

September 2005

tools
ideas
plans
steps

2

How to...?

Tips and tools for South African tourism companies on local procurement, products and partnerships.

Brief 2: Stimulating local cultural and heritage products

Produced by
Overseas Development Institute
Business Linkages in Tourism



In collaboration with:
Tourism Business Council of South Africa
The Department of Trade and Industry
The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
Funded by: International Finance Corporation



the dti
Department:
Trade and Industry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Written by Caroline Ashley, Clive Poultney, Gareth Haysom, Douglas McNab and Adrienne Harris.



PREFACE

The purpose of the 'How To...?' series is to assist tourism companies to take advantage of opportunities to contribute more to the local economy. The intended audience is tourism businesses of various sizes and operational types. Other guidelines already describe what to do, and why, for more responsible, sustainable or empowered tourism. This How To series focuses on *how* to do it. It provides practical tips drawing from the experiences of successes and failures.

In addition to an executive summary, there are four briefs in the series. These are:

1. Boosting procurement from local businesses
2. Stimulating local cultural and heritage products
3. Building local partnerships
4. Setting corporate priorities and managing internal change.

The first three focus on different types of local linkages and thus may be used by different operational staff (chefs, buyers, guest relations officers, lodge managers etc). The fourth brief gives tips on how to manage corporate change in order for any of the first three to be effective in the long-term.

Tips 📌, Warnings ⚠️, Examples 📌, Government and Institutional issues 🏛️, Useful tools 🛠️, Quotes “” are marked throughout.

There are several issues that are only touched upon in this brief, but expanded upon in one of the others.

Additional copies can be downloaded from www.odi.org.uk/rpeg/research/pro-poor_tourism/howto.html
Hard copies are available, free of charge, from Business Linkages in Tourism. Contact Adrienne Harris, bizlink@tbcsa.org.za.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great deal of thanks is owed to many individuals and organisations that made the 'How To...?' series possible.

The project was funded by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and initiated by Wilderness Safaris and Spier in collaboration with the Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots project. It was managed by a Steering Committee of Malcolm McCulloch (Wilderness Safaris), Tanner Methvin (Spier), Adrienne Harris (TBESA), Kate Rivett-Carnac (**the dti**), Lisa-Ann Hosking and Kele Molopyane (DEAT).

Many tourism operators gave up time to be interviewed and provided information on their experience:

Jaap Kleftenberg (AAA Tours), Grant Ruddiman (Arabella Sheraton Group SA), Paul Miedema (Calabash Tours), Jennifer Seif (Fair Trade in Tourism), Chris Bertie (Halcyon Hotel Group), Graeme Arendse and Joy Bennet (Imvubu Nature Reserve), Judi Rebstein (Jan Harmsgat Country House), Craig Doria (Ker and Downey), Bernie Samuels (Klein Begin Laundry), John Rosmarin (Lesheba Wilderness Lodge), George Wardlow (Luwawa Forest Lodge), Eddie Koch (MAFISA), Pete Christodoulou (Mbotyi River Lodge), Tim Foggin (Advisor to Mbotyi), Noel de Villiers (Open Africa), Robert Davids (RAiNN), Samuel Lekgethenyene and Elizabeth Phiri (RECOPRO), Aldrin Ndalani (Ribolla Tourism Association), Michel Girardin (Shiluvu Lakeside Lodge), Adrian Enthoven, Cherie Immelman, Heidi Newton King, Tanner Methvin, Lesley Joemat and Lindsay Small (Spier), Ralph Freese (Spier and Sun International), Ashley Wentworth (Stormsriver Adventures), Rampofeng Nditsele, Dan Ntsala and Michelle Webber-Steyn (Sun City), Peter Venison (Tsogo Sun), Pat Goss (Umngazi River Bungalows), Patrick Bodham-Whetham and Malcolm McCulloch (Wilderness Safaris). The briefs draw heavily on the experience of the pilot sites of the Pro-Poor Tourism Pilots Project (see back page).

The drafts were reviewed by Steering Committee members and a Review Group comprising Wolfgang Thomas (Centre for Responsible Tourism Research at Cape Peninsula University), Clifford Ross (City Lodges), David Rattray (Fugitives' Drift Lodge), Justin Pooley and Irene Visser (IFC), Alan Louw (Lesedi African Lodge / Tourvest), Ted Stilwell (National Accommodation Association South Africa), Michael Warner (ODI), Harold Goodwin (Responsible Tourism Partnership), Wayne Duvenage (SAVRALA) and Morne Bosch (Spier). Participants at a Pro Poor Tourism (PPT) Pilots workshop also provided comments on summary drafts.

Research, liaison, text revision, and administration was done by Oliver Reichardt and Sebastian Brinkmann of ODI. Editing was done by Jennifer Stern. Layout and printing by Global Calendars and Publications.

© Copyright: Overseas Development Institute and Business Linkages in Tourism, 2005.

Photographs courtesy of:

Caroline Ashley, Clive Poultney, SA Tourism, Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa, Wilderness Safaris, Calabash Tours, Umngazi River Bungalows, Stormsriver Adventures and George Hallett.



Contents

Stimulating Cultural and Heritage Tourism Products	2
Benefits	3
Constraints	4
Different Approaches	5
Getting Going	6
TIP 1: BE STRATEGIC IN ASSESSING YOUR NEEDS AND PRODUCT OPTIONS	6
by assessing corporate objectives and the local cultural heritage thinking laterally in exploring cultural product potential	
TIP 2: DECIDE WHERE TO COMPETE, AND WHERE TO COMPLEMENT LOCAL BUSINESS	7
by developing products with synergy between your skills and those of community entrepreneurs	
Matching Supply and Demand	8
TIP 3: ASSESS MARKET DEMAND AND CATER DIFFERENTLY TO MAINSTREAM AND SPECIAL INTEREST MARKETS	8
by providing an accessible general product for the mainstream market developing complex products for the cultural specialists	
TIP 4: DEVELOP THE SUPPLY OF INNOVATIVE, QUALITY, AFFORDABLE LOCAL PRODUCTS	9
by helping entrepreneurs with USP and quality developing new ideas building on established anchor attractions and day to day activities	
TIP 5: BALANCE AUTHENTICITY WITH PRACTICALITY	10
by ensuring authentic feel by building in chances to talk to local people, working closely with partners ensuring safety, accessibility and workable scheduling	
TIP 6: LINK PRODUCTS TO MARKET CHANNELS AND NETWORKS	11
by building in preference for locally produced curios and products integrating new products into established channels of tour operators, tourists and government	
Making it Happen	13
TIP 7: BUILD MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY	13
by understanding who has cultural skills, leadership roles and entrepreneurial opportunities structuring a partnership that is transparent, fair and delivers local benefits	
TIP 8: ASSIST LOCAL SMMEs WITH BUSINESS ADVICE, NETWORKS, AND MARKET ACCESS	14
by providing advice on tourist tastes, new business ideas, adding value using your networks and facilities to help SMMEs market their business	
TIP 9: PLAN LOGISTICS CAREFULLY – AND EXPECT SURPRISES	16
by planning and budgeting for logistical issues from the start assisting cultural entrepreneurs with transport	
TIP 10: UPGRADE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE – TOILETS AND MORE	17
by ensuring toilets and facilities are adequate bringing in local government where possible	
TIP 11: WORK ACROSS THE DESTINATION AND INVOLVE OTHER TOURISM OPERATORS	18
by using festivals, routes, and local branding to bring competitors together	
TIP 12: BALANCE COMPANY PROCEDURES WITH CULTURAL PRODUCT PROVISION	19
by assessing whether standards and procedures can be met or adapted assessing how to integrate new cultural products into day to day operations	
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND CHECKLIST	20
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	Inside back cover

Stimulating Cultural and Heritage Tourism Products

Cultural and heritage products make a southern African trip unique and memorable for tourists. They provide the word-of-mouth stories that bring return guests, and they can draw an ever-widening range of South Africa's population into the tourism industry. They are also a key way for companies to diversify their product and stimulate the local economy.

There is a vast amount that established tourism businesses can do to help local cultural products and businesses thrive, such as developing an archaeological excursion for guests in partnership with local residents, supporting a local dance festival, providing business and marketing advice to a music business, training local guides as specialists in local history and environment, or integrating local crafts into hotel furnishings.

A tourism destination that thrives on local cultural products will open up many opportunities for local people and economic growth. Of course disadvantaged South Africans must not be pigeon-holed into one corner of the tourism industry. But if the cultural and heritage products are not developed to full potential, myriad entrepreneurial opportunities will be closed off to those who could most take advantage of them.

South African Tourism's (SAT) data indicate cultural products are highly desired by tourists, but that they are currently under-performing. Interest in South African cultural products varies between foreign tourists but is generally high, with 85% of American tourists, 77% of Europeans and 60% of Asians being interested in exploring the culture of South Africa. Product usage patterns indicate that the cultural product is in high demand, but questions around quality have been raised by the industry.

This brief outlines how established tourism operators can stimulate the local supply of cultural and heritage products. It provides examples, tips and warnings from the

experiences of those who have already invested in this area.



Face to face with South African Culture.

ACRONYMS AND KEY TERMS

Acronyms

DMO	Destination Marketing Organisation
FTTSA	Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa
PPT	Pro Poor Tourism
RTA	Ribolla Tourism Association

Acronyms

SAT	South African Tourism
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprise
USP	Unique Selling Point
ZAR	South African Rand

Definitions

BENEFITS

Enhanced products, guest experience and branding

Clients will gain from a more diverse range of goods and services, and the brand itself can become more original and distinctive if it incorporates elements of local culture.

Interaction with local people and cultures is often the highlight of a guest's visit, thus helping to attract a broader clientele and encouraging guests to stay longer.

Supporting local tourism enterprise is a tangible way to demonstrate your support for the local economy, gain local licence to operate and improve your performance on the BEE Scorecard.

At Shiluvuri Lakeside Lodge, where guests are encouraged to visit local artists at work, and local culture is profiled, occupancy has increased 25% in the last three years. Due to their approach and FTSA certification, Shiluvuri management perceives high staff morale and improved visitor experience, plus increased recognition and enhanced reputation from local stakeholders and the wider industry.



The creation of business opportunities for local communities and emerging entrepreneurs



Small entrepreneurs and local enterprises are keen to get established in tourism. But with limited access to capital and international networks, large-scale investments in hotels, lodges, car rental or reservations are difficult. However, they face a much richer seam of opportunity in developing tours, excursions, homestays, curios and services that build on the rich culture, heritage, politics and history of South Africa.

Exploiting unfulfilled potential in South Africa's tourism sector

South Africa's cultural product has, according to SAT's Global Competitiveness Study, not been fully exploited. Although the cultural resource is seen as a strong advantage, the tourism industry believes that it is underperforming relative to its potential. Museums, South African cuisine, African curio shops, and township experiences are all identified as requiring improvement and diversification¹.

The cultural product needs to be "more targeted, more authentic and more sophisticated". (Global Competitiveness Study)



SAT's gap analysis showed that more tourists desired cultural and historical heritage than wildlife viewing, but fewer had experienced it while in South Africa. SAT concluded that South Africa's cultural tourism product is one of the country's key attractions and needs development.

Calabash Tours employs four local guides (three of whom have each bought a 10% share in the company), and takes tour groups through Port Elizabeth townships. Guests drink at local shebeens, listen to local bands, walk in the informal settlements, visit schools, and hear about the township's relation to apartheid city planning and to the political struggle. The tour is up-front in not being just a 'look-see' – political history, local conversations, and walking are included.

Calabash tours are being sold to the mainstream market. Thompson's and Fairfield coaches stop twice a week. The business also has commendable international recognition, winning the overall classification, as well as 'Best for Poverty Reduction', at the Responsible Travel Awards at London's World Travel Market (WTM) in 2004. The owner, Paul Miedema has invested heavily in developing links with the shebeens, bands, schools and other cultural entrepreneurs. He provides an on-going stream of business advice, helping the community to improve and develop their product, and has set up a charity to channel donations.



¹ SAT, 2004:166

CONSTRAINTS

Under-development and lack of marketing of cultural product

The tourism market has traditionally been focused on wildlife and wilderness, coastal product, or business tourism, so many tourists and operators are not mentally geared towards cultural tourism. Cultural product development needs innovation and risk taking, but much tourism development has been based on duplication and imitation. In South Africa there is a narrow view of what constitutes cultural product – township tours and beaded necklaces – and a lack of appreciation for the diverse ways in which culture and heritage can be integrated into sophisticated tourism.

There is a widespread belief that domestic tourists and business tourists are not interested in cultural products, although SAT data indicate that 64% of domestic tourists are interested in exploring the culture of South Africa. This misperception may be related to not effectively marketing what is available in the country to domestic tourists (SAT, 2004)².

Quality of the cultural tourism product

The risk of a tacky product is high. Some companies decide it is easier and cheaper to use their own staff, for example, to perform cultural shows, and they assume the diminished authenticity from doing it in-house will not be a problem for international tourists. Doing it well is a challenge.

Lack of business expertise and experience

Those who have the greatest cultural and historical knowledge are often those with least business experience, and least opportunity to set up in tourism. In order to produce a quality cultural experience it is almost obligatory to form some kind of partnership with local communities, *Brief 3*. Although there is a risk of failure, partnerships can be very successful and dynamic.



Ndebele woman with traditional gear.

² SAT, 2004:171, www.southafrica.net/satourism/getTradeltem.ofm?Tradeltem=D=176



DIFFERENT APPROACHES

There are different approaches to including culture and heritage into your product, but the common principles are to develop quality products, ensure they are marketed appropriately, and engage with local communities and entrepreneurs to catalyse business development.

Developing new products for guests through direct collaboration

New offerings for guests may include an evening in a shebeen or restaurant, live music, crafts to buy, a visit to a heritage site or cultural centre, guided walks to view local flora and fauna, historical and archaeological sites, a home stay or a visit to artists at work.

Usually such products are provided by local SMMEs working in collaboration with an established hotel or tour operator. The linkage between them usually combines a commercial relationship (commission or payment for provision of meals/goods/drinks/tours, etc) with an element of technical support. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Both the successful Calabash product, *Tip 5*, and the unsuccessful Southern Sun/Alexandra collaboration, *Brief 3, Tip 2*, utilised this approach.

The link with local cultural product providers may be a critical part of core business, and of the product offering. For example, Mbotyi River Lodge on the Wild Coast only provides accommodation and food to its guests, as all activities are provided by local people – river guides, hiking guides etc. The success of the lodge, which facilitates the process of guests hiring guides, depends on the success of these SMME services. Alternatively, the new product may be an optional extra – at least at first.

Support for local networks and expansion of cultural and heritage activities

Beyond different contracts, there are other ways to assist local business development around cultural products. Examples include sponsoring events and festivals, supporting a producers' association with marketing and materials, providing training to businesses, or providing tourists with information that encourages them to engage and spend locally. For example, Jan Harmsgat Country House brings local performers from rural areas around Swellendam together with national artists in cultural events. Spier Leisure, which operates Spier Village Hotel, assisted bed and breakfast operators in Kayamandi Township to get established, and provided on-site training for them.

Integration of local cultural elements into the business environment.

Furnishings, guest amenities, mementos and stationery can all be adapted to integrate local cultural flavour. In this approach, it is not a specific cultural product or activity that is being offered to the tourists, but an adaptation of what is already on offer. This may be the only way in which cultural and heritage products are utilised, or it may complement cultural products and contribute towards developing cultural branding. The product supplied may be small – decorative art, furnishings, greetings cards, mementoes, indigenous vegetables and recipes for the kitchen – but the volumes can be large or the profile significant. Locally made art and furnishings can add a distinctive touch and local flavour. Their impact is enhanced by providing guests with information on the source and meaning of the art, or linking the artworks to local exhibitions or museums.

Local African art in Park Hyatt and Arabella Sheraton Hotels gets a high profile.

When Spier Village was built, the restaurant table tops were made from local mosaics, which proved a popular and very attractive talking point.



Getting Going

TIP 1: BE STRATEGIC IN ASSESSING YOUR NEEDS AND PRODUCT OPTIONS

Accurately assess your needs

Be sure of your reasons for including culture and heritage in your product, as this will affect the type of product you choose. Ask your existing clients what would appeal to them and, if you are trying to attract a new market, do some research to find out what would best suit it.

If your aim is to boost occupancy rates, the new product will be core to the operation, and market analysis and customer satisfaction will take priority. If the intention is to demonstrate social commitment by involving the local community, concentrate on building local partnerships, *Brief 3*.

If the new product is core to the established business, you will need to devote significant resources to it. There are a number of ways to incorporate cultural elements into your product without exposing the company too much in the way of risk. You could offer it as an optional activity at first, or incorporate local artistic and cultural flavour into the operating environment – in the food, furnishings, amenities or uniforms. Understanding your market is an essential part of this process, *Tip 3* below.

Think laterally in exploring cultural product potential

Successful cultural product development requires innovation. In considering what is possible, think laterally. How can existing cultural products be upgraded to meet market needs? How can existing conventional excursions include a cultural or historical component? What added value could be gained by explaining to tourists new facts about the origins of what they see or do? How can traditional craft be adapted for modern uses? Initial discussions will only scratch the surface, so continue exploring new ideas.

An example of adapting traditional culture for modern markets comes from the Gambia, where local women are making traditional Gambian costumes for Barbie Dolls. It has proved a popular purchase among tourists.

Understand the area

Knowledge of the local culture is essential for identifying what product development is possible, and for doing so on a basis of trust and respect. Outsiders' or newcomers' understanding of the culture of an area

may be very superficial so a local facilitator, who can also help you to understand the local power issues and politics, can be very useful. Consider making links with a local museum or with artists and writers who may have a much richer appreciation of local culture.

When Wilderness Safaris got involved in Maputaland; they brought in Clive Poultney, an anthropologist with 27 years' experience of working with a range of community projects in the region. This helped them to engage more deeply with local communities and draw on specialist cultural products, while sticking to their own core business.

"Get advice on township ceremony and protocol. If you're an outsider you need a guide – if you're a white guy, outsider, like me." (Paul Miedema, Calabash Tours)

If you don't speak the language, get a translator. Spend time talking and researching.



TIP 2: DECIDE WHERE TO COMPETE, AND WHERE TO COMPLEMENT LOCAL BUSINESS

Look carefully at where you compete with, or can promote, local businesses. Balance your own profit against other benefits, such as product enhancement, local recognition, diversification of the tourism economy or the enrichment of the destination. The aim is to combine expertise not to compete. For example, for an established operator providing accommodation, it may be best to set up a local cultural excursion for guests, but not commit to sending guests to B&Bs. A partnership between a tour operator and home-owners, on the other hand, could focus on bed and breakfast products. The only rule is to look for synergy.

Spier Village assisted bed and breakfast owners in Kayamandi Township to improve their product by hosting them for a day and a night at Spier. Being tourists themselves enabled the women to see what tourists were used to – the standards of service, the typical routine – and gave them ideas for their own products. The homestay owners were also encouraged to try to identify what their products had that was unique and worth building on, so as to establish a distinctive product. This did not undermine Spier's own accommodation business, as the B&Bs are catering to a different market. On the other hand, nor did it become part of the core business in the way that local suppliers have become part of the Spier supply chain.

But in practice this synergy can be a challenge. If the established operator has a good business idea to suggest to local product producers, it is often likely that he or she could also make a profit from it in competition with local businesses. This requires a judgement call about what is core business, and how to balance profit maximisation against other business benefits,

benefits in Brief 3.

In Limpopo, the marketing director of the Ribolla Tourism Association (RTA) reports that their business has gone down as more lodges are guiding tourists around the art centres themselves. Whereas some lodges, like Shiluvari, provide information to their guests about hiring a guide at RTA, other lodges simply sell the product themselves. Ironically it is the very success of the product that has increased competition, and thus reduced the market for the producers' association.

Develop products that build on synergy between your skills and facilities, and those of community entrepreneurs.

Balance your own profit maximisation against other benefits, such as product enhancement, local recognition, and diversification of the tourism economy.



PPT facilitator invited to join in Zulu dancing at Mqobela.

Matching Supply and Demand

TIP 3: ASSESS MARKET DEMAND AND CATER DIFFERENTLY TO MAINSTREAM AND SPECIAL INTEREST MARKETS

There is an enormous difference between tourists that choose their destination because of the cultural interactions on offer, and those that are happy to do something different for an afternoon, and need a chance to stock up on holiday mementos. In the nineties, Maputaland Tours and Sangoma Safaris were developed around Mboza in Maputaland, offering interaction with local people that proved highly popular with cultural specialists. But as an offering to guests at Wilderness Safaris Ndumo Lodge, they struggled, because guests arrived expecting two game drives a day, not culture.

"The Sangoma tours were principally for Ndumo Lodge, but the volume was too low. Ndumo was sold as a place with game drives twice a day. In contrast, at Serra Kafema, in the Kunene Region of NW Namibia, we sell the Himba visit as part of the itinerary, and thus as part of the expectations of the guest. It works fantastically. But at Ndumo, it was difficult to repackage the product." (Malcolm McCulloch; CEO Wilderness Safaris)

Distinguish between the cultural specialists and the mildly interested. Provide an accessible general interest product on a regular basis, and reserve the complex products for the specialist minority.

Consider varying cultural products and target markets over the year. It may be possible to increase occupancy in the low season by attracting groups with a different primary motivation and stronger cultural interest.

Be realistic. Balance authenticity with what your tourists actually want.

If your guests are primarily interested in wildlife, beaches, business, or golf, it does not mean that cultural products won't interest them. Products that diversify their experience can be very successful, so long as they fit with their itinerary and expectations. Such products for the mass market are likely to be fairly standardised. For example, at Rocktail Bay, the community tour offered to guests routinely

is much less in-depth and rich than the specialist tours previously offered. But it meets the needs of the tourists for an afternoon activity, and may stimulate the interest of some for a more specialised tour.

If, however, the market you're aiming for is specifically interested in exploring cultural issues, you can incorporate a much more specialised product, as these people will make trade-offs with cost and convenience for a truly authentic experience.

If you're catering to mainstream tourists, you can afford to be very pragmatic about what will bring them in. If tour groups

really need a toilet in a small town that can be the hook. On the hook you can hang curios, entertainment, refreshments and other services.

For the mainstream, cultural tours can be offered as a chance for something different, or an additional experience to be had when the game viewing is not at its best in the middle of the day.

Use any hook – it doesn't have to be related to culture.

Pancakes can be used as an entry point for curio sales. Harrie's Pancake House is a chain of restaurants in many of the more popular tourist destinations including the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town and Graskop in Mpumalanga. They all have an attached retail outlet where curios are sold (although not all of these are sourced from South Africa) and the link between the two is now part of the business model.



TIP 4: DEVELOP THE SUPPLY OF INNOVATIVE, QUALITY, AFFORDABLE LOCAL PRODUCTS

Identify what is – or could be – distinctive, marketable and of high quality in the area. This requires lateral thinking rather than just following blindly what has been done before or elsewhere. It can only be achieved through innovation, collaboration and dialogue with local people.

"If entrepreneurs wish to succeed, they need to know that they must develop a unique selling point that sets them aside from everyone else. If they settle on the mundane, the rewards will be mundane." (David Rattray, owner of Fugitives' Drift Lodge)



Develop a range of experiences around an anchor

Often one strong cultural product can be used as an anchor around which others develop.

Many different products can be built around an anchor, which is a high profile sure winner product that catches the tourists' interest and business.

Test the products out yourself and pilot them with tourists, you may need to make several adaptations.

Around the battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, there is potential for walking tours through roadless wilderness, and products that explore local traditions, such as the significance of Nguni cattle.



Turn day to day activities into innovative product

It is important to look wide and deep to find products that go beyond the usual. The challenge with such activities is to develop them as products that can be scheduled and meet other tourist requirements, *Tip 5*.

In developing the Port Elizabeth township tours, Calabash focused on what is distinctive about PE – the political issues around the first city to have a joint area, a transitional council, and a black mayor. Local tours need to focus on what is unique or special about the place.



Amidst the plethora of African product, it is important to bring out what is distinctive to your area.

Mboza's cultural tours in Maputaland included:

- farm work with a family in the fields – ploughing and joining in communal harvesting
- seasonal activities such as making and enjoying marula drinks in February
- line fishing with local fishermen. Tourists participated in fonya (thrust basket) fish drives where 50-300 people line up across a pan and drive fish to the shore
- attending services in old Anglican mission churches, as well as African separatist churches
- running and jogging through settlements and into the sand forests. A half marathon was organised with local families
- horse rides through the settlements, including having tea at one of the homesteads
- Sunday lunch at a local home

Cultural products can be sophisticated

Even upmarket hotels such as Arabella Sheraton Grand Hotel and The Western Cape Hotel and Spa display sophisticated contemporary African art and traditional African craft in the public areas and hotel rooms. It's all about quality.

Craft quality

There are some very successful craft markets, but there are even more unsuccessful ones, usually because of poor quality or high prices. Explore a variety of sources of funding and ask local museums if they can assist with product development and marketing.

If the product is mediocre, get expert input to change that. Or don't sell it.

There are several organisations and individuals that can provide expert input on craft development and help drive up quality.



TIP 5: BALANCE AUTHENTICITY WITH PRACTICALITY

One of the biggest challenges is how to maintain sufficient authenticity in a cultural product that is packaged for tourists. Lack of authenticity soon leads to tacky or mundane products, and embarrassed or bored guests. But truly authentic cultural events are not likely to comply with tourist requirements for assured safety, accessibility, and tight scheduling. The balance depends on which market you are serving – special interest or mainstream, **Tip 3**. More authentic products are most feasible on a small scale, while higher volumes require standardisation.

"Whilst the diversity and richness of South Africa's culture appears to be well recognised by many tourists, the key challenge seems to be showcasing it with dignity and authenticity." SAT³.



The key is to find the appropriate combination of:

- Authenticity – local people doing what is truly part of their culture in a way that they would normally do it themselves
- Spontaneity – tourists able to participate and engage with local people
- Safety – monitoring of health and safety standards, including safety of any food provided, cleanliness of toilets and facilities, and any physical risk to guests (e.g. from fire, theft)
- Accessibility – a venue that is not too far for tourists to reach, and has space for a group of tourists to watch or participate
- Interpretation – explanation in a tourists' language of the product and its significance
- Scheduling – a product that fits into itineraries, which often means just a few hours is available
- Compliance – with legal regulations.

Package a product based on authentic culture and person-to-person interaction in a way that ensures safety, efficiency, accessibility and legal compliance.



However informal or authentic the product appears to tourists, it needs to comply with industry legislation. For example, public liability insurance needs to be in place, whether it is covered by the tour operator's policy or by the cultural product. Such compliance issues may be entirely new to cultural entrepreneurs, and this is an area where input from the private partner, local government and the insurance industry can be a great help.

Guests on Calabash Tours visit shebeens that are popular with locals, and the live music is for everyone, not just for tourists. They get out of the bus to talk to local people but the tour is packaged to ensure guest safety and satisfaction. Tourists walk only in areas where Calabash is confident they are safe, shebeens are pre-selected, and the menus have been agreed in advance. In one case, Calabash supplies the meat rather than risk local supplies. To Calabash owner, Paul Miedema, what makes it authentic and interesting for the guests is that they get to talk directly with local people – and this can never be packaged. The tour is led by guides who grew up in the area.

Building in opportunities to talk to local people increases the authenticity for guests.



eg.

Ker and Downey takes its hunting and photographic clients to visit a traditional Masai manyatta. The area is very remote, and not visited by any other companies. The clients can accompany the Masai as they go about their daily activities – such as making jewellery – or join them for special events – such as bloodletting. The Masai do not do anything out of the ordinary for these occasional visitors. In contrast, the cultural villages that are on popular tourist routes tend to be specifically adapted to providing tourist services and information, in order to deal with volumes of visitors.

eg.

³ SAT Global Competitiveness Study, 2004:173

TIP 6: LINK PRODUCTS TO MARKET CHANNELS AND NETWORKS

Look at how your existing marketing channels can be utilised and encouraged to integrate the new products, and assess what new channels might be needed.

Prioritise local products within established markets

Tourists want to shop, and they want authentic locally distinctive products. Local producers want to sell their products. And yet often curios on sale are not from the area – or even not from South Africa. For example, at the Visitor Centre at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, where the art and craft vending has been privatised, the 'Zulu' artefacts on sale are not 'Zulu', not made by Zulus and the sales income does not go to Zulus. In instances such as this, a clear policy and management decision could catalyse organic growth of local enterprise.



Niche tour operators

One way to ensure a steady flow of visitors for a cultural product is to sell it to tour operators. They provide low margins, but their business provides security and volume.

In Limpopo, Shiluvu Lodge is used by some specialist operators such as Rainbow Tours in the UK, and Tribes Travel. Securing FTSA-accreditation assisted in getting their business.

Niche market companies are risky, and thus an exclusive dependence on a specialist operator is probably not a good idea. Marketing through a range of specialist operators in a number of markets is much safer.

In the nineties, the sangoma tour in Maputaland was sold by a specialist operator, Multituli, who brought guests who had a keen interest in cultural interaction. However, when Multituli went under, it left the cultural tour struggling.



Mainstream tour operators

Although the margins when selling in bulk to mainstream tour operators are very small, the sheer volume of business makes it worth pursuing. In order to capture this market, you need to offer operators something that fits in well with their itinerary, or – even better – fills a gap or a dead spot. The Calabash Tour in Port Elizabeth does just that – providing an excursion for guests on a one-day stopover.

Calabash Tours sells to mainstream operators, such as Thompson's and Saga. The Calabash guides join their coach, rather than taking a Calabash bus. Forty or more Thompson's passengers every Friday for the past 4-5 years has provided the company and its SMME partners with a reliable base on which the more profitable elements of the business can be built. The downside is that operators expect heavy discounts for their volume, and pay less than half what a normal tourist in a Calabash bus pays.

Attracting a mainstream operator, even if just once a week, can bring a substantial boost to the business. But additional guests are crucial to provide the profit margins.

Consider getting new products written up in the influential guide books, and encourage the DMOs to include them in educational trips, which would, in turn, influence tour operator itineraries.

Attracting tour operators to visit new local businesses is not always easy. At Sun City Resort and Spier Village, Tourvest automatically takes their guests to Indaba Curios, which they own, and not to other ones.

Small craft markets and producers are less able to pay commissions, which is the most dependable way to ensure guides steer guests their way.

The large tour operators often have a financial incentive to keep their itineraries the same, and to supply the guides, curios and activities themselves. At the same time they have little incentive to diversify their product and demonstrate their local contribution to the community, because they are less dependent on one community or area.

Specialist and Independent Tourists

In Limpopo, Lesheba Wilderness Lodge finds the tour operators have minimal interest in their product. Eighty percent of tourists come via word of mouth, the internet or Getaway Magazine – reflecting the personalised nature of the product and its appeal to the independent traveller. At Shiluvuri Lodge, owner Michel Girardin also believes the backpacker market – a rapidly growing niche – can be of great value to cultural enterprises. He suggests it has played a significant role in the growth of tourism spend in the Ribolla area. Though some backpackers are on a student



The incentives for tour operators to adapt business practices are weaker than for others in the tourism sector, except where they come under pressure from the international tour operators or their customers.

budget, many have high disposable income to spend on activities precisely because they are using cheap accommodation Ribolla tourism has arranged a number of guided tours for individuals or groups of backpackers over the past 3 years.

The internet, guidebooks and travel magazines are good ways to attract independent travellers.

Tour operators and tourists with a special interest in cultural interaction are likely to care about the social record of your business, so provide information on the local benefits of the product, or secure independent accreditation, e.g. FTSA.

To attract backpackers, provide transport, and tap into their information exchange networks.



Government marketing

Getting local cultural products into government marketing is important, but it's not always easy, and many cultural tourism products have experienced frustration.

RTA reports that the official guide to Limpopo Province – Limpopo Tourist Factfile 2003 / 2004, which was produced by the Limpopo Tourism and Parks Board, contained old pictures, numerous factual errors, no black-owned accommodation and very little information on cultural heritage tourism products. A new official provincial guide, Know Limpopo, was not distributed until Indaba of 2005. This latest version is an improvement but still provides no coverage of key cultural heritage products such as the Ribolla Open Africa route, so marketing depends on the individual budgets of companies involved.



Government marketing is not seen as supporting and promoting local cultural products by many of the current role players. There is enormous potential for more marketing support of local initiatives and regional branding.

In contrast, many other provinces are increasing their efforts to market cultural tourism products. For example, the Western Cape Government has set up and sponsored Cape Town Routes Unlimited to market the region, and the Cape Winelands District Municipality has commissioned a scoping study to assess the skill, technical and marketing viability of craft in the Cape Winelands region. The latter project focuses on emerging crafters and how they can be fast-tracked from the second to the first economies, and aims to inform the planning of an extensive three year programme to develop craft and culture in the region.

Making it Happen

TIP 7: BUILD MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

The right partner

As in any business development, it is essential to find the right partner but, in the case of cultural and heritage products, there are additional considerations.

- the entrepreneurs with cultural talent may have little business or tourist experience
- the product may depend on the assets of a wide community, such as traditional culture, archaeological heritage, political history and the natural environment. If these are used for a tourism business, the community will expect to benefit
- the product might be run by a community group, e.g. choir, dance troupe, local project, or by a charitable trust rather than a single entrepreneur
- the product is likely to be developed in rural or township areas where social leadership is very important and sets the context in which business relations develop. So relations with leaders are key, even if they are not product producers themselves.

In the Western Cape, CoMart, a community organisation, has assisted a number of community cultural groups, such as choirs, to develop festivals and events. CoMart's experience with both successful and stalled cultural enterprises highlights some lessons for others:

- the community needs to feel they own the initiative, so that they take responsibility for moving forward. The local audience is important too
- building trust is critical but this comes only from delivery. Action is a motivator
- strategically, heritage is a good figurehead to work from. It is multi-denominational and can unite a community
- senior women in the community can be the driving force to get things done.

Don't just talk to the men. Often it is the older women who get cultural products going.

Before choosing local partners, get a good understanding of the local stakeholders and dynamics.



A fair and beneficial partnership

Choosing a local partner necessitates a lot of pre-planning, **Brief 3, Tips 1-3**. Having chosen your partner, take time to ensure you have an equitable and transparent relationship in which all parties feel they have a good deal, and risks are shared, **Brief 3, Tips 4-6**. You need to understand how local people expect to benefit, and they need to know from the start what is commercially feasible.

"Success and money create their own problems, particularly where communities, rather than individuals, are involved. These problems should be dealt with in advance. The distribution of money will always create difficulties." (David Rattray, owner, Fugitives' Drift Lodge)



New initiatives invariably raise expectations. The owner of Lesheba Wilderness Lodge recognises that his work with the community on indigenous art 'unintentionally raised expectations'. But to date he 'hasn't increased the incomes significantly but significantly opened new opportunities'. He has been a catalyst, but progress so far is just a drop in the ocean

Make sure you understand what benefit the potential partner wants, and what support they need in order to deliver their part. Ensure expectations are realistic.

The partnership is just the start. Maintain, adapt and expand it, as the business evolves, **Brief 4.**



TIP 8: ASSIST LOCAL SMMEs, WITH BUSINESS ADVICE, NETWORKS, AND MARKET ACCESS

Cultural and heritage products can be developed in ways that maximise chances for thriving local businesses and a range of spin-offs. Established businesses have much to contribute if they appraise potential and make input with this approach in mind.

Provide advice to cultural tourism partners

It is easy to underestimate the enormous value of the expertise that established businesses possess. What is obvious to you may be invaluable advice to others. When developing a cultural tourism product in partnership with local people it may be necessary to explain what tourists get elsewhere, are likely to spend, can physically carry, or like to drink. You may also need to give advice on product development, operations, marketing, and business and financial planning and management.

Advising a potential competitor could cause problems for your business. See **Tip 2** for advice on competing with local SMMEs.



Stimulating local enterprise by giving advice

Advice given by Calabash owner, Paul Miedema, to shebeen owners, jazz musicians, students and a women's group has helped them develop their businesses.

- he encourages shebeen owners not to do dual pricing for locals and tourists, but to stock drinks that tourists buy and locals don't, and put a bigger mark up on those ones. He advises fixed prices, advertised on the wall
- Calabash constantly identifies new business ideas for tourists to spend money and for local people to turn skills into value added. For example, the Marimba band that plays in shebeens has now cut CDs, which are sold to tourists. Calabash took a dozen local photos and gave them to a 17 year old schoolboy poet. The poet wrote a poem for each photo. They have now been printed on 12 square sheets in a clear box, the size of a CD. They cost ZAR20 to produce, sell at ZAR80-100, and all profits go to the trust
- women volunteers running the feeding centre need income-generating options that fit around their work. The proposal being developed is for them to produce beaded South African flags. If these can be sold to all tour groups at a price of ZAR15-20, they could collectively earn up to ZAR60,000 per year given the size of the market that Calabash can bring.

In KwaZulu-Natal, Fugitives' Drift Lodge, which focuses on the battles and history of Zululand, is mentoring a learnership programme to equip young Zulu people with the skills necessary for the tourism industry, and to identify options for developing businesses attached to tourism.



Let community entrepreneurs come and experience being tourists at your business.

Invest time in training or discussions with community entrepreneurs about tourist expectations, habits and needs. Keep up discussion about new business ideas and new ways to capture tourism spend.

Help set up feedback mechanisms so that local businesses can improve in response to tourists' comments.

"The bottom line is that the experience on offer must add value to their trip, and the economic spin-off will then come naturally." (David Rattray, owner, Fugitives' Drift Lodge)



The new Tourism Scorecard awards points for supporting enterprise development – not just in terms of cash support, but also time spent by staff.



Access to finance can be a binding constraint on new enterprises. Help entrepreneurs identify sources of assistance, and make sound financing proposals. See **Brief 3, Tip 3** on financing partnerships.

Use your networks to help small business make new linkages

Your network of contacts is just as important as your business advice. Growing a small business is all about reaching into new networks, and an established operator can provide invaluable contacts.

At Shiluvuri Lodge and RTA a major objective is to help local artists make linkages with external buyers. There is now an agreement for some local potters to supply 2,000 pots per month to Woolworths in Johannesburg for sale as plant pots. The women are being assisted by RTA because they lack skills to process orders and use the internet, and they do not have the means to transport their wares. Other buyers of local art have included American art museums, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other exhibitions in Johannesburg

Boost market access and inform tourists

The many ways in which an established operation can market a local business can make the difference between being a marginal enterprise, always scraping along, and having enough guests to be viable and expand.



Wilderness Safaris puts the community tour on the day's activity list, which is written up on a blackboard and explained to guests every morning. Spier changed its concierge desk to a local BEE company, Concierge Connections, which prides itself on using a range of emerging local businesses. Shiluvuri Lodge directs guests to local artists' production centres, or takes them there on organised outings, and puts information about RTA and local artists in the guests' rooms. Shiluvuri also insists that tour groups that already have a guide with them use a local guide as well.



Once a small business has one recognised client, they can use it to get more clients. The marimba band that plays for Calabash clients has, due to their growing recognition, succeeded in getting gigs in other venues.

Provide cultural entrepreneurs with names and introductions to other clients or sources of assistance.

Showcase local art in restaurants, lobbies and lounges – and let clients know what it is they are admiring.

Find ways to encourage your guests to visit local businesses and utilise their services.

A different type of market boost comes when an upmarket hotel profiles local art. For example, the Park Hyatt bought pieces from barely-heard-of artists when building in Rosebank. The showcasing of the art at the hotel helped change patrons' perceptions of local art and craft for the better.

Remember tour operators, concierges, tour guides and drivers have their own incentive systems and rules. Shifting guest itineraries may be a challenge and require adaptation of incentives.

Training and language skills

For well understood historical and infrastructural reasons, language is a major barrier for many of those talented in culture and heritage. Articulating information, and communicating with guests is essential to any tourism business. Thus helping to source or provide language skills for tourism can be an important contribution to cultural product development. Identifying other sources of training, particularly in hospitality skills or business management can also be invaluable to cultural entrepreneurs.

Business support services, adult basic education, and rural schooling need to take into account the need for language skills, particularly in tourism areas.

Help source or develop well-structured language modules focused around tourism and other necessary skills.



TIP 9: PLAN LOGISTICS CAREFULLY – AND EXPECT SURPRISES

Getting izangoma (pl. of sangoma) to a lodge, or tourists to a sangoma; taking tour groups to local schools and shebeens with poor facilities; getting a choir to a venue on time; clearing a space for tourists to park at an artist's house. Whatever the product, logistics will need to be sorted out.

Logistics were a major challenge for the Sangoma Safari in Maputaland. Getting the izangoma to Ndumo or Rocktail Bay put pressure on the lodge vehicle pool, which made life hard for the lodge manager and guides. When the izangoma visited, they had to sleep out, but sleeping in the dunes provoked problems with the Parks Board. With no 'dressing room' the izangoma donned their regalia in the bush before a performance. But one night four white rhino appeared, and the izangoma disappeared after the rhino, keen for a closer look. This left the guides doing some swift anthropological footwork explaining totems and artefacts to guests until the izangoma returned!

Another part of the original Maputaland product was dance at Mboza. The dance groups came not from the immediate area, but from the chief's area – partly because they were spectacular, and partly because the chief wanted his dance group involved. But this imposed high transport costs, meaning the activity ran at a loss.

The nature of the cultural product, often involving rural people, rural locations, and irregular events, means that transport and logistics may be more of a challenge than usual.



Plan, and budget for, the logistical issues at the start when assessing whether the product is viable.

Assist local cultural groups and entrepreneurs with transport – perhaps in the form of a travel fund or a loan for the purchase of a vehicle.



Izangoma participating in the Sangoma Safari in Maputaland.

TIP 10: UPGRADE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE - TOILETS AND MORE

Inadequate facilities for tourists are often a major constraint on the development of cultural products, particularly in rural areas. Lack of toilets is the most obvious, but lack of other facilities, like safe parking, restaurants and access to information, are also important. The absence of services to host conventional tourists who want comfort restricts the marketability of the product.

One international tour operator pulled out of the Mboza Maputaland cultural tours in the nineties, mainly because of the lack of water-borne sewage at one camp. Given health and safety regulations today, requirements are higher. But local artisans may well not know about requirements, such as the Health and Critical Control Point (HACCP) regulations, or have the ability to do anything about them. Consider how you can provide assistance.

In Limpopo, lack of infrastructure for tourists is a major frustration for those involved in the RTA and Open Africa Route. The RTA manager reports that there is a need for road repairs, fresh water, electricity and sanitation at tourist sites, all of which should be provided

"You have to fight. It takes time... people don't follow up on what is happening on the ground." (Aldrin Ndalani, RTA)

by government. But the delays are interminable. Yet, as a route entity, the community is in a far stronger position than more isolated enterprises in the representations it makes to government, and therefore should be more likely to attract the support it needs.

Authenticity still needs basic facilities – bring in local government if you can. They often have expertise and sometimes resources.

Local government has a key role to play in providing basic tourist facilities in areas with cultural tourism potential. Lack of facilities is constraining SMME growth.

In some areas, park authorities could play a facilitating role in developing tourism services where they can support SMME clusters.



Visiting Mqobela school near Rocktail Bay lodge.

TIP 11: WORK ACROSS THE DESTINATION AND INVOLVE OTHER TOURISM OPERATORS

One tourism company can achieve a limited amount on its own in supporting local cultural products. Much more can be done if stakeholders in a destination come together to tackle local problems, enrich the destination and generate economies of scale – and everyone can benefit. Although collaboration may be fraught with difficulties, given the competitive nature of the industry, there are many ways to bring stakeholders together:

- tourism routes, such as Open Africa Routes, are being used as one way to bring products and people together
- the owner of Lesheba Wilderness Lodge is working not only at the local level with the artists' centre, but also to establish UNESCO Biosphere status for the Soutspanberg Mountains, and to get buy-in from all stakeholders. This would provide a boost for all the tourism providers
- Ribolla Tourism Association is planning an annual event to bring together the arts and crafts community into one local exhibition

At Jan Harmsgat Country House, owner and former artistic producer, Judi Rebstein helps organise various cultural events which bring together local artists, entrepreneurs, established tourism businesses, and different audiences. A fundraising concert in February 2005 featured local and visiting artists together, and raised funds for a new crèche in a township and a women's embroidery business. 'Dance for All' concerts are held every year. The performance combines classical ballet, modern and African dance and is performed by black children, who have been trained by Phyllis Spira, South Africa's prima ballerina. The third Dance for All, in 2005, attracted a full house with a 70% black audience, which is unusually highly integrated for Swellendam shows, or for classical dance.

"The neighbours see your success and they all start doing the same thing, and co-operatively it becomes necessary to make the cake bigger rather than try to get a bigger slice of the same cake. I have watched my 'competition' here over these years make this error – trying to grow their businesses by trying to get a bigger slice of the cake rather than co-operating to make the cake bigger. Pretty fundamental stuff at all levels, but it is amazing how often a whole industry can be crippled by this principle not being applied" (David Rattray, Owner of Fugitives' Drift Lodge)

Festivals and other local events are a great catalyst for bringing out cultural talent, bringing stakeholders together and capturing media attention.

Tourism Routes can bring stakeholders together in a more permanent and structured way.

Securing a marketing boost for the whole destination – such as designation as a heritage site – gives an incentive for everyone to engage.

Working with your competitors won't necessarily be easy. Identify clearly where you are going to co-operate, and where you are going to compete.

Provincial, municipal and other local tourism authorities and associations have a key role to play in bringing businesses together and creating a critical mass for cultural products to take off.



'Dance for All' students with Bishop Desmond Tutu, their patron.

TIP 12: BALANCE COMPANY PROCEDURES WITH CULTURAL PRODUCT PROVISION

Address conflicts between procedures and cultural products

There may be conflicts between the organic way that local culture is produced for tourists, and the procedures your company is used to. Health and safety is the most obvious issue, and measures are needed to ensure standards are met, *Tip 10*, but there are other issues.

Use of local guides vs. national guides

Local guides can be incredibly important for providing tourists with local expertise and interpretation of culture. In many instances, it would be much less satisfactory – if not totally inappropriate – for an outsider to lead tourists on a cultural excursion. However, it is difficult for local guides to get accreditation. So a company that only uses accredited guides will insist on a national guide accompanying a local guide on the tour. Many local guides report that the old-fashioned attitudes of the national guides are a big problem for them. In particular, they complain that the national guides ‘scaremonger’ guests about local safety, and that they treat local guides with disdain.

Alcohol use

Guests generally like their hosts to join them in a drink, particularly if the activity is a social celebration or shebeen visit. Most tourism companies have well defined policies on guides and staff drinking with guests. It is essential to work out norms regarding alcohol use when partnerships are established with local providers of cultural product.

Operating practices need to be adapted and jointly agreed by both parties.

When disputes run deep, bring in facilitators.

A suite of problems arose at Kosi Bay in the early 1990s, when local guides started to take advantage of their guests’ invitations to join them in a drink. Some guides got drunk, messed up the vehicle and boat, rode the sea turtles, generally forgot about their duties, and one was accused of sexually harassing a guest. This led to another set of problems. Firstly with the Parks Board – who was understandably protective of the sea turtles. And, secondly, with the community because the accused local guide refused to accept the discipline meted out by management, and called in the community to defend him. This led to the untenable situation of community members trying to be involved in the operational functions of the business, and everything came up for negotiation. The problems were finally resolved by calling in facilitators, complemented by a change in lodge management.

Child labour

Established tourism operators would not use child labour, but community cultural performances, particularly dance troupes and choirs, often include children. Local schools can be part of a cultural itinerary. Guests will want to know that children are not being exploited or discouraged from attending school.

The legislation in South Africa governing the use of children in cultural activities is Sectoral Determination 10: Children in The Performance of Advertising, Artistic and Cultural Activities, South Africa. The act can be downloaded from www.labour.gov.za

Where cultural products do not conform to company operational procedures, this may create internal blockages.

Ways to deviate from normal procedure, or adapt corporate procedure, will need clearance at the top.

eg.

Adapt day to day operations to integrate new cultural products

Cultural products and partnerships may initially be developed as an ‘add-on’, perhaps by one manager. But if they are to thrive, they need to be integrated into day to day operations.

This involves a process of managing corporate change, so that managers buy in to the approach and employees are capable of implementing their new roles. For more details, see *brief 4*.



SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND CHECKLIST

Support to local cultural and heritage tourism enterprises can simultaneously boost local entrepreneurs and provide valuable product diversification for guests.

Principles

- look beyond what is currently provided to tourists, delve deeper into local culture
- develop very different products for cultural specialists and for the mainstream with an afternoon's interest
- tackle both supply and demand. Help local products to reach quality standards and, at the same time, address how they are marketed and reached by guests
- establish new partnerships with local experts. Combine their cultural expertise with your business skills in ways that benefit both sides
- pay particular attention to logistics and standards. While these are needed for any product, the informal, often rural, nature of many cultural and heritage product providers may pose extra challenges
- assess options in terms of how they can support thriving local enterprise by encouraging spin-offs and linkages.

How Government can make a difference

This brief focuses on what companies can do, but supportive actions by government include:

- providing toilets, water, road access, parking, information, and other infrastructure in key locations with cultural product potential
- giving cultural products a high profile in destination marketing
- ensuring cultural SMMEs have access to finance and business support
- supporting destination-wide initiatives that bring together museums and other providers of cultural products, with tourists and operators
- addressing the relative paucity of incentives and requirements for ground handlers and tour operators to encourage or respond to local linkages within a destination.

Checklist

Before committing your company to stimulating local cultural and heritage products, ask:

- ✓ Do we have sufficient knowledge of the richness of local culture – or do we know someone who can help provide that?
- ✓ What types of cultural and heritage products suit our guests – whether specialists or mainstream tourists?
- ✓ What new products could be developed that integrate and build on local culture and history?
- ✓ How can sufficient authenticity of the product be combined with the practicalities and logistics required by tourists?
- ✓ Is the company open to local partnerships with local product providers, based on shared expectations and mutual benefits? Do we have Brief 3 to assist on partnerships?
- ✓ Do we have capacity to support local cultural product providers with technical advice on products, markets and networks?
- ✓ What support can be gained from local government for providing facilities or marketing?
- ✓ How can we link with other operators in the destination in ways that will support the cultural products without undermining our own competitive position?



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The material in the 'How to...?' series draws heavily on the experience of 5 companies that were 'pilot partners' in the Pro Poor Tourism Pilots project (2002-2005). The 5 pilot sites are described below. Further information on the project can be found on www.pptpilot.org.za.

Wilderness Safaris' Rocktail Bay Lodge

- an upmarket coastal destination within the Coastal Forest Reserve of Maputaland
- accommodation is 5 star and consists of 10 tree lodges and a family unit (but is expanding)
- Wilderness Safaris is a large safari/ lodge operator that currently operates 45 camps/ lodges in 7 countries
- PPT focus was on strengthening the existing partnership with Mqobela community and developing a new partnership with the Mpukane community.

Spier Leisure

- Spier Village Hotel is outside Stellenbosch in the winelands of the Western Cape
- accommodation consists of 155 rooms, targeted at the four star market
- Spier is owned by Spier Holdings, a large, family owned operation that also includes a winery and other leisure products
- it currently receives approximately 500 000 day visitors per annum
- PPT focus was on assisting Spier with the revision of its procurement policy and practice.

Sun City

- Sun City is the largest resort in Southern Africa, renowned for its casino and entertainment, but expanding its appeal to families, business and sporting enthusiasts
- the resort has over 1,500 rooms in four 3 to 5 star hotels plus a time-share complex
- approximately 600,000 guests stay annually.
- Sun City is owned by Sun International, a large southern African hospitality company
- PPT focus was in small enterprise development for local suppliers.

Ker & Downey, Tanzania

- Ker & Downey operates exclusive photographic and trophy hunting safaris in Tanzania's national parks
- it has 14 private concessions with a total area of over 32,000sq kilometres
- the business case to enhance PPT linkages rests on the need to secure the future of the hunting industry
- PPT focus was on how to restructure its range of community donations and interventions for more strategic input.

Southern Sun

- Southern Sun Sandton Precinct consists of six hotels and the Sandton Convention Centre located in Gauteng province
- PPT partners, the 4 and 5 star InterContinental, Crown Plaza and Holiday Inn hotels have a total room capacity of approximately 1,700
- PPT focus was on strengthening links with its neighbour, Alexandra Township, mainly via township tours

Fair Trade in Tourism accredited sites

To produce the 'How To...?' Series, interviews were held with operators at many other sites, many of which are accredited by Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa, (Calabash Tours, Jan Harmsgat Country House, Stormsriver Adventures, Shiluvu Lakeside Lodge, Lesheba Wilderness, Imvubu Nature Tours). More information on each of these is available at: <http://www.fairtourism.org.za>

Business Linkages in Tourism is a new business set up to continue PPT facilitation services on a self-financing basis, beyond the PPT Pilots project. It is initially housed in TBCSA. It provides services in the strategic planning and facilitated delivery of: product development based on local business linkages; procurement of goods and services locally; cultural and heritage product development; sustainable local partnerships for tourism development; development of clusters and networks for tourism-led development.

Contact Adrienne Harris (bizlink@tbcsa.org.za) www.tbcsa.org.za/blt

Further sources of information

General resources on SMME development and responsible tourism are listed in other "How to..." briefs. Resources specific to cultural tourism include:

Business Linkages in Tourism: www.tbcsa.org.za/blt

Open Africa: (021) 683 9639 admin@openafrica.org www.openafrica.org

Responsible Travel: www.responsibletravel.com

Backpacker Association: www.btsa.co.za

Global Competitiveness project:

www.southafrica.net/satourism/research/viewResearchDetail.cfm?ReportTypeCategoryID=35

Briefing Paper 5: Developing local excursions for tourists: www.pptpilot.org.za/Briefing%20papers/paper5.pdf

Author details:

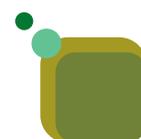
Caroline Ashley, Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute, c.ashley@odi.org.uk

Clive Poultney, PPT facilitator and Senior Consultant, Business Linkages in Tourism: pptsa@africa.com

Gareth Haysom, PPT facilitator and Consultant, Business Linkages in Tourism, duffhaysom@mweb.co.za

Douglas McNab, Research Officer, Overseas Development Institute, d.mcnab@odi.org.uk

Adrienne Harris, Project Manager, TBCSA, Adrienne@tbcsa.org.za





“The ordinary citizen can expect to make a living from tourism through employment or some peripheral activity, but he/she cannot expect to become a millionaire. A few highly motivated, possibly highly skilled individuals will become wealthy from tourism, as in any other sector of the economy.”

“Whilst the diversity and richness of South Africa’s culture appears to be well recognised by many tourists, the key challenge seems to be showcasing it with dignity and authenticity.”

“Don’t assume people know things. Cover everything in the training.”

“When you have seen the big five, been to Cape Town...are you now going to go to another country and look for something else?”

“The cultural product needs to be “more targeted, more authentic and more sophisticated.”

Diversifying the tourism product

“Cultural expositions can easily be attached to other activities.”

“Can South Africa open its rich tradition of culture and heritage through its indigenous peoples?”

“The bottom line is that the experience on offer must add value to their trip, and the economic spin-off will then come naturally.”

“Avoid raising expectations, because if you fall short, you’ll be a liar. The guys have been lied to too often.”

“Deliver then promise.”

“It was difficult to repackage the product. We would have had to re-educate the agent networks.”

“In this industry the risk of “tacky product” is very high. Discipline at the front line is essential. Visitors must never feel pressurised to make donations. No begging.”

“You’ve got to be in it for the long run, not for short-term return.”

“Make sure it is sustainable, with ongoing support. If you’re going to start something, understand that you’re going to hand-hold for quite a while. And make sure you can assist with the market for some time to come.”

Exploring heritage and culture

“Get advice on township ceremony and protocol. If you’re an outsider you need a guide – if you’re a white guy, outsider like me.”

“What we do is make it part of our brand value and expect all of our people to deliver on it.”

Authenticity and marketability

“The neighbours see your success and they all start doing the same thing, and co-operatively it becomes necessary to make the cake bigger rather than try to get a bigger slice of the cake.”

“The way to do it is to work with inbounds.”

“We have our own “big five” – five of the oldest and best local artists.”

“MARKETING, MARKETING, MARKETING” This follows hard on the old war cry “LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION.”

“When working with communities, business must be entirely transparent and often explained to communities.”

“Within communities, there are vast receptacles of knowledge that cannot be accessed due to industry related exclusionary rulings.”