

JAMAICA

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‘PEOPLE OVER PROFIT’ AND ‘ADAPTABILITY’ CRITICAL TO TOURISM OF THE FUTURE



Professor Andrew Spencer, President, Caribbean Maritime University delivering during the Jamaica Tourist Board Tourism Opportunities Visionary Symposium

MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA - October 3, 2022- Twenty two years ago the United Nations World Tourism Organization began commemorating World Tourism day on September 27. Each year a poignant theme is given around which all member countries organize meaningful dialogue and activations. This year’s theme is Rethinking Tourism.

Jamaica’s Ministry of Tourism and its public bodies are highly invested in the commemoration of World Tourism Day and have consistently expanded the event to a series of activities under Tourism Awareness Week.

On World Tourism Day, the Jamaica Tourist Board hosted a Tourism Opportunities Visionary Symposium at Half Moon Resort. The international speakers provided unique perspectives on ways in which destination Jamaica can be more adaptable and relevant in a world where consumer tastes and demands have shifted, more so as a result of the global pandemic.

Destination Jamaica has grown significantly since the onset of the pandemic, demonstrating resilience and leadership through shrewd guidance and creativity in very uncertain circumstances.



Doug Lansky, Award winning Travel Writer, World Travel Expert, Travel Trends Futurist during the Tourism Opportunities Visionary Symposium on World Tourism Day



Doug Lansky has the attention of the audience at the Tourism Opportunities Visionary Symposium

Professor Andrew Spencer, President, Caribbean Maritime University believes that Jamaica should build on these adaptive efforts to continue to be a leader in the region. He said, “Tourism was probably the most creative space throughout the pandemic. Particularly in Jamaica we saw a number of things we did just to be able to keep up and capture our market share.” He posited that there are critical considerations for destinations to employ as they position themselves to be ready for the future, including: expanding the market space in changing times even as there are paradigm shifts. He highlighted the pivotal changes made with the utilization of touchless services using technology. But lamented that in some instances there has been a walk-back on gains made, “We have not capitalized on the gains made towards adapting to the future of touchless interactions,” he said in response to the return to printed menus, ditching electronic ones.

The future of tourism in the region ‘in an extended resilience corridor facilitating free movement of visitors in a safe and secure environment that help us to be nimble in a time of crisis,’ is a key consideration Professor Spencer. He cites the amplification of community tourism during the pandemic for travellers wanting experiential activities, as one of the successful models that should be exploited.



Scott Eddy, Travel Influencer, addressing the audience during the Jamaica Tourist Board's Tourism Opportunities at the Half Moon Resort

Scott Eddy, renowned Travel Influencer said, there is an untapped potential in digital marketing that most destinations in the region are not exploiting. As an influencer who has worked with many countries to develop their online presence, he admonishes that being a destination of relevance in the future has to include deliberate decisions and dedicated personnel to achieving visibility on the platforms that matter to audiences.



Professor Andrew Spencer speaking on the importance of domestic tourism in the future of the industry

“When we rethink tourism we need to redefine what success means,” said Doug Lansky, Award winning Travel Writer, World Travel Expert, Travel Trends Futurist. For Lansky, Tourism for the future has key features such as the improvement of services offered, delivering unique products with a keen balance on holistic growth.

In articulating his stance for prioritizing people over profit, Lansky opined that, ‘a great product with limited entry is engineered demand.’ He elaborated that “We have number controls as evident with airline seats, night clubs, hotel rooms, concert tickets. But somehow destinations seem to be afraid to make this bold and decisive move out of fear that they will lose out on arrival numbers.” He is of the view that destinations need to control their arrival numbers in order to balance tourism, protect and maintain the value and integrity of the tourism product and the people while fostering sustainability.

With reference to the successful tactics that have yielded increased profits, he spoke of customer centric operations that reduced or removed waiting (time), giving visitors more opportunities to buy activities, as opposed to keeping them out of the consumer loop by waiting in long lines. The use of an arm band that is swiped as payment for activities, allows for charges to be made against hotel rooms, resulting in reduced upfront payment and more impulse purchases and increased profit. Another strategy for the future, he said is the build out of facilities for niche markets such as the hearing impaired, the disabled and other specialized groups.

The successful future of tourism is going to require small and consistent steps in the right direction with people and communities' welfare at the centre while engaging technologies to achieve maximum returns.

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For more information about Jamaica, go to www.visitjamaica.com.

About The Jamaica Tourist Board

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), founded in 1955, is Jamaica's national tourism agency based in the capital city of Kingston. JTB offices are also located in Montego Bay, Miami, Toronto and London. Representative offices are located in Berlin, Barcelona, Rome, Amsterdam, Mumbai, Tokyo and Paris.

This year, the JTB was declared the 'Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board' by the World Travel Awards (WTA) for the 14th consecutive year and Jamaica was named the 'Caribbean's Leading Destination' for the 16th consecutive year as well as the 'Caribbean's Best Nature Destination' and the 'Caribbean's Best Adventure Tourism Destination.' In addition, Jamaica was awarded four gold 2021 Travvy Awards, including 'Best Destination, Caribbean/Bahamas,' 'Best Culinary Destination –Caribbean,' Best Travel Agent Academy Program,' as well as a *TravelAge West* WAVE award for 'International Tourism Board Providing the Best Travel Advisor Support' for a record-setting 10th time. In 2020, Jamaica was named the WTA's 'World's Leading Wedding Destination,' the 'World's Leading Cruise Destination,' and the 'World's Leading Family Destination.' Also in 2020, the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA) named Jamaica the 2020 'Destination of the Year for Sustainable Tourism'. In 2019, TripAdvisor® ranked Jamaica as the #1 Caribbean Destination and #14 Best Destination in the World. Jamaica is home to some of the world's best accommodations, attractions and service providers that continue to receive prominent global recognition.

For details on upcoming special events, attractions and accommodations in Jamaica go to the JTB's Website at www.visitjamaica.com or call the Jamaica Tourist Board at 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422).

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