COMMUNICATION, MEDIA AND TOURISM
TRAINING IN AFRICA

UNWTO

World Tourism Organization

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In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in media attention towards African tourism. However, it is unfortunate that the narrative often remains unchanged, characterized by negative portrayals or stereotypical stories about travel in Africa. Moreover, the focus tends to be limited to a few select destinations or only a small portion of the vast and diverse tourism sector.

The world has changed. So has tourism. And communications cannot fall behind.

Now is the time for African destinations to craft their own narrative.

Effective tourism communications has an essential role in facilitating outreach, allowing destinations to connect with new audiences and recover from the worst crisis in the sector’s history. Diverse formats and nuanced storytelling styles can showcase how countries and communities across the continent are harnessing the power of tourism to protect nature, to preserve cultures, celebrate local traditions and put African innovation and entrepreneurial drive on the media map.

The pandemic has made clear the importance of all things digital for the promotion of destinations everywhere. More and more travellers are making use of social platforms to gather information, book and engage with communities.

The present moment calls for aligning newfound consumer and social consciousness with improved communication abilities among tourism professionals. Furthermore, communication experts must acquire enhanced skills to capitalize on the increasing interest in African tourism.
Purpose

To improve the communication skills and media literacy of tourism stakeholders, specifically in the areas of media engagement, messaging, crisis response, maximising the use of social media platforms and storytelling.

Objectives

The training sessions will:

- Provide the knowledge and skills to effectively engage with local and international media.
- Equip with techniques to develop effective messaging and storytelling strategies - from print to multimedia.
- Encourage to leverage new and innovative technologies and platforms to reach wider audiences.
- Plan and implement crisis communication plans to mitigate crisis impact while setting the ground for recovery.
- Build a tourism stakeholders network to collaborate, exchange knowledge and best practices.
- Maximize the use of digital environments.
- Make the case for communications among peers and mobilize support and investment.
- Improve public profiles and build reputation.

Content

The programme includes topics such as:

- Who is my audience? Define whom you want to connect to.
- What do I want to achieve? Communicating with strategy and purpose.
- How to do it? Storytelling and effective messaging.
- Where am I? Understanding media trends and the changing media landscape.
- Who matters? Building and curating relationships with media outlets.
- Do your homework! Preparing news conferences and live Interviews.
- Multiply! Using digital platforms to expand your audience.
- Whom do I call? The media and tourism.
- By the book! Core rules of effective and responsible crisis communications in tourism.
- Let’s get along! Communicating with difficult media.
- How to do it? Simulation exercise.
- Let’s do it! Multimedia content production (with and without budget).

Target Audience

The target audience will include communication specialists, public relations officials of National Tourism Boards and Ministries of Tourism as well as journalists covering the tourism sector. This workshop will be directed to qualified participants working in the media and communications office at NTAs, nominated by their respective National Tourism Administration.

In addition, it is crucial to involve participants from academia (such as professors, researchers, post-graduate students) connected to communications, journalism or sustainable development. This inclusive approach aims to foster bottom-up awareness and engagement.

A cross-cutting selection of participants profiles will allow for a comprehensive and rich exchange of knowledge, reflecting tourism’s own hugely diverse nature.

Networking

The workshop is only the beginning. It sets the ground to build upon and will not only contribute to share knowledge and develop skills, but also to create professional connections.

Communications does not stand still and these connections will allow to create networks around shared objectives and expand as new trends, priorities and relevant developments emerge. The workshop is only the beginning!
Language Course:

English.

Methodology/Structure/Module

The Workshop will adopt a theoretical-practical approach, consisting of multiple modules. Each module will consist of presentations, discussions, debates, group work involving case studies, and hands-on activities. Over the course of two days, the training aims to cover topics such as effective reporting on tourism, gaining insights into the operations of UNWTO, and maximizing the utilization of digital tools to expand its outreach.

The workshop will be focused on two types of groups. The first group will be communication officers/specialists of the Ministries of Tourism and National Tourism Boards while the other segment will target journalists who report on the tourism sector. As an important element in the realization of Advocating the Brand Africa, the appreciation of the sector by the media will help improve knowledge of the general masses/audiences.

Facilitators

This hands-on workshop will be conducted by UNWTO, with the support of media, branding, digital and communications experts. It will give spokespeople the skills and confidence to face the media in both the good and the challenging times.

Location

Victorial Falls Hotel, Zimbabwe.

Evaluation

At the end of the training, participants will be evaluated through written assessments and feedback forms, to ensure that the training has met the objectives and has been effective in improving their communication and media literacy skills.

Certificates will be awarded at the end of the training session.