

Harnessing the power of technology to benefit African tourism businesses

 By [Josephine Wawira](#)

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With an internet penetration rate of approximately 27% in Africa, there is still a lot to be achieved, but this is an opportunity for tourism businesses to harness and benefit from. Players such as Jumia Travel are already in the forefront.

According to its CEO Paul Midy, the company is keen on using technology to revolutionise how people travel. This is for instance, through incorporating Revenue Management Systems which create a smooth booking process for both the customers and hotel partners.

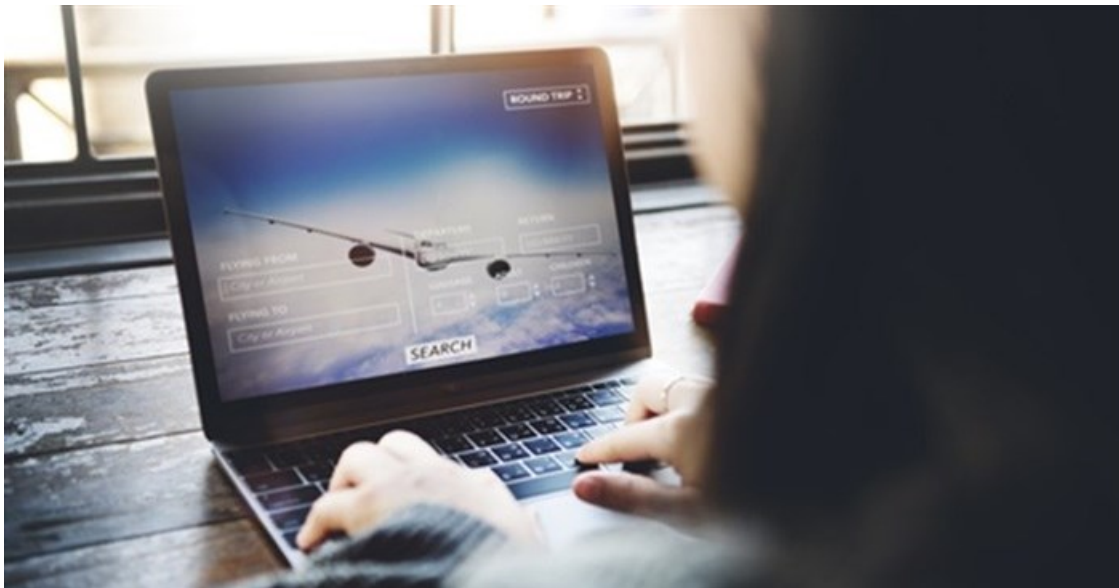


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Moreover, speaking on 16 May at the recently concluded Indaba 2017 travel show in Durban, South Africa, Midy stressed that using technology to connect African nations through tourism will grow the continent's economy and improve its competitiveness with other global tourist destinations. "64% of money spent in Africa for travel and tourism is spent by Africans. Therefore, investors should focus more on the one billion people on the continent, and grow domestic tourism," he said.

But challenges abound, such as the high cost of travel in Africa, as well as the difficulties of acquiring visas to travel within the continent. It is for this reason that the Jumia Travel boss echoed sentiments by South African President Jacob Zuma, who during his official opening of the Indaba show called upon African governments to ease visa regulations for Africans, "in a bid to create a seamless travel experience and make Africa a destination of choice in the world."

According to UNWTO, global tourism recorded its seventh successive year of sustained growth since the global financial crisis in 2016. Each year, over one billion people now travel around the world, with global international tourist arrivals registering an average 4% growth. Africa enjoyed an 8% increase in international tourist arrivals to reach 58 million in 2016, a double-fold growth rate with more potential for both tourism and economic development.

ABOUT JOSEPHINE WAWIRA

Josephine Wawira is a consultant in communication and public relations with over six years of progressive writing and broadcast experience. She is currently a writer for Africa's online hotel booking portal, Jumia Travel, focusing in the areas of travel, tourism and hospitality as it relates to Africa.

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