



LIVING THE 'I' IN #IY2017 – IT'S UP TO YOU

DATE: MAY 2017

The year is rapidly nearing the halfway mark. And yet in many ways it feels like just yesterday we were getting used to writing '2017'. If there is one thing that can be expected in these times beyond imagination, it is that time simply seems to pass by in the blink of an eye.

With the sense of surprise of how the year is rapidly ticking on comes the sense of there being so much yet still to do.

For those in the global Travel & Tourism (T&T) sector, 2017 has particular importance. This year is our year – the UN's *International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development* – IY2017.

Across the globe, across all sectors, the UN system has put the spotlight on global T&T as a critical player and partner in advancing the globe's goals for sustainable development. For 365 days (now almost 50% complete), the global T&T community has the opportunity to embed understanding of:

- The invaluable role that T&T plays in fulfillment of the UN SDGs
- The fact that the definition of 'sustainable' goes far beyond green
- The scope of 'Sustainable Tourism' reaches across *Economic* sustainability, *Social* sustainability, *Cultural* sustainability, as well as *Environmental* sustainability

IY2017 seeks to inspire action across the sector's value chain – ensuring not a day is wasted in the quest to strengthen tourism's ability to be understood, and to support global development, through every traveller, and every destination, every day.

By default, focus of awareness-building is applied to Government and Businesses.

The question is: what role will the T&T sector play in reminding travellers of the power they have to be a force for good through their travels, their touch, their talk, their not turning away. How is IY2017 bringing the 'I' to life?

THE 'I' IN IY2017 IS YOU

Importantly, through IY2017, the spotlight stretches to travellers of the world. With over 1.2 billion people crossing international borders each year, and over 5 times that number travelling domestically, travellers – business and leisure - have a vital role to play.

This message is one that will echo throughout IY2017.

Whether carrying a backpack, briefcase, iPad or ink pen, business card or call-home card, each and every one of us is a traveller, carrying the responsibility to ensure that each time we travel, our actions work towards a more understanding, united, sustained world.

The UNWTO (in cooperation with Media Partners CNN and RTVE) wisely and creatively built into IY2017's messaging and momentum a powerful consumer-focused campaign: Travel-Enjoy-Respect (#TRAVELENIJOYRESPECT - <http://www.tourism4development2017.org/travel-enjoy-respect/>).

Launched in January 2017 on the official launch of IY2017, its message is clear - the power of one to impact millions for good.

As stated by Dr Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of the UNWTO,:

“Every day, hundreds of thousands of us jump on planes, explore new lands and greet new faces without any real idea of the power of the tourism industry, and how this can be used as a catalyst to evoke positive, real change within the sustainability sector.

Tourism has proven to be a wonderful catalyst not only to enhance our knowledge about the world, but also shorten distances among different traditions, cultural backgrounds and beliefs. People become more open minded and more sensible to current global issues and the fact that we live in “One World” thanks to the power of travel.

Small gestures have great repercussions, we all know that. In that regard, small actions like supporting local culture and products and respecting the hosting communities will definitely transform the way we travel today. Today, 1.2 billion people travel internationally in one single year, 6 billion more are estimated to travel within their countries. Imagine the power of their single actions multiplied by billions.”

DELEGATES BECOME ADVOCATES

This spirit of unity is shared by one of the T&T sector’s keepers of the secrets: Simon Lehmann, President of Phocuswright, a valuable global T&T resource priding itself as being:

‘the travel industry research authority on how travelers, suppliers and intermediaries connect. Independent, rigorous and unbiased, Phocuswright fosters smart strategic planning, tactical decision-making and organizational effectiveness.

Phocuswright delivers qualitative and quantitative research on the evolving dynamics that influence travel, tourism and hospitality distribution. Our marketplace intelligence is the industry standard for segmentation, sizing, forecasting, trends, analysis and consumer travel planning behavior.’ (Source: <http://www.phocuswright.com/>)

Just days ago, Lehmann chose to open the President’s Address at his latest Phocuswright regional conference in Europe with the UNWTO’s #TRAVELENJOYRESPECT campaign video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GhKvI9PFvU&list=PLeBPu6JHeH_sPKw_7hQXDsdWvd-nYvnFI&index=8 .

Why would the leader of a technology-based research company open his keynote with such a message to his employees?

Lehmann was quick to make the connection, saying:

“No matter what you do in the travel industry from serving customers to developing Hightech travel solutions, one thing that we share in our DNA is we love to travel. During these uncertain times it is important we all stand together and remind ourselves that traveling is one of the most powerful peacekeepers if we enjoy, travel and foremost respect.”

The response?



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“The audience was overwhelmed and did not expect such an opening video but it immediately triggered emotions that connect us. We can all relate to it within seconds and we remember what it is all about. It creates a coherent environment immediately.”

One moment, one message, reaching millions, in one of the most important times of our T&T lives: IY2017

It's up to each and every one of us to ensure not one opportunity is lost.

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