

AUGUST 2014

TRAVEL BUYER

FOR SA CORPORATES

+Meet

A portrait of Virginia Strong, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark grey blazer over a blue and white patterned top. The background is a blurred indoor setting with light-colored walls and a blue patterned surface.

A STRONG *approach to travel at WSP*

Virginia Strong compliments OBT
as central to TMC partnership

- *Does your SLA measure up?*
- *Meeting tech trends to **AMAZE** delegates*
- *How to look at travel budgets in a new way*
- *The twists and turns of oil and gas travel procurement*



COMPLETE CUSTOM SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR MEETINGS AND INCENTIVES

Inspire your team or client with a unique & special experience
From just R1 320 per person sharing, per night all this includes:

Accommodation • Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Midnight snacks
Full conference facilities • Floorshows and cabaret every night • Live music and Bands
offered throughout the day • Disco • Gymnasium

BONUS: for every 23 full paying passengers booked receive 1 Passengers fare **FREE**
For more information and terms and conditions
call us on 0860 11 44 11 or visit msccruises.co.za



COMMENT:

Measuring up

ASERVICE level agreement (SLA) can be an extremely effective communications tool for creating a common understanding between two parties regarding services, expectations, responsibilities and priorities, believes international speaker, consultant and author **Naomi Karten**.

"However, if it is established at the wrong time, for the wrong reasons, or in the wrong way, it can create bigger problems than those it is trying to solve."

This statement is reflected in recent local research efforts, where it seems that despite the many benefits associated with a properly planned and implemented SLA, corporates are still not using SLAs optimally and even more concerning is that there are still a lot of corporates and TMCs in this market who do not have SLAs in place (page 4).

Speaking at an ABTA industry event, **Merrill Isherwood**, specialist: Travel Management, SARS, suggested that because the travel industry was so process driven and documented, it was easy for travel buyers and their teams to get so overly absorbed in efficiencies that they started

to forget that travel was still an emotional issue for most people. So even if companies had a clear SLA in place with the TMC, with precise measurables and a fancy scorecard, both parties would not reach their objectives if a key factor, 'The Personal Touch', was not achieved, she said.

In Karten's view, the value of an agreement such as an SLA is not just in the final product; the very process of establishing an SLA helps to open up communications.

And in a world so driven by opening up communications and streamlining efficiencies, one only has to turn to any news report for a grim reminder of how 'The Personal Touch' has gone missing in the whirlwind of the world's activities.

At least we have more control over our travel programmes and if more respect is shown for the people and processes that power these, then perhaps we can make a difference in our industry. In our world.

All the best!

KIM COCHRANE
(kimcochrane@telkomsa.net)

COVER

WSP Group Africa's South African operation is a prized account for a TMC. *Travel Buyer* spoke with the company's **Virginia Strong** about her approach to travel management. Cover image by **Shannon Van Zyl**.

News	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emirates dominates with 2 000 seats a day • EY-AZ deal: more options, cheaper flights • VFS Global under investigation 	
Power panel	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your SLA measure up? 	
Profile	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'Strong approach' to travel at WSP 	
News	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to business visas: what you need to know 	
Meet	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does your PCO add value? • Dining in the dark • Venue inspector: Ten Bompas Hotel • Meeting tech trends to AMAZE delegates 	
On the radar - Travel budgets	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at travel budgets in a new way 	
On the radar - Oil & gas	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The twists and turns for procurement in this sector 	
Destinations	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business in Cape Town 	
Deal detective	24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelinfo's latest top travel deals 	

PUBLISHER Kate Nathan **GROUP PUBLISHER** David Marsh **EDITOR** Natasha Tippel **CONSULTING EDITOR** Kim Cochrane **EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS** Linda van der Pol, Dorine Reinstein, Michelle Colman, Max Marx, Debbie Badham **DESIGN & LAYOUT** Tanya Bosch **PHOTOGRAPHER** Shannon Van Zyl **SALES** katen@nowmedia.co.za **ADVERTISING CO-ORDINATOR** Courtney Canham **SUBSCRIPTIONS** subs@nowmedia.co.za **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RSA** R295.00 (Free to target readership only), African R680.00, International R890.00 **PRINTED BY** Juka Printing (Pty) Ltd **PUBLISHED BY** Travel & Trade Publishing (Pty) Ltd, Now Media Centre, 32 Fricker Rd, Illovo Boulevard, Illovo, Johannesburg, PO Box 55251, Northlands, 2116, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 327 4062, Fax: +27 11 327 4094, e-mail: travelbuyer@nowmedia.co.za, web: www.travelbuyer.co.za



Brought to you by Now Media, *Travel Buyer + Meet* is a professional travel publication aimed at South African travel procurement decision-makers in travel-buying companies. This publication aims to reflect an unbiased perspective of the corporate travel industry offering insight and tools encouraging readers to manage their travel spend better. *Travel Buyer* is the media partner of ABTA, ACTE and the GBTA



New Schedule → Effective July 2014

Flight	Departure Time	Arrival Time	Day
Johannesburg/Mauritius	13:35	19:35	Daily
Mauritius/Johannesburg	09:15	11:45	Daily
→ Johannesburg/Mauritius →	09:40	15:40	Sat & Sun
→ Mauritius/Johannesburg →	17:00	19:35	Fri & Sat

Emirates dominates with 2 000 seats a day

EMIRATES' market share of international flights from South Africa will be stronger than ever from the third quarter of this year.

The airline will introduce a fourth daily flight from the end of October, departing Johannesburg at 09h30 and arriving in Dubai at 19h40.

The flight will be operated by a B777. This will bring the total number of flights to South Africa to seven daily – four to Johannesburg, two to Cape Town and one to Durban – upping capacity to around 2 000 seats from South Africa to Dubai.

According to the Centre for Aviation, Emirates currently has a share of almost 10% of international seat capacity in South Africa, excluding the additional flight. This is followed by British Airways, which holds 8,5%. SAA has 40% of the market.

As it is, European carriers are struggling to compete with

their Gulf counterparts. **Tamur Goudarzi-Pour**, Lufthansa's vp for the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Europe, told *Travel Buyer* that as a result of competition from Gulf Carriers, there was an overcapacity on the SA route. "We are committed to Africa, and plan to stay but we need to look at sensible capacity allocations, particularly in Johannesburg, and ensure we have profitable operations.

"We welcome competition on an even playing field but there are certain advantages given by the state to state-sponsored carriers that we do not receive as a purely market-driven airline. The playing field is not level," he said.

Sailesh Parbhu, md of XL Nexus Travel, says the additional daily flight is in line with demand. He adds that the airline's aggressive pricing, good connections and growing international network are resulting in increased demand.

But **Jonathan Gerber**, director of TAG Travel, says there is only seasonal demand and that it is not ongoing. "In the past Emirates was the go-to airline in terms of price; I believe that, with its origin and destination policy, this no longer the case."

Gerber explains that this is because Emirates can get better yields out of other markets. As a result, the South African market is locked out initially, particularly in the lower classes. Then, as it gets closer to the travel date and seats are still available, the airline opens access to the SA market.

"We are now getting access to far better fares in advance on other carriers. I think that the airlines will continue to compete on this basis." Gerber adds that currently he doesn't believe there is overcapacity of international flights and that Gulf carriers offer a specific need that doesn't suit all clients.

EY-AZ deal: more options, cheaper flights

THE South African travel industry has welcomed Etihad's acquisition of a 49% stake in Alitalia, saying it would boost connectivity to Europe for South African travellers and could potentially bring down fares.

The acquisition is believed to be Etihad's biggest investment in a foreign carrier to date. The conclusion of the deal is subject to final regulatory approvals.

According to **John Ridler**, spokesperson for Cullinan Outbound Tourism, an increase in competition on the route through the Middle East will bring about some positive changes for SA travellers. "Hopefully we will see more favourable fares to Italy via Abu Dhabi on Eithad."

Butch Williams, airline strategy manager of Pentavel, says although there are many available options with the likes of Emirates, Lufthansa, Air France, etc., the demand on availability during peak season often results in higher fares. "Any additional flight options should make a difference."

The acquisition agreement will undoubtedly bring about an increase in connections for SA travellers, says **Rod Rutter**, coo of XL Travel.

He says the investment will give Etihad access to the Italian market and potentially deepen its foothold in central and Eastern Europe. Rutter says the deal will also revive Alitalia and, with the right funds and management, Alitalia could become a powerful force in Europe.

Free WiFi at SA airports

AIRPORTS Company South Africa has launched a free WiFi service for passengers in the boarding areas of its nine airports.

Users will have either 30 minutes of WiFi connection or 50MB of data available at no charge. Once 30 minutes have lapsed, or 50MB of data is reached, users will be able to top up the service on a pay-as-you-go basis.

WiFi can be accessed through any AlwaysOn WiFi hotspot on laptops, smart phones or tablets that have built-in support for WiFi or are equipped with a WiFi network card.

BA tests hi-tech blanket



BRITISH Airways has begun testing a hi-tech blanket which changes colour using brainwaves, to ensure it offers customers the best flight's leep in the sky. The 'happiness blanket', which is woven with fibre optics, uses neuro-sensors to measure a person's brainwaves and changes colour, from red to blue, to show when they're at their most relaxed and meditative. The airline hopes monitoring a person's sleep and relaxation patterns during a flight will inform decisions made to improve aspects of the in-flight service; from changing the timing of meals, what food is served and even the types of films shown.

PICTURE: BRITISH AIRWAYS

VFS Global under investigation

VFS Global, a worldwide outsourcing and technology services specialist for diplomatic missions and governments, has come under scrutiny over allegations of abusive market dominance and unlawful tender procedures, resulting in excessive visa application prices and hidden fees.

A spokesperson for the Competition Commission told *Travel Buyer* it was investigating allegations of abuse of dominance against VFS, in the visa support services market. At the time of going to print, the Commission was expected to submit its recommendations on whether action should be taken against the visa service company.

VFS Global has 100% market share in visa assistance for Spain, Canada, Denmark, Austria, New Zealand, Greece, and Sweden. In principle, applicants should be able to go to the High Commission to apply for visas but often this is discouraged and clients are redirected to VFS.

Jaco Badenhorst, md of Visa Request, brought the initial complaint to the Competition Commission. He told *Travel Buyer* the market dominance VFS Global had created in several visa markets had led to excessive visa application prices with hidden fees as well as abominable service levels. For

example, for Canada VFS charges a R1 040 service fee whereas other visa companies charge R250, he says. Clients are also often made to wait for several hours at the VFS offices, adhering to "ludicrous" security measures, such as the prohibition of use of electronic devices, but they don't dare to speak up because VFS is their only way to obtain a visa, Badenhorst added.

He says Australia used to work exclusively with VFS. The embassy opened up the service to a few other companies, resulting in much better service and considerably lower prices.

Spokesperson for VFS Global, **Rustom Dhanbhoora**, denies that VFS has created a monopolistic situation, "as there are numerous other visa-processing companies in the market", and that service fees are not unjustifiably high. "Service fees levied by VFS Global are approved by the client governments and form part of the tendering procedure. The level of service fee is based on various parameters as stipulated in the tender requirement and the country of operation," he says.

VFS Global has also come under scrutiny following the tender process through which it became the sole service provider to receive and manage South Africa's visa applications for inbound travellers.

News flash...

■ VFS Global has signed an exclusivity contract with the Portuguese consulates in Johannesburg and Durban.

From July 28, residents from Johannesburg and the surrounding areas must apply for a Portuguese visa through VFS at its premises in Johannesburg. Travellers from KZN will need to apply through VFS in Durban from August 1 onwards.

Appointments must be made online.

For Cape Town travellers, the visa application process is unchanged.

■ TELEPERFORMANCE has signed an agreement with the Australian Government to handle all the Australian visa application centre (VAC) services in South Africa, effective July 1. VACs are located in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Save the date

The SITE Summit 2014 will be held on September 19 at the Regency Hyatt Rosebank Hotel in Johannesburg.

"The purpose of the summit is to raise awareness, promote and educate corporate buyers and the industry at large about incentive travel as a proven and effective business tool, to drive workforce motivation and performance reward in South Africa and in the rest of Africa," says organiser, **Henk Graaff**.

Contact him at 082 376 1616.

New Protea hotel to be 'premier MICE spot'

PROTEA Hotel Fire & Ice! has announced plans to open in Menlyn, Pretoria, early next year.

The six-storey hotel, which is being built in Summit Place, a new commercial precinct under development opposite the Menlyn Park Mall, will feature a stand-alone, double-storey conference facility adjacent to the hotel.

The ground floor will be able to accommodate up to 500 people and upstairs there will be two 150-seater conference rooms and a variety of boardrooms. ■

Explore the best
travel deals
in the world!



Use our FREE online
or mobile channels.

Our travel experts
in support 24/7/365.

Win Free
holidays

UNIGLOBE
Travel

access more™



+27 (0) 11 444-8910

enquiries@uniglobetravel.co.za

www.uniglobetravel.co.za

TB1811SD

Does your SLA measure up?

A recent ABTA Buyers Breakfast in Johannesburg saw delegates discussing TMC service levels by focusing on practical guidance for positive engagement as well as ways to approach service delivery challenges. **Kim Cochrane** looks at some of the key issues raised, in particular the service level agreement (SLA), by opening up the discussion to different industry participants.



Merrill Isherwood,
Travel Management,
SARS

RESearch generally shows that corporate companies and travel management companies (TMCs) continue to formulate and enter into service level agreements (SLAs) with clear expectations, conditions and measurements prior to the commencement of their partnership to improve and maintain service levels.

But according to a recent postgraduate study conducted by **Tanja Lapersonne**, tourism lecturer at Varsity College in Port Elizabeth, less than half the respondents in her research had entered into a formal SLA with their TMCs.

Her study was conducted through Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University as part of her BCom Honours: Tourism degree, with her primary objective being to formulate a "21st-century SLA that would ensure service delivery of key performance indicators within the corporate travel management process".

Interestingly, Lapersonne's finding was echoed in an ABTA snap survey about TMC service level challenges, the results of which were presented at a Buyers Breakfast event in Johannesburg in June.

Of the ABTA survey respondents, 89% said they had an SLA in place with their TMCs and as many as 11% said they did not have such a contract. Of respondents who rated themselves as 'extremely happy' with their TMC, they all had SLAs, 60% met monthly to review these (40% met twice per annum), 80% had KPIs and all worked very or fairly closely with their TMC regarding KPIs.

Kananelo Makhetha, md of BCD Travel SA, says these statistics are more or less correct in terms of his company's dealings with clients. "SME customers are not very particular about SLAs and in the instances where these agreements are in place, clients are not strict about them and often pass over the opportunity to utilise the SLA

to derive better value from the relationship with the TMC." He says most multinational clients operating in African countries do insist on formalised SLAs, but this is not the case with local clients, particularly SMEs.

Advocate Louis Nel of Benchmark, who attended the ABTA event, told *Travel Buyer* that in his experience, he agreed there were still a lot of corporates and TMCs in this market who did not have SLAs in place and if they did, there was not enough focus on them or enough clarity regarding key performance areas (KPIs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) as well as how to link these with performance and breach of contract.

Are SLAs still relevant in today's corporate travel office?

Yes, believes **Merrill Isherwood**, specialist: Travel Management, SARS, who spoke at the event and offered practical guidance for managing the TMC relationship more effectively. "But that said, while we have a clear SLA in place with our TMC, with precise, measurable KPIs and a fancy scorecard, both parties – TMC and corporate client – won't reach their objectives if a key factor, 'The Personal Touch', is not achieved."

Isherwood says because the travel industry is so process driven and documented, it is easy for travel buyers and their teams to get so overly absorbed in efficiencies that they forget travel is still an emotional issue for most people.

Internal stakeholder satisfaction is a key focus area for the SARS Travel Management Office. "For us, happy travellers are our most important priority. Will they be any happier if a booking is done in ten minutes as opposed to 15 minutes? No! The only thing they want is that

the travel experience runs smoothly for them. For example, if a traveller tells me: "I've missed my flight!", my first response should not be: "I'll get you onto the next flight" but rather "Are you okay?"

For this reason, continues Isherwood, honesty is critical to ensure all communication is understood. In addition, to achieve success, the TMC and travel buyer must both have mutual goals that are also aligned to their company's objectives and staff KPIs – and more importantly, they must have mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities.

"Do I fully understand my TMC's mandate from their management and do they understand mine? How do we assist each other? This contributes towards external stakeholder satisfaction, another key priority."

If this framework is not in place, the SLA will not have as much relevance or clout, she believes.

For Makhetha, SLAs are still relevant because they set service performance expectations at the outset and allow the TMC to allocate resources and price them in line with service level expectations.

In Lapersonne's view, the SLA framework defines the KPIs and service levels expected from the TMC, which are linked to financial incentives and penalties for exceeding or falling short of these agreed expectations. "The SLA provides a clear understanding of both party's values and goals to assist in excluding future questions or challenges. To ensure that an SLA is effective, it should comprise seven to ten measurable metrics which are managed, tracked and audited on a monthly or quarterly basis."

How often should SLAs be reviewed?

In her studies, Lapersonne was assessing the idea of an SLA as an instrument to ensure service



Tanja Lapersonne,
tourism lecturer,
Varsity College PE



Kananelo Makhetha,
BCD Travel SA md



Adv Louis Nel,
Benchmark

delivery and found that while research indicates that corporate travel procurement managers are becoming more reliant on SLAs to manage their relationship with their TMCs, only a small percentage of 38% were using their SLA as a relationship management tool.

"The SLA framework defines the KPIs and levels of service that are expected from a TMC and while 87% of respondents agreed that KPIs should be linked to the SLA, only 46% felt that a SLA should be revisited annually, with a mere 4% opting for a monthly review."

Isherwood suggests at least a bi-annual review, if not quarterly, in the event of changing requirements.

Advocate Nel agrees it should be a dynamic, ongoing process. "There should be quarterly performance management meetings and at these, compliance should be reviewed. In fact I believe SLAs should rather be called performance management agreements (PMAs) and it is always useful when drafting such an agreement to look at benchmarks in other industries."

Makhetha says most formal SLA reviews are quarterly although the performance indicators are tracked monthly. "Limit the number of service performance measures and have them measurable. Ensure that they drive customer satisfaction of all main stakeholders."

To avoid nasty surprises, what should SLAs include?

Lapersonne has seen how in recent years the procurement departments of corporate companies have become involved and influenced by the travel procurement process through the introduction of new measurable KPIs that impacted on travel costs and service elements.

"A KPI (also referred to as a critical success factor) is a key buying factor that travel procurement managers will evaluate during the selection process of a TMC. Basic KPIs, such as response time and speed and quality of reservation, still form part of today's KPIs, however travel procurement managers are now including metrics that will improve and escalate their travel management programmes."

While elements do differ according to client preferences, Makhetha says the

common elements relate to response times to bookings as well as general communication, service error ratios, customer satisfaction indexes, data and documents accuracy and query resolution.

Makhetha points to an Advito white paper on improving travel programme management through strategic KPIs and meaningful savings measurements, which states the optimum number of strategic KPIs for a corporate travel programme is eight to 12, balancing comprehensiveness with avoidance of over-complexity.

For this reason, Isherwood maintains that SLAs must include clearly defined expectations that have been discussed and agreed to by both parties prior to inclusion in the SLA.

Do corporates currently make optimal use of their SLAs?

In Isherwood's opinion, no. "SLAs are seen to be a measuring instrument used more for punitive measures than as a working document that is regularly reviewed and adjusted as business needs dictate."

Advocate Nel is in agreement. "There should be a distinct link with breach and contract termination. What is also common is the misperception that an SLA is not a contract. It can be a stand-alone contract or attached to a contract as an addendum. It is imperative that this is addressed and linked to mediation in order to avoid costly litigation when things don't work out."

According to Lapersonne's study, she has found that while SLAs are standard documents in the majority of corporate organisations, corporate travel procurement managers are propelling past traditional targets and metrics that measure service delivery and are shifting their focus towards SLAs that will reduce costs and reflect intricate service key performance indicators.

"This development is due to the fact that organisations have their own quality assurance programmes and expect TMCs to adhere to similar standards and continual technology development."

HOW TO enhance service levels with a PERSONAL TOUCH

MERRILL Isherwood, specialist: Travel Management, SARS, offers this advice to travel buyers:

- Does the TMC understand the nature of your employees' travel? Explain clearly any 'exceptional' travel.
- Understand TMC and industry limitations and educate your travellers accordingly. For example, understand what a penalty is and explain to travellers why the TMC is charging it (an industry requirement).
- We have expectations of our service providers but our travellers also have a responsibility to suppliers; they cannot be disrespectful to suppliers or their staff. Any bad behaviour is brought to our attention at the Travel Management Office. Compliance is our top priority, which incorporates respect for company policy, processes and for the people who compiled these and for those people who are performing the processing of bookings etc. Through compliance, costs are automatically contained and respect is shown for company money.
- Trust that your TMC will always do their best and ensure they know they can expect your best in return. Always be there to support them. The TMC must know they can approach you at any time if they need assistance. Both parties must know and acknowledge that you are in this together.
- Your TMC must also always know you will present them in a positive light. Even if an error was made, go back to the traveller with a positive solution. For example: "Yes, there was an error but these are the steps we put in place to prevent it happening again."
- Do not expect your TMC to make the difficult calls.
- Bring in the humanity factor, with mutual respect in all interactions.
- Only use upfront discounts and nett rates; no commissions. Our dealings are transparent; the TMC discloses any commissions and proof of these are submitted.
- Bridge the gap between your KPIs and TMC service levels. My team has unique roles and they also have KPIs. Our goals/KPIs are best measured by client satisfaction surveys. ■



Virginia Strong and Shaun Lovett

How travel just happens at WSP

With a monthly travel spend in the region of R1m and 800 trips a month, WSP Group Africa's South African operation is a prized account for a TMC. The group enjoys a comfortable relationship with Wings Travel Management, hinged around the efficiency of a customised online booking solution, writes **Michelle Colman**.

VIRGINIA Strong found "a mess" when her superiors at WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd asked her to review its travel accounts. The more she investigated, the less she could reconcile and the more inefficiencies she found.

After undertaking an extensive search for a new TMC, she found an 'extra miler' in Wings Travel Management and has been working with the company since April 2012, renewing their annual contract twice.

WSP is one of the world's leading multinational engineering firms, with a presence on all five continents. Strong holds the post of commercial manager for WSP Africa's Civil and Structural Engineers Division, located in Bryanston, Sandton. In this country, the group has a staff complement of 800 nationwide, working from nine offices. Monthly travel trips average at some 800, making the company's business no small account.

Most of the travel takes place domestically, with a fair amount into Africa. Consulting in civil, structural, building services, environmental and industrial projects, the company undertakes varied assignments which currently include building road infrastructure in Lesotho, constructing prisons in Mozambique and developments for South African Breweries in Namibia.

Wings' robust presence in Africa, including an office in Nigeria where WSP conducts much business, coupled with its Reserve Bank approval to ticket anywhere on the continent, were further inducements to contract the TMC.

Company travel policy prioritises cost

efficiency, comfort and safety. "We limit accommodation costs to R1 000 per night, car hire to B and C categories and all air travel, irrespective of rank, must take place in economy class," states Strong. "Even the managing director, **Mathieu du Plooy**, flies economy," says Wings Travel Management's **Shaun Lovett**, "and that's testimony to the emphasis on cost saving".

With the African travel, WSP leans on Wings for risk assessments in the health and safety arena, and daily tracking of travelling staff. Both parties are members of International SOS and WSP runs a buddy system for staff on the move. Says Strong: "We put our tracking to the test recently, when Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta's International Airport caught fire last year. I wanted to know how many of our staff were in Kenya at the time and how many needed to be transported out of the country. Wings was able to give me a report in next to no time."

Online booking solution is central to the partnership

Central to the WSP/Wings partnership is an Amadeus-based online booking tool (OBT) adapted to WSP's many specific needs and strenuous controls. Wings has trained a team of 30 travel bookers at WSP's countrywide offices to effect all domestic bookings. The team, all "savvy PAs and administration assistants", were coached by Wings' OBT specialist at boardroom tables and in videoconferencing sessions.

Strong compliments the system's user-friendliness, its tracking and its allocation of expenses per division or as an overhead or project-related cost. All information is pulled through to financial statements to recover project-related travel.

'In policy' transactions are automatically approved – a distinct advantage when so much of the company's domestic travel is done at short notice. But the OBT flags any transaction that contravenes WSP travel policy for Strong's attention, at the same time offering travel bookers computerised fields to explain why an 'out of policy' action is necessary. Strong and Wings staff are in the habit of speaking each afternoon to discuss approvals that have not yet been cleared.

International bookings are high-touch transactions, made by a dedicated senior consultant at Wings, with the support of two back-up personnel, to ensure that passports, visas and vaccinations are in place. Travel bookers submit requisitions to Wings, once again customised and bearing divisional cost-centre codes for report allocation.

Wings' quality assurance team investigates every hiccup. Says Lovett: "The team ensures that our employees adhere to stringent internal controls, implementing corrective and preventative measures. Any service failure, regardless of origin or scale, results in the generation of a Process Improvement Report (PIR) for investigation. The entire process culminates in quarterly, client-specific WingsIFI (Incident Free Index) reports, detailing our service-related performance and that of our suppliers.

CHANGES TO BUSINESS VISAS: *what you need to know*

By **Dorine Reinstein**

If the client's staff is to blame, we educate, but if the fault is ours, we implement further controls."

Lovett adds that the TMC is the only one in Africa to have its quality management system that is ISO 9001:2008, certified through Bureau Veritas.

WSP's reporting requirements are considerable. Strong gets a daily report of which staff members will be travelling where in the following seven days. Then, over and above central reporting for the group, all divisions and offices require individualised financial reports on a monthly basis to monitor performance. For this task, Wings employs a self-developed MIS reporting tool called goData, which links into one standardised platform globally. "We also have our head office in Quebec requesting reports, such as those relative to carbon emissions," says Strong. These too are calculated by Wings goData.

It may sound sappy, but Strong does notice how **Tony Sofianos**, Wings's global ceo, breaks to welcome her when she pops into the company's head office. She appreciates the TMC's proactivity. "After a recent round of travel-booker errors, Wings suggested a refresher course," she explains. What's more, the TMC, through Lovett's assistance, has helped her realise her goal, that "travel must just happen," seamlessly 24/7/365. ■

BESIDES new requirements for families travelling with children into and out of South Africa, which has dominated the news recently, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has also implemented a few changes to existing work permits and business visas through its new Immigration Act, which have implications for business travellers working for large multinationals in South Africa.

Visitor's visa with authorisation to work

This visa applies to those who are employed by a company abroad and have a need to work in South Africa for a maximum period of 90 days. No extensions will be permitted on this visa.

Visa-exempt foreign nationals must now obtain a pre-approval letter for their Section 11(2) work authorisation from the appropriate South African mission overseas, rather than applying electronically with the DHA. For these nationals, there are likely to be lengthy delays as the overseas missions implement this new procedure.

Visa-required foreign nationals must apply for a Section 11(2) at a South African mission (rather than DHA) at the same time that they apply for a visa. These applicants may see improved processing times because they will now apply for their visas and Section 11(2) work authorisation in tandem rather than wait for

pre-approval from DHA before applying for a visa.

Spouses and children

According to Intergate Immigration, one of the biggest issues, under the previous Act, was the lack of an accompanying spouse option. Under the new Act, spouses and children will now be permitted to immigrate to South Africa on an accompanying basis.

Critical Skills visa

Under the new Act, work visas have seen the removal of two categories, the 'quota' work permit and the 'exceptional skills' work permit. The two permits have been amalgamated and create the addition of a new work visa category – the 'Critical Skills' work visa.

'Quota work' permit holders and 'exceptional skills' permit holders will not be able to renew their work permits under the same terms. They will have to look at other work visa options as soon as possible.

General Work visa

This visa will be issued for a maximum of up to five years.

Applications for general work visas will now require a certificate from the Department of Labour confirming that, despite a diligent search, the prospective employer has been unable to find a suitable

South African or permanent residency holder to fill the position. Intergate Immigration anticipates that there will be a longer processing time due to the additional step.

Intra Company Transfer visa

This visa, which is currently issued for a period of two years, has been extended to a maximum of four years under the new Act. A person already in SA on an ICT visa will be allowed to extend their visa to maximise the four-year validity option. No further applications for extensions beyond this four-year period can be made.

Don't overstay your visa!

Intergate Immigration says much harsher treatment will be handed out to those who overstay their visa and can result in them being declared undesirable for as many as five years.

All foreigners will need to have a valid visa in their passport or face not being allowed back in to South Africa for a time period of between one and five years. If they travel out of South Africa without a valid visa or permit, they will be declared an undesirable person.

Source: Intergate Immigration (www.intergate-immigration.com) and BAL Corporate Immigration (www.balglobal.com) ■



Tel: 011 978-5055 or 021 418-1366/7
Johannesburg.reservations@airnamibia.aero
Capetown.reservations@airnamibia.aero

Daily flights from Cape Town & Joburg...

to Windhoek Walvis Bay Frankfurt Luanda Lusaka Harare Vic Falls



Where does your PCO add value?

As budgets tighten and corporates find themselves forced to cut back in as many areas as possible, they may find themselves questioning whether they could do without the service of PCOs. Professionals share their views on where PCOs add value and what makes them indispensable.



Zodwa Msimang, Ikono Communications



Megan Buchanan, Event Affairs



Jacqui Abrahams, Accenture



Elouise Cloete, Shift Ideas



Howard Stephens, Ex-Nedbank CPO

THE relationships PCOs have with suppliers are a significant value-add. As **Elouise Cloete** from Shift Ideas points out, PCOs have long-standing relationships with suppliers and hence experience better results with negotiations.

"As an event management company, we receive information regarding new suppliers and venues on a daily basis. This information is then sifted through, meetings are conducted and top suppliers' information is then compiled into a database – we then have access to all sorts of different suppliers at our fingertips. With this information, we are able to source a suitable supplier for a specific need and budget quickly and effectively," adds **Megan Buchanan** from Event Affairs.

Zodwa Msimang from Ikono Communications believes that it is a PCO's ability to conceptualise an appropriate theme and approach to the event that makes all the difference.

PCOs have an extensive knowledge base of concepts and ideas that they remain abreast of through newsletters, blogs and magazines. "We are able to use all these ideas and adapt them to create a unique concept for corporate clients," says Buchanan. She adds that it's also the responsibility of meeting planners to remain abreast of the rules and regulations that pertain to events.

Buchanan summarises the value PCOs bring to the table by saying that while any employee can sift through suppliers, spending time researching various event concepts, an event manager's ability to pull all those elements together efficiently so the conference runs smoothly without a hitch is invaluable.

According to clients

SA workplace solutions – services lead for Accenture, **Jacqui Abrahams**, reveals that corporates value the services PCOs provide because of their up-to-date

knowledge of latest events, themes, add-ons, trends and technology, as well as familiarity with regulations and policies in the events space.

"PCOs also add value because of the discounts they can achieve with their preferred suppliers – they then pass those refunds back on to us."

She adds that possibly one of the most important aspects of a PCO's offering is its payment process, which is a great deal less onerous than many corporate internal payment processes. "If necessary, we have the capability to run events ourselves but payments and reconciliation would become a major headache," she maintains.

Howard Stephens, ex-chief procurement officer (CPO) of Nedbank, has a different view on the value that PCOs bring to the table. He says Nedbank tries not to use PCOs at internal events and generally chooses to bring in the skills and expertise of PCOs when there are external parties included in the mix. He further notes that PCOs are most necessary when events take on requirements that are less straightforward. For example, when a specialist venue is used, particular speakers are needed or when the venue itself doesn't provide the services that are needed. "In these cases we need to make sure that we have somebody who can make all these elements come together seamlessly."

Going above and beyond

It's essential for PCOs to demonstrate their worth to their clients by going above and beyond. Cloete believes this can be achieved by having an open-book policy in terms of billing and not billing a management fee on elements where the PCO as a supplier did not add necessarily add value.

Equally important is the PCO's in-depth understanding of the company they are working with

and its meetings and events needs. "We have to be an extension of their team and ensure that they get the very best deals from our suppliers," maintains Msimang.

Closely linked to this is good communication. Buchanan says "over-communication" often goes a long way. "Thanking your client for the business after the event with a gift or even just a card is something that is highly valued by our corporate clients. Adding small touches such as candles or flowers – anything you think will be appreciated and may have been overlooked – is a great way to add value."

Helpful insights

Stephens reveals that PCOs should capitalise on their extensive knowledge to impress corporates. This relates specifically to potential unknowns and areas in which PCOs might have insider tips – they can give their clients helpful insights and advice, which may spare them hassles down the line.

He confirms that corporates are particularly interested in hiring PCOs that are completely transparent in their billing and that don't have hidden commissions on value-adds. "We want to work with PCOs who will point out the areas in which we can handle things ourselves and those in which we can't – they shouldn't be charging us for tasks we can take care of ourselves."

Abrahams emphasises the importance of PCOs understanding their clients' business and policies so that they have a firm grip on the organisation's needs, giving them the ability to make helpful suggestions when it comes to venues and associated services. She notes, however, that in her experience, PCOs are willing to bend over backwards for their corporate clients and are more than capable of delivering on their expectations.



DINING in the DARK



Conference planners looking for a different take on dinner should consider hosting it in the dark. **Liesl Venter** finds out more.

DISCONCERTING, nerve-racking but a complete eye-opener probably best describe Dinner in the Dark – a concept developed by **Hein Wagner**, an international speaker and adventurer.

Born blind, Wagner has spent a lifetime educating people around the capabilities of people who are vision impaired but his latest offering to the corporate world gives a rare glimpse into the life of someone who can't see.

"Having vision does not necessarily mean one has to have sight," says Wagner, whose mission in life is to inspire as many people as he can.

According to him, Dinner in the Dark as a concept is not new and has been done in various formats internationally.

"The idea is straightforward and simple – dinner is served to guests in complete darkness. All items that can create light are taken away and guests are literally having a blind experience," he explains. "We have adapted it slightly in that we do not use waiters with night vision

but visually impaired people, but this is only revealed to the guests at the end of dinner."

Wagner says most people who have been hosted have found it to be a life-changing event.

"Sometimes you need to be in the dark to be able to really open your eyes and see," he says. "It is an extremely positive experience and great fun is had. Through all the fumbling in the dark, awareness is raised of the abilities that blind people have, by sharing on a very small scale what the life of a visually impaired person is like."

How it works

The venue is critical, says Wagner. "There are several technical requirements to hosting a dinner and so we prefer to use pre-selected venues for the event. In most cities we have preferred venues that we use and that are able to help us create the experience."

Wagner facilitates the evening and guides the guests through their experience in the dark.

The evening kicks off with all guests having to remove any item of light from their person including watches, cellphones and cameras.

"The reason we do this is because it is disconcerting to find yourself suddenly in the dark and it is instinctive to try and light up where you are."

Once light-free, guests are escorted into the pitch-black venue. It is loaded table by table with guests being guided by their highly skilled waiter at the door who assists them with finding their seats. "After that, the fun starts," he says.

Once seated, guests have to find the drinks on the table and pour for themselves. Starters and the main course are also served in the dark and while there are utensils on the table it is generally accepted that most guests just use their hands.

Luckily, one is also provided with an apron.

"It is a very noisy experience," says Wagner. "In the dark, introverts become extroverts, and extroverts become extreme extroverts. It really

comes down to it that when one sense is temporarily removed the other four senses are heightened."

Dessert is usually served with the lights on. "Throughout their experience in the dark there is a candle and matches on the table but guests only realise this when they are told about it and are given the opportunity to switch the lights on."

The dinner can be linked to various themes, including trust, communications, leadership and respect.

The event is suitable for small or large groups and up to 130 guests can be accommodated in one sitting. Very important, says Wagner, is that a detailed dietary requirement of each guest is necessary beforehand to ensure that no mishaps happen in the dark.

He and his team also provide live entertainment during dinner should this be requested.

"It really is a unique and unforgettable experience that is unlike anything most people would ever have experienced."

► *Meet continues on p 10*



SUE MARILLIER & ASSOCIATES
EVENTS CREATION, EVENTS SERVICES & EVENTS MANAGEMENT
WELCOME TO OUR WORLD
A world where dreams become reality...breathing life into events, evoking emotion, precision thinking & strategic focus.
In proud partnership with Keystone Productions
www.smassociates.co.za | Info@smassociates.co.za | Tel: +27 11 704 1619 | Cell: +27 82 829 4421

TB1819SD

NEED SPACE?

We enlisted the help of meetings expert, **Carla Rossouw**, to inspect the new conference centre at the Ten Bompas Hotel, Johannesburg.



CARLA Rossouw is a PCO at her company, *Vespasian Consulting*. She has been in the industry since 2004 and is a member of SAACI as well as the PCO Alliance Network. To further enhance her knowledge in all things travel, she is also a travel consultant, travel writer, tour leader and restaurant reviewer on a freelance basis.



DCP rates
from R525pp



What Carla Rossouw found...

TEN Bompas opened in November 1996, a boutique hotel developed from the original Dunkeld home where owner, **Christoff van Staden**, lived in his youth. Van Staden and partner, **Peter Aucamp**, are still the owners today.

The Space Conference Centre is the new addition to Ten Bompas Boutique Hotel and Winehouse Restaurant. 'Space' opened in February and its minimalist interior is well suited for conferences and a variety of functions and events. All the venues have natural light and doors on to the garden.

New conference and function space:

- Big space, double-volume room suitable for 60-80 guests
- Small space, suitable for 20-30 guests
- Big and small space combined, 80-100 guests
- Space lounge can accommodate 10 guests
- Outside patio allows for 20 guests
- Flat grass area suitable for a marquee for up to 80 guests

The *à la carte* restaurant is open to the public and is closed on Sunday evenings. The seasonal menu affords a small selection of delectable, varied and hearty dishes supervised by executive chefs, **Andrew Scott Fleet** and **Johannes de Bruijn**. The in-room dining menu is the same as the seasonal *à la carte* menu and is available from 06h30-22h00. The kitchen is not halaal friendly but strictly halaal and kosher meals can be ordered from an external service provider and carry a surcharge.

- The restaurant has a separate 20-seat private dining room, also suitable for conference sessions
- The main restaurant can host around 50 guests and is also available on an exclusive-use basis

- The upstairs small boardroom can accommodate six guests
- The upstairs bigger boardroom can accommodate 14 guests

General

Suites are spacious, individually decorated and comfortable. Two suites have wheelchair access. Individual female travellers will be at ease while staying at Ten Bompas.

- Ten suites, four of which can be twin.
- Complimentary services to hotel guests include breakfast, uncapped WiFi throughout, extensive mini bar, sparkling wine and fresh fruit on arrival, laundry service, daily afternoon *canapés*, speciality coffees, parking, shuttle service in the area, including Rosebank (closest) and Sandton (most convenient) Gautrain stations.
- Room facilities include lounge, dual fireplace, Nespresso coffee machine, i-pod docking station with electronic alarm, CD player, bedding and pillow options, steam shower, separate bath, double basin, separate guest toilet, Charlotte Rhys and L'Occitane amenities, slippers and gowns.
- Green aspects include organic vegetable and herb garden, LED lighting throughout, rainwater tanks for irrigation, worm farm and recycling of paper, glass, plastic and cans.
- Room rates (two pax, including breakfast) from R3 500.

This establishment is well run and managed by the very capable **Danie Potgieter**. Staff retention is high. I found staff to be friendly and competent. Staff training and multi-skilling is a priority. Ten Bompas knows what guests want and continuously delivers and maintains a high standard of service.

► *Meet continues on p12*



Engage in innovative CONFERRNCING

We at Forever are passionate about making your conference an unforgettable experience.

Let our experienced Forever sales team assist you step by step to ensure a successful conference, teambuilding, event or function worth remembering. We have a wide selection of beautiful venues in breathtaking settings. Whatever your needs are, Forever has the venue and the planning expertise to make it happen!

Contact us today to book your next memorable event.



Forever Portfolio

Resorts Badplaas ★★★, Blyde Canyon ★★★/★★★★, Gariep ★★★, Loskopdam ★★★, Phalaborwa Safari Park ★★★, Plettenberg ★★★, Swadini ★★★, Tshipise ★★★, Warmbaths ★★★ **Lodges** Amanzi Mountain Reserve ★★★★★, Isiyala Game Lodge ★★★, Matombu Wild ★★★★★, Mount Sheba ★★★★★ Ramoswe Lodge ★★★, Waterfall Safari Lodge ★★★ **Hotels** @ Badplaas ★★★, Centurion ★★★★★, Warmbaths ★★★, White River ★★★ **Retreats** Leopard's Trail Guest Farm, Rex's Ranch, Ruby Cliff Horse Ranch

Meeting tech trends to **AMAZE** delegates



Meeting technology doesn't only help conference and event managers execute events, but it also provides additional take-home value for delegates, writes **Sue Marillier** of Sue Marillier & Associates. She works in partnership with Keystone Productions.

THE rate at which technology is changing for meetings and events is staggering, making the deliverable to clients more professional and seamless. Only a few years ago, an overhead projector was still included as the standard equipment at all venues.

The focus today is more about the learning outcomes from conference sessions and significantly less about the social aspect of the conference. Senior management contingents are aligning themselves to the return on investment (ROI) benefit they will get after spending millions on the event or conference. This is where technology can play a significant role.

Top technology trends

Video mapping



VIDEO mapping enables you to project images on a multi-dimensional shape or form. The options are endless, from projecting onto a car or even a building. Imagine a landmark such as the Sydney Opera House being transformed by video mapping. In local terms it could be an old building in the middle of town or the launch of your new offices.

Multi-image display presentation software

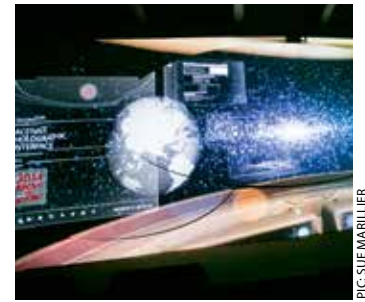
THIS software runs on multiple devices, from large white screens to plasmas. It creates an orchestrated, powerful presentation and allows your technical team to manipulate what is shown on each projection screen.

Gesture media

GESTURE media allows presenters to control presentations by their own body movements so there is no need for a device such as a clicker, mouse or keyboard. If gesture media is beyond budget, consider presentation software such as Prezi, which is a storytelling tool.

3D animation video opening

THIS is a great way to open your event. It is, however, a costly option since the man hours required are more than ten times that of a normal video produced. It does enable you to create your own unique message and visuals, with no stock footage. The end result is breathtaking!



Stretch your budget further

Video mapping using different surfaces

THINK smaller when you consider video mapping. Yes, it would be amazing to project the whole building or conference venue's walls but why not make this technology work for you on a smaller projection surface?



Gobo projection



RECONSIDER the old faithful gobo by projecting it onto a bigger surface, enhanced by some general wash lights. The end result is amazing and yet so simple!

sakhumzi
restaurant
Authentic Soweto Experience

CHOSEN BY
TOP 100 JSE-LISTED
CORPORATES FOR
"YEAR-END FUNCTIONS"

Web: www.sakhumzi.co.za | Tel. No. 011 536 1379
Email: dine@sakhumzi.co.za

TB1821



Concerts



Conferences



Exhibitions

STRETCH your imagination and ***SHRINK*** your budget,

...with the Tshwane Events Centre, where we can give you all the space you need at an unbeatable price.

With over 82 000 m² covered exhibiting space and open and multi purpose areas, the Tshwane Events Centre can accommodate 50 000 visitors simultaneously - and safely park 3 500 cars.

With eight purpose built, well-appointed conference rooms, an executive boardroom and eleven halls varying in size, we can handle any size event, to suit any budget - big or small.

Add to this our arena that accommodates 25 000 people and a full-blown theatre for 460 patrons, it is clear that we size up, or down to suit your needs.

State-of-the-art infrastructure services - wireless internet access, internet connections, secretarial services, banking facilities, top class catering facilities - ensure that our turnkey solutions are just that.

***TRUST US TO MAKE YOUR
NEXT EVENT A MEMORABLE
EXPERIENCE!***



***DON'T DELAY, MAXIMISE
YOUR NEXT EVENT TODAY...***

TEL: +27 12 327 1487

EMAIL: ricky@tshwabac.co.za

www.tshwane-events.co.za

Look at travel budgets in a new way

By Dorine Reinstein



Johan Persson, head of global account management EMEA & NORAM at Radius Travel



Scott Gillespie, tClara managing partner



Collin Austen, business development executive, Club Travel

AS difficult economic times combined with a volatile rate of exchange continue to put pressure on corporate travel budgets in South Africa, **Scott Gillespie**, an expert in the field of travel data analysis and tClara managing partner, is looking into a new and more innovative way for travel managers to tackle budgets.

In a recent blog, 'A Brighter Way to Measure Travel's Impact', Gillespie explores the possibility of forgetting about return on investment (ROI) and 'Big Data' to focus rather on what matters and what's measurable.

"Think about the issue this way: At what point is too much travel counter-productive? Spend too much time on planes and you're not selling. Cross too many time zones and you're not giving clients such good advice, or making such good decisions on that oil rig."

Gillespie offers to analyse productivity of road warriors in a company by looking at sales, hours billed, customer satisfaction, safety as well as absenteeism, engagement, disability costs and retention. Once this information has been obtained, it should be measured against a comparable group of employees in the company who have done much less travel.

"These facts give travel managers, HR executives and business leaders a clear-eyed view of travel's impact. Making solid business cases for changing travel workloads,

travel budgets and travel policies is now ever so much easier."

Could Gillespie's principles be applied to SA budgets?

"I think it's a very interesting way to look at budgeting," believes **Collin Austen**, business development executive at Club Travel. He explains that finding a healthy balance between procurement, the business and the traveller is something towards which every company strives. Austen warns, however, that as with all economic principles, Gillespie's theory will not work in all circumstances or in all companies.

"For a long time we preached that travel buying needs a balance between HR – traveller and staff wellbeing – and cost containment or procurement," agrees **Johan Persson**, head of global account management EMEA & NORAM at Radius Travel. Persson welcomes Gillespie's theory as a refreshing way to look at budgets, as most customers still focus too much on cost containment and not enough on loss of efficiency and traveller wellbeing.

"To highlight the fact that there is a cost to having your people travel beyond the price of the ticket and their expense claims while they're travelling, is valid."

Like Austen, Persson also warns that although the theory behind Gillespie's principles is sound, it

could come under scrutiny from an analytical point of view. "I think it's a really good metric that in theory could be applied very well. The challenge lies in its practical implication."

He explains it could be tricky to find two departments in an organisation that have similar functions but where one department travels considerably more than the other. "I could compare a sales department where people travel a lot to an HR department where staff don't travel so much. But the functions of the sales team and HR team are completely different."

Shirley Le Roux, TraveluXion md, agrees: "I have read Scott Gillespie's approach and I hear where he is coming from but I think many markets and organisations are not even at a stage where they can measure the impact of travel as they don't have effective systems in place to enable real-time reporting."

According to Le Roux, most organisations in SA are still grappling with post-dated data received from their TMCs. Only once companies have a solution in place to accurately measure data across multiple TMCs in real time, does Gillespie's approach become viable as a budgeting tool.

Richard Whitfield from T-Systems South Africa, believes Gillespie's approach will only work if business travel expense is managed effectively in a company.

World class organisations are looking for improved control of travel budgets

For the solution, contact TraveluXion.

Visit us at • www.TraveluXion.co.za
Email us at • Debbie.Duncan@traveluxion.co.za
Office • 011 548 7300
Mobile • 083 616 0349

TraveluXion

clear software for corporate travel • smart people, smart solutions

follow us on and twitter at @TraveluXion



Shirley Le Roux,
managing director
TraveluXion



Richard Whitfield,
Finance, T-Systems SA



Rene van Moerkerken, travel & events co-ordinator at Baroque Medical

"In order for the approach to work, one cannot necessarily do away with big data immediately. A corporate, if not there yet, needs to analyse the company's big data in detail first to determine the current status. Thereafter, the corporate can create reporting methods to summarise its big data easily, for quick analytics." Should the corporate's current status be that it is difficult to enforce travel policy, he continues, it could prove difficult to implement Scott Gillespie's approach.

What are effective ways for companies to budget for the year ahead?

According to Persson, three categories should be taken into account when budgeting for the year ahead: planning, setting up and management.

In the planning phase, he explains, travel buyers need to meticulously analyse their spend from the previous year to forecast the budget for the coming year. Industry forecasts are also quite

important as well as building a certain amount of contingency into the budget.

"The industry forecasts needs to be quite granular and specific to the specific routes used by your company. There's no point in telling me that airfares are going to go up by 8% if I only travel to New York and I know that every year New York goes up by 15%."

Once a company has completed the planning phase, they need to set up a travel budget. Persson explains every department should get a monthly report to tell them how they're performing versus budget and how their forecast will be for the remainder of the year. He warns it is important to factor in seasonality when setting up a budget.

Lastly, the travel budget needs to be managed effectively, says Persson. "If a department is reaching the limits of their budget, what alternative is there to travelling rather than a full-out ban? Will you be looking at other facilities such as videoconferencing?"

In the management phase, it is important to set up a pre-trip approval, according to Persson, as

this will help manage the ongoing travel budgets.

"What we often find is that when people are travelling, they're not using their time very productively. By having a pre-trip approval, it will help department heads ensure that people are maximising their time in whatever destination they're travelling to, thereby minimising unnecessary trips."

Whitfield explains that currently companies mainly analyse the current travel spend and compare it to the same period of the previous year to determine which business units have decreased or increased in their travel spend. He adds it is important to continuously engage with the various business units to determine if upcoming customer onsite requirements, sales strategies, specific projects, etc. will require business travel.

"Although one can try to accurately budget, this is never a 100% true reflection, as business could become volatile and dependent on customer regions, business development regions, loss of current clients, etc."

▶ feature continues on p16



Club Travel
CORPORATE



GlobalStar
Travel Management

BREAKING NEW GROUND OFFERING UNLIMITED & CUSTOMISED REAL TIME TRAVEL SPEND REPORTS

- Spend Analysis
- Supplier Management
- Policy/Risk Management
- Activity Management
- Spend Management
- Reconciliation Analysis
- Traveller Location

www.clubtravelcorporate.co.za

JNB - Jeremy Heatcliffe
072 857 4314
jeremy@clubtravel.co.za

CPT - Collin Auster
082 331 0117
collin@clubtravel.co.za



► feature continues from p15

Rene van Moerkerken, travel & events co-ordinator at Baroque Medical, says the company monitors the costs of the travel budget based on a comprehensive report the company receives from the TMC that outlines which flights have been booked and at what cost.

"Baroque Medical manages expenses through highlighting the cost of last-minute bookings to our internal travellers. When I do an advanced booking through the Amadeus system, I have the benefit of paying lower transaction fees. However, should there be a last-minute travel booking, additional costs are incurred. We therefore encourage employees and customers to pre-plan their travel accordingly."

Are travel managers doing enough to budget ahead?

Gillespie agrees that many if not most firms budget for travel at a very high level and with a very simplistic approach. They only look at the spend of the previous year and the budget pressures that the company is under during the current planning cycle.

"The practice of creating traveller-level budgets is extremely rare, if it indeed exists. Instead, travel budgets seem to be set at a



fairly high level," he says. This means that low-and mid-level managers don't seem engaged with the travel budget. "This also makes it technically challenging to apply budget pressure to these managers, and so that hinders the ability to 'meet plan' in this category."

Most companies also don't really benchmark the travel expenses. "The closest I've seen is that a few companies may benchmark their overall travel expenses against their overall revenues, but this strikes me as low-value. There is way too much noise in each company's definition of T&E."

Persson suggests the budgeting process is not as robust as it should be. "Most of the companies we encounter don't spend enough time being specific with their planning. They don't realise the impact of other departments. Even if they have budgeting in place, they often don't manage it effectively."



CWT's Debbie Duncan moves to TravelXion

CARLSON Wagonlit Travel's **Debbie Duncan** has recently taken up the position of sales and marketing manager at TravelXion. Duncan ended her career at Carlson Wagonlit Travel as senior manager: Global New Business Development and Marketing.

She says: "Being part of the Bidtravel Group as well as my personal operation and sales interactions with major global corporate clients has served me well to understand the needs of large corporations."

Duncan explains TravelXion is not a TMC nor is it just another online booking tool. "Our solution is designed to allow the companies full line of sight over any potential T&E based expenditure before the expense is incurred. The functionality incorporates the company's cost centre budgets to ensure approvers are able to make informed decisions."

► feature continues on p18

EVERYTHING AT THEIR FINGERTIPS.

SHINE WITH BUSINESS TRAVEL BY CWT

Your travellers are, for many organisations, your most valuable asset. But if they're spending time researching travel, they won't be at their most productive. This is where CWT can help your organisation shine. Our experienced travel counsellors make travel reservations quick and easy and our full support of online booking tools allows travellers to book anytime, anywhere. Because of CWT's buying power, your travellers will have direct access to the best airfares and hotel rates. Our online portal also keeps them up to date with the latest information relating to their journey, while CWT's award-winning mobile application puts those travel details at their fingertips when they need them most, on the road.

A never-ending commitment to the perfect trip

Visit carlsonwagonlit.co.za or contact Phumi Mazibuko on pmazibuko@carlsonwagonlit.co.za or +27 11 628 2300.



Reconciling expenses

About 22 Days, 8 Hours, 17 Minutes remaining



Designed to free you, not frustrate you,
Diners Club Advantage **plus** is the ultimate end-to-end expense
management solution for reconciling corporate, TMC & supplier data.



Automate
expense
management



Consolidate
your data



Build
customised
reports



Upload to
any financial
system



Call our Travel Helpline on 011 358 8610 or visit our website at www.dinersclub.co.za

▶ feature continues from p16

▶ **Did you know?**

THRIFTY recently launched a new app, called 'My Thrifty Africa App'. The app enables customers to book a vehicle on their mobile devices. Clients can browse, confirm and pay for their rental in seconds and reserve a vehicle from anywhere at any time. The app allows clients to find cars by location and vehicle class and time, as well as edit existing reservations. To watch the budget, they can view their current rental status, such as kilometres driven and time remaining, as well as browse previous rentals and look into future reservations.

“ I have seen that costs are increasing across the line and that some of our preferred service providers have suddenly increased their rates quite considerably. In some cases we don't get the preferred rates we negotiated. ”

- Rene Van Moerkerken

Budgeting challenges facing travel managers in SA

THIS year has been challenging in terms of the budgeting process as compared to other years, believes **Rene Van Moerkerken** at Baroque Medical (pictured).

“Our current process encourages us to book flights as far in advance as possible to make sure that we get the lowest price. As we know, flight prices change on a daily basis but this has become more evident with the volatility of the exchange rate. Furthermore, decisions regarding international travel can sometimes only be made two weeks prior to the individual travelling and this further affects the price that we pay for flights and this ultimately affects the budget spend.”

Changing MICE trends and policies have also had an adverse impact on travel budgets. Van Moerkerken adds: “In the past when staff and customers were sent to international meetings, we were only required to settle the bill for accommodation and registration following the event. This trend has subsequently changed and we are now required to pay in advance. This is once again affected by the

rate of exchange at the time of payment.”

Increasing prices and changing supplier attitudes could have an impact on the frequency of business travel. Van Moerkerken says that although Baroque Medical does a lot of business travel, she doesn't foresee that there will be a sudden increase in business travel in the near future.

“I have seen that costs are increasing across the line and that some of our preferred service providers have suddenly increased their rates quite considerably. In some cases we don't get the preferred rates we negotiated.”

The main impact on budgeting for this year has been the decline of the rand, which has a huge impact on international travel, agrees **Collin Austen** at Club Travel. He explains that Club Travel hasn't seen a decline in travel necessarily, but rather spikes in spend. ■



The most REWARDING of all your essential daily items...

If you don't have a **MOOLLA REWARDS CARD** yet, order one today. It's free, easy and will be as valuable to you as you are to us!

Book with Thrifty Car Rental and start earning your **MOOLLA REWARDS** today! Rewards are transferred into your **MOOLLA REWARDS** Card each week so you can enjoy them right away! With our ever-growing fleet and range of vehicles as well as our national footprint, we are geared to be **THE FIRST CHOICE** for you and your customers. Let's **DRIVE** a road together. Apply today! Email us: moollarewards@thrifty.co.za or Call: **086 100 2111**

Follow us on Facebook: **Thrifty Moolla Rewards**

Thrifty
Terms & conditions apply. © Car Rental

TWISTS AND TURNS

for oil and gas travel procurement

The oil and gas sector is expanding geographically, with more sites coming on stream, often in more remote locations. Each comes with its own access, health and security problems.

What's more, oil and gas corporations often misunderstand the process of buying travel.

Michelle Colman questions stakeholders on the challenges they currently face.

Chris Pouney, director, Business Travel, Severnside Consulting Ltd

In many organisations, travel purchasing typically sits in the 'indirect procurement' category; the purchase is important to the company but not always seen as business critical, advises **Chris Pouney** of Severnside Consulting.

"For oil and gas clients, however, and some other industries such as mining and shipping, travel is absolutely a 'direct procurement activity' and unless it's managed effectively, then the profitability and reputation of the organisation is under serious risk."

Thus the implication, says Pouney, is that travel suppliers, and in particular TMCs, are placed under tremendous pressure to get it right. High emphasis is placed on quality of staff, availability and robustness of systems and processes.

He points to the complexities of travel patterns in the sector, which require an advanced level of expert travel management. "Crews may be on rigs for month-long rotations, and when they come off need to get home as quickly as possible. Oil and gas

“Managing travel in the oil and gas sector can be highly lucrative, but it will work you hard and TMCs and travel managers operating in this sector have to be at the very top of their game.”

- Chris Pouney

clients will have intricate crew-rotation plans set up months in advance, but needs may change at a moment's notice. Airlines have developed highly complex products which are only normally available to expert TMCs in this sector."

Tracking mechanisms are another priority as staff safety is paramount. Pouney says TMCs must be able to locate travellers any time of day or night, and have robust and tested plans to support and evacuate personnel at short notice. Further, visas and work permits are critical and relationships with embassies and high commissions must be delicately managed.

"We need suppliers who understand local market nuances, such as local fares and safety, yet operate to global standards and can report, sometimes hourly, in line with global standards."

Costa Papoutsis, head, business development, Oil and Gas, Sub-Saharan Africa, Wings Travel Management

Among the challenges for travel buyers working in the oil and gas sector is a global corporate directive that restricts oil and gas travellers from using European Union-banned air carriers, says **Costa Papoutsis** of Wings Travel Management. Many domestic carriers that travel on routes to oil and gas sites, often located off the beaten track, do not qualify for



*THE majority of energy companies in the oil and gas sector regard health and safety as a critical requirement under their duty of care obligation, states **Costa Papoutsis**, who heads up business development in Wing Travel Management's Sub-Saharan Oil and Gas operation. But it comes at a price.*

EU regulations and are therefore blacklisted, creating access issues for workers.

Papoutsis says traditional oil and gas travel is rotational, in line with 28-day work cycles. A rig worker's replacement has to arrive onsite before that worker can leave, in back-to-back fashion. "In some regions there is no alternative but to amend travel policy or to seek more expensive alternatives," he states.

Within the African region, this critical travel becomes more challenging. Government visa departments are slow, and it is expensive to process work visas. After every trip, the traveller has to re-apply and go through a bureaucratic process that changes often. Long-term visa validities, such as the ten-year visa one would get in First World countries, are not available.

In some instances, even when visas are obtained from national embassies outside of the home country, like Tanzania, the traveller may be forced to re-purchase an entry visa on arrival. Travellers may experience additional concern when having to visit an ATM to withdraw local currency for the fees, while Passport Control holds the passport.

Often visas, which can only be applied for 48 hours ahead of travel, are delayed, resulting in multiple flight ticket changes.

► feature continues on p20



***CHRIS Pouney** of Severnside Consulting Ltd, a consultancy firm with clients in Europe, Middle East and Africa, points to the essential role of travel in the oil and gas industry and the responsibility to perform, as an overriding challenge for both TMCs and travel buyers.*



When the odds
are against you...
we're there for you
24/7/365.

- ▶ INDUSTRY LEADERS IN EMERGING ENERGY MARKETS
- ▶ SOLVING YOUR TOUGHEST PEOPLE LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT CHALLENGES
- ▶ SUPERIOR TRAVEL RISK MANAGEMENT

Contact us today:
info@wings.travel +27 (0) 11 292 5000
www.wings.travel

© 2014 Wings Travel Management. All Rights Reserved.

TB1817SD

▶ feature continues from p19

"These types of challenges are outside of normal travel policy, causing frustration and added expenses for travel buyers; that is why it is essential for travel buyers to partner up with TMCs who understand and have proven solutions for crucial travel within the African continent," says Papoutsis.

"Travel is project driven with cost centres that are price sensitive. These budgets are set without the understanding of air ticket yield management, logistical abnormalities being more the rule than the norm. Hotels are still a scarcity in key locations, driving up the prices due to them being at maximum capacity."

Alan Reid, travel procurer

Destinations travellers in this sector frequent are often off the normal business travel network, says travel procurement specialist, Alan Reid. Those in Africa come with a specific set of challenges, with flight issues springing to the fore. Periodical shortages of flight frequencies, a shortage of seats and as a result high fares spring first to mind.



PIC: SHANNON VAN ZYL

TRAVEL buyer Alan Reid, associated with a global energy business, says frustrations experienced in the oil and gas sector are pretty much the same for travel procurers across the board, with a few twists unique to the industry.

He illustrates with an example. "Flights to and from Luanda on a Friday, when there are shift changes of oil and gas workers, are problematic. This affects both workers bound for Johannesburg and Europe. Flights are full, so there is little discounting."

Air services are often scheduled at inopportune times, so that it is difficult to get a full day's work in a destination, necessitating a stay-over, which escalates trip costs. For instance, Reid states, travellers from Johannesburg to Windhoek can take an early flight out, but return flights take place in the late afternoon and taking airport time into account, this cuts into the day. Flights to Tanzania from Johannesburg depart mid-morning arriving mid-afternoon, once again wasting the better part of a day.

Reid says it is his impression that the airlines are willing to lay on more flights, but they are at the behest of governments and bureaucratic negotiations.

Travel to West Africa, he continues, is at peril of aging and congested airports with "woeful infrastructure". Trips entail hours getting through customs and immigration on arrival and departure.

"Then there's the inevitable problem with visas. It used to be quite quick to get an Angolan visa but the country requires more and more documentation all the time. A Nigerian visa is costly. For Tanzania, leisure travellers do not need a visa, but business travellers do, and the fee is applied inconsistently." South Africans will need visas for travel to Kenya after September 1, viewed by many as a tit for tat measure after South Africa imposed stricter visa regulations for Kenyans. Biometrics will entail application in person at the High Commission in Pretoria, a trying condition for travellers located in other cities.

On the plus side, says Reid, is the appearance of more and improved hotels in Africa, more international hotel brands and better hotel rates. "It will be interesting to see what effect these new brands have on corporate agreements." Credit cards could also be more widely used, he suggests. ■

Business in Cape Town

Max Marx offers a few ideas on where to conduct your business when in Cape Town.

WHERE TO MOTIVATE YOUR TEAM

CAPE Town-based **Alby Hildebrand**, regional manager at ABSA Insurance Financial Advisers, heads up a team of short-term insurance advisers. Hildebrand was keen to motivate her staff to become more innovative when conducting business, approaching clients and closing sales.

She found the perfect partner in Hotel Verde, the new four-star hotel near Cape Town International Airport. Hotel Verde is the first hotel in Africa to be built from the ground up with the environment in mind, showcasing some of the most advanced environmentally conscious technological installations and innovation available today.

Hildebrand capitalised on these features by



taking her team on a tour of the hotel and drawing parallels between the hotel and aspects applicable to her industry environment.

"I pointed out that Hotel Verde was operating in an industry where there were other hotels all sharing the same pool of clients and offering similar products. I wanted the team to understand that success comes from standing out from the pack, and that to stand out you have to find that unique thing that differentiates you from others in your industry."

She says what her team learnt about innovation is that it isn't just about giving birth to an idea, but it is also about taking something which already exists, refining it and making something new out of it.



PIC: HOTEL VERDE

ALBY Hildebrand's team saw how Hotel Verde (pictured) used photovoltaic solar panels to generate electricity. The team hopped on bicycles in the gym, which generate electricity when in use, and were shown how guests are given an opportunity to do their bit for the environment.

WHERE TO HOST YOUR DAY CONFERENCE



If you're looking for a hip, urban space for a day conference in Cape Town that provides inspiration for a meeting of minds and out-of-the-box thinking, then the Inner Cities Ideas Cartel (IC|IC) at 71 Waterkant Street is one place to consider.

As a creative workspace, the IC|IC offers memberships to urban entrepreneurs and

creatives, who have access to office space, WiFi, a clubhouse for members, coffee bar, networking, pop-up events and more.

Jane Spickernell, director of ECHO, one of South Africa's leading event, conference and brand activation companies, says the IC|IC lends itself to more intimate corporate interaction – sometimes just what companies need to break the ice and get down to the business at hand.

The IC|IC Rooftop is the ideal space for cocktail parties, product launches, working lunches and presentations or it can be used as a breakaway venue for a larger conference taking place in the auditorium.

"What's great about the IC|IC Auditorium and the IC|IC Rooftop is that very little needs to be brought in for a day conference as venue-hire rates include a selection of technical and audio-visual equipment and security. The IC|IC is also able to provide in-house catering for smaller, more intimate events. And the coffee is excellent!"

Spickernell adds that the IC|IC's central location means that event companies can team up with corporate activity companies to bring team-building elements to the conference, and also take delegates on adventures near the IC|IC.



PIC: CINDY TAYLOR

THE Inner Cities Ideas Cartel houses a 98-seat IC|IC Auditorium with entertainment deck and adjacent meeting rooms as well as the IC|IC Rooftop, a glass-encased café with outside deck. Both venues are available for exclusive hire and are managed by Nina van Deventer Property & Project Management.

Conference at The Commodore



PIC: LEGACY HOTELS

OVERLOOKING the V&A Waterfront with views of Table Mountain, Robben Island, the Harbour and the Atlantic Ocean is The Commodore, Legacy's flagship hotel in Cape Town. As an option for a day conference, the Commodore Hotel offers conference rooms and facilities for groups of up to 150 delegates.

▶ feature continues on p22

WHERE TO HOST A GLITTERING EVENT

THE Reserve at Taj Cape Town is set to become one of Cape Town's top venues for medium-sized gala banquets, cocktail events, formal dinners, seminars, corporate events and more.

Michael Pownall, Taj Cape Town gm, says while large trade shows and conferences with thousands of delegates are well catered for in Cape Town, "we felt there was an urgent need for a grand venue equipped to host events of around 400 delegates".

Housed in the original 1894-built African Banking Corporation building, which in the 1920s became the renaissance-styled branch of Standard Bank, The Reserve at Taj Cape Town exudes a sense of style that is impossible to replicate in modern times.

The entrance with its colossal bronze doors opens to the elegant ABC bar, perfect

for a classic cocktail reception or guest registration. The original banking hall, which features 330m² of floor space with beautiful columns stretching up to impossibly high ceilings, can host up to 230 guests at a glamorous gala dinner or banquet, or 400 guests for a lavish cocktail party. The venue can also be optimised for corporate events, catering for 300 delegates cinema-style, or 200 delegates school-room style.

There are two exceptional spaces within The Reserve at Taj Cape Town that echo the building's illustrious past – the Chairman's office with its original teak panels and period fireplace, ideal for use as an opulent break-away room or a cigar lounge; and The Vault – the former walk-in safe at Standard Bank.



PIC: TAJ CAPE TOWN

The Reserve at Taj Cape Town exudes a sense of timeless grandeur.



PIC: LEGACY HOTELS

Spice up your meeting

FOR an important business lunch incorporating the tastiest Cape Malay cuisine, travel and events planners can turn to the PortsWood Hotel's Quarterdeck Restaurant in the V&A Waterfront for their travellers. The once Cape Colony petty-crimes prison was declared a national monument and transformed into a restaurant in 1994.

WHERE TO HAVE A BUSINESS LUNCH WITH A DIFFERENCE

A NEW gem has been uncovered in Cape Town, which makes an ideal venue for business lunches, wine tastings, themed banquets and any other extraordinary corporate event.

Built in the 1920s as a walk-in vault for the African Banking Corporation, which later became Standard Bank, The Vault at Taj Cape Town, located below Adderley Street, forms part of The Reserve at Taj Cape Town, the city's latest five-star banquet and function venue.

A unique 120m² subterranean venue, The Vault offers something different for those



PIC: TAJ CAPE TOWN

who seek to impress top executives at a business lunch, meeting or intimate dinner.

WHERE TO BUILD TEAMS

WHEN **Abigail Burns**, PA to an executive director at Old Mutual Specialised Finance, wanted to do something different for her division's year-end get-together, she contacted corporate activities company Adventure Works!

"We wanted to bring the team together and also experience Cape Town's cultural and heritage elements, as many of us don't know our city on that level."

Adventure Works! offered a solution with its 'Captivating Cape Adventure' experience. The group of 60 was split into teams, made up of people who don't regularly work together.

The morning started with fun icebreakers. The teams were then armed with a race kit,



maps and clues and set off in chauffeur-driven vehicles to complete various challenges. These included drumming at Greenmarket Square, exploring the underground tunnels at the Castle of Good Hope (a new Cape Town offering), making cappuccino at Truth Coffee in Buitenkant Street, planting seeds and de-weeding the gardens at Oranjezicht City Farm (an urban farm in Cape Town), and enjoying a spice challenge at Atlas Trading in Bo-Kaap. The morning

ended with an exhilarating speed boat harbour ride, after which the group enjoyed a feet-in-the-sand lunch at Grand Café & Beach at the V&A Waterfront.

Burns says her team is still talking about the day. ■



PIC: ADVENTURE WORKS!

A team member enters the maze of underground tunnels at the Castle of Good Hope.



LEGACY

HOTELS & RESORTS

YOUR CAPE TOWN, OUR LEGACY...



- COMPLIMENTARY LIMITED WI-FI • SCRUMPTIOUS BREAKFAST DAILY
- BEAUTIFUL VIEWS OF THE V&A WATERFRONT • 3KM FROM CAPE TOWN CITY CENTRE
- STATE OF THE ART CONFERENCE FACILITIES AT THE COMMODORE HOTEL
- NEWLY REFURBISHED ROOMS AT THE PORTSWOOD HOTEL*

*SOFT REFURBISHMENT TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE END 2014



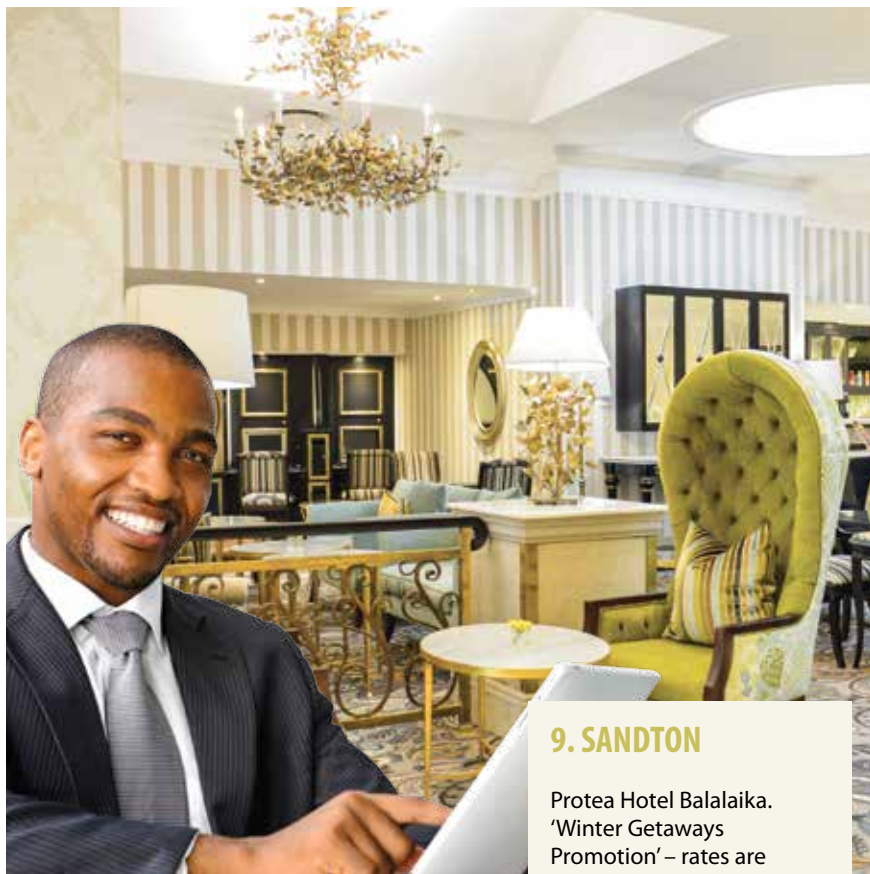
CAPE TOWN

• THE COMMODORE HOTEL

• THE PORTSWOOD HOTEL

Top 10 specials

Linda van der Pol, Travelinfo's editor, is our Deal detective, bringing you great specials from Travelinfo, the online travel information system in daily use by travel agents all over SA. Just book through your TMC and tell the consultant it's a Travelinfo special. To get connected, e-mail lindav@nowmedia.co.za.



PIC: PROTEA HOTELS

1. THAILAND

Thai Airways International. 'Hello Asia' promo fares. All-inclusive fares are from R7 477 ex-Johannesburg to Bangkok, Phuket, Krabi, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rei. Fares to Hong Kong are from R 8 820, Kuala Lumpur from R8 970, Singapore from R9 050 and Bali from R9 888. Fares to China and Australia are also available. Fares are for sale until September 15. Travel permitted until September 30.

2. LONDON

British T.I.P.S. 'Views of London' package – experience London by road, river and air. Hop On Hop Off Bus, Thames cruise, London Eye and The View from the Shard. Offer is valid for travel until February 28. Adult rates R1 840 per person, with child (4-15 years) rates at R1 150 per child.

3. MAURITIUS

Air Mauritius. Winter sale – fly to Mauritius from Johannesburg

return in economy class from R2 100. Fare excludes all airport taxes and surcharges – about R3 782. Valid for travel between July 21 and September 25.

4. DUBAI

Pure Sport. Dubai Sevens packages from R11 990 pp sharing. Packages include airport-hotel-airport transfers, three nights' accommodation at the Grand Excelsior Hotel with breakfast daily, return transfers to the Sevens Stadium, match ticket, UAE single-entry visa and travel insurance. Rate excludes flights and airport taxes. Available for travel from December 4 to 7.

5. MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique GSA. Vilanculos Beach Lodge – SA resident special. Four-night packages are from R8 100 pp sharing. Offer includes return flights ex-Johannesburg, airport taxes, return transfers to resort, accommodation in a luxury chalet, all meals and non-motorised watersports. Offer expires October 31.

6. ZANZIBAR

Rove Africa & Safaris. Seven-night packages are from R12 995 pp sharing. Rate includes return flights ex-Johannesburg, all pre-payable taxes and surcharges, return airport transfers to/from hotel, four-star accommodation with all meals and select drinks. Valid until December 22.

7. NAMIBIA

Air Namibia. Business-class companion specials to Windhoek. Return fares from Johannesburg are R6 433 for the first passenger and R2 333 for the second passenger. Return fares from Cape Town are R6 212 for the first passenger and R2 112 for the second. Fares include all taxes. Offer is available until August 31.

8. PHUKET

Avocatur Wholesale Tour Operator. Eight-night Phuket package from R5 099 per person excluding taxes (about R5 100). Offer includes return airfare

9. SANDTON

Protea Hotel Balalaika. 'Winter Getaways Promotion' – rates are from R600 pp sharing. Offer includes breakfast, complimentary *glühwein*, free 500MB, WiFi throughout the hotel, access to the in-house gym and complimentary Sandton shuttle service. Offer is available Friday to Sunday until September 30.

ex-Johannesburg, return airport-hotel transfers, accommodation at Sea View Patong with daily breakfast and Phuket Simon Cabaret show. Rates are valid until September 30.

10. DURBAN

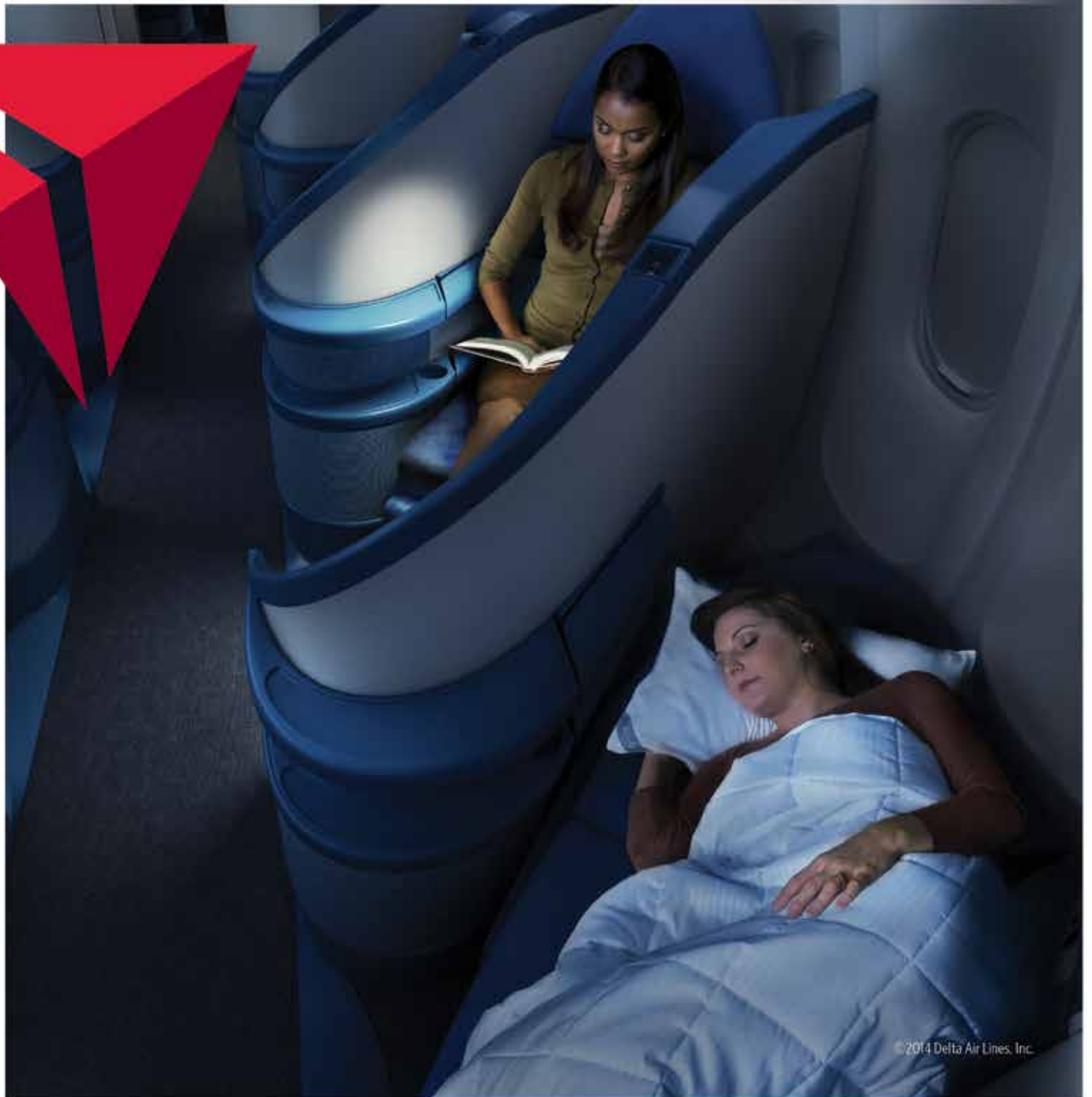
The Oyster Box. 'Indulge' package from R1 575 pp sharing – special includes one-night classic sea-facing room with breakfast, dinner (curry buffet) and one 30-minute back and shoulder massage per person. Package available until December 19. ■

DISCLAIMER: All specials are subject to availability, currency fluctuations and seasonal surcharges.

WAKE UP WHEN YOU WANT TO. NOT WHEN YOUR NEIGHBOUR DOES.

ENJOY FLAT-BEDS WITH DIRECT AISLE ACCESS FOR MORE SLEEP
ON NONSTOP FLIGHTS FROM JOHANNESBURG TO ATLANTA.

For more information, please contact your local travel agent or call Delta on (011) 408 8200.



travel counsellors



BUSINESS TRAVEL JUST GOT PERSONAL

We're a global network of friendly and professional travel gurus with a 20 year track record of arranging business travel for VIP clients. As a traveller you'll benefit from your very own personal Travel Counsellor - there for you at any time of the day or night.

Being independently-owned means we're not tied to particular suppliers or consortia, so you can be confident you're getting advice without agenda. And our unique financial trust means that with us, your money is completely safe.

Thousands of travellers absolutely love our unique approach, because our 1300 Travel Counsellors across the globe really do care. What matters to you, matters to us. That makes us more than a little different from the rest.

It's why 96% of our customers would recommend us. Call now to find out why you'll want to recommend us, too.



Personal Concierge



Truly Independent



Completely Protected



Global Knowledge



Multi Award Winning



Delighted Customers

021 300 1945
connect@travelcounsellors.co.za
www.tctravelmanagement.co.za

With us...it's personal