

How vacation ownership aligns with sustainable tourism

While vacation ownership, typically referred to as "timeshare", is not marketed as a vehicle for sustainable tourism, the industry aligns itself with many of the core principles of sustainability. According to Brent Dickson, director of Dream Hotels and Resorts, vacation ownership is gaining momentum, particularly with millennials, not only due to affordability but also because this market is generally more conscious when it comes to being a responsible traveller. While it is not typically marketed as a vehicle for sustainable tourism, the vacation ownership industry aligns itself with many of the core principles of sustainability.



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"As part of the sharing economy, the vacation ownership model allows travellers to enjoy the benefits of using a vacation property that's readily available, without having to purchase an entire vacation home or add to demand for new developments that ultimately strain the local environment.

"Dream Vacation Club has been working with the industry's trade body (VOASA) and the National Consumer Commission (NCC) in formulating the best way forward in regulating the industry and promoting responsible business practices," adds Dickson. As an overview, the vacation ownership model aligns with the following principles when it comes to sustainable tourism:

Employment opportunities

Vacation ownership properties don't lie empty for most of the year, unlike second homes. Local businesses can, therefore, benefit from a steady supply of vacation owners who visit the same property and area throughout the year. In South Africa, the industry generates employment for around 27,000 people and contributes billions of rand to the GDP, according to a Grant Thornton survey undertaken by the Vacation Ownership Association of Southern Africa (VOASA).

Preventing over-tourism

Vacation ownership clubs don't need to spend huge sums each year trying to break into new markets, or to overdevelop in

certain areas to keep up with a new demand for accommodation. Their guests are already coming back and chances are, they'll be bringing their children, or their friends with children, so they can almost count on the next generation continuing the tradition into the future, without added strain on the local environment and its resources.



Research shows shared vacation owners holiday more than their counterparts

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Deeper connection

Vacation owners benefit from peace of mind returning when to a place where they know what to expect, with a happy anticipation mixed with fond memories of previous years. The long-term connection between guests and the places they visit solidifies loyalty and boosts occupancy annually, often times resulting in lengthening the season.

Regulated industry

Dream Vacation Club has also welcomed the decision by the National Consumer Commission to [investigate the vacation ownership industry](#) and to pinpoint unscrupulous industry players that over-promise and under-deliver, tarnishing the industry's reputation and limiting its potential. Clear regulation of the industry going forward will benefit and protect the end consumer and ensure professionalism.

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