

Instagram, Facebook can help change the narrative of Africa as a tourist destination

Facebook and Instagram representatives attended the Annual World Tourism Conference in Kigali, Rwanda to explore and discuss ways in which social media can be used effectively to drive tourism growth across Africa.



Akua Gyekye, Public Policy Manager for Africa at Facebook

(Source: Facebook)

The team took part in a live panel discussion, the *Evolution of Online Travel and Lifestyle Tourism: Leveraging Africa's Diversity*, showcasing how both platforms can be used as a tool to creatively help change the narrative of Africa as a tourist destination.

The event, developed by the Rwanda Development Board, the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) and the Africa Travel Association (ATA), saw government officials, tourism ministers, tourism boards and business professionals from across the world and the continent descend onto the capital.

Using social media to put African countries on the map

Showcasing how tourism operators and agencies can leverage Instagram, Facebook Live and Facebook 360, the Facebook and Instagram team discussed how new technologies can be used to create a seamless experience for both the tourist and the operator; from immersive travel experiences to entice potential customers, to using WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger to allow tourism companies to build customer service channels and communicate with customers prior to booking, during their trip and on their return home.

Commenting on Facebook's involvement in the World Tourism Conference Akua Gyekye, public policy manager for Africa at Facebook said: "Social platforms offer tourism agencies and companies in Rwanda and across the continent wonderful opportunities to put their countries firmly on the map. We're excited to share ideas about how Instagram and Facebook can help Africa share its rich culture and beautiful landscapes with the world, and connect with the tourists of today and the future - an effort we're proud to support."

Ahead of the conference, Facebook undertook a number of training sessions including partnering with the ATA and Rwanda Development, the local business council, to train 100 tourism focused SMBs in how to use Facebook platforms to promote, engage with communities, and grow their businesses.

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