

Sunshine Coast - Eastern Cape

Holiday destination of choice

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The beginning of the year is a time for planning, and this entails looking back at the previous year for indicators that will assist in planning for the new year. This issue provides feedback on the Festive Season and looks at travelling trends for 2018, proving you with a valuable tool-kit. Also, a peek at some exciting up-coming events on the Sunshine Coast for 2018.

Season Feedback:

Financial instability and political turmoil impacted the 2017 festive season, however, there were some surprises!



Events: In general, events were well attended, with organizers happy with the turnout. The over-abundance of events in Kenton between Christmas and New Year did, however, have an impact on events elsewhere. Organizers were surveyed and all agreed that they plan to hold similar events for the 2018 season.



Accommodation: No surprises here, in general the comment was that stays were shorter, however, properties overall were pleased with the occupancy.

Visitors: There were many repeat visitors, however, a greater number than usual of first time visitors to the area. Comments from visitors were mostly favourable, many being impressed with the cleanliness of the towns, quality of beaches and variety of restaurants and things to do, with favourable reports on brochure and printed information materials.



Restaurants: Most restaurants were pleased with the number of tables and had a good season, however, some did report a downswing, especially in the value of orders. Inevitably, several visitors commented on slow service at restaurants. Having said this, there were far more favourable comments than negative.

Food Sales: Overall, food purchases were down, with visitors opting to purchase essentials only.

Petrol Sales: As with food sales, petrol sales were down, perhaps indicating that people chose to stay at their destination base rather than travelling within the area, and of course more fuel efficient vehicles are a contributing factor.

Adventure Activities: Most adventure activities were very well supported.

Shopping: This was the big surprise. Most shops indicated that visitors were not making spur of the moment decisions on spending, however, higher priced items did well. Clothing stores reported a bumper season.



So, in conclusion, the season was perhaps not a bumper year for businesses, however, we definitely saw more first time visitors who were impressed and indicated that they plan to return!

TRENDS FOR 2018

The success of your product relies on targeted marketing. Research from Google, Trekker and TripAdvisor for 2018 has revealed some interesting points to consider :

Holiday booking statistics

59% of people research and book holidays 1-3 months prior to departure

79% book via smart phones

64% of holiday choices are researched and booked by women

82% of bookings are made on-line via websites

90% travellers think reading on-line reviews prior to booking is important

The statistics on the left are useful when considering trends and marketing practices. We have known for a long time that on-line presence is essential, and that sites such as TripAdvisor and that various Social media sites are vitally important for successful marketing. However, it is equally important to consider WHO your target market is and HOW BEST to reach them.

Further analysis below breaks down travellers into age groups, needs and wants, spending potential, and method of researching holidays. This is an extremely useful tool when planning marketing campaigns: Groupings overlap, so it's important to look at this aspect.

HOW HOLIDAY DECISIONS ARE MADE BY DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS



Generation Z: This is the largest living generation, but spend less on travel than other groups. Most prioritize travel over purchasing a home, car or paying off a debt. This group are gearing up to take their share of the market and account for 25% of the population. In 2 years they will account for 40% of consumers. They approach social media differently, giving high value to privacy and prefer SnapChat. 25% no longer use Facebook, and spend their time on line looking for content on social media rather than social networking. YouTube and Instagram are preferred by this group. Travellers in this category are looking for:

- ⇒ Services that are easy to find and book;
- ⇒ They check Trip Advisor before making a decision;
- ⇒ 95% more likely to trust reviews on a third party site than a destination site.

Why are they important: 22-31 year olds are worth ± \$200 billion. By 2022, their estimated worth will be \$1,091 billion. By 2025, this group will comprise three quarters of the global workforce. Since this generation are avid smart phone users, it is important to gear up to their needs.

Generation X - born between 1965 and 1980: This is the third largest generation and have the most buying power and financial freedom. 68% are chief shoppers for big purchasers such as travel. 83% work full time or part time and spend most of their money on travel compared to older or younger generations. 61% have children at home, so family activities are a priority and travel will line up with school holidays. This group is looking for:

- ⇒ The ability to relax and unwind
- ⇒ Family focused options
- ⇒ Option to work while on holiday (Wi-Fi is a priority)
- ⇒ Uncomplicated travel arrangements
- ⇒ Most likely to look for a nicer hotel, amenities and to plan ahead.

Why are they important: Accommodating family groups is essential, and this group definitely looks "on-line" before making decisions, relying on social media sites such as Facebook and rate Trip Advisor highly.





Seniors: One of the most interesting to note is that 85% of people in this group tend to do last minute or spur of the moment bookings. 57% will travel to spend time with loved ones; 39% travel for variety and 38% travel to relax and rejuvenate. Under 50 year olds are most likely to look for relaxing holidays, whilst 65+ year olds are looking to socialize and find time for adventure! This group prefers traditional communication channels through a travel agent, brochures, radio ads, etc. They are also most likely to research holidays on the web, in preference to social media. It goes without saying that this group has more time to travel and thus will take advantage of special last minute travel deals.

Why are they important: This group has the most freedom to travel and are most likely to take advantage of last minute special deals. They are most likely respond to print and direct media advertising for specials.

NEWS FROM TOURISM UPDATE

There is much optimism among tourism authorities in Southern Africa for growth this year according to Tourism Update. [Read more....](#)

Just over a year ago, South African Tourism set itself a target – five million more tourists in five years – certainly ambitious, considering the global economic climate. [Read more....](#)

AWESOME EVENTS

21-22 JAN : KOWIE RIVER : School boat race trails from the Small Boat Harbour to the Putt Bridge.

3 - 10 MAR: PINEAPPLE CRICKET : Great action at cricket fields throughout the Sunshine Coast. For more details on the fixtures closer to the time, log on to : www.sunshinecoasttourism.co.za

30 MAR - 8 APR : ROYAL ST ANDREWS AMANZI FESTIVAL : Without question, the most exciting event on the Sunshine Coast calendar, with R1 million prize money sponsored by the Royal St Andrews Hotel. The final line up will be announced shortly, but you can be assured of an action packed week. The final programme will be announced shortly, and you can look forward to :

- Marina Mile Open Water Swim
- Trail Run
- International Body Boarding contest
- International Surfing contest
- Kiddies tube races
- Rubber Duck races

5 - 8 APRIL : BATHURST AGRICULTURAL SHOW : The annual agricultural show is a must to visit - keep an eye out on our website for the full programme closer to the time.

28 JUN - 8 JULY : NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL : The Grahamstown National Arts Festival programme is open for participation entries and the final programme will be launched towards the beginning of March 2018.

WISHING YOU A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS 2018