

# top10 | TRENDS IN DESTINATION MARKETING for TWENTYFIFTEEN



CAPE TOWN  
TOURISM

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## Crafting content that tells not sells

Armchair travellers are looking to first-hand experiences and everyday stories to spin the compass on their next visit. Technology has become the campfire around which these stories are being told – with Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tripadvisor, Wayn and Pinterest keeping the coals aglow. What's more - the story merely starts with the booking, and then plays out during - and long after - the visit.

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## Creating opportunities for visitors to become locals

As Millennial traveller numbers start to snowball, bucket lists have become more personal than prescribed. Meeting local shopkeepers, renting someone's home and hiring a pair of bicycles ticks all the boxes as touristic attractions give way to unexplored neighbourhoods that get real. The local citizen is key to fostering good feelings and nurturing lifelong relationships.

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## Optimising channels for three screen viewing

As would-be visitors and in-destination travellers increasingly digest their info on tablets and smart phones, there is massive user migration to mobile platforms. Optimising destination websites for mobile - with further buzz about responsive tech like meta-search, apps and mobile payment – is a migration that is non-negotiable. Don't think trend, think seismic shift.

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## Providing inspiration before information

Today's knockout tourism websites are image-driven, emotive and absorbing. Information still counts but most journey-planners will mine multiple sites and refer to user reviews to plot their trip. Creating a visual imprint cuts through the clutter.

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## Facilitating storytelling through influencers

The conversation is happening in the midst of the experience. The landscape has gone from being one defined by the authority of few to a kaleidoscope of opinions, snapshots and observations; a world in which 'likes' keep the 'love' flowing. Facilitating and strengthening the conversation has become pivotal to the role of the DMO.

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## Valuing quality rather than quantity in social media

Engagement is the buzzword but achieving it takes real commitment and an integrated sense of what both brand and destination stand for. Asking your team to absorb this into their DNA means that DMO's must have a compelling story to begin with, followed by the trust to let others carry that conversation forward.

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## Placing the destination first and the DMO second

In 2015, DMO's are reinventing their role by placing the destination, and not the destination brand, in the limelight. Inspiring images, free from ownership, interpretation and instruction, capture the imagination and ignite the desire to 'be there'.

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## Truly understanding that we can't please everybody

DMO needs to draw on their discipline to curate a series of central ideas and themes that stick. In 2015, we will see that it's the quirkier destinations, those brave enough to take a stand that catch the limelight. Destinations that try to tick every box will end up looking like everyone else.

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## Collaborating rather than competing

Skint budgets, a shortage of time and a common purpose all add up to avoiding disaggregation of effort. Creating systems and trust for collaborative projects and common messaging goes a long way towards selling a destination clearly and authentically.

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## Trialling, refining and trialling again

Product is no longer the end point of the process, today's economic climate and the expectation of adaptability has called on us to rethink the idea that there is a beginning, middle and end. The notion that a business, idea or project is constantly functioning as a prototype encourages creativity, boldness and agility: fail-fast and learn quickly.

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