

# How the tourism industry can unleash the power of strategic partnerships

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26 Jul 2023

The tourism sector is getting back on its feet. Prior to 2020, the sector accounted for 8% of GDP and given the strong growth the industry is showing, the government is hoping to it reaches 10% by 2030. Over the same time period, the sector has set itself an audacious target of attracting 21 million visitors annually. While those goals may be lofty, they can be achieved by harnessing the power of strong strategic partnerships.

By teaming up and integrating with solution-driven companies, hotel partners can supercharge the growth of the tourism sector and turn tall ambitions into tangible results while making a positive contribution to the country's economy.



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## Collaboration is key

Collaborating with the government and the relevant industry bodies is a crucial component in the quest to achieve the ambitious goals set for the tourism sector and hoteliers can play an important role in this. By actively engaging with government initiatives, hotel owners can align their strategies and efforts with the national agenda. This includes participating in tourism campaigns, supporting local initiatives, and contributing to sustainable tourism practices.

Open lines of communication and partnership between hoteliers and government stakeholders can go a long way toward fostering an environment of shared goals and mutual support. As key stakeholders, hotels can also actively contribute to shaping the policies, regulations, and infrastructure development that will ultimately drive the industry forward.

## Teamwork makes the dream work

Strategic partnerships help propel the tourism industry forward and foster innovation. Hotels can leverage the unique capabilities their partners possess to boost business outcomes by teaming up. For example, 20 months ago, Sun

International partnered with booking technology firm Profitroom. Since then, Sun International has secured 50,000 direct bookings.

By working together closely and acting on the constant feedback loop they had initiated, Profitroom and Sun International have been able to turn their partnership into a net positive for the South African hospitality industry.

## **Partnerships and innovation go hand in hand and a high tide raises all boats**

Collaborating with external partners, such as technology providers, enables hotels to tap into fresh ideas, cutting-edge technologies, and emerging trends. By joining forces, hotels can co-create innovative solutions, enhance guest experiences, and streamline operations. Any hotel looking to take advantage of the sector's growth should be considering how they can leverage strategic partnerships to grow their revenues.

These partnerships offer numerous benefits including expanded market reach, access to new customer segments, and increased brand visibility. By joining forces with complementary businesses, hotels can tap into untapped markets, attract a wider audience, and drive more bookings. As with the example of Sun International, finding the right partner can yield incredible results.

Fostering strong partnerships within the tourism industry is not just about making hotels money. The sector is a major employer, and its continued growth will go a long way toward helping the country alleviate the current youth unemployment crisis.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the South African hospitality industry can create 800,000 jobs over the next decade if all goes well. Considering that, it becomes clear that building dynamic, resilient partnerships is how we help realise the promise everyone knows South Africa has.

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