

How online payments are making it easier than ever to visit SA

According to the Minister of Tourism, Patricia De Lille, more than 5.8 million people visited South Africa last year, and more are expected in the coming years. Travel has rebounded strongly from the pandemic, and is expected to continue growing at an annual rate of 7.6%.

One of the factors driving this growth is South Africa's weak currency, which makes it an attractive destination for travellers from many countries in the global north. Another factor is the ease of online payments. Online payments have made it easier and more convenient for travellers to book their flights, hotels, and other travel arrangements. This has instilled newfound confidence in travellers, and has encouraged them to visit South Africa.



Source: DCStudio via [Freepik](#)

Michael Puffett, senior business development manager at Profitroom Africa says: "The beauty of online payments is the fact that it's not just about convenience – it's about safety too. Travellers can now make themselves less susceptible to theft and fraud. Furthermore, by offering travellers multiple payment options – from credit cards to digital wallets – hotels can also amplify their booking potential. So, it is a win-win for everyone."

Lee-Anne Singer, chairperson of the Federated Hotels Association of South Africa (Fedhasa) in the Cape says: "It is encouraging to see local and international travel improve so much. Visitors this year spent more than R25bn and it looks like that number will only continue to increase. Having a safe and convenient digital payments infrastructure is a key part of that growth."

Safe, secure, convenient

One of the primary reasons for the popularity of online payments in the South African travel landscape is the stringent security measures employed by travel websites. Encryption technologies, reinforced by multi-layered security protocols, are deployed to safeguard users' sensitive financial information. This ensures that travellers can confidently complete transactions without the nagging worry of data breaches or fraudulent activities.

Minister's optimism sparks hope for sector growth and expansion

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Profitroom, for example, recently teamed up with Callpay to enhance the safety, security, and convenience of online payments for travellers. The collaboration plans to integrate scheduled token payments on selected payment gateways - a token that will allow travellers to schedule payments on a specific date, such as seven days prior to check-in.

Andre Knobel, head of operations at digital payment specialists Callpay, says: "Thanks to industry-leading encryption standards we have been able to create an incredibly safe digital payments ecosystem that blends safety with convenience. This makes South Africa an appealing place to visit as international travellers can have the peace of mind that their data is secure."

Partners in payments

These joining forces will help bolster the online payments landscape.

Puffett says that with a shared vision of fostering innovation and bringing value to client bases, partnerships can align perfectly with what companies want to be able to offer their clients. Payment gateway solutions have often presented difficulties for some of our clients but with our new partnership, those problems are set to become a thing of the past.

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