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Find out what to expect from World Travel Market with Natalie Marsh's guide to the highlights

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Step inside ExCeL London on the morning of November 5, and you will find yourself among some of the travel industry's biggest stakeholders, influencers and decision-makers.

Welcome to World Travel Market, an event that brings together tourist boards, airlines, hotels, wholesalers and other suppliers with travel buyers from around the world.

More than 50,000 attendees and almost 5,000 exhibitors descend on the Docklands venue across the three-day event, which is now in its 39th year. To help you make the most of its business sessions, we've picked out some of the most important sessions, so you don't miss out on a moment of the action.

▶ RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Minimising environmental impacts, creating economic benefits for local people and understanding cultural and environmental issues might be some of the topics that spring to mind when you hear the words 'responsible tourism'.

With more than 1.3 billion international tourist arrivals last year, it's increasingly important that growth does not come with negative consequences. The travel industry, from small hotels to big corporations, has been taking steps to reduce its environmental footprint.

Single-use plastic has come to the fore, so find out what the travel industry is doing to minimise its use, in **Is The Industry Reducing The Plastic Pollution It Causes?** (Monday, 4.20pm, TA190). Hear from stakeholders including Sherin Francis, the chief executive of the Seychelles Tourist Board, and Jo Hendrickx, founder of organisation Travel Without Plastic.

We've all heard the words 'responsible tourism' thrown around in the travel trade landscape, but how can you actually convey its importance to others? **Communicating Responsible Tourism** (Tuesday, 2.40pm, AF190) will shed some light on the trends and campaigns in this field, while demonstrating how best to

FAST FACT

World Travel Market is at London's ExCeL from Monday to Wednesday next week london.wtm.com



WTM news
Stay up to date with the latest news from WTM exhibitors with *Travel Weekly's* live coverage, and daily email newsletter. Go to travelweekly.co.uk for more

Tech trends
Travolution is media partner for Travel Forward, producing a print publication and hosting one-to-one sessions with tech experts on the stand (100). Go to travolution.co.uk for more

Agent showcase
Travel Weekly is holding its Destination Showcase in London on November 7, inviting travel agents to meet suppliers. Email travelweekly@fore-uk.com to sign up

Crisis summit
The International Travel Crisis Management Summit is a full-day conference on Thursday, November 8. items.travel



PICTURE: WORLD TRAVEL MARKET; STEVE DUNLOP; SIMON HARVEY

→ relay these issues far and wide. Hear from experts, among them James Thornton, the chief executive of Intrepid Travel.

As well as helping the environment, equality is another arm of responsible tourism that the travel industry is working towards. Gender equality and its role in responsible tourism will be discussed in **Responsible Tourism – How Much Progress Have We Made?** (Wednesday, 11.15am, EU80). The session will look at whether the emergence of women leaders in the travel industry has contributed to progress within the responsible tourism agenda. Moderated by TV and radio journalist Tanya Beckett, the round table will also feature Inge Huijbrechts of the Radisson Hotel Group, Helen Caron of Tui Group, and the director of the Griffith Institute for Tourism, Dr Susanne Becken.



Keep up to speed with some of the biggest changes in travel with sessions that delve into research and trends

TOP TRENDS

From travel advice to consumer habits, keep up to speed with some of the biggest changes in travel with sessions that delve into research and trends.

It's impossible to deny how much of an impact the increase in the number of booking channels has had on how customers plan and book their holidays. However, **Global Consumer Trends: Opportunities for the Travel Industry**

(Monday, 12pm, ME580), will look at how this marketplace of choice may actually be getting in the way of the customer making an informed decision. Presented by Paul Davies, category director of travel at market research firm Mintel, this session will highlight opportunities for travel companies to cut through the noise and showcase their expertise.

Travel among those aged 15 to 29 is one of the fastest-growing cohorts of customers. According to the WYSE Travel Confederation, youth travellers account for 23% of the more than one billion international arrivals worldwide. As a growing number of young people prioritise travel, deeming it a necessity rather than a luxury, engaging this market is crucial. Moderated by Steve Lowy, chairman of the British Educational Travel Association, participants in **Capture Your Youth** →



→ (Tuesday, 10.30am, Platinum Suite) discuss what kind of authentic travel experiences this cohort is looking for. The latest youth travel trends will also be shared, along with examples of which brands have hit the nail on the head with their marketing.

Staying on top of the latest travel advice is crucial. With some markets more versatile than others, it's important to keep customers informed with the latest official advice. Understand what this consists of in the session **Travel Advice Essentials from Abta and the FCO** (Wednesday, 10.30am, TA190). Here, Angela Hills, senior destinations manager at Abta, breaks down the elements of Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice, what it means and what to consider if the advice changes.

DIGITAL FIRST

Promoting your company online is becoming increasingly vital, and many sessions focus on how to harness this technology and concentrate on digital to keep up with customers. **Nation Branding in a Digital Economy: Assessing Tourism's Most Dynamic Frontier** (Monday, 3.30pm, AS1350) is one such session that looks at how digital has changed the tourism industry. Hear from the leaders of successful social media brand Beautiful Destinations. The founder and chief executive,



Social media cannot be underestimated for agents who want to promote their businesses

and the executive director for global communications and external affairs, will be offering their take, alongside Jordan's tourism minister and Puerto Rico's chief marketing officer. The role of technology in travel will be discussed, and attendees will hear how the industry is adapting to these digital advancements.

The internet and social media cannot be underestimated for travel agents who want to promote their businesses and the destinations they sell. Learning how to harness these channels effectively and make your content stand out will be discussed in **Unforgettable Journeys: The Science Of Creating Memorable Branded Travel Content** (Tuesday, 12pm, EU80). Here, Dr Hamish McPharlin, head of insight at



PICTURES: ED HILL/LLOYD STURDY

BBC Global News, together with Richard Pattinson, senior vice-president at BBC StoryWorks, delve deep into the relationship between emotion and memory and how this can help create travel content that will stand out in customers' minds. On the topic of content creation, there will be

tips on how to use good content for conversions, in **Quality Not Quantity: Using Great Content To Sell The Holiday Dream** (Wednesday, 2.50pm, AS1350). This session will showcase how companies are using content in the form of stories and turning it into bookings. **TW**



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