

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY THINK TANK '25

AGENDA

THE OBJECTIVE IS TO HAVE A CONVERSATION AROUND THE FOLLOWING TOPICS, DEBATING AND FINDING SOLUTIONS.

07:30 – 08:00 ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION WITH TEA AND COFFEE

08:30 – 08:55 OPENING ADDRESS

Johnny Goldberg: *Chairman, Global Business Solutions*



Jonathan has been a leading figure in labour law for over thirty years, advising on negotiations at plant, industry, and national levels. A respected adviser and speaker, he represents business in key roles, including Commissioner on the National Minimum Wage Commission, Labour Market Convenor at NEDLAC and member of the Employment Services Board. As a Chartered Director, he recently led the business delegation on labour law amendments at NEDLAC.

09:00 – 10:00 PANEL DISCUSSION 1 Navigating Risk and Resilience

FACILITATOR:

Dave Milne: *COO, Peermont Hotels*



Dave joined Peermont in 1999 as Group CIO and has held various executive roles over the past 26 years. He has served as Group Hospitality Executive since 2017. His earlier career included roles in operations and/or information technology at prominent South African hotel chains, including Southern Sun Hotels, Picardi Hotels, Protea Hotels and Legacy Hotels.

PANELISTS:

Mokwena Morulane: *MD, Cresta Marakanelo Ltd.*



Cresta Marakanelo Ltd is a leading hotel group listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange. As a former Deloitte professional, Mokwena has held senior roles in mining and financial services. As a Fellow of ACCA and member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, he holds a BA (Hons) in Accounting from the University of Luton and at Oxford's Said Business School he completed the Executive Leadership Programme. He is a corporate governance specialist and serves on multiple boards.

Michael Pownall: *Co-Founder & Managing Partner of Valor Hospitality Partners*



Michael is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Valor Hospitality Partners, AMEA, overseeing strategy and business development across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. With over 40 years' global experience, he brings deep expertise in luxury hotel operations, asset management, and sustainability. Originally from Sheffield, he began his career with Cunard and has held leadership roles at renowned properties across four continents. Now based in Cape Town, he continues to grow Valor's international presence while enjoying golf, food, and wine.

Jameel Verjee: *Founder & CEO, CityBlue Hotels*



Jameel, a London School of Economics law graduate and former solicitor, began his career at the leading UK law firm BLP, before moving into business. After founding several start-ups in the UK and Middle East, he shifted his focus to sub-Saharan Africa and launched CityBlue Hotels in 2013. Now one of Africa's fastest-growing local hotel chains, CityBlue operates in five countries with over a thousand keys in the pipeline. Known for its five-star locations, affordability and tech-driven service, the group partners with institutions like the National Museums of Kenya and Dream Hotels & Resorts to build a pan-African presence. Recognised as a leading business thought leader, Jameel was awarded the "Creating Impact" award in 2023 and now serves on the Advisory Board of the Lagos Business School's Hospitality Initiative.

10:00 – 10:15 PANEL BREAK

10:15 – 11:15 PANEL DISCUSSION 2 Customer experience (CRM)/Brand Experience/ Impact of AI/Tech Advancement and Revenue Generation

FACILITATOR:

Samantha Williams: *Profit Room Ltd.*



Samantha is an award-winning revenue specialist and the Commercial Director at Profitroom Ltd. She also leads the revenue growth strategies for leisure hotels across Africa. With a strong background in hospitality and her experience managing over 75 hotels, she is known for her practical insight, leadership and advocacy for personalised, automated systems that boost sales and guest engagement. She is based in Cape Town and is passionate about helping hoteliers maximise performance.

PANELISTS:

Gary Greenfield: *MD, Interact RDT*



Gary is a seasoned leader at the intersection of consulting, digital innovation and customer-centered transformation. As the founder of Interact RDT, a leading customer and user experience consultancy, and Spawntech, a cutting-edge AI technology company, he has dedicated his career to helping organizations unlock growth through smarter insights, seamless experiences and bold innovation

Reinhard Visser: *Group Operations Lead, Dream Hotels & Resorts*



With over 25 years' experience in the hospitality industry, Reinhard has worked across a wide range of hotel environments, each enriching his understanding of what it takes to deliver exceptional service. As Group Operations Lead at Dream Hotels & Resorts, his passion lies in designing memorable guest experiences and establishing operational standards that consistently exceed expectations. He thrives on creating environments where every detail contributes to a guest journey that is seamless, personalised, and unforgettable.

Natalia Rosa: *Founder & CEO, Big Ambitions*



Natalia Rosa is a seasoned tourism marketing and communications expert and the founder and CEO of Big Ambitions, a specialist travel and tourism agency. With over 20 years' experience, she has worked with local and international tourism organisations and currently leads the SADC Business Council Tourism Alliance, promoting regional travel development. Her background includes consultancy for global brands and qualifications in Publishing Studies, Portuguese, Politics, Journalism, and Media. She is committed to advancing tourism in Africa through strategic communication, PR, marketing, and training.

11:15 – 11:45 TEA AND COFFEE BREAK

11:45 – 12:45 PANEL DISCUSSION 3 Outlook for Tourism over the next 5 years and making SA more than a "two-pot" destination (Kruger and Cape Town).

FACILITATOR:

Lee-Anne Singer: *HVS and Chair of FEDHASA Cape*



As Partner for Southern Africa at HVS Middle East and Africa, Lee-Anne brings over 29 years' experience in tourism and hospitality. As the Marketing and Sales Director at Singer Group, she has led brand growth and strategic partnerships. She also holds leadership roles with FEDHASA Cape, Cape Town Tourism and the Cape Chamber of Commerce, influencing industry policy and development. A recognised speaker and award-winning role model, Lee-Anne is known for driving innovation, collaboration, and empowerment across the tourism sector.

PANELISTS:

Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa: *CEO, TBCSA*



Tshifhiwa is a tourism and marketing executive with over 20 years' experience across the tourism value chain, including roles at South African Tourism, FEDHASA, and Rennies Travel. A recognised thought leader and advocate for tourism development in South Africa and Africa, he serves on several industry boards, including the global advisory board of The Sigmund Project. He regularly speaks and writes on the role of innovation and technology in driving the sector forward, highlighting the need to equip hospitality professionals for the future.

David Frost: *CEO, SATSA*



With 21 years' executive experience in tourism strategy, David is an economist by training. He has held leadership roles at The Premier Group, Tourvest and served as Special Advisor on Tourism to government ministers. In 2001, he founded the Tourism Strategy Company, consulting widely across the private sector and SADC countries, notably leading Namibia's successful tourism strategy from 2003 to 2007. David has also advised the World Travel & Tourism Council for Africa and sits on the boards of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa, the Tourism Conservation Fund, and South African Tourism. He has led SATSA since 2013.

Olivier Perillat-Piratoine: *MD, Club Med Southern Africa*



Olivier is a French citizen and permanent resident in South Africa. He started his career in Aerospace in Europe, Asia and Africa before joining the Travel & Hospitality Industry in 2017 with Club Med. He is Managing Director of Club Med Southern Africa and Indian Ocean based in Johannesburg. With his team, he looks after the sales and marketing of Club Med worldwide destinations which is soon to include the new South African Resort, Club Med South Africa Beach & Safari opening in July 2026.

12:45 – 13:45 LUNCH

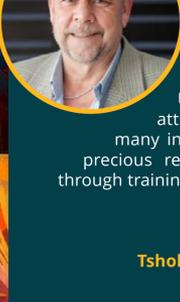
13:45 – 15:00 PANEL DISCUSSION 4 Funding models for Hotel Opportunities

FACILITATOR:

Johnny Goldberg: *Chairman, Global Business Solutions*

PANELISTS:

Fabio Nava: *CBRE*



Fabio Nava is the Director of Advisory & Transaction Services for Sub-Saharan Africa at CBRE Excellerate, with 18 years' experience in real estate and finance across key African markets. Previously Vice President for Hotels and Hospitality at JLL, he specialises in debt and equity advisory and transactional services. Fabio's diverse client portfolio includes international hotel groups, global corporates, and financiers such as IDC, IFC, Unilever, Nedbank, and Roche.

Katlego Mphahlele: *IDC*



Katlego Mphahlele CA(SA) is a senior deal maker in the Tourism and Services Unit at IDC, with over ten years' experience in sourcing, structuring, and leading tourism investment proposals. Katlego is also a director of a clean-tech innovation company and serves on adjudication committees for the DTIC's SPII and THRIP programmes.

Chris Snyman: *Chief Development Officer, Dream Hotels & Resorts*



Chris leads the group's development pipeline, asset management strategy and franchise expansion. With over 20 years of hospitality leadership, he focuses on unlocking asset value and driving revenue across a diverse portfolio. He also supports operational tech upgrades to enhance efficiency and guest service. As a former GM and Cluster Operations & Development Manager, he combines strategic insight with hands-on experience. He holds certifications from Cornell University and AHLEI and is known for his commercial acumen and guest-centric approach.

15:00 – 15:30 TEA AND COFFEE BREAK

15:30 – 16:15 PANEL DISCUSSION 5 Think Big, Play Bigger: Tourism's Role in Job Creation and Sustainability

FACILITATOR:

Chris Godenir: *Touching Dreams*



Chris is the General Manager at The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel in Cape Town, with 21 years' service. Beginning his hospitality career in the late 1970s, he is known as a maverick committed to sustainability human capacity development. Certified by the American Hotel and Lodging Association and Cornell University, he is an experienced hotelier having managed many properties throughout South Africa and the UK. Over the past decade at The Peninsula, Chris attributes the properties financial success to the many initiatives they have undertaken to preserve our precious resources and develop the potential of youth through training.

PANELISTS:

Tsholo Mogotsi: *Chief Partnerships Officer, Youth Employment Service*



Tsholo develops and manages strategic relationships to advance YES's mission, engaging partners across government, business, and civil society to boost youth employment and economic growth. With over 30 years' experience across business, government, and entrepreneurship, he started out as a programmer and later co-founded a successful IT startup. His career shifted toward sustainable development, including roles at the Nelson Mandela Foundation and Johannesburg's Department of Economic Development. He remains active in tech startups, with a focus on innovation and strategic partnerships.

Mathew Lambert: *CEO, Invictus Education Group*



Mathew has over a decade's experience in commercial finance, business intelligence and strategic leadership. He ensures that the organisation delivers scalable, innovative learning solutions that meet the needs of learners and employers. Committed to high-quality, industry-relevant training, he drives the expansion of future-focused programmes that prepare students for the workplace through blended learning and digital delivery. He cultivates a culture of collaboration, creativity and accountability, all aimed at providing transformative, practical education that empowers learners to succeed.

Mel Meyer: *Director Of Operations, Sondela Academy*

Known as "Ranger Mel," he manages all operations within the Sondela Lifestyle Group, overseeing aspects such as conservation education, event management, and hospitality services. Mel has been instrumental in coordinating large-scale events like the Sondela MTB Classic, ensuring smooth operations and enhancing the visitor experience. In addition to this, he supports Sondela Academy students by involving them in practical conservation and guiding activities, such as trail maintenance and event preparations.

16:15 – 16:30 CLOSING ADDRESS

Sean Murray: *Infrateq Africa*

Sarah Marron: *Hospitality Solutions (formerly known as Sabre) Business Card Draw: LG TV*

MAIN SPONSORS:

WYNDHAM

HOTELS & RESORTS

Profitroom

infrateq africa

Hospitality Solutions

vingcard

Powered by SynXis®
Formerly known as Sabre

ASSA ABLOY

INDUSTRY SPONSORS:

DREAM

HOTELS & RESORTS

Sondela

NATURE RESERVE & SPA

LEGACY

PEERMONT

HOTELS CASINOS RESORTS

Sun International

EXCHANGE

CLUB MYKONOS

LANGEBAAK

ASSOCIATIONS:

FEDHASA

Federated Hospitality Association
of Southern Africa

SATSA

The Voice of Inbound Tourism

TBCSA

Tourism Business Council of South Africa

VOASA

Vocational Occupational Association of South Africa

BENEFICIARIES:

reach for a dream

ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST
Protecting forever, together.

TOUCHING DREAMS