GTTP KENYA
BLEISURE TOURISM
KENYA IS MOVING WITH YOU IN YOUR WORLD OF BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL-Fastest WIFI available

9/30/2017
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“I was surprised by the speed of the Internet. The speed was faster than in some developed nations” Jack Ma, Founder and Chair Alibaba Group.
BLEISURE TOURISM: KENYA MOVES WITH YOU IN YOUR WORLD OF BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL

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ST. ANTHONYS BOYS KITALE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the Global Travel & Tourism Partners: Amadeus, Carlson Family Foundation, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, Eurostar, Hertz, HRG, KDS, Marriott, Starwood Hotel and ResortsTravelport Enterprise Holdings for their immeasurable support towards this Passport to the World. In a special way we thank Joseph Okelo, The East Africa and Country Director, The GTTP-K Program Staff, our Teachers The Principal Mr. Cosmas Nabungolo and Mr. Amboka Suleiman for making it happen to us. For our Parents we are blessed to have you.

We thank Telkom Kenya, Treasures of Africa Museum (Kitale), Aturkan Hotel (Kitale), African Touch Safaris, Fly 540, for invaluable information.
**Table of contents**

Acknowledgement ........ I

Introduction ...................5

About our Study.............9

Tourism and Kenya’s Economy....10

Telecommunication in Kenya.....11

Analytical Framework for Travel and Tourism Services in Kenya .....12

A day at the African Touch Safaris Travel Kitale Office........13

Fly 540 – East African Safaris.................................................................15

Experiences of Bleisure Travellers.........................................................17

Conclusions .................................................................30

References ............................................................31

Appendix 1..................................................................32

Appendix 2..................................................................33
**Definition of key terms & abbreviations**

ATBI- Amadeus Travel Business Insight

BT- Business Traveller

CTD-Corporate Travel Department

KPTC-Kenya Posts &Telecommunications Corporation

MT- Managed Traveller

UMT-Unmanaged Traveller

TMC-Travel Management Companies

TAPPS- Travel Apps

TGN- The Gadget Nomad

TRT- The Reward Traveller

*544#- USSD code for internet on all networks
INTRODUCTION

Business travel has been defined differently in different texts. Broadly speaking, it includes all trips undertaken by employers, employees, on behalf of their companies, or organizations, including attending meetings, sales missions, conferences, incentives, or meeting clients on charity programs among other events.

The important distinction between Leisure travel and Business travel is that business travelers travel because they must perform a business function while Leisure travelers travel because they want to. An emerging and rapidly growing trend in travel is a mix of business and leisure in travel. This trend has been cited as “BleisureTravel”. In 2015, ‘Bleisure Travel’ was cited by Top Marketing Executives at the Advertising Club in New York’s Vertical Series as an emerging trend among Business Travelers. Their research showed that business travelers are better at maintaining a work-and-life balance while on the road; and that they extended the corporate trips to include more leisure activities; the trend now known as “Bleisure Tourism”.

Bleisure travel as a sub sector in business travel is further broken down into two main groups; “Managed Travels” and “Unmanaged Travels”. Managed Travel is conducted through corporate travel systems traditionally using intermediaries such as Travel Management Companies (TMC). In the Unmanaged travelers category, individual travelers book directly with suppliers such airlines, hotels and other travel service providers like the leisure travelers.

Statement of problem

Kenya is poised to capitalize on this increasingly popular trend marked by a major departure from the 24 hour, seven days a week workaholic business traveler to Bleisure Travel. Our study investigates this phenomenon through a qualitative study. It is our hope that this study shall shed ambient light on the area and make recommendations that shall help improve tourism in our country.

Scope of study

We conducted our study in the field and on the Internet. In the field we interviewed business travelers and travel and hospitality stakeholders to collect data. We also used the Internet to collect data that gave us insight into the study area.

Our study confined itself to Telkom Kenya customers and TMC’s, and we sought to find out optimizing business travel to benefit the customer and business alike. ABTI report (2013) illustrated the big trends defining the 21st century BT as it gets personal. Key points scoring include but are not limited to technology and travel, examining traveler experience from booking to the final destination.
**Research methods**

We used interviews and administered questionnaires and collected samples of literature to gather primary and secondary data. We recorded the data using note taking and in some we took photos. The Internet was resourceful in filling in the gaps that we could not otherwise collect.

**Data analysis**

We conducted a qualitative analysis of data collected and drew conclusions after making informed decisions.
About our study

According to Trip Advisor, business travelers travel with smartphones and or tablets to stay connected as they hit the road traversing different parts of the globe. The increasing popularity of Travel Apps makes visitors Natural Brand Ambassadors by helping them stay connected and share instant updates about their experiences with family and friends.

Because business travelers must travel to perform a business function, Corporate Traveler Departments and Travel Management Companies have an obligation to optimize business travel to the benefit and satisfaction of travelers and businesses alike.

It is in this background that sampled out travelers and businesses in travel and tourism service industry to find out measure taken to address various issues and needs of today’s bleisure tourist. During our study we visited facilities offering business requirements to the business traveler according to Passport The World Resources (2015:pg 17-20). The nature of the case under study blurs the distinction between the business and leisure traveler we adopted the models in the GTTP Resources.

Business traveler tribes

ATBI (2014) thematized personalization or put simply tailoring business travelers according to their requirements expectations and priorities. The trends exhibited by bleisure travelers may lead us to the motivation for today’s traveler. Travelers can be grouped into four tribes according to ATBI report. However we chose two tribes in our study which provided for us a layout of travelers’ attitude. Attitude in turn adds personality to the data we gathered.

The Gadget Nomad

The Reward Traveler Connectivity and reward are a priority for these travelers. From the insights recommendations and conclusions made by AMADEUS we invoked travel companies and businesses strategies to ultimately deliver more value to the business. It is no doubt that travel impacts positively on work and life of the two tribes above. These travelers are always out to add leisure to their travel.

In today’s connected world, the ability to access corporate networks and staying in touch with family and friends via WIFI or Internet takes the second place in terms of priority for the bleisure traveler. Connectivity in travel today is a essential link to continued productivity while on the move. Efficiency and productivity are emphasized besides other non-work factors as drivers for travel. Non-work factors we found out during our study include cleanliness, food, natural environment, culture, local sights among others made the business travelers extend their trips to include leisure.
Tourism and Kenya’s Economy

The Tourism Industry contributes significantly to the Kenya’s economy. Tourism continues to play a key role in Kenya’s export trade besides horticulture. Innovation and the need to stay ahead and relevant on the global market has found a home in Kenya. Although attractions in Kenya are varied and diverse in both urban and rural areas, business and leisure travel stands out above other forms of travel.

As change remains a constant in travel and tourism, so does Kenya’s tourism industry. As business travel gets more personal so is Kenya tailored to meet tomorrow’s business traveler’s requirements. We attempt to answer the question why Kenya leads the way in bleisure tourism.

Is Kenya a first choice destination for Business travelers, or has Kenya chosen to be the destination of choice for bleisure tourism?

The answer to this question lies in part to the prerequisites of bleisure travel. In bleisure tourism instant connectivity and sharing of experiences while on the move is of unrivalled significance. As business travelers require constant contact and shifting between work and life, destination enabling this perfect mix between business and leisure compete favourably in the global tourism market. This story in Kenya is best told by dialing *544# - Internet connection on personal devices or WIFI available. Kenya moves with you as you quickly change from work to leisure and back.

Telecommunication in Kenya
I was surprised by the speed of the Internet (in Kenya). The speed was faster than in some developed nations. Jack Ma in his comment on the state of internet in Kenya said he would consider investment opportunities he had seen in the country (Kenya) and would make a firm announcement at a later date. (2017)

The Travel industry is rapidly experiencing change as communication technology evolves. The last decade has seen drastic changes and High Speed Internet is the main game changer allowing online services to remove the need for physical media. Social networking like Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Twitter have completely changed the way we communicate. Cloud based tools like Dropbox, Google Apps and Skype have made flexible working a reality as we live in a world of rapid adoption.

Although the telephone was invented in 1876, public telephone services came into use in Kenya in 1908 with 18 subscribers in Nairobi alone. By 1980, 73,932 direct exchange lines (DEL), 84% were connected to automatic switching services, and 75% had long distance dialing capabilities (STD). Also available were 1228 telex lines in use and 50 leased data transmission circuits. This 1980 network represents a solid foundation for future expansion even with its significant shortfalls. With 33% of LDC attempts failed due to congestion, 15% of exchange lines out of order at any given time. (KPTC Annual Report:1982)

By 1990s Kenya was experiencing rapid export-led growth and urbanization, and, a corresponding high growth demand for infrastructural services such as telecommunications. At this time the export volume increased by 22% with companies in value added agriculture (flowers, vegetables and fruits) and tourism playing a major role.

At present, Kenya has undergone tremendous revolution influenced by global footprints of a wave of change towards increased competition in advanced industrial areas of the world. Today we proudly report that Kenya operates in a more open and flexible industry structure. Specifically, the Customer Premises Equipment (CBE) market open to competition. We confidently report the establishment of a variety of special purpose “private networks” or closed user groups, operated by business corporations, non-profit and inter—governmental organizations and various international value added network services (VAN’s)

During the same period (1990s) Tourism overtook agricultural exports as the most significant source of foreign exchange. However the tourism sectors’ performance was continuously constrained by telecommunications problems in a significant way and in various important areas. Kenya’s future was debated and finally settled as “technology choice”. Technology choice refers to widening the range of technology options available for expanding the network and providing direct optical fiber links to the largest users and replacing wired local loops with mobile services.
More has changed technologically in the last decade than has in the last millennium. Equally the travel industry has changed too, and so have we as a country. Either by dialing *544# from your gadget in Kenya gives instant settings and access to all internet service providers, or by simply being at a travel facility with WIFI opens up the world for a traveller visiting places in Kenya. Kenya’s telecommunications has a history that is longer than the independent Kenya and so is our story of business and leisure travel today.

Analytical Framework for Business and Leisure Travel and Tourism Services in Kenya
One way of approaching the travel and tourism is from the point of view of the customer. According to GTTP Resources mentioned in the Travel And Tourism Process Chart, an outline of eight basic steps taken by a traveler are illustrated. The traveler must make decisions on the following:

- Finding information on where to go
- Making reservation
- Travelling to the destination
- Staying n a hotel or other accommodations
- Eating
- Taking part in activities at the chosen destination
- Returning home
- Telling others about the experiences.

At this juncture we blur the distinction between business and leisure travelers and dwell on travel experience. In classical marketing terms, what is of importance to our study is selling services that people want to buy as opposed to what selling what we have. This is essentially getting personal with the traveler.
Telkom Kenya is a leading Internet services provider in Kenya. It has a well established infrastructural foundation and has quickly moved from previous telephone and data service providers to the technology choice. It is connected via optic fiber in almost all parts of the country. Thanks to competition and innovation it still has a broad clientele list.

Recently, Telkom Kenya was re-branded from Orange Kenya. This moved came with the rolling out of the fastest 4G internet. Among service providers, we noted that they have a significant share in the market.

We visited their office and interviewed the Head of Technical Sales and Operations, Mr. Kibiwott. This interviewee said the market changes drives their operations. As it stands they mainly deal with Data and Gadgets. Smartphones and routers top their list of sales. Their main customers include;

- Corporate Firms
- Hotel Aturkan, Le Voyage, Iroko Hotels (Kitale)
- Kitale Industries (an affiliate of Mombasa Maize Millers)
- Cyber Cafes in Kitale (90%)
- Schools and Colleges.

Telkom is the leading data seller due to its affordability and reliability. They have an active and quick customer care desk. This strength makes them rise above others. With well trained personnel and switching to radio systems and optic fiber for data transmission, they have
regained customers they had lost in recent years. Their invaluable information gave insights into our choice of respondents.

Despite its leading role, Telkom still has challenges in network breakdowns.
A Day at The African Touch Safaris Travel

At the ATS Travel Kitale Town office in the foreground is Gad Kiprono (Sale Executive) middle ground is Hawa Rotich and Caroline Kiptum (Travel Consultants)

ATS Travel mainly deals with air tickets. they encourage early bookings preferably two days in advance. With branches in Nairobi, Eldoret, Kisumu and Kitale, the company is expanding its services to individual customers and corporate clients in major towns in Kenya. With tickets to global destinations, this company has an elaborate cooperation with leading airlines operating in Africa, Asia, Europe and The Americas.

The staff at the office received us cordially and gave us all the information we required. In our findings, we observed that the County Governments top the list of Domestic Business Travelers. The County Government have a Travel Management Department that made reservations for the government officials.
The company has an elaborate vision and mode of operations that is customer friendly. For instance in case of change of travel dates, they charged a fee of 2500ksh for any flight cancellations. This is a strength we noted as it befits a business traveler who may change plans as demanded by work or in the event of an added extra day or two for leisure activities.

We also observed that clients stand to benefit from their convenient mode of payment. They have an Mpesa agent number where customers make withdrawals as they pay for the tickets. In this way the transaction is instant. It creates connectivity between them and clients. In case of any doubts, an Mpesa Ledger was used to confirm receipt of money and also proof of payment.

The major challenges faced include flight delays which cause inconvenience for the esteemed customer. As they offer connections between local/domestic flights to any international flights in areas where international flight don’t reach, a delay from a point of departure adversely affects a travelers’ plan.

All in all, the company has come of age to win customer loyalty and trust. This company says real-time contact with customers and flight carriers is efficient especially with the well established communication services and high speed internet.
FLY 540 THE CASE OF AN AIRLINE

With Lillian the Sales and Reservations Agent at the Fly 540 office - Kitale
This airline offers individual and group flights management in Kenya and East Africa. The Kitale agent further gave us her list of top clients. The clientele comprises of both public and private business travelers. The County Government tops the list again. Notably corporate firms included Imani Radio, Water Mission International personnel. Privately individuals also Fly 540 as their mode of travel of choice. Fly 540 corroborates with hotels that make bookings for the end-to-end convenience like the Crane Suites in Kitale.

Bookings for these flights can be made online or via travel agents. They provide room for changes in travel plans at a modest fee of 1000ksh only. This carrier offers the cheapest rates and extra fees for changes. Modes of payment are cash, swipe card or Mpesa.
EXPERIENCES OF BLEISURE TRAVELERS AT THE HOTEL ATURKAN- KITALE

With Perminus the Finance Manager The Hotel Aturkan

The Management Staff of this Hotel are wonderful people for allowing us to conduct our study on their facility. Mr. Perminus an ever smiling gentleman received us at the shortest notice. We conducted our study without before hand notification. We took this approach because we wanted to make a real, authentic and investigative survey of the facility. During our initial Internet survey on the topic we read comments that made us rethink about the image portrayed by a client on Trip Advisor about this hotel. To avoid bias or prejudice we visited the hotel without making any booking for an interview with the Management. First hand information is of great importance in research.

The Hotel uses contracting as a business model in their service delivery to corporate companies. These contracts are tailored to fit every corporate customer. Contracted customers are rewarded by preferential treatment. Reward travelers would relish this facility through a system of Rack Rates as opposed to Normal Rates.

This Hotel offers accommodation on five classes

- Standard Rooms
- Superior Rooms
- Deluxe Rooms
- Executive Rooms
- Presidential Suite
The hotel has a restaurant, bars including a basement bar for Corporate Executives who want privacy in leisure. A club, fitness centre, an open swimming pool, sauna and jaccuzzi, and a gift shop.

The hotel has contracts with NGOs like UADP, USAID, World Vision, Safaricom, Handicsp International. For these corporate travelers, the Hotel offers off-site team building services at a facility at Gatua, an area on the other side of town. The Hotel cooperates with other Tourism Industrialists like African Safaris and KWS to give satisfaction to the business traveler. Saiwa Swamp National Park and Mt. Elgon National Park are a few kilometers away and are ideal for hiking and tranquility of nature. Saiwa swamp is renowned for the Sitatunga a rare gazelle found only in Kenya.

The hotel has three conference halls each with different capacities.

- **Saiwa Conference Hall @ 2500 per person full day**
- **Sitatunga Conference Hall @ 1800ksh per person ½ day**
- **Elgon Peak Conference Hall @ 1250 per person**

Conference services come with free stationery, bottled water, fruits, and free WIFI.

*With Louis, our guide through the Hotel*
The Gift Shop

Aturkan Swimming pool is shaped like a footprint

Rooftop barbeque restaurant

The restaurant gives visitors a clear view of the Mt. Elgon and its environs as seen in the background of the picture below.
Ajurkan Barbershop and Salon
The Main Bar

The Jacuzzi with an even view of the sun setting over Mount Elgon
Sauna at Aturkan

Witnessing Dennis the fitness instructor

taking on the weights
Aturkan boasts of a wide variety of meals in the Jet Sea restaurant with well trained chefs who can prepare any meal from traditional to Chinese cuisine.

AN INSIGHT INTO EXPERIENCES OF BLEISURE TRAVELERS GLORIA AND LINDA IN KENYA

During our day at The Hotel Aturkan we met two visitors who openly shared with us their experiences.
Sam and Gloria during our pool side interview. These two travelers shared their experiences with us.

Our first question after introductions were made was their attitude towards the facility. They were elated summing it up as lovely. They were categorical about choices of accommodation.

For Linda she preferred Norfolk Hotel over Hilton because of the garden at Norfolk. She said she loved the weather and would stay there everytime she makes her business travel.
She said she has a smartphone that enables her to switch between work and family. She manages all her business and is always in contact with her TMC back in the United States.
For them availability of WIFI was a strength in her choice of where to stay.
The Gadget of choice for the business and leisure traveller showing all apps used while on the go. Linda showed us how the apps worked for her.
A time to say bye to Bleisure Tourists Gloria and Linda at the icon of Kitale, The Hotel Aturkan
CONCLUSION

After a satisfactory data collection phase, the data was analyzed and report made. The main objective was to evaluate Bleisure Tourism in Kenya. We identified the difference between business and leisure travels in terms of must travel for a business function and want to travel for leisure. We invoked earlier studies in order to get a working definition of ‘Bleisure Tourism’ as an emerging trend wherein corporate travelers mix business with leisure activities while at a destination.

Our hypothesis that business and leisure activities’ are getting personal is a footprint clearly imprinted in Kenya on the local and global tourism market. This study enjoints previous studies indication that bleisure travels impact positively on work and life of Business Travelers and businesses. Bleisure Tourism is an important sector of tourism with an end-to-end satisfaction. Although four different BT tribes exist, our study was confined to only two: The Gadget Nomad, and Reward Traveler.

Although respondent’s attitudes, requirements and expectations of a bleisure travel vary, they all agreed on security, cleanliness of food, water, rooms, environment and efficiency. Our study established that even though bleisure travel is getting more personal, the availability and accessibility of fast and continuous Internet/WIFI connections determines choices made on where to stay, work and have fun while on a business trip.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Kenya must capitalize on these rapidly evolving trends by adopting and expanding on her infrastructural and technological terrain. Stakeholders should constantly update and upgrade themselves and their businesses in tandem with 21st century and tomorrow’s travelers and travel policies.

Efficient communications systems, safety of travelers, and customer services add great value to doing in the industry. In any case an efficient and effective customer care desk and quick response is a hall mark in travel and tourism business management. This is only possible when you connect with your clients and responding to feedback. Efficient Internet/WIFI, flexibility in business and policy, and diversifying non-work extras are strengths that need constant upgrades and updates.

Travel Management Departments in corporations should offer an adequate budgetary allocation that motivates employees which in turn increases productivity. Travel Management Companies should offer more itineraries to attract a wider customer base. Also quality and standards should always prevail as corporate travelers get forever more personal.
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Internet; Trip Advisor.
Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Companies

1. Name of Business

2. What are your products

3. Who are your main clients

4. Which mode of booking does your company use

5. What are the strengths of your services

6. What are the challenges you face

7. Who supplies you with Internet

8. Why did you choose the service provider
Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Travellers

Name (optional)................................................................................................................................................
Country of origin............................................................................................................................................
Which tribe of business travel do you belong to..........................................................................................
Is this your first time in Kenya ....................................................................................................................
How did you know of this hotel(s).............................................................................................................
What do you like about the hotel(s)............................................................................................................
What do you like about Kenya ......................................................................................................................
Who are you travelling with...........................................................................................................................
Do you travel with family members or friends..........................................................................................
Would you include them in your next trip? If yes why..............................................................................