

FEBRUARY 2014

# TRAVEL BUYER

FOR SA CORPORATES

## +Meet

## Avroy Shlain: *basing local on the global*

Mienie steers cosmetics house towards a synchronised travel policy

- *Secrets for the successful travel manager of tomorrow*
- *Strategic meetings management: from silos to savings*
- *More economy class please!*
- *WiFi access – is your next event at risk?*



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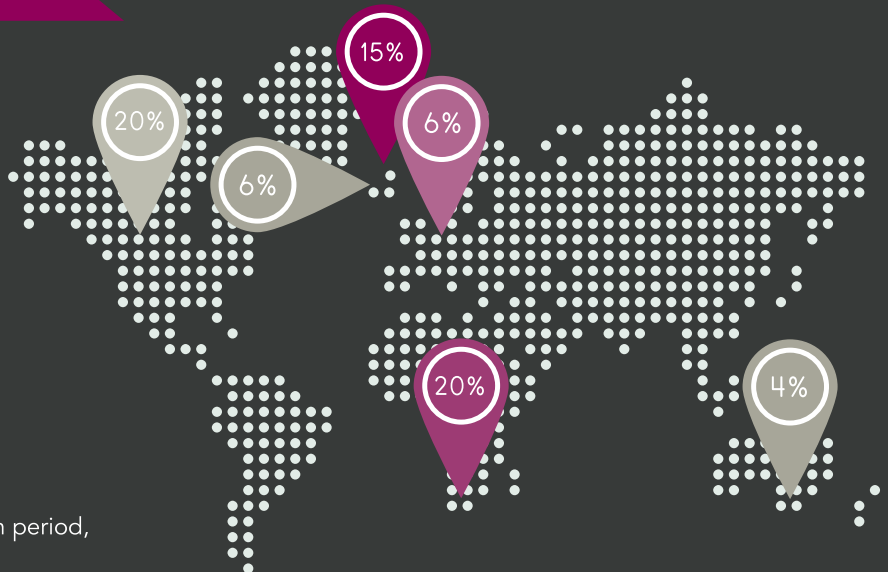
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GLOBAL COMPANY GROWTH IN 2013

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  - UNITED KINGDOM (UK)
  - NETHERLANDS (NL)
  - CANADA (CA)
  - SOUTH AFRICA (SA)
  - AUSTRALIA (AU)
  - DUBAI (AE)
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## COMMENT:

## From silos to savings

ACCORDING to the annual business travel buyer survey carried out by the Business Travel Show being held this month in London (February 4-5), 76% of buyers will have more money to spend in 2014 – despite just 49% of buyers being asked to book more trips.

The survey reveals a third consecutive annual rise in the number of buyers enjoying bigger budgets year on year. In 2013, 72% of budgets were higher or the same than in 2012. And in 2012, 67% were subject to an annual rise. The survey states that 76% of airline budgets will be the same or greater in 2014 and 74% of accommodation budgets will rise.

Most of the 183 respondents who participated in the survey were UK-based, with 55% controlling budgets in excess of £3m and 65% managing programmes with over 500 business travellers. When asked about the biggest issues facing them and the industry over the next 12 months, Iata's NDC came out on top, followed by travel management 2.0, data, sustainability, meetings management and mobile technology. The five lowest-ranking issues were airline consolidation, risk management, virtual meetings, fuel increases and less reliance on TMCs.

It's always interesting to benchmark our trends against international perspectives, which is why this month I'm pleased to share with you two Power Panel discussions incorporating views from buyers based in different markets. The first topic looks at secrets for the successful travel manager of tomorrow (p 4) and the other debates the issue of why meetings and travel practitioners might still be reluctant to pursue integration – and why they should move "from silos to savings" (p 8). Despite the benefits of an integrated travel and meetings programme, travel managers still seem to believe the initiative is too big to tackle.

Referring to a global template in her own travel management programme, our cover buyer for this month, **Marlene Mienie**, Avroy Shlain Cosmetics travel manager, shares her strategy that has seen the company adopting a cost-effective, synchronised travel policy. And while the initial roll-out was typically met with some reluctance, with consistent top-level support from different divisions, the team has achieved a compliance rate of 98%.

It's about moving past the silos and towards the savings.

All the best  
**KIM COCHRANE**

## COVER

It's been a busy couple of months in the limelight for **Marlene Mienie** of Avroy Shlain Cosmetics. Part personal assistant, part travel manager, Mienie tells us how she steered the direct sales cosmetics house towards adoption of a cost-effective, synchronised travel policy. Cover image by **Shannon Van Zyl**.

## News 2

- Marriott to pay R2bn for Protea
- WTM Africa – what's on
- Orange Collection rebrands with focus for group travel
- E-tolls: what's the impact on bill-backs?

## Power panel 4

Secrets for the successful travel manager of tomorrow

## Q&amp;A 6

Avroy Shlain: basing local on the global

## Meet 8

- From silos to savings
- The 5 things meetings managers predict for 2014
- Is your next event at risk?

## On the radar - Economy class 16

- More economy class please!
- How to make the most of economy class
- Economy class at a glance

## Deal detective 24

Travelinfo's latest top travel deals

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## Marriott to pay R2bn for Protea

**M**ARRIOTT International and Protea Hospitality Holdings have signed definitive agreements for the purchase by Marriott of Protea's three brands and management company.

Under terms of the agreements, Marriott will pay about R2bn (or about US\$186m at current exchange rates), subject to normal closing adjustments. The purchase price represents about ten times anticipated pro forma 2014 calendar year EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) excluding transaction costs.

The transaction is subject to receipt of certain third-party and governmental consents, including exchange control approval from the South African Reserve Bank and competition approval from the South African Competition Commission and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and satisfying other customary conditions for transactions of this kind.

Assuming these conditions are met, Marriott and Protea plan to close the transaction on April 1. Marriott does not expect the transaction will have a material impact on its 2014 results.



PIC: PROTEA HOTELS

The Protea Hospitality Group has entered Zanzibar, bringing the exclusive Mbweni Ruins Hotel into its portfolio. Protea Hotel Mbweni Ruins is situated on the coastline 7km from Stone Town and 5km from the airport. The exclusive hotel has 13 suites furnished island style, a restaurant, deck, pool, beach bar and a spa. Protea Hotels is also set to enter Ghana and Rwanda in 2014.

## WTM Africa announces event programme

THE line-up of events for World Travel Market Africa in Cape Town includes a responsible tourism programme, sessions presented by the African Business Travel Association (ABTA) and a travel blogger programme.

WTM Africa's own World Responsible Tourism Programme (WRTP) will form a key component of the education sessions. The programme is put together by Professor **Harold Goodwin**, organiser of the World Travel Market WRTP in London, and will include a pan-African cast of speakers covering core responsible tourism issues affecting the African continent.

ABTA has joined WTM Africa as an official education partner. The association will facilitate and present sessions covering key trends, developments, challenges and opportunities from SA and the continent as well as how these destinations

can revolutionise the business travel industry on Friday May 2.

Saturday May 3 will see a session focusing on issues surrounding education within the African travel industry.

WTM Africa has joined forces with director of Travel Bloggers Unite, **Oliver Gradwell**, to bring a dedicated travel blogger programme, where influential travel bloggers will offer guidance on how the industry can best utilise bloggers as a marketing resource.

Other topics of discussion at WTM will include the latest trends in travel technology and the challenges faced within the airline industry.

World Travel Market Africa is part of Thebe Reed Exhibitions' Africa Travel Week, which also includes IBTM Africa and ILTM Africa and takes place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from April 28 to May 3.

## Orange Collection rebrands with focus for group travel

FORMERLY known as Solomon's Guide, Orange Collection has launched a fresh look with its latest edition to go with its streamlined focus on properties for the MICE trade and group travel.

"We've heard from tour operators and PCOs about the need for one reference point that focuses on the larger properties that are key to their industry. Something that tells them at a glance how many conference delegates a venue can host or what special facilities they have for events. Orange Collection is that reference point. It gives you all the information at your fingertips on a variety of platforms," according to **Ian Solomon**, ceo of Moja Media.

The new Orange Collection app (orangecollection.co.za/app) allows for offline browsing and online booking. Smartphone versions of the app are now also available for iPhone, Android, Windows and Blackberry.

Orangecollection.co.za is the website that mirrors all the information in the guidebook, as well as



PIC: SUPPLIED

carrying additional images, information and booking tools. The new DL-size guidebook fits snugly on the busiest of desks and there is also an eGuide version, compatible with PCs, laptops and mobile devices.

Users can also join the Orange Collection community on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest to enjoy giveaways, accommodation specials, travel conversations and photographs.

### News flash!

VOYAGER members can now purchase Mango flights with their miles. All Mango scheduled flights

are redeemable against Voyager miles. Passengers cannot earn Voyager miles on Mango flights.

# E-tolls – impact on bill-backs?

**A**s thousands of South Africans are still fiercely protesting against e-tolls, travel agents have expressed concern about the increased liability associated with car-rental bill-backs. They fear that scores of people, sparked on by the unrelenting OUTA protests, will resist paying their car-rental e-tolling fees.

One agent, who prefers to stay anonymous, says: "I have launched a feedback campaign with my clients already. We have advised clients that there are no more car-rental bill-backs through our agency, as there is too much liability. I think agencies may find clients who say that they are not going to pay tolls, so we would rather the account goes straight back to the client and then it is not our problem."

According to **Leon Smith**, Club Travel Ontdekkers, e-tolls

will not affect bill-backs in any manner. He explains that clients will have to agree in advance that they are liable to pay for e-tolls. "At the point of rental, the client will agree to pay for the tolls. There will also be a provision that the tolls can be claimed at a later date, in case it was not correctly received and posted on the original invoice."

"The e-toll fight has been lost. If clients use the roads, they will need to pay e-tolls," agrees **Allan Lunz**, md BidTravel. For him, e-tolls are very unlikely to cause any major problems when it comes to bill-backs. He explains that when a client rents a car for less than a month, the most he can possibly pay on e-tolls is R450. This is often less than the fuel the client needs to pay on his car-rental bill.

Says **Julianne Barker**, national strategic client manager for BCD Travel SA: "E-tolls are

going to add another variable of which the cost impact cannot be ascertained in advance."

The only impact on bill-backs she foresees is a delay in invoicing.

**Jonathan Gerber**, TAG Travel, adds that bill-backs on cars have always been a risky business regardless of e-tolling fees. "For the sake of a tiny fee, an agent must take full risk on a valuable item. I don't think e-tolls have added any extra liability issues and in fact many agents are unaware of the risks involved in a car-rental bill-back."

XL Travel prefers to steer clear of bill-backs altogether, explains **Rod Rutter**, coo XL Travel. For the few corporate travellers who insist on bill-backs, e-tolls are unlikely to affect their billing, as it will just be considered as one more additional charge, according to him.

## News flash!



PIC: AIRLINK

■ AIRLINK will launch direct flights to Skukuza Airport in the Kruger National Park commencing June 2, 2014. Airlink will provide two daily scheduled airline services linking Skukuza with Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport and one daily flight to Cape Town International Airport.

## News flash!

■ Coastal-based SA passport holders travelling to France or Italy can now apply for their visas in Durban and Cape Town. Capago Visa Centres are now accepting French and Italian visa applications at their offices in the two cities. KwaZulu-Natal residents can apply in person at Unit G002 Pencarrow Office Park, 8 Pencarrow Crescent, Armstrong Avenue, La Lucia. Western, Eastern and Northern Cape residents, as well as residents of Saint Helena can apply in person at Ground Floor, Old Warehouse Building, Black River South, 2 First Street, Observatory, Cape Town.

■ INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group has announced the opening of a new hotel on Mauritius. The Holiday Inn Mauritius Airport is on the island's south-east coast, 700m from the new SSR International Airport.

## IHG launches rewards programme

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group (IHG) has launched Business Club in SA, a rewards programme for corporate customers booking conferences, meetings or accommodation within the IHG stable.

Business Club members will receive points for bookings, which can be translated into discounted room rates or special offers for personal or corporate use. Members can convert their Business Club points into IHG Rewards Club points, which enable them to redeem personal complimentary room nights at any hotel worldwide. Business Club vouchers offer discounts on meeting room bookings, food and beverage or hotel stays at participating hotels; or 'Time for You' vouchers.

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# Secrets for the successful travel manager of tomorrow

The travel management landscape is evolving quickly through rapidly developing technologies and increased globalisation. As this landscape adapts, so do the skills required to be a successful travel manager, writes **Dorine Reinstein**.



**Chris McAndrews, SVP:**  
marketing and partnerships,  
Radius Travel



**Serge Bacchus, European  
contract manager, Unisys**



**Shawn Geraghty, director  
of corporate travel, Cerner  
Corporation**



**Herman Mensink, chairman,  
CORTAS**

**M**OST travel managers come from a manual travel programme where consolidation was the exception to the rule, says **Serge Bacchus**, European contract manager for Unisys. "Today, however, travel managers are faced with an array of automated systems in increasingly globally consolidated travel programmes. This has jeopardised the role of the travel manager and we can see a trend where companies are doing away with travel managers altogether as soon as automated systems are in place."

It is therefore essential for travel managers to be aware of the critical skills required to ensure success in this rapidly changing environment, he says.

Bacchus was speaking during a recent ACTE webinar entitled 'The growing skill set of the successful travel manager', where global travel managers shared their perspectives on how the role of travel manager would change over the next three years and how travel managers could prepare for the travel management environment to come.

Included in this discussion were findings from the May 2013 survey conducted by ACTE and sponsored by global travel management company, Radius Travel, to provide insight into the evolution of the travel manager role. ACTE received 164 responses from individuals from 28 countries across all regions.

## What skills are most important for the travel manager today?

According to the study, the top-five essential qualifications

for managing a travel programme today are: negotiation expertise, knowledge of travel industry technology, relationship management expertise, cross-functional collaboration skills and leadership experience.

In the webinar, **Chris McAndrews, SVP:** marketing and partnerships, Radius Travel, elaborates: "Negotiation expertise really stands out as an essential aspect of the travel manager's job, with four out of five respondents rating it as the most essential skill."

**Herman Mensink**, chairman of CORTAS, a joint business travel industry platform initiative of the top-25 multinational corporations in the Netherlands, says it doesn't come as a big surprise that negotiation expertise ranks amongst the most-needed skills, as negotiations are the core focus of the travel manager's job today. "However it looks like the respondents focus very much on negotiation expertise whereas procurement and sourcing expertise is scored a lot lower. That's interesting and not what I would expect."

According to Bacchus, the travel manager's role today boils down to generating savings. Negotiations play an integral part when trying to generate savings so Bacchus, who manages a consolidated programme across 15 countries, is also not surprised that it ranks so highly in the list of essential skills. "I think that in most of the companies, procurement staff are key. The answer in terms of how to make yourself indispensable as a travel manager is therefore to generate savings."

**Shawn Geraghty**, director of corporate travel for Cerner Corporation, notes the perceived importance of skills comes down to the perspective of each

individual respondent. "Generally speaking, the travel manager's role has come through the ranks of travel. From my perspective, I would have a different configuration of the five most essential skills and would focus more on the financial and data-analytic perspective. There is a degree of that in negotiations but the financial aspect takes those negotiations and makes sure that they're actually utilised."

## How do people skills compare to functional skills?

At the risk of oversimplifying, travel management qualifications can loosely be labelled as either people skills or functional skills. Looking at the survey results, however, it seems travel managers believe that people skills are most critical to their success today.

McAndrews adds: "We found it interesting that if you take a look across the skills that were rated as essential by most participants, most fall into the 'people skills' category and not so much into 'functional skills'. In short, this means that while travel management is often located these days within process-driven functions such as finance or procurement, the human touch remains essential."

He continues that in this context, negotiation skills may be understood as critical to working effectively with not only suppliers but also internal stakeholders. Cross-functional collaboration, leadership and relationship management are all people skills as well.

Geraghty says as a technology company, Cerner Corporation hires the majority of its staff straight from university. "This



means we're combining a large group of young, early career-starters with a group of experienced associates. This requires a lot of management as well as knowledge of social networking and other modern methods of communication. Multicultural and multi-generational skills are extremely important in a global company."

## Just how important are multicultural skills in an increasingly global world?

Surprisingly though in the survey multicultural skills don't figure in the top-five essential skills for successful travel managers.

Mensink is baffled that travel managers don't seem to recognise the importance of multicultural skills. "I'm intrigued by the fact that multicultural hasn't scored high. Most of the travel managers surveyed are running either a globally or a regionally consolidated programme. One of the first obstacles a travel manager encounters when managing a global travel programme is multicultural issues."

Geraghty also testifies to the importance of multicultural skills. "When people in other parts of the world tell you that you don't understand what it's like in a certain area of the world, accept that it's probably true and try to get an understanding of the differences. This doesn't mean you have to change your objectives for the company but there are differences in each region. Know what you don't know and be willing to learn."

## How will requirements evolve over the next three years?

Travel managers have recognised

that the skills needed for their role in three years might be very different from the skills needed today. Most respondents predicted that the following six qualifications would be more important:

1. Technologically savvy
  2. Innovative mindset
  3. Marketing and social media skills
  4. Change management experience
  5. Knowledge of travel industry technology
  6. Managing alternatives to travel
- "Interestingly, there is a greater focus on managing alternatives to travel," comments McAndrews. "Of travel managers, 51% cite managing alternatives to travel such as videoconferencing as a qualification that will grow in importance. This may mean that travel managers could expand their role to what has been described as collaboration management, interaction management, meetings management or even communication management. This may include not only sourcing virtual alternatives but also giving employees the tools to decide whether travel or a virtual alternative is more appropriate for their intended interaction."

Travel managers also recognise they don't only need to be knowledgeable on travel technology but they actually need to be technologically savvy, he continues. This shift in skills shows that although people skills are essential today, the future focus will be more on functional skills.

Mensink says the survey results clearly reflect the way the industry is going and therefore the way the travel manager's role is going. He adds that as an associate professor, he is quite knowledgeable on Generation Y. "We noticed that mobile devices are the key devices of this generation, which means the way communication is

managed should be on top of the agenda for travel management. That's why I see marketing and social media skills being more prominent."

Mensink says while change management experience is definitely an important skill for the future, it is equally important today.

Bacchus believes what has happened over the years has put the travel manager in quite a difficult position. He adds travel managers are increasingly trying to find a common ground between the older generation who wants to fly Business Class and be wooed by nice hotels, and the younger generation who doesn't care about privileges or luxury but want to have more freedom. "The travel manager is sitting in the middle."

Serge adds the single most important skill for travel managers will be to reach the highest level as possible in terms of strategic behaviour.

## Are you ready to adjust to the changing skill requirements?

Travel managers have recognised they need to gain more skills when it comes to functional skills such as data analytics, marketing and social media, as well as finance and budgeting.

Says McAndrews: "Travel managers appear confident of their people skills. Improving non-technical functional skills emerges as a need for most travel managers. Planning, as well as finance and budgeting skills, when added to traditional strengths in personnel and purchasing, can help travel managers exploit opportunities and resist challenges for the travel programme from within the organisation."

There are several ways for travel managers to improve on areas where they feel they are lagging behind. Mensink

# 10 TIPS

## to thrive in tomorrow's travel management environment

1. Travel, meet, listen.
2. Develop marketing communications skills and create a multinational communication plan.
3. Reach out to your travellers worldwide. Form a global travel advisory board and appoint country champions.
4. Investigate using social media both for listening and talking to travellers.
5. Build up your ability to work with data analytics.
6. Be willing to use third parties to complement your own strengths.
7. Gain understanding into the mindset of your younger travellers; attitudes are changing.
8. Get involved in virtual alternatives to travel; you may soon be responsible for managing them.
9. Keep up to date with technology – in the travel industry and in the systems used within your own business.
10. As always, cultivate and maintain C-level support for your programme.

Source: Study - 'The Growing Skill Set of the Successful Travel Manager'

explains one option is to interact with other travel managers and industry peers. Training courses are another great way to brush up on lacking skills. "I would focus on training courses that are not travel specific. Rather opt for a training course on change management, or a course on communication skills." ■

# Avroy Shlain: basing local on the global



PICS: SHANNON VAN ZYL

*Marlene Mienie ... finds industry events invaluable in terms of new trends and products for travel buyers*

“We are fortunate to have top level buy-in. Senior management are happy to fly with low-cost carriers, for example, and this makes it easy to get the rest of the staff to follow suit.”

It's been a busy couple of months in the limelight for **Marlene Mienie** of Avroy Shlain Cosmetics (Pty) Ltd. She was recently named the Office Professionals of South Africa's (OPSA) 'Professional of the Year', an award co-sponsored by Rexel SA. Part personal assistant, part travel manager, Mienie tells us how she steered the direct sales cosmetics house towards adoption of a cost-effective, synchronised travel policy. Words by **Michelle Colman**.

## Q: How did you become involved in travel procurement at Avroy Shlain?

**A:** I was employed as PA to the managing director, **Justin Hewett**, who assigned the management of the company's travel account to me as a project in 2010. At that point there was no cohesive policy and travel procurement was decentralised, with different departments following different sets of rules. Avroy Shlain, which began operating in 1973, is now owned by Tupperware Brands, a company headquartered in Orlando in the United States. I referred to Tupperware Brands' global travel policy, which subsequently became the basis of our own strategy.

## Q: What are the main elements of the policy?

**A:** To start with, the policy is concise and well-worded, only running to ten pages. At its heart is cost-consciousness; it views travel as a last resort when a business objective cannot be reached by other channels of communication. It covers domestic and international travel

for head-office staff, a body of 140 people. Some 20 to 30 members of staff travel regularly, mainly to major South African cities. Avroy Shlain is also active in Namibia and Botswana.

## Q: What challenges did you experience in instituting the policy?

**A:** The initial roll-out of the policy was met with some reluctance, as people generally tend to resist change. Staff found themselves now faced with centralised control and more parameters. It took some 18 months to get their full buy-in, but with the support of the company's HR and Finance departments and the Executive Committee, we have now achieved a compliance rate of 98%. There is appreciation that from a safety perspective, it is better for the company to know where its staff members are and ensure they are travelling in good conditions.

Secondly, Avroy Shlain does not favour a bill-back process. We had to encourage our travellers to pay for services with their personal credit cards, and fill out claims on their return to the office. We undertook to reimburse them within a week, subject to receipt of the

necessary documentation. Once staff saw their reimbursements coming through without delay, they began to support the process. We also found that they became more cautious about their travel expenditure, thinking twice about whether some of their expenses were really necessary to the business they were conducting.

## Q: As a company, Avroy Shlain appears to favour less conventional accommodation?

**A:** We began using B&Bs as our staff responded well to the 'home-away-from-home' atmosphere. We have built up a good relationship with many B&B establishments and have a database of regular suppliers.

More recently, we added a number of boutique hotels to the list because our staff members enjoy the personalised treatment. Properties are added on the basis of positive feedback from travellers. I make the bookings directly.

## Q: So where does a TMC come in?

**A:** We definitely have use for



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a TMC and since 2009 have been using Tamarin Bay Travel in Roodepoort, part of the XL Travel consortium. They came to us on the basis of a strong recommendation and have proved to be the right partner. We have a senior consultant dedicated to our account, with back-up when necessary. Currently Tamarin Bay does all our flight bookings and we tap into their corporate rates for car rental.

Travel takes up some 60-70% of my time; there are the day-to-day bookings to make, information to review and

budgets to control, so I am in contact with the TMC on a daily basis. Ideally we aim to make bookings at least two weeks ahead of departure, but of course we have emergencies.

**Q: How much international travel do you book?**

**A:** International travel accounts for around 10% of all bookings. Each September the company gives me a schedule of trips staff will make in the following year, and this allows sufficient time to research and access good rates.

**Q: Is Avroy Shlain's staff generally supportive of cost-saving measures?**

**A:** We are fortunate to have top level buy-in. Senior management are happy to fly with low-cost carriers, for example, and this makes it easy to get the rest of the staff to follow suit.

**Q: What initiatives do you have planned for 2014?**

**A:** I'm hoping to make more use of technology. I'd like to use programmes such as

Trip-It, an e-travel organiser for itinerary details and booking confirmations. We recently implemented Expensify, an app that streamlines employees' expense reporting, allowing them to copy and mail receipts through mobile devices. I am a member of the African Business Travel Association (ABTA) and find their meetings invaluable with respect to introducing new trends and products to travel buyers. Currently OPSA is using ABTA resources to train secretaries and office staff engaged in travel procurement. ■



# Reach 18000\*

## Meeting Planners in SA Corporates



- Published monthly from June 2013
- A daily online news service with Travel Buyer ([www.travelbuyer.co.za](http://www.travelbuyer.co.za))
- Distributed to 18000 individuals in marketing departments, to corporate travel decision makers, meeting buyers, PAs, PCOs and TMCs
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FOR MEETING MANAGERS

# From silos to savings

In a recent webinar organised by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), industry players discussed the reasons why meetings and travel practitioners might still be reluctant to pursue integration. **Dorine Reinstein** reports on what companies need to build a successful strategic meetings management programme (SMMP).



**Amy Harris**, vice president, marketing activation and engagement, SunTrust Bank



**Cheryl Hoffard**, manager of travel and meetings, The Schwan Food Company



**George Odom**, vice president, principal, integrated travel and meetings, Advito



**Lisa Palmeri**, senior director of professional services, Cvent

**D**ESPITE the benefits of an integrated travel and meetings programme, such as sourcing, policy design and data tracking, 90% of travel managers say the initiative seems too big to tackle.

A new white paper from the Incentive Research Foundation (IRF), entitled "Striking the Balance: The Integration of Offsite Business Meetings and Incentive Group Travel", recently examined the varying degrees to which business and meeting components are incorporated into the incentive programme. Just under half of respondents (48%) include meetings in their incentive trips, with reasons ranging from it saves money (10%) to it maximises the organisation's investment to do so when all the top performers are in the same place at once (42%).

## What is the current consensus when it comes to integrating meetings and travel?

**George Odom**, vice president, principal, integrated travel and meetings for Advito, explains that numerous recent studies on this topic have been conducted. These studies indicate that whilst most companies have been contemplating the possibility of integrating travel and meeting spend, only a few have taken steps to actually implement a concrete programme.

"People are looking for the additional savings, the additional control. They investigate how they could bring the spend of the company together and what the

benefits are. They are just unsure how to go about it."

## What are the benefits of alignment?

According to Odom, cost saving is the most obvious benefit that comes with aligning travel and meetings. A company can significantly reduce costs by leveraging their spend, reducing their supplier base and concentrating the duty of care and crisis management. He explains there are other benefits as well, ranging from enhancing process efficiencies with better reporting and business controls, consistent supplier contracts as well as using technologies on both the front- and back-ends to manage the process.

**Cheryl Hoffard**, manager of travel and meetings for The Schwan Food Company, believes enhanced supplier relations result from consolidation. "Once hotels found out we consolidated both travel and meetings into one department, it seemed they were more interested in negotiating and working with us."

Hoffard saw increased efficiencies throughout the company, as the different department started doing things the same way instead of everyone doing everything their own way.

## The most common misconceptions?

One of the most common misconceptions about integrating travel and meetings, according to **Lisa Palmeri**, senior director of professional services at Cvent, is that people believe the meeting and travel policies have to be

mandated. This is not the case, says Palmeri.

She explains that companies that don't mandate policies can still be successful with their programmes just by gaining buy-in.

A second misconception, she adds, is that the programmes are difficult and expensive to implement – arduous and daunting. "It really doesn't have to be," she says, as companies need to remember to walk before they run and to implement in phases.

A last misconception she has experienced is that people think the two programmes somehow need to match. "That can discourage people from even attempting it to begin with."

Although there are some synergies such as shared vendors and overlapping policies, she says the components for a meetings programme versus a travel programme can be very different. "While the two disciplines have some things in common, they are distinct and the drivers around why an organisation might want to launch a strategic meetings management programme (SMMP) are different to those for a managed travel programme."

**Amy Harris**, vice president, marketing activation and engagement for SunTrust Bank, agrees: "We're managing two different areas. We're in marketing and our travel manager sits in procurement. We have two very different goals in mind. When procurement is looking at their goals, they're looking at bottom-line savings. Our goals in marketing are to align with the strategic goals of the company, which are not always the lowest-cost options but the lowest cost with the best value."

► *Meet continues on p10*



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► *Continues from p8*

The most persistent misconception Odom has found is that an integrated programme is only about savings, which is not the case. Another anchored misunderstanding is that there is a formal process with well-defined steps. "It really doesn't work that way."

## What is the best way to start capturing data such as meeting spend in a consistent way?

Palmeri suggests that clients often feel overwhelmed when they want to start capturing data. "Often the point of entry that is relatively painless is to implement a simple meeting request form. Using automation, the meeting request forms can come to a centralised point or to a gatekeeper or whoever is interested in having the data. From there, companies can start to build a reliable database."

Palmeri explains this process doesn't require approval or additional review and it doesn't entail managed meeting planning. It merely allows a company to know the meeting activity. "Then, after about six months of gathering that information, companies are able to build business cases and make recommendations. Now that they know their meetings environment, they can uncover the policies, the standard operating procedures, the negotiable areas. That's a popular way to kick-start a programme."

## Does integration jeopardise existing supplier relationships?

The fear of losing valuable contacts with suppliers is one of the biggest challenges associated with implementing an integrated programme, explains Hoffard. "People don't want to give up relationships with the hotels and their perks."

Effective communication is

the best way to overcome this challenge, according to Hoffard. Explain to your staff that they will still be allowed to do the fun part of the meeting side; the SMMP will merely take care of the negotiations and the contracts upfront. "It's all about getting the staff to trust and understand that we're all working on this together and not as two separate silos."

"Stakeholder management is indeed key," agrees Harris. When building up an integrated programme, she says Sun Trust decided to develop task forces to convey that everyone was part of the whole process. "We let all the stakeholders into the process. We made the SMMP rollout part of the company so no one thought we were taking things away from them." According to Harris, this way of working has ensured that the company is seeing close to 90% compliance.

Odom agrees: "Communicate to your stakeholders. Keep the things that are important to them. Explain to them why policies are important and why it is important to adhere to the policies. People will follow policy if they understand why the policy is in place. Be a communicator and not a policy police."

## How can one overcome the challenges of combining procurement and marketing needs?

According to Harris, although the company is passionate about the SMMP and both the meetings and travel side are extremely compliant, it is hard to reconcile the needs of both departments. She showcases this with an example. She explains the travel department is looking for hotels in every city that offer the best cost-effective option. The meeting department on the other hand looks for the hotels that offer the best value, which isn't always the cheapest option.

"We do sit down with the travel management team and procurement; we do look at

“It's all about getting the staff to trust and understand that we're all working on this together and not as two separate silos.”



the hotels that they prefer; and we do try to overlay our group hotels but sometimes it's a challenge." Harris adds the company was faced with a challenge when travel procurement decided not to renew its contract with a specific hotel. When the meetings department organised a group meeting at that hotel, they saw their conference rates had increased considerably because of this.

Which department will eventually take the lead depends on the company, according to Odom. "It's interesting, in my experience, as the travel side is often more reluctant to make the changes or to really understand the meeting group. This obviously makes the meeting side a bit defensive. It's service versus cost. Are you trying to get the least expensive/cheap or are you trying to get the best value?"

Odom adds that often the meetings side has more institutional power than the travel side. "If the meetings side isn't aligned and doesn't agree, they can shoot the process down. If the meetings people aren't onboard, it's going to be difficult."

## Advice to get started?

The first and best advice is to start talking, according to Harris. "Especially in this situation with

two different lines of business where each side doesn't necessarily see the immediate benefit of an integrated programme. If you can get at the table and talk about the two programmes and talk about the goals, and how you can overlap your goals, I think you can overcome the first hurdle."

Another recommendation would be to learn from peers by listening to webinars, talking to people from GBTA and reading trade magazines, says Hoffard.

Knowing the objectives of the constituencies you are selling to is another key aspect of success, according to Palmeri. "If you are trying to sell cost savings to the marketing team, it might be falling on deaf ears. Understand what it is that they want to get out of the programme and stay true to the objectives. It's very easy to go down the rabbit hole of integrating travel and meetings because it can go in a lot of different directions."

Lastly, Odom advises the group should recognise where the expertise lies. He explains for example that the meetings department should use the travel side to book transportation because that's one of their areas of expertise. "Get it focused and work together. If a group can't do that, it might not be the right group you want to work with."

► *Meet continues on p12*

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# The **5** things...

...meetings managers predict  
will happen in 2014



Jim McIntosh



Jacqui Abrahams



Bianca Lellyett

### ■ Tight budgets

**Jim McIntosh**, gm: business development and marketing for Tourvest Destination Management, says the economic crisis has resulted in increased involvement by financial people in MICE decision-making which, in some cases, has resulted in tighter budgets.

**Jacqui Abrahams**, workplace services lead, and **Bianca Lellyett**, M&E supervisor for Accenture, say delivering great events despite budget constraints is likely to be their greatest challenge this year.

### ■ Greater integration

McIntosh adds that in periods of high growth, corporates are run by sales and marketing people but in tougher trading environments, financial people are more likely to be at the helm. With procurement playing a bigger role, it is likely the industry will see more harmonisation between business travel and MICE spend.

Accenture plans to integrate business travel and meetings and events more closely in 2014. "We ultimately use the most suitable venue for each event but we try to direct the majority of our spend towards our preferred business travel hotels, event venues and suppliers to maximise savings."

### ■ More technology

McIntosh says while South Africa has proven time again that

it has the expertise, facilities, technology and infrastructure to successfully host major conferences and events, the only area where the country still falls short of international standards is that of broadband, in terms of both cost and speed.

"Until we can offer international visitors free, high-speed internet access at all our hotels, then we cannot compete on the international stage."

Abrahams and Lellyett name technology as the single greatest opportunity for the meetings and events industry in 2014. "The way in which we use technology in our eventing depends on client expectations but can include things such as a fog screen, holographic technology and interactive technology."

### ■ Shorter lead times

Although not a new trend, meeting managers predict that short lead times are here to stay, at least for the next year.

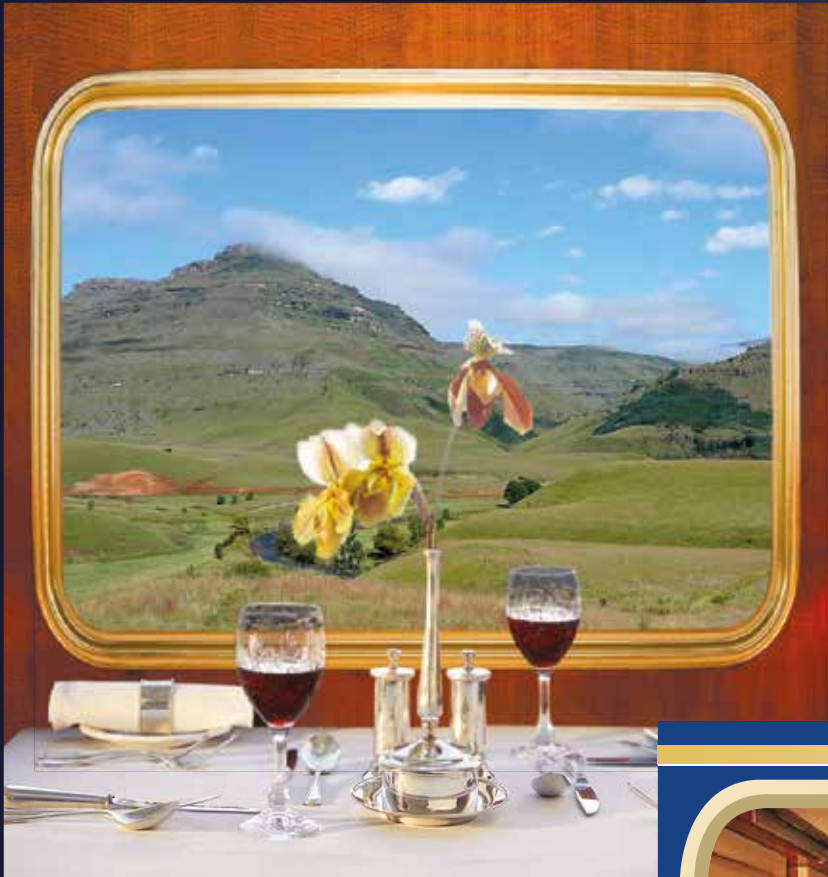
### ■ Focus on greening

"Organisations such as the Event Greening Forum and the Wilderness Foundation are going some way to green the MICE industry but in SA we are a long way behind our counterparts in Europe and North America," say McIntosh. "Green audits of conferences, events and incentive trips should become a normal part of the service offering but are a prohibitively expensive exercise in the current price-sensitive climate."

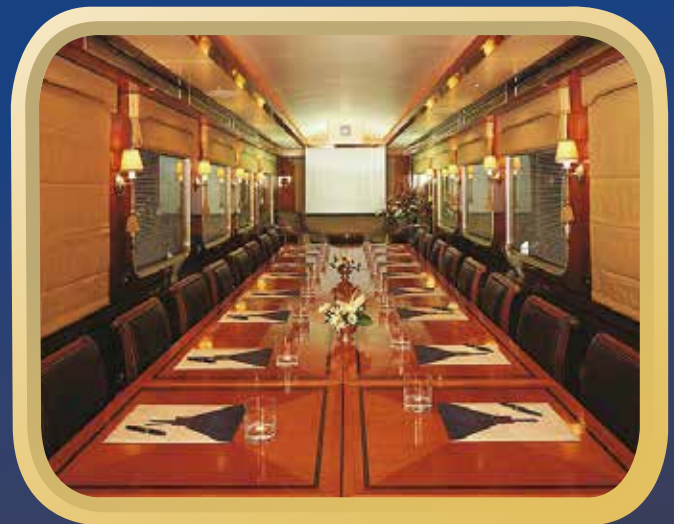
► Meet continues on p14



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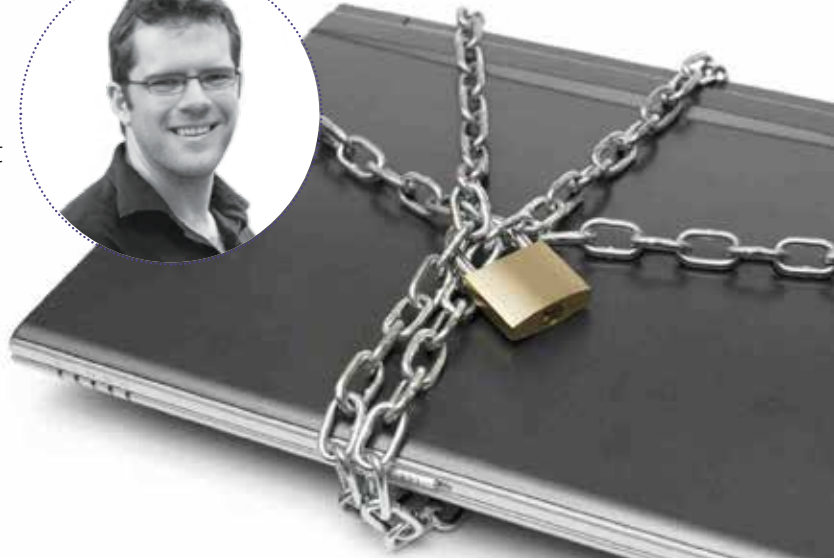
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# Is your next event AT RISK?

WiFi access is considered a must-have for events and conferences. Yet an open WiFi network could compromise the security of your event, leaving delegates vulnerable to unscrupulous hackers. **Glenn Wilkinson**, lead security analyst at SensePost, offers advice for event organisers.



**A** LARGE conference with several thousand people using an open WiFi network is ripe for nefariousness. The biggest threats are likely to be theft of e-mail and social media credentials, especially if there are high-level attendees such as CEOs.

Event organisers should be prudent when offering WiFi to delegates. There will be a trade-off between convenience and security. While open WiFi networks that don't require a password to connect are the most convenient, they are also the most vulnerable to attack. With these networks, all online data delegates access is viewable to anyone else on the same network, and even to hackers who aren't actually connected but are just within range of the network. If the delegates aren't browsing SSL-enabled sites (sites starting with 'https') hackers will be able to see the contents of every site delegates visit, every e-mail or message they send and receive as well as every image viewed.

Hackers could also 'steal' users' sessions, identifying cookies from web pages they're visiting, allowing them to impersonate the users on those sites without the need of usernames and passwords. For example, if a hacker steals a Facebook cookie, they could use it to read the user's inbox, and even send messages from the user's account.

Applying a single password to a wireless network (technically, a 'pre-shared key') reduces

convenience but increases security. A hacker would now need to obtain that password to carry out the attacks mentioned above. This could be obtained legitimately, such as by asking for the password at the conference or by 'cracking' the password.

There are free online tools for the latter approach and a plethora of tutorials. Once the password is retrieved, it is once again easy for the hacker to view all other users' online activities (albeit with a little more work).

Conference organisers could further increase security (and therefore also reduce convenience) by implementing 'enterprise' wireless network security, which requires users to have their own username and password. In this scenario, even if an attacker gains access to the wireless network he wouldn't be able to view other users' web activities.

## Do these attacks actually happen?

While I don't know of any statistics on how common these activities are, at every security conference I attend (which is about eight a year) I notice this kind of activity going on. Again, the likelihood of a hacker being successful can be greatly reduced by using 'enterprise' WiFi networks at conferences, with individual usernames and passwords required to connect to the access point.

## Be aware of dubious networks

Other attacks are possible against users unrelated to the above scenarios. Attackers could create their own wireless access point and give it a suitably enticing name to convince delegates into connecting to it. For example, if the conference is called 'Widgets R Us', the attacker could create a network called 'Widgets - WiFi'. Since the attacker controls this access point, he'd be able to view all the internet traffic of any delegate who accidentally connects to it - passwords and all.

There's even an oddity in the way laptops and phones connect to wireless networks that may allow an attacker to force your device to connect to the hacker's access point. These attacks, known as 'karma attacks', take advantage of the probing techniques used by wireless clients to impersonate a legitimate network. To protect your event from this attack, you should advise users remove all open networks their device has previously connected to, and would automatically reconnect to - e.g. 'Starbucks'.

## Secure your network

To secure a WiFi network, conference organisers should require unique credentials to access the network by providing attendees with individual usernames and passwords ('enterprise' mode). These can be printed en masse before the event and just left at the registration desk - thus allowing attendees to regularly change their credentials. Delegates should also be advised to only access sites that are SSL enabled and only connect to the correct wireless network name.

As a final safety precaution, attendees could be advised to make use of a VPN (Virtual Private Network). It ensures that any data sent between the delegate's device and the network is encrypted so a hacker on the same local network cannot 'see' the data. Many companies have their own VPN, allowing remote workers to connect to the local company network as if they were in the office. Otherwise, many providers are available.

It's less convenient to set up an enterprise mode wireless network and use a VPN but it dramatically increases your security. I should know; I'm one of the hackers. ■



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# More economy class please!

With budget constraints still a reality, an increasing number of companies continue to explore the possibility of tightening travel policies to include economy class travel as a way to reduce travel spend.

By Dorine Reinstein.

PIC: QANTAS

**T**HERE has been an increase in regular economy demand from corporates, which was a response from the 2008 economic challenge, believes BCD Travel SA md, **Kananelo Makhetha**. "The future increase in demand from corporates will depend on the extent of sustained economic recovery."

And with a noticeable increase in demand, numerous airlines have adapted their economy class offerings to suit the corporate market.

**Xenia Adamou**, gm at Etihad Airways in SA, says the airline is constantly investing in development of new, innovative products and services in economy class to cater for corporate travellers. "The adverse effect of the global economic crisis is still being felt by both business and leisure travellers. The market is highly competitive

– with passengers increasingly looking for enhanced services and great value. It is therefore likely that many global carriers will continue to introduce added benefits and service enhancements in their economy classes over the next year to retain a competitive edge."

The continued pressure on travel budgets has also led to a great number of airlines investing in the fourth class, premium economy. **Lauren Egger**, sales and marketing executive for Qantas Airways, explains the airline's premium economy offering has been a great success and Qantas expects the demand for premium economy to increase exponentially throughout 2014.

"Premium economy is an alternative product available for corporates who are reducing their travel spend. The additional benefits being offered, in

particular the privacy of a 32/40-seat cabin, adds appeal."

The greatest problem for travel managers when it comes to incorporating premium economy into the travel policy, however, is the limited availability of this class of travel on many routes.

Says **Lindley Aylward**, head of Financial Shared Services, De Beers Group: "All our air fares are negotiated upfront with the airlines and we do have premium economy class corporate fares with Virgin Atlantic and British Airways (on certain routes). The problem, however, is that not all BA and Virgin Atlantic flights have premium economy class cabins and it is also dependent on the aircrafts used on these specific routes."

Capacity is, however, growing steadily. Lufthansa has announced it will start offering

a premium economy product in 2014. And British Airways has also announced it is increasing its premium economy offering from South Africa.

## Capacity gain on SA routes

According to spokesperson for British Airways in SA, **Stephen Forbes**, there will be a net capacity gain on South African routes in 2014, with the A380 coming to Johannesburg and three additional 777ERs operating on the Cape Town route from May 2014. "This will help meet the demand for World Traveller Plus seats."

Forbes has seen an increasing number of companies integrating the premium economy option into their travel policies. "Companies have now started including World Traveller Plus in their travel policies, which

gives them a wider choice of services and options. It also allows them to extend their travel budgets. World Traveller Plus is allowed in most travel policies."

**Chris Pouney**, director, business travel, Severnside Consulting in the UK, agrees that the increase in capacity has somehow facilitated the integration of premium economy into travel policies. "Multinational companies have largely resisted premium economy in policy as its difficult to apply consistently with so few airlines offering it – but this is changing. For example, it works for travellers from France where Air France offers premium economy but what about their colleagues travelling from say Zurich for the same meeting, where SWISS only has economy and business?" He adds that an increasingly popular option is to travel one way in business class and one way in economy.

According to Pouney, companies are often forced to adapt their travel policy as it could just tilt the scale in

their favour when a possible candidate has to choose between two companies when moving jobs. "If someone is travelling extensively, believe it or not, but travel policy may be the difference between someone joining company A or B, so ultimately companies need their travel policies to be competitive with the industry in which they operate to attract and retain the right talent in their organisations."

While certain airlines are increasing premium economy capacity, there is a parallel trend where airlines are removing the category as they feel it is diluting revenue from their business-class cabin.

Says Pouney: "One of the biggest concerns from an airline perspective is the 'risk' that travellers will downgrade from business to premium. Airlines have mitigated this risk somewhat by keeping cabins small, and in the case of Turkish Airlines, having only certain routes enabled where it makes



PIC: SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

Many carriers continue to introduce added benefits and service enhancements in their economy classes to retain a competitive edge.

the most sense rather than an across-the-board approach taken by say BA or Virgin Atlantic."

Interestingly, not one of the Middle Eastern mega airlines (Emirates, Etihad or Qatar) has introduced a premium economy product. Adamou explains there is no reason to introduce a premium economy class, as Etihad believes its award-winning Coral Economy class service is on

par with or even surpasses the economy class service offered by other airlines.

**Fouad Caunhye**, Emirates regional manager for Southern Africa, agrees: "Emirates' economy class is designed to give more space and comfort than what one would typically expect in an economy class product."

► feature continues on p18

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PIC: AIR MAURITIUS

# How to make the most of economy class

Frustrated as corporate travellers may be about flying in economy class, there are a few ways to make the experience more pleasant. *Travel Buyer* spoke with industry players to learn more about their advice when it comes to travelling in economy.

## ■ Lounge access

Ensuring travellers have access to a comfortable lounge prior to their flight can help make the trip a lot more pleasant.

**Jim Weighell**, Sure Corporate manager, says although lounge access comes at a price, it can easily be negotiated into specific corporate rate agreements.

Some credit cards, such as Diners and American Express, also offer clients the opportunity to make use of airport lounges. Otherwise, it might be worth purchasing the Priority Pass, which gives access to over 600 airport lounges worldwide.

Several airlines will offer their loyalty members complimentary lounge access.

**Fouad Caunhye**, Emirates regional manager for Southern Africa, says Emirates' Silver and Gold Skywards members can relax in any Emirates Business Class Lounge at Dubai International. If not in Dubai, Gold or Platinum members can relax before their flight at over 60 dedicated Emirates lounges, including the Emirates Lounge at OR Tambo International Airport. This extra luxury is available even when flying Emirates in economy class.

## ■ Get the best seat

Not all seats in economy class are the same. Websites such as Seat Guru offer a great way to check which seats in which aircraft offer the most comfortable options. Unfortunately, the better seat scenario has started to be identified by airlines as a revenue source.

Weighell adds: "Increasingly, we are seeing fees being charged for pre-seating and 'preferable' seats." According to him, clients are advised to select seats as far forward as possible.

BCD Travel South Africa's md, **Kananelo Makhetha**, says it helps to secure seats in the emergency exit area. "The challenge is that they may not recline as much as others. It also helps to secure an aisle seat where you can 'extend' into the passage."

Some airlines, such as Virgin Atlantic, will allow travellers to purchase a 'seat plus', where travellers can book a seat next to their own seat for a reduced fare.

## ■ Pack the necessary amenities

Corporate travellers should remember to pack their own 'comfort' amenities bag for the flight, as most airlines won't offer a comprehensive toiletry bag for their economy class passengers.

## ■ Purchase your perks

Virgin Atlantic offers a 'guest list' service where passengers can buy elements of the Upper Class service such as chauffeur pick up and Clubhouse access.

## ■ Book early

"Working the system used to involve knowing the right people who could manipulate manual systems. In this automated and systems-managed environment, it is more useful to have a knowledge of aircraft seat

layouts and to reserve seats and flights as early as possible," says Weighell.

**Xenia Adamou**, gm at Etihad Airways in SA, agrees: "Early bookings are a sure way of receiving the best possible price available."

## ■ Become a loyalty member

Being a member of an airline's loyalty club will improve your chances of getting a better service in economy class. Says Weighell: "The acquisition of a high-tier airline ticket and global alliance loyalty card will be advantageous where involuntary upgrades are being sought by airline staff."

Loyalty programmes such as Emirates Skywards offer travellers in all classes, including economy, the opportunity to enhance their flying experience, agrees Caunhye.

He continues that Skywards members can upgrade instantly with Skywards Miles at the airport check-in desk. Emirates Skywards members also get priority check-in regardless of their class of travel.

Adamou recommends travellers take the time to better understand their loyalty programme to maximise the rewards and benefits available to them. "For example, Etihad Guest members have the flexibility of spending their Etihad Guest Miles to pay for a seat with the 'OpenSeat' option, which is a variable cost equivalent to the price of a commercial ticket on all flights. In addition to these OpenSeat options, members can also redeem their miles for 'GuestSeats', which are a fixed

number of seats available on every flight, at a fixed number of miles."

## ■ Select carriers that offer mobile connectivity options

Connectivity is an important perk for most business travellers. It is therefore a good idea to select a carrier that offers in-seat laptop power.

Etihad has introduced mobile connectivity to its aircraft, enabling guests to use their mobile phones, smartphones and laptops to send and receive calls, messages and e-mails and access the internet. Full onboard connectivity on all aircraft in the Etihad Airways fleet is scheduled to be completed by mid-2014.

If you need to select a carrier that doesn't offer the convenience of an AC outlet in economy, a gadget such as the Energi To Go XP18000 can help corporates stay charged. This small all-in-one product charges up to three laptops, smart phones, digital cameras, camcorders, DVD players, iPods and MP3 players for five hours.

## ■ Change your mindset

Probably the most important tip for business travellers to have an enjoyable economy class experience is to adjust their mindset first. They should know and admit they will receive fewer facilities."

► feature continues on p20



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PIC: BRITISH AIRWAYS

### BA increases premium economy offering

**B**RITISH Airways is increasing its premium economy offering from South Africa, as the airline is taking delivery of its next generation of aircraft such as the Boeing 777-300ER, 787 and A380.

The new aircraft feature new seats in premium economy that recline a bit further, as well as a much

larger video touch screen and two USB ports and an RCA port allowing travellers to link their personal electronic devices to the in-flight entertainment system. The onboard service is also being enhanced and will include a dedicated World Traveller Plus menu, with two choices off the Club World menu.

### Did you know?



PIC: KLM

■ KLM Economy Comfort passengers enjoy a seat with more leg room (90cm vs. 79cm) and more recline (18cm vs. 9cm) in the front part of the economy class. Economy Comfort passengers also enjoy faster disembarkation.

■ DELTA Air Lines has announced it will invest more than \$770m (R7,6bn) through 2016 to refresh the interiors on its domestic Boeing 757-200, 737-800, Airbus A319 and A320 aircraft to provide

power at every seat, add new slim-line seats with adjustable headrests, update lavatories, add more efficient galleys and incorporate additional features to improve passenger comfort.

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# Economy class at a glance

Airline	Aircraft	Seat width (cm)	Seat pitch (cm)	Entertainment	Amenity pack	Extras
<b>Air Austral</b>	B737-800	47	79	Videos and movies	Yes	Hot towels
<b>Air Botswana</b>	ATR 42	43	76	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ATR 72	43	81			
	BAe 146	43	81			
	RJ85	43	81			
<b>Air France</b>	A380 (JNB)	48	81	On-demand movies, TV programmes, games, music	Yes	Champagne; cushions of an original design on each seat; wider trays and more practical storage; children's kits; more electrical sockets
	B777-200 (CPT seasonal)	46	81			
<b>Airlink</b>	Jetstream series 4100	39	76	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Embraer 135	43	79			
	BAE 146	47	79			
<b>Air Madagascar</b>	B767-300ER	44	79-84	N/A	N/A	N/A
	B737-300ER	44	74			
<b>Air Mauritius</b>	A319-100	45	76	Videos, music, games	N/A	N/A
	A340-300C	46	79-84			
	A340-300E	46	79-81			
	A330-220	46	79-81			
<b>Air Namibia</b>	B737-500	51	79	N/A	N/A	N/A
	A340-300	60	79			
	A319-100	51	81			
	Embraer ERJ135	60	76			
<b>Air Seychelles</b>	A330-200	46	81	Movies, TV programmes, CDs, radio channels	N/A	Choice of three meals
<b>Arik Air</b>	A330-200	48	82	Panasonic in-flight entertainment system	N/A	Children's kits
<b>BA Comair</b>	B737-300	43	84	BA kiddies' entertainment booklet; BA Highlife in-flight magazine	N/A	N/A
	B737-400	43	79			
	B737-800	44	73-76			
<b>British Airways</b>	B747-400	44	79	Video, movies, audio	Yes	Activity packs; under 12s Skyflyers service; priority boarding for families
<b>Cathay Pacific</b>	B747-400 (March 2014-July 2014)	44	81	Videos, movies, audio channels	On request	B747 & B777: AC power supply socket B777: USB port to charge mobile devices; iPod, iPhone, iPad connection to stream personal music and movies on PTV
	B777-300 (New Economy Class) (August 2014-December 2014)	47	81			

▶ table continues on p22



## Economy class continued...

Airline	Aircraft	Seat width (cm)	Seat pitch (cm)	Entertainment	Amenity pack	Extras
<b>Condor</b>	B767-300	43	76-79	Selection of film highlights; nine audio channels	N/A	Selected premium meals, which can be ordered online in advance
<b>Delta Air Lines</b>	B777-200LR	46	79-81	Video, movies, music, games	No	Hot towels; midnight snack
<b>Edelweiss Air</b>	A330-200	44	79	Individual screen for every seat	Yes	Economy Plus available as of May 2015
<b>EgyptAir</b>	A330-243	47	82-87	Movies, TV programmes, soundtracks, video and audio channels, in-flight magazine	Yes	46kg checked baggage (two-piece concept) plus 7kg cabin bag; free baggage wrap ex-JNB; STPC - HTL Hotels accommodation and transfers at TB3; quick transit tours at reduced rates; Ahlan Meet & Assist at minimal charge
<b>EI AI</b>	B767-300	45	36	N/A	Yes	N/A
<b>Emirates</b>	B777-300ER (JNB/DBN/CPT)	43	81-86	Video, audio, games, e-mail and sms from seat; power-points	No	Mood lighting to combat jet lag, USB connection for MP3 players, baby kits
<b>Ethiopian Airlines</b>	B787 Dreamliner	44	81	Audio and video on demand; games; in-flight magazine	N/A	N/A
<b>Etihad Airways</b>	A330-200	43	79-86	Video, movies, TV shows, music, games	Yes	Hot towel; USB and RCA power adaptors; complimentary coach transfers to/from Al Ain or Dubai
<b>Kenya Airways</b>	B737-800 B737-300	44 43	82 82	Varies according to aircraft type; movies, music	No	Hot towels
<b>KLM</b>	B777-200 (JNB and CPT)	46	79	Video on demand (films, television programmes, Euronews), music, language courses, games and audio books	No	N/A
<b>Korongo Airlines</b>	B737-300	44	81	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Kulula.com</b>	B737-400 B737-800	44 44	73-76 73-76	In-flight magazine – <i>khuluma</i>	No	N/A

Airline	Aircraft	Seat width (cm)	Seat pitch (cm)	Entertainment	Amenity pack	Extras
<b>Lufthansa</b>	A380-800 (JNB)	45	79	Integrated seat monitor AVOD	No	Kids' channels and a multi-player game mode; new seat gives extra 5cm of personal space in the A380
	A340-300 (CPT)	44	79		No	
<b>Mango</b>	B737-800	43	76 *Mango's new seats provide 6-7.5cm extra leg room	Mango TV in-flight entertainment; <i>Mango Juice</i> in-flight magazine; Mango G-Connect Inflight available on six of the eight aircraft	No	Mango Plus offers: Bidvest Premier Lounge access; 10kg additional checked luggage; meal voucher
<b>Qantas</b>	B747-400	45	79	Movies, games, TV shows, audio channels, children's entertainment	Yes	Pillow and blanket
<b>Qatar Airways</b>	B777-200LR	46	84	Video, TV programmes, music, radio programmes	Yes	Choice of three main courses; USB ports
	B777-300ER	46	84			
	B787-8 (788)	44	79			
<b>RwandAir</b>	B737-800NG	43	79	N/A	N/A	N/A
	B737-700NG	43	81			
	CRJ-900NG	43	81			
<b>SAA</b>	A319	45	80	Movies, TV programmes, radio programmes, games	Yes	Pillow, blankets; kids' activity packs; entertainment offer in YC same as in BC
	B737-800	44	80			
	A320	45	80			
	A340-600	44	83-85			
	A340-300	44	83-85			
	A330-200	45	80			
<b>Singapore Airlines</b>	B777-200ER	47	81	Choice of 500 entertainment options with up to 100 movie selections	Yes	Interactive language courses; weather updates; adjustable footrests; winged headrests
<b>SWISS International Air Lines</b>	A340-300	44	81	Movies, sound tracks, video channels, audio channels	No	Hot towels; Swiss chocolate
<b>Thai Airways</b>	B777-200ER	51	84	Movies, audio channels	No	N/A
<b>Turkish Airlines</b>	A330-300	46	79	A selection of English movies and Turkish movies on board	Yes	Pillow, blanket; USB port; kiddies' sets
<b>Virgin Atlantic Airways</b>	A340-600	44	79	Video, game console, video on demand	Yes	Passengers can request special meals 48 hours prior to departure

**\*Disclaimer:** The table contains a selection of the economy class features offered by airlines that supplied information. *Travel Buyer* has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information provided by suppliers.

# 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](mailto:lindav@nowmedia.co.za).

## 1. ZANZIBAR

**African Encounters.** Fully inclusive specials: seven-night packages are from R9 569 pp sharing until February 10 and from R9 780 pp sharing from March 1 to June 15. Offer includes return flights on Mango, taxes, accommodation, all meals, select drinks and transfers.

## 2. THAILAND

**Perfect Destinations.** Phuket and Kuala Lumpur package from R11 055 pp sharing. Rate includes six nights' accommodation at The Old Phuket with daily breakfast, two nights' accommodation at the Swiss Inn Hotel in Kuala Lumpur with daily breakfast, return flights via Doha, return airport/hotel transfers and approximate airport taxes. Offer valid from April 1 to October 31 (book by February 28). Block-out dates apply between June 21 to July 13.

## 3. INDIA

**Jetstar Tours.** 'Mumbai Madness' land-only rates are from R4 970 pp sharing. Package includes five nights' accommodation at Vivanta by Taj - President in a



PIC: SHUTTERSTOCK

double room, daily breakfast and return airport transfers. Rate is valid until March 31.

## 4. EUROPE

**United Europe.** Prague, Budapest and Vienna. Packages are from R5 620 pp sharing. Offer includes three nights in Prague, three nights in Budapest and three nights in Vienna; daily breakfast throughout; and second-class rail ticket between cities. Offer valid in February and March.

## 5. DUBAI

**Legend Tours and Transfers.** Dubai Shopping Festival package – rates are from R5 498 pp sharing. Package includes seven nights' accommodation with breakfast, return airport transfers in Dubai and a tourist visa. Rate excludes flights and is valid until March 31. Block-out dates apply between February 22-26.

## 6. MAURITIUS

**Beachcomber Tours.** 25% early bird discount – book and pay 30

days in advance. Rates are from R11 290 pp sharing, excluding airport taxes (R3 315). Package includes return airfares ex-Johannesburg, return transfers, six nights' accommodation with breakfast and dinner plus free land and motorised water sports. Valid for travel between February 1 and March 24.

## 7. AUSTRALIA

**Qantas Holidays/Tour East.** Australian Grand Prix packages are from R8 540 pp sharing. Offer includes return flights ex-Johannesburg, four-day general admission ticket for an adult and handling fees. Excludes airport taxes of about R5 440 pp. Offer is valid for travel from March 1 to 10.

## 8. MOZAMBIQUE

**Thompsons Holidays.** Five nights Massinga Beach – rates are from R12 545 pp sharing. Package includes return flights ex-Johannesburg, return airport-hotel transfers and four-star accommodation with all meals. Rates are also

## 9. SOUTH AFRICA

**Car Hire Brokers.** Domestic special – Group T Picanto or similar: rate is R253 per day; and Group B Hyundai i20 or similar: rate is R353 per day. Special is valid for pick-ups until February 28 and includes unlimited mileage, super damage and theft waiver, contract fee and airport surcharges.

available for travel ex-Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. Rate expires June 30.

## 10. VIETNAM

**ICAN Holidays.** Eight days land-only package from R12 810 pp sharing. This includes two nights in Ho Chi Minh City with breakfast and excursions as well as five nights at the five-star La Veranda Resort Phu Quoc Island, breakfast, internal flights and transfers. Offer is valid until October 2014. ■

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





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