

To which destination should one travel next?

Tourists are exposed to increasing amounts of product offerings from various destinations due to globalisation that has put countries worldwide in a more intense competitive situation. Different factors can influence a tourist's decision to choose a specific destination and in the case of an emerging destination such as South Africa the question remains why tourists visit the country and whether they would revisit and recommend it to others? The purpose of a tourist's visit as well as certain features of a destination can influence a tourist's choices and experiences. The importance of these features will vary in importance among tourists from different markets.

A study was conducted by Rentia van der Walt, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), to identify the most appropriate set of competitiveness indicators for South Africa as an emerging destination. The study evaluated the importance of these indicators prior to and during tourists' visits to South Africa among 270 international tourists. The tourist markets were segmented according to their place of origin (country they reside in) and purpose of visit. Four indicators varied in importance when tourists were segmented according to place of origin, while only one indicator varied when segmentation was based on purpose of visit.

The American tourist market found *value adders* (value for money, the exchange rate, ease and costs of access) more important than the European market; while the European market found *key attractors* (culture, history, adventure, natural environment) more important than the UK market. Tourist markets from Asia and Australasia considered the *branding and image* of South Africa as more important than the UK market did. *Non-negotiables* (services, facilities, sanitation, transport, safety and security) were more important for the American, Asian and Australasian markets than the European market. Tourists who travelled for business as well as for other purposes such as studies, sport, shopping and hunting, found *business and sport* more important than tourists who travelled for leisure purposes.

Furthermore, tourists' destination experiences around these indicators had a positive effect on tourists' intention to revisit and recommend South Africa. Destination marketing managers need to know which indicators the specific tourist markets perceive as more important to be able to communicate them in an effective way to the segmented tourist markets.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2011 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Rentia van der Walt under the supervision of [Dr. E.A. Kruger](#).