

How to use research to market destinations

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Valuable insights can be gleaned from visitors *after* they've visited your destination. Through first-hand experience a visitor can highlight what works - and what doesn't - in terms of your destination's offering. Opinions that, of late, have become readily available through the internet are proving itself as the number one research tool for destination marketers.



Carmen Lerm, CEO of
FusionDesign

"Your visitors will tell you very vocally and globally where you're going wrong, giving you the opportunity to right those wrongs," said Carmen Lerm, CEO of integrated marketing strategy agency, FusionDesign.

Online surveys

A range of very useful tools are available to gauge customer experiences online. Known as "widgets", these dialogue boxes can be easily installed on your website to give visitors the opportunity to air their opinions. Asking questions like "What did you like?" and "What didn't you like?" will help determine what can be improved.

Trip Advisor

Cape Town's premier "moving destination", City Sightseeing, has links to the influential travel authority Trip Advisor on its website's homepage. On Trip Advisor people can review their City Sightseeing experience and also rate it, therefore helping City Sightseeing gain valuable insights from their customers.

Travel blogs

Keeping up with the latest trends and changes in consumer behaviour in the travel community is as easy as studying the blogs of leading travel bloggers. Travel bloggers are the opinion shapers of the 21st century. What they say goes and in turn determine where people go in terms of destination travelling.

"The internet as a research tool has no equal. As destination marketers we can instantly know where people go and, more importantly, why they go there," said Carmen Lerm.

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