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# The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Travel Agent – Insights into the Future of the Travel Agent

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# Project Background

- Where we are as an industry right now?
  - Massive changes to the international, and certainly the domestic, travel landscape
  - Need to evolve to keep pace in a rapidly changing technological environment
  - Meet travellers' expectations of flexibility, seamlessness and personalisation of their user experience associated with travel
  - TMCs' traditional transactional value has weakened
  - Revenue models are changing
  - Mistrust between the travel agent and consumer
  - This business model is not sustainable

# Project Background

- Objective: the development of a framework for a sustainable and profitable business model for travel agents in South Africa.
- Study examined what the customer – both leisure and business traveller, and corporate procurement manager – defines as true value and how the travel retailer and travel consultant of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will have to evolve.
- Paper identifies key recommendations that the South African travel agent or TMC of the future will need to take cognisance of, and in fact act on.

# Methodology

- Study conducted in two phases targeting specific audiences:
  - Phase 1: Corporate Procurement Managers
  - Phase 3: The Corporate and Leisure Traveller
- Desktop research
- Surveys
- Focus groups and face to face and telephonic interviews

# Findings



# Findings

- Shift from the booking or transactional to the journey itself
- The travel agent should identify the friction points across the entire travel journey and seek to mitigate the stress at those points
- Expansion of the concept of Duty of Care
- Future need of a corporate travel manager?
- The business model needs to change to be customer centric, not supplier centric
- Build positive relationships

# Where to now?



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# Thank You



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