Issue 12 | 2016



Africa's Leading Business-Events Industry Magazine

ICONIC SIGHTS AND HIDDEN GEMS Discover South Africa's Best this Festive Season LESSONS LEARNED IN 2017

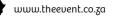
Venues and Suppliers Share their Challenges and Successes





From the team at the *Event* magazine, we would like to wish our friends and clients a wonderful festive season, and a prosperous 2017.



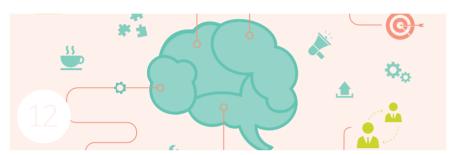






ICONIC SIGHTS AND HIDDEN GEMS

Kim Crowie takes a look at some of the iconic places South Africa has to offer this season – as well as hidden conferencing gems worth exploring.



LESSONS LEARNED

The industry reflects on the challenges of 2016, and how these insights will guide their 2017.



ADVENTURE TOURISM

It's the buzzword of the season, so buckle up for the adventure of a lifetime.



CAPE WEST COAST

Wesgro brings you another feature on one of the Western Cape's greatest regions. This month, we explore the quaint towns and culinary delights of the West Coast.

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A MASSIVE THANK YOU FROM THE EVENT TEAM

The Event has enjoyed another incredible year of growth and success, thanks to you!



Lance Gibbons – Publishing Editor

This has been a year of political uncertainty, fluctuating currencies, protests, and the threat of being downgraded to junk status; however, we have still managed to attract a great number of conferences, incentive travellers and new exhibitions to our country. Wesgro has exceeded set targets for the year, procuring more international business for 2017 than 2016. Incentive houses are finding that the global appetite for South African products are steadily growing, after a very difficult period.

Even though the leadership in our country may not be an example to follow, the captains of our industry keep navigating through stormy waters. For example: SAACI, through its ability to showcase different provinces within our country by I feel 2016 has been a year of challenges and must congratulate all business leaders for driving the sector forward. Thank you for your leadership and continued support for our industry. We at the *Event* Magazine salute you and wish you great success in the year to come.

way of its national congress, EXSA repositioning itself to meet organiser and supplier demands within the exhibition sector and AAXO taking organisers to a new level of professionalism. Our industry leadership has been astounding with Amanda and her team at the SANCB creating valuable strategic partnerships both public and private, Nina Freysen Pretorius as President of ICCA, Joey Pather newly appointed CEO of the Guangdong International Convention and Exhibition Centre, and many more.

I feel 2016 has been a year of challenges and must congratulate all business leaders for driving the sector forward. Thank you for your leadership and continued support for our industry. We at the *Event* Magazine salute you and wish you great success in the year to come.



Katie Reynolds-Da Silva – Editor

This year, the *Event* magazine has seen tremendous growth, both within the publication and in our partnerships with international publications and initiatives. We are so proud to announce that the *Event* is the exclusive African partner of the Iceberg, an online collective of knowledge sharing and valuable case studies.

My team continues to astound me with their innovation, talent and industryleading knowledge. It is a pleasure to run this publication, and I am grateful to do my part to grow and develop the business-events sector in Africa.

To our valued clients, thank you for continuing to partner with us and contribute to our cutting-edge editorial. To our new clients, welcome on board, and we wish you manifold success through your adverts, editorial and case studies.

Have a wonderful festive season, and I hope 2017 brings you great success.

ibtm world ANNOUNCES FINAL LINE UP FOR KNOWLEDGE PROGRAMME

ibtm world's knowledge programme is set to deliver a stellar line up of international speakers delivering world class content over the three days of the show.

ollowing the extensive research with the industry the content has been developed to reflect the needs of both exhibitors, Hosted Buyers and visitors.

The content has been created to provide up to date education for all attendees and has been created for the industry by the industry and follows the new 7 themes. *www.ibtmworld.com/knowledge*

As part of the ibtm Knowledge Programme the new theme of Industry Trends will kick off with a highly topical session - The Impact of Brexit featuring James Heappey MP and Chair, All party Parliamentary Group for Events, UK Parliament. The session will discuss and debate the possible impacts of Brexit on the global meetings industry and the panel will be on hand to answer questions and offer their views on this unprecedented state of affairs.

Jurriean Sleijster – President and COO - MCI will discuss the latest trends in the association industry providing an insight into developments in membership, engagement and activation & strategies.

ibtm world and EventMB are partnering to deliver one of the most anticipated pieces of research this year. Julius Solaris will be joined by a panel of top experts within the meetings industry to provide an unprecedented insight into what the industry will look like in 2017. The session will be held on Wednesday 1st December at 11.00.

Fresh Tech for your Event - Dr James Morgan will look at the changing landscape of event technology with exciting new products being offered to event planners.



© ibtm world 2015

The line-up for our knowledge programme is impressive this year, we have fantastic speakers and content which is highly topical, we introduced the new themes and this has given us a clear structure of content which is relevant to everyone attending ibtm world this year.

This multi-media session will explore new logistics and production management technology for better work efficiency.

The content will once again take place in the ACS Knowledge Village and this year's theme will bea circus theme, with rooms being called The Big Top, The Lion's Den and The Circus School.

"The line-up for our knowledge programme is impressive this year, we have fantastic speakers and content which is highly topical, we introduced the new themes and this has given us a clear structure of content which is relevant to everyone attending ibtm world this year", commented Graeme Barnett, Senior Exhibition Director, ibtm world, "The 7 themes as part of the Knowledge Programme are particularly innovative and all topics are at the forefront of the event planners' educational needs."

SA TOURISM APPOINTS NEW REPRESENTATIVE AGENCY IN ITALY

South African Tourism has reaffirmed its faith and investment in Italy as an important tourism source market by appointing JoyCo' as its official representative agency in that country.



Cape Town Beach Café © SATourism

ollowing the closure of SA Tourism's Milan office last year, South Africa has now partnered with JoyCo', founded and directed by Gioja Tresoldi, effective from 1 October 2016 until 31 March 2017.

SA Tourism is undergoing a global restructuring process, with the aim of maximising its marketing spend by reducing operational costs and boosting budgets to directly promote South Africa as an attractive travel destination in certain key markets. This spells good news for Italy's trade and media, which will benefit from the increased marketing investment.

Part of SA Tourism's strategy was to create a Southern Europe Hub in June, servicing the French and Italian markets. This process included the appointment of Bashni Muthaya as Regional Manager: Southern Europe. Muthaya has previously served in various senior capacities at SA Tourism, including as General Manager of the Strategic Research Unit and Regional Director: Europe and the United Kingdom.

"Having played a strategic role in the marketing area for several years," comments Muthaya, "I welcome this new role with great enthusiasm. For the next two years, my goal will be to optimise the functionality of the Southern Europe Hub within the two major markets of France and Italy."

In Italy, Muthaya will be liaising closely with the Joyco representative agency, investing in supporting and training the Italian trade and promoting South Africa through the media until 31 March 2017. In parallel, SA Tourism will be inviting bids from suitable companies to provide these services from April 2017. This is in line with the National Treasury procurement regulations.

"There was a need for SA Tourism to have a representative agency in Italy that merges a knowledge of South Africa with intimate insights into the workings of the I welcome this new role with great enthusiasm. For the next two years, my goal will be to optimise the functionality of the Southern Europe Hub within the two major markets of France and Italy.

Italian market," said Chief Marketing Officer, Margie Whitehouse. "We look forward to a fruitful collaboration with JoyCo' to promote South Africa as a destination for the growing numbers of Italian tourists to South Africa, and we are excited to be working with a local partner of this calibre."

Recent tourist arrival numbers affirm SA Tourism's decision to invest in the Italian market. In the first half of 2016, South Africa welcomed 4.9 million international travellers, including 697 373 from Europe, showing growth of 14.7% over the previous year.

In Europe, the United Kingdom and Germany recorded the most visitors to South Africa, with 222 942 and 142 092 tourists respectively. They were followed by the newly constituted Southern Europe Hub (France and Italy combined), which accounted for 91 653 arrivals between January and June, of which 23 600 were from Italy – an impressive increase of 16.2% over 2015. •





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MULTI-MEDIA: CHANGING THE FACE OF EVENTS

Chris De Lancey, Sales and Marketing Director of Multi-Media, shares his wealth of technology insights with the *Event* and tells us what tech trends we can expect in 2017.

ulti-Media celebrated 25 years of expertise in the industry this year with an exciting birthday bash - on the set of The Voice in Johannesburg. They are a technical partner to the African formats of the show, and although they had small beginnings, their principles of respect and integrity towards staff, suppliers and clients have held them together. In addition to offering event solutions such as the concept and design of stage, sound and lighting; the organisation also has a set-building company in their stable, which has been making a name for itself in the exhibition stand-building arena.

Recent Innovations

In addition to their Midrand office in Johannesburg, Multi-Media have also maintained a Cape Town satellite office, which will soon offer full, stand-alone services to Western Cape clients.

According to Chris De Lancey, equipment has been high on the agenda this year, ensuring the company keeps up with the latest technologies in sound, lighting and AV. "In 2015, we invested in and led the market with what was the highestresolution LED screen in the country at that time, a 3.6mm pitch screen. This screen is ideal for venues where either space or light is problem, and it is ideal for conferencing where detail is required in the information being presented."

What Do They Do, Exactly?

Multi-Media have a number of high-level clients across a range of industries. They've handled quite a selection of jobs, too, from conferences, road shows and launches, to gala dinners and boardroom meetings.

An example of the workload they take on is a recent Pick n Pay Franchise



Multi-Media celebrated 25 years of expertise in the industry this year with an exciting birthday bash – on the set of The Voice in Johannesburg. © Multi-Media

Conference at the Royal Livingstone Hotel in Zambia. "We provided all technical, structures, decking, power, carpeting, artist requirements, as well as assisted with content creation for this event. A total of 188 tonnes of event infrastructure was transported to Livingstone – technical alone comprised 90 tonnes of technology. We had a team of 32 technical staff from SA, together with 24 local staff over the 10 days to install and take down all the equipment and the structures," says Chris.

For their work with the television show *The Voice*, technical consisted of up to 200 panels of 12mm LED screen, approximately 160 moving lights, 170 static lighting fixtures, 96 channels of audio, 60 channels of radio mics, 2km of LED strip lights on 80 controllers, and possibly 5km of cabling.

Trends in the New Year

Chris says popularity in LED screens is set to continue as the technology improves

in resolution and applications. He adds that apps are also starting to make their mark on the events industry. "While South Africa lags a little behind the rest of the world, apps are being used for delegate registration, disseminating programme information, and even to connect people for networking purposes."

A Word of Advice

Planners often forget that audio visuals are such an integral part of a successful event, and Chris gives some great advice for avoiding mishaps: "Don't get us involved at the end. Talk to us early in your planning. We have knowledge and experience that will help. We know which venues will accommodate your big dreams. Talk to us about your budget upfront. After 25 years in the business, you can trust us to give you the correct advice; we'd rather be your partner than your supplier." •





your event enthusiasts





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Solutions



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Show Conceptualisation

At Multi-Media, our passion is bringing ideas to life in full colour through quality visual displays.

We are an experienced team of audio-visual and technical experts, and pride ourselves on providing customised eventing solutions. We draw on 25 years' industry experience, extensive national footprint and access to cutting-edge equipment to deliver perfectly tailored solutions that continually exceed our clients' vision and expectations. This has ensured that we have gathered a reputation for excellence and unparalleled service to our clients.



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ICONIC SIGHTS AND HIDDEN GEMS

We take a look at some of the iconic places South Africa has to offer this season - as well as hidden conferencing gems worth expoloring.

Maropeng

Maropeng is the official visitor centre to the Cradle of Humankind and Sterkfontein Caves. The Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site is an hour's drive from Johannesburg or Pretoria. There is fossil evidence of our early human ancestors dating back more than three million years. By coming here, you are coming to the birthplace of the human species. Maropeng offers a state-of-the-art conference centre, a four-star boutique hotel, a restaurant that boasts the vista of Witwatersberg and Magaliesberg mountain ranges, an outdoor amphitheatre which can accommodate over 6 000 people, dormitory accommodation facilities which are suitable for team-building and youth groups, and an incredible interactive exhibition facility which shows how our ancestors developed over the past few million years. For more information, visit www.maropeng.co.za.

Liliesleaf

A National Heritage Site that commemorates a strategic and seminal point in SA's liberation struggle, Liliesleaf is a beacon on the global landscape of human memory. But more than that, it keeps the memory of the struggle alive and real. "Visitors to the historical site

interact with dynamic, immersive interactive audio and audio-visual exhibits that takes them on an inspiring journey of discovery where intriguing and fascinating liberation struggle testimonies and stories come to life, that helped shape and define South Africa's new democratic dispensation." says Estee Erasmus, Liliesleaf Operations and Marketing Manager.

It offers four conferencing and event venues for between 40 and 200 pax. For more information on Liliesleaf, visit www.liliesleaf.co.za.

Joburg City Theatres

Joburg City Theatres offers three incredible venues in the heart of the City of Gold: the Joburg Theatre Complex, the Roodepoort Theatre and the Soweto Theatre. The staging facilities at Joburg Theatre are among the most sophisticated in the world. They include five computer-controlled stage lifts, five stage wagons facilitating the movement of sets forecast across the stage, a 15m², revolving stage wagon, and an adjustable proscenium.

All three theatres boast plush hospitality suites, where quests can be hosted prior to and after performances. Ideal for an

evening out, these theatres are guaranteed to keep one entertained - with a new amphitheatre set to be built in early 2017 for the Soweto Theatre. For more information on Joburg City Theatres, visit www.joburgcitytheatres.com.

Monte De Dios

An opulent venue fit for royalty, Monte De Dios is a Spanish Equestrian Wedding and Conference Venue situated against Bronberg Mountain in Zwavelpoort, Pretoria East. Although only two years old, Monte De Dios offers old world elegance, coupled with delectable five-star dining and a tranquil spa. "We have a variety of versatile outdoor and indoor venues: ranging from more intimate boardroom meetings or casual brainstorming sessions to larger groups of seven hundred guests," says Chantellé Müller Pieterse, Sales, Marketing and Events Manager at Monte De Dios

Monte De Dios home of PBOE'toria Food, Wine & Craft Market also offers a variety of monthly events; including laid back Tapas Sundays with live entertainment, Romantic Picnic Movie Nights and Food & Wine Pairing evenings. For more information on Monte De Dios, visit www.montededios.co.za.



Namakwa Guest Farm

A family-run establishment nestled in the heart of Namakwaland, this 147-hectare property outside Springbok offers a refreshing stay in nature, with all the modern comforts a traveller could desire. The Namakwa Guest Farm is surrounded by the Goegap Nature Reserve where zebras. gemsbok and steenbokkies can be spotted. The farm itself hosts ostriches, chickens and peacocks, and offers breath-taking views.

Their conference venue can hold up to 600 quests in the 600m² banquet hall. with 250 guests at the pool deck. For more



information on Namakwa Guest Farm. visit www.namakwaquestfarm.co.za.

Abang Africa

Abang Africa is a travel company focused on community tourism. This allows travellers to meet local people on their holiday, and offers added value to what would otherwise be a standard tour, says Henko Wentholt, Manager of Abang Africa. "Our handle is #fundandfair: we add an experience that you'll love and remember for the rest of their lives. and it happens to be sustainable".



In addition to offering tours where folks travel with their guides on public transport and walk around the streets experiencing life in the townships, they also offer homestays with families from all walks of life. "We offer a rural homestay in the Valley of a Thousand Hills near Durban. You spend the night with a Zulu family with whom you also prepare your meal. You visit all activities in the village, the school, the brewery, etc. In short, you live like a Zulu for one day," Henko explains. For more information on Abang Africa. visit www.abangafrica.com.

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LILIESLEAF

Liliesleaf today commemorates a seminal point in South Africa's liberation struggle which, for Nelson Mandela, was a place of discourse and engagement. Visit Liliesleaf for a conference and engage in an inspiring environment that once was the nerve centre of the liberation movement; where debate and dialogue inspired a unique group of selfless leaders. While conferencing, take a moment to take an inspiring journey of discovery into our past, through interactive, immersive exhibits that brings the history to life.

- t. +27 11 803 7882
- e. lulamile@llt.co.za

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MONTE DE DIOS -PRETORIA EAST

Nestled against the picturesque Bronberg mountain is Monte De Dios, an exquisite Spanish Equestrian Wedding and Conference Venue. Indulge in one of our six luxurious rooms, surrounded with old world elegant charm of a bygone era. Delectable dining and a tranquil spa make it the ideal getaway, business sleep-over or a delight for the discerning traveler; your home away from home. Monte De Dios also offers laid back tapas Sundays with live entertainment, romantic picnic movie nights and food and wine pairing evenings.

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The best entertainment never ends!

JANICE HONEYMAN'S ROBIN HOOD AND THE BABES IN THE WOOD

5 November to 30 December

Robin Hood and his Merry Men (and women!) will storm the stage and delight the audiences with a hilarious, action-packed pantomime. There will be non-stop thrills and spills as Robin takes on the evil Sheriff of Nottingham and still finds the to catch the eye of the fearless Maid Marian in this classic tale for the whole family. Packed full of action, adventure and an abundance of comedy as well as heroes and villains aplenty!

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THE MANHATTAN BROTHERS

8 December to 18 December

The renowned South African acapella singing group that had a US Billboard pop chart hit, *Lovely Lies*, is celebrated in this tribute show of jazz and popular music from the 40's and 50's. The role of Miriam Makeba, will be performed by **Mmatema Moremi** (*Idols SA*) and accompanied by local acapella group, Complete.



THE BIG BAD MUSICAL

15 December to 23 December

A courtroom has never been more lively and fun than in The Big Bad Musical. The jury, which is the audience, must decide the outcome of the biggest trial that's ever taken place in the fairtytale world.

The notorious Big Bad Wolf is taken to court by quirky storybook characters: Little Red Riding Hood, her Grandmother, the Three Little Pigs and the shepherd in charge of the Boy Who Cried Wolf. The Fairy Godmother and the Wicked Witch appear as the attorneys.



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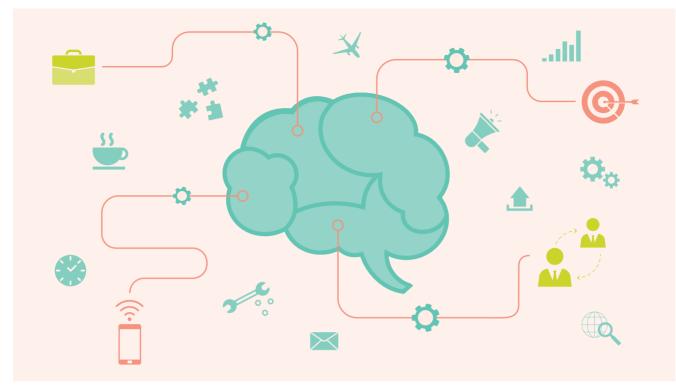
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LESSONS LEARNED IN 2016: THE INDUSTRY SPEAKS

South Africa's business-events sector has seen much take place over the last 12 months. We speak to the leaders in the industry to find out what lessons they will carry with them into the future.

his year has been interesting to say the least, and with it has come a number of valuable lessons we've learned within the industry. Africa's business-events economy continues to grow as we realise the importance of partnerships within the industry. A number of industry bodies, companies and associations can attest to this. We've also seen much change as we ramp up to to offer more innovative products – new venues and refurbishments, infrastructure investments worth millions and technological advances that can only help elevate the continent as a conferencing destination of choice. Education, too, has been on the lips of many as training, workshops and event qualifications are taken more seriously. We've also seen many successes and triumphs, new events launched and more to look forward to. As the United States learned this November, change is inevitable and only time will tell if that change will become a positive or negative force. A few months ago South African Tourism appointed a new CEO, Mr Sisa Ntshona. This change we hope will be a fruitful one as a man of strong entrepreneurial instincts and experience takes the nation's number one marketing and tourism development platform into a "new era of business sustainability" as SA Tourism Chair Dr Tanya Abrahamse so eloquently put it. The *Event* speaks to some of our foremost industry leaders to find out what lessons they have learned over the last twelve months, and what lies ahead for the next twelve.

Carol Weaving, Chair: Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO)

Looking back over the months since our launch, I can proudly say AAXO remained laser-focused on providing professionalism and credibility to the exhibition industry. The challenges faced by our members necessitated that we prioritise the following needs: 1. Standardisation and formalisation - As an industry champion, we established the AAXO Badge of Approval which organisers can display, providing their exhibitors peace of mind that comes with knowing the event receives the maximum exposure required to grow sales and revenue. Additionally, AAXO's code of conduct has been developed to guide members on acceptable standards, holding them to account for the events they host as well as providing an independent third-party mediation facility. 2. Representation - AAXO championed a massive challenge by negotiating the VAT ruling with SARS on behalf of the industry. We also consistently pursue strategic partnerships that will benefit our members, with entities such as SAACI and UFI. 3. Measurability - To help cement exhibitions as a marketing channel and demonstrate its full impact, AAXO not only commissioned industry research from Grant Thornton early this year to understand the economic impact of exhibitions but we also established the compulsory ABC Audit demonstrating transparency and bringing credibility to AAXO members and their events. Our groundbreaking training sessions also focused on measuring ROI. In 2017, AAXO will consistently be on the lookout for new ways to add value to its members.

Robyn D'Alessandro, National Marketing Manager. Gearhouse Group of Companies

In a depressed economic climate and dogged by political uncertainty, technical suppliers are operating in a far more difficult events environment than ever before. Budgets continue to fall, clients expect more 'bang for their buck' and Gearhouse Group was braced for a decline in revenue in 2016.

However, we have learned that what makes the difference is not necessarily having the latest and the best technology, the largest capacity or the most skilled crew (although those help of course). For Gearhouse, over the past couple of years, an internal 'service above all' drive has made all the difference. We have seen a 360-degree turnaround in the business – from being operationally driven to becoming completely client-service orientated. It has helped us reactivate dormant clients, strengthen relationships and gain ground under potentially difficult circumstances.

We are continuing to see very short lead times and smaller budgets, so it has been a year of finding innovative solutions at short notice, and while that has been trying operationally, it has stretched us creatively and we hope to continue to build on what we have achieved this year into 2017 and beyond.

The lesson here is that we are living in a rapidly changing world but, if you are proactive and positive regarding dealing with perceived NEGATIVE CHANGES, THE BENEFITS CAN BE FAR REACHING.

Bronwen Cadle de Ponte, General Manager, CSIR Convention Centre

2016 has been a challenging year in terms of dealing with the likes of the negative effects of Ebola, new visa regulations and changes in government policy on conference spending, procurement, etc. Having said that, the year has also been exceptionally positive in terms of growth in the conferencing market. The lesson here is that we are living in a rapidly changing world but, if you are proactive and positive regarding dealing with perceived negative changes, the benefits can be far reaching. We all need to accept that globalisation means that we are living in an increasingly dangerous and legislated world where communication is rapid and major changes take place overnight. Instead of fighting this new world and wasting time bemoaning situations, we need to work together to find proactive ways of putting solutions in place for the new problems we face every day – a good place to start is to really, properly understand the underlying nuances and points of view of the source of what you perceive to be a problem and then work hand-in-hand with your various publics to find solutions that satisfy all parties objectives.

Glyn Taylor and Gary Koetser, Joint CEOs: Century City Conference Centre

The significance of business events is something that's been spoken about for years, but it's all about the Rand value that every delegate brings. It has a knock-on effect on accommodation, flights, tours, transfers, and more, and it is for this reason that this Conference Centre was built. To give you an example, we recently hosted a conference of 900 international delegates, who spent approximately R15-20-million for the duration of their stay. They booked out every available hotel room, they went shopping at Canal Walk, they went on tours for three days, they enjoyed all their meals at our hotel and nearby restaurants, and during their free time they explored the area. So, the knock-on effect of conferencing matters.

On the local front, Century City as a node has become very appealing to people that wouldn't normally have considered it before. When brought here as a conference delegate, people are immediately taken by the location, with its close proximity to all major local attractions, as well as all the leisure activities the area has to offer. All of a sudden, Century City is now on their radar of places to visit and more often than not, about 50% of these people return for leisure at a later stage with their families to enjoy the Western Cape. The marketing value that business events bring, coupled with the widespread reach, has by far been the best form of marketing for the zone.

Our venue has been designed in such a way that we can host a combination of corporate conferences, association bookings, exhibitions and confexes and we've got numerous events booked for the year ahead. We're talking neurologists, physicians, a lot of medical and pharmaceutical events. In fact, about 60% of next year's operating budget has been booked already. Another point to mention is that 35% of our conferences that took place in 2016 have booked again for next year. This is significant as these events usually work on a rotation basis and they can't rotate within a period of four years to the same place – let alone the same city. So for us to land four major conferences that also booked for the following year, is incredible. A fact we are very proud of, as we aim to ensure that people who have their conferences here will always want to come back. If you look at the business from a financial perspective, we have exceeded all expectations.

In fact, about 60% of next year's operating BUDGET HAS BEEN BOOKED ALREADY.

Adriaan Liebetraau, Chief Executive Officer at SAACI

As the official umbrella body for the business-events industry in Southern Africa, SAACI constantly strives to be at the forefront of new initiatives. The business-events industry is ever-evolving, with focus having quickly shifted towards areas such as innovation, sustainability and new and creative ways of ensuring that delegates become participants and move away from classroom presentations with text-heavy PowerPoint slides that one can read off the screen instead of listening to stale topics. Conference's main return on investment is content and one needs to do more to keep audiences interested in sessions, activities and lectures.

One initiative that we are very proud of is the SAACI Academy – launched just over a year ago, we are constantly and continually working on improving this service offering to our members. The academy professionalises and empowers the Southern African business-events industry through training and education. This is done by providing online workshops and training courses by accredited training partners and institutions. Currently, the SAACI Academy has 618 registered online learners, with 321 companies already registered with the institution; and 53 online courses in progress. SAACI also remains closely tied to various collaboration partners such as ICAS (Independent Counselling and Advisory Services), the leading employee health and wellness provider in South Africa. Partnerships such as these provide enormous benefits to our members, and to the industry as a whole, mainly because it plays a role in the positive growth of our industry and encourages initiative, ingenuity and creativity through collaboration. Other collaboration partners include AVIS, British Airways, Greenpop, Price Forbes and South African Airways, with a banking partner on the cards.

Shaun Bird, General Manager: Sandton Convention Centre

Working in this industry in different countries makes real demands on your perspectives and approaches, having moved from Gaborone, Botswana in the latter part of 2016 to take up the position as General Manager of Sandton Convention Centre, has been a dream realised, but has not come without its challenges. The key is to stay positive and focused, but still have fun. Positive thinking coupled with a philosophy that there is nothing that cannot be done if we apply ourselves to the problem. You need to work through each problem as if it was a jigsaw puzzle and never give up until the puzzle is solved. Creativity and flexibility have also helped a lot.

When adapting to different cultures, it is vital to engage with each new culture with the mindset that the culture is not going to change to suit your expectations, you have to be very sensitive to the cultural heritage of each country and adjust your dealings with others accordingly. Our clients, particularly international clients, have different needs and perspectives and we need to be sensitive to them.

Sandton Convention Centre has built a strong reputation as the venue of choice for major events in South Africa, while also proving highly popular for smaller and more intimate functions with its wide range of state-of-the-art meeting, exhibition and special event venue options, as well as world-class facilities and services.

YOU NEED TO WORK THROUGH EACH PROBLEM AS IF IT WAS A JIGSAW PUZZLE and never give up until the puzzle is solved

Gill Gibbs, ConCept G Exhibitions & Events

Most of us have been on a flight and experienced turbulence whether it was quite dramatic or, mildly alarming. When your stomach feels like it has been put in a washing machine, it lurches and flips - throwing you off guard. Adrenaline pumps swiftly through your body, leaving your feet burning and tingling. For want of a euphemism, it can be best described as 'unsettling'.

Safe to say that 2016 has been a turbulent flight. A lurching economy that has left our industry in the aftermath of recovery, the global political climate that has directly impacted the already volatile economy, reminders of the deaths of key individuals that made an impact on society and with their passing, leaving their legacy and footprint from which we can hopefully learn and grow, using their experiences to steer our course.

And what of our learnings - specifically in 2016? We have experienced that what we see and hear is not necessarily so... From one angle, there is the undeniable fact that as industry leaders and pioneers, with many notches of hard-earned experience on our belt, with time, some of us are truly blessed with wisdom and clarity. Then there is that little thing called TRUST - we need this in order to effectively engage and interact with people on a daily basis. In our interaction, we trust that their word is their deed. Just how much should we trust before we have built said trust? And furthermore, before said trust is earned? Know that the individual with whom you are engaging or interacting is going to put a spin on everything that they tell you. They will tell you what they think or assume you want to hear. It is called veiling. There seems to be a general lack of lucidity and candour and one has to dig even deeper to find the truth behind the veil. We know that everything we think we know to be true, is not true. Case in point: take Trump - why did he beat the odds? And the outcome? A classic blindside - he pulled off the biggest upset in presidential history. To take someone at face value is the belief that what that person is saying is the truth rather than looking for the hidden agenda, motive or meaning behind what they are saying. Face value means that there is no veiling and that digging deeper in this case, is not likely to reveal anything interesting. The opposite of this is to seek the hidden motives and objectives. When last did you experience anything at face value?

As we approach the closing of 2016, the year of turbulence, we look toward the new year with a clear and direct vision - using our rapidly gaining wisdom and clarity as our steering advantage. •



CTICC ©SA Tourism



Speaker at the 2016 UFI Congress in China. The 2017 UFI Congress will be held in South Africa © UFI

YOUR 2017 BUSINESS EVENT GUIDE

We take a look at the local and international conferences, trade shows and association congresses that are not to be missed in 2017.

he global exhibition and conference industry is worth millions, with around 260 million exhibition visitors every year according to UFI's 2016 Global Exhibition Day stats. There are 4.4 million exhibiting companies, with 1 197 exhibition centres with a minimum of 5 000m² of indoor space. The value of the international exhibition industry is US\$ 55-billion. With these kinds of numbers, it's easy to see the significance of business events and the role they play in a country's economic structure on various levels.

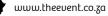
South Africa's exhibition and conferencing industry has grown consistently over the last decade, with the country bringing more and more international association events and world congresses home – not to mention the amount of interest it brings to the continent as a result. As the 'gateway' to Africa, SA offers not only a meeting place for the world to explore the continent, but it has also been instrumental in breaking down negative connotations and feelings towards the wider continent.

International convention centres like Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Durban ICC, CSIR ICC and Sandton Convention Centre offer unmatched hospitality and event support, while event organisers, suppliers and regional and national convention bureaus not only support and create incredible events, but continue winning awards for their work, too.

This year, CTICC extended its reach into the global market by hosting 39 international conferences in its 2015/16 financial year, representing a 22% increase on last year and a total of over 43 000 delegates. Induced tourism generated by the CTICC resulted in approximately 603 000 international tourist days and net foreign exchange earnings of R619-million. This has cemented its reputation as the number one destination for international association conferences in Africa.

CSIR ICC have also seen healthy numbers and positive growth in the conferencing market. The venue hosts over 700 events annually. "Some notable events hosted at the CSIR ICC during the year include the 33rd Annual Southern African Transport Conference and Exhibition; SAGES Conference, UN Habitat III Thematic Meeting, Sustainability Week Congress and Exhibition, the 9th World Congress on Engineering Asset Management; and the 14th SA Agricultural Outlook Conference," says Refilwe Nchebisang, Marketing Coordinator at CSIR ICC. Sandton Convention Centre once again has a strong booking throughout the year, with a range of events from consumer expos to high-profile conferences. "The impressive line-up of large scale events at the Sandton Convention Centre included COP17, the South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA) 50th Anniversary Convention and Property Exhibition' as well as consumer exhibitions Gateway to Space and Ice Age," Shaun Bird, GM at Sandton Convention Centre says.

The Johannesburg Expo Centre also has a number of shows scheduled for 2017 This includes Ultra South Africa, the Rand Show. Machine Tools 2017 and IFAT Africa. Craig Newman, Chief Executive Officer at the JEC has a confident outlook for the future: "In the next five to 10 years, the exhibitions and events industry could become one of the main economic contributors of this country. However, for this to happen we will need ease of access and greater communication between the public sector, exhibition organisers, and venues. South Africa has excelled at delivering on true economic sector exhibitions that contribute to the broader economy but we can still improve on the perception that is created in the marketplace on the value of exhibitions, eventing and conferencing in 2017."





Inside the CTICC © SA Tourism

Major African Events

Thanks to South Africa's infrastructure and proven track record in hosting world-class events, it still maintains the highest number of conferences and exhibitions on the continent. Having said that, Africa has a number of hubs where the business-events sectors are rapidly growing, such as Kenya, Nigeria, Morocco and Egypt. Here's a look at some of the highlights on the African business-events calendar.

AfricaCom

AfricaCom is the largest, most influential Africa-focused tech event in the world. It focuses on economic development and social empowerment through digital connectivity, and is a business and technology incubator for the architects of Africa's digital future. Date: 13 – 17 November 2017 www.tmt.knect365.com/africacom

Meetings Africa

Africa's premier marketplace for the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions sector, the trade show is a strong business platform for the continent's diverse offerings of services and products, with a focus on associations and the transformation in Africa through business events. Date: 27 February – 1 March 2017 *www.meetingsafrica.co.za*

INDABA

As one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar and one of the top three on the global calendar, INDABA brings together some of Africa's best tourism products and introduces them to international buyers and media. It takes place at the Durban ICC annually. **Date:** 16 – 18 May 2017 *www.indaba-southafrica.co.za*

World Travel Market Africa

Meet, network, negotiate and conduct business with over 600 exhibitors and over 4 800 travel professionals at WTM Africa in Cape Town. This show is vibrant and culturally diverse – and with its Hosted Buyer Programme, senior level buyers are treated like VIPs with 3 days of tailored activities. **Date:** 19 – 21 April 2017 *www.wtmafrica.com*

Kenya International Trade Show

Africa's prime multi-sector products, equipment and machinery expo, Kenya International Trade Exhibition is the largest event of its kind in East Africa and bring over 150 exhibitors from 30 countries together – with over 12 000 trade visitors in attendance. Date: 2 – 4 June 2017 www.expogr.com/expokenya

> In the next five to 10 years, the exhibitions and events industry could become one of the main economic contributors of this country.

January

- ROAR Organiser and Exhibitor
 Awards | 26 January
- Edmark Expo | 22 23 January

February

- Investing in African Mining Indaba | 6 – 9 February
- ECommerce Africa Confex | 22 - 23 February

March

- Design Indaba | 1 3 March
- Career Indaba | 6 8 March
- Professional Beauty CT | 26 - 27 March
- Power & Electricity World |
 28 29 March
- Open Education Global
 Conference | 8 10 March
- IT Leaders Africa Summit | 15 – 16 March

April

- ibtm africa | 20 April
- Zambia Travel Expo | 27 – 29 April
- SA Cheese Festival | 28 30 April
- Africa Showcase: East Africa | 3 - 7 April
- Zimbabwe International Trade Fair | 25 – 29 April
- As'hambeni Business Tourism Expo | 25 – 29 April
- NAACAM Show | 5 7 April
- Rand Show | 14 23 April



May

- East AfricaCom | 17 – 18 May
- Food and Hospitality Africa | 7 – 9 May
- MamaMagic The Baby Expo JHB | 11 – 14 May
- Totally Concrete | 23 24 May
- Machine Tools Africa | 9 – 12 May
- Africa Utility Week | 16 – 18 May
- The Dubai Show (JHB) |
 1 31 May
- ICT South Africa | 11 12 May

Jun

- Africa's Big Seven | 25 27 June
- Markex and Madex |
 7 8 June
- SAACI Congress |
 2 4 June
- Africa Rail / Aviation | 13 – 14 June
- Transport Show | 28 29 June
- Infrastructure Africa | 9 – 10 June

July

- West AfricaCom | 11 12 July
- Eduweek | 4 5 July
- Money Expo | 8 9 July
- Powergen & Distributech
 Africa | 18 21 July

August

- East Africa International Trade Exhibition | 22 – 24 August
- Loeries Creative Week | 14 - 20 August
- Cape Construction |
 15 16 August
- The Wedding Expo DBN | 5 - 6 August
- Decorex Johannesburg | 19 – 13 August
- #BuyaBusiness Expo / SBE | 31 August – 2 September
- My Business Expo CT |
 24 August



Waterwise booth during expo at the CSIR ICC © Sustainability Week Conference and Exhibition

September

- IFAT Africa | 12 14 September
- Electra Mining Africa | 12 – 14 September
- International Sourcing
 Fair | 13 15 Sep
- Automechanika Johannesburg | 27 – 30 September
- Scalex Johannesburg | 27 – 30 September

October

- Medic West Africa |
 11 13 October
- Sports Events and Tourism Exchange | 24 - 26 October
- Swahili International
 Tourism Expo | October
- Totally Concrete East
 Africa | October
- Value Added Agriculture
 West Africa | 25 26 Oct
- International Population Conference | 29 October – 4 November
- The Digital Education Show | 18 - 19 October
- Winex | 26 28 October

November

- East Africa Rail | 21 – 22 November
- FIBO | 2 3 Nov
- African Agri Investment
 Indaba | November





www.theevent.co.za

International meetings are vital for South African and African businesses to attend – although it's important to strategise and research which trade shows are best for one's company. Here the world meets, networks and makes multi-million rand business deals. Below is a look at some of the biggest events in 2017.

ACE of MICE Exhibition

Taking place in Istanbul, the ACE of MICE Exhibition is a fairly young show that packs some serious punch. Last year it saw 330 exhibitors, 750 hosted buyers and 14 496 visitors through its doors and logged just under 10 000 B2B meetings – making this Turkey's most extensive business event. Date: 22 – 24 February 2017 www.ameistanbul.com

IT&CM Events

Incentive Travel and Conventions, Meetings Events (IT&CM Events) have three annual shows in their portfolio: IT&CM China, IT&CM India and IT&CM Asia. The exhibitions bring Asian and international exhibitors and buyers together in one dynamic marketplace to foster growth in the MICE sector. **IT&CM China Date:** 21 – 23 March 2017 **IT&CM India Date:** August 2017 **IT&CM Asia-Pacific Date:** 26 – 28 September 2017 *www.itcmevents.com*

ibtm world

With a 28-year history as the leading trade show for businesses events, ibtm world brings 15 500 industry professionals together in Barcelona. Over 3 000 international suppliers from the meetings and events sectors attend to meet, network and conduct business with top level meeting planners and decision makers. **Date:** 28 – 30 November 2017 *www.ibtmworld.com*

IMEX Exhibitions

IMEX Group has two exhibitions annually – IMEX America and IMEX Frankfurt. The former is the USA's largest meetings industry trade show, while Frankfurt offers a landmark exhibition for professionals and bring 3 500 suppliers together for three days of great business. **IMEX America Date:** 10 – 12 October 2017 **IMEX in Frankfurt Date:** 16 – 18 May 2017 *www.imexamerica.com | www.imex-frankfurt.com*

Save the Date: International Shows

- Airport Show | 15 17 May 2017 | www.theairportshow.com
- Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME) | 21 22 February 2017 | www.aime.com.au
- Canton Fair (China Import & Export Fair) | 15 April 5 May 2017 | www.cantonfair.org.cn
- ICCA Congress | November 2017 | www.iccaworld.org
- India International Trade Fair | November 2017 | www.indiatradefair.com/iitf
- International Luxury Travel Market | Cannes, Tokyo, Cape Town, Sao Paolo, Shanghai and Riviera Maya | *www.iltm.com*
- Power Gen International | 13 15 December 2016 | *www.power-gen.com*
- The African Trade Show (USA) | 2 4 September 2017 |
 www.africatradeshow.net
- WESTEC | 12 14 September 2017 | www.westeconline.com
- World Travel Market London | November 2017 | www.wtmlondon.com

UFI Congress

The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry's 84th global congress takes place on African soil for the first time, and is hosted by the Johannesburg Expo Centre, a testament to the growth of business events on the continent. The UFI Congress offers industry insights, and tackles exhibition challenges. **Date:** 1 – 4 November 2017 *www.ufi.org*

Adriaan Liebetraau resigns as SAACI CEO

"We wish to inform you that SAACI Chief Executive Officer Adriaan Liebetrau has tendered his resignation with the association. Adriaan joined us as CEO in May 2014 after previously serving on the board of directors, he has been given an amazing opportunity to join Tsogo Sun at the Sandton Convention Centre where he will head up the Sales and Marketing departments for the Sandton Convention Centre, Sandton Sun, Intercontinental Sandton and Garden Court Sandton City, he will leave SAACI early next year and we will start the process for his successor in the coming days.

We wish to thank Adriaan for his dedication to our association, he has successfully ensured the roll out of the SAACI strategy launched three years ago and wish him well with his future endeavours, he will remain on the SAACI board as a co-opted member and we appreciate his continued involvement.

We wish to assure all members that we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition process during the coming months.

Wayne Johnson - Chairman





Gala Dinner | Photographer: Steven Booth

ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE SUCCESS STORY: TURNERS CONFERENCES

Name of Conference:

14th International Congress of the International Radiation **Protection Association** Date: 9 - 13 May 2016 Number of Delegates: 950 Number of Accompanying Persons: 50 Number of Days: 5 **Client:** International Radiation Protection Association / Southern African Radiation Protection Association and South African Radiation Protection Society - Joint Hosts, in collaboration with; the European Commission, International Atomic Energy Association, International

Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection, International Commission on Radiological Protection, International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements, International Labour Office. International Organisation for Medical Physics, International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists, OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, Pan American Health Organisation, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and the World Health Organisation.

About the event:

The 14th International Congress of the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA14) was hosted by the Southern African Radiation Protection Association and South African Radiation Protection Society at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in Cape Town from the 9th to the 13th of May 2016. One thousand participants from 68 countries attended this congress and it proved to be an excellent opportunity to communicate on the achievements, scientific knowledge and operational experiences in radiation protection.

The congress theme was "Practising Radiation Protection: Sharing the Experience and New Challenges." The programme shared practical and theoretical knowledge, and highlighted new challenges and how best to handle them, and addressed three major topics



Exhibition Welcome | Photographer: Steven Booth

of the radiological protection system; Fundamental Science; Policy, Standards and Culture, and Practical Application. The programme structure took the form of morning plenary sessions followed by six concurrent parallel sessions over four days, the final day of the congress celebrated 50 years of collaboration in Radiation Protection with Keynote lectures and panel discussions. Six refresher courses took place every day before the morning plenary session.

A technical trade exhibition gave delegates the opportunity to sample the latest technical developments in all of the fields in which radiation protection is playing an active role and gave them access to new products and services available from commercial companies and organisations.

Event highlights:

- The 50th Anniversary of the founding of the International Radiation Protection Association.
- Great networking opportunities during tea breaks, lunches and the Welcome Reception in the Exhibition Hall.
- It only took 60 seconds for delegates to register.
- First time IRPA used a congress app.
- IRPA University Day



Plenary Monday | Photographer. Steven Booth

Pre and post tour itinerary and highlights:

- Delegates enjoyed half day and full day tours in Cape Town and its surrounding areas, visiting District Six, Cape Point, Table Mountain and the beautiful winelands amongst other sites.
- Pre and post overland tours visited the Garden Route, Kruger National Park, Private Game Reserves, Victoria Falls and Zimbabwe.
- Technical Tours visited Koeberg Nuclear Power Station and the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation

Addition to Knowledge Economy:

A free IRPA University Day took place at UCT, it was a once in a lifetime opportunity for students in natural sciences, engineering and medicine to listen and interact with worldrenowned experts and learn about career opportunities in Radiation Protection.

Congratulations and thank you for last week's congress.

- Virva Nilsson, Swedish Radiation Safety Authority.



Coasteering © Gravity Adventures



Stand up Paddling at Langebaan © Gravity Adventures

BUCKLE UP FOR THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

Adventure tourism is becoming an integral part of the incentive travel package as more and more people search for memorable experiences in the leisure sector. Kim Crowie chats with the experts to find out what's new, what's trending and what's not to be missed.

Adventure Tourism Ideas

Southern Africa has many adventure tourism operators in the region. Here are some of the best adventures you can book in our adrenalin-pumped region.

- Aerial adventures such as zip lining, Tarzan swings and canopy tours
- Hiking, canyoneering and rock climbing experiences
- Big 5 safaris, game drives, 4x4s, quad, cycle, motorcycle and overland tours
- Extreme sports on land such as bungee jumping, abseiling, paragliding, gorilla trekking, hot air balloon rides, sky diving, archery, paintball
- Extreme water sports such as kite boarding, white river rafting, shark cage diving, ocean safaris, snorkelling, tubing

dventure tourism is a fastgrowing industry with adrenalin pumping activities and experiences to die for. From white water rafting down the Vaal to shark cage diving, bungee jumping, abseiling, there really is no end to the possibilities. According to Johan Radciffe, Owner of Dirty Boots, a renowned marketing platform for adventure products, these activities go through cycles of popularity. "One of South Africa's most-popular adventure activities is still shark cage diving," he explains, "even with all the controversy surrounding it, they are still seeing huge numbers of tourists, local and international. 2016 saw the launch of a great new product in Cape Town called scootours - basically an off-road scooter that you start at a top of a path and ride down with - with franchises in all the major tourist areas around South Africa already."

Overall Health of the Sector

The adventure industry has been very innovative over the last decade, with over 100 activities available in the country.

According to a 2014 Dirty Boots industry survey, the sector is worth roughly R4.6billion and shows no sign of slowing. It has been the largest-growing sector in the travel industry for the last few years, with SA Tourism and the Department of Tourism even taking a keen interest of late. "Tourists no longer just want to sit in a bus and visit historical or cultural attractions. Most tourists, local or domestic, will partake in at least one activity while on vacation," Johan says. "All this growth and demand is busy creating a very professional and competitive adventure industry." He adds that part of the appeal is its ability to allow the client to feel as though they have achieved something with an element of risk attached.

Barbara Futter, Co-Owner of Adventure Works, says adventure tourism is alive and well. "Over the last 20 years, Southern Africa has seen the birth and rapid growth of a dynamic adventure tourism industry. There is huge demand for adventure, both from international visitors and locals alike and this will only grow. I see townships as the next area of growth in this industry."



Breede River rapids © Gravity Adventures



Amphitheatre Heritage Hike © Active Escapes

Trending Adventures

Not everyone is willing to risk their neck to get the experience of a lifetime. Sarah Drew, Director of Active Escapes, says hiking tours and 'slackpacking' – where catering, guiding and luggage support is provided – have increased in demand. "Our biggest market is, in fact, people who still want a challenge but also want to sleep in a comfortable bed, not have to worry about cooking for themselves, and organising the logistics," she says. "We recognise a growth area as the family market increasingly looking for more 'active holidays'."

> Our biggest market is people who still want a challenge but also want to sleep in a comfortable bed, not have to worry about cooking for themselves, and organising the logistics.

The flagship product of Gravity Adventures is the Orange River Gorge wilderness rafting trip. According to Marie-Louise and Andrew Kellett, this has been most popular with families and is a perfect combination of adventure and relaxation. "The logistics of running a multi-day rafting trip in an extremely remote wilderness area are complex but we have been doing this for a long time and our systems are excellent," says Marie-Louise. "We are especially well known for our delicious on-river catering!" She adds that adventure tourism is the way of the future because although it is a form of 'experiential tourism', it occupies the intersection between conservation and commerce. "When done right, it is empowering for travellers, employees and the cultural and natural environment. As a traveller, inform yourself of the current issues in your chosen destination and make an informed choice of which operator to give your hard-earned money to. Think specifically of issues around ethical animal encounters as well as human rights and safety and standards."

Keeping up with current trends and issues is not only a traveller's responsibility, but a tour operator's too, says Barbara. "We have clients who have been with us for over 16 years, so the pressure is constantly on to come up with bigger and better events. We strive to stay current with the latest trends and incorporate these into our activities." Adventure Works has seen cook-offs as their most popular activity, while their Urban Adventure – a history lesson, discovery of Cape Town city centre and an Amazing Race-themed treasure hunt all in one – has really taken off in 2016.

And if that's not enough to persuade you to book your own exciting trip, here's a final bit of encouragement from Johann: "In my opinion there is no time or money better spent than on quality time with friends or family doing some awesome adventure activity."

Special thanks to Active Escapes (www.active-escapes.co.za), Adventure Works (www.adventureworks.co.za), Dirty Boots (www.dirtyboots.co.za) and Gravity Adventures (www. gravity.co.za) for their insight. •

A Breakdown of the Industry

The most common









adventure experience offered by tour operators is horseback riding, followed closely by scuba diving and guad biking The highest incomegenerating activity is shark cage diving The adventure tourism industry in SA was worth R4.6-billion in 2014, and this excludes safaris and cultural trips The majority of international adventure tourists come from Germany (27.1%), followed by the UK (25.1%), and





tourist is 35 years Adventure companies spend between 7-10% of their turnover on marketing, and 4.3 hours a week on social media marketing

the Netherlands (16.1%)

The average age

of an adventure

The SA cycling industry is estimated to be worth between R700-million to R1-billion per annum

All information courtesy of Dirty Boots SA Adventure Industry Survey 2014



The Dragonfly Africa team



A charter operation for large groups. Photography by Franz Rabe Natural Photography (*naturalphoto.co.za*)

A CHAT WITH DRAGONFLY AFRICA

The *Event* chats with Sales and Marketing Director Yolanda Woeke-Jacobs to find out how Dragonfly Africa has maintained its position as a leading destination management company in Southern and East Africa.

ragonfly Africa and its sister company Green Route Africa are some of the most successful destination management companies on the continent, with a combined 10 SITE Crystal Awards to date. They operate across eleven countries -South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Kenva, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda – serve individual travellers, groups, meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions, and bring over 30 years' travel experience to the table. The Event chats with Yolanda Woeke-Jacobs, Director of Sales and Marketing at Dragonfly Africa, to find out what keeps them at the top of the incentive travel chain.

Let's start at the beginning. How have you built Dragonfly Africa into the leader that it is in the travel industry today?

The Dragonfly Africa Group comprises two of the most established and successful destination management companies in Southern Africa, Dragonfly Africa and Green Route Africa. We have captured a

significant slice of the high-yield incentives market - a market virtually unknown in South Africa before 1994, when it all began. London-born Rupert Jeffries - Executive Chairman, arrived in South Africa in 1975 as a Grey-Phillips advertising executive, fell in love with the country and made it his home. While still on international transfer in 1979. he visited Cybele Forest Lodge and Health Spa in Mpumalanga and after some soul searching, decided to buy it. Whilst running Cybele, it occurred to Rupert that exploring the regions scenic beauty from the air might be of interest to guests. Rupert started creating Cybele and gamelodge packages and was then asked to do other itineraries for clients around the rest of South Africa. This was the beginning of Dragonfly Travel - the emphasis was always on detailed and creative travel itineraries and the business grew to a small office in the nearby town of White River and eventually to Johannesburg.

When Nelson Mandela was released from prison and a Democratic Government likely, it became apparent to us that there would be enormous travel opportunities for Southern Africa – particularly in the area of international reward incentives. So a specialist division was set up within Dragonfly to start focusing on the international MICE market and we appointed a Sales Office in New York. We executed our first incentive group for 120 people in Cape Town during 1994. This programme won the first SITE Crystal Award for a South African programme.

Dragonfly Africa and Green Route Africa now comprise a staff of over 60 people, many of whom have been with the company over 10 years; a few over 20 years. So there is a depth of experience and knowledge that runs throughout the group.

How do you maintain this position in the sector?

Our business is our staff! We have an amazing, dedicated team that all share the same goals, service beliefs and core values. We work with quite a few distinct international markets. Each one has different cultures and different budgets and we have specialists for each of these markets.



We foster healthy relationships with all our suppliers in the industry and work together as a team. And of course what we have learnt over the many years of running large and

complicated incentive programmes.

How do you manage so many different country portfolios under one banner?

As our business has expanded it has become essential to offer services in other parts of this amazing continent. Existing clients want to return, to see and experience more of Africa. They have placed their trust in our capabilities so it is only natural that we expanded into the 11 countries in Southern and East Africa that we now cover. One of the strategic reasons for purchasing Green Route Africa in 2010 was the fact that they already had an operation set up in East Africa, including an office in Nairobi, Kenya. It has taken an investment of time and resources get to know these new regions as a DMC should. This is not just setting up operational offices in the region, but also ensuring the team are familiarised with the destination - a vital element. We have also entered into strategic alliances with partners who act as extensions of our business.

What are the key differences in the requests you receive, particularly when handling business-events travel inquiries versus leisure travel?

Our leisure itineraries average between 10 and 16 nights on the ground in Southern Africa, whilst the average incentive trip could be three to four nights from Europe and up to seven nights from North America. Probably the most successful combination from an incentive trip with guite a large budget would be three nights Cape Town, three nights at a private game lodge, and three nights at Victoria Falls. We have also found that leisure clients are looking for more boutique-style properties and want more experiential activities by immersing themselves into the local culture. With our MICE groups, we are often limited to using bigger venues and hotels, for obvious reasons. With reward travel, money-can'tbuy experiences are often expected; this keeps things interesting and encourages us, as a DMC, to always be on the lookout for new and exciting ventures and ideas.

What trend have you noticed in 2015/2016 in incentive travel that is likely to carry into the new year?

For specific markets, CSR (corporate social responsibility) is a very big aspect of MICE travel. Companies are eager to give back to local communities. It is our view however that these projects have to be sustainable - where there is regular feedback and the projects must be maintained and managed for future benefits.

Which challenges do you face on a regular basis as a destination management company, and how you overcome these?

Direct flight capacities into safari regions. We can overcome this by making use of charter flights. This, however, is an expensive option that is not always available to all groups. Charter flights in particularly need careful coordination - we recently completed a large incentive programme from North America where we utilised 35 private game lodges around the country with 118 charted aircraft being utilised over three days - including six Boeing 737s.

The fact that airlift into Cape Town is not always direct, especially from the USA markets, makes the travel times unnecessarily long. With an aircraft change in Johannesburg and that extra leg, it adds to an already long journey. With such strong competition around the world, this can have a negative impact on the decisionmaking process. We do try overcoming this by highlighting the incredible value for money our destination currently offers.

Another big challenge is misconceptions of Africa that some of our potential clients have. They are often not aware of how safe, sophisticated and diversified Southern Arica is. We overcome this by regular visits to our source markets with one-on-one engagements.

Let's talk about Green Route Africa. When was it that you identified this particular sector as an important part of the travel industry?

Dragonfly Africa purchased Green Route Africa in 2010. This merger afforded both companies the opportunity to focus on specific key source markets, and take advantage of their brand strength in their respective markets. It is also made it possible for us hone in and offer exactly

There is a depth of experience and knowledge that runs throughout the group.

what our clients are looking for. As mentioned before it has given Dragonfly Africa a footprint into East Africa.

What's new at Green Route Africa in 2016? What can we expect in 2017?

The Green Route Africa team has expanded into new European markets, with newly appointed sales offices. Our goal is to build an ever stronger operational team for the busy year ahead.

How much of a role do exhibitions and trade shows play in destination marketing?

Over the years we have found that attendance at exhibition and trade shows is vital. IMEX is a fantastic platform and is very beneficial to our business (both Frankfurt and Las Vegas), provided the diary system is used correctly.

Any last words?

Our team makes us a success. We have dedicated and very special staff working for us, from our guides, account managers and finance team to our sales and support staff. This undoubtedly makes it all work as a successful and cohesive business and company.

In February this year, the company announced news of a Management Buy Out of the business. Mike Waller, Chief Executive Officer, and three other executives. Yolanda Woeke-Jacobs, Director: Sales & Marketing, Barry Schreiber, Director: Finance, and Kerry Roos, Director: Operations and Product Development, will immediately acquire additional shares. Mr Jeffries will remain the majority shareholder over a minimum period of four years, after which time the shareholders will be able to acquire all of the remaining shares in Dragonfly Africa and Green Route Africa. Mr Jeffries says, "We are all extremely pleased we have been able to conclude this agreement as an entirely internal matter, with no outside parties or institutions involved."







Club Mykonos

Strandloper © SA Tourism

The West Coast

CAPE WEST COAST

Known for its abundance of tourist routes, the Cape West Coast is now garnering attention from the business-events industry.

omprising Swartland, Namaqua West Coast, Peninsula, Bergrivier, and the Cederberg, the Cape West Coast region is an established locale for leisure tourism. Visitors flock to the region for its annual display of magnificent wild flowers, regular whale sightings, wine farms and cellars, culture and heritage tours, birdwatching and golfing. Quaint seaside towns such as Langebaan, Elands Bay, Yzerfontein and Paternoster offer upmarket accommodation in a unique setting, while towns such as Darling, Riebeek-Kasteel and Clanwilliam have retained a small-town charm while catering to the needs of seasonal visitors.

In recent years, business travellers and meeting or conference delegates have embraced a move away from the frenetic pace of city life, and converged on the Cape West Coast, where nature offers inspiration and eases tension.

Suggested Venues:

Allesverloren

Approximately 100km north-east of Cape Town, lying below the Kasteelberg, is the historic wine estate of Allesverloren. This, the oldest wine estate in the Swartland, renowned for its red wines, also has a stunning function and conference venue that can seat up to 250 people. Allesverloren is well equipped to help organisers hold a successful conference, team building event or product launch. Some of the state-of-the-art equipment available includes a powerful audio system, complete with hand-held and wireless lapel microphones and a DVD player. The venue also offers a data projector with sound and a dedicated screen.

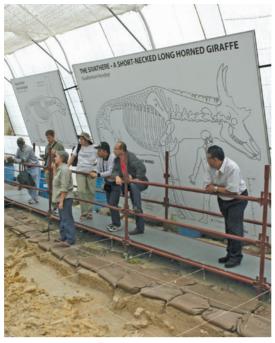
Club Mykonos

The Athene Conference Centre at Club Mykonos can cater for up to 500 delegates. Supported by the Bouzouki restaurant, it is capable of handling your conference requirements with Greek hospitality and Mediterranean flair. Wi-Fi, audio-visual equipment and exhibition space are all included. The resort is inspired by the Greek town of Mykonos, and its incredible architecture and festive atmosphere ensure that delegates enjoy more than just the business aspect of their visit.

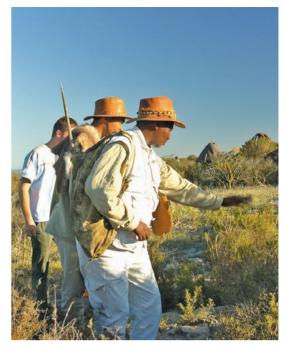
!Khwa ttu

!Khwa ttu offers visitors the unique experience of being introduced to the world of the San people. The Centre is housed within a series of lovingly restored old West Coast farm buildings, whilst the surrounding area teems





© West Coast Fossil Park



!Khwa ttu guided tour

with an abundance of birdlife, game and fynbos and stunning views over the Atlantic Ocean and Table Mountain. The conference room has all the necessary equipment and can accommodate between 10 and 30 delegates.

West Coast Fossil Park

The West Coast Fossil Park is situated on the R45, close to Langebaan. The park is home to five million-year-old fossils of sabre-tooth cats, bears, short-necked giraffes, wild pigs, three-toed horses and the many other animals that populated the West Coast region. After a fascinating fossil tour, visitors can stroll through the gardens or enjoy a meal at the restaurant.

Strandloper

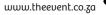
A visit to the West Coast is not complete without a meal at Strandloper, the famous beach kitchen. Guests are treated to an authentic culinary experience including fish curry, angel fish and snoek, grilled haarders, smoked angel fish, snoek with sweet or steamed potato, and waterblommertjie bredie. Each course is served individuals over a leisurely three to four-hour period. Festivities centre around the open, central braai area as a local musician serenades diners with traditional guitar music. In recent years, business travellers and meeting or conference delegates have embraced a move away from the frenetic pace of city life, and converged on the Cape West Coast, where nature offers inspiration and eases tension.

Incentive Opportunities

When the business of the day is concluded, delegates and business professionals can unwind by exploring the fascinating heritage and culture of the Cape West Coast. A guided tour by descendants of the San people is a must-see, and includes a ride on an open vehicle through the landscape viewing game, and a visit to a replica traditional village for fascinating demonstrations of ancient tools and other extraordinary aspects of the San's traditional way of life.

The awe-inspiring wonderland of wildflowers that bloom annually is a sight that can't be missed, as is the region's up and coming wine estates which attract thousands of travellers throughout the year. Both wine and flowers can appreciated simultaneously at wineries such as Lutzville Cape Rock and Namaqua. Many visitors are also keen to explore the small fishing towns that dot the region, and offer authentic culinary delights. The Saldanha Bay Oyster Company harvests and sells arguably the best oysters in the country, and when these deliciously sweet and plump oysters are paired with champagne, this is an experience that will never be forgotten.

Brought to you by the Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau, a division of WESGRO www.capetownconventionbureau.org



NATIONAL WINE TOURISM STRATEGY WILL HELP REALISE POTENTIAL OF WINE AND FOOD TOURISM

The Event was proud to attend the first-ever Business of Food and Wine Tourism Conference.

more collaborative approach to the promotion of South Africa's unique wine tourism offering and a new national wine tourism strategy is a step closer to being realised after The Business of Food and Wine Tourism Conference, which was recently held at Spier Wine Estate in Stellenbosch.

"This is the start of a new journey. The strategy is being developed as a dynamic industry framework and practical plan. Our immediate priorities are to get buy-in from role players and to finalise the implementation plan with input from and alignment with government," says Destinate's Mariette du Toit-Helmbold, who was commissioned to develop an industry-led wine tourism plan, as part of the Wine Industry Strategic Exercise (WISE), an initiative that was introduced to promote a robust, adaptable and competitive industry.

Minister Derek Hanekom, Minister of Tourism, said: "We support the development of a wine tourism strategy that will see the industry unite behind a common vision, brand and aligned plan to take wine tourism forward. We look forward to working with the industry to help realise the enormous potential wine tourism has in contributing to our country's overall tourism growth."

VinPro, the organisation that represents South African wine cellars and wine grape producers, has provided funding to conclude the strategy and implementation plan and enable a number of interventions within the next twelve months.









On the agenda is the development of a national wine tourism brand and message with a wine tourism marketing kit to train the trade and hospitality industry, providing them with the tools, message and visual inspiration to promote wine tourism more effectively.

The establishment of a neutral wine tourism digital marketing platform with interactive website, activated social media platforms, aligned wine tourism event calendar and fresh content providing links to all the wine regions and routes for cross-marketing purposes is a priority.

Visiting the winelands is listed as the second-most popular experience by visitors on South African Tourism's website, making alignment with the national tourism strategy and South African Tourism's marketing plans and platforms a key priority. A global wine and food tourism campaign is being proposed, jointly funded through public and private sector contributions, and in close partnership with the South African Wine Routes Forum to identify and map the wine tourism levers within each wine region, including the Northern Cape and the Garden Route.

A wine tourism research and training programme, which will provide industry and government with the muchneeded intelligence, whilst mapping new wine tourism career paths and investing in service excellence in the industry, will be developed.

"South Africa's competitive edge is not only our wine, but also our hospitality and passionate people, matched with unique experiences, exceptional food and breath-taking scenery, all easily accessible to the visitor," says Mariette. It A million bottles of South African wine are sold daily. This is a million opportunities to tell South Africa's story through wine tourism.

is imperative that South Africa promote what is authentically South African and push the boundaries with innovation and dynamic marketing. To this end, the wine tourism strategy is a tourism strategy, not a wine strategy, aimed at increasing business and employment opportunities within the value-chain of hospitality and wine tourism, with the focus on small- to mediumsized enterprises and black-owned businesses that operate at a local level.

A million bottles of South African wine are sold daily. This is a million opportunities to tell South Africa's story through wine tourism," added Mariette.

Rico Basson, CEO of VinPro, is sure that this conference will have long term benefits for wine tourism and related industries: "We need to adapt to international trends. whilst offering the best authentic, local offerings. Wine tourism is a major revenue generator for South Africa, which already contributes about R6-billion to GDP. We are committed to increasing this figure to R15-billion by 2025. It also presents an important opportunity in terms of job creation. The wine industry value-chain currently employs in excess of 289 000 people and the new strategy will pave the way for significant growth in the wine tourism sector over the next 10 years."

Siobhan Thompson, CEO of Wines of South Africa added: "South Africa exports wine to markets across the world. The bulk of SA's exports are aligned with South Africa's key source tourism markets like the EU, with exports to markets in the rest of Africa, the US and China growing. It makes sense for wine and tourism to collaborate and promote our wine tourism offering as a differentiating factor within our broader wine and tourism marketing initiatives."



Hühnerauge © Flickr

SOWETO: WHERE HERITAGE MEETS ENTERTAINMENT

Established during the gold rush in the late 1800s, Soweto has a long and vibrant history. It was home to renowned South Africans including Desmond Tutu, Trevor Noah, and the late Nelson Mandela, and today is home to the Hector Pieterson Museum, the Nelson Mandela National Museum, and many other unique, local attractions.

township located in the city of Johannesburg in Gauteng, Soweto is a vibrant area bursting at the seams with colour, culture and history. Although initially a mining shanty in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Soweto is perhaps better known for the tragic uprising that took place in 1976 where 10 000 students marched on Orlando Stadium over the government's policy to enforce education in Afrikaans. Since 1994, however, Soweto has become the place to be. Not only does it offer unique tourism opportunities and delicious, locally-produced morsels but it is fast-becoming a trendy place to hold a conference, concert or cocktail party. In recent years, there have been a number of revitalisation projects in the region, resulting in steady economic growth and an increased interest in the many attractions Soweto has to offer.

Key Venues

Soweto Hotel and Conference Centre

Soweto Hotel and Conference Centre is the first four-star luxury boutique hotel offering African hospitality in the area.

s

| Soweto Hotel and Conference Centre | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Venue | Plenary | | | |
| Kliptown Conference Centre | 60 cinema style, 50 classroom style | | | |
| Soweto Tourism Centre | 60-80 seater | | | |
| Helen Josephs Boardroom | 10 seater | | | |
| Winnie Madikizela Mandela | 14 seater | | | |

Chaf-Pozi

Chaf-Pozi. located at the famous Orlando Towers, offers an authentic township experience from delectable shisanyama and shuttle tours of Soweto, to top entertainment at an exceptional venue. Ideal for corporate events or networking functions. Chaf-Pozi offers set menus

or speciality spit braai for groups of over 30. The venue also offers to a mini tour of Soweto prior to your meal, dancers, musicians and comedians, African face painting, traditional drumming, and bungee jumps, SCAD freefalls, wall climbing or paintball at the Towers. For more information, visit www.chafposi.co.za.

The conference room and two executive

board rooms offer state-of-the-art

experiences and spectacular views

of Soweto. For more information,

visit www.sowetohotel.co.za.



Ubuntu Kraal Brewery

As the home base of Soweto Gold lager, Ubuntu Kraal is an ideal destination for corporate events, networking functions and teambuilding. The venue is a trendy, township eatery with a stunning beer garden which includes beer tastings, brewery tours and a gourmet grill. The venue caters for events up to 450 guests. For more information, visit *www.sowetogold.co.za.*

Incentive Travel Products

Soweto has a myriad of attractions for the incentive traveller. For those who like to reward their palates, a shisanyama tour will bring you in close contact with some of the most delicious, open-flame cooked meat you'll ever taste. Wandie's Place is a Soweto restaurant institution where celebs from across the globe dine on local specialities; Sakhumzi's on Vilakazi Street, across from the Mandela House Museum allows you to indulge in some tasty food and beer. Shebeens – local township bars – bring added excitement and vibrance to the area.

For those interested in history, the Hector Pieterson Memorial and Museum, and the Regina Mundi Catholic Church in Moroka played a crucial role in the township's history of resistance against apartheid. Vilakazi Street is home to the Mandela House, now a museum, and nearby is the former residence of Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Adventure is just a few feet away in Soweto, and travellers can enjoy a bicycle tour of the city, followed by a live jazz performance, something that's been at the heart of Soweto since the 60s, or opt for something more exhilarating like a bungee jump, abseil or a climb at the iconic Orlando Towers. •



Soweto can be accessed through OR Tambo International Airport or Lanseria International Airport, both of which have a regular schedule of international flights and local connections. The major airlines flying here include:

KLM

LATAM

Oatar

Airways

Quantas

Singapore

South African

Saudia

Airlines

Airways

SwissAir

Airlines

Turkish

Airlines

United

Virgin

Atlantic

TAAG Angola

Airlines Brasil

Lufthansa

- Air China
 - Air France
- Air Mauritius
- Arik Air
- British Airways
 - Cathay Pacific
- Delta

•

- EgyptAir
- El Al Israel
- Airlines
- Emirates Ethiopian
- Airlines

 Etihad
- Airways

 Iberia
- Kenya
- Airways



Climate

As a municipality of Johannesburg, Soweto has a **semi-arid**, **cool climate** with an annual mean temperature of 16.2 degrees Celsius and an average of **3 182 hours of sunshine** a year. South
African
Rand
(ZAR)US Dollar
(USD)Euro
(EUR)Chinese
Yuan503.713.3625.16

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Soweto Tourism Information Centre (Joburg Tourism)

Head Office: Walter Sisulu Square, Klipspruit Valley Road and Union Street, Kliptown, Soweto Tel: +27 (0)11 342 4316 Email: *info@joburgtourism.com* Website: *www.joburgtourism.com*

Gauteng Convention and Events Bureau (Gauteng Tourism Authority) Head Office: 124 Main Street, Marshalltown, Johannesburg, South Africa Tel: +27 (0)11 085 2500 Email: *info@gauteng.net*

Website: www.gauteng.net

Ubuntu Kraal Brewery is an ideal destination for corporate events, networking functions and teambuilding, and caters for events up to 450 guests.



Orlando Towers, Soweto, Gauteng, South Africa © SA Tourism



Vibrant Vilakazi Street © SA Tourism SA Tourism



32 EVENTS TO DIARISE

www.theevent.co.za

DECEMBER

WORLD SME EXPO 1 – 3 HONG KONG, CHINA

CHENGDU INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXPO 2 - 4 SICHUAN, CHINA

WOMEN ADVANCEMENT FORUM

4 – 8 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

POWER GEN INTERNATIONAL 13 – 15 ORLANDO, USA

AL ANSAAR SOUK

AND TRADE FAIR 23 – 2 JANUARY DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

JANUARY

AFRICAN REAL ESTATE SUMMIT 2 – 3 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

MEETINGS MOROCCO 12 – 13 MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

SOUTH AFRICA BUSINESS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 12 – 13 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

MULTIMODAL WEST AFRICA

24 – 26 LAGOS, NIGERIA

IDC IT FORUM

26 CASABLANCA, MOROCCO

POWER TECH AFRICA 30 – 31 NAIROBI, KENYA

FEBRUARY

INVESTING IN AFRICA MINING INDABA 6 – 9 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

<mark>IBTM ARABIA</mark> 7 – 9 ABU DHABI, UAE

AFRIROCK 12 – 17 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

AFRICABUILD LAGOS 14 – 16 LAGOS, NIGERIA

MY BUSINESS EXPO JOBURG 15 – 16 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

NSBC SUMMIT 15 – 16 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

AFRICA MARKETING WEEK 15 – 17 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA **HEDGE NEWS AFRICA SYMPOSIUM**

16 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

AFRICA BUSINESS CONFERENCE 16 – 18 BOSTON, USA

DESIGN INDABA CONFERENCE 17 – 19 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

SOLUTION FOR AFRICA CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 21 – 22 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

AFRICA ENERGY INDABA 21 – 22 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

WAIPEC 21 – 23 LAGOS, NIGERIA

ECOMMERCE MONEY AFRICA CONFEX 22 – 23 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

AVIATION AFRICA 22 – 23 KIGALI, RWANDA

MEETINGS AFRICA 27 – 1 MARCH JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA



EXSA BRAND RELAUNCH

The Exhibitions and Events Association of Southern Africa (EXSA) recently relaunched its brand, bringing changes to every facet of the association, including a fresh new logo. The new EXSA brand has been in quiet development for over four months and was part of the new General Manager. Phumulani Hlatshwayo's turnaround strategy, unveiled at the launch. The event, which took place on 26 October 2016, gave members the opportunity to get involved in the new strategy through added suggestions, to voice their opinions and concerns, and network with industry peers. "We have come a long way in a relatively short period of time and this is something that we can all be very proud of, but more importantly, we have so much more that can be achieved and we are excited about what lies ahead," says Hlatshwayo. EXSA remains committed to growing and developing the exhibition industry to the benefit its members and the South African economy.



ICCA SIGNS FOUR NEW PARTNERS

The International Congress and Convention Association have announced four new Association Relations Partners under their new Strategic Plan: Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau. Monaco Convention Bureau, Tourism New Zealand and Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute. The newly launched Association Relations Partnership is a collaborative programme designed to help ICCA deliver an ambitious programme of new activities and online services that will strengthen its relationship with international associations, including hosting some of their top executives and meeting directors at the annual ICCA Congress.



Caroi Weaving

Chairperson of AAXO

AAXO'S EXHIBITION OF EXHIBITIONS

The Association of African Exhibition Organisers hosted its inaugural Exhibition of Exhibitions, a groundbreaking occasion designed to equip exhibition organisers and exhibitors with information and innovative tools to boost the industry. The event took place on 19-20 October 2016, and gave organisers an opportunity to showcase their skills and ideas on a massive platform. The event was open to all AAXO members, who account for 80% of the organising community in South Africa, and took place at the Blue Wing Conference and Events Venue at the TicketPro Dome in Johannesburg. The programme included training sessions, exhibition opportunities in the marketplace, and networking options. "AAXO remains committed to growing this industry and this event is just one of many geared towards building an industry that hosts world class events for the benefit of all involved." the association said in a statement.





ରୁ TBCSA REPORT PUBLISHED

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa's Tourism Business Index Report for the third quarter of 2016 was recently published. It shows that business performance remains below 'normal' levels with an index score of 92.6 - similar to the 2015 index score for O3. A wide range of factors are attributed to the quarter's performance including the weak Rand exchange rate, which is said to have had a positive impact, whilst the cost of input continues to put pressure on business performance. The outlook for Q4 is not so optimistic, with an overall expectation that performance levels will dip, reaching an index score of 87.1. As with this guarter, the accommodation sector is expected to remain fairly stable.





Outgoing Chief Executive Officer at SAACI

SAACI AND TGCSA ON VENUE GRADING CRITERIA

As 2016 came to a close, the Southern African Association for the Conference Industry hosted a number of meetings in conjunction with the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa in order to properly review the grading criteria for venues (previously known as 'Meetings, exhibitions and Special Events'). The organisations finalised their draft of Minimum Entry Requirements for Venues, and then opened the drafts to SAAC's regional committees to review and feedback on the document. Regional committee members in the Western Cape reviewed the draft on 16 November, while KwaZulu-Natal committee members gave their input on 28 November. Final results have yet to be announced, and further updates can be found on www.saaci.org.



ABTA BRINGS BACK THE FAM TRIP

The African Business Travel Association will be hosting Africa familiarisation trips for travel buyers and suppliers in 2017. ABTA Regional Manager: Africa, Jeanette Moloto, will take the lead on this project. "I have always felt that not enough travel professionals get to actually visit the destinations into which they are sending their travellers," she says. "I am a firm believer that 'you don't know until you've been' and we are really excited to be adding Fam Trips to our list of activities across Africa next year." Under its new initiative 'ABTA Network Connect', ABTA has separate FAM trips planned for Corporate Travel Buyers and Travel Suppliers/TMC's. Trips for next year include Angola, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa.



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