

SA Tourism appoints new Chief Marketing Officer

African brand development specialist, Margie Whitehouse, is the new Chief Marketing Officer for South African Tourism...



Margie Whitehouse

Whitehouse has over 25 years' experience in nurturing and growing African brands, within both the public and private sectors. Her journey into marketing began when she joined the Unilever management graduate programme in 1988. Her experiences in various marketing roles have shaped her into a seasoned brand innovator, developer and entrepreneur.

Margie holds a Degree in Bachelor of Business Science (Honours Marketing) from UCT. An entrepreneur at heart, she has created and started brand consultancies to assist companies, both start-ups and established, to innovate and build strong brand identities.

She built Freedthinkers in 1999 where she worked as CEO until 2005, assisting brands such as the dti, FirstRand, Department of Environment and Technology, Nando's, Investec, MTN and moyo. She is currently working in a consultative capacity for MW Brand Innovation, focusing on building great African brands such as SowetoTV, Argon and Loxion Kulca.

Whitehouse has served on the SAA Board, presently sits on the board of HospiceWits, in order to give back to society, and also chairs the WPGA (the Women's Professional Golf Association) through her passion for golf.

Commenting on Whitehouse's appointment, South African Tourism's Chief Executive Officer, Thulani Nzima said: "Margie is the ideal candidate to drive the brand promise of destination South Africa both domestically and globally. Her extensive knowledge of the African continent also bodes well in her new role, as Africa is an important market for us. We have bold plans to continue growing our footprint on the continent. Her myriad of experiences in the marketing field makes her ideal for this strategic role. She is a well-rounded marketing specialist whose insight will ensure that South African Tourism's marketing initiatives can compete with the best in the world."

She remarked "I am delighted to be joining South African Tourism, especially at a time when tourism is such an important

contributor to the economy of our country. A research-informed integrated marketing strategy, innovative use of technology, and a clear understanding of the ever-evolving needs of travellers, are only some of the critical components for successful destination marketing. With this in mind, I look forward to working with the team at South African Tourism, as well as various stakeholders to strengthen South Africa's brand further and continue growing tourist arrivals to our beautiful country."

Whitehouse will assume her role as Chief Marketing Officer at South African Tourism from 2 March 2015.

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