

Marketing Minor: Making every guest feel like part of the family

 By [Cari Coetzee](#)

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Minor Hotels has been going from strength to strength in establishing its hotels and brands across Africa, with Avani and Anantara now familiar names. The hotel group is progressively making inroads in the African travel market, meeting travellers with accommodation that spans from luxury to stylishly laid-back comfort. We chat with the regional marketing manager for Minor Hotels in Southern Africa, Ivana Naidoo about the brands, the industry and what it takes to market Minor Hotels.



Ivana Naidoo

🔱 *Describe your career so far.*

It's been fantastic! I started my career in one of the biggest advertising agencies in Johannesburg, engaging with giants in the creative and communications industry, and absorbing all aspects of marketing and communications. I now use my talents and the skills I learned in advertising and PR to influence the travel industry.

🔱 *What do you love most about marketing Minor Hotels and its hotel brands?*

No two days are ever the same, that's what makes working with Minor Hotels and its brands exciting and fascinating. Anantara is a luxury hospitality brand for modern travellers, connecting them to genuine places, people and stories through personal experiences, and providing heartfelt hospitality in the world's most exciting destinations. Avani, on the other hand, is the vibrant upscale brand, offering relaxed comfort and contemporary style in city and resort destinations. Being able to flexibly work between the two brings new engagements and opportunities.

🔱 *What do you love about your industry?*

You get to see the entire world and meet people from various walks of life and be inspired by people who are driven and passionate about hospitality. Our industry allows for you to be curious and gives you the opportunity to explore new cultures

and environments. Above all, it's about continuously striving to offer the best to our guests.

■ ***Explain your specific brand management strategy. How does it tie into your company's overall marketing/corporate communications?***

Our strategy is simple, and that is to invite guests to experience the best of our hotels and the destinations where they are found. We are constantly engaging with our key source markets be it the USA, Europe and not forgetting our very own Africa. Our global strategy is to ensure that every guest feels part of the Anantara and Avani family.

■ ***What are some of your favourite campaigns that you've worked on for Minor Hotels and why?***

My favourite campaign to date is the Anantara Medjumbe Island Resort Naturally Exclusive campaign. The concept for this campaign gives guests the opportunity to retreat to their own personalised tropical island experience. Essentially, the island will be yours and yours alone for the time you book it, with only your loved ones to share in the memorable experience making it the perfect way to celebrate a landmark birthday, a wedding, a significant anniversary, or any other special event. Naturally Exclusive includes all fine dining at the resort's restaurant by personal chefs, water activities, dhow cruises and dhow sailing lessons.

■ ***What are you working on right now?***

We are planning for 2018 and finding ways to change the way we do things for the better, tapping into larger international markets and entrenching awareness of our Anantara and Avani brands in global markets.

■ ***What are the tools of your trade?***

There is no 9 to 5 in hospitality. You have to be engaged and online all the time, and sometimes a suitcase has to always be packed. You need to be in tune with the trends both regionally and internationally. You have to be thick skinned and love what you do. There is no other way around it.

■ ***Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.***

Guest satisfaction, revenue, revenue, revenue.

■ ***What's on your wish list for brand objectives for 2018?***

If I had three wishes for 2018 it would be:

1. For guests both in Africa and abroad to fall in love with our beautiful continent and all its potential.
2. For guests to leave our hotels feeling rejuvenated and walking away with memories to last a lifetime.
3. For them to come back to Africa again.

ABOUT CARI COETZEE

Cari Coetzee is a contributor to Bizcommunity Tourism, Agriculture and Lifestyle.

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