

South Africa

SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM



South African Tourism

Evaluation of Implementation Programmes: B2B Campaigns

March 2024

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Purpose	3
1.3 Methodology.....	4
1.3.1 Secondary data collection	5
1.3.2 Data limitations	5
SECTION 2: GLOBAL B2B CAMPAIGN EVALUATION	6
2.1 Programme overview.....	6
2.1.1 Destination Awareness Global	6
2.1.2 Delegate Boosting	7
2.1.3 Delegate Boosting 2.0	8
2.1.4 Support/assistance provided	9
2.2 Relevance	10
2.2.1 Issues addressed	10
2.2.2 Alignment with government objectives.....	10
2.2.3 Importance to the country	10
2.3 Effectiveness	11
2.3.1 Objectives achieved	11
2.3.2 Contribution to the tourism sector and economic growth	11
2.4 Efficiency	12
2.4.1 Resources used.....	12
2.4.2 Resource efficiency	12
2.5 Impact	13
2.5.1 Intended impacts	13
2.5.2 Unintended impacts.....	13
2.5.3 Sustainability	13
2.6 Overall impact.....	14
SECTION 3: DOMESTIC B2B CAMPAIGN EVALUATION.....	16
3.1 Programme overview.....	16
3.1.1 Bid Support Programme.....	16

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

3.1.2	Corporate Project	18
3.1.3	National Association Programme.....	19
3.1.4	Support/assistance provided	20
3.2	Relevance	20
3.2.1	Issues addressed	20
3.2.2	Alignment with government objectives.....	21
3.2.3	Importance to the country.....	21
3.3	Effectiveness	21
3.3.1	Objectives achieved	21
3.3.2	Contribution to the tourism sector and economic growth.....	22
3.4	Efficiency	22
3.4.1	Resources used.....	22
3.4.2	Resource efficiency	22
3.5	Impact	23
3.5.1	Intended impacts	23
3.5.2	Unintended impacts.....	23
3.5.3	Sustainability	24
3.6	Overall impact.....	24
SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....		26
4.1	Recommendations	26
4.2	Conclusion.....	28
SECTION 5: References		29

List of Tables

Table 1: List of internal and external Global and Domestic B2B stakeholders	4
Table 2: SANCB B2B Media Campaigns – Global Destination Awareness Overview	6
Table 3: Destination Awareness Overview	6
Table 4: Delegate Boosting Overview	7
Table 5: Delegate Boosting 2.0 Overview	8
Table 6: SANCB B2B Media Campaigns – Domestic Campaign.....	16
Table 7: Bid Support Brief Overview	17
Table 8: Corporate Project Overview.....	18
Table 9: National Association Overview	19
Table 10: Recommendations	26

List of Figures

Figure 1: Theory of Change	2
Figure 2: Purpose of the Implementation Programmes	3

List of Abbreviations

B2B	Business to business
CNN	Cable News Network
CPC	Cost per click
CPM	Cost per <i>mile</i> (thousand impressions)
CTR	Click-through rate
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DT	Department of Tourism
FY	Financial year
JMIC	Joint meeting industry council
MICE	Meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
PR	Public relations
SA	South Africa
SA Tourism	South African Tourism
SANCB	South African National Convention Bureau
SMMEs	Small, micro, and medium enterprises
VTSDs	Villages, towns, and small dorpiess

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

South African Tourism (SA Tourism) has developed a framework for the evaluation of implementation programmes which includes a three-year roll-out plan for conducting implementation programme evaluations in SA Tourism. Two implementation programmes have been targeted per year for evaluation.

The framework for the evaluation of implementation programmes is informed by the National Evaluation Policy Framework and guidelines developed by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, as well as the best practices from international organisations that guide evaluation practice and theory including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The framework and guidelines prescribe approaches for the development of evaluation frameworks for public development programmes as well as for assessing the design, effectiveness, and impact of such programmes.

In line with the framework for the evaluation of implementation programmes, two programmes have been identified for assessment, one of which is the Business to Business (B2B) Campaigns under Programme 4: Business Events. In this regard, the evaluation seeks to:

- assess whether the identified implementation programmes have successfully delivered their intended outcomes and impacts as reflected in the implementation programme plans;
- determine the benefits that have been derived from the identified implementation programmes and the link to the outcomes of SA Tourism; and
- provide recommendations that can be used during future planning to improve SA Tourism's implementation programmes and projects.

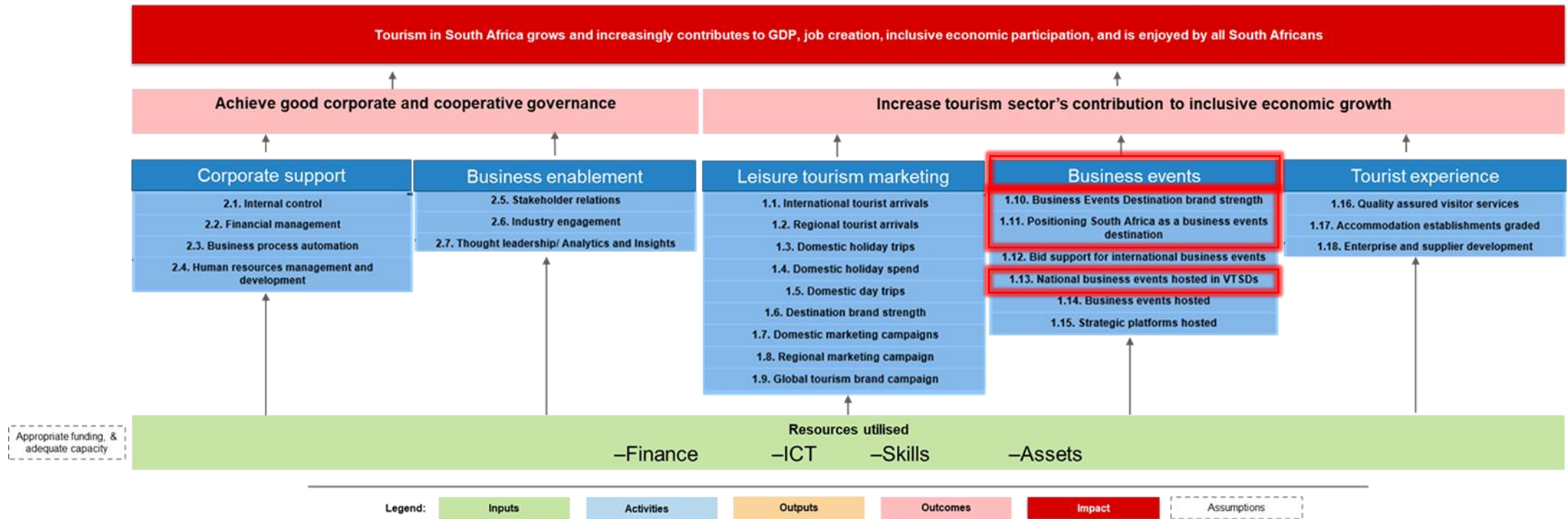
The evaluation of the implementation programmes should assist SA Tourism to:

- strengthen its programme and project planning and execution;
- improve accountability;
- contribute to more effective decision-making; and
- realise or maximise its intended impacts.

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

Outlined below is the Theory of Change, which is based on the programme overview (informed by the Annual Performance Plan for 2021/22 – 2022/23) and the SA Tourism Results-Based Plan. Which will serve as a tool to guide the evaluation process of SA Tourism programmes.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



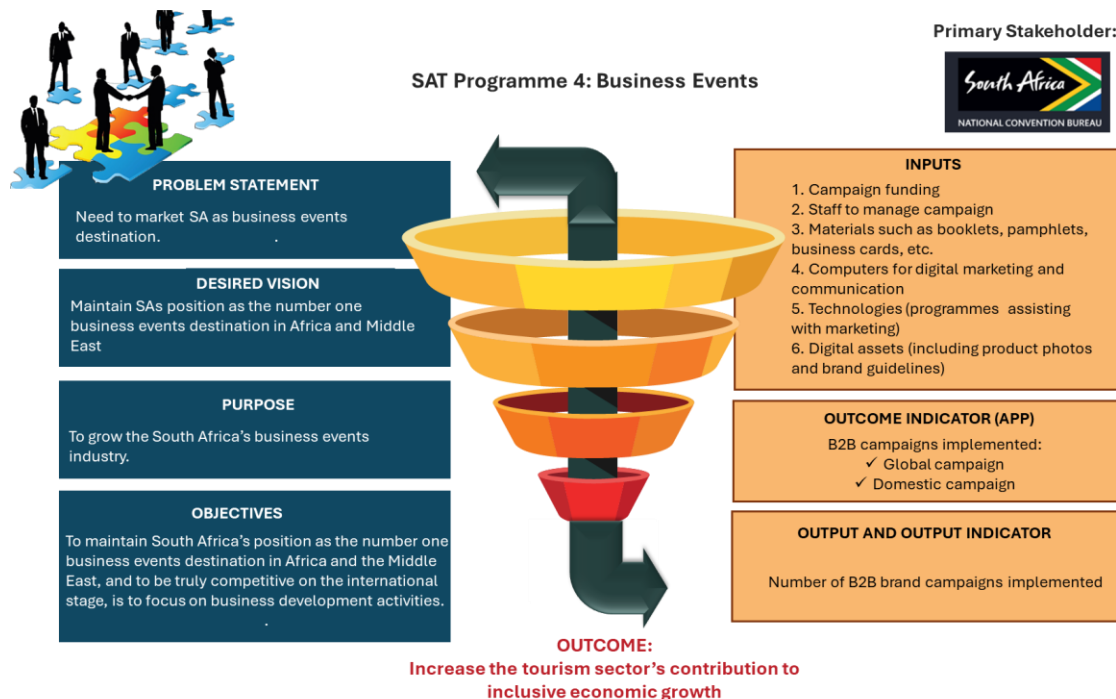
The implementation programmes being evaluated under B2B campaigns aim to achieve the highlighted intended outcomes by strengthening the Business Events Destination Brand of South Africa by positioning the country as a business events destination in the global market. Further, to develop the business events industry domestically by enhancing the attractiveness of VTSDs to local markets.

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

1.2 Purpose

This document presents the evaluation process and outcome of the evaluation of the implementation programmes for Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns 2022/2023 as represented under SA Tourism's Programme 4: Business Events.

Figure 2: Purpose of the Implementation Programmes



SA Tourism has implemented this programme to assist the organisation in maintaining South Africa's position as the leading business events destination in Africa and the Middle East and to retain the country's competitive advantage in the global business events space.

The programme is led by the South African National Conventions Bureau (SANCB), which seeks to identify leads for future business events to ensure South Africa can bid to host such events. For the medium to long term, the SANCB will continue its focus on demand creation and bid support globally as it focuses on bids for future meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) within the six focus sectors of the SANCB. This aligns with the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) Global Manifesto (2020) – an industry rationale for the use of business events as primary agents for post-pandemic economic recovery and renewal.

The SANCB aims to position South Africa as a business events industry destination. The main intention of the business events global campaign is to establish the country as a major player in the knowledge economy arena by leveraging the Open Doors campaign. In the 2022/23 financial year (FY), SANCB sourced and submitted 95 bids for international business events to be hosted between 2022 and 2029, exceeding the planned target of 93. These bids have a combined estimated economic value of R1.2

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

billion and can potentially attract 49 232 international and regional delegates to South Africa between 2022 and 2029.¹

1.3 Methodology

Both the Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns were evaluated. The evaluation of the implementation programmes, as per the framework for the evaluation of the implementation programmes, involved an outcome and impact-type evaluation. These evaluation types can be summarised as follows:

- **Outcome** – This evaluation type determines whether the intended benefits of the implementation programmes have been achieved by looking at the relevance and effectiveness of the implementation programmes.
- **Impact** – This evaluation type determines the results of the implementation programmes and the difference they have made to beneficiaries and the broader economy.

The evaluation was undertaken through both primary and secondary research. The primary research involved obtaining feedback from internal and external implementation programme roleplayers to qualitatively assess the success of both the Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns. The following was undertaken to solicit feedback for the implementation programme evaluation:

- **An in-person interview was done with the project managers**, who provided background and relevant information on the implementation programme (including secondary information such as analysing and interpreting campaign and survey data).
- **A questionnaire/survey was distributed online to key stakeholders** to identify challenges, solicit input on the impact of the implementation programme, and collect recommendations for future implementation and the overall sustainability of the implementation programme.

Overall, eight of the ten stakeholders responded to the Global and Domestic B2B Campaign evaluation. The table below represents the type of external and internal stakeholders who were engaged throughout the primary data collection. These stakeholders were identified as part of the evaluation of the implementation programme during its pilot phase. Additionally, the green shade indicates the stakeholders who participated in SA Tourism’s evaluation survey.

Table 1: List of internal and external Global and Domestic B2B stakeholders

SANCB Media Campaign
Head: Business Development & Support Services
Brand and Marketing - Business Partner
Demographica - Agency
Demographica - Agency
The Media Shop
Business Events Africa-Publication

¹ SAT Annual Report 2022/2023

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

SANCB Media Campaign
Meetings Publication
(Ophthalmologist/Medical Sector) - Delegate Boosting AV -Vestal Fick (PA
Thought Leader - Business Outsource Processing
4 Mal Media Management

1.3.1 Secondary data collection

Key documents that were used to extract performance information relating to the B2B Campaigns:

- SANCB Campaign Launch Report 30 September 2023
- SANCB Paid Media Report: Media Campaign October-December 2023
- SANCB Quarter Four Report Demographics 31 March 2023
- SANCB Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns Close Out Report FY2022/2023
- SANCB Divisional Operational Plan FY2023/2024

1.3.2 Data limitations

The following challenges were identified during the data collection processes:

- A list of 10 B2B Domestic and Global stakeholders was provided. Several attempts were made to contact these stakeholders to have them respond to the implementation programme evaluation via an online survey or an interview. In total, eight responses were received.
- Most stakeholders responded, regarding both the Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns, with two stakeholders able to provide information only on the Domestic campaign.
- Some survey responses lacked detailed responses from stakeholders because many were involved in the campaign from a trader's perspective and were not necessarily engaged in the day-to-day marketing and implementation aspects.
- Additionally, their lack of participation may have been influenced by the inadequate communication between SANCB and selected stakeholders regarding their required involvement in the survey.

SECTION 2: GLOBAL B2B CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

2.1 Programme overview

The SANCB B2B Campaigns have a global awareness leg that uses media platforms to create awareness of South Africa's readiness as a business events destination for international markets.

Table 2: SANCB B2B Media Campaigns – Global Destination Awareness Overview

Global Destination Awareness	Components
a) Destination Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • Boardroom Magazine • Conference & Meeting World (CMW) - Exhibition World • Planner Guru • Business Events • Twitter
b) Delegate Boosting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare • Mass Devices + Medical Design Outsourcing • LinkedIn • Twitter

The section below provides an overview of the key components of the campaign.

2.1.1 Destination Awareness Global

The table below provides a brief overview of the Destination Awareness component.

Table 3: Destination Awareness Overview

Business Objectives	Build awareness that South Africa as a destination is open and ready to serve as a MICE destination. The intention is to encourage more delegates to sign up for conferences and mini business-related holidays.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across MICE sectors and business decision makers (BDM) globally
Markets	South Africa, Kenya, United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, Netherlands, France, Germany, India, Japan, Australia
Channels	LinkedIn
Budget	R149 397.34
Duration	30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

Destination Awareness Global Performance Insights:²

The LinkedIn advert campaign ran from 30 September 2022 to 31 March 2023. It had a total cost of R149 397.34 and resulted in 1 755 231 impressions. The overall cost per mile (CPM) – also known as cost per thousand – is a metric system used in marketing to measure the price of an advertisement per one thousand impressions or clicks for the campaign was R85.12 and the overall click-through rate (CTR) being the number of clicks that your advert receives divided by the number of times your advert is shown on a media platform was 0.30%, resulting in 5 281 clicks and 5 307 engagements.

In terms of content, the campaign primarily featured thought leadership pieces and static images. The thought leadership pieces had a total spend of R69 121.49 and resulted in 711 619 impressions. The static images, in turn, had a total spend of R57 883.26 and resulted in 537 632 impressions. The static images had a higher overall CTR (0.35%) while the thought leadership pieces had a CTR of 0.24%.

Overall, the campaign appears to have performed well in terms of impressions and clicks, with a relatively low CPM. However, the CTR was low, suggesting that the advert creative may not have proved as engaging as it could have been. Further analysis could be conducted to determine which adverts in particular performed best and to identify areas for improvement.

2.1.2 Delegate Boosting

The table below provides a brief overview of Delegate Boosting.

Table 4: Delegate Boosting Overview

Business Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively communicate the conferences taking place in South Africa, by driving awareness to the tourism sector. Drive delegates to register for the attending conference. Encourage attendees to extend their stay in South Africa pre- or post-conference.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across life science and business outsourcing environments (business decision-makers) globally
Markets	South Africa, Kenya, United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, Netherlands, France, Germany, India, Japan, Australia
Channels	Mass Devices, Healthcare, LinkedIn, Twitter
Budget	R705 993.05
Duration	30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

² SANCB Campaign Close Out Report 30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

Delegate Boosting Performance Insights:³

The initial campaign cost was relatively high (R295 116.18). The campaign was rolled out from 30 September 2022 to 31 October 2023, resulting in 3 330 259 impressions. At R88.62, the CPM was also relatively high. The campaign continued in November and December with a lower spend of R120 997.64 and R66 072.72, respectively. Notwithstanding the drop in spend, both months had high impressions (over 2.7 million). December had the lowest CPM (only R24.16), indicating that the cost per thousand impressions was very low and the campaign was successful in reaching many people at a low cost.

January had the lowest spend (only R33 343.80), resulting in a comparatively low number of impressions, but the CPM remained low at R23.85. In February, the spending was increased again (to R63 335.66), resulting in a smaller number of impressions compared to those recorded in other months. However, at 8.99% the CTR was very high, indicating that the adverts were highly engaging and resonated well with the target audience.

March had a higher spend (R127 046.87), resulting in 2 193 722 impressions, with a CPM of R57.91. The CTR was also relatively high (0.93%), indicating good engagement. Overall, the campaign had a total spend of R705 912.87 and resulted in 96 948 clicks with a CTR of 0.72%. This is a decent rate for a digital advertising campaign.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the campaign was successful in reaching many people at a relatively low cost per impression. The engagement rates were also relatively high, especially in February, indicating that the campaign was well-targeted and resonated well with the target audience. The insights gathered from the data can help in refining future campaigns and optimising advert spending to achieve better results.

2.1.3 Delegate Boosting 2.0

The table below provides a brief overview of Delegate Boosting 2.0.

Table 5: Delegate Boosting 2.0 Overview

Business Objectives	To raise destination awareness and interest that will lead to demand and attendance of meetings, exhibitions, incentives for travellers, and conferences.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across business outsourcing environments (business decision-makers) globally
Markets	South Africa, Kenya, United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, Netherlands, France, Germany, India, Japan, Australia
Channels	Business Events Africa, 3SMedia, Google, Mass Devices, LinkedIn, Twitter

³ SANCB Campaign Close Out Report 30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

Budget	R459 693.59
Duration	December 2022 - March 2023

Delegate Boosting 2.0 Performance Insights:⁴

Business Events Africa and 3SMedia: These channels have similar budgets and spend, but very different levels of impressions and engagements. Business Events Africa generated over 2.6 million impressions and 35 510 engagements, with a relatively high CTR of 1.53%. On the other hand, 3SMedia generated only 391 268 impressions and no engagements, with a much higher CPM of R150.51. This suggests that Business Events Africa was more effective at reaching and engaging with the target audience.

LinkedIn: With a budget of R90 524.86, LinkedIn generated 771 120 impressions and 2 412 engagements. It had a CTR of 0.31% and a relatively high cost per click (CPC) which is a metric that determines how much advertisers pay for the ads they place on websites or social media, based on the number of clicks the ad receives, which was R37.64 for this campaign. The CPM for this channel was R117.39, which was higher than the overall average for all channels.

Google Display and Google Search: The budget allocated to Google Display was higher than that allocated to Google Search. The former generated over 7.2 million impressions compared to just 628 304 for Google Search. Google Display had a low CTR (0.50%) while Google Search had a relatively high CTR (2.46%).

Overall, Business Events Africa and Twitter were the most effective channels in terms of generating impressions, clicks, and engagements. LinkedIn had a high CPC but generated some engagements. Google Display and Google Search did not generate any engagements despite generating a high number of impressions. 3SMedia had a very high CPM but did not generate any engagements.

2.1.4 Support/assistance provided

The global segment of the B2B Campaign received consistently positive responses from stakeholders. Firstly, the campaign effectively highlighted how SANCB could support the industry, showcasing a clear understanding of the intended message. Secondly, the campaign's overarching goal of positioning South Africa as a top choice for business events garnered favourable feedback. The recognition of the country's world-class infrastructure and outstanding leisure experiences contributed to the positive perception of South Africa as a destination for such events. Furthermore, a respondent noted that the campaign objective was conveyed through the message of South Africa being open for business from a business events perspective.

⁴ SANCB Campaign Close Out Report 30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

The message instilled confidence in the country's ability to host significant events post-pandemic and reinforced its unique brand positioning. Moreover, the campaign positioned South Africa as a destination for inspired business events, adaptive thinking, and innovative solutions, emphasising the country's capacity to reimagine success despite macro-environmental challenges.

2.2 Relevance

2.2.1 Issues addressed

The primary issues that were addressed by the implementation programme are the following:

- communication of SANCB's support for and collaboration with the tourism sector;
- addressing the lack of confidence in South Africa's infrastructural capabilities;
- mitigating job losses through attracting associations to host significant events; and
- promoting South Africa's competitive edge in the business events industry.

Other issues that the implementation programme successfully addressed are:

- collaboration within the business events industry for post-pandemic recovery; and
- facilitating the hosting of international exhibitions and conferences across South Africa.

In the broader sphere, the business events industry came together as one to combat challenges faced during the pandemic and promote the recovery of the industry. This implementation programme assisted the industry in achieving post-pandemic recovery in terms of international exhibitions and conferences to be hosted at several conferencing and convention venues throughout South Africa.

2.2.2 Alignment with government objectives

The campaign effectively aligns with the Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014 by promoting the sustainability of the tourism sector and marketing South Africa internationally. By executing a global marketing programme to reignite international demand, the aim was to drive the priorities outlined in the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan and, ultimately, the Tourism Sector Master Plan published in 2023.

2.2.3 Importance to the country

The Global B2B Campaign aimed to create awareness of South Africa's primary business events destinations among a global audience. This awareness extends beyond mere geographical knowledge; it encapsulates the essence of a destination, including its history, traditions, and local experiences. The campaign profiled the country's business events offerings, further showcasing South Africa's infrastructure, unique culture, and diverse people. It also boosted tourism and business events in South Africa, promoting investment and the advantages of the country's economy. The aim was to promote South Africa's depth of knowledge and growth opportunities to draw international business events, ultimately, contributing to possible investment in the knowledge sphere and economy of South Africa.

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

Delegate boosting is of paramount importance in campaigns for the business events industry as it directly influences the success and impact of such gatherings. By strategically attracting a diverse and engaged audience, delegate boosting not only ensures the financial viability of an event but also contributes to the richness of discussions and networking opportunities. Good attendance at a conference enhances its reputation, fostering a positive cycle for future iterations. Moreover, a diverse and widespread participant base contributes to a more comprehensive exchange of ideas and perspectives, elevating the overall quality of the event. Effective delegate boosting through campaigns not only guarantees the visibility and credibility of the conference but also establishes it as a must-attend forum within the industry, thereby solidifying its influence and relevance.

2.3 Effectiveness

2.3.1 Objectives achieved

The Global B2B Campaign somewhat achieved its intended objectives, with the destination awareness campaign reaching about 1.2 million members of the target audience and generating over 6 600 interactions regarding engagement and clicks. However, the real success of the campaign is measured by the number of B2B sales from a business events perspective secured since the campaign's launch. With a larger budget and exposure on global platforms such as Cable News Network (CNN), the campaign could have had a bigger reach. Nonetheless, the campaign managed to get the industry excited about the reopening of the tourism sector in South Africa and received buy-in from the Department of Tourism.

The implementation programme is vital to the business events industry in South Africa as it promotes the country's capabilities as an international event-hosting destination. In addition, SANCB can assist international conference and exhibition venues and planners to differentiate their offerings to solicit winning bids. Continuing mass awareness creation and top-of-mind presence in the international markets will drive increased bid success and the selection of South Africa as a business events destination by international corporates, associations, and other entities.

2.3.2 Contribution to the tourism sector and economic growth

Ultimately, the campaign provided support in terms of informing the world that South Africa is open for business in the post-pandemic era. In doing so, the aim was to contribute to the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan and enhance job security within the conferencing and exhibition sector.

The general perception is that the campaign is necessary, more so now that the industry has normalised post-pandemic. Continued investment in attracting international business events will not only grow the industry but also contribute to the development and growth of other sectors of the economy.

2.4 Efficiency

2.4.1 Resources used

The Global B2B Campaign used various channels to implement the programme. At a primary level, there is a need for a multifaceted strategy that showcases a comprehensive approach, incorporating funding, human resources, infrastructure, and equipment requirements. A research-centric approach was used to gather information to inform the campaign execution. The campaign made use of the following:

- Magazine publication (Business Events Africa)
- Google
- Mass Devices
- Social media (LinkedIn, Twitter)

Furthermore, human resources (such as a support services coordinator, and brand and marketing partners) and infrastructure were integral to the programme. This was handled by a B2B agency that is contracted by SA Tourism, underlining the importance of financial resources and professional expertise in executing the campaign.

2.4.2 Resource efficiency

The campaign aims to convene decision-makers and associations to promote South Africa as a primary destination for hosting business events. The campaign reached its intended audience and was reported as being effective in its execution. However, challenges were experienced in terms of timing and budget limitations. The following are potential improvements regarding the implementation of an efficient campaign:

- **Enriched media:**
The importance of educational supplements over display adverts was emphasised, suggesting a preference for more enriching content.
- **Role:**
The role of SANCB and the support that it can offer to the business events industry were relatively unknown to industry players.
- **Focused target:**
The expansion and coordinated planning of the campaign will improve messaging, target audience capture, and the monitoring of results.

Overall, stakeholders indicated that the resources were sufficient and facilitated efficient task execution. The Global B2B Campaign was effective, and the timing was as per the required launch periods. Furthermore, report-back processes and close-out reports on the effectiveness of the various campaign platforms were provided. However, quick approval processes and stakeholder inputs are required to effectively develop and implement the required campaign objectives.

2.5 Impact

2.5.1 Intended impacts

The overarching intention was to attract more international MICE activities to South Africa and emphasise the significance of easier access to various places in the country, to foster growth in the tourism sector.

- **Goals:**
The primary goals were to convey to tourists that South Africa is a secure location for conducting meetings and to unite corporates to contribute to the value chain through the bid support programme.
- **Sector impact:**
The intended impact of the Global B2B Campaign will be seen within three to five years due to the long lead time for international business events to be secured.
- **Global perception:**
The campaign has instilled a level of confidence in the global community concerning the safety and security aspects of South Africa.

2.5.2 Unintended impacts

The Global B2B Campaign did not result in unintended impacts, whether positive or negative. It was noted that the campaign received global acclaim and recognition.

2.5.3 Sustainability

The stakeholders were positive as to whether the impacts of the campaign are likely to continue/be sustained after completion. The campaign is anticipated to generate lasting effects, emphasising the potential for word-of-mouth promotion and positive public relations (PR) resulting from increased international business events. This may foster organic industry demand growth if effectively managed.

In support of growing demand, a follow-up campaign is planned with a rebranding, due to the conclusion of the pre-pandemic era. The initial focus of the campaign was to encourage people to visit South Africa, and the emphasis is now shifting towards maintaining a consistent message. The upcoming phase aims to sustain the momentum of the campaign and ensure that the message remains relevant and compelling for potential visitors.

It was suggested by internal stakeholders that SANCB consider running a roadshow concurrently with the campaign to better inform the industry of the support that the SANCB may provide. Furthermore, the SANCB could consider operating an independent digital system from SA Tourism's platforms to streamline the launch and management of active campaigns.

2.6 Overall impact

Based on the information presented in this section under each theme and taking into consideration all the implementation programme's benefits and pitfalls, the overall impact can be described as follows:

- **Relevance:**

The Global B2B Campaign highlighted the importance of SANCB's support to the business events industry. Acknowledging pandemic-induced job losses, the promotion of South Africa's infrastructural capabilities and economic investment climate played a significant role. The campaign also emphasised the need for inspirational communication and diversifying South Africa as an international business events destination. The implementation programme contributed to the recovery of the business events industry and united roleplayers in communicating the message that the country is open for business in the post-pandemic era.
- **Effectiveness:**

The campaign was successful in driving the recovery of the business events industry within the international competitive space. The real success will be citing B2B sales growth since the campaign's launch. Despite the potential for greater impact, increased funding, enthusiasm, and support from both the industry and the Department of Tourism are needed.
- **Efficiency:**

The Global B2B Campaign segment's resource utilisation was deemed successful by the media agencies/partners. However, the abovementioned statement references the need for sufficient funding allocation and enhanced approval structures within SANBC and SA Tourism to expedite processes.
- **Impacts:**

The Global B2B Campaign is intended to secure business events and increase confidence in safety and security globally. The campaign has been globally recognised, winning several awards. Furthermore, the bid support programme aims to unite business events establishments. The anticipated impacts should be experienced within the next three to five years.
- **Sustainability:**

Participants had positive views about the campaign's lasting impact, noting long-term effects and the initiation of a follow-up campaign with a different promotional approach. If managed effectively, there are opportunities for word-of-mouth promotion and positive public relations stemming from the rise in international business events. The current campaign is shifting towards maintaining a consistent and compelling message for potential visitors, whereas the previous year's campaign was focused on encouraging visitors to return to South Africa post-pandemic.

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

In conclusion, the Global B2B Campaign contributed to the recovery of the business events industry at a globally competitive level, particularly during a very difficult period where travel restrictions, safety and hygiene concerns, and limitations on business events resources were severe. Thus, there is a call for technological innovation and targeted communication strategies to secure business from the international market.

SECTION 3: DOMESTIC B2B CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

3.1 Programme overview

The Domestic Campaign consists of three programmes that are summarised below.

Table 6: SANCB B2B Media Campaigns – Domestic Campaign

Domestic Campaign	Components
a) Bid Support Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Events Africa • The Planner Guru • LinkedIn
b) Corporate Project Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination Awareness Local • Business Events Africa • The Planner Guru • LinkedIn • Google Display
c) National Association:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Display • LinkedIn • The Planner Guru • Business Events Africa

3.1.1 Bid Support Programme

The bidding process has many complex admin-intensive steps. Therefore, it is important to have a bidding partner that can support businesses through the process. SANCB makes the bidding process simpler and easier for businesses so that they can host a seamless event. SANCB offers bidding, convention planning, and delegate boosting support services to win world-class business events.⁵

Bid support includes the following:

- Bid strategy
- Bid document
- Lobbying
- Bid promotion and presentation
- Site inspections
- Planning support
- Delegate boosting support.

⁵ SANCB Bid Support Programme. Available at: https://sancb.southafrica.net/sat_bidsupport_microsite_1

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

The table below provides a brief overview of the Bid Support Programme.

Table 7: Bid Support Brief Overview

Business Objectives	Encourage associations, societies, and business event organisers to feel confident that with the support from the SANCB, they have the best possible chance of winning the bid to host the next business event in South Africa.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across the business events industry and business decision-makers domestically, including: African tourism ministers, industry associations, country tourism authorities/organisations/industry experts, supply, and demand side of the tourism value chain
Markets	South Africa
Channels	Business events (social, banners), Planner Guru (social, banners), LinkedIn, YouTube
Budget	R697 129.37
Duration	30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

Bid Support Performance Insights:⁶

The total budget for all the channels was R697 129.37, of which R697 226.83 was spent. This means that the campaign was slightly over the budget.

YouTube had a budget allocation of R212 701.54, and it had the highest spend (R212 805.16). It also had the highest number of engagements (4 034 853). This suggests that YouTube was the most effective channel for engagement.

LinkedIn had the highest budget allocation (R224 875.81), with R224 869.65 of this amount spent. It had a relatively high CTR (0.40%) and 4 100 engagements. This suggests that LinkedIn was a reasonably effective channel for engagement.

Business Events Africa had a budget allocation of R142 887.50, all of which was spent. It had a high CTR (1.84%) and 55 548 engagements. This suggests that Business Events Africa was an effective channel for engagement.

⁶ SANCB Campaign Close Out Report 30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

3SMedia had the lowest budget allocation (R116 664.52), all of which was spent. It had a relatively low CTR (0.46%) and only 7 123 engagements. This suggests that 3SMedia was the least effective channel for engagement.

3.1.2 Corporate Project

The table below provides a brief overview of the Corporate Project.

Table 8: Corporate Project Overview

Business Objectives	To invoke the emotions of corporates to see the value propositions of in-person meetings in South Africa.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across the business events industry and business decision-makers domestically, including African tourism ministers, industry associations, country tourism authorities/organisations/industry experts, supply, and demand side of the tourism value chain
Markets	South Africa
Channels	Business events (social, banners), Planner Guru (social, banners), LinkedIn, display banners
Budget	R256 641.09
Duration	30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

Corporate Project Performance Insights:⁷

The total budget for all channels was R256 641.09 and the total spend was R256 676.23, indicating that the entire budget was used.

Business Events Africa generated the highest number of impressions, clicks, and engagements. This is because of the Facebook promotion. Google Display had the lowest budget but generated the highest number of impressions, at a low CPM.

LinkedIn had the highest CPM and CPC among all channels, indicating that it was the least cost-effective channel.

⁷ SANCB Campaign Close Out Report 30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

The overall CTR was 0.70%, which means that only a small fraction of people who saw the adverts clicked on them. However, Business Events Africa had a relatively high CTR (1.14%), indicating that its adverts were more engaging and relevant to the target audience.

Despite having the highest CPC, LinkedIn had the lowest number of engagements, indicating that the adverts might not have been very effective in driving user engagement.

Overall, the campaign performed well in terms of generating engagements, with the highest number of engagements being recorded in January (despite the spend for that month being the lowest). The CTR was also higher in the months when engagements were higher. The CPM was relatively consistent across the six months, while the number of clicks and impressions varied.

3.1.3 National Association Programme

The vision of the implementation programme is to show excellence and lead by example to meet the needs of associations and create a prosperous future for all. The programme is designed to capacitate and place the smaller players on the map to enhance local tourism. The programme aims to assist associations in hosting events and conferences, sharing knowledge, and furthering local tourism in the villages, towns, and small dorpiess of South Africa

The table below provides a brief overview of the National Association Programme.

Table 9: National Association Overview

Business Objectives	Encourage associations, societies, and business event organisers to feel confident that with the support from the SANCB, they have the best possible chance of winning the bid to host the next Business event in South Africa.
Campaign Objectives	Awareness (reach)
Audience	Reach relevant audiences across the business events industry and business decision-makers domestically, including African tourism ministers, industry associations, country tourism authorities/organisations/industry experts, supply, and demand side of the tourism value chain
Markets	South Africa
Channels	LinkedIn
Budget	R187 396.50
Duration	30 September 2022 - 31 March 2023

National Association Performance Insights:

Overall, the campaign had a relatively high CPM, which suggests that it was targeting a relatively high-value audience. The CTR was moderate, indicating that the advert was relevant to the audience but could potentially be improved. The CPC was also high, indicating that the clicks generated were relatively expensive. However, the campaign generated a good number of engagements, which suggests that it was successful in driving the desired actions from the audience.

The CTR varied across the posts, with the highest CTR (0.73%) being achieved by a static image post in November. The lowest CTR – 0.11% – was also achieved by a static image post in November.

Overall, the video posts seem to have had higher engagement, with the highest number of engagements being achieved by a video post in January (626 engagements). It is important to note that the number of impressions for the video posts was generally higher than for the static image posts, which could have contributed to the higher number of engagements.

3.1.4 Support/assistance provided

The Domestic B2B Campaign targeted the business events industry players in South Africa by providing advice, support, and educational information through the bid support campaign, magazine, and website. Similarly, this can be actioned by targeting meetings, event planners, and incentive planners. Stakeholders noted an increase in brand awareness and highlighted the campaign's local focus, emphasising its effectiveness in encouraging local associations, societies, and business event planners to participate in bidding for global events. The success of the campaign lies in its ability to provide guidance on SANCB's services and encourage collaboration with SANCB. This resulted in the bid support activities that aimed to capacitate events establishments and planners in villages, townships, and small 'dorpiess' (VTSDs) to host global-level events.

3.2 Relevance

3.2.1 Issues addressed

The primary issues that were addressed by the implementation programme are the following:

- addressing the sustainability of the tourism sector through information dissemination on relief programmes and growth opportunities;
- changing perceptions of South Africa's capacity to host business events nationwide, beyond main economic hubs or international destinations; and
- encouraging national associations and industry leaders to spread meetings and conferences across VTSDs (i.e. vulnerable and underdeveloped tourism service delivery sites).

The implementation programme identified and addressed procurement challenges by incentivising the use of local service providers and promoting tourism experiences through pre- and post-event tours. The collaboration between associations and enterprises related to the business events industry and SANCB helped to support the recovery of the industry in the post-pandemic era.

3.2.2 Alignment with government objectives

The Domestic B2B Campaign is aligned with the SANCB's mandate. It aligns with the Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014, supporting the development and promotion of sustainable tourism. As with the Global B2B Campaign, the Domestic B2B Campaign geared its activities towards the recovery of the local business events industry. It supports the Tourism Sector Master Plan, published in 2023, by stimulating domestic business events through targeted campaigns and strengthening the supply side through resource mobilisation and support.

3.2.3 Importance to the country

Events bidding processes are integral to securing lucrative contracts and partnerships that can significantly impact a destination's growth and seasonality. With dedicated support, businesses can navigate the complexities of event bidding, ensuring that their proposals are comprehensive, competitive, and tailored to meet the specific needs of clients or event organisers. Ultimately, the success of an events bid can expand opportunities through the tourism value chain within a destination, allowing other sectors to build valuable connections, secure investment, and create a competitive destination image.

Targeting VTSDs contributes to the geographical spread of the economic impacts associated with business events. Furthermore, the campaign aims to empower smaller players in the field and diversify the product offering for both international and local associations, academic societies, and corporations seeking options for business events. Thus, the campaign aims to promote inclusivity, encourage healthy competition, and strengthen the industry ecosystem. The investment associated with business events can contribute towards the improvement or development of the local infrastructure and economy. Furthermore, the initiative aims to allow smaller businesses to become integrated into the value chain.

3.3 Effectiveness

3.3.1 Objectives achieved

The stakeholders were of the view that the campaign had fulfilled its objectives. The campaign reached an audience of 1.4 million, with over 18 000 interactions and engagements. However, it is suggested that more campaigns of a similar nature are necessary, as not all industry players are aware of the support that SANBC offers. According to stakeholders, the campaign's reach was extensive, both on digital and traditional media.

Furthermore, the campaign and bid support programme assisted national associations in driving recovery in the business events industry and promoting healthy competition in the sector. Case studies suggested that the national associations, academic societies, and corporate leaders found the programme effective. The only constraints mentioned were the delays experienced with the turnaround time for approvals within SA Tourism which links to the matter of short timeframes. Several remarks were made on the limited budget allocated for media and production.

3.3.2 Contribution to the tourism sector and economic growth

The Domestic B2B Campaign exposed the business events industry and related tourism industries (property owners, tourism operators, events planners, venues, etc.) to potential buyers. The success of an events bid boosts revenue and supports job creation in these sectors, both directly and indirectly.

The implementation programme provides the business events industry with tools to market various destinations and products in South Africa to national associations, societies, and corporations by using the same destinations to host meetings, conferences, exhibitions, and related business events. Thus, the campaign aims to enable collaboration within the industry to promote the recovery and growth of the tourism sector. Overall, the implementation programme continues to increase awareness and recognition of South Africa's business events destination offerings.

3.4 Efficiency

3.4.1 Resources used

The main resources are related to the support of services coordinators and marketing partners/agencies. These partners engaged the target audience through:

- Magazines
- Websites
- Digital presence
- Social media

Equipment such as computers, recording devices, and cameras were identified as key resources. Furthermore, the abovementioned bullet points underscore the significance of human resources and funding as critical factors contributing to the success of the campaign.

3.4.2 Resource efficiency

The use of digital resources maximised the return on investment while lowering the carbon footprint of the implementation programme. Overall, respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of the campaign and there was a shared sentiment that improvements were required. These include:

- **Budgeting and resource allocation:**
Increased or better allocation of resources could further optimise the impact and efficiency of the campaign.
- **Expand media:**
Consideration should be given to expanding the media and content options in terms of multiple audio-visuals for delegate boosting, creating more impactful materials, and leveraging platforms like LinkedIn and YouTube.

- **Short timeframe:**

Improve messaging by making use of targeted supplements in magazines and digital platforms instead of relying solely on display adverts. This should yield a greater return and reach across profitability indicators.

3.5 Impact

3.5.1 Intended impacts

The primary objective is to reintroduce South Africa as a destination for business events, recognising the substantial changes brought about by the pandemic.

- **Goal:**

The short-term goal was achieved, with the medium-term goal focusing on continuity. Ultimately, this contributes to increased numbers of visitors to the destination and related economic impacts.

- **Enhance the tourism value chain:**

The Domestic B2B Campaign played an integral part in assisting tourism businesses, providing them with an opportunity to do business with larger tourism organisations and thus increase their sustainability. Furthermore, the goal is to enhance brand awareness and stimulate interest among decision-makers in associations, academic societies, and corporations.

- **Promote SANCB's support programmes:**

The campaign educates businesses and associations by highlighting SANCB's support programmes for the sectors, with total engagement for the bid support exceeding 4 100 000. The success of the campaign can be measured in the extent to which corporates have been made aware of the value of in-person meetings and national associations encouraged to host more meetings.

The promotion of support services is highlighted as a key element, demonstrating the campaign's ability to bring more meetings to South Africa. Thus, the campaign's objectives, achievements, and tangible impacts focus on both the short-term and medium-term goals, with a clear emphasis on economic contributions and collaboration.

3.5.2 Unintended impacts

The unintended impacts of the campaign, both negative and positive, provide a nuanced perspective on the following:

- **Small businesses:**

On the positive side, small tourism businesses were provided with a platform to showcase and enhance their offerings, fostering sector collaboration and creating a sense of cooperation between smaller tourism businesses.

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

- **Safety and hygiene concerns:**

The campaign was originally designed to attract people to the destination. It inadvertently addressed the critical issue of safety and hygiene that was heightened due to the pandemic, reassuring potential visitors about the destination's secure and hygienic environment.

- **Issue:**

There was confusion about who was eligible to apply for the campaign.

While unintended impacts varied, the overall outcome of the campaign was positive, including aspects such as collaboration, awareness, and support for the recovery of the tourism sector.

3.5.3 Sustainability

The impacts of the campaign are likely to continue using digital marketing for the improvement of the tourism sector. The following factors could influence the sustainability of the intended impacts:

- leveraging legacy programmes and the knowledge economy;
- collaboration between stakeholders, including buy-in from larger organisations;
- better budget support for messaging, content creation, supplementary platforms, or functions, and multiple audio-visual options;
- longer campaign periods to maximise reach and return on investment; and
- continued key brand promises and service delivery.

The Domestic B2B Campaign is ongoing, with the continuity phase undergoing rebranding (like the Global B2B Campaign) due to the conclusion of the pandemic era.

3.6 Overall impact

Based on the information presented in this section under each theme and taking into consideration all of the campaign's benefits and pitfalls, the overall impact can be described as follows:

- **Relevance:**

The Domestic B2B Campaign emphasised the destination capabilities of business events and encouraged associations, academic societies, and corporations to host events in villages and small towns. Furthermore, the campaign aims to address procurement challenges by incentivising the utilisation of local providers and promoting tourism experiences. The campaign assisted the business events industry, with members of this industry uniting in their efforts to promote the post-pandemic recovery of the industry.

- **Effectiveness:**

The campaign fulfilled its objectives but can be extended, with an ongoing need for similar initiatives. Furthermore, there is a need to link success to improved statistics and tangible results. While highlighting the need for a bigger budget and allocated timeframes, the industry nonetheless had a positive response to the campaign, and there was notable excitement

SA Tourism: Evaluation of Implementation Programmes – B2B Campaigns

about the campaign on the part of external stakeholders/beneficiaries. The campaign also gained support from the Department of Tourism.

- **Efficiency:**

The campaign had an extensive reach through publications, websites, and social media. A larger reach and return on investment can be achieved with better messaging, the use of supplement features, and targeted monitoring. As with the Global B2B Campaign, approval processes should be fast-tracked.

- **Sustainability:**

Key factors for impact sustainability include industry cooperation, legacy programmes, collaboration, better budget support, ongoing engagements, and consistent service delivery. The use of digital marketing and collaboration with tourism sector players and potential buyers should yield a positive impact, with an increased number of business events hosted in primary and secondary (VTSD) tourism destinations. The campaign is being rebranded and continuing by refocusing its message on a post-Covid landscape.

- **Impacts:**

The Domestic B2B Campaign achieved positive outcomes, including assisting tourism businesses, increasing sustainability, and enhancing brand awareness within the local context of the business events industry. Thus, the goal is to reintroduce South Africa as a business events destination while ensuring that smaller players and local markets also actively participate in the industry.

The B2B Domestic Campaign secured the role of SANBC within the business events industry by supporting industry players, including associations, venues, and local service providers (within the value chain). The aim was to actively collaborate to attract business events and ensure geographical spread in terms of economic impacts.

SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Recommendations

Tabulated below is a summary of the recommendations for the Global and Domestic B2B Campaigns.

Table 10: Recommendations

Campaign	Recommendation
General	<p>Improved timing and approval structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders emphasised that constraints were experienced in receiving inputs and approvals regarding strategies, context, and required resources, this is due to internal challenges within SA Tourism. These constraints affect the period available to execute production and media campaigns. Longer campaign periods will also allow for a larger reach and return on investment. Better messaging and a targeted approach will yield better returns and improve monitoring of the success of the campaigns. <p>Expansion of media options and supplements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The allocation of resources to expand media options and related supplements can increase the engagement and interaction level of the campaigns. Consideration should be given to increasing budgets or enabling a direct allocation of resources to SANCB as regards human resources, equipment, and access to digital platforms. <p>Continuity phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuation of the campaigns is crucial for building on the strides made to promote the recovery of the business events industry. The refocusing and rebranding of the campaigns should see the return and growth of the industry within three to five years of the inception of the implementation programme.
Global Campaign	<p>Reposition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The campaign is shifting towards maintaining a consistent and compelling message for potential visitors. Key industry leaders willing to participate to ensure that product offerings remain at a world-class level.

Campaign	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the professionalisation of the industry. <p>Enriched media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of international business events and ensure that PR opportunities are managed effectively. Improve the visibility of the campaign to promote its longevity. Consider attending roadshows alongside the continuous use of printed and digital media within the campaigns. Improve media responsiveness and resource allocation, and advocate for media independence within SANCB.
Domestic Campaign	<p>Buy-in from larger players:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage larger players in the business events industry to partner with smaller entities. Encourage larger associations, academic societies, and corporations to host events locally, and rotate event locations. <p>Legacy programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to consider the implications of hosting such campaigns as legacy programmes. To support and promote cooperation within the business events industry in South Africa. To enhance brand awareness of SANBC within the local context of the business events industry. <p>Targeted approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering a more targeted approach, with a focus on supplements in terms of the media platforms used and content produced. To upgrade service offerings that will give SANCB a competitive edge and solicit more interactive engagement. Enhance the marketing and support activities of the campaign, targeting the extended tourism value-chain and national associations programme.

4.2 Conclusion

The B2B Campaigns evaluation process was well received by all partners and stakeholders. Launch, media performance, and close-out reports were provided. Furthermore, eight out of 10 identified stakeholders/partners responded to the performance and impact of the campaigns promptly. This report summarises the results of the evaluation surveys and interviews undertaken during February 2024.

Overall, the B2B Campaigns achieved their intended objectives for 2022/23 by promoting South Africa's capabilities to host business events now that the pandemic era has come to an end and tourism is being restored. In collaboration with the business events industry and related associations, the implementation programme contributed to the recovery of the industry and created unity between different players and businesses within the value chain of the tourism sector. Furthermore, this solidifies the purpose of SANCB regarding industry players and their role in the international business space.

The campaigns will continue and be repositioned to maintain the headway made in the post-pandemic era by the business events industry. Likewise, through more targeted messaging and enhanced media options and supplements to the existing channels.

To improve the overall management of the implementation programme, SANCB should streamline approval processes. Also, SANCB should consider relevant timelines to optimise the reach and targeting of the media platforms to yield a better return on investment. This coincides with the need to augment the campaign's messaging and platforms to have a more focused target audience and interaction output in terms of monitoring indicators.

The B2B Campaigns are viewed in a positive light, with the excitement and involvement of the business events industry players echoing their success. Continued efforts and collaboration with the industry should yield the intended impacts within three to five years of the inception of the campaigns.

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