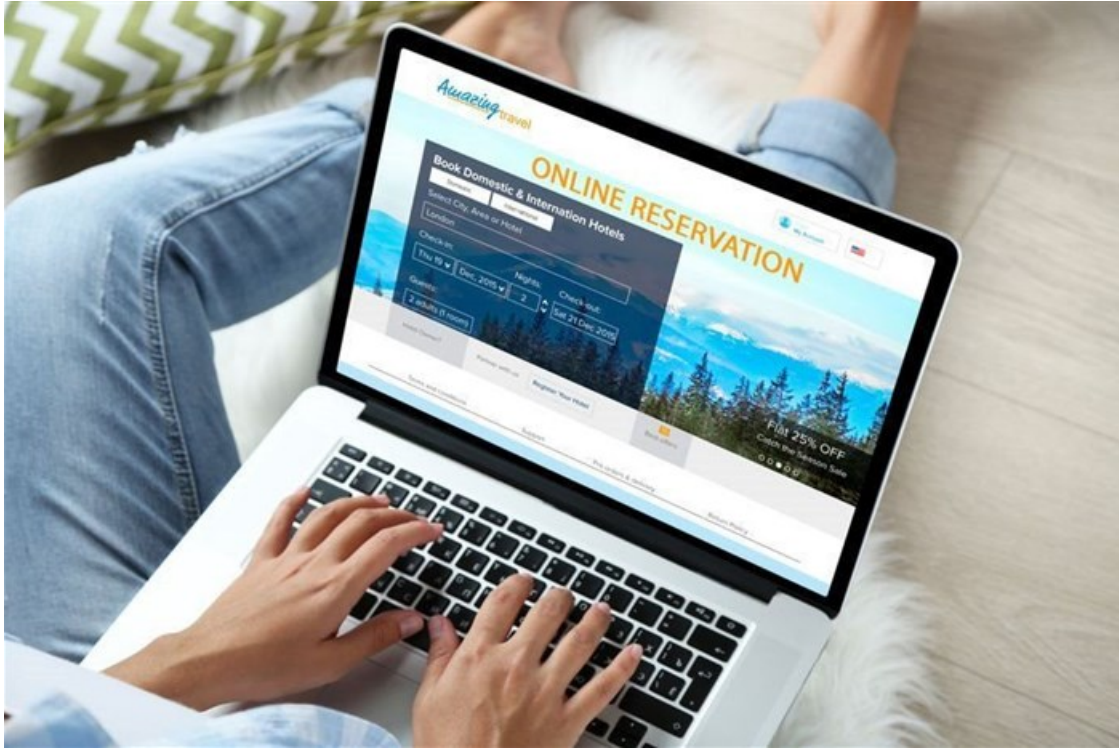


SiteMinder reveals SA's Top 12 hotel booking channels in 2020

Hotel industry guest acquisition platform, SiteMinder has unveiled the lists of distribution channels that brought the greatest booking revenue to hotels in 2020 and since the global hotel booking reset began in April.



©belchonock via [123RF](#)

The lists, which vary across more than 20 of the world's most established travel destinations, reveal a broader range of consumer choices and a shift away from the consolidation seen in previous years, with 32 instances of distribution channels making their first appearances and 20 instances of distribution channels climbing at least two positions from the prior year.

The annual lists also highlight the sustained growth of direct bookings for hotels, with hotel websites maintaining their top-five position in all destinations over the full 2020 year, including in South Africa where they ranked as the third top producer of booking revenue for local hotels. The ranking of hotel websites rose further in more than a third of destinations, including South Africa, since April, when hotel bookings dropped to below 10% of 2019 levels as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Other key findings included:

- The increased popularity of Airbnb as a distribution channel for accommodation providers, especially since April. Airbnb debuted among the top 12 in nine destinations; rose in South African and four other destinations over the full year; and surpassed its full-year ranking in 10 destinations, including South Africa, since April.

- The strengthening of local and regional distribution channels, such as followme2AFRICA and Thompsons Africa, as a result of restricted international travel. Over the full 2020 year, they comprised around half of the top 12 in each destination and were particularly dominant from the start of the global hotel booking reset.

- The continued relevance of wholesalers, with leading bedbank Hotelbeds among the top 12 in each destination, including South Africa, both over the full 2020 year and during the pandemic period. WebBeds was also among the top 12 in South Africa and seven other destinations since April.

"The travel disruptions of 2020 levelled the playing field for many distribution channel providers to demonstrate the unique value they provided to consumers and therefore to hotels," says James Bishop, SiteMinder's senior director of global demand partnerships.

"With international travel restrictions in place and rising cases of coronavirus around the world, many consumers were drawn to local hotel accommodations where the direct hotel website has always performed well, or through local booking channels, which, after an initial slump, saw an uptick from pent-up travel demand. Many other consumers were drawn to the staycation appeal and perceived security of Airbnb-listed properties. SiteMinder's lists of the top 12 hotel booking revenue makers are a testament to real changes in people's travel behaviour and preferences during this time."

Bishop adds: "This past year in South Africa, as a result of the hotel booking reset, we naturally saw a decline in international guests and, subsequently, a greater relevance of local and regional players such as followme2AFRICA and Thompsons Africa. Consumers have changed. It is therefore critical that hoteliers assess how and where they sell their rooms and ensure they embrace the distribution channels—global and local, direct and indirect—with proven effectiveness in securing reservations and revenue."

In South Africa, the top 12 hotel booking channels in 2020, based on total gross revenue made for all users of SiteMinder's platform, were:

Over the full 2020 year

1. Booking.com
2. Expedia Group
3. Hotel websites (direct bookings)
4. Agoda
5. Hotelbeds
6. Global distribution systems
7. followme2AFRICA
8. Tourplan
9. HRS - Hotel Reservation Service
10. Airbnb
11. Thompsons Africa
12. WebBeds - Destinations of the World

Since the hotel booking reset (April-December 2020)

1. Booking.com
2. Hotel websites (direct bookings)

3. Agoda
4. Expedia Group
5. Hotelbeds
6. Global distribution systems
7. followme2AFRICA
8. Tourplan
9. Airbnb
10. Thompsons Africa
11. Flight Centre Travel Group
12. WebBeds - Destinations of the World

To view the top 12 lists of all travel destinations worldwide, and the 2021 predictions of more than 25 of the world's top distribution channel providers, visit the [SiteMinder website](#).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>