

Three trends travel suppliers should take note of in 2018

 By [Olivier Hannaert](#)

23 Jan 2018

With the uncertainty of the economy and the rollercoaster the rand often finds itself on, many industries, including travel, are affected. This, however, does not mean that South Africans will give up on their holidays - quite the contrary, actually. It's often during these stressful times that they feel most in need of a holiday to reward them for how hard they are working to get through the tough economic times.



Olivier Hannaert, MD of Club Med Southern Africa

This is not to say that South Africans will just take any holiday option that comes their way. With South Africans having to work even harder for their money, they will likely be a lot more cautious, and deliberate, about what type of travel they will be spending their hard earned money on.

Which brings me to my forecasts for 2018.

1. Experiences

In recent years we've seen a generation change where the new generation places great importance on the value of experiences - and generally speaking, South Africans are an adventurous bunch of people who love trying new things. That said, I do believe that in 2018 we will see more South Africans looking for new experiences that will take their holiday to the next level. Whether it's heading off on a snow holiday to try their hand at skiing or snowboarding, or just to experience snow for the first time; choosing a golfing holiday where they'll have the opportunity to experience some of the most breathtaking golf courses the world has to offer; or wanting to take the family on a trip where they'll get the best of both - city and sea - South Africans will be looking for diversity and new experiences.

These experiences should, as far as possible, be tailor-made to the traveller, and should cater to individuals, couples, families, newlyweds, those who love to socialise, those who love to be alone, those who want me-time or those who want family time. There should be a world of options available for South Africans to choose from, and it's up to us, the travel suppliers to provide them with everything they need (or could ever hope for).

2. All-inclusive and quality-to-price ratio

We should expect to see a lot more South Africans choosing all-inclusive holidays that are exchange-rate proof and don't come with any nasty surprises or hidden costs. Travel packages where the cost is locked in once the deposit is paid, which will not be negatively affected if the rand does take a dip, will be a very appealing option.

More so than this, I feel that South Africans will be looking for holiday options that have a good quality-to-price ratio. Most South Africans who choose to travel are generally used to a certain quality of life, and when it comes to their holidays (everything from the hotels they book, the restaurants they choose to visit and everything in between) they will be looking for options that can meet these expectations. That said, I feel we will see fewer South Africans opting for the "cheapest" travel packages available to them and where South Africans decide to spend a little more, it will be on tailor-made holidays which will ensure that the whole family has a great time.

3. Specialists

Within the travel sales funnel, South Africans already have a good idea of what type of holiday they are looking for. They have a world of information at their fingertips (quite literally), and so they will be looking for specialists who are able to provide them with further expertise and a seamless experience – before, during, and after their trip. A person's holiday begins the moment they are doing research, and so travel suppliers should expect to join the client from that moment on their journey and provide expert feedback (more than what the client would find using Google) throughout. This could be done by providing personal feedback on the travel suppliers' own personal experience, utilising websites and CRM better, or taking it one step further and using virtual reality to give the client a taste of what they can expect from their holiday.

The fact there are limited annual leave days available to South Africans, more people are looking at ways to be smarter in how they maximise their holiday time – and again, will rely on the expertise and guidance from travel specialists.

ABOUT OLIVIER HANNAERT

Olivier Hannaert is the MD of Club Med Southern Africa.
■ #BizTrends2020: The future of the travel agent profession - 6 Jan 2020
■ Sustainable and responsible tourism practice is the travel industry's responsibility - 1 Aug 2019
■ #BizTrends 2019: 2019, a year to reconnect, revitalise and re-engage - 21 Jan 2019
■ #BizTrends2018: Three trends travel suppliers should take note of in 2018 - 23 Jan 2018

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>