

Five radio stations, 10 million listeners, destination KZN

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East Coast Radio, Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal and Tourism KwaZulu-Natal have once again joined forces for Connecting Africa - an initiative aimed at driving African, and South African, trade and tourism to KwaZulu-Natal.

Now in its fifth year running, the project saw East Coast Radio hosting four radio stations in Durban from 27 April 2016 to 5 May 2016, with the aim of helping to scope the economic future of the Zulu Kingdom by promoting the province to potential investors and tourists in the continent. This year, representatives from Afro FM (Ethiopia), Phoenix FM (Zambia) and 99FM (Mozambique) joined East Coast Radio and its sister station, Jacaranda FM (Gauteng) for an unforgettable experience. The stations have a combined listenership of more than 10 million.

“Connecting Africa is an exciting, unique project that brings together key stakeholders to amplify future business and tourism opportunities in Africa,” says East Coast Radio’s General Manager, Boni Mchunu. “The main objective of the project is to create destination KZN awareness in the respective markets while drawing attention to the rich, cultural fabric of our beautiful continent. This project harnesses the power of radio to strategically position KwaZulu-Natal as a premier investment, trade and tourism destination. East Coast Radio is excited to be at the forefront of this initiative.”



The transcontinental team spent nine days travelling between Durban and the Midlands, immersing themselves in the tourism and trade offerings of the region before sharing their experiences with their listeners back home when they broadcast live on 2 and 3 May 2016.

The launch of a direct flight route by SA Express between Lusaka, Zambia and Durban, Ethiopian Airlines’ offering of direct flights between Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Durban, and SA Airlink’s direct flights between Maputo, Mozambique to Durban, have opened up a whole new world of travel and trade possibilities. Connecting Africa taps into this portal and highlights the extensive travel and trade opportunities available to our neighbours on the continent.

“The main objective for the Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal’s involvement in the Connecting Africa 2016 edition is to expand trade linkages between the province of KwaZulu-Natal and other Africa countries, while marketing the province of KwaZulu-Natal as a competitive business destination nationally and internationally,” explains Mxolisi Manyakanyaka, Executive Manager for Corporate Services at Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal. “This in turn will attract foreign and domestic direct investment into the province. This year’s focus is aimed promoting the province of KZN as a trade hub and create easy access to South African and regional market (SADC).”

“Connecting Africa has become an ideal vehicle for KZN to promote tourists attractions and events, and ultimately bring more visitors from these markets into the province,” says Bongani Mthiyane, General Manager of Marketing at Tourism KwaZulu-Natal. “Through Connecting Africa, the province has direct access to over 10 million radio listeners, to reinforce KZN as the holiday destination of choice. Furthermore, through this partnership, KZN will have an opportunity to build industry confidence by engaging directly with tour operators and agents from partner countries to package and sell KZN. KZN will further promote beach experiences and packages particularly to landlocked countries, as well as safari and cruise packages between KZN and Mozambique.”

East Coast Radio presenter, Carol Ofori, hosted the visiting teams during their stay in KwaZulu-Natal. “No place in South Africa comes close to what KZN has to offer!” she said as she strapped on her tour-guide boots.

Connecting Africa is more than a robust initiative to promote inbound tourism and establish trade and investment networks in the continent. It is also a learning exchange programme that encourages the sharing of ideas and ideologies among the continent's broadcasting peers.

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