

The great tourist migration...

 By [Eran Feinstein](#)

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The East African travel industry is stomping across the web.

East Africa is quickly taking its place on the world map when it comes to technology innovation and entrepreneurship, and local businesses, especially within the travel industry, are benefiting hugely as infrastructure and IT professionals migrate across East African nations.

That is not surprising since, in the last five years, regional governments have spent in excess of US\$250bn to lay down submarine fibre optic cables and, in a recent statement, communications solutions provider "Gilat Satcom" indicated that it will soon lay down a slew of additional coastal, as well as inland, fibre optic circuits. [Gilat Satcom has already served Africa with coast-to-coast](#), as well as international connectivity, laying down routes which have provided many African nations with broadband connectivity that is both fast and reliable at competitive pricing. Marketing director Eran Yoran said, "We are investing heavily so that we can provide businesses in Africa with a fully-redundant extremely stable broadband network with excellent QoS".

In addition to increased connectivity, or rather because of it, technology hubs and co-working spaces have begun to spring up everywhere, most of which are seemingly based on the iHub model, which opened in Nairobi, Kenya in 2010. These kinds of tech hubs and shared workspaces allow for entrepreneurs, as well as digital marketing professionals, developers, designers and Information Technology (IT) professionals to work individually or collaboratively on projects, and to expand their entrepreneurial endeavours by networking and masterminding with other top minds in business and IT, the result of which is a broader selection of services and business products that are fast becoming available to businesses in the region.

How technology advancement is serving the growing travel industry



The giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) is an African even-toed ungulate mammal, the tallest living terrestrial animal and the largest ruminant. These were photographed in the Eastern Serengeti. (Image: Harvey Barrison from Massapequa, NY, USA, via Wikimedia Commons)

As a travel destination, East Africa is one of the most rapidly growing regions on the planet with Tanzania, and Kenya leading the way.

Tanzania, home to the famous Serengeti National Park, is ripe with lush mountains and volcanoes as well as stunning beaches and the island of Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous archipelago just off the coast, which is made up of Zanzibar Island, Pemba Island and a multitude of smaller islands.

Reputed to be one of the best scuba diving destinations in the world, the Zanzibar coral reef structures around the islands boast an abundance of beautiful marine life and incredible visibility and year-round water temperatures that allow for skin diving.

Kenya, with its deserts and mountains, rainforests, beaches and rolling plains of grasslands is rich with scenic diversity and wildlife so it is naturally one of the most popular travel destinations in Africa. The urban jungles of Kenya are not much less

exciting, offering up large bustling cities full of cultural diversity that is both traditional and modern.

As impressive economic growth and an ever-growing tourism industry overtake the continent, investment opportunities abound in the travel accommodation sector and IT professionals, marketing service providers, web design and development companies, web hosting service providers, payment processors for credit cards, mobile payment options and [fraud prevention software providers](#), as well as other hospitality industry service, software and product companies are stepping up to meet the demand.

In addition to that, more readily available Internet and cell phone connectivity has brought the world to the backdoor of East Africa, making it easier for hospitality and travel industry enterprises to serve millions tourists from all over the planet and enabling those visitors to create itineraries as well as pay for accommodations, travel, transport, tours and more in advance of arrival on the continent as well as once on the ground and in travel mode.



Sunrise at Diani Beach, Kenya. (Image: Lukasz Ciesielski, via Wikimedia Commons)

With tablets and smart phones an integral part of travel gear these days, more and more tourists are arranging only key destinations ahead of time and booking the rest on the fly, thus allowing them to have a more spontaneous, adventure kind of travel experience, an experience that, surveys show, is more and more in demand.

ABOUT ERAN FEINSTEIN

Eran Feinstein is the CEO of Direct Pay Online, a global e-commerce and online payments solutions provider for the travel and related industries. With over 14 years of experience leading technology, sales, marketing and operation teams, Feinstein is an authority in the East African e-commerce and payments arena.

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