

10 insights impacting hospitality and global travel for 2022

 By [Rosemary Anderson](#)

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The hospitality sector has had to re-evaluate, rethink, reimagine and reset as to how it can be relevant in a post-Covid-19 world.

Hit with a barrage of turmoil and turbulence, it's time for triumph and to turn difficulties into opportunities.



Rosemary Anderson

Here are several insights impacting hospitality and global travel for the year ahead.

Digital nomads

These professionals have careers that allow them to work remotely anywhere in the world. As such, they are free to choose wherever they wish to live.

Several destinations are specifically targeting this new growing market and with a targeted and aligned private-public sector marketing campaign, we believe we could grow the hospitality sector by over one million beds in a year as well as sell out every room in Cape Town every night of the year.

Removing barriers and ensuring job creation, South Africa could be positioned as a destination that welcomes digital nomads. This would include the establishment of a favourable visa regime for those earning a foreign income and who wish to work remotely in South Africa.

Tourism Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has indicated her receptiveness to this initiative and we are enlisting her support to facilitate the necessary visa requirement changes with her Department of Home Affairs counterpart.

Workations or staycations

When business people travel for work, it has become fairly normal practice to add on a few days to capitalise on their travel and maximise being away. This trend has been enhanced in Covid where people are choosing to stay in their destination for much longer than a few days. This offers a fantastic opportunity for hotels and accommodation establishment to market long-stay offers to guests.

High-speed Internet and mobile technology

Hospitality businesses are fast realising how important it is to provide high-speed Internet to meet their guests' needs, whether in restaurants, or accommodation establishments. The trend is further evident with the increasing levels of restaurant and hotel bookings done via mobile booking platforms.

Hospitality digitalisation

Whether it be booking a room and check-in automation optimisation, in the cloud, predictive smart systems, blockchain solutions, cybersecurity, predictive smart systems, smart recognition technology or smart rooms themselves, all these trends are being practically implemented more so now than ever before.

Pet-friendly accommodation

Increasingly more guests would like to take their four-legged family members with them to both accommodation establishments as well as restaurants. The UK offers many venues now targeting this growing sector even offering doggie menus and beds.

Sustainability

Guests are moving away from wasteful extras such as leaflets, sewing kits and small plastic containers of shampoos, gels and creams. The trend for hotels is to move to bulk dispensers and to remove anything that is superfluous. In the UK, every accommodation establishment must display its green energy efficiency and more travellers see this as a priority, choose an accommodation establishment based on their green energy ranking rating. There is a general growing concern for the environment and patrons want to see recycling and genuine efforts being made to reduce the establishments carbon footprint.

Self-catering accommodation

This sector saw the biggest growth internationally over the past 20 months - when travellers were finally allowed to travel. Equally heightened was the demand on caravans and other accommodation-inclusive vehicles. In Europe, the interest in purchasing 'mobile homes' was massive with waiting lists of over a year.

Less is more

More guests are looking for high standards of cleanliness, maintenance and service but not necessarily with all the extra frills which had higher levels of priority previously.

Menu selection

This has shrunk from necessity when restaurants had to try to stay financially viable with a reduced customer base. Restaurateurs are seeing how this is improving their gross profits and are retaining a more limited menu, consequently enjoying the bottom-line benefits of it. Patrons do not seem to be objecting.

Less grumpy patrons

Both hoteliers and restaurateurs have given feedback that they find their customer base less difficult to deal with and more forgiving. Long may this last into 2022 and beyond!

HR trends

The difficult months of lockdowns and then trading under severe restrictions forced the industry to have people doing the jobs of multiple persons. This job-sharing trend has worked exceptionally well in numerous areas and the success of this is now being adopted as a norm.

Businesses have also seen the benefit to their bottom line by moving to a single shift business and not having double shifts. This has significantly reduced the employee cost to company. Companies that have done this and have seen the benefits, are not likely to revert to double shifts going forward.

Kindness

The last but most important trend in my opinion. The past 20 months have been gruelling for everyone, and touches of genuine kindness now go far further than they have ever gone before. So, if you want to create a loyal customer base and frequently returning customers, practice ARC (Acts of Random Kindness). It goes an exceptionally long way to differentiate yourself from everyone else. Let's hope this new trend is the trendiest trend of all and dominates hospitality and tourism so it becomes entrenched and is one of the long-lasting silver linings of Covid-19.

ABOUT ROSEMARY ANDERSON

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