

## INDABA 2015 concluded on a high note

INDABA 2015 concluded on May 11, 2015 and enjoyed great participation from 20 countries from around the African continent. More importantly, the level of connectivity between buyers and exhibitors vastly improved over 2014.



When business closed on day three of INDABA, the number of meetings had increased by 69% from 17,191 in 2014 to 29,058 meetings. The Online Diary and Match Making System was a key driver in improving the quality of the INDABA 2015 experience for exhibitors and buyers. The investment that South African Tourism has made in upgrading the Online Diary and Match Making system was acknowledged by exhibitors, particularly those representing four and five star accommodation.

The highlight for Mauritius Tourism Authority was the increase in the number of meetings they set up at INDABA 2015. "We have had many meetings and a lot of interest in our destination. It's a wonderful platform to conduct business and meet people" says Amrita Craig of Mauritius Tourism Authority.

"We have done what we set out to do," says Mr Thulani Nzima, CEO of South African Tourism. "We have brought the best of Africa together, and we have put our industry in direct contact with the exceptional, painstakingly selected buyers. Imagine the business that will come from 29,058 meetings. This is what INDABA is all about: creating an enabling business environment for the exhibitors who invest in their businesses and in destination Africa through INDABA."

When South African Tourism commenced INDABA 2015 planning, it was determined to put exhibitors at the heart of the show. INDABA, Mr Nzima says, "is their show." Without the exhibitors there would be no tradeshow, there would be no tourism industry and there would be no cause to invite tourism buyers to South Africa. INDABA is not just another place to do business, it is the embodiment of the African spirit, where Ubuntu connects delegates from all corners of the globe."

It was apparent that INDABA 2015 delivered value to the exhibitors. Andrew Seguya, Chief Executive Officer, Uganda Wildlife Authority: "We have found INDABA 2015 extremely valuable. Whereas other trade shows sell the whole world, INDABA is selling Africa. We will return next year."

The INDABA bid parties (that included Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, Durban Tourism and the International Conventions Centre) will spend the next few weeks reviewing INDABA 2015. Planning for INDABA 2016 has commenced and the date will be announced after the review meeting.

Mr Nzima says it was already apparent - from remarkable growth in the number of meetings held this year - that the strong demand for business meetings at INDABA would be a core focus of INDABAs of the future.