

Airbnb plans to expand across Africa

Brian Chesky, CEO of Airbnb, a global community-driven hospitality company, attended the Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2015 to meet with entrepreneurs from around the world and explore the sharing economy's impact and expansion, particularly on the African continent - which represents a huge opportunity for the company. In the last twelve months alone, Airbnb has more than doubled in size in Africa.



Brian Chesky, CEO of Airbnb

"The spirit of entrepreneurialism is a common thread that unites the Airbnb community across the globe," said Brian Chesky. "I'm thrilled to meet so many entrepreneurs here at GES who will build and grow this community throughout Africa. And I'm excited to see how Airbnb will empower people across the continent to make extra income while providing travelers with a truly authentic experience."

As a Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship (PAGE), Brian Chesky joined a group of US business leaders committed to helping to develop the next generation of entrepreneurs around the world. At the GES 2015, he participated in a roundtable alongside other PAGE members and US Administration officials including US Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker. He also participated in a discussion with Steve Case on "Getting Ready for Growth," and led a Challenge Hack on the sharing economy.

Airbnb also sponsored prizes for the winners of the GES Youth and Women Spark the Fire Pitch Competition, providing winners of the African Impact, Top Women-Owned African Business, and other winners with Airbnb travel accommodations to support historically marginalised communities on their entrepreneurial journey.

As a PAGE, Chesky's signature initiative has been supporting the growth of entrepreneurship in Cuba, where Airbnb launched in April and which has already become its fastest growing market.

Many of the steps taken in Cuba to overcome challenges around internet literacy and mobile payment infrastructure will provide important lessons for Airbnb's growth in Africa.

In the wake of strong successes in key markets around the world, Airbnb plans to significantly grow its business in Africa, where the company has already seen some impressive growth. In just the last year:

- The number of listings in Africa has more than doubled
- The number of people staying in Airbnb listings in the region has increased by 145%,
- The number of Africans using Airbnb to travel has increased by 139%

To help spur additional growth, Airbnb has also appointed Nicola D'Elia as General Manager for Middle East & Africa. Previously, D'Elia was responsible for Facebook's growth and partnerships in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. D'Elia will build out a team to accelerate Airbnb's growth in the region.

In Kenya itself, there are currently over 1,400 listings available to book through Airbnb with the greatest concentration in Nairobi (788). Kenyans are also embracing Airbnb as a way of traveling, with the number of Kenyan guests using Airbnb tripling in the last 12 months.

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