

ATINGI EACADEMY TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SOUTH AFRICA PILOT

Pilot Project Report

OBJECTIVE:
26 - 28
SEPTEMBER
2022 COHORT

The key objective of the 3-day sprint was to test the applicability of eAcademy courses in SA's tourism recovery trajectory while documenting learnings on the most effective approach to maximise the impact of the Atingi platform in South Africa.

CHALLENGES IN DIGITALISATION IN THE AFRICAN TOURISM SECTOR

Digitalisation is key to tourism development in Africa. The UNWTO 2019 report on Women-owned Enterprises in Sierra Leone found that only 16% of women-owned enterprises were using email when conducting their business, an indicator of the level of access to digital solutions as well as digital skills within tourism and hospitality in Africa.

Fundamentally, an elearning solution assumes that candidates will have seamless connectivity, be able to onboard themselves and navigate the platform relatively easily.

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

40

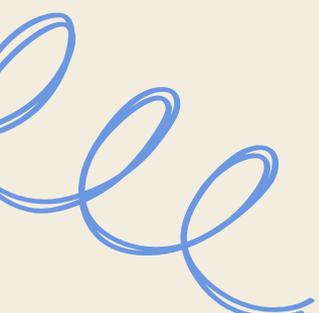
The program target was 30 participants. was oversubscribed by 10 candidates

16

Participants completed the 3 Day sprint due to connectivity challenges and rolling power cuts in South Africa

1

Candidate dropped out after struggling with navigation on Day 1





KEY THINGS TO NOTE FROM THE SOUTH AFRICA PILOT

Candidate profiles: Backpacker manager and front desk, waitress/servers, guest relations officer in boutique hotel, marketing officer in tourism business, event co-ordinator, guest transport

Majority of participants were on their mobile devices, 3 on laptop computers

All participants and trainers were impacted by rolling blackouts in South Africa, this resulted in connectivity challenges and some disruption during the sprint. Candidates were supported by trainers on Zoom and WhatsApp

ISSUE

DETAILS

OBSERVATIONS

Digital skills

Candidates struggled with onboarding and navigation up until day 3

- Without trainer's support many more candidates would have given up and not continued
- Age and current role was not a factor - old and young required support

Connectivity

Rolling electricity blackouts are a daily reality and here to stay in SA and other African countries

- Candidates remained committed to completing their modules despite connectivity issues

Mobile phone navigation

Despite the platform being targeted at mobile users as well as laptop computers, the platform did not appear to be optimised for mobile

- Candidates experienced difficulty with the drag and drop functionality and understanding of what to do during in-course exercises
- Instructions were not clear on the exercises (e.g. drag and drop)



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Contextualisation of course needed

The attendees responded very well to goal-setting content presented by Rob Hetem.

- Some attendees attended because their employers mandated it and were not there because they identified a need for this kind of knowledge. Rob's content helped shape 'why' attendees were taking the course and 'how' they could apply it to strategise their career paths.

Group learning

Attendees fed off of each others' energy and also gleaned best practices from their peers in similar roles as them

- During the group activities which were led by facilitators, each attendee was encouraged to share how the course content could be applied in their daily work environment, and also issues covered in the course content were currently managed. Attendees commented that the shares from other attendees and facilitators were valuable.

Timed and structured approach

The attendee who dropped out on day one said they would complete the material in their own time. Their progress is poor when compared to the successful completion of those who stayed in the structured and timed group learning activities.

- Working together in a group helps participants to stay on track and cover more modules in a short space of time. Employers also trust facilitated training and allow time off for structured learning. Employees have commented to me that it is nice to see all the certificates and get feedback from me as a facilitator because it makes them feel confident that training was done and was effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS/LEARNINGS FOR FURTHER ITERATIONS

- The 3-day blended approach is highly recommended for trainee's in South Africa and on the continent due to the digital skill level of trainees. As facilitators we are confident that all trainees who participated in the pilot will continue to access the platform and take additional courses as they have gained confidence in navigating the platform over the 3-day period
- The courses on the eAcademy Tourism and Hospitality stream are relevant towards recovery of tourism in South Africa, however, trainees do benefit from supplemental learnings through practical exercises and discussion with peers on course topics
- Consider partnership with network providers to either zero-rate the Atingi eLearning platform or to provide free data (2GB) for trainee's
- Consider a closer working relationship between the facilitators of the blended training approach and the PR agency, Instinctif, so as to maximise the opportunity to connect with trainees who are outside of the formal tourism and hospitality structures and therefore difficult to reach. We have connected with the Instinctif team and share video recordings of the training sessions and opportunities to use trainee feedback and insights in future social media campaigns

"I'm smiling until my jaw becomes painful" -
Feedback from pilot participant, Karabo Myaka
after he received his first digital certificate

"Thank you. God, for your strength, without you I
would not be here" - Comment from pilot
participant Thelma Mpolweni, at the end of the
training program



We are passionate
about *digital skills*
for sustainable tourism
development in Africa

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