

Indaba 2014 has risen to the challenge, says SA Tourism's CEO

Thulani Nzima, the CEO of South African Tourism, has promised the tourism industry an intensely business-focused Indaba 2014. He said that next year's Indaba has risen to the challenge to ensure that it is revamped, relevant and future proof.



Our commitment is to the industry; it's our job to identify, attract and assemble the very best buyers and exhibitors who have a common purpose, to connect and to share. As an extension of this, the primary purpose of Indaba is to construct an unrivalled environment for people to do business.

Nzima was speaking to delegates at the Travel and Tourism Summit in Joburg, when he explained that South African Tourism had commenced a three-year journey to make Indaba the vortex that fuels the southern African (and now rest of Africa's) travel and tourism industry, ensuring it provides the best possible environment to facilitate quality meetings.

Indaba, he said, was on an irrevocable path to being a genuinely pan-African travel trade show that offers buyers the best and the widest diversity of African product under one roof. In response to demand, South African Tourism had invited all of Africa to Indaba 2014.

"Indaba is the only true travel and trade show that is owned within Africa. As the host country, South Africa is excited to unite with its fellow Africans, to join forces and actively raise the profile of our continent in the travel and tourism sector. International buyers don't see borders, so we are expecting to improve both the number and quality of Indaba buyers at Indaba as a result."

An unequalled opportunity to do business

This year, buyers came from 77 countries around the world and, in 2014, this number is expected to grow. Indaba 2014 will give the world's travel and tourism buyers an unequalled opportunity to do business with more than 1600 African exhibitors at a show that prides itself on being the biggest and broadest, must-attend, mass-market travel trade show on the continent.

"The African continent," he said, "is undergoing unprecedented growth in tourist arrivals and global market interest. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's International Tourism in 2012 - Key Trends and Outlook report, average growth to the African continent in 2012 was 6%, second only to growth in the Asia Pacific region (7%)."

Indaba 2013, Nzima said, was attended by 2,341 local and international buyers, 249 of who were top international buyers hosted by South African Tourism.

"Indaba-hosted buyers are carefully selected against specified criteria. South African Tourism sources the best buyers from around the world, ensures they qualify, and invites them to Indaba to work with the industry, with the intention of benefiting everyone's bottom line".

Indaba 2014 is expected to attract more than 6,400 leading professionals and companies to meet and do business in Durban over the three days. Already, more than 200 exhibitors have reserved their space. South African Tourism expects 3,000 influential global buyers to come and no less than 800 journalists from all over the world are expected to attend, affording media coverage to many exhibitors.

A number of exciting changes

To illustrate the commitment to re-energize and reposition Indaba as the must-attend travel and tourism exhibition, a number of exciting changes are planned for 2014.

They include a brand new matchmaking system that will ensure the most appropriate meetings for both exhibitors and buyers to make optimal use of their time; a new Travel Technology Zone that will showcase all the latest travel tech trends that impact on the industry; and, most importantly, a designated Business Hub Zone with back-to-back table-top meetings, simulating more business than ever before as exhibitors are guaranteed access to top quality hosted buyers.

"Indaba is justifiably known as Africa's top travel show. We are working hard, and smart, to make sure it maintains its status as the continent's premier trade show and one of the three most important travel events on the global calendar," he said.

For more, go to www.indaba2014.net.

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