

Asata announces Travelstart as latest member

The Association of Southern African Travel Agents (Asata) has announced the addition of Travelstart, a prominent online travel booking platform, as its latest member. "We are excited to have Travelstart join our association, a respected leader in Southern Africa's travel sector and an e-commerce trailblazer," says Otto de Vries, Asata CEO.

"With its booking engine enabling online reservations across South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, Travelstart stands to gain global support from Asata's collaboration with the World Travel Agents Association Alliance in advocating and establishing policies for tourism growth."



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

"In addition to global connectivity, Asata membership provides access to our in-depth local market knowledge, training programmes, networking events, and a seat at the table with regulatory stakeholders that impact our industry," de Vries adds.

Unlike many countries, the travel industry in South Africa is not regulated by the government. Therefore, it is even more vitally important that key players in the industry band together through organisations like Asata, for example, to ensure that strict criteria and ethics are adhered to across the industry, De Vries notes, emphasising that Asata membership signifies trusted, ethical standards all members uphold.

"By meeting our strict criteria and code of conduct, Travelstart further reassures customers of its credibility as a partner they can depend on to deliver excellent service and peace of mind when booking," he says.

Driving meaningful change

John Friel, country manager of Travelstart in South Africa also comments: "We have faced many challenges in the last few years and a clear lesson learned is that we are a stronger force when we work in an aligned fashion. We are looking forward to debating important issues that we will face in the future and bringing an e-commerce voice to the table as part of the Asata membership network."

De Vries notes that with Travelstart joining Asata, together with Pentravel recently joining, Asata now represents 99% of travel agents. This wide industry representation lends organisational credibility and influence to drive meaningful change.

"There is no stronger community than the travel industry. We are built on relationships and on the foundation that we are better together. Together with our member network, I am confident we will continue advancing professionalism and trust across the regional travel sector," de Vries concludes.

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