

Anna Kankondi
Stakeholder Relations Manager
t: +264 (0) 61 207 5111
e: Anna.Kankondi@ol.na

Technology with purpose Three priorities for Namibia's tourism industry

By Maryke Van Lill, Managing Director, OL Leisure

This year's World Tourism Day's focus on the digital agenda and artificial intelligence invites tourism leaders to consider what we want technology to enable.

For me, there are three priorities. We should use technology to make the traveller's journey through Namibia easier, use data to understand our guests, businesses and impact better and invest in our people so that digital transformation strengthens the human experience of hospitality.

Making Namibia easier to discover and navigate

Namibia has an extraordinary tourism offering. Its scale, however, can make planning and travelling more complex. The dunes, coast, Etosha and rivers of the Okavango may inspire a journey, yet the considerable distances between them mean that travellers also need confidence to plan and navigate it.

Technology can help close the gap between inspiration and arrival. It can make Namibia easier to discover, research, plan, book and navigate, while AI can shape recommendations around the time travellers have, how they prefer to travel and what genuinely interests them.

This creates an opportunity to make Namibia more visible and its diversity easier to understand. Technology can guide people beyond where to go and towards why a place matters, helping them connect with the people, landscapes and stories behind the destination.

We must also remember that digital access and physical access must progress together. Air connectivity, capacity and the ability to move through the country remain fundamental to Namibia's competitiveness. A seamless planning experience has its greatest value when travellers can complete the journey with confidence.

Using data with purpose

The second priority is becoming better informed. Digitalisation has already changed how people discover, research and book travel. AI can connect these stages more intelligently and provide relevant information as the traveller moves through a destination.

DIRECTORS: S Thieme, M van Lill (Managing Director), F Rüeck, S Bartsch.
Company Secretaries: Ohlthaver & List Centre (Pty) Limited. (Reg.No.1960/1583).



INTRODUCING THE OL PORTFOLIO



Relevance is central to this opportunity. When we understand why someone is travelling, what interests them, how much time they have and the experience they seek, we can respond more personally. With the guest's trust, information can support continuity across a journey, helping teams understand what matters and anticipate certain needs.

The same principle applies to sustainability. Good data helps tourism businesses understand, measure and demonstrate their impact. This is becoming increasingly important in international source markets, where businesses face growing expectations to substantiate environmental claims.

Many Namibian tourism businesses are already making meaningful contributions to conservation and sustainability. As reporting expectations continue to grow, technology can help businesses of all sizes capture and organise information more efficiently, making it easier to communicate their impact while remaining focused on conservation, guest experiences and day-to-day operations.

Investing in people

The third priority is to invest in people alongside technology. Greater efficiency should create greater capacity for meaningful guest care.

Technology can reduce repetitive work, make information easier to access and help teams recognise what may be relevant to a guest. Our people bring that information to life through context, conversation, knowledge and judgement. They notice the details that matter and create moments of care that guests remember.

This is where technology and hospitality meet. A system can help us understand a guest, while our people make the welcome feel personal. Technology supports the experience and our teams deliver it.

At OL Leisure, we are empowering our teams through digital and AI training so that they can use these tools confidently and responsibly. This supports more capable people, a more efficient and informed business and a more relevant guest experience. It also reflects how we expect our people to show up for every guest: Authentic, Caring and Passionate.

Namibia at the centre

Transformation has value when it solves a clear problem and improves the experience it serves. For Namibia's tourism industry, success should be measured by how effectively technology helps travellers discover the country, plan with confidence and experience it in a way that feels personal and relevant.

Namibia is our competitive advantage. Technology can make the country more visible, its journeys easier to navigate and its tourism impact easier to understand. Our people, places and stories are what give the experience meaning.

The strongest role technology can play is to work intelligently in the background, creating the conditions for Namibia and its people to remain at the centre of every journey.

ENDS

About OL Leisure

Proudly owned by the Ohlthaver & List Group, with its foundations firmly rooted in Namibia, OL Leisure offers an authentic and heartfelt hospitality experience. At the core of the company is a genuine love for Namibia, which shines through in every guest interaction, turning each stay into a truly memorable journey.

DIRECTORS: S Thieme, M van Lill (Managing Director), F Rüeck, S Bartsch.
Company Secretaries: Ohlthaver & List Centre (Pty) Limited. (Reg.No.1960/1583).



INTRODUCING THE OL PORTFOLIO



"Namibia Through Our Eyes" is OL Leisure's slogan and the guiding philosophy of the brand. It is a commitment to showing the world the true essence of Namibia through the lens of being Authentic, Caring and Passionate. The company is guided by the OL Purpose of creating a future, enhancing life and an unwavering commitment to the OL Persona.

OL Leisure operates six extraordinary luxury destinations across Namibia, each shaped by the culture, traditions and communities of their surroundings. Proudly locally owned, the group's properties are rooted in conservation, community upliftment and authentic storytelling. From sweeping desert vistas to hidden coastal enclaves, every stay is an opportunity for guests to connect meaningfully with the land and the people who call it home.

For any enquiries, please contact:
Carmen Maartens
Communications Specialist – O&L Group
E: Carmen.Maartens@ol.na

DIRECTORS: S Thieme, M van Lill (Managing Director), F Rüeck, S Bartsch.
Company Secretaries: Ohlthaver & List Centre (Pty) Limited. (Reg.No.1960/1583).



INTRODUCING THE OL PORTFOLIO



DIRECTORS: S Thieme, M van Lill (Managing Director), F Rüeck, S Bartsch.
Company Secretaries: Ohlthaver & List Centre (Pty) Limited. (Reg.No.1960/1583).



INTRODUCING THE OL PORTFOLIO

