

How to sell Africa to experiential travellers

By [Mareike Pietzsch](#)

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Experiential travel is currently trending and, according to industry forecasts, is set to boom in 2017. The experiential travel trend was born out of a desire for travellers to fully immerse themselves in a country and grasp the moments they're experiencing.

Information overload is changing how travellers book



Technology is giving today's traveller more choice when booking their vacation online. The speed and ability to compare travel products are making global travellers savvier. While the online world offers many advantages, the information overload can also be overwhelming.

Here are tips on how to sell to the experiential traveller:

Love your social media channels



Yes yes, we've all heard about the millennials who are always on their phones. But, realistically, the way that millennials and thirty-somethings are documenting their life has changed. Communication has morphed into a strong visual format due to social media consumption.

- Travel companies need to cater to the experiential traveller by offering social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter) as click-through icons.
- Always include social media icons with a click-through link on your marketing material, websites, newsletters and company email signatures.
- Always hyperlink your blog content
- As documenting has become a way for experiential travellers to “hold” onto moments, provide your Instagram hashtags to travellers.
- Offer tools and travel apps in your client documentation

Chat online

Clients want a personal approach and often use direct communication on social media channels. “We get many queries from customers seeking advice in our Facebook inbox. It’s an immediate way to do customer service and to show that we care about passing on valuable information,” says Mareike Pietzsch, content developer at Jenman African Safaris.

Add a personal touch



Technology has taken away some of our immersive, real-time experience. On holidays, we no longer get lost or wander through a foreign city because we have apps assisting us. So, it's important that you're the personal touch that clients are looking for.

- Provide personal, excellent customer service
- Brief clients before they go on their journey
- Write and send personalised emails (be approachable, use their first name!)

Offer 'real' experiences



The experiential traveller wants to have experiences that feel real. This means that tour operators and travel agents need to offer activities and tours where clients can get involved in the destination's history, culture, and country.

"We've noted an increase in clients wanting to give back to the places they travel to. For example, Pack for a Purpose is a great way for clients to help communities by useful supplies – like textbooks or crayons – in their luggage," says E-marketer Jonathan Sloth-Nielsen at Jenman African Safaris.

- Inform clients about community and cultural day trips and experiences
- Stay informed about new projects where travellers can get involved to give back

It's predicted that experiential travel will transform into "transformative travel" that looks at how experiences not only immerse a person but also change them.

If you have any questions or notes, email me at mareike@jenmansafaris.com.

ABOUT MAREIKE PIETZSCH

I am part of the fantastic marketing team at Giltedge Africa - a brand that is defining luxury travel for Africa, continuously on the lookout to improve its product offering for international travellers. I write content about the tourism offerings in Southern Africa, East Africa and the Indian Ocean islands, new travel trends, sustainable tourism and multi-generational travel.

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