

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE NATIONAL TOURISM CONFERENCE

DATE: 3 NOVEMBER 2008

VENUE: EMPEROR'S PALACE, GAUTENG

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1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is a significant economic growth driver and it has been identified as one of the immediate priority sectors within the ASGISA. The hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Soccer Cup provided the sector with an opportunity to elevate service levels in South Africa to world standards. It is estimated that during 2010, there will be a total of 3, 5 million participants of which a third will be foreign arrivals. This requires South Africa to provide a highly satisfactory experience to tourists during the event and beyond. However a lack of customer service ethos leading to poor service levels has been identified as a challenge towards tourism growth.

DEAT will host a conference on Service Excellence on 3 November 2008 and the purpose is to provide a platform for role players in the tourism sector to engage and share information on service excellence initiatives and best practises internationally as well as to commit world class service to local and international clients.

The objectives of the conference will be amongst others to:

- Communicate and launch Service Excellence Initiative.
- Provide international benchmarking regarding service excellence initiatives and their impact on tourism
- Determine the readiness of tourism sector towards ensuring that South Africa delivers a world class customer service in 2010 and beyond.
- Identify and consolidate institutional partnerships to ensure the development of a service excellence culture in South Africa.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

This communications strategy seeks to achieve the following objectives: -

- Profile and position South Africa as a world class destination to attract new tourists and ensure repeat visits
- Communicate the launch of the Service Excellence Initiative
- Communicate the readiness of the tourism sector in ensuring that South Africa delivers a world class customer service in 2010 and beyond.
- Communicate how service levels in the tourism sector contribute towards the ASGISA objective

3. COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

- The Conference takes place at a time when preparations for the hosting of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup by South Africa are at an advanced stage and the Tourism Skills audit has highlighted the lack of customer service ethos as a challenge which can have a detrimental effect on tourism growth.
- Service quality was declared a national priority by the Deputy President in 2007 and tourism was highlighted as a primary focus.

- This conference takes place when there is competition for media coverage within the sector because of events taking place around the same time however an opportunity exists to collaborate with organisers of the others tourism activities to market this conference (TFCA Investor Conference 20 – 22 October and TBCSA Hospitality Investment Conference 23-30 September 2008).

4. COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

- To continue to profile South Africa as a world class tourist destination and promote both local and international tourist interest despite some negative media reports.
- Communicate the readiness of the tourism sector in ensuring that South Africa delivers a world class customer service in 2010 and beyond
- To highlight the sector's role in supporting ASGISA Initiative.

5. SPOKESPERSONS

- Minister
- Deputy Director General Tourism Branch
- CEO SA Tourism
- CEO TBCSA
- CDs Tourism Industry Support and Development
- DEAT Chief Director Communications (Acting)

6. THEMES AND MESSAGES

Theme:

Building a Service Excellence Culture and Partnerships in Tourism for 2010 and Beyond

Messages:

- Service Excellence is a key factor in ensuring customer satisfaction and tourism growth.
 - Tourism is a global and competitive industry, skilled service oriented people are the backbone of this industry and a lack of such skills threatens the industry.
 - In order to grow tourism, South Africans need to develop a positive attitude and passion for the industry/sector.

- Partnerships between the private and public sectors is critical in ensuring that South Africa provides quality customer service in 2010 and beyond by improving service levels and quality of service provision.
 - 2010 provides South Africa with an opportunity to elevate service levels in the country to world standards.
- A draft Human Resource Development Strategy has been developed to address poor service levels.
 - The strategy highlights "A service ethos and Tourism Culture" as one of the strategic imperatives for tourism growth.
- Travel and Tourism sector responds to the challenges of climate change.
 - Tourism is a climate sensitive sector and it's important that it responds to the challenges of climate change through adaptation and mitigation because our lifestyles and well being are affected by climate change.
 - Addressing climate change demands action from all role players in the sector.

- Striving for A Green Conference
 - South Africa continues to organise events in a manner which embraces the concept of sustainable development through practices which have minimum or neutral impact on the environment

7. COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME

PRE

Audience	Communications Opportunity	Communication Activities	Cost	Responsibility	Timeframe
Public	Publicity and Awareness	Publicise event through the media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue media advisory to publicise and invite media to the event • Secure slots for media interviews. • Draft interview schedule • Approve contents of media pack 		External Communications and META4	25 October

Stakeholder, delegate and media Internal		Create a conference website link to the DEAT website to create a hype about the conference and update regularly	None	Corporate Comms	14 Sept
		Host information sessions to inform/educate DEAT staff about service excellence	None -	Corporate and Tourism	31 October
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place news piece in Bojanala (DEAT external publication) Negotiate for space on publications of stakeholders in the sector 	None	Corporate Comms Meta4	15 September and 15 October
		Approve layout and design of DEAT exhibition	R18 000	Corporate Comms and Tourism branch	12 September
		Approve branding material	R12 000	Corporate Comms	15 October
		Create awareness about environmental friendly ways of conserving the environment through: Uploading the "Come Play Green With Us Booklet" on the registration web link		Meta4	1 September 2008

DURING

Audience	Communications Opportunity	Communication Activities	Cost	Responsibility	Timeframe
Public	Publicity and Awareness	Draft and Issue media statement on conference	None	External Comms and Meta4	3 November
		Conduct media interviews	None	External Comms	Ongoing (pre-event)
		Register media on site		External Comms and Meta4	3 November
		Transport 5 community media to event	R5 000	External Comms	Ongoing (pre event)
		Upload speakers presentation and Minister's speech and conference statement on website	None	External and Corporate Comms	3 November
		Create awareness environmental friendly ways of living through the "Did You Know Tip" or "Do's and Dont's" documents through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print tips at the back of the delegate cards • During Gala Dinner • Print tips at registration counters 		External and Meta4	3 November

POST

Audience	Communications Opportunity	Communication Activities	Cost	Responsibility	Timeframe
Public	Publicity and Awareness	Conduct interviews to announce outcomes		External Comms	From pre – 10 November
		Monitor media coverage and prepare exit report			Ongoing until 12 November
		Place opinion piece			Immediately after conference
		Produce Eco Impact Report with Comparative Analysis of Pre and Post the Conference		Meta4	10 November
		Ensure website is fully updated and contains relevant video images		Meta4	3 November
		Draft and produce Conference Report		Meta4	

8. STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

- A Communications team, convened by the Head of Communications in the department will be responsible for the implementation of this communications strategy. META4 will support DEAT Communication to implement the strategy.
- Tourism branch will provide content for the production of communication products