

WTM Global Trends Report highlights opportunities in tourism industry

Euromonitor, the world's leader in strategy research for consumer markets have released their annual World Travel Market (WTM) Global Trends Report 2012 at London's World Travel Market on 5 November.

The WTM Global Trends Report has successfully predicted some significant trends in the travel and tourism industry over the last eight years. This includes gamification, or the integration of gaming dynamics in non-gaming environments to create brand awareness and loyalty, as a key industry trend for travel companies. Cape Town Tourism recently lead the way in South Africa's destination gamification by introducing a Facebook game during October 2012.

Shopping is a major theme

The Euromonitor Trends Report for 2012 highlights shopping as a major theme, with BRICs flocking to Europe, Indians jetting off on low-cost carriers to purchase gold, and hotels being built inside shopping malls in the Middle East. Technological innovation is the driving force between the rise of smart TVs and creating new opportunities for travel brands. Americans are drawn to countries coming in from the cold, such as North Korea, Cuba and Myanmar, while Nigeria's film industry, Nollywood, is a magnet for intra-regional African travel.

Opportunities for Cape Town and the Western Cape include:

- An increase in the number of UK holidaymakers taking more than one holiday this year could be a sign that the country's economic fortunes are improving. The World Travel Market 2012 Industry Report has revealed more than half, 52%, of the 1 001 UK holidaymakers polled took more than one holiday this year, many of them to long-haul destinations. With 200 000 visitors from the UK visiting Cape Town annually, this bodes well for tourism from this key source market.
- Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Chile, Nigeria and Singapore have been highlighted as the next set of emerging travel and tourism powerhouses. Cape Town and the Western Cape have strong trade relationships with a number of these countries and a focus on business exchange coupled with leisure tourism pose a definite opportunity for the region.
- Travel technology is set to become more interactive and advanced with the onset of Smart TVs. Similar to smartphones, smart TVs integrate television with Internet technologies and social media. In the future, people watching travel programmes will be able to make immediate bookings through their smart TVs via travel apps or web links. Cape Town Tourism's continued investment in technology and ability to speak to the digitally-savvy traveller will lead the way for the destination in an ever-increasingly digital travel arena.
- The flipside of the digitally connected coin is starting to show emerge with a growing trend in international hotels offering guests a break from being constantly connected. When offering Wi-Fi is standard for many hotels - others are heading in the opposite direction and helping guests to check in and switch off, offering 'digital detox' holidays to help stressed consumers to relax and unwind, without texts and emails.

A progressively competitive era

Says Mariëtte Du Toit-Helmbold, Cape Town Tourism CEO: "The Euromonitor Report again sets the tone for new developments in international tourism trends. Learnings for Cape Town and the Western Cape is clear - the world is moving faster, changing more and appearing smaller as countries, regions and cultures collide and intermix more than ever before. As the tourism industry we are finding ourselves in a progressively competitive era, one of overwrought resources and huge challenges for markets once considered stable. It is critical that the tourism industry keep an eye on the over-arching

trends affecting the world of international travel and continue to look for opportunities as much as prospective drawbacks.

"The opportunities for Cape Town and the Western Cape stemming from interactions at World Travel Market as well as insight gleaned from the trends in the Euromonitor Report demonstrate that we are on the right track in the way we are positioning the region as an inspirational, must-see destination. The search for authenticity in digitally connected destinations continues - especially from our key source markets of Europe and the USA that are increasingly discerning in their travel choices. A strong focus on emerging destinations and Cape Town Tourism and Wesgro's collaboration with South African Tourism in new source markets of Asia and the Pacific will be a determining factor in growing tourism in the next five years," Du Toit-Helmbold concluded.

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