



DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

2025-
2028



NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE DIRECTORATE

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1. NELSON MANDELA BAY TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY: OVERVIEW

This document represents the plan for Economic Development Tourism and Agriculture's Tourism Digital Marketing strategic objectives and associated programmes of work for the period 2025 – 2028.

Covid 19 has changed the tourism landscape not just in Nelson Mandela Bay but Internationally. This has led to the need for many businesses to reinvent and reimagine themselves. Furthermore, tourism strategies and plans will need to include a higher focus on becoming more resilient in order to survive future risks that could negatively affect the sector.

EDTA in 2020 through industry stakeholder engagements developed an Economic Recovery Framework that seeks to form the basis of restoring the Nelson Mandela Bay economy post the impact of Covid 19 pandemic. It provides a broad framework that will provide guidance on strategic intervention programmes that the Municipality and its partners must adopt in order to deal with the challenges imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic. The framework sets out the work that needs to be done within the Nelson Mandela Bay.

The overall framework is anchored on the following 6 Strategic Intervention Programmes:

- Industry support & growth
- strategic\catalytic projects
- Township product development
- enterprise development & support
- poverty alleviation and social programme
- township economy
- key enablers: infrastructure, skills development, safety & security and policy

The actions required to implement the proposed intervention programmes require the concerted effort of a wide range of different stakeholders. The Tourism Master Plan serves

to set the scene for a collaborative approach amongst all the tourism role players within Nelson Mandela Bay.

2. THE NELSON MANDELA BAY TOURISM MASTER PLAN

The Municipality's Tourism Master Plan was updated in 2024 and is a detailed and robust assessment of, and recommendation for, the entire Tourism Value Chain. The Economic Development Tourism and Agriculture Directorate owns the execution of the broader Tourism Master Plan. The Destination Marketing and Visitor Information provision for Nelson Mandela Bay falls within the Tourism Marketing Sub Directorate and the development function falls within the Tourism Development Sub Directorate.

The Tourism Master Plan details the full extent of Tourism work to be done within the Metro including spatial development, product development, infrastructure, and Marketing.

The objectives of the Tourism Master Plan can be summarized as follows:

- To enable all tourism role players to develop a common vision for NMB tourism future
- To enable NMBM to achieve its potential as a unique and competitive metropole and regional visitor within South Africa and in the African continent
- To provide a concrete framework for the implementation of responsible tourism policies
- To clearly identify and maximize the development and usage of all the possible tourism attractions in NMB
- To provide a concrete framework for meaningful community involvement and beneficiation from sustainable tourism development
- To identify and package opportunities for creation of jobs, SMME and BEE investment opportunities
- To provide a concrete framework for the transformation of the tourism industry in the metropole
- To provide a concrete strategic framework for tourism institutional structuring and capacity building
- To provide a strategic framework for meaningful involvement and participation of all the key role players and stakeholders in tourism development and marketing

The broader tourism work to be done in the Tourism Master Plan relies on the actions and endeavours of many stakeholders and not solely on that of EDTA. Industry stakeholders contribute to the success of the tourism economy through effective implementation of their roles and responsibilities.

The travel sector as being made up of a complex web of relationships and that this calls for industry coordination. EDTA will need to drive and continue to collaborate with identified stakeholders to create synergy in the promotion of the destination.

Stakeholders include:

- Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency
- South African Tourism
- Tour Operators & Travel Trade
- Private Sector Product Owners
- South African National Parks
- Key national industry associations such as SATSA, SAACI and ICCA
- Local Tourism Industry Association partners
- Community Tourism Forums
- Transnet
- ACSA / Airlines
- Development Agencies – MBDA, Eastern Cape Development Corporation
- Civil Society
- Media
- Host Community
- SAPS and other important Safety and Security agencies
- Other important municipal departments such as Sports Recreation Arts and Culture, Human Settlements, Safety and Security, Public Health, Communications

3. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

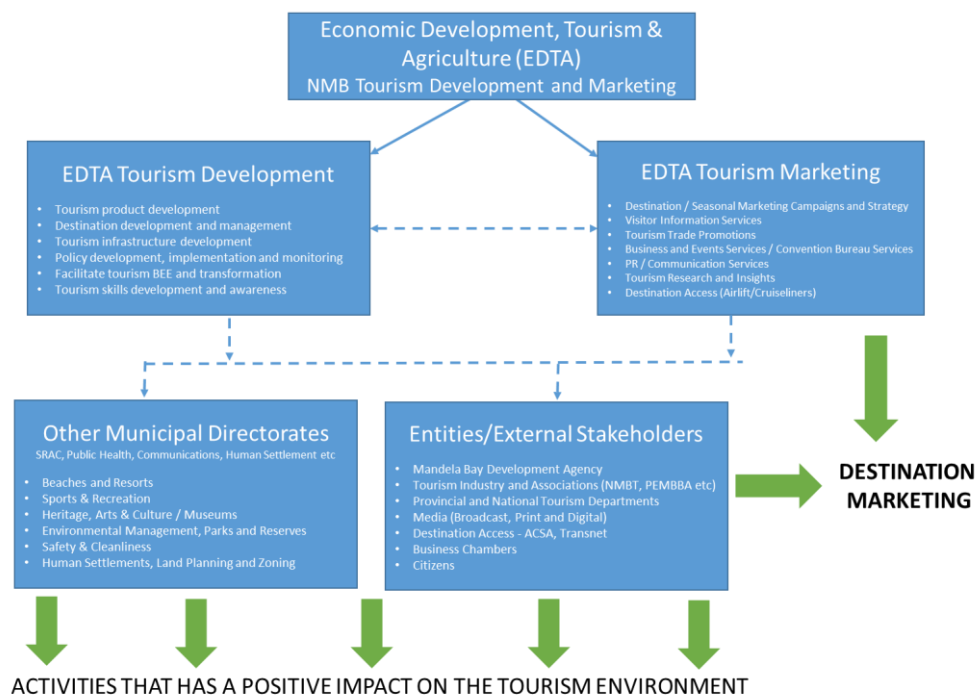


Figure 1: NMBM EDTA Tourism Institutional arrangements

4. EDTA TOURISM MANDATE

The tourism role of EDTA is to facilitate, direct, coordinate, promote and manage the provision of efficient and effective tourism development, destination marketing and tourism experience management services in Nelson Mandela Bay in collaboration with private tourism and other stakeholders. There are two different tourism mandates within the directorate which includes Destination Marketing and Tourism Development respectively.

5. VISION

The high-level vision for tourism in Nelson Mandela Bay provides the focus and framework for the five strategic objectives/goals which Destination Marketing is driven by:

1. To define a solid brand value proposition and positioning, building on our unique differentiators of tourist experiences and understanding of consumer insights which can easily be understood by residents, local trade, international trade and all consumers and translated into a consistent image for NMB and demonstrated through a variety of itineraries (establish the blue print of our offering and brand),
2. To optimise tourism volumes and yield for Nelson Mandela Bay in a totally sustainable manner,
3. To establish good levels of tourism business all-year-round,
4. To grow tourism impact in an inclusive, responsible and sustainable manner,
5. Facilitate the delivery of a quality tourist experience that lives our brand principles through collaboration with stakeholders, partners, Nelson Mandela Bay's tourism businesses and local citizens.

5.1. STRATEGIC ACTIONS

To fulfil these overall objectives, EDTA has identified strategic objectives and strategic actions that are the focus of the strategic plan:

1. Define an easily understood and easily communicated **brand proposition** that everyone can articulate and buy into.
2. Ensure the brand proposition is central to all our activities – both in marketing the destination and in facilitating the delivery of the tourist experience.
3. Leverage industry's connection with the travellers and trade to promote the brand value proposition.
4. Leverage **content marketing** to drive awareness and education of our brand offering, both digitally and traditionally.

5. Identification of **product/experience development** needs for tourism development in line with our brand and consumer needs and facilitation of the creation of these offerings through collaboration with other municipal and industry partners - ensuring that inclusive tourism benefit is delivered to the entire region.

To deliver these 5 priorities, Nelson Mandela Bay will focus on the following key programme areas for the next 3 years:

1. Innovative and impactful **Destination Marketing** – Aimed at attracting a mix of market segments (traditional and developing markets) that will deliver good high yield business all-year-round to
 - a. Leisure Tourism – Domestic and selected International markets,
 - b. Business Tourism - Domestic and selected International markets,
 - c. Experience Development for trade and consumers from above markets.
2. **Content Marketing Strategy** – Aligned with international travel trends and best practice, the aim is for Nelson Mandela Bay's brand to be shared with the world in an impactful, consistent and authentic way resulting in greater awareness and knowledge levels about the city, region and brand offering – this will be done mainly digitally, but also through traditional PR.
3. **Quality Visitor Experience** Improve visitor experience issues such as safety, cleanliness and product experience development through collaboration with stakeholders, partners and industry; and the provision of visitor information services to increase geographic spread.
4. **Research**, insights, performance monitoring and evaluation.

Key principles are to:

- Focus on a limited number of activities that are driven by the strategic choices made and agreed upon in this document. This means that ad hoc projects and initiatives that arise that are not part of the strategic scope, need to be declined – or need to be allocated with additional budget and resource allocation. Being side-tracked by

multiple ad-hoc requests that are not aligned to the strategy runs the risk of impacting the ability to deliver the agreed KPIs.

- EDTA will focus on what it can do well itself but facilitate action by partners and members as well to drive the strategy. In particular, partnerships and joint marketing agreements with neighbouring regions of the Garden Route and Eastern Cape are critical.
- Target a small number of highly productive market segments, to maximise the impact of its budget and work with SA Tourism and Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency to build demand in new markets.

6. STRATEGIC MARKET SEGMENTS

The Digital Marketing Strategy is guided by the overall marketing strategy. Markets have been assessed based on the following principles:

1. Where do we currently get our volumes from and how do we protect, defend and extend their stay in NMB?
2. Where is their scope for growth from newer markets, and preparing for the future?
3. What markets are easier for us to market in and which markets does our experiences appeal to?

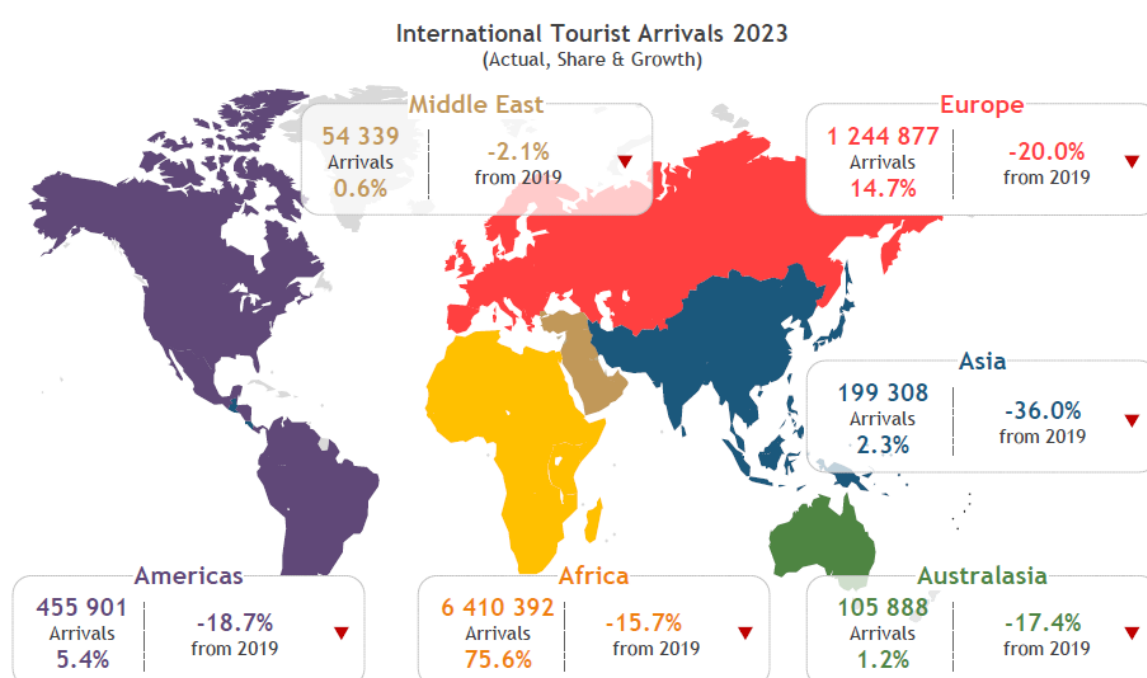
International tourist arrivals to South Africa reached 8.48 million in 2023, a notable increase of 48.9% compared to 5.7 million in 2022. This represents a solid recovery after the sharp declines in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, although it is still below pre-pandemic levels. The 2023 growth is more moderate compared to the explosive rebound of 1391.3% seen in 2022, reflecting a more stabilized but positive trend.

The Eastern Cape experienced a significant increase in international tourist arrivals, which rose by 57.6% from 189,163 in 2022 to 298,088 in 2023. This growth follows a strong recovery trajectory, although the increase is lower than the 203.1% spike seen in 2022, which was primarily a rebound from the pandemic's worst impacts. The Eastern Cape increased its share of total South African arrivals from 3.3% in 2022 to 3.5% in 2023. While this represents a modest gain, it shows that the province is gradually capturing a higher proportion of international tourism to South Africa.

Nelson Mandela Bay mirrored the growth seen in the Eastern Cape, with a 55.5% increase in international arrivals, from 145,656 in 2022 to 226,532 in 2023. This follows a substantial 228.0% rise in 2022, meaning 2023 saw a somewhat slower but still healthy increase in foreign visitation. The share of total arrivals in the Eastern Cape from NMB dropped slightly from 77% in 2022 to 76% in 2023, indicating a small shift in visitor distribution within the province.

6.1. FOREIGN MARKETS:

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS TO SOUTH AFRICA BY REGION



In 2023, Africa Land maintained its leading position with 72.5% of arrivals, though this is down from nearly 80% in 2021. Europe followed with a 14.7% share, still below pre-pandemic levels.

The Americas accounted for 5.4% of arrivals, with 0.5 million visitors, holding steady from previous years. Asia saw a decline of -36.0% in visitor numbers compared to 2019, while Australasia's recovery (-17.4%) aligned with the overall global growth rate.

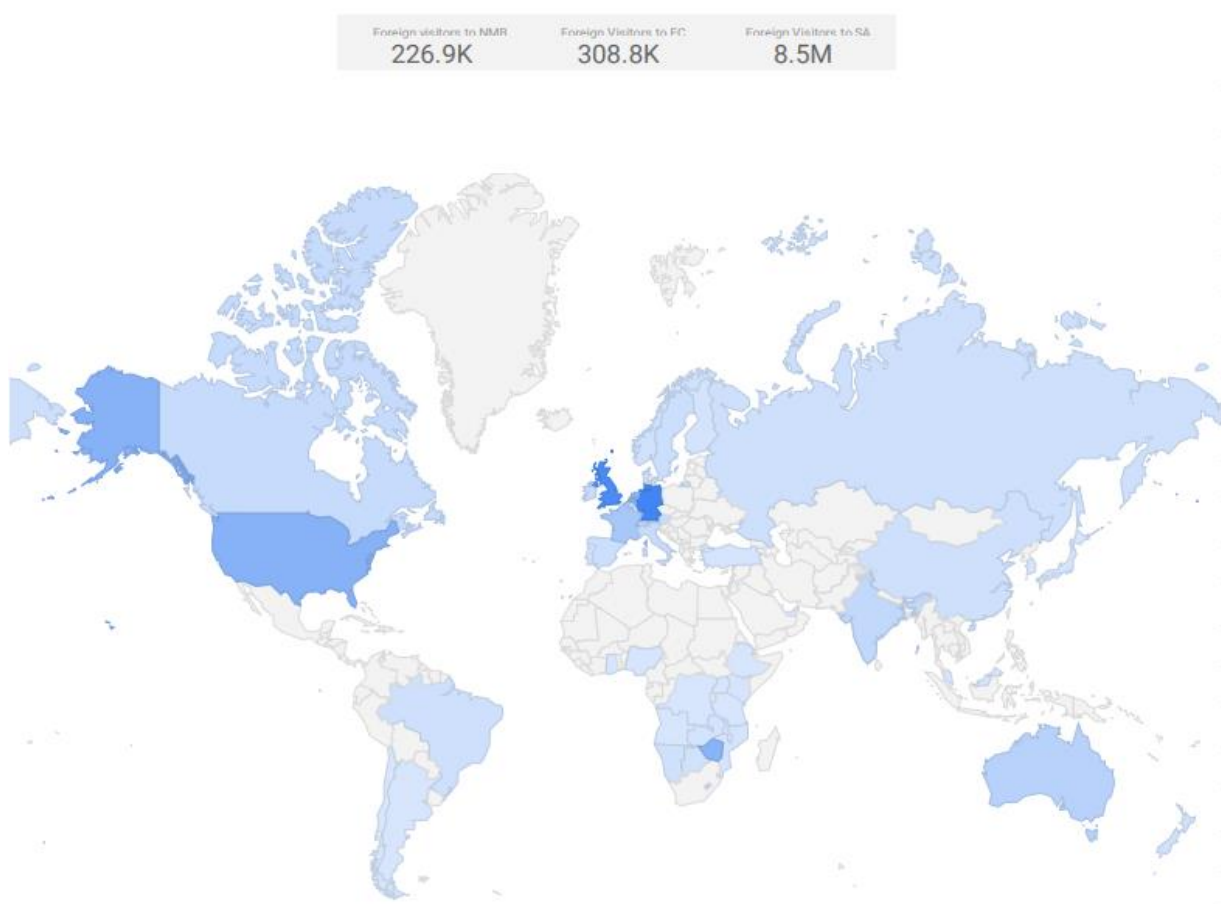
The Middle East, though the smallest market, showed the strongest recovery with just a -2.1% decline in visitors. Africa and Europe maintain their dominance in terms of overall share of visitors to South Africa.

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS TO EASTERN CAPE TOP 10 COUNTRIES

Eastern Cape Top 10 Source Markets 2023					
	Germany	UK	Zimbabwe	USA	Netherlands
Arrivals	42 718	40 116	38 567	26 004	20 355
% Share 2023	13.8%	13.0%	12.5%	8.4%	6.6%
% Growth 2019-2023	49.2%	42.5%	214.7%	13.5%	74.1%
	Lesotho	France	Australia	Switzerland	India
Arrivals	14 320	13 392	10 483	7 398	6 505
% Share 2023	4.6%	4.3%	3.4%	2.4%	2.1%
% Growth 2019-2023	16.3%	51.4%	147.6%	59.4%	99.3%

The Eastern Cape's Top 10 Source Markets are Germany, UK, Zimbabwe, USA, Netherlands, Lesotho, France, Australia, Switzerland and India. The top 10 represents a share of 71.2% from the total number of 298,088 foreign tourists to the Eastern Cape in 2023. There is a slight difference in the Top 10 order when comparing the Eastern Cape with Nelson Mandela Bay mostly due to the location of NMB in the province.

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS TO NELSON MANDELA BAY



Tourist Arrivals 2023 – Source SAT Annual Tourism Report 2023 (Data cut)

TOP 25 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN - INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO NELSON MANDELA BAY

Country	NMB 2019	NMB 2023	EC 2023	SA 2023	Share SA	Share EC	Recovery
Germany	65,885	35,251	42,718	245,259	14.37%	82.52%	53.50%
United Kingdom	43,640	32,828	40,116	356,160	9.22%	81.83%	75.22%
USA	21,853	19,178	26,004	353,975	5.42%	73.75%	87.76%
Zimbabwe	2,366	18,326	38,567	2,106,940	0.87%	47.52%	774.43%
Netherlands	22,518	17,009	20,355	131,371	12.95%	83.56%	75.54%
France	15,773	11,326	13,392	119,974	9.44%	84.57%	71.81%
Lesotho	6,934	8,725	14,320	1,163,826	0.75%	60.93%	125.84%
Australia	10,211	7,689	10,483	86,250	8.91%	73.34%	75.30%
Switzerland	8,473	6,439	7,398	42,654	15.10%	87.04%	76.00%
India	5,214	5,156	6,505	79,774	6.46%	79.27%	98.90%
Belgium	10,779	4,842	5,758	46,348	10.45%	84.10%	44.92%
Canada	6,712	4,135	5,094	55,056	7.51%	81.18%	61.61%
Austria	5,131	3,845	4,137	20,894	18.40%	92.95%	74.94%
Italy	7,604	3,817	4,612	52,091	7.33%	82.76%	50.20%
Ireland	5,183	3,790	4,540	27,282	13.89%	83.47%	73.12%
Spain	4,291	2,991	3,216	32,020	9.34%	93.01%	69.70%
Sweden	4,053	2,984	3,279	24,543	12.16%	90.99%	73.61%
Brazil	6,684	2,639	3,109	25,672	10.28%	84.87%	39.48%
Russia	1,187	2,565	3,037	28,357	9.05%	84.46%	216.02%
China	5,992	2,385	3,157	37,164	6.42%	75.55%	39.80%
Namibia	3,397	2,134	3,844	160,078	1.33%	55.52%	62.83%
New Zealand	1,631	2,037	2,610	19,349	10.53%	78.03%	124.87%
Denmark	3,012	1,976	2,405	17,995	10.98%	82.16%	65.59%
Botswana	3,014	1,776	3,324	363,025	0.49%	53.44%	58.93%
Norway	2,140	1,768	2,251	-		78.53%	82.60%

KEY FINDINGS FOR 2023:

2023 marked a significant recovery for international tourism to Nelson Mandela Bay, with visitor numbers substantially increasing compared to the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021. Germany, the United Kingdom, and the USA remain the top three source markets, demonstrating their resilience and continued importance. European countries, particularly Germany, the UK, France, and the Netherlands, have experienced substantial growth in visitor numbers to Nelson Mandela Bay in 2023.

Emerging African markets, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Namibia have shown significant growth, indicating potential for further development in these markets. Direct airlift is a possibility with smaller aircraft that can already land at the Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport.

While India have shown good recovery to almost post covid numbers, China's recovery is still slow, and efforts need to be made in increasing the numbers from the Asian markets.

Foreign spend in the Eastern Cape rose by 57.1%, from R3.12 billion in 2022 to R4.89 billion in 2023 from foreign source markets. This is a strong increase, although it is slower than the 269.7% growth seen in 2022, which was driven by the post-pandemic rebound.

The growth in 2023 is reflective of the continued recovery but at a more sustainable pace. The top 7 countries in terms of foreign spend to the Eastern Cape was: United Kingdom (R747,824,087), USA (R671,379,132), Germany (R571,272,816), Zimbabwe (R360,724,122), The Netherlands (R309,584,988), France (R242,986,532) and Australia (R207,415,124).

From our identified target markets the top 5 highest average spenders are from USA, China including Hong Kong, Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

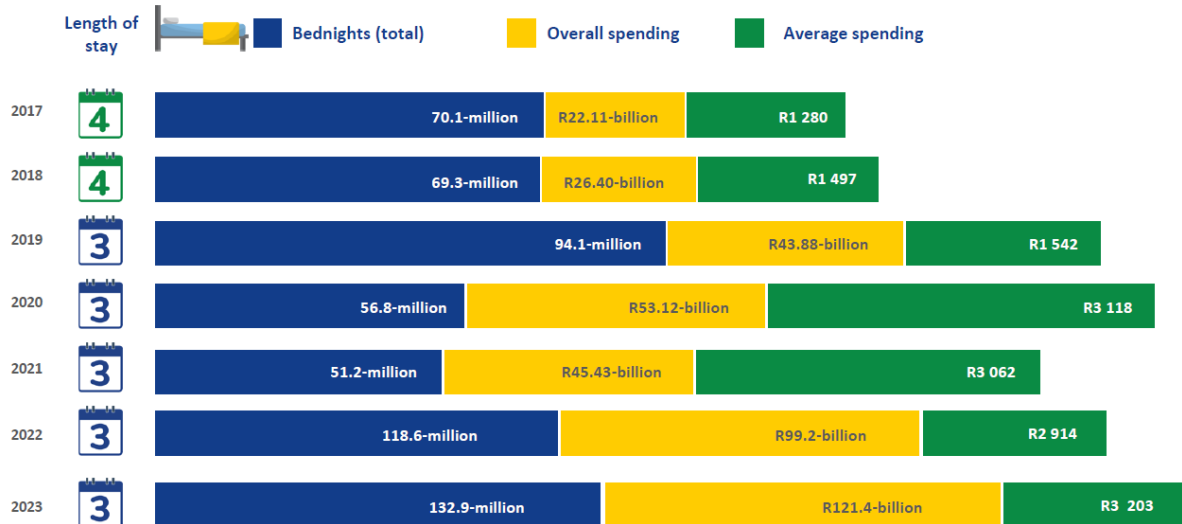
KEY MARKETS FOR EDTA TO FOCUS ON:

Based on market size and growth potential, EDTA should prioritize the following markets:

- Germany: As the largest source market, Germany offers significant potential for further growth.
- United Kingdom: A strong and consistent market, the UK remains a key focus.
- USA: While recovering, the US market offers opportunities for increased visitor numbers.
- Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Namibia: These emerging markets have shown significant growth and should be targeted for further development.
- European Markets: Countries like France, the Netherlands, and Italy, along with emerging markets like Sweden and Norway, offer potential for growth.
- Asian Markets: India and China offer great potential in terms of the number of possible travellers and also off peak travel during the winter months in South Africa.
- From the top 25 countries, apart from Zimbabwe and Lesotho, Russia and New Zealand also out performed pre-covid numbers. Russia has shown significant growth for both South Africa (174% growth vs 2019) and Nelson Mandela Bay (216% growth vs 2019) while New Zealand showed 125% growth for NMB and 118% for SA.
- From our target markets the top 5 highest average spenders are from USA, China including Hong Kong, Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

- Utilise existing twin sister agreements to collaborate and identify marketing opportunities in those markets.

6.2. DOMESTIC MARKETS:



Domestic tourism in South Africa experienced significant growth in 2023, reaching record levels. Overnight trips surged by 11.3% to 37.9 million, with holiday trips and VFR travel as the primary drivers. Business and MICE segments also showed substantial growth. The average spend per overnight trip increased to ZAR 3,203, contributing to a total domestic tourism spend of R121.4 billion.

The Eastern Cape saw a 17.9% increase in domestic trips to the EC totalling 6,780,928 while 5,904,208 domestic trips originated from the EC to other provinces. The EC showed a significant 119.7% increase in spending with a total domestic tourism spend of R19.0 Billion at an average spend of R3,220 and an average length of stay of 4.3 nights accounting for 25.4 Million bednights. While day trips declined, the overall domestic tourism landscape in 2023 presented a positive outlook for the industry.

2023 saw a significant increase in domestic tourism to Nelson Mandela Bay. The number of visitors increased by 24.1%, reaching 2,375,435. This growth was driven by a 39.7% increase in overnight visitors (1,672,733 tourists), with VFR travel being a major contributor, increasing by 67.9%.

Domestic visitors stayed longer in 2023, with the average length of stay increasing from 3.13 nights to 3.74 nights resulting in the total number of visitor bednights sold/occupied going from 4,191,666 to 5,854,567 in 2023.

The average spend per overnight visitor increased slightly to R2,860 per trip or R817 per day. Despite a slight decrease in day visitors of 1.97%, their average spend of R867, resulted in a total day visitor spend of R609 million. Overall there was a 34.04% increase in the overall domestic direct spend to R5.39 billion up from R4.02 Billion in 2022.

The top 4 purpose of visit for domestic tourists in South Africa where VFR (42.3%), Holiday (33.8%), Business (7.9%) and MICE (3.5%). The Eastern Cape Main Purpose for domestic trips were slightly different to that of the overall data with VFR (64.87%) being the main purpose of travel in 2023. This was followed by Holiday (25.15%), Religious (7.87%), MICE (1.51%) and Education/training (0.60%). In terms of Nelson Mandela Bay 33.3% of domestic visitors Main Purpose of Visit was Vacation/Holiday followed by Event (MICE) (29.63%), VFR (23.7%), and Business (8.15%).

Share of Domestic Destination by Origin 2023
(Destination across, Origin going down)

Origin	Destination									
	2023	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	KwaZulu Natal	Limpopo	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	North West	Western Cape
	Eastern Cape	59.9%	0.3%	2.2%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%
	Free State	5.6%	55.7%	6.2%	0.7%	0.1%	0.3%	10.4%	7.0%	4.5%
	Gauteng	14.7%	22.7%	42.5%	25.7%	20.8%	38.5%	8.1%	32.7%	16.4%
	KwaZulu Natal	4.6%	0.3%	7.8%	57.9%	0.2%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%
	Limpopo	0.6%	0.9%	20.9%	6.7%	74.3%	21.2%	2.3%	6.3%	2.2%
	Mpumalanga	1.2%	0.0%	7.5%	2.7%	2.3%	33.1%	0.0%	1.3%	0.3%
	Northern Cape	0.8%	4.8%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	70.9%	4.9%	5.8%
	North West	0.8%	15.0%	7.7%	0.1%	2.1%	3.7%	5.2%	47.9%	0.0%
	Western Cape	11.7%	0.4%	2.2%	3.1%	0.2%	0.2%	3.1%	0.0%	59.1%

Main Purpose of Domestic Trip – Source South African Tourism Annual Report

According to the South African Tourism Annual Report, the domestic trips to Eastern Cape where mainly from the Eastern Cape (59.9% internal trips), followed by Gauteng (14.7%), Western Cape (11.7%), Free State (5.6%), KZN (4.6%), Mpumalanga (1.2%), North West (0.8%), Northern Cape (0.8%) and Limpopo (0.6%).

The provincial markets for Nelson Mandela Bay is primarily decided upon by the provincial numbers although it is expected that the metro get a larger share of the Western Cape and a smaller share of KZN due to the location of the metro from these borders. The city however also has one of the two major airports and thus this could assist in reducing the

impact and serve to increase visitor numbers from those areas. EDTA is looking at improving this indicator going forward.

When looking at the number of trips and visits taken to NMB, the vast majority are undertaken by the domestic market. While a high percentage of these are staying with friends and family, we have seen increases in paid for accommodation and daily spend.

The sheer volume of numbers means that this market is actually our most valuable source of tourism income. International trends demonstrate the need to have a stable domestic tourism base as this allows destinations to weather international challenges and fluctuations.

With the advent of international terrorism, war, uncertainty around natural events (ash clouds, tsunamis, pandemic etc.), and swings in economic stability – international tourism is sensitive and can suddenly decline. Compounding this is also the barriers for international travel to South Africa, including cost of airfare, perceptions of safety and security and also difficulties in obtaining visas. For long term sustainability and seasonal influence, a robust domestic strategy is required.

The majority of domestic visitors coming to NMB are intra-provincial (59.9%), which means people are coming from other parts of the province to NMB. These tourists already see the value in NMB and need to be converted to stay longer and spend more in the tourism value chain.

Gauteng, Western Cape, Free State and KZN remain the highest source provinces for interprovincial domestic visits to NMB and should have high focus. Western Cape also presents an easy opportunity to convert Garden Route travellers further along to NMB as part of this route.

KEY TRENDS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM DOMESTIC SURVEY

1 Sustainability at the forefront

- With growing environmental awareness, sustainable travel will become even more central. Tourists are expected to increasingly opt for eco-friendly accommodations, low-carbon transport options, and experiences that contribute positively to the local ecosystem and community.

2 Technology integration

- The integration of advanced technologies like AI and VR will enhance the travel experience, offering personalised itineraries, virtual tours, and seamless connectivity.
- Loyalty programmes also play relevant role in ensuring data collection and driving travel.

3 Experiential travel

- The demand for unique, immersive experiences will continue to rise.
- Travellers will seek out activities that offer a deep dive into local cultures, cuisines, and traditions, moving away from generic tourist attractions towards more authentic, off-the-beaten-path experiences.

4 Health and wellness tourism trends

- The focus on health and wellness will intensify, with tourists looking for destinations that offer wellness retreats, spa experiences, outdoor activities, and culinary tours focused on healthful eating.
- This is in line with the need for relaxation for domestic tourists.

5 Microcations and staycations

- Shorter, more frequent trips, along with staycations, will become popular choices for travellers seeking quick breaks without the hassle of long-distance travel.
- A Sho't Left should provide South Africans with an option of taking frequent, short trips.

6 Accessible tourism

- Greater emphasis will be placed on making travel accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities, ensuring that accommodations, attractions, and transportation are inclusive and barrier-free.

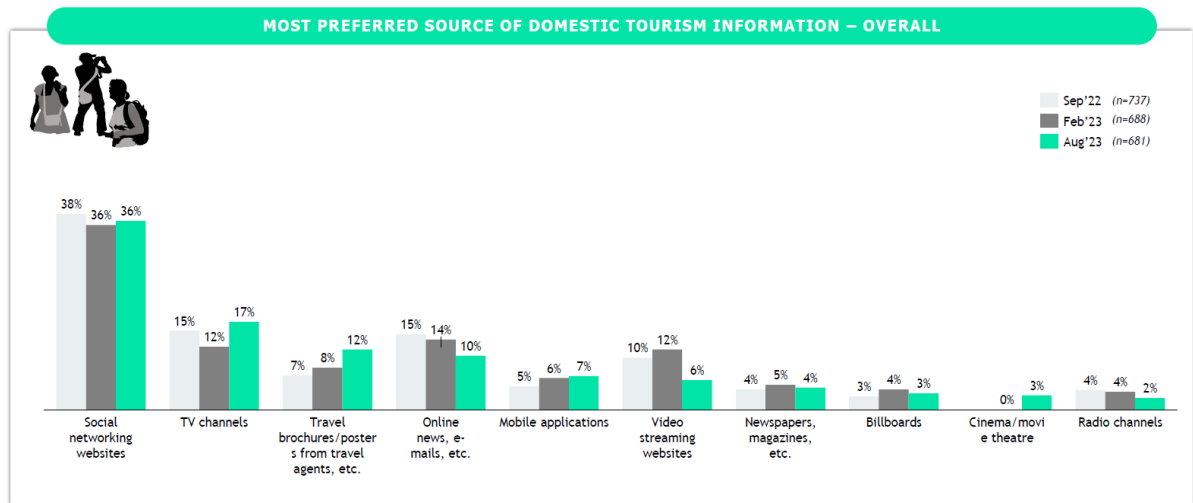
7 Cultural and heritage preservation

- Tourism that supports the preservation of cultural and historical sites will gain traction, with more tourists participating in conservation efforts and educational tours.

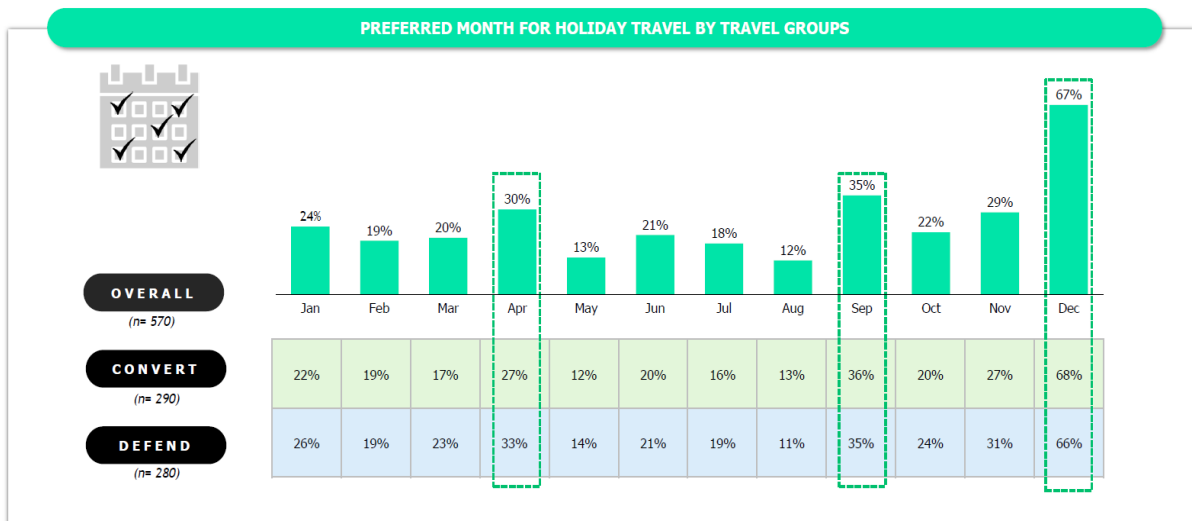
8 Safety and security

- Tourists are prioritising destinations known for their safety, stability, and robust health infrastructure.
- Safety and security also includes the knowledge that their homes will be safe while they are away.

PREFERRED SOURCE OF INFORMATION

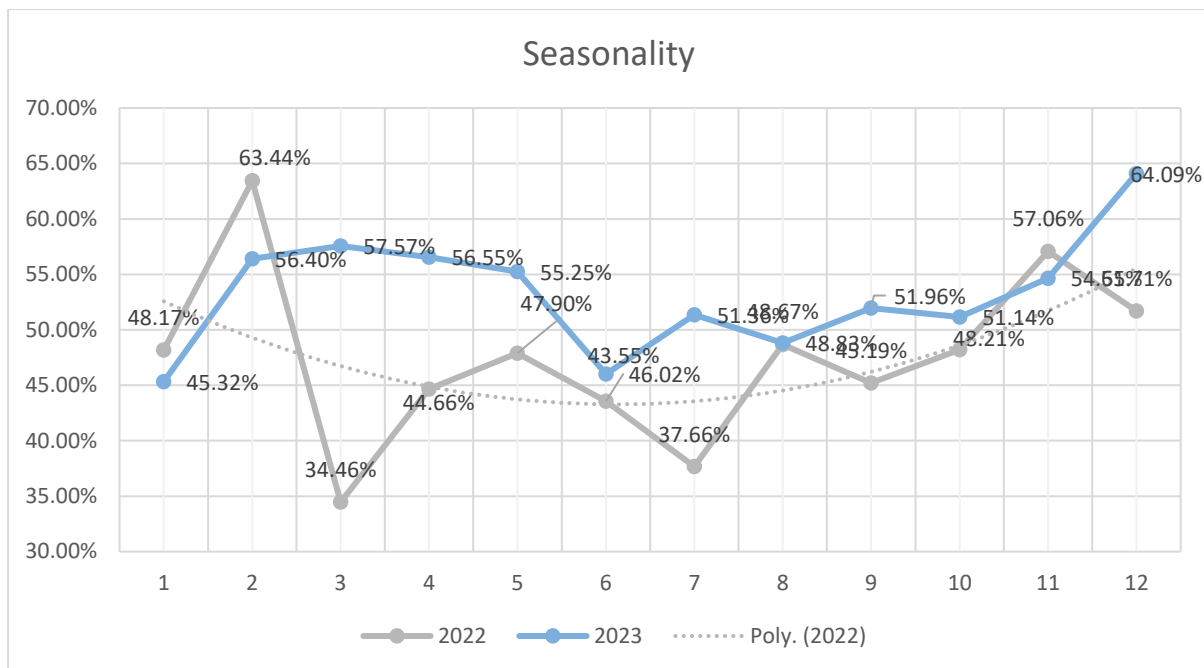


DOMESTIC TOURISM PREFERRED MONTH OF TRAVEL



Source: SA Tourism Domestic Survey

Domestic visitors prefer to travel for holiday when the weather is warmer and during school holidays normally around April, September and December.



Source: EDTA/NMBT Tourism Occupancy/Survey

Looking at both the Accommodation Occupancy Data and the SAT Domestic Tourism Survey on preferred month of travel you can clearly see the correlation between what consumers are saying is what is taking place in the destination.

Overall the busiest period for formal accommodation facilities are during December holidays and lowest during the winter months. Depending on when school holidays are there also seems to be an increase in occupancies where leisure is boosting the continuing business travel. The spike in February 2022 was due to the T20 Cricket Series, Herald Cycle Tour and after season business travel taking place in Nelson Mandela Bay.

6.3. PRIORITY 1 – LEISURE TOURISM

A. Domestic Leisure Tourism

- Convert existing intra-provisional day visitors to stay for a night
- Focus on Gauteng, KZN, Free State and Western Cape as key domestic visitor source markets, especially leveraging reciprocity and the garden route connection
- Promote key events to chosen domestic tourist segments (younger single travellers and family orientated segments)

B. Foreign Leisure Tourism

- a. Defend and grow length of stay from core markets of
 - i. Germany
 - ii. UK
 - iii. Netherlands
 - iv. USA
- b. Leverage emerging markets for growth from
 - i. France
 - ii. Italy
 - iii. Sweden / Norway (Scandinavian Countries)
 - iv. Australia
 - v. New Zealand
- c. Entrench foundations for future sustainability and growth from
 - i. China
 - ii. India
 - iii. Russia
- d. Cruise Liner Opportunity
 - i. Increase Cruise Liner business to NMB
 - ii. Encourage leisure itineraries to increase spend from cruise liner travellers
- e. Considerations on above strategic choices
 - i. South African Tourism is currently undertaking a portfolio review and research from this process needs to be reviewed against our choices when available
 - ii. To leverage collaborative marketing opportunities with the Garden Route, Cape Town and Western Cape we need to assess their strategic choices for alignment
 - iii. Should direct air access from other international locations open up, we will assess and potentially support marketing in those destinations
 - iv. When our trade partners have activities in other markets, we can support them with NMB content and marketing tools
 - v. Domestic tourist segments to focus on will be young single travellers (youth) as well as family orientated segments which resonate with our brand offering.

6.4. PRIORITY 2 – BUSINESS EVENTS

A. Domestic Business Events

- a. Focus on conferences between 50 – 500 pax
- b. Target SA associations for annual conferences
- c. Leverage existing marketing platforms for this work (SAACI, Meetings Africa, etc.)

B. Foreign Business Events

- a. Research Africa opportunities to penetrate Africa effectively by interrogating ICCA data
- b. Support bids for international opportunities as and when viable (especially when linked to NMB industry like Automotive, Agriculture and Marine / Oceans economy)
- c. Target African markets – Zimbabwe, Namibia, Rwanda to boost demand for airlift and regional routes

6.5. PRIORITY 3 – PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

A. Domestic Products / Experiences

- a. Target for leisure tourism spend
- b. Target for repeat leisure travel
- c. Focus on identifying, developing and enhancing key attractions and activities that can be packaged and marketed for the domestic market - both trade and consumers.

B. Foreign Products / Experiences

- a. Target for leisure tourism spend
- b. Target for repeat leisure travel
- c. Focus on identifying, developing and enhancing key attractions and activities that can be packaged and marketed for the foreign market for trade and more specifically cruise tourism.

7. THE TOURISM WORK TO BE DONE IN NMB

The Tourism Master Plan details the full extent of Tourism work to be done within the Metro including spatial development, product development, infrastructure, and Marketing. This document is in the process of being updated. The destination marketing services, trade engagement and visitor services is the role of EDTA's Destination Marketing Unit, however, plays an active role in the broader work to be done by other internal municipal divisions and external partners.



7.1. DESTINATION MARKETING & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The tourism role of EDTA is to facilitate, direct, coordinate, promote and manage the provision of efficient and effective tourism development, destination marketing and tourism experience management services in Nelson Mandela Bay in collaboration with private tourism and other stakeholders. There are two different tourism mandates within the directorate which includes Destination Marketing and Tourism Development respectively.

7.2. EDTA DESTINATION MARKETING MANDATE

Economic Development Tourism and Agriculture is the Destination Marketing Organisation responsible for amongst others promoting and facilitating travel and tourism to Nelson Mandela Bay incorporating Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth), Kariega (Uitenhage) & Despatch. A destination marketing organization (DMO) or convention and visitors' bureau (CVB) is an organization that promotes a town, city, region, or country in order to increase the number of visitors. It promotes the development and marketing of a destination, focusing on convention sales, tourism marketing, and services. The directorate implements the marketing plan as detailed in the destination marketing strategy across various platforms that include, but not limited to traditional media, digital media, trade and consumer engagements and new media.

EDTA destination marketing services include:

- Destination / Seasonal Marketing Campaigns
- Digital marketing
- Visitor Information Services
- Tourism Trade Promotions
- Business Events Services / Convention Bureau Services (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing and Events)
- Event Support Services
- PR / Communication Services
- Tourism Research and Insights
- Nelson Mandela Bay Airlift
- Cruise Line Strategy Development and implementation

The EDTA Tourism Development unit is responsible for:

- Tourism product development
- Destination development and management
- Tourism infrastructure development
- Policy development, implementation and monitoring
- Facilitate tourism BEE and transformation
- Tourism skills development and awareness
- Work with and develop Community Tourism Forums (CTF's)

8. KEY PROGRAMMES OF THE TOURISM MASTERPLAN:

The tourism master plan has highlighted the following actions in regards to destination marketing:

8.1. DESTINATION MARKETING

- Continue intermediate post Covid-19 marketing campaign with realigned marketing message taking into account new travel behaviours post Covid 19.
- Develop a new, data driven, three-year destination marketing strategy and plan in partnership with tourism stakeholders
- Implement tourism industry and SMME market access initiatives
- Package and effectively implement tourism awareness campaigns to local communities
- Promote Responsible Tourism Practices
- Implement a Destination Brand Review
 - Define Tourism Brand and blueprint experiences
 - Integrate Brand blueprint into all forms of communication
 - Disseminate consistent brand blueprint communication to drive awareness and understanding
 - To local platforms to engage intra-provisional day visitors
 - To local tourism product to share with their guests to drive additional nights and repeat visitation, and enhance visitor experience
 - To local ground handlers to reach visitors accessing NMB only as a gateway to other areas for repeat visitation
 - To domestic travellers through consumer events, shot left hosting and media hosting
 - To inbound operators to influence itineraries through meetings and speed marketing hosting
 - To outbound operators in chosen international markets through roadshows, training material and itinerary examples as well as hosting
 - To online booking entities and review sites to reach independent travellers
 - To international media during hostings
 - In all digital platforms
 - Integrated into Business Tourism offering for domestic and Africa promotion

- Packaged with event information for national and international promotion and delegate/spectator boosting
 - To citizens to enable them to articulate and promote the blueprint offering
- Driving city beautification projects to ensure destination attractiveness and creation of Sociogenic marketing opportunities.
- Execute annual marketing plans for
 - Domestic Leisure
 - International Leisure
 - Domestic Business Events
 - Africa and other international Business Events
 - Trade Promotions, Air Access and Cruise – Promotion and implementation of business incentives
- Collaborative Partnerships
 - Encourage formalisation of Nelson Mandela Bay tourism and hospitality sector representation structures i.e. restaurant sector, business events sector, tourist guides
 - Regular industry communication, updates and education in partnership with industry stakeholders
 - Develop an industry communication plan in partnership with industry stakeholders
 - Identify and develop public private partnership opportunities
 - Review existing MOU's and include tourism development and marketing requirements
 - Joint marketing programmes, collaboration and engagements with local, provincial and national tourism stakeholders (Feeder routes)
- Business Events
 - Establish a fully-fledged Nelson Mandela Bay Convention Bureau
 - Establish an industry business events and events panel to identify and drive business events leads in partnership with the EDTA NMB Convention Bureau
 - Develop and implement a NMB Business Events Strategy including a Business Events Ambassadors Programme
 - Review the NMB Events Policy and implement actions
 - In partnership with industry identify business events opportunities relevant specifically to economic clusters within Nelson Mandela Bay that will allow

for enterprise development and growth opportunities for Nelson Mandela Bay businesses

8.2. VISITOR EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES

- City Pass
- Visitor Information centres
- Website
- Enquiries
- Information distribution points such as shopping malls, etc.

8.3. PRODUCT ENGAGEMENT

- Leveraging their engagement with visitors to share the brand blueprint
- Providing information, research and insights to product to aid them in their marketing and service delivery efforts
- Providing platforms for product to promote themselves locally and internationally
- Engage product to assist in trade and media hosting cost effectively
- Partnering with Product to influence and coordinate other stakeholders

8.4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TO DRIVE TOURISM AGENDA

- Formalise collaborative memorandum of understanding agreements with relevant national, provincial and local government departments and entities including local tourism industry associations.
- Engage all other National, provincial and local departments that have an impact on tourism.
- Establish clear communication guidelines between government entities
- Establish a tourism task team made up of various different municipal department representatives including
 - Sports and Recreation (for Events) (See section on Event Marketing Optimisation for Tourism)
 - Airports / Ports
 - Safety and Security
 - Signage
 - Product development entities (DTI, MBDA etc.)

8.5. RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Research to inform strategic choices, opportunities and to deliver customer insights
- Monitoring of results for optimisation and learning
- Consistent evaluation of efficacy
- Develop and enhance institutional capacity to conduct and manage tourism research
- Enhance the current dedicated tourism research capacity and collaborate with Nelson Mandela University Tourism Unit to provide credible market intelligence information
- Collaborate and participate on National and Provincial Research Initiatives
- Review and update tourism research agenda
- Promote and share relevant data with investors, developers and relevant stakeholders
- Initiate a Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism Product Audit
- Regular update and maintenance of tourism databases
- Development of a Tourism Information Services plan and provision of tourism information services
- Disseminate of relevant data to relevant stakeholders

8.6. POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

EDTA aims to create a conducive and legislative and regulatory environment for tourism development and promotion and to introduce best practice approaches and risk management tools to enhance the sector's performance. This will be achieved through:

- Review and Enhance the Organisation structure
- Refining Performance Management Systems
- Providing informative and accurate reporting to all stakeholders
- Identify, review local tourism policies and regulations.
- Identify policy and legislative impediments (Outdoor Advertising, zoning, Guest House Policy, AirBNB etc)
- Develop appropriate interventions to improve ease of doing business
- Create a legislative and regulatory environment for tourism development and promotion.

- Collaborate and participate on National and Provincial Policy formulation and strategy sessions
- Embark on advocacy and awareness creation campaigns on policies, legislation and
- regulations targeting key stakeholders and sector departments
- Introduce possible new interventions such as a tourism levy for informal accommodation sector, such as AirBnB.
- Promote and enhance institutional efficiency
- Investigate self-regulation of tourism sectors in partnership with Tourism Associations

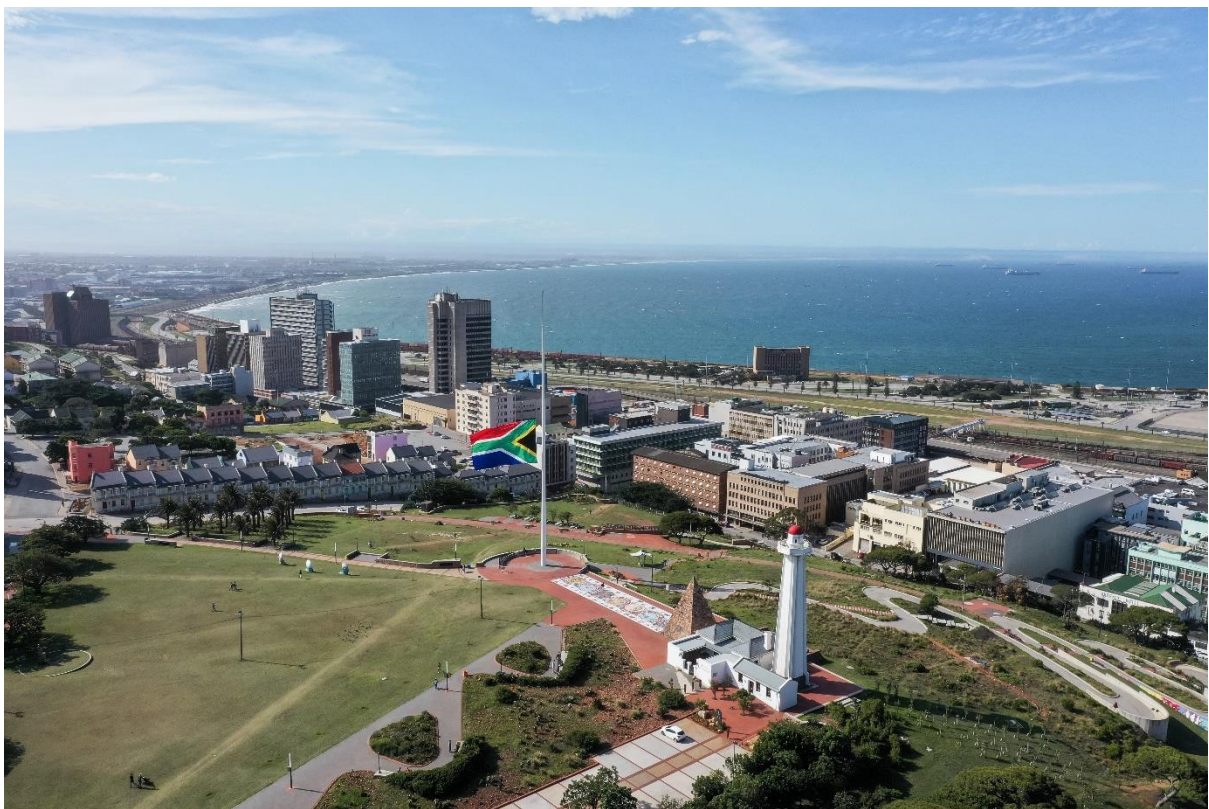
9. NELSON MANDELA BAY UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION



Nelson Mandela Bay offers a unique and diverse product that seamlessly blends **Beach, Bush, and City** experiences. With its pristine beaches and ocean the city provides a coastal escape for sunbathers, surfers, and marine life enthusiasts.



The nearby Bush experiences, including the renowned Big 7 Addo Elephant National Park, allow visitors to immerse themselves in Africa's wildlife and nature, while the City itself boasts a rich cultural heritage, modern infrastructure, and a thriving business hub.



Known as **"The Friendly City"**, Nelson Mandela Bay prides itself on its welcoming, warm-

hearted residents, offering a sense of community and hospitality that ties together its diverse offerings.

By linking our destination marketing activities with this phrase will help bridge the gaps caused by the city's many name changes over the years, creating a cohesive identity that welcomes all who visit, live, and work here.

Nelson Mandela Bay offers several unique selling points (USPs) that make it a vibrant and attractive destination for tourism, business, and living.

9.1. RICH HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE:

Nelson Mandela Bay is a region deeply intertwined with South Africa's struggle for freedom, showcasing a rich cultural history and heritage through landmarks, historical sites, and museums. Visitors can explore a diverse range of attractions that reflect the area's significant role in the country's past and its multicultural identity.

9.2. STUNNING BEACHES AND COASTAL ATTRACTIONS:

The area is renowned for its beautiful, pristine beaches, offering a variety of activities such as surfing, swimming, and relaxation. The coastline is home to a rich marine ecosystem, where visitors can enjoy whale watching, dolphin sightings, and the conservation of endangered species, contributing to the region's environmental significance. Marine Protected Areas and a diverse range of coastal attractions make the region a key destination for nature lovers. Key beach/coast points: Whale Heritage Site, Bottlenose Dolphin Capital of the World, Hope spot for the African Penguin, Blue Flag Beaches.

9.3. GATEWAY TO ADVENTURE AND ECO-TOURISM:

The region offers unparalleled access to wildlife experiences, with vast national parks and wildlife reserves that feature both terrestrial and marine species. The combination of land-based and sea-based safari opportunities, alongside private reserves catering to luxury tourism, makes the area a premier destination for eco-tourism. Its varied outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling, and fishing complement the region's natural beauty and provide endless opportunities for adventure. Key Bush points: Big 7 safari experiences in one day, Addo Elephant National Park, Private Game Reserves, 13 Green Flag Trails showcasing 5 biomes, Municipal Nature reserves.

9.4. VIBRANT ARTS AND CULTURAL SCENE:

The region boasts a thriving cultural scene, with numerous festivals, art exhibitions, and live performances throughout the year. This diverse arts culture is reflected in local galleries, theater productions, and food offerings, making the area a rich blend of artistic expression and multicultural influences.

9.5. PREMIER DESTINATION FOR SPORTS:

Nelson Mandela Bay offers a range of world-class sports facilities and is a hub for major sporting events. From rugby and soccer to cricket, the region plays host to a variety of high-profile tournaments. It also caters to outdoor sports enthusiasts with opportunities for triathlons, cycling races, and water-based activities, making it a dynamic destination for both professional and recreational athletes.

9.6. ECONOMIC HUB WITH STRATEGIC LOCATION:

The city serves as a key business destination, with a growing reputation in various industries such as automotive, technology, and logistics. Its modern infrastructure supports business tourism with excellent conference and event venues. With strategic access to major ports and proximity to regional tourism routes, the area is well-positioned for both trade and leisure travelers.

9.7. PLEASANT CLIMATE:

The region benefits from a moderate climate, offering mild winters and warm summers, making it an appealing year-round destination for visitors and residents alike. The temperate weather supports outdoor activities and contributes to the area's overall livability.

9.8. UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

The area is home to a prominent educational institution, offering a range of academic programs, research opportunities, and a hub for innovation. The presence of this university adds to the intellectual and cultural vibrancy of the region.

9.9. AFFORDABILITY AND LIFESTYLE:

Compared to larger cities, Nelson Mandela Bay provides a more affordable cost of living and a relaxed, laid-back lifestyle. This makes it an attractive destination for families, retirees, and those seeking a more balanced, easy-going way of life.

These unique selling points make Nelson Mandela Bay a remarkable destination, combining natural beauty, cultural depth, wildlife experiences, adventure, and business potential, all within an inviting and affordable environment.

10. DIGITAL TRENDS AFFECTING TRAVEL

In today's rapidly evolving travel landscape, it's essential for destination marketers to stay ahead of key digital trends that shape how travelers discover, plan, and experience destinations. By embracing these trends, destinations can better engage their audiences, build trust, and offer seamless, memorable experiences. These trends not only help destinations remain competitive and relevant but also enable them to reach broader, more targeted audiences, foster lasting connections, and ultimately drive tourism growth.

10.1. PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES:

Consumers increasingly expect tailored travel experiences. Travel companies are using data-driven insights to offer customized recommendations, personalized itineraries, and exclusive deals based on travelers' preferences and past behavior.

10.2. SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE:

Social media platforms play a significant role in shaping travel decisions. User-generated content, influencer partnerships, and visually compelling posts inspire travelers and influence their destination choices. Travel brands must actively engage with users to build trust and reach wider audiences.

10.3. MOBILE-FIRST BOOKING:

With mobile devices being the primary tool for booking and researching travel, ensuring mobile-friendly websites and apps is crucial. Travelers now seek convenience through instant booking options, real-time updates, and mobile check-ins.

10.4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL:

Eco-conscious travel is on the rise, with more people seeking sustainable and eco-friendly options. Digital marketing campaigns focused on sustainability, green tourism, and

responsible travel practices resonate with modern travelers who prioritize environmental impact.

10.5. VOICE SEARCH AND AI:

The growing use of voice assistants like Alexa and Google Assistant is changing the way travelers search for information and make bookings. AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants are enhancing customer service, offering instant responses and personalized recommendations.

10.6. AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) AND VIRTUAL REALITY (VR):

AR and VR are transforming how travelers experience destinations before they visit. Virtual tours, destination previews, and immersive experiences help travelers visualize and plan their trips more effectively, influencing their final decisions. These also serve to enhance the visitor experience at attractions or tourism experiences.

10.7. INFLUENCE OF REVIEWS AND RATINGS:

Travelers increasingly rely on online reviews and ratings to make informed decisions. Digital platforms, such as TripAdvisor and Google Reviews, play a vital role in building credibility and trust for destinations and accommodations. Destinations must use these platforms to monitor the destination but also to promote the destination and its products.

10.8. SMART TRAVEL TECH:

The rise of wearable devices, smart luggage, and IoT-enabled accommodations are enhancing the travel experience. Travelers expect seamless, tech-driven services, from smart hotel rooms to automated check-ins, providing greater convenience and efficiency.

10.9. CONTENT-DRIVEN MARKETING:

Travelers are looking for engaging, informative, and authentic content that helps them make decisions. Brands are leveraging blogs, videos, and storytelling to build connections and provide value, offering destination insights, travel tips, and personal stories.

10.10. DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY:

As digital travel grows, so do concerns about data privacy and security. Travel brands must prioritize secure online transactions, transparent privacy policies, and ensure safe data handling to maintain customer trust and compliance with regulations like GDPR.

These trends shape how travel businesses connect with consumers, emphasizing the importance of digital innovation, personalization, and responsiveness in the travel industry.

11. NELSON MANDELA BAY TOURISM DIGITAL STRATEGY

The Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism (NMBT) digital strategy aims to position the region as a premier global destination by leveraging the power of digital channels to enhance visibility, engagement, and conversion. Through a comprehensive approach that integrates content marketing, social media, and data-driven insights, this strategy seeks to connect with diverse audiences, promote the region's unique offerings, and foster long-term relationships with travelers.

By embracing emerging digital trends and utilizing a mix of earned, owned, and bought media, NMBT will create a dynamic online presence that highlights the area's rich history, vibrant culture, stunning natural beauty, and thriving tourism experiences, driving growth and recognition in the competitive global tourism market.

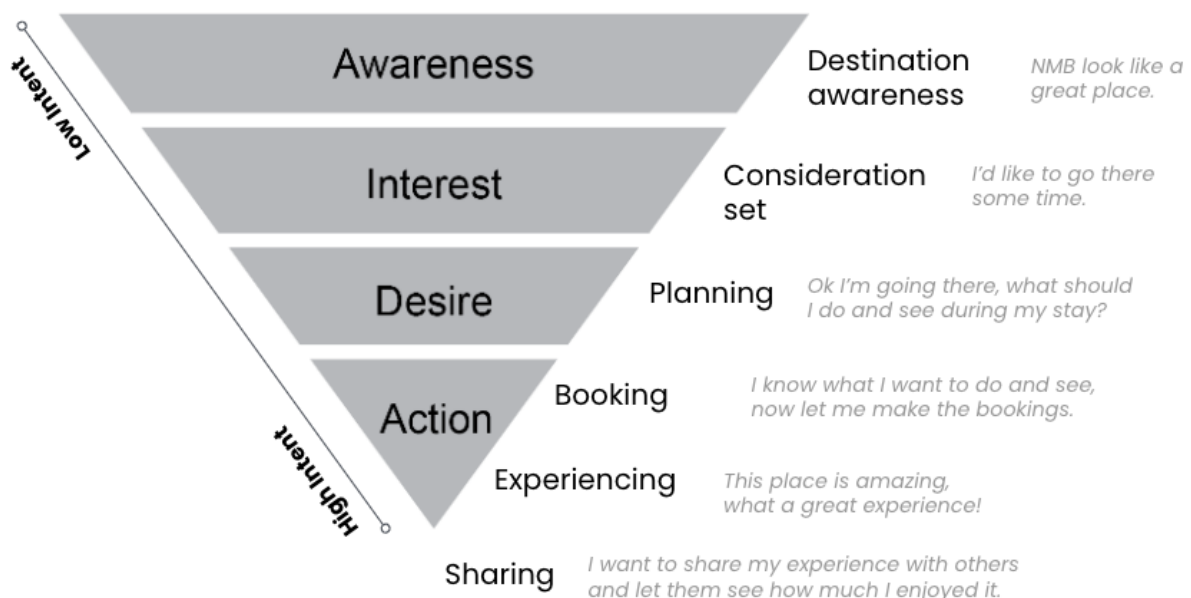
OWNED MEDIA The properties that we own	EARNED MEDIA The people and publications that talk about us	BOUGHT MEDIA The channels where we spend our media budget
• Overall Digital Strategy • Website Development and Design • App Development and Design • User Experience Design • Email & SMS Marketing • Database Management • Search Engine Optimisation • Production of all owned content; animation 2D & 3D as well as full end-to-end video solutions.	• Online Public Relations • Reputation Management and Sentiment Analysis • Influencer Marketing • Events • Production of all Public Relations Content • Seeding of all content online	• Search Marketing and PPC • Programmatic Media Buying and DMP Management • Social Media Buying; Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google etc. • 3rd Party Media Buying • Media Buying Strategy • Affiliate Marketing • Native Advertising • Production of all Media Elements; banners, videos, animations, blogs etc.

The core of the digital strategy will be understanding the diverse audiences, the types of content and imagery that resonate with them, and the specific needs or desires our brand fulfills. This approach will guide the development of:

- Content that inspires, educates, and engages our audience;
- Messaging tailored to address different audience needs and preferences;
- Clear and compelling calls to action that direct users to relevant pages and websites;
- Well-designed, targeted landing pages that provide a seamless user experience and drive conversions.



A successful engagement strategy hinges on understanding the mindset of our audiences and crafting content and calls to action that resonate with their interests. By creating relevant and compelling content, we provide opportunities for travelers to connect, engage, and share their personal travel experiences. This approach encourages them to become active participants in the conversation, ultimately fostering a community of authentic storytelling and deeper emotional connections with the destination.



Our strategy will focus on adapting content to align with each stage of the traveler's journey.

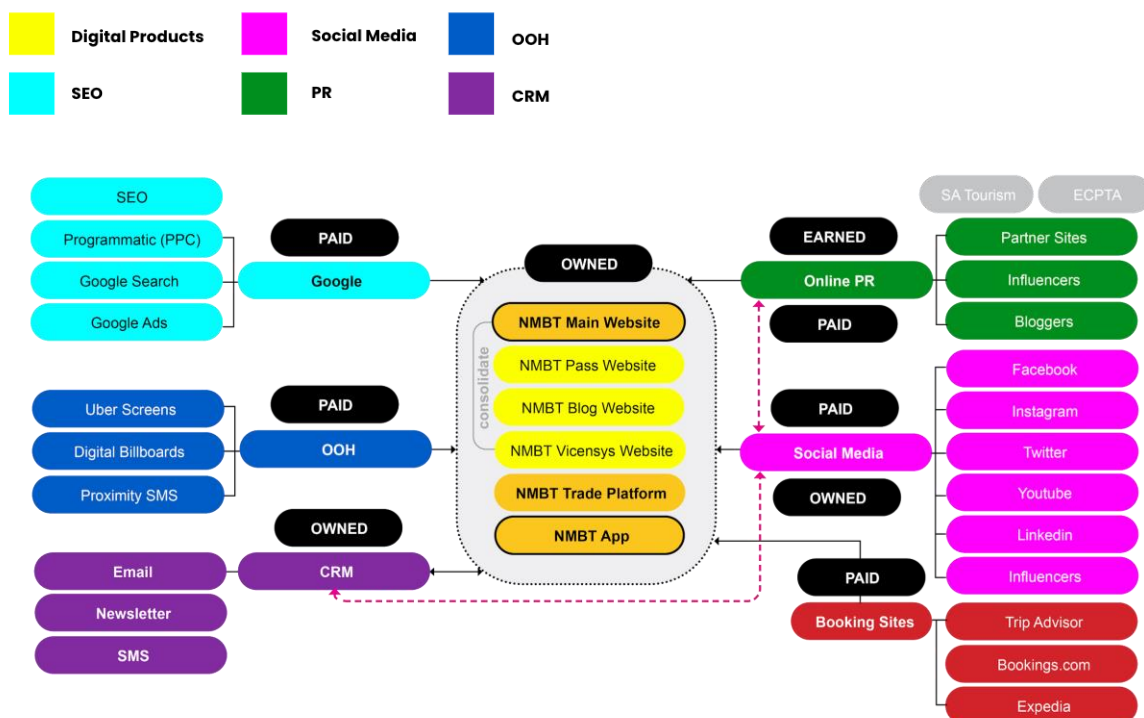
This approach is important because it ensures that the content we deliver is always relevant and valuable to the traveler at each stage of their journey. By tailoring our messaging to meet their needs—whether they’re discovering, comparing, planning, booking, experiencing, or sharing—we enhance engagement, build trust, and guide travelers toward making a decision to visit and advocate for the destination.

This strategic alignment not only improves the overall user experience but also increases the likelihood of conversion, repeat visits, and positive word-of-mouth, all of which are critical for sustained growth in the highly competitive travel and tourism market.

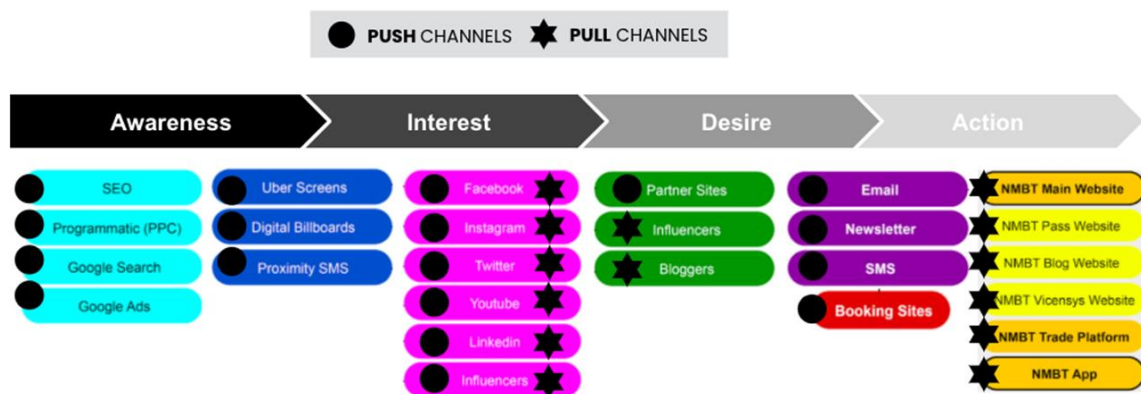
12. DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS

A fully integrated digital ecosystem will ensure the full potential of digital across paid, owned and earned digital media is reached and effectively placing Nelson Mandela Bay in front of the right audience, with the right messages and with a compelling call to action that leads to authentic engagement with the brand, conversion and real measurable return on investment.

EDTA’S DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM:



The relevant digital platforms or media will be used to either push content to visitors or pull visitors to our platforms depending on where in the visitor journey they are.



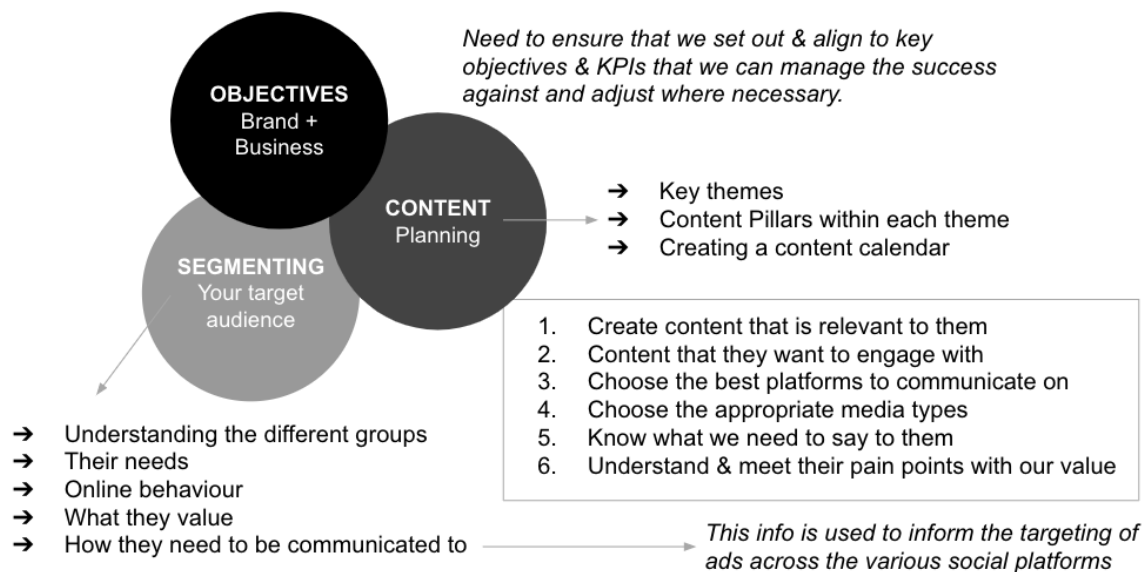
By implementing both 'Push' and 'Pull' tactics into the content marketing strategy, content produced will have a stronger support system as traffic is generated from a wider range of online sources. As the process evolves, it is continuously reviewed and refined using data measured within Google Analytics and across other monitoring software, which enables adjustment where necessary.

A digital media library will also assist with providing all stakeholders with content that can be used to promote the destination on stakeholder platforms. Collaboration is key in expanding the reach of our campaigns.

13. CONTENT MARKETING

Content Marketing is a central element of the strategic initiatives outlined in the Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism Strategic Marketing Plan. It is identified as a key focus area to help drive engagement, build awareness, and promote the region's unique offerings. As part of our digital marketing strategy, content marketing will serve as the primary tool to connect with audiences by creating valuable, relevant, and engaging content that showcases the city's diverse attractions, businesses, and experiences. This approach aims to foster a deeper connection with potential visitors, residents, and investors, positioning Nelson Mandela Bay as a top destination through compelling storytelling and targeted digital campaigns.

“Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.” - Content Marketing Institute



Content will be distributed and proliferated across digital and traditional channels and will include both owned and earned media platforms. Content becomes the biggest tool a destination marketing entity has and it needs to focus on created, curating and distributing new, fresh and exciting content around the brand blueprint which include text, articles, images and video. **This will be the primary marketing cost for the next three years – content production and dissemination.**

Our product and trade partners will be key in generating and distributing content. We need to work with our local product and trade to train them on how to maximise their content production, specifically around online visitor testimonial generation and leverage.

In order to support the volume of execution required in digital platform management (including social media monitoring and management) it is also recommended to secure the services of a Digital Agency to assist in executing this function. This will also aid in the repackaging of content and content proliferation.

As content creation requires varied, rich content on a frequent basis – this cannot be done by one headcount. Budget will be allocated to commission and secure content from various places – photographers, bloggers, freelance writers, etc. This will ensure content is rich and updated frequently but managed for consistent messaging.

The digital marketing strategy for Nelson Mandela Bay will focus on leveraging Earned Media, Owned Media, and Paid Media to enhance brand visibility and engagement. Earned

Media will be utilized by encouraging organic mentions, user-generated content, and media coverage. Owned Media will focus on creating valuable, engaging content across our own digital platforms to build direct relationships with our audience. Paid Media will be used strategically to amplify content, reach targeted audiences, and drive traffic. This integrated approach will strengthen Nelson Mandela Bay's digital presence and drive measurable outcomes.

All content will be stored on a digital content library and shared with relevant media, trade and stakeholders for use in promoting the destination.

14. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

In order to ensure the effectiveness of this strategy, EDTA will implement performance monitoring tools to effectively monitor, report and manage our and 3rd party content through all our digital/online media platforms and where possible that of traditional media such as broadcast and print media.

As our campaigns also strive to drive user generated content on all of these platforms it is also important that the outcomes of these campaigns are not only measured in terms of ROI but also for social monitoring and listening and competitor review.

By monitoring our marketing efforts one can quickly respond and adjust campaigns where needed and quickly identify areas for intervention to ensure campaigns perform as intended.

15. CHANNEL TACTICS

EDTA must leverage specific channel tactics to effectively drive both tourism awareness and action because each channel provides a unique opportunity to engage diverse audiences at various stages of their travel journey. By utilizing targeted digital out-of-home platforms, search engine optimization, social media retargeting, and collaborative marketing campaigns, NMBT can ensure that the right message reaches the right people at the right time.

These tailored approaches not only capture attention through visually compelling content and interactive experiences but also guide potential visitors seamlessly from awareness to

booking. This strategic, multi-channel approach maximizes visibility, enhances engagement, and drives tangible results in attracting both local and international tourists.

15.1. TOURISM DESTINATION WEBSITE AND APP

Create a user-friendly, visually appealing website and app that integrates booking systems from leading booking platforms including the Nelson Mandela Bay Pass. This will allow travelers to browse, compare, and book travel packages, activities, and experiences directly. The site should also feature seasonal promotions, exclusive deals, and customized offers to drive engagement and bookings.

Funnel: Action

Content Approach: Leverage dynamic content that is updated regularly based on seasonal peaks, exclusive offers, and specific campaigns to keep the website fresh and engaging. Ensure the user journey is seamless, from discovering travel options to completing bookings.

Audience / Targeting:

- **B2C (Business to Consumer):**
 - Local citizens of NMB
 - Travelers from the Eastern Cape
 - Domestic travelers
 - International visitors
- **B2B (Business to Business):**
 - Travel agencies, tour operators, and other partners in the tourism industry

Tactics:

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** Optimize the website with relevant keywords to ensure the destination is easily discoverable by domestic and international travelers looking for travel experiences in the region.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Highlight joint campaigns and packages with OTAs and local tourism partners to expand reach and offer exclusive deals on the website.
- **Email Campaigns & Newsletters:** Encourage visitors to subscribe to newsletters for regular updates, exclusive deals, and personalized recommendations based on their preferences.

Funnel: Awareness

Promote the website as the go-to destination for travelers seeking information and booking options for NMB and surrounding areas. Drive traffic to the website through various digital channels, such as search engines, social media, and digital advertisements.

Content Approach:

Focus on creating visually striking, informative content that showcases the highlights of the destination. Utilize storytelling, featured local attractions, and user-generated content to create a sense of desire and urgency among potential travelers.

Audience / Targeting:

- **B2C (Business to Consumer):**
 - NMB citizens and residents
 - Travelers within the Eastern Cape
 - Domestic and international tourists looking for local experiences
- **B2B (Business to Business):**
 - Tourism boards, travel agencies, airlines, and corporate partners

Tactics:

- **Content Marketing:** Develop blogs, destination guides, and itineraries that not only promote the area's attractions but also optimize for search engines to drive organic traffic.
- **Google Display Ads:** Use visually compelling ads to promote seasonal content and offers across the web, driving awareness and click-throughs to the website.
- **Social Media Advertising:** Run targeted ads on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to generate awareness, featuring beautiful imagery and user testimonials that link directly to the website.
- **Collaborative Marketing Campaigns:** Partner with local businesses, content creators and international OTAs to promote the website through joint campaigns, driving both traffic and bookings.

- **SEO & Paid Search (PPC):** Ensure visibility on search engines by optimizing for high-intent keywords, ensuring the website ranks well for searches related to travel and activities in the region.
-

Additional Website Features for Both Funnels:

- **Personalized User Experience:** Offer a customized experience based on user behavior, preferences, and past searches. Suggest packages and activities based on visitor interests.
- **Integrated Social Proof:** Include customer testimonials, reviews, and user-generated content (photos and videos) to build trust and credibility.
- **Interactive Maps & Guides:** Allow visitors to explore interactive maps of the region, featuring must-visit attractions, accommodations, restaurants, and travel tips.
- **Booking Integration:** Integrate real-time booking functionality with seamless payment options to convert website traffic into confirmed bookings efficiently.

By focusing on both **Action** and **Awareness** strategies for the website, the goal is to create a hub where visitors can not only find inspiration and information but also easily take action, such as making bookings or signing up for newsletters. These tactics help to engage users at different stages of their travel planning journey, ultimately boosting conversions and customer loyalty.

15.2. SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

SEO aims to create good visibility and awareness online by improving search rankings. The objective is to enhance the Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism (NMBT) site rankings, attracting a diverse audience and leading them to relevant content quickly.

Funnel: Awareness

Content Approach: Ongoing research and updating of SEO practices are essential. Content will include relevant search keywords, and system design will integrate these keywords to optimize visibility.

Audience Targeting:

- B2B and B2C:
 - NMB Citizens

- Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
- Domestic Travellers
- International Travellers

Tactics:

- On-page SEO
- Off-page SEO
- Google Ads – Search Engine Advertising (SEA)

15.3. GOOGLE ADS – SEARCH ENGINE ADVERTISING (SEA)

Create targeted content around specific offerings, seasonal campaigns, peak holiday periods, and special deals to generate interest and encourage engagements such as clicks and views.

Funnel: Interest

Content Approach: Focus on peak content for seasonal and campaign-based initiatives that highlight unique travel experiences.

Audience Targeting:

- Domestic Travellers
- International Travellers

Tactics:

- Text Ads
- Banner Ads

15.4. PROGRAMMATIC ADVERTISING

Deliver targeted content and ads based on audience online behavior through trade and consumer platforms such as Travel Update and booking sites.

Content Approach: Emphasize seasonal content and specific campaigns to engage and capture interest.

Audience Targeting:

- Domestic Travellers

- International Travellers

Tactics:

- Banner Ads

15.5. FACEBOOK

Drive awareness year-round through engaging content that showcases NMB's offerings, seasonal attractions, specials, competitions, and other tourism products. Promote website traffic, app downloads, user-generated content sharing, and cross-posting with partners.

Funnel: Awareness, Interest, Desire

Content Approach: Utilize a combination of brand-focused, seasonal, campaign-specific, and agile content to engage audiences consistently.

Audience Targeting:

- B2B and B2C:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- On-page and Off-page Ads
- Organic Content
- Retargeted Ads (from Facebook, website, and existing databases)
- Collaboration with stakeholders through sharing of content

15.6. INSTAGRAM

Engage audiences with visually compelling content that highlights NMB's attractions and experiences.

Funnel: Awareness, Interest, Desire

Tactics:

- Organic Content
- On-page and Off-page Ads
- Retargeted Ads
- Collaboration with stakeholders through sharing of content

15.7. TWITTER

Enhance brand awareness through organic content and engagement.

Funnel: Awareness

Tactics:

- Organic Content
- Promoted Tweets
- Social Listening and Engagement

15.8. LINKEDIN

Promote NMB, engage with stakeholders, share information, and participate in tourism trade groups.

Funnel: Awareness, Action

Content Approach: Use a mix of always-on, peak, and campaign-based content to maintain engagement.

Audience Targeting:

- B2B
- Domestic Travellers
- International Travellers

Tactics:

- Organic Content
- Ads
- In-mail

- Groups

15.9. YOUTUBE

Showcase NMB's offerings through immersive video content that invites audiences to experience the destination firsthand.

Funnel: Interest, Desire

Content Approach: Build channel content around seasonal and specific campaigns.

Audience Targeting:

- B2C:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- Channel Playlists
- Pre-roll Ads
- SEO
- Retargeting on Social

15.10. INFLUENCERS / AMBASSADORS / CONTENT CREATORS

Inspire and empower locals to share their NMB experiences while elevating overall community sentiment. Partner with national and international content creators to create authentic, non biased content that will increase destination appeal. EDTA can partner with content creators by arranging tourism activations, collaborating on content created by others and facilitating partnerships between content creators and tourism products.

Funnel: Awareness, Interest, Desire

Content Approach: Leverage seasonal, campaign-based, and agile content to encourage community involvement.

Audience Targeting:

- NMB Citizens
- Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
- Domestic Travellers
- International Travellers

Tactics:

- Content Collaborations
- Influencer Campaigns and Hostings
- Stakeholder Collaborations
- Tourism Content Creator Activations

15.11. BLOGGING

Maintain a regularly updated blog optimized for SEO. Cover diverse travel themes relevant to different audience segments. Invite or partner with guest bloggers.

Funnel: Awareness, Interest, Desire

Content Approach: Create a structured content plan that aligns with annual tourism cycles and audience interests.

Audience Targeting:

- B2C:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- SEO Optimization
- Retargeting on Social
- Content Sharing on Partner Sites and Social Pages

15.12. PARTNERSHIPS

Actively pursue partnerships where NMBT can be featured and reciprocate by showcasing partner offerings.

Funnel: Interest, Desire

Content Approach: Focus on seasonal and campaign-based collaborations to maximize mutual visibility.

Audience Targeting:

- B2B and B2C:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- Cross-sharing Content
- Collaborative Campaigns
- Features and Banners with OTAs

15.13. BOOKING SITES

Integrate booking capabilities from leading booking sites to promote packages, activities, and seamless booking experiences. Enhance visibility through joint marketing campaigns and airlift marketing incentives to support new air routes.

Funnel: Action

Content Approach: Utilize seasonal peak content and specific campaign-based initiatives to promote offerings and boost engagement.

Audience / Targeting:

- B2C and B2B:
 - NMB Citizens

- Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
- Domestic Travellers
- International Travellers

Tactics:

- Retargeting on Social
- Subscription Campaigns
- Google Search Ads
- Collaborative Marketing Campaigns with OTAs

15.14. DIGITAL BILLBOARDS

Leverage digital out-of-home platforms to guide viewers through key touchpoints, including airports and travel hubs. Digital billboards, and proximity SMS/Messaging can be used individually or together to inspire action and engagement. Consumers who interact can be retargeted on social media.

Funnel: Awareness

Content Approach: Focus on seasonal peak content and specific campaign-based messaging to capture audience attention.

Audience / Targeting:

- B2C and B2B:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- Inspire viewers to engage through interactive content and prompts
- Use multi-touchpoint strategies: digital billboards, Uber screens, and SMS
- Retarget users on social media who interact

15.15. EMAILERS

Utilize personalized communication via emailers, newsletters, SMS, and push notifications. Tailor messages based on audience interests and behaviors, such as following up on specific event engagements or sending location-triggered messages.

Funnel: Interest

Content Approach: Implement a content plan that delivers timely, relevant, and contextual information. Ensure a clear call to action or engagement at every step of the funnel.

Audience / Targeting:

- B2C and B2B:
 - NMB Citizens
 - Eastern Cape Provincial Travellers
 - Domestic Travellers
 - International Travellers

Tactics:

- Segment CRM data for precise audience targeting
- Personalize communications based on user behavior and location
- Deliver relevant content throughout the customer journey

16. DIGITAL MARKET ACCESS AND TRANSFORMATION

In an increasingly digital world, it is essential for the tourism industry to adopt innovative technologies and digital solutions to remain competitive, attract new customers, and optimize operational efficiencies. This strategy is specifically designed to support Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) and previously disadvantaged communities, ensuring they gain market access and are equipped to adapt to the evolving demands of the tourism sector. By providing tailored digital training, fostering collaboration, and utilizing data-driven insights, this approach aims to create a sustainable, inclusive, and digitally advanced tourism ecosystem.

16.1. DIGITAL TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

EDTA will look to empower tourism businesses with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the digital landscape and enhance service delivery. EDTA will look to offer accessible digital training modules for small and medium-sized tourism businesses on essential digital skills, including digital marketing, social media engagement, e-commerce, SEO, and data analysis. This will include developing specific training content for local tour operators, hotel owners, and service providers to utilize global platforms like Google My Business, Online Booking Sites, and social media to expand their market reach.

16.2. EXPANDING MARKET ACCESS THROUGH DIGITAL CHANNELS

To enable tourism businesses to reach global markets, it is essential to maximize their digital presence by supporting the development and optimization of websites and social media profiles, ensuring they are easily accessible and visible to potential customers. Additionally, facilitating partnerships with leading Online Travel Agents (OTAs) such as Expedia, Airbnb, and TripAdvisor provides easy market access by offering established, trusted platforms with a global reach.

These OTAs already have vast customer bases, integrated booking systems, and robust marketing capabilities, allowing businesses to gain exposure to international travelers without the need for significant investment in individual marketing efforts.

By guiding businesses in the implementation of efficient digital booking and reservation systems, we can enhance the customer experience while streamlining operations, ultimately increasing their global reach and competitiveness.

16.3. DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

Our objective will be to help businesses leverage data analytics to make informed decisions that will optimize customer experience, increase revenue, and enhance marketing efforts. We will provide businesses with the tools to collect and analyze data on customer preferences, booking patterns, and seasonal demand, allowing them to better understand their market and the various stages of the visitor journey.

By gaining insights into the different stages visitors go through, from initial awareness to booking and post-visit engagement, businesses will be able to tailor their offerings more effectively.

Additionally, we will guide businesses in developing data-informed marketing strategies, utilizing digital tools such as Google Analytics, SEO, and paid social media campaigns to target the right audience with relevant content at each stage of their journey. Our support will ensure that businesses can effectively use data in their development strategies that are aligned to the overall destination strategy to maximize growth, improve customer experiences, and increase competitiveness.

16.4. COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEMS FOR GROWTH

Collaboration will play a key role in driving the success of our campaigns and benefiting businesses within the tourism sector. By working closely with EDTA as the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), the tourism trade, hotels, activity providers, and other tourism partners, businesses can amplify their visibility and reach a broader audience.

Participating in initiatives such as hosting familiarization (fam) trips and sharing content through collaborative channels will allow businesses to tag and promote their partners, fostering a strong network of mutual support.

Engaging in seasonal campaigns and special deals on the destination marketing platforms will help businesses take advantage of promotional opportunities that can drive more visitors during key periods.

We will also encourage businesses to regularly update their information on our website and provide accurate fact sheets to ensure consistent, up-to-date messaging across all platforms and also look at supporting opportunities to feature the destination on digital platforms that businesses already utilize, creating cross-promotional efforts that increase exposure and attract new customers to the destination.

This collaborative approach will not only enhance business growth but will also strengthen the collective tourism offering, driving more traffic and bookings for all involved.

17. PARTNERING WITH EVENTS TO PROMOTE TOURISM

The Economic Development, Tourism and Agriculture (EDTA) directorate supports events that help attract visitors to Nelson Mandela Bay, promote the destination brand, provide entertainment for locals and tourists, and uplift local communities. To assist in achieving these goals, the directorate offers free marketing support services using its existing platforms. These

services are aimed at increasing awareness, growing attendance, and enhancing the overall reach and impact of events that align with the city's tourism and development objectives.

Eligible events are those that contribute meaningfully to tourism growth, generate positive exposure for the destination, support local businesses, and offer opportunities for community development.

Depending on the support provided, organizers might be required to submit a detailed event proposal along with a completed Event Organizers Survey to provide insight into the event's goals, target audience, expected outcomes, and potential benefits to the city and its residents.

The proposal must detail:

- The name and date(s) of the event
- A comprehensive event description and its objectives
- Expected number of visitors and projected economic impact
- Marketing reach and exposure opportunities for the destination
- Local economic and community development components, including use of local suppliers
- Any training or workshops related to tourism, trade, or investment

To support eligible events, the following marketing and promotional services may be offered:

- Listing of the event on the Nelson Mandela Bay events calendar at www.nmbt.co.za (Event organizer to upload) – To be approved prior to publishing.
- Listing on the Nelson Mandela Bay Travel Guide Mobile App, including push messaging to app users
- Website link exchange with NMBT platforms
- Banner adverts and competition placements on the NMBT website
- Branding at the event or event digital platforms
- Provision of a tourism welcome letter
- Digital marketing via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other platforms
- Mention of the event in the NMBT newsletter or direct mailers to visitors
- Provision of visitor guides and maps or digital promotional and information material
- Flyer distribution through Visitor Information Centres and relevant digital platforms

- Press release publication on the NMBT website and distributed to local media database
- Invites to media, trade partners, and digital influencers to events

Additionally, EDTA offers delegate and spectator boosting opportunities through digital marketing campaigns targeting the regions or countries from which attendees are expected. This approach will aim to boost attendance and broader exposure, amplifying the overall impact of the event and reinforcing Nelson Mandela Bay's position as a key destination for tourism, trade, and investment.

18. CONCLUSION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS

In closing, a comprehensive digital destination strategy is essential for elevating the visibility and appeal of NMB, guiding potential travelers from awareness to action with a seamless, engaging experience.

The effectiveness of this strategy will be significantly enhanced by collaborating with tourism stakeholders, who can contribute to a unified, powerful marketing effort. By working together, stakeholders can amplify the destination's message, extend its reach, and create compelling, relevant content that resonates with diverse audiences.

These partnerships will foster greater trust and credibility, ultimately driving increased interest, bookings, and long-term success for the destination.