

# 20 Adventure Travel Trends to Watch in 2018

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**ADVENTURE TRAVEL**  
TRADE ASSOCIATION

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A decade on from the global economic recession that hit tourism hard in 2008, tourism growth has recovered, and it can be said that 2017 was mostly a good year for global tourism.

According to the UNWTO, international tourism arrivals grew by 7% in 2017 to reach a total of 1.322 million departures.<sup>1</sup> Tourism growth outpaced the growth of the global economy, contributing to GDP, job creation, and tax revenues around the world.

Although the activities associated with the International Year of Sustainable Tourism focused on the positive aspects of the industry, overcrowding in several destinations led to protests and a discussion about tourism's negative effects.

Interestingly, 2017 illustrated that tourism growth is unaffected by protectionist rhetoric, diminishing security, and tighter border controls. However, global risks pose threats to adventure tourism growth:

- **Climate Change:** 2017 was the second-warmest year on record, and climate change continues to cause epic natural disasters, such as the hurricanes that ravaged the Caribbean and wildfires in California. These events can have devastating consequences for residents and tourists alike.
- **Inward-Looking Politics:** Anti-globalization parties gained traction in many developed countries—although they took power in only one. Tourists tend to shy away from protectionist countries, as the “Trump Slump” in the United States has proved.
- **Human Rights Abuses:** The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar reignited the debate in tourism circles about the ethics of visiting a destination when the traveler disagrees with the human rights practices of the government.

Despite these threats, the ATTA observes that travelers are becoming more adventurous and mainstream travel brands are offering more adventurous products to appeal to them.

Adventure travel stakeholders will need to continuously innovate their product and marketing to stay ahead of the mass travel companies recognizing the opportunity in developing and selling adventure experiences. They will also need to develop contingency plans in preparation

for the environmental and geopolitical threats that face the planet.

Some trends, such as virtual reality and big data, may be accused of threatening the adventurous nature of adventure tourism by removing the elements of surprise and discovery that are central to adventure experiences.

This report examines trends in adventure tourism in five sections:

- “The Big Picture” provides a macro view of the intersection between global politics and its effect on adventure tourism.
- The section on the virtual future examines upcoming trends in technology and specifically how tech tools can be used to market and sell adventure tourism products.
- “Traveler Trends” looks at the demand side of the adventure industry.
- “Product Trends” examines the supply side of the adventure industry.
- The section on destination trends identifies key issues facing adventure destinations as they seek to grow sustainably in 2018.

Research for this report was conducted in early 2018 by the ATTA, led by Natasha Martin. The research team reviewed secondary and primary research, and interviewed industry leaders.

*Tourism can and should contribute to achieving U.N Sustainable Development Goals. The three goals specifically identified are as follows:*

*Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.*

*Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and protection patterns.*

*Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.*



SECTION A:  
**The Big Picture**





## Trend 1: Adventure Tourism Continues to Grow

Despite terrorist attacks, political upheavals, and natural disasters, tourism in the last decade has continued to grow, demonstrating its resilience in an unpredictable world.

WTTC found that in 2016, travel and tourism was responsible for just over 10% of global GDP and 10% of the world's jobs. Visa estimates that by 2025, 280 million households will be traveling internationally, with much of that growth fueled by emerging markets.<sup>ii</sup> Tourism is also growing faster than the global economy and other industries such as manufacturing, retail, and financial and business sectors. Many destinations that experienced declines in 2016, such as Turkey and France, recovered in 2017, and China continued to produce staggering numbers of outbound travelers (136.8 million in 2016 alone).<sup>iii</sup>

The negative effects of large tourism numbers were acutely felt in destinations around the world in 2017, and it is expected that overtourism will continue to be a serious issue felt by adventure tourism and mainstream tourism destinations alike (see Trend 18 in “Destination Trends”). Adventure destinations need to be vigilant about monitoring the quality of experience and the environmental impact of increased tourism—and learning from destinations already battling this issue.

In the adventure travel sector, businesses also continue to report growth: more than 70% of responding tour operators to the Adventure Travel Trends Snapshot Survey report say they are growing; more than 40% of those indicate that the reason for growth is new travelers.

By ATTA's projections the international adventure travel market can be valued conservatively at \$683 billion, showing 21% CAGR since 2012. The consumer surveys used to derive this projection do not include domestic travel or Asian outbound travel, and it is likely that with those elements included, the number would be even larger. Corroborating this projection is a recent study published by the International Finance Corporation estimating the global soft adventure market to be worth \$745 billion. The IFC included only hiking, kayaking, rafting, backpacking, viewing nature/ecotourism, bird-watching, diving, and a cultural tourism estimate in its valuation.<sup>iv</sup>

Demographics have shifted to the point where the biggest group of Western travelers, aged 25–45, who have grown up traveling, often see it as a right, and are demanding authentic, unique experiences. They take advantage of technologies to inform their travels to long-haul destinations and to benefit from low flight prices.

The demand for adventure tourism experiences will continue to expand in 2018, fueled especially by outbound travelers from Asia who now have two decades of travel experience; these forays have made them more intrepid. In fact, according to research from the China Outdoor Association, 60 million Chinese people practice an adventure sport such as mountaineering, horseback riding, or rock climbing.<sup>v</sup>

*Economic and demographic growth is making the world more crowded. In 2018, expect to see more organizations and private companies joining with the public to fight for protection of pristine land and natural landscapes. Examples of activism come from Nature Needs Half, funded by the DiCaprio Foundation; companies such as Patagonia, which is suing the US government for its rescinding of 85% of Bears Ears National Monument and nearly 50% of Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument;<sup>vi</sup> and the ATTA’s Adventure Travel Conservation Fund, which is a nonprofit for the travel trade whose mission is to provide funding for the conservation of these natural and cultural resources.*



*Our sector continues to grow, and along with it the responsibilities of managing sustainable growth, protecting vulnerable communities, and safeguarding the planet’s most pristine places. The ATTA is looking to ramp up several initiatives in 2018, including continued support of the Adventure Travel Conservation Fund, and AdventureEDU to ensure tourism entrepreneurs and guides on the front lines of the business have the knowledge and tools they need to operate sustainably and deliver a strong conservation message to their guests.*

—Shannon Stowell, CEO of ATTA

## Trend 2: Instability Creates Shifts in Tourism Flows

Although the global level of tourism will most likely stay stable in 2018, the flows will shift, depending on the desirability of destinations, which will be influenced by political atmosphere as well as unpredictable shocks.

Inevitably, 2018 will see some destinations suffer from climate disasters, terrorist attacks, and political or social upheaval, which will disrupt tourism arrivals. For some destinations, the downswing is not being caused by a sudden, unforeseeable event but a tightening of visa and trade policies that push tourists away. Whether the result of a crisis or a buildup, these events will create diversions in traditional tourism flows.

In the United States, the tourism industry is preparing for a “Trump Slump” caused by the strong US dollar, the travel ban, and anti-Trump sentiment. Some cities are attempting to counter this through marketing campaigns, such as Discover Los Angeles’s [#EveryoneisWelcome campaign](#), but it is unclear whether those marketing programs will have the desired effect.

Other destinations will benefit. In the case of the Trump Slump, Canada and Mexico are major beneficiaries. Canada has seen a 60% increase in tourism from Mexico alone, and the city of Cancun in Mexico is forecast to achieve four times the increase in tourism numbers this year of any of the seven most-visited US cities.<sup>vii</sup> Leaders of emerging markets seem to see the opportunity, with Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, commenting at Davos 2017 that protectionism was akin to “locking oneself in a dark room.”<sup>viii</sup>

It is worth noting that protectionist governments aren’t affecting all destinations. Despite Brexit, VisitBritain is forecasting a 4.5% increase in tourism arrivals in 2018.<sup>ix</sup>

*Revealing new pathways: it seems that tourism to the Middle East is making a comeback. The UNWTO found that the Middle East is the fastest-growing travel region in the world, and ForwardKeys found that flight bookings for travel to the Middle East grew by 10.5% in 2017.<sup>x</sup> Many tourism companies are investing in the region. Hilton Worldwide has seven new Egypt hotels in its pipeline,<sup>xi</sup> and mysterious street artist Banksy opened The Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem.<sup>xii</sup> These trends suggest that new pathways in the Middle East, to places such as Erbil, Damascus, and Baghdad, may open up for adventure travelers in the near future.*

### **Trend 3: Adventure Departures from China Increase**

Euromonitor expects that by 2022, China will be the largest source of outbound tourism demand.<sup>xiii</sup> Countries that are prepared to receive tourists from China will benefit the most from this forecasted growth.

In 2016, Chinese nationals crossed their borders 136.8 million times.<sup>xiv</sup> About half of these trips were to “Greater China,” which includes Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau—but more often than ever, Chinese travelers were venturing farther abroad. In fact, China leads nearly every country in the world in tourism arrivals and tourism spending. According to UNWTO, in 2014, Chinese travelers spent USD\$165 billion on outbound travel, up 27% from the previous year. Yet, according to Hotels.com, only 5% of Chinese nationals have a passport.

Research by the ATTA indicates that Chinese adventure tourists are young and wealthy. They are interested in visiting exotic destinations that deliver exceptional photographic memories for them to share on social media. Some sources suggest that concerns around pollution are another factor driving the demand for nature-based holidays. However, with the exception of some trekking experience, their technical skills are low and safety is a high priority. Chinese travelers are prone to selecting trending destinations, but also readily abandon destinations if safety or politics is a concern.

Consumers in China are becoming more sophisticated, which extends to their travel choices: a growing percentage are no longer content with passive sightseeing. According to a Sabre report, 9% look for an adventure, and 17% seek better understanding of foreign cultures. The survey found that although a majority (74%) are willing to spend time and energy on planning their trip, they need the support of travel providers to determine what is relevant for them.



*Canada is an adventure destination working to attract the Chinese tourist. In 2016, about 600,000 Chinese nationals visited Canada, and Canadian tourism planners hope to double that number by 2021. Canada has opened seven additional visa-processing facilities in China, mainly in second-tier cities, and jointly with China named 2018 the year of China-Canada Tourism, releasing a suite of tools for Canadian businesses to learn more about this new market.*



*China is big, hungry, young, and fast. The adventure industry needs to be prepared for what this means for growth of the sector. We are expanding, not only in numbers, but in aspirations. We want to be part of the global community of travelers, we want to take part in protecting the planet, and we want to contribute to sustainable growth. Consider this as you market your destinations to Chinese travelers. And also, have a mobile strategy.*

—Willde Ng, Founder of 40urs.com

## **Trend 4: Decline in Democracy Increases Risks**

Democracy is in decline, according to the “Freedom in the World 2018” report by Freedom House. Globally, 71 countries suffered declines in political rights and civil liberties, compared with only 35 that registered gains. The report notes that the decline of democracy is typically marked by three things: the right to choose leaders in free and fair elections, freedom of the press, and the rule of law.

Where there is a decline in democracy and instability in freedom and human rights, there are two major effects for adventure tourists:

- Security services act arbitrarily, and judicial systems may not protect a traveler’s rights.
- Bilateral relations between source countries and destination countries can deteriorate and diminish a traveler’s home government’s ability to help them.

This means that the absence of the rule of law can leave travelers particularly vulnerable. If arrested abroad, they may not be given the due process they could expect at home. Furthermore, a breakdown in diplomatic communications between unfriendly nations may limit the ability of diplomats to help their citizens in times of crisis abroad, as illustrated by the tragic case of Otto Warmbier, a young American tourist arrested for stealing a sign in North Korea in 2016.

Destinations and adventure operators should prepare for shocks by ensuring they have protocols in place to deal with emergencies. They should consider the following:

- Having a crisis management plan and communications plan
- Whom to appoint as the company spokesperson to answer questions in times of crisis
- Identifying the person responsible for leading the crisis response in the organization
- Having a system to alert all company employees as well as families affected in a crisis
- Having links to authorities in all countries where they operate.

World Nomads is increasingly concerned about the application of arbitrary rules and laws across the globe. From Missouri to Myanmar, governments and law enforcement officers are ignoring the rule of law, eroding civil rights, and restricting free speech. Travelers may be in breach of these new rules without even knowing it. Travel insurance provides not only financial protection but also a lifeline to anyone who runs foul of these laws via our emergency assistance centers. But travel insurance is not enough on its own. World Nomads urges all travelers to be aware of political developments in the countries they are visiting, stay abreast of travel alerts—either via your government or the one we publish on World Nomads—and seek advice on situations from reliable sources. It is prudent to travel with the knowledge and tools to avoid trouble before it happens to you. Be an informed traveler and you will be a safer traveler. *Arm yourself with a little knowledge and insight into your destination and add a healthy dose of common sense.*



—Phil Sylvester, Travel Safety Expert for World Nomads



SECTION B:

# Technology Trends





## Trend 5: Bots Will Rule Customer Service

Using artificial intelligence, bots will solve customer service problems faster and more efficiently than humans.

A chatbot is a computer program designed to emulate human conversation and chat with people online. Chatbots have evolved to providing immediate but well-crafted, personalized responses and meaningful interactions that engage audiences. This functionality can help with sales, marketing, customer service, and, critically for destinations, partner programs, such as when a destination is seeking to provide support to outbound operators leading trips in their country. Additionally, data can be mined from conversations with clients to inform marketing and product strategy.

In 2018, expect even more adventure tourism businesses to use the many integrations available for chatbots to help manage the increasing requirements of good customer service.

*According to analyst firm Gartner, the use of chatbots will triple through 2019 as enterprises seek to increase customer satisfaction and reduce operating costs.<sup>xv</sup>*

*Tips for using a chatbot:*

- *Research the questions your customers typically ask, and keep on top of those they may ask.*
- *Use a real name and photo to answer questions, and keep it personalized so that it feels less like a bot.*
- *Let customers know there are other ways to contact your company.*
- *Ensure the design works on mobile phones.*

## Trend 6: Virtual Reality Becomes an In-Demand Marketing Tool

In 2018, virtual reality will become an in-demand marketing tool for adventure tourism businesses and destinations keen to showcase natural, cultural, or adventure assets that may be difficult to convey through traditional forms of storytelling.

Phocuswright found that VR experiences are a useful way to introduce travelers to a new destination and help them decide where to travel.

There is proof that VR drives visitation. A study in Wales found that 85% of people who tried a VR experience of a wildlife attraction in the country then wanted to visit it in person.<sup>xvi</sup>

VR technology is increasingly accessible, and headsets such as Oculus Rift are affordable as marketing tools. IHS Technologies estimates that by 2020 the VR market will be worth \$2.6 billion.

### ***Matoke Tours***

*Although major destinations are using VR in their marketing, smaller outfits are as well. Matoke Tours, an inbound operator in East Africa, launched their Virtual Gorilla to much acclaim in 2016. Their website conveys their reasons for doing so:*

*Matoke Tours expects that with the launch of “Virtual Gorilla” a new era is dawning for the travel industry. The VR experience offers many benefits for travelers who are considering Uganda as a destination: This app enables us to convey the intensity and emotion of the travel experience before the journey has even started. Travelers are then better able to decide which excursions they want to book.<sup>xvii</sup>*

Beyond the marketing opportunities, however, virtual and augmented reality experiences could be used to complement and enhance on-the-ground travel with behind-the-scenes “tours” of extinct, damaged, or other unreachable sites. It remains to be seen, however, if travelers will adopt these technological advances as enhancements to existing trips or an alternative to traveling altogether.<sup>xviii</sup>



## Trend 7: Big Data Provides Answers for the Future

In their study on personalization in travel, Accenture Interactive found that 100% of travel brands surveyed had a Web analytics tool and 90% had technology that allowed them to deliver a personalized content experience. However, only 50% of these companies were using the data from those technologies to improve the consumer experience.<sup>xix</sup> In 2018, adventure tourism companies will need to use the data and software they have to remain competitive as travel companies deliver increasingly tailored and personalized experiences to their customers.

*Big data* is a buzzword that refers to large data sets that when analyzed effectively can lead to businesses identifying new insights, trends, opportunities, and risks. *Big data* can refer to data collected through tourism satellite accounts, foreign travel advisories, TripAdvisor reviews, and even the activity trackers worn by tourists. Although most adventure operators won't have access to big data, DMOs and governments will, and there are untapped opportunities for them to use this data and the analysis of it to support their stakeholders.

Although there is a big demand for big data, it could be accused of making adventure travel less adventurous. Adventure tourism thrives on its ability to provide delightful, engaging, and diverse activities to travelers. With the data available to tourists in the planning process, there is little room for surprise in the destination. Similarly, on the supply side, tourism developers or operators have more knowledge than ever before when developing new products and marketing strategies, and making price adjustments. Adventure travel companies will want to balance how they use this information to deliver bespoke experiences with creativity and personalization that still deliver some unexpected surprises. Furthermore, big data facilitates a level of personalization and in-depth understanding of target markets that travelers may perceive as an invasion of privacy.

In 2018, expect both destinations and operators to have increased access to large data sets via their online tracking tools and big data via destinations that can help them solve problems, such as how to:

- understand tourism flows,
  - create new products, and
- understand tourism segments and buying preferences.

The challenge for businesses and destinations in 2018 will be to apply the insights of big data analysis with creative strategic thinking to support ongoing innovation.

*Yes, adventure operators are able to use big data to inform marketing and product strategies. Operators and destinations may consider investing in “reputation management.” This involves hiring a digital marketing firm to “listen in” on customer sentiment about a brand, company, or destination and weigh the positive and negative, analyze the text, and build a dashboard for management. These initiatives can be linked to CRM systems and/or internal customer surveys. Digital marketing companies can also identify trends, such as keywords used in searches for destinations, which then inform SEO strategies.*



*A digital marketing company might also be able to help in scraping the Web for new product scanning or competitive scanning. This can be important if the competition is in a different country or changes its offering frequently. So rather than going to check on the competition on a regular basis, the operator can delegate that task to an algorithm and simply check a dashboard once a month!*

—Philippe Duverger, Associate Professor and Director of the Master of Science in Marketing Intelligence at Towson University

## **Trend 8: Blockchain Technology May Fuel Disintermediation in Adventure Travel**

In 2018, travel companies will experiment with blockchain technology with the hopes of speeding up disintermediation. Blockchain is the technology behind cryptocurrency. Simply put, blockchain is a digital ledger, in which transactions made in cryptocurrency are recorded. Blockchains may be public or private. As explained in the IBM Blockchain blog, “a public blockchain network is completely open and anyone can join and participate. Bitcoin is one of the largest public blockchain networks in production today . . . A private blockchain network requires an invitation and must be validated by either the network starter or by a set of rules

put in place by the network starter.”<sup>xx</sup> A blockchain is said to be immutable, meaning it can never be changed. It is reliable because it is distributed across millions of computers.

In the travel industry, some people are looking at blockchain as a means to disintermediation, a way that travelers and businesses will be able to circumvent commission rates and layers of intermediaries between service providers and travelers.

As explained by Phocuswright analyst Douglas Quinby in his article on the Phocuswright website,<sup>xxi</sup> the idea is that the blockchain will enable sellers (hotels, airlines, and tour operators) and buyers (travelers) to execute contracts (bookings) without the need for a “trusted” third party. “Through the blockchain, he says, “a buyer can execute a payment or contract without the need of a trusted intermediary such as a bank, credit card, clearinghouse, or even an OTA, and thus without the fees typically charged by those gatekeepers.”

Winding Tree, a B2B marketplace, is one of the first platforms using blockchain in the travel industry:

*Winding Tree is building a decentralized alternative to the current concentrated travel distribution landscape, where anyone can access inventory directly from the suppliers. The travel industry is particularly suitable for a decentralized marketplace, because the suppliers are experts in what the blockchain cannot provide: customer service and arbitration.*

Major travel companies, such as Tui, have already begun to build private blockchains, and Winding Tree has brought on major partners such as Lufthansa and Swiss.

Although the blockchain holds promise for disintermediation, Quinby argues that trust is not the main reason people book through intermediaries. He suggests that a no less important reason people seek out online intermediaries is the support they offer in the discovery process. He notes, “Travelers choose websites for product choice, ease of use, efficiency, and the best price. All travel startups—whether on blockchain or not—should understand the true customer problem that needs solving before they prognosticate on displacing OTAs. Any blockchain-based startup will still have to acquire and convert customers. In online travel, that is neither easy nor inexpensive.”



SECTION C:

# Travel Experience Trends



## Trend 9: Solo Travel on the Rise

This year, more adventure travelers will opt to travel on their own. In fact, according to MMGY Global, about one in four American travelers say they will travel solo in 2018.<sup>xxii</sup>

Many companies report seeing an increase in the number of solo travelers and are creating itineraries specifically for this market. Abercrombie & Kent reported a 15% increase in solo travelers in 2016 compared with 2015. After seeing a 40% increase in solo passengers on group trips over the past five years, Intrepid Travel launched their first solo-only tour range.

Solo travelers are not necessarily single individuals; they may also be people whose partners don't share their interests or don't have time to join the vacation.

The increase in this type of travel is caused by the wider availability of resources for this market such as booking platforms and specialized itineraries, as well as media coverage about solo travel. SoloTravelerWorld.com has even launched the solo traveler awards for companies that excel in servicing this growing market.

Adventure travel companies interested in attracting solo travelers will need to

- consider lowering or eliminating the single supplement;
- create special groupings for solo adventure travelers;
- focus on the special interests of solo travelers; and
- understand why people travel alone and adapt marketing and products to those needs.





*The solo travel trend has been on the rise for several years. But what's interesting now is the noticeable shift in the mind-set of these solo travelers.*

*Solo travelers are recognizing the value they hold and their place as a defined market group, which is growing. Because of that they are starting to make demands, and the industry will need to decide how to work with those demands, such as whether to continue charging single supplements. Even smaller companies such as **Adventure Canada** have responded by waiving single supplement charges for single travelers because they saw how much of their overall business came from solo travelers.*

*As this kind of demand continues, tour operators and experience providers will need to make decisions about how they will work with this market. Will they change policies to attract more, or risk losing the market share because they can't adapt? What does adaptation look like? How can an industry based on double occupancy cope? Will hotels and ships be built with smaller rooms and smaller cabins to suit the trend?*

—Jillian Dickens, Director at Bannikin Travel & Tourism

*The traveling population is getting older. Visa estimates that by 2025, travelers over 65 will represent one in every eighth international departure.<sup>xxiii</sup> The writer AA Gill put it this way when talking about baby boomers:*

*“We got to go around the globe relatively easily, cheaply and safely. Postwar children are the best and most widely traveled generation that has yet lived. We were given the world when it was varied, various and mostly welcoming.”<sup>xxiv</sup>*

*This generation will continue to travel into their retirement. They are adventurous, wealthy, and focused on adventure combined with comfort.*

## Trend 10: Being Local as the Ultimate Adventure

As adventure travelers become more experienced, they are increasingly seeking to experience destinations as temporary locals. In 2018, more destinations will create proactive strategies to facilitate this, which will mean educating residents and providers, as well as partnering with technology platforms that make these experiences accessible.

Visit Copenhagen has launched a new strategy called LocalHood.<sup>xxv</sup> The strategy targets the traveler who seeks to be a “temporary local,” that is, one who searches for “a personal connection to an instantly shared experience based on interest, relations and authenticity.”

Many technology platforms exist to facilitate these personal connections. Some are global in scope, such as Airbnb experiences or EatWith.com, and some are localized, such as Thailand’s HiveSters.com.

The concept of Localhood may even offer a solution to overtourism (see “Destination Trend 18”) as it seeks to create a framework for locals and visitors to interact amicably around shared experiences.



*At HiveSters, we offer real Thai experiences. There is no setup. For example, you can learn how to cook Pad Thai street-food style with a street-food mama. The way she teaches is exactly how she cooks: real Thai and authentic taste. The experience is very different from when you go to cooking school. One of the main trends that has had an impact on our growth is the local experience trend, where people are looking to interact and do activities with local people. They want to get to know the country they are visiting and immerse themselves in the local way of living.*

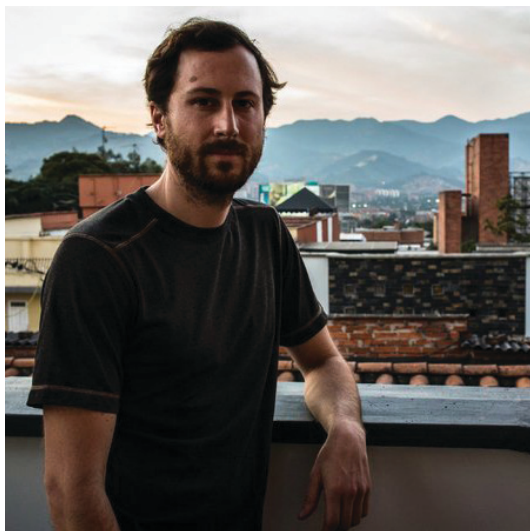
—Achiraya Thamparipattra, CEO at HiveSters

## Trend 11: “Slow Travel” in Increasingly Adventurous Destinations

The popularity of “slow travel,” when visitors stay for extended periods of time in a destination, will increase, fueled by companies such as Unsettled and Remote Year.

A new type of tour operator has emerged in the last five years, one that may be better categorized as a destination facilitator. These companies facilitate “slow travel” or the ability to stay in a destination for extended periods of time (typically around one month). The clients of these companies typically have the flexibility to work remotely, and want to explore a new destination. The companies provide accommodation, common work space, and, in the case of Unsettled, structured networking and growth sessions to ensure that participants get the most out of their experience.

Destinations know the value of an extended length of stay. As this market is set to grow, both adventure operators and adventure destinations should learn how to attract and work with this market.



Michael Youngblood from Unsettled gives his perspective on the slow tourism trend:

*Unsettled is growing by leaps and bounds in the type and number of experiences we will offer in 2018. We will run about three times the amount of experiences in 2018 over what we did in 2017. We’ve found three core trends are driving the popularity of our types of trips.*

*First, the number of people who work remotely is growing. It’s no longer a progressive perk that a few startups offer, but it’s become a strategy ingrained across many industries that embrace technology and realize they can attract better*

*talent by casting a global net. I’m not referring to the so-called “digital nomads” either. Although “digital nomads” are certainly a trend, it’s 1% of the market of people who can work remotely. Digital nomads make a full-time lifestyle out of it. Imagine how many more people can work and live from a single location for one month or two weeks at a time.*

*Second, there's an overlooked group of middle-aged professionals who are traveling for different reasons today. They're traveling during transitional periods, when they are between jobs, contracts, or careers. The average career today, in the United States, lasts four years before the worker changes career fields entirely. These professionals are likely to travel and to travel for different reasons. They're looking for growth and to expand their networks, and they're on the hunt for opportunities—things that would traditionally be done in the city where they plan to search for a new job.*

*Third, in the United States alone, 10,000 people retire every day, and they are healthier, wealthier, and younger than any retiree generation in history. Most people assume that Unsettled attracts 25–30-year-olds, but our average age is 10–15 years older than that. I think that one of the largest overlooked trends is the number of 50–60-year-olds who are embracing slower, more adventurous international travel. This group no longer wants traditional “tour travel.” They are looking to feel young, interact with people of all ages, and challenge themselves and think about what they want out of this next stage of life.*

*I often think of the rise of slow travel as if it was the cruise industry in the 1960s. It has just begun, but there's a billion-dollar industry on the horizon. The ports of call are no longer traditional sun-and-sand destinations, but digital hot spots. Destinations can actively design for and attract this market by investing in and marketing three things: (1) digital infrastructure, (2) lifestyle opportunities on a day-to-day basis, (3) the makeup of the types of people guests will meet when they visit your destination.*

## **Trend 12: Adventure Travelers Seek Wellness and Mental Health Benefits in Their Itineraries**

Adventure travelers are increasingly seeking experiences that allow them to unplug, focus inward, and tap into the mental health benefits of adventure travel.

People are increasingly using travel experiences as an opportunity to regain a sense of control among the chaos they encounter in their everyday lives. In fact, the ATTA's 2017 research with Dr. Paige Viren and *Outside* magazine showed that physical and mental health are key motivations for travelers when they seek out adventure travel. “We're seeing more trips offered as restoration, wellness, recovery, and digital detox, which seek to offset the intensity of modern life,” Dr. Milena Nikolova of the American University in Bulgaria commented.

The trend is for adventure itineraries to include an element of wellness, but not as the primary motivation of the trip. In fact, the Global Wellness Institute found that only 7% of all leisure

travel consisted of primarily wellness trips (when the main goal was visiting an ashram or a yoga retreat, for example).<sup>xxvi</sup>

Travel brands have recognized that the act of traveling is stressful as well. To combat this, proactive companies are beginning to support customers with wellness services. For example, Air France partnered with the Mind mobile app in June 2017, allowing guests to take advantage of free meditation sessions while flying. Additionally, hotel brand Swissotel recently launched a program encouraging guests to commit to wellness and healthful habits even when they are on the road. This trend has generated powerful marketing campaigns, too. Estonia is one destination that has tapped into this trend with their Stress Buster Campaign. The campaign deployed face-recognition technology in busy cities to identify stressed people and then offer them a trip to Estonia to relieve their stress. The campaign highlighted all the activities tourists could do in Estonia to minimize their stress, such as bird-watching, canoeing, and visiting national parks.



<https://www.visitestonia.com/en/stressbuster>

Adventure travel companies and destinations can tap into this trend by ensuring their marketing speaks to this core motivation of adventure travelers.



SECTION D:

# Product Trends



## Trend 13: Transformative Experiences Become a Focus of Experience Design

A deepening understanding of the motivations for adventure travelers supported by research is helping to bring the science of experience design more intentionally to adventure travel product development. Milena Nikolova, ATTA AdventureEDU director, notes, “Experience design involves knowledge about the importance not only of different elements in an itinerary, but also the sequencing of activities, the time spent in different activities, balancing effort with the sense of achievement, and the emotions surrounding challenge.”

Recent research by ATTA, East Carolina University, and *Outside* magazine found that adventure travelers crave transformative experiences. In fact, rather than accepting transformation as a happy by-product of their quest for fun and thrills, adventure travelers are actively motivated by this desire for personal growth and change. This finding, combined with the widespread appreciation of the benefits of transformational travel, is encouraging more tour operators to focus more intently on the way elements of a trip come together to deliver on the motivating factors of personal growth, learning, and ultimately transformation.

Taking this goal of delivering their guests’ desires for personal growth and transformation to a dramatic level is a new company formed by industry veterans Explorer X. Explorer X cofounder Jake Hauptert says, “We found that when travelers are not privy to the destination until they arrive at the airport, the suspense draws out the dormant explorer inside of them, forcing them to set intentions, be mindful, and be prepared for everything. Our hope is that by releasing the expectations of place, we’re able to inspire them to take the journey within, harken back to the roots of travel, slow it down, open it up for unplanned exploration so they can recalibrate their inner compass.”

Not only is the tours and activities sector focusing more on experience design, but other aspects of the travel supply chain are as well. Airports are one area seeking to provide meaningful experiences, instead of simply being transit points. Casey Hanisko, president of ATTA, notes, “We see airports and other transportation providers thinking more carefully about their role in the overall traveler experience. This includes more trees, natural spaces, spas,

running tracks, and even yoga rooms. These soft infrastructure additions mean that tour operators can include the experiences as a specific component of their itinerary, instead of just a requirement of travel.”

Jennine Cohen, Geographic Expeditions’ managing director for the Americas, observes, “When it comes to luxury travelers who are looking for transformational experience, exclusive access is often more important than the accommodations themselves. For these kinds of trips, we’re weaving together remote destinations that are difficult to get to on one’s own by leveraging private jets and/or boat charters.

*“Far from daily distractions, technology, obligations, and worries about what’s next on their trip, our travelers are able to slow down, become present, and fully drop into the experience. They often experience a deep sense of connection with the people, landscape, wildlife, and ultimately themselves. The experience has the power to open their hearts and minds and allows for the possibility of a shift in perspective along with a sense of renewal.”*

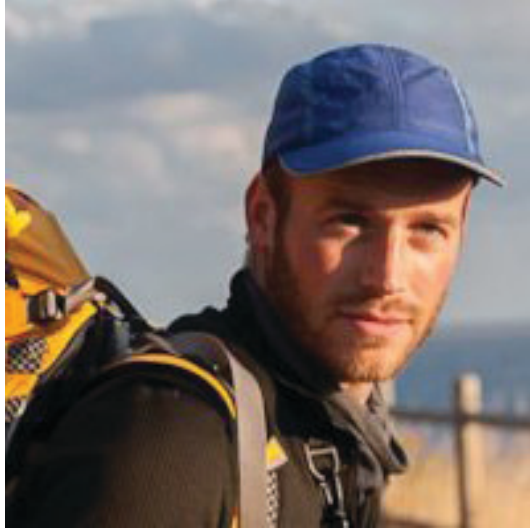
The Transformational Travel Collaborative has even created a suite of tools, including the TTC Guiding Principles and a *Hero’s Guidebook*, to facilitate the inclusion of transformative experiences into an itinerary. Several operators have adopted innovative ways to ensure their clients experience a transformation on tours.

## **Trend 14: Increase in Trail Tourism**

From Jordan to Japan, destinations are actively marketing trails to keep tourists in the destination longer, and tourists are happy to stay.

Trail tourism has many benefits to destinations: it increases the length of stay of low-impact tourists, it can promote repeat visitation by tourists who do one section of a trail at a time, and it drives tourism dollars to local businesses.

Investing in trails is typically easy for cities, because they are features that greatly appeal to local residents as well as to tourists. According to the National Association of Homebuilders, living near a walking or biking trail is one of the top three most attractive feature to home buyers.<sup>xxvii</sup>



*Destinations can support trail tourism by investing in trail infrastructure and marketing outdoor experiences. Cultivate use of existing trails with both local and international markets. Make sure good practical travel resources are available in English and target market-segment languages. Consider bikepacking as a new segment to invest in beyond the traditional hikers to extend into new markets.*

— David Landis, Director of Village to Village Press

For tourists, a trail holiday allows them to spend a lot of time practicing a favorite sport, whether walking, biking, or cross-country skiing. There is a sense of accomplishment in completing a trail, which aligns with the motivations around mental well-being that have been discussed earlier in this report. Finally, adventure tourists seek local, authentic experiences that trail tourism typically delivers.

In 2018, expect an increase in trail products being offered by adventure operators, such as self-guided itineraries, luggage transfer services, and “passports to the trail” that encourage repeat visitation for a tourists to complete a long trail, like the Great Himalaya Trail or the Camino de Santiago, in several repeat visits.





*Tourists and locals are looking for deeper experiences, ones that transform them, shift their perspectives, and offer them a new kind of adventure. The Jordan Trail appeals to the dreamers, the wild ones, the adventurers who are keen to get to know the places they visit on a level like no other tourist. They are the modern-day explorers. The Jordan Trail attracts a new market for the country, requires minimal investment, and most importantly is a ripe opportunity for communities that have never engaged in the industry to get involved and benefit economically and socially.*

—Muna Haddad, Managing Director of Baraka Destinations and Chairperson of Jordan Trail

## **Trend 15: Increase in Products for Female Adventure Travelers**

The year 2018 will see an increased interest in catering to female travelers who seek to bond with other women during their adventures.

Women, like solo travelers referenced in Trend 9, are not necessarily single, but simply seek like-minded female companions with whom to share their adventurous journeys.

*REI has launched Outessa, a series of outdoor events designed for women. The promise of Outessa is that “you’ll discover something amazing—an outdoor skill, new friends, a fun challenge, and in the end, a greater appreciation of yourself.”*

According to the *Huffington Post*, there has been a 230% increase in the number of women-only travel companies in the past six years.<sup>xxviii</sup> Some adventure operators cater exclusively to females, such as AdventureWomen, whereas others simply offer specific itineraries that are bookable only by women, such as Austin Adventures. Women are particularly interested in supporting other women, which sees companies hiring female guides and sourcing from

female-owned suppliers. Itineraries tend to cater to the women’s interest of collecting cultural capital on their trips by including community-based tourism experiences, connections with local female artisans, and so on.



*Over the last few years, we’ve seen a big trend in everyday women taking on the world of adventure by storm. There’s a big push toward empowering women all over the media these days, but especially in the adventure travel circuit via social media. It is inspiring to see women challenging the typical stereotypes of girlfriend getaways (e.g., weekend at the spa) by replacing the traditional concept of women’s travel with the new idea of adventurous women exploring the world alongside other empowering women. We think there are many women who are looking for the opportunity to travel but who might not feel comfortable in the “normal” mixed-group setting or going about it on their own. A women-only tour provides not just safety in numbers but also a support network when it comes to trying new things, whether that*

*involves summiting Angel’s Landing in Zion National Park or traveling abroad for the first time. Another big motivator is the ability to make connections to other women with similar interests and bonding over the course of a week when a group overcomes challenges together. There’s nothing more empowering and inspiring than a group of women “getting after it” and proving they can do anything the boys can do when it comes to adventure, minus the macho factor!*

—Kasey Austin Morrissey, Vice President of Operations, Austin Adventures

## **Trend 16: Winter Products**

Destinations with winter offerings are seeing large increases in arrivals in the colder months—and not just for skiing.

According to Iceland Statistics, one-third of Iceland’s tourists visited during the winter months<sup>xxix</sup> (from January to April). Winter is the peak season for many of Greenland’s regional destinations, and the Yukon, in Canada, found that the largest contingent of tourists all year in 2016 were there to see the aurora borealis.

From AfriSki in Lesotho to the vast winter complex of Kakslauttanen in Finland, destinations are increasingly investing in infrastructure to accommodate winter tourists. Travelers are seeking out winter festivals (such as the Harbin Ice Festival, which received more than a million tourists in 2016), the opportunity to experience the holidays in another country, and what is broadly categorized as “polar activities,” such as watching the northern lights, viewing arctic wildlife, and participating in outdoor snow activities.

The main source of winter tourists are the United Kingdom, the United States, and China. In fact, although no Chinese national was recorded traveling to Antarctica in 2007, one decade later, they represent the second-largest group of visitors to the destination, according to the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.<sup>xxx</sup>

The popular travel blog *Mafengwo* found that winter travel, both at home and abroad, is a top pick for tourists during Chinese New Year 2018. Internationally, Chinese tourists are seeking out winter scenery, aurora borealis viewing, polar bear viewing, and glaciers. Popular destinations include Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway.<sup>xxxi</sup>

Smoothing out the numbers of tourists over the year can help alleviate overcrowding at destinations (see Destination Trend 18: “Overtourism”) and create year-round jobs for the tourism workforce.

*According to a survey of US adult travelers conducted by the Australian airline Qantas, 79% of Americans would consider taking an international trip during winter. A slight majority of those, 53%, would not necessarily be looking for a change of weather.<sup>xxxii</sup>*

*We are proactively investing in infrastructure for tourism during the winter season. Demand for winter continues to grow from Asia as well as Australia, with more countries expressing interest in this part of the year. It is a season for our region that represents a key element of Canada. The season incorporates the northern lights and a multitude of winter activities not found in many cities, such as ice fishing and snowshoeing. Winter events and festivals offer experiences that visitors will maybe experience but once in their lives! We are seeing stronger product offerings that now necessitate tourism investment into our region.*



—Frank Creasey, CEO Fort McMurray [Canada] Tourism

## **Trend 17: Pre-Fab Pop-Ups Provide a Little Luxury in Remote Places**

The tiny-home trend has come to tourism. A suite of companies selling or leasing prefabricated luxury cabins are looking to break into the tourism space by offering pop-up solutions to landowners hoping to host tourists.

In its introductory video, Poshtel, a Danish startup, asks, “What if buildings could simply pop up where you needed them? What if a city was never more than a month away from solving a housing crisis? What if a vacant lot could be turned into a designer hotel overnight? What if you could suddenly live where no one has lived before?”

Their product is a shipping container refurbished to be a luxury hotel room. Poshtel works with landowners who have space to host a pop-up hotel room, and then leases the rooms over Airbnb.

Poshtel, OodHouse, and LiveKlein are three of a handful of companies looking to provide ready-made solutions to landowners who want to host guests in the sharing economy. However, if the companies are hoping to have their pop-ups mainly in remote locations, they



will have to solve the transportation issue. Still, the demand from tourists for remote, luxury (dare we say it) Instagrammable experiences is there, and this is a trend to watch.

The startups might provide solutions to destinations looking to diversify the spread of tourism to remote national parks and, similar to the way Airbnb supports homeowners in earning extra revenue, support landowners in doing the same.



*As travelers increasingly seek authenticity, travel trends desecrate local ecosystems and cultures in their wake. Overdevelopment, especially hotel chains, have eradicated the very reason people want to travel to these places, and today, hotels fail to serve the modern traveler—with their overly generic and standardized experience.*

*Poshtel PopUp is a chain of designer hotel suites available for rental. Anyone with a taste for adventure can pop up somewhere new in a luxurious, sustainable, and authentic space. Poshtel pop-ups are made from upcycled shipping containers and use the latest ecological and sustainable architectural design from Scandinavia, and our state-of-the-art off-grid technology will allow us to operate anywhere. This utility will allow*

*us to be off-grid dependent, giving us an ability to pop up anywhere, and leave without a trace.*

*For tourism boards and operators, we give a platform and accessibility for a new generation of travelers who are seeking authenticity, and sustainability. We will be in places where no hotels can go, given our off-grid technology.*

—O Koo, Cofounder, Poshtel



SECTION E:

# Destination Trends





## Trend 18: Adventure Destinations Need to Prepare to Avoid the Problems of Overtourism

The year 2017 saw an increase in protests by residents of highly touristic cities, such as Venice and Barcelona, and *overtourism* was the catchall term given to encapsulate the negative effects of overcrowding such as rising rents, declining livability, threats to culture and nature, and alienated local residents. In 2018, adventure destinations, often located in fragile environments and with less built infrastructure, need to pay attention to the dialogue around preventing and managing overtourism, because the destruction of the world's most pristine and special places is irreversible.

Adventure destinations may receive comparatively few tourists (consider the Galapagos' 218,000 tourists<sup>xxxiii</sup> to Barcelona's nearly 34 million<sup>xxxiv</sup>), but numbers are deceiving. Adventure destinations are more likely to be home to vulnerable populations, fragile ecosystems, and endangered wildlife, and require specific, more stringent safeguards to protect the special quality of the place.

Organizations responsible for adventure destinations must proactively consider the level of risk of overtourism. For many adventure destinations, growth is quick and exponential. (The number of tourists in Iceland has tripled in the last six years, now totaling five times their local population.<sup>xxxv</sup>)

McKinsey, in a report titled "*Coping with Success*," notes that when it comes to the effects of overtourism, prevention is easier than recovery.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Although the solutions offered for overcrowded cities are not perfect for adventure destinations, they can serve as guidance.

McKinsey recommends four best practices to prevent overcrowding:

1. **Build a comprehensive fact-base and update it regularly:** collecting accurate statistics is often a challenge for adventure destinations, but good data is worth its weight in gold. Not only can it be used by nearly any tourism stakeholder from marketers to planners, but it can help identify trends before they cause negative effects. McKinsey specifically

recommends measuring residents' attitude toward tourists, such as the Mood of the Nation survey in New Zealand.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

*In an effort to combat overcrowding at key attractions in Amsterdam, tourism planners are using data to encourage the geographic spread of tourists across the city. The Amsterdam City Card is a chip-enabled card that provides access to public transportation and key attractions. It also allows the city to track the movements of tourists and then feed that information back by informing tourists of wait times or identifying less congested attractions.*

2. **Conduct long-term planning to encourage sustainable growth:** The Adventure Travel Development Index provides a useful framework for adventure destinations seeking to build sustainable adventure markets. It specifically identifies a range of interdependent factors that contribute to the enabling environment for successful adventure tourism. Adventure destinations must also reexamine how they define success—considering how to capture indicators such as certain lengths of stay and spread of tourists. Carrying-capacity numbers are most likely required to preserve a positive tourism experience.

*In Jamaica, the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment launched a long-term plan titled “National Community Tourism Policy and Strategy” to move away from being a sun-and-sand destination and toward a more sustainable, community-based tourism destination.*

*In Barcelona, the city has launched El Plan Especial Urbanístico de Alojamiento Turístico (The Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodations) to improve the quality of life of the residents in Barcelona and to safeguard what they call the fundamental rights of residents.<sup>xxxviii</sup>*

3. **Involve all sections of society:** The development referenced above requires collaboration across government ministries, with the private sector and industry associations, both at the global level (like ATTA) and regionally (like guide associations).
4. **Find new sources of funding:** Investment is required to ensure the correct protections are in place. McKinsey recommends looking at innovative models of funding, i.e., beyond the traditional bed night taxes, to fund these investments.





*“This has become a very relevant issue in certain destinations in the fjords. While we do still market our iconic destinations, our marketing only promotes alternative times to visit, trying to encourage tourists to come outside of the high season. When it comes to high-season marketing, we only present new or lesser-known destinations, trying to spread traffic throughout the region and decrease high-season pressure on our most popular icons.”<sup>xxxix</sup>*

—Kristian B. Jorgensen, CEO of Fjord Norway (to Norie Quintos in an article on *Adventure Travel News*)

*Airbnb has a new tool designed to provide an outlet for frustrated neighbors of Airbnb hosts. The tool allows neighbors to complain about certain apartments or homes that may be attracting rowdy guests.*

## Airbnb and your neighborhood

If you think your neighbor is an Airbnb host and you have a complaint, we want to know.

- ✓ Select an issue
  - Noise, party, or disturbance
  - Common spaces (parking, trash, etc.)
  - General concerns with my neighbor hosting
  - Personal safety or criminal activity

## Trend 19: Undertourism an Unexpected Concern

It seems that it is possible for one country to suffer from overtourism and undertourism at the same time—just in different locations. *Undertourism* refers to undervisited destinations, especially those that have built infrastructure and perhaps raised expectations among local residents for tourists.

In 2018, as tourism grows and popular destinations combat overtourism, more destinations looking to benefit from increased numbers may suffer from undertourism, whether caused by a sudden unforeseeable shock or simply low numbers resulting from low competitiveness.

In a piece for *Place Brand Observer*, Gunter Soydanbay identifies archaeological sites as places that typically receive low numbers of tourists, and ironically need the tourism visitation to support preservation work.<sup>xi</sup> Other countries or cities develop intricate tourism marketing plans but still fail to attract tourists, because of their lack of competitiveness, their perceived safety and security, accessibility, or other factors that keep only the most intrepid travelers from visiting.

Destinations that suffer from undertourism may consider building their understanding of the adventure tourist, who is more likely to visit hard-to-get-to places that may not have advanced tourism infrastructure. To combat undertourism, Soydanbay suggests offering once-in-a-lifetime experiences (such as balloon rides), improving storytelling to make the place relevant to the visitor, or using technology such as augmented reality to create better experiences.

*Iceland and Colombia are two of the high-profile destinations that successfully overcame the challenge of undertourism. The number of visitors to Iceland tripled since 2010 when the country's profile dipped due to the financial crisis and volcanic eruption. In Colombia's case, foreign tourism has grown more than 250% since 2006. Behind the successes of both places lies a similar systematic approach. The former established Íslandsstofa, whereas the latter put PROCOLOMBIA in charge of promoting the country. By defining their strategic priorities, by repeating the same key messages over and over again, by adopting story-based communication, and by riding the wave of national stability, both countries managed to experience a boom in tourism.*



—Günter Soydanbay, Brand Strategist at Soydanbay Consulting

## **Trend 20: Holistic Approaches to Tourism Development**

In 2018, adventure tourism policy makers will be forced to adopt integrated and holistic development plans that commit to sustainable tourism development.

The Sustainable Tourism Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit identifies a lack of integration of tourism policy between national, local, and regional levels as a threat to sustainable tourism development. In addition, it also finds a “vacuum at the national level,” which contributed further to the fragmentation of policy creation and implementation.

Good long-term planning is identified in the McKinsey report on overtourism as a key way to prevent overtourism. The McKinsey researchers also note that destinations may benefit most from a shorter-term plan—that is, two to three years, versus ten years—and realistic timelines that allow destinations to be agile and adjust as conditions change over time.<sup>xii</sup>

Adventure destinations will need to begin to consider policies such as carrying capacities, quotas, and better public transportation. In addition, robust and transparent monitoring and evaluation programs need to be put into place. The adventure industry should seek to support

these initiatives wherever possible, to facilitate the collection of data to support the case for further adventure market development instead of more harmful forms of mass tourism.

As noted in the Adventure Tourism Development Index, successful adventure tourism development depends on a coordinated effort between industry, government, local communities, and project supporters. These actors will need to take a development approach uniquely tailored to the local political, economic, social, and environmental landscape.<sup>xlii</sup>

*Hawaii's 2016 Tourism Strategic Plan focused on a holistic vision of development and tourism marketing, with significant investments to support Hawaiian culture, protecting natural resources, and promoting sustainable initiatives.*



*The International Galapagos Tour Operators Association (IGTOA) plays an important role in working to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of tourism in the Galapagos in a variety of ways. First off, we provide financial support to the people and organizations working on the front lines of conservation through our Galapagos Traveler Conservation Fund. To date, we've provided over \$1 million in funding. One of the biggest challenges facing the archipelago today is inadequate biosecurity. The more people come to visit, the greater the likelihood that new, harmful invasive species will arrive. We have helped to fund several important new biosecurity initiatives in recent years, including the procurement and training of a new K-9 biosecurity unit that will help*

*detect potentially harmful contraband as it enters the islands.*

*We are also very involved in professional standards development and training for Galapagos guides. In conjunction with the Galapagos National Park Directorate and WWF-Ecuador, IGTOA sponsored and organized the first-ever third-party guiding certification program in Galapagos history. One of the challenges facing the islands as tourism becomes more popular there is ensuring that the quality of visitor experience doesn't suffer. Through the course, Galapagos guides not only learn world-class guiding skills, but gain the skills they need to become true ambassadors for Galapagos conservation.*

—Matt Kareus, Executive Director, IGTOA



## CONCLUSION

At the macro level, for both better and worse, global tourism and the adventure travel segment within it continues to grow. Adventure travel is rapidly becoming mainstream, with an increasing number of travelers seeking the deeper experience that adventure companies have been refining for decades. As enthusiasm builds for adventure market development from governments, destination managers, and travelers, significant opportunities for financial growth are available to adventure businesses long accustomed to serving a fringe audience. The growth brings with it a host of benefits and important challenges as pressure on communities and natural resources will also increase.

At the tactical level, adventure companies find themselves coping with a diversity of shifts brought about by greater intentionality on the part of travelers motivated to achieve some personal growth along with new populations of travelers, and of course technology. Predicting precisely how all these innovations and dynamics will affect adventure company operations is a challenge. One way of gauging how some of the more disruptive innovations in personalization, virtual reality, and blockchain, for example, may affect adventure travel may be to observe how they take hold in the business travel segment. Given that the requirements of business travel are structure and predictability, the segment can be viewed as something of a future predictor for the adventure segment.

Finally, cutting through the newsy clutter, a simple guideline might be to simply remain focused on the core value adventure delivers. For both new and experienced adventure companies the guidance applies: maintain focus on delivering the experiences with heart, which truly connect travelers to nature and people in the destinations they visit.

## ABOUT ATTA

Established in 1990, the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) serves over 1,000 members in 100 countries worldwide. Members predominantly include tour operators, tourism boards, specialty agents and accommodations with a vested interest in the sustainable development of adventure tourism. The ATTA delivers solutions and connections that propel members towards their business goals and the industry toward a responsible and profitable future. Through its regional AdventureConnect and AdventureNEXT events and annual Adventure Travel World Summit and AdventureELEVATE trade conference, the ATTA excels in professional learning, networking and partnering services. With expertise in research, education, adventure travel industry news and promotion, members of the ATTA receive competitive opportunities that help establish them as leaders in adventure tourism.

## ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

The ATTA strives to produce regular reports that take the pulse of the industry through our membership as well as the global travel industry. In addition, consumer research studies lend insight into the fast paced and changing world of travel and travelers' perceptions of it. At [adventuretravel.biz](http://adventuretravel.biz), our Research Reports can be located that dive deeply into the motivations of adventure travelers, the size of the industry, the landscape and health of the industry at large, as well as other targeted reports on subjects ranging from Travel Agents to adventure travel in specific destinations.



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## THE ATTA'S WEB PROPERTIES



**ADVENTURE TRAVEL**  
TRADE ASSOCIATION

The ATTA's homepage online at  
[www.adventuretravel.biz](http://www.adventuretravel.biz)



**ADVENTURE**  
Travel News

The adventure travel industry's  
source of trade news online at  
[www.adventuretravelnews.com](http://www.adventuretravelnews.com)



**ADVENTURE**  
.TRAVEL

The traveler's guide to finding  
adventure at  
[www.adventure.travel](http://www.adventure.travel)



**ADVENTURE**  
HUB

The HUB is ATTA's Online Members  
Community at  
<http://members.adventuretravel.biz>

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