

Why SA's youth is the world's best-kept secret

 By [Robin Fredericks](#)

24 Jun 2019

Matt Davison, founder of tourism booking platform, Tickets n Tour believes that South Africa has some of the most educated and hardworking, underutilised youth in South Africa, who struggle to find jobs or even gain experience.



Matt Davison

As a lover of all things travel – and the ambition to start his own business – Davison, who is still young himself, has catapulted his passion, not only for the industry, but for South Africa's youth.

Here, Davison shares more with us about his company, and why he only employs young South Africans...

■ ***When, how and why was Tickets n Tour started?***

Ticketsntour.com was only officially started this month (June) by acquiring specialtours.co.za at the end of May this year. It began because of my obsession with travel and shopping for deals. I knew there was a better way to navigate multiple websites to find the best price of an activity.

There is huge growth in the activity market right now, and Special Tours had some of the best tours in SA already listed and had the functionality to compare prices for two of them. So we developed Tickets n Tour to show the best prices on all the main activity providers, on one page.

■ ***Why is it important to have South African tours and experiences promoted?***

As a South African, I proudly advocate my country every time that I travel. Yet I've found that the initial response from foreigners is always "I want to see it, but isn't it dangerous?".

This is a perception that I feel compelled to change. South Africa is so much more than a dangerous country in Africa, and my hope is that people go back to their home countries after visiting and share how South Africa is a "must-see" destination.

■ ***What do you love about South Africa's unique culture? How is it amplified through Tickets n Tour, especially that of its recent 'Special Tours' acquisition?***

I believe that South Africans are incredibly unique, in the sense that they are driven to overcome difficult circumstances with an attitude of unwavering optimism. We work hard and have a sense of pride and tenacity as South Africans. I hope that comes out in how we market Tickets n Tour. The young team works incredibly hard with the iconic "South African" tenacity. We are now entering the .com stage, which means that we will be taking on huge international travel sites as competitors to showcase our work in an international arena.

■ ***What is it about South Africa's domestic tourism that would interest the international market?***

I believe South African tourism has a lot more to offer. The pure diversity of the nation, from our history to our landscapes, is incomparable - not to mention all our wildlife! Last weekend I was showing a travel blogger friend from the USA the Garden Route. I think she fell in love - she'll tell people we are "a must see".

■ ***How can we as a country help facilitate this?***

I think as a country we're pretty good at displaying national pride. There are good investments and developments happening in the travel industry, and I believe the people of South Africa treat tourists with respect, highlighting the friendly, warm nature of our country. I do hope that more conservation takes place but I believe that depends largely on effective education and will happen in time. Articles like this one are important too, to get the word out there.

■ ***I noticed that you only employ young South Africans, why is that?***

We try to only employ young South Africans full time, as I believe that we have one of the most educated, and driven workforces in the world. I only really discovered this last year when I built a team for another startup in SA. Previously, when living abroad, I had also been outsourcing to India and the Philippines.

The quality of work and drive of the youth in South Africa is unparalleled. With that being said, we do currently have one American in our internship program and earlier this year we had an intern from Holland, I believe that this variety introduces a wider (global) perspective to learn from.

■ ***You've mentioned that the youth of South Africa is the world's best-kept secret – what makes them different, in your opinion, to the rest of the world?***

It's rather sad but we have quite a few South Africans graduating from school or university that are unable to find jobs. In fact, I was one of them and chose to teach in Thailand and upskill further.

With almost a 30% unemployment rate there are A LOT of people looking for jobs. Our tiny company used to get 20+ applications a day, so we have a lot to pick from. But I think what makes the South African youth different is that we have good education opportunities, low cost of living and better spoken and written English than many other countries. It's a combination of these three elements, along with their hunger for success, that make the youth of South Africa an HR manager's dream picking pool.

■ ***Why do you think it's important for companies, big or small, to offer job opportunities to the youth – how can this help South Africa's youth?***

Many South Africans are leaving the country right after university, contributing to a huge brain drain in South Africa. It's really important to keep these driven graduates around to contribute to the economy of South Africa. Sadly, those that choose to leave have the potential to make the biggest difference. I believe that companies should utilise the ETI (Employee Tax Incentive) and employ young South Africans to show them there is a future in South Africa and together we can build a stronger economy.

■ ***Is there any training that you offer your employees? How have they benefitted from this?***

Yes, we offer some really great training opportunities through our internship program. We test aptitudes and interests and try to drive the interns to gravitate naturally toward their interest in digital marketing areas, such as SEO, account management, editing, social media etc.

We have monthly performance reviews and incentives which give the interns an opportunity to grow in the area in which they have the most passion. We are actually pretty proud of our internship program as people who have gone through it the last year have gone on to work at great companies, like Travelstart, or head up marketing divisions in international startups.

■ ***Why is it important for the youth of South Africa to be upskilled***

It's so important to continually upskill staff so that we can compete in the international job market and global economy.

I believe that the country you come from doesn't matter as much as what you are able to do - and the passion of South African youth allows them to do a lot.

You can connect with [Tickets 'n Tour](#) via [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

ABOUT ROBIN FREDERICKS

Editor at Bizcommunity.

- #WTMA24: Celebrating 10 years of industry growth and collaboration - 16 Apr 2024
- Pullman Cape Town: Where business meets leisure - 9 Apr 2024
- Sho't Left Travel Week: A chance to boost South Africa's domestic tourism - 6 Jun 2023
- #ATMDubai: Enhancing the customer experience through AI - 5 May 2023
- SA Tourism taps into Middle Eastern market, uplifts SMMEs at ATMDubai - 4 May 2023

[View my profile and articles...](#)

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