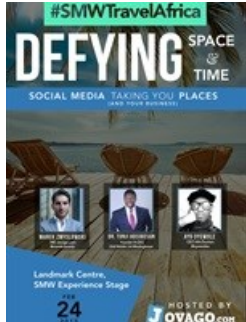


Social media broadens travel in Africa

This year's Social Media Week Lagos, 24 February 2015 is dedicated to travel and Jovago.com will be on hand to educate Nigerians on travel trends and how social media is helping to shape the future of tourism in Africa at 'Defying Space and Time, Social Media Taking You (and your Business) Places'.

There are over 200 social networking sites in the world. Avid social media users have found ways to fuel their curiosity of other worlds besides their own. The tourism space on social media is populated with several creators and curators, some unaware of their contribution.



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Travel inspiration

Frequent travellers interact with social media differently at various stages of the travel cycle. About one in every five leisure travellers worldwide visits social media sites for travel inspiration. First, they fantasise about locations they want to visit by searching for the perfect destination for their intended purpose, be it to explore an African safari or just to relax on a sandy beach.

The MD of Jovago.com, Marek Zmyslowski, stated, "Africa is a huge tourist attraction.

Unfortunately, before now, most of these attractions were not being fully explored because there were not enough people selling the African story. Now, with the proliferation of social media,

discussion forums and blogs, more people are writing about Africa's tourism opportunities and in turn, more people are discovering Africa."

Each travel stage is handled effectively on social networking sites where one can instantly contact trusted friends, colleagues and brands, leaving users with no reason to go beyond the social space. According to a report published by the European Travel Commission, in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region, 14% of leisure travellers use social media for travel inspiration, 14% when searching for hotels, 13% for vacation activities, 11% for restaurants and 10% for vacation activities.

Promoting African destinations

In an age where 71% of adults online use Facebook, businesses have gone social to take advantage of the gold mine of potential customers and clients. Travel agencies have not been left behind; travel sites such as Jovago.com have invested in their social media presence to promote amazing African destinations to the world.

Social media has an immense effect on the travel culture and attitudes of the older and younger generations. Almost every destination in the world has a social media page dedicated to it, with travel enthusiasts rooting for more people to come and visit. They organise local events to build awareness and encourage tourism. One of such events is Social Media Week, a global platform that connects people, content and conversation around emerging trends in social and mobile media. Social Media Week is held in over 20 cities worldwide and will be held in Lagos, Nigeria in February.