

2010 FIFA World Cup: Africa Getting Ready

Large football events do not only do wonders for the game of football itself, yet also earn a huge amount of money for the countries hosting them. Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Portugal have been able to verify this claim in recent years.

As the matches, which are always available for viewing all over the planet, are often repeated, the adverts for the countries simply continue for many years. Therefore, it is no surprise that so many countries bid for events such as the World Cup or the European Championships. South Africa was the lucky nation to win the right to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the biggest football competition. Yet, the neighboring and nearby nations are hoping to cash in too.



The previous World Cup was held in Germany, making it easily accessible for most Europeans and other football fans around the world. Indeed, people visit Germany on a regular basis without the lure of sport. The same could be said about Korea, the venue for the 2002 World Cup. To a certain degree, South Africa is also visited for other reasons than football, but this is not true of the surrounding African countries.

It is hoped that hordes of football fans, once they have travelled so far anyway, will travel also to some other countries in Africa. For this to happen, South African visas need to be recognised on the African continent, even if temporarily. It may be many peoples' first and last trip to that particular area of the world, so the locals want to make the most of the opportunity. Namibia and Botswana in particular are making arrangements to attract football fans on day trips to their countries.

South Africa itself expects a considerable boost for its economy thanks to the 2010 World Cup. The country is likely to benefit from the event especially now in time of the global economic crisis. African tourism has already recorded a drop in foreign tourists' arrivals but tourism professionals expect the World Cup and other events to improve the situation.



The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism expects the World Cup to add some US\$ 2.52 billion to SA gross domestic product – part of it in form of direct investments and the other part in tourist spending. Some experts suggest the growth is to be even more robust. Other events are also expected to lure tourists to SA and boost its economy; among them is e.g. the British and Irish Lions rugby tour.

The 2010 World Cup is expected to bring some 3 million tourists to SA from Africa as well as from other continents. Almost all sectors of South African economy will be under big pressure to provide the best services. The goal of the event should not be only to generate one-off revenue; it should convince the visitors to come back next time. The World Cup is an ideal marketing opportunity for the country.

Retailers need to get ready for the influx of customers. This sector will benefit highly from the event as an international visitor of the World Cup is expected to spend some \$166 a day. A domestic traveler will presumably spend \$89 daily.

Sport Tourists

The sport tourist is at the heart of strategies that spend tens of millions of dollars on attracting an Olympic Games or World Cup. These flagship events help build new transport systems, improve airports and clean up cities – all because the sport tourist is coming to town. Sport tourists are passionate, high-spending, enjoy new sporting experiences and often stimulate other tourism. Their direct benefit to a destination is cash – their indirect benefit can be years of follow-on tourists. Sport tourism is now a tool to make achieve many things – to make money, create thousands of new jobs and even help change cultural perceptions such as in the Middle East and South Africa.

Sportbusiness.com

<http://www.tourism-review.com>

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