into a successful tour operator.

We had to increase our staff complement to 115 full-time team members and changed our motto from "MK Tours – The executive choice" to "MK Tours and Travel – We don't just do travel; we build memories".

Furthermore, we expanded our business beyond the shores of Cape Town and are now represented at five-star hotels in Sandton.

We are proud brand ambassadors for South Africa and have many true inspirational stories of team members from Khayelitsha, Langa, the Cape Flats and Gugulethu who have worked their way up the ranks, starting out as porters and drivers to become operational managers and senior managers. Thank you for a very successful project that has transformed the lives of many.

HIGH-PROFILE CONFERENCES CEMENT SOUTH AFRICA'S BUSINESS EVENTS APPEAL

South Africa has been fortunate to secure a number of high-profile conferences of late, confirming the country's status as a business-events destination of choice. Here are just two examples:

- **The MBA World Summit** will take place from 14 to 16 March 2018 at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business's satellite campus in the community of Philippi, Cape Town. This was after South African MBA student and software entrepreneur Raymond Ledwaba secured this important business event for the country. MBA students from the world's leading business schools apply to participate in this top-level MBA leadership event, debating global challenges, business topics, technology trends and innovations, and developing projects that leave a legacy in the host country. The conference will include a social impact programme where small businesses from the local community will present their business challenges to the MBA students. The MBA World Summit participants and 25 entrepreneurs from

Philippi will spend the third day of the event brainstorming solutions to key challenges faced by the entrepreneurs.

- **The 37th World Ophthalmology Congress** of the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) will be hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 26 to 29 June 2020 by the Ophthalmological Society of South Africa, co-hosted by the Middle East African Council of Ophthalmology and the African Ophthalmology Council. This is the world's largest international ophthalmic congress, with more than 12 000 delegates expected to attend. South Africa is honoured that renowned Pretoria ophthalmologist Dr Kgaogelo Edward Legodi has been appointed as the President of the 2020 World Ophthalmology Congress. The local organising committee, led by Dr Legodi and former president Kgalema Motlanthe, will give a preview of the 2020 conference to the ICO delegates at the 2018 World Ophthalmology Congress in Barcelona, Spain, from 16 to 18 June.

"This is the world's largest international ophthalmic congress, with more than 12 000 delegates expected to attend."

WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2018

TIME	EVENT	VENUE	ATTENDEES
08:00 - 09:00	Hosted Buyer Breakfast	SCC - Exhibition Hall 2 (Level -2)	By Invitation Only
08:30 - 10:00	Women in MICE Breakfast	SCC - The Bill Gallagher Room (Level 2)	By Invitation Only
09:00 - 10:00	Lilizela Tourism Awards Briefing	SCC - Café Nala (Level -1)	Open to all attendees
09:00 - 16:00	Meetings Africa Exhibition Pre-scheduled appointments between hosted buyers and exhibitors and interaction with visitors	SCC - Exhibition Hall 1 (Level 0)	Pre-registration and On-site registration for participants
11:00 - 12:00	Business Talk 2 A panel discussion on key business events matters on the African continent	SCC - Café Nala (Level -1)	Open to all attendees
12:00 - 14:00	Food Court	SCC - Exhibition Hall 2 (Level -2)	Online Diaries closed from 13:00 - 14:00
13:00 - 14:00	Official Lunch		

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BUSINESS EVENTS BENEFIT FROM SHARED ECONOMIES



Talking business is what Meetings Africa is all about and experts in industry shared their insights at various educational events across the show. Rashid Toefy, deputy director-general of economic developments for the Western Cape government, lead a panel discussion on how the shared economy affects business events. Joining the discussion were Senthil Gopinath, regional director Middle East of ICCA; Raymond Ledwaba, CEO of IT Thynk Smart Solutions; and Byron Moorgas from Always Innovative Solutions. Rashid set the tone saying that trust, transparency and authenticity are required for shared economies, with tourism a particularly client-facing and technology-facing industry. He also wants to see businesses continue to focus on the triple bottom line: profit, people and planet.

Synergies

Senthil said that from a meetings industry and ICCA perspective, it's all about blending expertise and bringing synergies together. "You see new entrants in the market, brands and products, and competition and cooperation are being seen more. It makes the industry stronger and longer lasting. Knowledge sharing develops day by day and the economic impact becomes stronger. It's a key driving force in the meetings industry," explains Senthil.

The diversity of the continent is Africa's strength, says Senthil, adding, "Each country has its own USPs, strengths and weaknesses. When we share each other's strengths, we make it happen as one continent. The expertise goes back many years. What we need from each country is to share your expertise and market with the rest of the world."

Raymond says that if one looks at the challenges that Africa faces, it is fertile ground to solve problems and issues through shared economies. "Some 60% of the population of this continent is unbanked, so we shouldn't look to solve these problems in isolation as it would take millennia. The idea that your cell phone number can be your bank account, for example, is powerful. The success of M-Pesa is a great example showing how a telecoms company is solving a banking problem," he notes.

"We find that we can leapfrog at times and lead at others," says Byron.

Tools

- **Skills-sharing** is a big problem, says Raymond. He looks to connect with universities and unemployed youth to bridge the skills gap and provide opportunities to gain real experience and exposure in the IT sector. Byron

says that innovation comes from data sharing, with students often coming up with innovative products and solutions.

- **Data sharing** is another topical issue, with Byron's company, which includes TomTom, making data from their mapping platforms available to a wider audience in the form of traffic and navigation information, and in so doing helping government, consumers and business to optimise their travel daily. Data sharing or co-creating is particularly difficult cross-borders, adds Raymond, as countries see their data as their personal IP. Regulation adds another level of complexity.
- **Data mining** also requires training and focus, as some people effectively mine the data that is already available to them while others don't.
- **Matchmaking** from an event point of view is very important, adds Byron. As visitors don't usually have time to visit every stand, organisers who can match visitor to exhibitor is priceless. This extends to include matching corporates to the best fit for small or community business.
- **Technology** is already impacting the business-events industry, with digital features like 3D, meetings and diary management tools and apps improving connectivity.

Spaces

Rashid says he's seeing more non-traditional areas being used for meetings and events. While Meetings Africa takes place at a business centre like Sandton Convention Centre, he's seeing more events take place in townships or car parks being transformed into a meeting space. He urges industry to keep up with these trends.

Raymond agrees, adding that lecture halls, examination centres and universities should utilise space differently to generate extra income. "A university can be a property business as well as a place of higher education," he notes.

Solutions

There is no "cut and paste" or "one size fits all" solution. Raymond says one cannot expect a solution that works well in one market to produce the same results in another. "You need to localise solutions and don't leave people out," he furthers. He says the success of a business is reliant on customers with money and who are healthy, spending that money on your business – solutions need to result in these outcomes.

Senthil says that innovation may start as a disrupter but later be accepted as a solution. Rashid emphasised the need to adapt to stay in business. He looks at trends and says they come with inevitable changes, with some industries falling by the wayside if they have failed to adapt.

Panellists were encouraged to see how the theme has been embraced on the floor of Meetings Africa, with exhibitors and visitors sharing thoughts, engaging and carrying the message forward.

"Each country has its own USPs, strengths and weaknesses. When we share each other's strengths, we make it happen as one continent."



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GREEN STAND AWARD WINNERS

2018 marks the 6th year of the Green Stand Awards at Meetings Africa. The objective of the awards is to give recognition to the exhibition stands that reflect the implementation of event greening principles under the overarching theme of promoting sustainability.

All exhibition stands at Meetings Africa are eligible for the award. Preparation and participation are also encouraged. Naturally, there's often a positive correlation between active preparation and participation by those companies who intend to compete for the award and winning, with a written motivation assisting the judges with their decision.

CRITERIA: The stand adjudication considers five criteria, namely Design, Materials, Operations, Transportation, Communication & Policy, Beyond Green, and Innovation.

Winners:

Small stand winner – CSIR International Convention Centre
Small stand runner up – Faircity Hotels & Apartments

Medium stand winner – Shai Boi Project Management

Medium stand runner up – The Forum
Medium stand special mention – Double Tree

Large Stand winner – Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau
Large Stand runner up – Limpopo Tourism Agency

Small Stand Winner:

CSIR: While it is a striking stand, it is commendable that most of the stand comprises reused materials from previous years, and even includes recycled pallets and plants from their gardens. With energy efficient lights and limited collateral, they kept their footprint light, while still making a statement.

Medium Stand Winner:

Shai Boi: As a new participant of Meetings Africa they embraced the concept of greening their stand through the use of Xanita board made from recycled material. LED lighting, a single fridge unit, limited LED display screens, low energy - low impact activations all contribute to a low energy consumption on site. Also, limited brochures and no gifting.



Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau © 7 Colors Communications

Large Stand Winner:

Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau:

They had an integrated design and thinking to ensure the long-term sustainability and limited negative impact of their stand. This included elements of reuse from previous years, recycled and recyclable materials, low energy lighting and

modular design. With the drought in Cape Town they had a focus on water saving, with no real flowers on their stand, but rather Xanita board Proteas.

Many thanks to the judges for their time to do the adjudication:

Tshepo Maseko, Mmabatho Sikhakhane, Morwesi Ramonyai, and Rudi van der Vyver.



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THEEVENT.CO.ZA – SHOWCASING AFRICAN BUSINESS-EVENT PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The *Event* magazine, the leading publication for the business-events industry in Africa, has launched its online portal.

Lance Gibbons, publisher of the *Event* magazine, explains the concept:

"The African business-events industry is lacking a comprehensive, easy-to-use, and affordable online platform. Therefore, we spent the last year developing one. The aim of the website is to connect event stakeholders with clients, suppliers and peers. For a nominal fee, venues can showcase their offerings, suppliers can post company profiles, users can rate their experiences, and companies can list their businesses in the directory, which is easily searchable by category."

Katie Reynolds-Da Silva, Editor-in-Chief of the *Event* magazine, elaborates:

"One of the most crucial parts of this website is its focus on you, the events-industry stakeholder. We have priced our digital marketing options with you in mind. We understand the pain points of our clients, and we have priced accordingly. Users can submit news articles, think-pieces, event listings, and job opportunities, or simply browse the information already available."

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THE DAVINCI HOTEL AND SUITES WINS THE GREEN HOTEL AWARD FOR MEETINGS AFRICA 2018

The Green Hotel Award is now in its fourth year and has become a key feature of Meetings Africa, where partner hotels are given recognition for their efforts and contribution towards sustainability. Partner hotels participated through the following activities:

1. Signing the Meetings Africa sustainability pledge
2. Completing the Meetings Africa self-assessment questionnaire and providing supporting documentation around their environmental initiatives
3. Were available for a confirmation site visit as part of the eco-audit of Meetings Africa.

Hotels were scored on their sustainability strategies, water-saving measures, energy-saving initiatives, waste reduction

measure, transport options, CSI initiatives, and sustainability training for staff

The following three hotels submitted their pledge and were available for a site visit:

- Maslow Sun International
- The DaVinci Hotel and Suites
- The Michelangelo Hotel

Based on the self-assessment score sheet, supporting documentation and interviews, the DaVinci Hotel and Suites is recommended for the winner of the Green Hotel Award for Meetings Africa 2018.

They led across most categories and demonstrated a commitment beyond expectation. They are ISO 14 000 certified as well as a high-ranking recipient of the Heritage programme

"The DaVinci Hotel and Suites is recommended for the winner of the Green Hotel Award for Meetings Africa 2018."

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Tariro Ndebele, Zimbabwe

MEETINGS AFRICA SHINES AS PAN-AFRICAN PLATFORM

The Meetings Africa theme of “shared economies” is evident on the stands of our colleagues from across the continent. Chatting to representatives from tourism agencies, properties and PCOs shows they’ve come with a business strategy in hand, meetings set up and a powerful selling proposition.

Tanzania: Doris Parsons is a director at StudioRed Communications, an agency that manages conferences, special events and public relations. She says, “This is our second year at Meetings Africa as a PCO (Tanzania has exhibited several times) and we’re back more informed and focused to sell to the MICE market. This is a premier event for the MICE industry and for us. People need more destinations to sell to their clients and we’re here to give information to buyers so that they’ll remember what Tanzania has to offer. We’re here to promote the destination and our services, and to follow up on leads as they come in. We see Meetings Africa as a long-term investment. We’re building up our CRM database, keeping in touch with relevant people and looking for association business.”

Seychelles: Lena Hoareau, manager for South Africa at the Seychelles Tourist Office, says this is their third time at Meetings Africa. She says the show has worked well to promote to the MICE market. “In previous years it was always about leisure as that is what Seychelles is known for. Now that we have that visibility and the infrastructure, we’re marketing more

about groups and incentives. We are focusing on companies planning to bring groups to the Seychelles on combined incentive and leisure trips. When you combine leisure with business, more people benefit in the Seychelles from your investment and you benefit by ensuring a greater return on your investment. Once people have been to Seychelles they’ll go back with a lot of memories, and hopefully return.”

Uganda: Godwin Mweteise of Yala Safaris Uganda is delighted to promote Uganda as a tourism attraction, in particular tracking of mountain gorillas. These very scarce creatures – there are only 750 remaining in the wild in the world and half of these are in Uganda, with the remainder in Rwanda and the Congo – are a massive attraction worldwide. He says, “We’re looking at first-time buyers, to encourage countries to come visit and see our activities, which includes a lot of wildlife and the third-highest mountain in Africa. We’re focusing on partnering with agents to bring business to our country. So far we have had a number of agencies registered from the Middle East, South Africa and Europe and are looking forward to welcoming them to Uganda. We’re also looking forward to Africa’s Travel Indaba.”

Rwanda: Frank Murangwa is director of MICE Destination Marketing at Rwanda Convention Bureau. This is his third Meetings Africa and he’s seen huge progress and a shift in business from when they first exhibited to this year. He says, “We first came as the Bureau only and now we have seven partners with us representing

the country. Meetings Africa is one of the biggest platforms in Africa. Some 70% of our business comes from Africa so we’ve keen to engage buyers and associations, showing the significant impact of growing the entire MICE market in Africa. Association business rotates so our presence here means we can persuade buyers to host their future events in Rwanda. We’re also looking at tourism from other African countries and what impacts it. We are looking at air connectivity and opening up new routes across Africa, including a new route to Cape Town launching in May. We find when we open up flights, we get an increase in visitors. We launched easy visas to the entire world this year too, which makes coming to Rwanda easier. Businesses and governments are investing in the MICE industry.”

Zimbabwe: Tariro Ndebele, sales and marketing director for African Sun, says she is excited about the many opportunities for business and incentive travel to Zimbabwe. African Sun is the largest hotel group in Zimbabwe by room capacity, with 11 hotels spread across every tourist destination and city. She says, “Each year we keep finding more value and that’s why we’re back this year. Zimbabwe is open for business, said our new President. Following on from this, we believe we are one of the best destinations for incentives and meetings in the region, and even the world – we have Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. We get great return on investment from Meetings Africa and the quality of the buyers makes it worth our while to be here. They get to understand us and we get to understand them – this is very important as they are a conduit to our products. We need to tell the correct story – Zimbabwe has an amazing story to tell. At the height of our great tourism industry, our major source markets were Europe, the Americas, and Africa, to a much smaller degree. Now we’ve realised there’s a lot of money in Africa that we haven’t tapped into. We continue to communicate with our existing markets as well as new markets, such as the Middle and Far East. We’re learning from each other – Africa has such potential. A forum such as this opens up opportunities and spaces where we can cooperate and compete. We call it co-opetition.”

“We get great return on investment from Meetings Africa and the quality of the buyers makes it worth our while to be here. They get to understand us and we get to understand them – this is very important as they are a conduit to our products.”



Lena Hoareau, Seychelles



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Lodge	Conferencing up to (PAX)
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Mosetlha Bush Camp Eco Lodge *Strictly an eco lodge; no electricity. Will not host a conventional meeting but will welcome events such as team building and strategic planning sessions*	10 pax single 16 pax sharing
The Bush house *Meetings and conferences permitted only if the group takes over the whole lodge*	6 pax single 10 pax sharing

UNLOCKING PINK TOURISM FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

By Jason JL Fiddler, founding chair and board member, KwaZulu-Natal Gay & Lesbian Tourism Association (KZNGALTA).



© KwaZulu-Natal Gay & Lesbian Tourism Association's Jason Fiddler co-presenting a travel trade talk on LGBT travel at Tourism Indaba 2016

A niche market no more, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) or pink travel has within the past decade evolved from a curiosity for mainstream tourism practitioners into a multi-billion dollar market segment, identified as between 4-6% of the economically active population (other research has banded this between 5-10%).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has produced two reports on this segment so far. In the 2nd Global LGBT Travel Report in 2017, Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General states that "LGBT tourism has experienced a significant increase in recent years. Gradually, this dynamic segment has proven its capacity to become a powerful vehicle for economic development. Yet the positive impacts of LGBT tourism reach far beyond mere economic benefits. Indeed, destinations welcoming LGBT tourism convey a powerful image of tolerance and respect."

With South African Tourism's "5-in-5" strategic goal to attract five million more leisure and business travellers to the country within five years, the challenge to government and the tourism industry is where to find these additional guests, how to facilitate their transport and provide the bed nights, activities and attractions to meet this demand head on.

Expansion of marketing efforts that speak honestly and encouragingly to LGBT travellers has been proven to result in increased tourism spend for some destinations. The report provides further insight: "While data is continually sought to explain these trends, LGBT travellers have become recognised as a segment that travels with greater frequency and demonstrates higher-than-average patterns of spending. Social change and improvements in the legal recognition and protection of LGBT people around the world have meant that LGBT consumers have gradually become more visible and with this, more easily targeted as a consumer segment."

Greater visibility is translating into quantifiable figures. In 2011, San-Francisco-based Community Marketing Inc (CMI) produced a study that estimated the U.S. LGBT travel market to be worth US\$65-billion annually, whilst Netherlands-based Out Now Consulting projected a global market spend of US\$165-billion for 2012.

In 2016 CMI valued global LGBT tourism spend at US\$211-billion per annum, an increase of about 27% in five years.

Clearly the buying power of a largely untapped marketplace has yet to reach its full potential. For South Africa, this can translate into at least tens of thousands of additional tourists each year, with the economic impact exceeding hundreds of millions of Rands.

"Slapping on a rainbow flag, or pink-washing, is insufficient to have a proper impact for products and destinations seeking to attract LGBT leisure and business travellers" says Jason Fiddler, key accounts manager for the non-profit KwaZulu-Natal Gay & Lesbian Tourism Association (KZNGALTA). "We were founded in 2004 to help guide the Tourism KZN pink strategy, and over the past 14 years as the oldest, and only, African LGBT tourism body, we find ourselves continually educating our business members and moreover the industry of both the value and import of speaking appropriately to, and genuinely welcoming our community onboard their transport, into their accommodation and as visitors to their attractions."



- The Event** @TheEventSA · 41m
MEC for Economic Development in Gauteng Lebogang Maile calls for more investment in infrastructure in townships, in order for more business events to be held in those regions. #MeetingsAfrica18
16 retweets, 22 likes
- SANCB** @SA_NCB · 11m
"Tourism industry is a strong contributor to our economy on the continent, offering great opportunities for growth. South Africa has already secured bids estimated to contribute R2.2 billion between now and 2021."
- @sisantshona #MeetingsAfrica18
8 retweets, 14 likes
- Dudzile Ramela** @duduramela · 32m
As Africans we can conjure great innovations and transform people's lives.
- Tokozile Xasa #MeetingsAfrica18
13 retweets, 20 likes
- moses mutapati** @momutaps · 33m
"Lets all become ambassadors of tourism" ...Minister Tokozile Xasa giving the Welcome remarks at #MeetingsAfrica18
11 retweets, 15 likes
- Visit Gauteng** @visitgauteng · 59m
The (new) President of South Africa has highlighted the importance of tourism. This is thanks to the hard work put in by the industry.
- Tokozile Xasa #MeetingsAfrica18 #GautengMeansBusiness
21 retweets, 11 likes
- Emmanuel K. Dogbevi** @EmmanuelDogbevi · 1h
The MICE industry is essentially a job creator and equally enables for infrastructure development. #MeetingsAfrica18 @SA_NCB
12 retweets, 25 likes
- Neo Mohlatlole** @NeoMohlatlole · 3h
When you learn teach, when you get give. Sharing knowledge on event greening and career opportunities in the MICE sector #MeetingsAfrica18 #Futureleadersforum
10 retweets, 13 likes
- SANCB** @SA_NCB · 46m
"As I bid farewell to you and all our other key stakeholders, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your role in showcasing Africa as a premier business tourism destination." Tokozile Xasa #MeetingsAfrica18
10 retweets, 13 likes

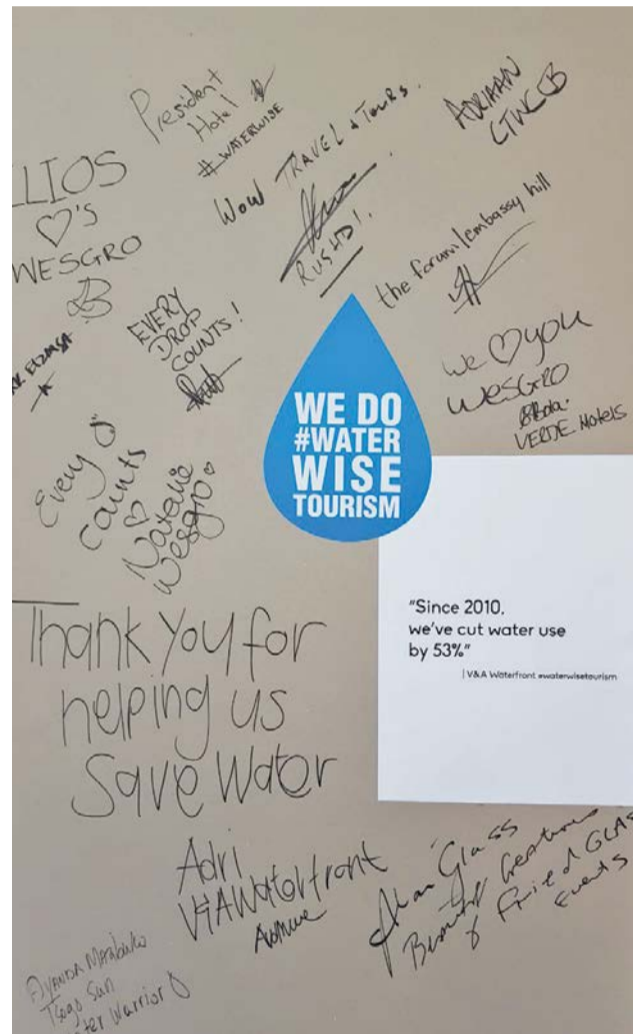
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SCENES FROM THE FLOOR



VOX POPS



SHEWANGIZAW TILAHUN, UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE CENTRE

I am at Meetings Africa to promote ECA Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Our exhibition area is 2 100m² and can accommodate stands of any size, as per our clients' requirements. Conference Room 1 can accommodate up to 864 people, and there are multiple other conference rooms and meeting rooms.



YUGASHNEE NAICKER, GROUP MANAGER, SALES, PEERMONT

We have three convention centres: in Botswana, Malawi, and Emperors Palace here in South Africa, so we are moving our business much more towards the conference market. We also have our leisure products that complement business-events, such as our casino.



RICK TAYLOR, CEO, THE BUSINESS TOURISM COMPANY

Meetings Africa is growing in the right direction. Earlier, I was reminiscing with an industry peer about the early years of Meetings Africa. When the Rwanda Convention Bureau first exhibited, they had 9m². Now their stand is almost 40m². The show has gone from strength to strength. Meetings Africa is THE African platform.



VEVE KONDILE, EDGE LODGE

This is my first time here at Meetings Africa, and it is well worth it. It's so informative and the way it is organised is very professional. I have met some interesting people and clinched some deals. I have meetings set up all day. Edge Lodge is a group of lodges situated in Beacon Bay in East London. We offer accommodation and conference and function rooms.



ADÉLE MARITZ, CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

This year we are promoting CTICC 2. We opened the new building in January, and it adds an additional 10 000m² of exhibition space and seven new meeting rooms to the existing convention centre. The response has been phenomenal at Meetings Africa. For Cape Town, it's amazing to have an additional offering.



MINISTER KGANYAGO, MANAGER: BUSINESS TOURISM MARKETING, ATKV RESORTS

At Meetings Africa, we are proudly offering ATKV Resorts as the place where great minds meet. We understand that the organisations that come for meetings at ATKV need environments that will facilitate creative and out-of-the-box thinking, so that the outcomes are high-quality. Our venues are at the heart of this business mantra.



TRACY MALEBANA, JOHANNESBURG EXPO CENTRE

The show has been great! The people that visited are very relevant to our business. The international hosted buyers are really interested in hosting events at Expo Centre. The Meetings Africa dailies really stood out this year. It was great to see so many products and attractions represented.



ZUKISWA NTWASA, EASTERN CAPE PARKS AND TOURISM AGENCY

We have met very good quality buyers this year. Our strategy is to meet African corporate and association buyers. We have also met some professors and African universities, and I'm confident that we'll secure good business with them. We are definitely coming back again next year!

CONTACT US

Director
Solly Moeng
solly@solamedia.co.za

Director
Lance Gibbons
lance@solamedia.co.za

Editor in Chief
Katie Reynolds-Da Silva
katie@solamedia.co.za

Head of Design
Sheree Steenkamp

Designer
Lauren Smith

Junior Designer
Caitlin Perrett

Writer
Susan Reynard

Business Manager
Coleen Tapson

Account Executive
Nicole Koopman

Production Manager
Aaysha Parker

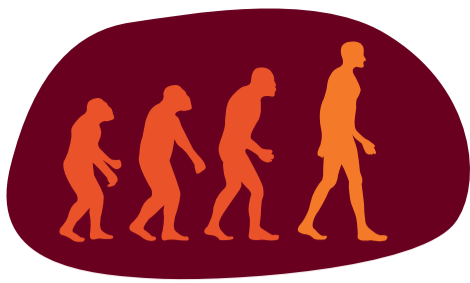
Traffic Manager
Tamlyn Peters

Printer
LawPrint

Regent Square,
Block A, Ground Floor,
Doncaster Road,
Kenilworth, 7745
Tel: +27 21 674 0646

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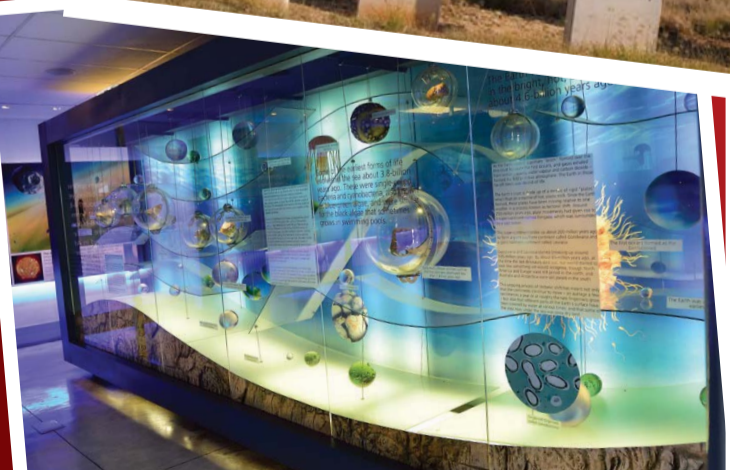
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