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What makes **LANSERIA**?

'the businessman's airport'

IDC consolidates travel: *the merge, the transition, the pay-off*



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Editor's note

Finally! South Africans can start looking forward to cheaper domestic airfares. There's a new player on the scene – new to the LCC game but not to the airline industry. FlySafair launched its first flight between Cape Town and Johannesburg on October 16, with fares starting from R499 one way (excluding taxes of around R500).

It's a welcome relief for SA travellers who are used to paying almost double on the route. Ceo, **Dave Andrew**, told Travel Buyer that initially he was concerned that customers would push back when the airline announced its unbundled fares (passengers pay for extras, such as a checked bag) but the model has been received well – particularly for "one-day travellers".

At the FlySafair launch event, deputy director general of the Department of Transport, **Zakhele Thwala**, expressed his support for the new venture, saying it was time South Africans had more choice. He added that it was time "we expand our base and make sure it's sustainable" and that FlySafair would bring needed competition.

Speaking about more choice, *Travel Buyer's* New Route feature looks at fastjet's ambitious plans

to open up East Africa, giving business travellers more options when flying to Uganda – and next stop, Kenya.

This month we also turn our focus to government travel and what's changed over the last year, following the announcement in November 2013 that there would be a crackdown on wasteful expenditure. This year all government departments have been required to implement the cost containment measures proposed by the Department of National Treasury – but has this been a good thing for the corporate travel industry?

Our Loyalty Programmes feature investigates how suppliers are changing the game when it comes to targeting and enticing individuals – and, more importantly, how this impacts on travel managers enforcing compliance.

The Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) hosted a very successful conference at the Bryanston Country Club in Johannesburg. For more on the event, see our next issue of *Travel Buyer*.

But for now, keep reading!

Natasha Schmidt
(natashas@nowmedia.co.za)

COVER

The IDC recently launched its own dedicated travel company. *Travel Buyer* finds out more. Cover photograph by **Shannon Van Zyl**.

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'We're not a new business' – FlySafair

NEW to the LCC game but not new to aviation, FlySafair launched flights on October 16, with fares starting from R499 between Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Ceo, **Dave Andrew**, told Travel Buyer the response from the South African market had been good but that corporates and the travel trade were slow to get on board. "We've seen consistent growth, week on week, in ticket sales. Things are certainly headed in the right direction." But Andrew admitted there had been hesitance from the trade, who had the stance "when you start flying, then we'll talk".

However, unlike many other start-up low-cost carriers that have come and gone in the South African market, the airline has 40 years' experience in the aviation industry. "Our biggest benefit is that this is not our only business and we're not a true 'new' business. Safair has been around a long time; we have a lot of experience and assets. We're not solely dependent on our low-



Dave Andrew, ceo of FlySafair.

cost operation," said Andrew.

He added that the oil price seemed to be heading in the right direction, which boded well for all airlines. Another advantage was that Safair's traditional business was outside the country, with dollar earnings, so the airline had a bit of a hedge against the exchange rate.

Meanwhile, with its pricing structure, FlySafair hopes to stimulate a new segment of the market. "If I look at the enquiries we've been getting through our call

centre, there are a lot of first-time flyers and this is a market we'd like to see developed," said Andrew.

The airline will initially launch flights from Cape Town to Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and George. "It's important to first get up and running and then we can look at connecting the dots domestically," Andrew said. He added that the airline was interested in looking at regional operations but that was "quite down the line".

Emirates inks deal with TAAG

EMIRATES has embarked on the first step of its plans to aggressively expand operations in Africa by over 40%, by signing a 10-year management contract with TAAG Angola Airlines.

The Gulf carrier will work closely with the Angolan government and TAAG to formulate and implement a business plan, provide management support and devise fleet and route network strategies to strengthen the airline's position.

Both airlines will also co-operate through bilateral codesharing and participation of customers in both airlines' frequent flyer programmes.

Emirates will not contribute equity under this agreement but appoint four senior managers to work for TAAG.

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Kulula partners with SkyTeam members

AIR France is the second SkyTeam alliance member to partner with kulula.com following the implementation of a codeshare agreement with Kenya Airways earlier this year, marking the start of what could be an interchangeable network with SkyTeam partners throughout the alliance.

This is according to **Erik Venter**, Comair ceo, who spoke at the launch of the Air France-kulula codeshare partnership on October 2. Partnering with other international carriers is something kulula would be looking at for the future.

Air France will add its code to kulula's domestic route network, allowing customers to seamlessly connect to and from Cape Town, Durban, George and East London by purchasing a single Air France ticket, with the convenience of one-stop check-in and baggage transfer. Venter said it would take a while

to get all the technology systems and policies aligned but that the airline had already entered into talks with other SkyTeam members to extend its service offering.

It made sense to have interchangeability with all SkyTeam members, Venter said. "So if you want to fly Delta from Atlanta to Durban, you can fly all the way through and fly SkyTeam all the way back again."

These new partnerships would not conflict with Comair's arrangement with

big brother British Airways, Venter said. "BA has no real say about what happens in operations at all. BA branding and franchising for Comair will continue as usual; from a kulula perspective, we can pretty much do what we want."

Air France premium-class customers will have access to the SLOW lounges in the domestic terminals at OR Tambo, Cape Town and King Shaka international airports.

BA branding and franchising for Comair will continue as usual; from a kulula perspective, we can pretty much do what we want.

Mauritius Ebola restrictions – BE PREPARED

THE Mauritius High Commission has announced that any foreign nationals, including South Africans, who have visited one or more of the countries affected by Ebola during the two months prior to the date of their travel to Mauritius, will temporarily not be allowed to enter the country.

The named countries include Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic

Republic of the Congo.

It is important for travel buyers to be aware of the new regulations and advise their travellers accordingly, as insurance companies and airlines will not give a refund if clients need to cancel because they will be denied access due to the Ebola virus.

Uriah Jansen, md of Oojah Travel Protection, says standard travel insurance policies will only

provide cancellation cover for 'named reasons'. "Cancellation due to a government prohibition – as is the case with Mauritius – is a general exclusion to the cover provided under the Named Reason Cancellation product. The Cancel for Any Reason product will provide cover for cancellation due to this. However, the traveller has to purchase this benefit within 24 hours of paying for his/her trip."

Thompsons Travel goes online

THOMPSONS Travel has launched its new website and blog for customers across the Thompsons Travel Corporate, Thompsons Travel Leisure and Thompsons Meetings and Incentives brands.

The operator has also launched a new wellness brand to help de-stress staff who are overworked.

Late starters, fast movers

THERE is a new scramble for Africa. The battle is among international hotel groups trying to create a significant footprint on the continent, which is regarded (along with South America) as one of the last frontiers.

Andrew McLachlan, Carlson Rezidor vp of business development for Africa and

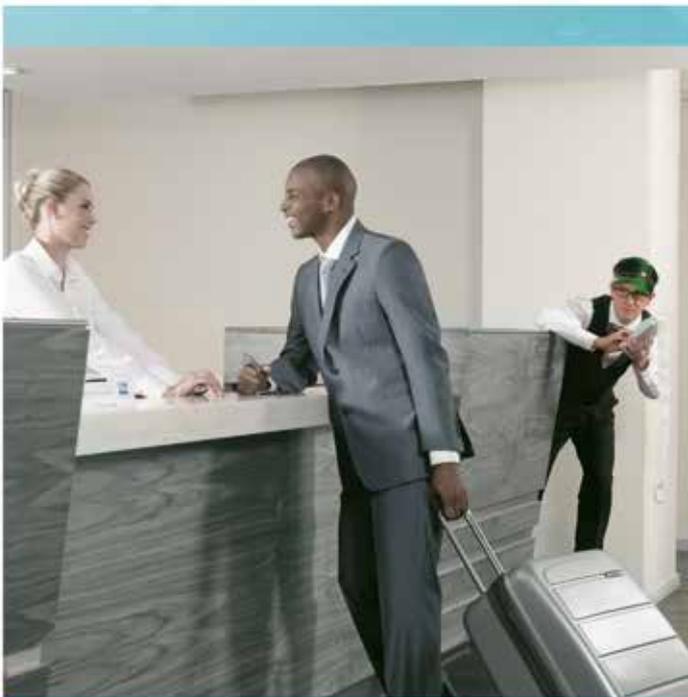
Indian Ocean Islands, says the reasons for this breakthrough are: African politics have become more stable in the past 10 years; many African natural resources are untapped; and there have been new oil and gas finds recently, which are always followed by developments in the banking and telecoms sector.

Carlson Rezidor Group is currently top of this future-facing pile, according to a recent W Hospitality survey, with the largest number of rooms (6 300) and hotels (30) under development in Africa. Its brand, Radisson Blu, leads all brands in the survey, with its Park Inn brand in third place after Hilton. Currently, the African strategy

has two key markets: Nigeria and South Africa, in each of which it aims to have 15 hotels by 2020. It has plans, too, for five hotels each in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Ghana and Angola. Add to this at least one hotel apiece in Abidjan, Lomé, Ouagadougou, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Juba, Gaborone and Lilongwe.



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Air Mauritius launches stopover packages

AIR Mauritius has officially launched its Mauritius Stopover Plus Travel Package, which offers passengers up to two complimentary nights in Mauritius as part of their journey.

"Being a global carrier with an effective footprint in Australia, India, China, Malaysia, Europe, Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands, it is key for Air Mauritius to promote its beyond Mauritius destination strategy," says Air

Mauritius regional manager, Southern Africa and Latin America, **Carla da Silva**.

Depending on the connectivity, passengers can spend a night on the island on either a bed-and-breakfast or half-board basis. Passengers can choose to extend their stopover by adding an extra night or two.

The Mauritius Stopover Plus Package lets passengers choose from approximately 16 hotels, ranging between three- and five-star.

Singapore Airlines offers pax more value

SOUTH African passengers flying with Singapore Airlines or SilkAir will receive a S\$40 (R360) Changi Dollar Voucher (CDV) when they transit through Changi Airport, as part of a joint promotion between Singapore Airlines and the Changi Airport Group.

Qualifying passengers' e-tickets must be issued on Singapore Airlines ticket number and they must be travelling on flights operated by Singapore Airlines or SilkAir both in and out of Singapore.

The CDVs are effective for transit passengers with travel dates until March 31, 2015.



PHOTO: DEBBIE BADHAM

SITE Summit 2014

On September 19, the fourth Annual Site Summit was held at the Hyatt Regency in Johannesburg. The event provided professionals in the corporate travel industry with the opportunity to learn from incentives experts on topics like incentives for achieving

business results, understanding the challenges around Africa as an appropriate MICE destination, and trending incentive ideas. Taking the opportunity to network are (from left) **Monique Swart** (ABTA) and **Clare Neall** (Event Stuff).

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More Cape Town - Upington flights

AIRLINK has increased its flights between Cape Town and Upington. With the additional frequencies, the airline now offers 10 return flights a week on the route.

The new flight departs CPT at 12h15, with the return flight departing UTN at 13h55 on Mondays and Fridays. On Sundays there are now two flights. The first departs CPT

at 10h45 with the return flight departing UTN at 12h50. The second flight departs CPT at 13h15 and the return flight departs UTN at 15h00.

Flights are operated by a 37-seat Embraer 135 regional jet.

Airlink also recently introduced same-day return flights between CPT and Windhoek and is offering double Voyager Miles until November 30.

Rezidor expands in SA

Park Inn by Radisson Cape Town Newlands opened its doors in October.

The hotel is the first NextGen hotel in Africa, catering specifically for Gen Y travellers. The 122-room hotel will include 28 superior rooms, as well as five meeting rooms, the largest of which can accommodate up to 160 delegates, and a boardroom. The hotel is situated at the base of Table Mountain and is close to Newlands rugby and cricket

stadiums and Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Ground-breaking on the 120-room Radisson Blu project, 8km inside the Kruger Park, should take place early next year. Rooms comprise environmentally sound tented structures. Andrew says the project will fill a gap at four-star level, between luxury and the SanParks offering, working on the premise that international visitors will be attracted to the known reliability of the brand. ■

Opening up East Africa

Fastjet's expansion plans are expected to offer business travellers from South Africa more options when flying into East Africa. **Debbie Badham** investigates.

FASTJET has big plans for East Africa. The airline recently introduced a fourth international route between Dar es Salaam and Entebbe. It also announced plans to establish a second hub in Kenya.

In June, Air Uganda was grounded due to an on-going audit by the International Civil Aviation Organization on the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority. With the announcement that operations would not be resumed, Air Uganda said in a press statement: "This is a Uganda Government issue. Air Uganda has passed the Iata Operational Safety Audit – IOSA – and is a member of Iata."

Ed Winter, ceo of fastjet, says: "The recent lack of capacity has resulted in price hikes by other airlines flying into the region and, consequently, we saw the

opportunity to enter the market with sensible pricing."

Since the Entebbe route opened for bookings in September, Winter says demand for the service has been good. "We've seen a significant number of bookings via the Internet. If things continue in this regard – as we expect they will – we will be able to move to increase our offering to daily flights quickly."

Winter says fastjet's new route to Entebbe will be an advantage to South African business travellers. "Dar es Salaam is a major airport in Africa, with a significant number of airlines serving the destination," he says, pointing to the ease of connecting to Entebbe via Dar es Salaam. "At the moment, people in Africa are travelling further than they have to – our mandate is to make that easier."

Fastjet expects to strengthen its positioning within East Africa, hoping to develop its presence in the region accordingly. In line with this vision, fastjet is in the early stages of developing a new hub in Kenya. The airline has submitted its Air Service Licence (ASL) application to the Kenyan Civil Aviation Authority with plans to launch domestic and international flights from the new base. Winter says once fastjet is presented with its ASL, it will then be able to apply for its Air Operator Certificate, which he expects could take up to six months.

The challenges of launching the operation, Winter says, are that, aside from the development of a new hub, the airline has also been trying to get permission to fly from Tanzania to Kenya, an endeavour it continues to pursue.

Once fastjet's base in Kenya



Ed Winter, ceo of fastjet

is up and running there are a number of possible new international connections, Winter says. These would include Johannesburg, Entebbe, Kigali, Dar es Salaam, Juba, and Malawi.

Connections

South African travellers flying from Johannesburg to Entebbe can expect a five-hour twenty-minute transit period for connecting

flights on a Tuesday and Thursday.

On return flights, passengers will have to overnight in Dar es Salaam as flights depart Entebbe

on a Tuesday and Thursday, with connecting flights to Johannesburg on a Wednesday and Friday.

Johannesburg to Dar es Salaam

Flight number	Day	Depart	Arrive	Duration
202	Tues, Thurs, Sat	00h05	04h40	3hr 35 min

Dar es Salaam to Entebbe

Flight number	Day	Depart	Arrive	Duration
207	Tues, Thurs	10h00	11h45	1hr 45 min

Entebbe to Dar es Salaam

Flight number	Day	Depart	Arrive	Duration
208	Tues, Thurs	12h25	14h10	1hr 45 min

Dar es Salaam to Johannesburg

Flight number	Day	Depart	Arrive	Duration
201	Mon, Wed, Fri	20h30	23h15	3hr 50 min



PHOTO: FASTJET

'Smart' travel

Fastjet has introduced a new premium fare – 'SmartClass' – on all its flights.

Passengers who upgrade to SmartClass can take advantage of advance premium seat allocation, increased baggage allowance of up to 32kg, as well as the ability to change flight dates as many times as required at no additional cost.

SmartClass fares start at US\$160 (R1 749) one way (add government taxes for domestic flights) and US\$450 (R4 919) for international routes. ■

IDC consolidates travel in-house

The Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (IDC) recently launched its own dedicated travel company to cater for its travel needs and those of its three subsidiaries. **Debbie Badham** speaks to head of department: support services, **Busisiwe Khumalo**, and corporate travel manager, **Maureen Masuku**, about the logistics of bringing travel in-house.

THE idea to launch IDC Travel, a dedicated travel office to serve the IDC and its three subsidiaries – Foskor, Sefa and Scaw Metals – was brought about by the alignment of several different critical factors.

At the same time that the IDC entered its tender process to bring on board an external TMC, it also became evident that the amount of travel being booked by Foskor Travel – a travel and procurement department that was launched in early 2012 to handle the subsidiary's travel requirements – was not sufficient to warrant its lata licence, which it received in February last year.

Foskor, which was previously the only one of the four companies falling under IDC's banner to have its own lata licence, was previously awarded the licence through the determined efforts of **Maureen Masuku**, who headed Foskor's travel procurement at the time (see *Travel Buyer's* June 2013 profile). When it became evident that Foskor's licence was not being put to optimal use, IDC began to engage with Foskor, Sefa and Scaw Metals about the possibility of consolidating their travel services.

"We began to question what the outcome of combining all our travel into one complete programme would be," says **Busisiwe Khumalo**, who heads up IDC Travel. Significant engagement between the four

companies took place, resulting in an IDC exco decision to launch IDC Travel.

Khumalo notes that any change brings a certain amount of discomfort but adds that those at the company were confident they were embarking on the right course. The IDC set about analysing the travel programmes belonging to other corporates, noting their success stories and creating a benchmark accordingly.

The result was IDC Travel – a dedicated travel team of eight, which is based at the IDC's head office in Sandton. Each subsidiary has its own dedicated consultant, who all report back to Masuku, who then reports directly to Khumalo.

The merge

Aside from having to adapt to the biggest change (i.e. from previously relying on an external TMC to handle travel requirements and now handling all travel in-house), a number of other changes resulted from the introduction of IDC Travel.

Most significantly, where IDC and its subsidiaries previously made use of different suppliers, this has now been consolidated so that all four companies are now required to use specific suppliers. The challenge was that where subsidiaries had acquired VIP status with certain preferred suppliers, they now had to shift to others, where



IDC's **Busisiwe Khumalo** and **Maureen Masuku** are spear-heading change through IDC's new travel office

they didn't have the same status.

The upside is that, having consolidated its travel spend, IDC Travel is now able to negotiate better deals with suppliers. In fact, the transition has enabled the company to place far greater emphasis on enhanced service and cost-saving. "Our mission has been to ensure we attach value to every cent spent," says Masuku.

She adds that there remains room for growth, with the potential to incorporate other subsidiaries and company partners into the travel programme. "What's more, the bulk rates we acquire from our corporate travel bookings can be enjoyed by staff when they book their own leisure travel."

Bulk rates are not the only advantage of IDC now having its own lata licence. The company is also able to earn commissions directly and has the opportunity to form greater relationships with its suppliers. "As IDC Travel belongs to the IDC, we now own our travel policy, giving us far better control of our programme," Khumalo says.

The transition

IDC's first and greatest challenge was the acquisition of quality consultants. Khumalo says the company was determined to pull together a team consisting of the best in the industry. "The problem was that some of the individuals we

had identified to join our team were already locked into long-term contracts and our date of implementation was looming.”

IDC’s determination paid off and the company managed to assemble a team that, together, has a wealth of experience in the travel industry, says Masuku. “There is a great sense of accountability and ownership among our team members.”

Another challenge was getting buy-in from the subsidiaries, which naturally experienced some discomfort from the ensuing changes. “It is for this reason that, for the first six months of the travel programme’s implementation, we decided not to implement any drastic changes and to use this time to continuously engage with and educate travellers.”

As far as back-office operations are concerned, a number of adjustments were necessary. Where the IDC would previously have received its reconciled travel reports from its TMC, input these into its systems and create management reports, it now had to incorporate the reconciliation process into its systems.

While Khumalo reveals that this has slowed the pace at which IDC’s travel management is able to process reports, she says it is merely

a case of adapting. “Further engagements to assist with that side of our operation are taking place and we are optimistic that we are going to get there,” she says.

The improvements

Presented with the opportunity to create new group policies, the IDC has taken the opportunity to improve specific programmes. “We specifically wanted to improve our service level, part of which has entailed creating one centralised number that employees can call to make their travel arrangements. We then installed a system that allows us to track consultants’ calls with employees via a central screen so that we can monitor as well as mitigate where there could be potential challenges,” says Masuku.

“Then in cases where we see a particular travel request is taking longer than it reasonably should, we can intervene and assist the consultant in question,” adds Khumalo. “We can also ensure that there are no travel requests left unattended to.”

Both Khumalo and Masuku feel that this is a particularly innovative feature of IDC Travel’s programme, noting that they have not come across such a system in any other travel programme.



PHOTO: SHANNON VAN ZYL

Maureen Masuku previously headed up Foskor’s travel division. Through her conscientious efforts Foskor Travel was opened early in 2012 (see *Travel Buyer* June 2013) and received its IATA accreditation the following year. Foskor received its IATA licence just six weeks after submitting the application - in what Masuku believes was record time. As a result of her efforts, IDC is now able to function as a fully operational travel agent with its own IATA licence. ■



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PEERMONT PREVIEW

Come take a sneak peek



PeerMont Hotels Casinos Resorts has undergone a number of exciting new developments this year with the introduction of new conferencing facilities, technological upgrades and extensive refurbishments. We look at what's new, what's changed and what the future holds for the PeerMont brand.

On the move

PeerMont Hotels Casinos Resorts has announced a series of refurbishments, additions and upgrades of facilities at a number of its properties to the tune of over R373m.

Included are a new casino resort being built in Burgersfort, Limpopo, entertainment theatre and conferencing upgrades at Emperors Palace and various other conference, room and bathroom upgrades at properties, as well as the recent opening of new restaurants and bars.

The Theatre of Marcellus at Emperors Place promises theatre aficionados an improved entrance experience with the completed guest experience makeover. The overhaul includes soft new finishes, improved sightlines, new tiered seating, increased capacity to over 1000 seats and a VIP area for ultimate comfort. Another new addition is the up-market, 400-seat Barnyard Theatre at Emperors Palace; a fun-filled guest experience perfect for evenings of popular music shows, theatrical flair and relaxed dining.

Mmabatho Palms Hotel Casino Convention Resort in Mafikeng, North West Province, has seen an investment of R4m in new contemporary-styled bathrooms, while Khoroni Hotel Casino Convention Resort in Thohoyandou, Limpopo, will receive an investment in infrastructure upgrades including parking, public bathrooms, the refurbishment of hotel suites and an improvement in bedroom amenities.

PeerMont recently opened the brand new, contemporary steakhouse – 'Karamba Grillhouse' and the stylish 'Moo Bar' cocktail bar at Rio Hotel Casino Convention Resort in Klerksdorp, North West Province. Both restaurant and cocktail bar were inspired by very modern concepts that are not only visually appealing but also beautifully decorated.



The Theatre of Marcellus at Emperors Palace



The Moo Bar



Karamba Grillhouse

New facilities fit for a King!

Peermont's Emperors Palace has unveiled 1 800sqm of brand new conference and meeting facilities as additions to its convention centre at the Palace of Dreams.

Nigel Atherton, complex gm at Emperors Palace describes the additions as "probably the most cutting-edge conferencing technology and venue combination in South Africa".

Conveniently located alongside Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport, with four hotels ranging from three- to five-star, Emperors Palace's convention centre has a new look and feel. Renovations include an enhanced entrance hall, an

extension to the original facility with an additional 440sqm sub-divisible 'Fabia' room', 220sqm 'Julia' room, five new 100sqm breakaway rooms, a new boardroom and extended pre-assembly areas.

All rooms can be accessed from the service areas. The additional seating areas in the pre-assembly area will provide extra comfort for guests during conferences, events or ceremonies. New carpeting has been fitted as well as new presentation technology that can support high-definition content viewing via cable, or wirelessly from any device.

All hotels offer free WiFi of up to 500MB per day.



Emperors Palace's new 1800sqm of meeting space includes extended pre-assembly areas

Limpopo casino convention resort on track

Peermont is 100% on track with its development plan for the Thaba Moshate Hotel Casino Convention Resort, in Burgersfort, Limpopo Province, and has almost undergone completion of its external building phase.

Aptly named after Thaba ya Moshate, Sepedi for 'mountain palace or castle', Thaba Moshate is the much-anticipated Peermont property set to open early next year. It will boast an impressive 6 295sqm R324m entertainment complex, with facilities such as an 82-room, three-star Peermont Metcourt hotel, 148-seat restaurant and 130-seat venue for conference-style functions, a vibrant show bar, landscaped gardens, pool and Boma. The casino will have 150 slot machines, a Salon Privé, walk-up bar facilities and eight gaming tables, offering local community members the promise of new jobs and sustainable employment, plus

retention of disposable income. Additional facilities to the entertainment complex include childcare amenities, a video arcade, a children's playroom and retail shop.

"Burgersfort was a logical choice for further development for Peermont as the town is near some of the world's largest platinum mineral deposits and has strong potential for further expansion as new mines develop around Thaba Moshate," says **Anthony Puttergill**, ceo and executive director at Peermont.

The Thaba Moshate Hotel Casino Convention Resort is located within the Greater Tubatse Municipality and is expected to draw the majority of its support from the Magisterial Districts of Steelpoort, Ohrigstad and Burgersfort. The resort stands between the R37 from Burgersfort to Polokwane and the R555 road to Steelpoort, where the main access road will lie.



The Thaba Moshate Hotel Casino Convention Resort will open in early 2015

It just keeps getting better

The first phase of the R10 million refurbishment project at Peermont's Graceland Hotel Casino and Country Club in Secunda has recently been completed.

Refurbishments have been done on two floors of the four-star Walmart hotel as well as the Prive-style Manhattan lounge at a cost of R5,5million.

Renovations focused on the carpets and wallpaper, giving the rooms a modern and dramatic look with a palette of red, purple and grey. The Manhattan Casino bathroom facilities also received a makeover.

The second phase is under way and will include the addition of the new Madison's Bistro and family restaurant, which will offer a New York, loft-style dining experience for the whole family.

Other recent renovations at the property include the installation of new carpets in the Augusta Club Lounge, curtains for the 1 000-seat multipurpose Graceland Arena, and a sprinkler irrigation system on the 18-hole, Gary Player-designed golf course. The refurbishment project will ensure that Graceland remains one of Mpumalanga's key entertainment, casino and golfing destinations.



Graceland Hotel Casino and Country Club in Secunda

3 reasons to keep conference-goers captive

Conferencing at resorts has been a big hit globally and is a fast-growing trend in the South African market. **Liesl Venter** speaks to industry experts to find out what the benefits and the challenges are of hosting events in locations where delegates can't leave.

The benefits

Firstly, delegates cannot be disturbed or disrupted as easily, says **Thuli Mahonga**, senior events manager for Nedbank Retail and Business Banking. "It is also ideal for the promotion of creativity while at the same time offering a more relaxed environment for delegates."

Secondly, resorts are ideal for networking opportunities and when it comes to teambuilding, they provide the perfect setting. "I firmly believe that these destinations improve concentration during the conference as delegates are not taxed with travelling to and from the event and are in a setting where they are fully focused on the conference itself," comments Mahonga. "It also affords a very real opportunity to get to know one's colleagues on a more personal level," she adds.

"First and foremost, you have the delegates' undivided attention," agrees **Catherine Larkin**, owner of CVLC. "There are no distractions or thoughts of leaving to pop into the office or attend nearby meetings. This in turn gives sponsors and other stakeholders the opportunity



Thuli Mahonga, senior events manager, Nedbank Retail and Business Banking

to interact with delegates and it really is 'quality networking' time."

Thirdly, as **Mariki Theron**, international sales and marketing manager for Legend Lodges Hotels and Resorts, points out, with a captive audience, meetings organisers have the opportunity to "wow" delegates the whole time. "Resorts also have such a variety of activities on offer that it is easy to keep delegates busy during their stay, from teambuilding to spa treatments, water activities and educational talks."

What challenges are involved?

"Capacity can be a major challenge," says Mahonga. She notes that there are limited facilities and often limited services along with that. "Also if the location is far from home or the office it can be problematic for delegates who have to travel. One is looking at increased expenses for this as well as for the need to secure services that the venue does not provide."

"The conference costs end up being considerably higher at a resort," confirms Larkin, saying that an added challenge is working out a programme that not only entertains delegates from a formal conferencing perspective but for the duration of the event.

Are resorts more appealing than more traditional venues?

"I feel two ways about it as both serve a certain purpose," comments Mahonga. "In my opinion, both make the grade. As an event organiser for a major bank, I believe it is necessary that you should be able to distinguish which one will serve your purposes and requirements effectively. The conference centres are able to serve both small and big numbers, whereas the resorts, I think, are better suited for smaller intimate groups."

Larkin however feels that resorts are undoubtedly growing in popularity. "We find more and more aggressive marketing by resorts, especially

to organisers; you might even say some are a bit questionable. This is mostly due to the current economic climate and the desperation of not only resorts but all companies to stay in the game."

Theron is of the opinion that resorts are the ideal destination for a conference as all the luxuries and fun activities merge well with a conference. "Because of the natural size of resorts, I think they have always targeted the conference sector to ensure bums in beds," she adds.

How do resorts compare in terms of location and budget?

"I purposely did not mention cost as part of the benefits or challenges as I feel conference centres/venues and resorts can both be extremely expensive. This is part of the event organiser's role to try and negotiate a better rate at the venue," maintains Mahonga. She notes that location and facilities play a part in the final decision. "One has to think how long the drive will be, if the roads will be comfortable, and whether it is easily accessible etc."

Larkin further notes that the service levels at traditional conference venues close to the city centres tend to be much better and more efficient as they deal with conferencing more frequently. She says the resorts are more relaxed and not always as business focused due to their focus being spread.

"Budget and if you have very limited time have an influence on where people conference; the traditional conference centres are ideal, however for a unique and out-of-this-world experience, a resort is definitely top of the list," concludes Theron.



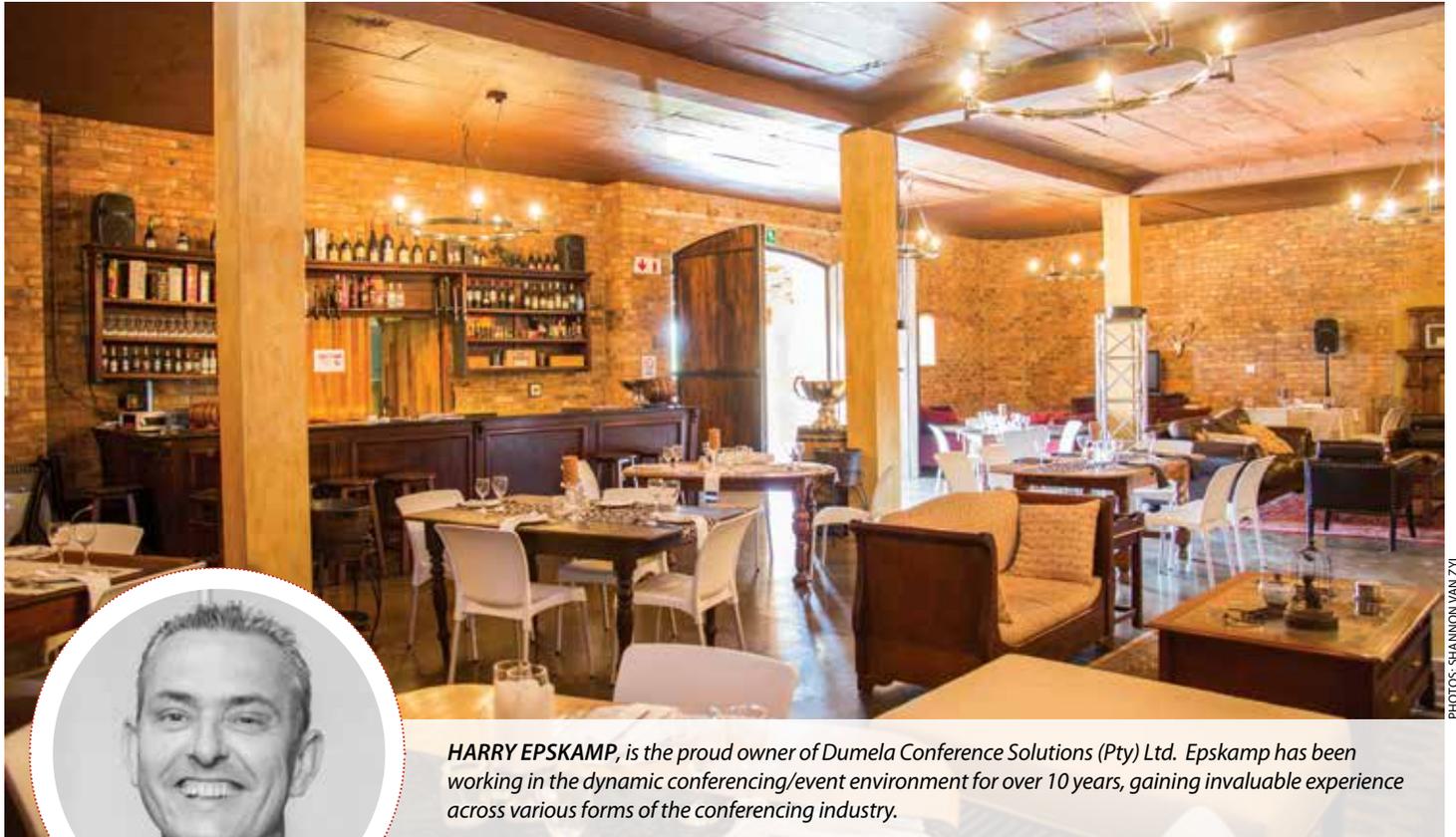
Catherine Larkin, owner of CVLC



Mariki Theron, international sales and marketing manager, Legend Lodges, Hotels & Resorts

Pretoria's 'sleeping giant'

We enlisted the help of meetings expert **Harry Epskamp** to inspect the facilities of the new Monte de Dios.



PHOTOS: SHANNON VAN ZYL

HARRY EPSKAMP, is the proud owner of Dumela Conference Solutions (Pty) Ltd. Epskamp has been working in the dynamic conferencing/event environment for over 10 years, gaining invaluable experience across various forms of the conferencing industry.

What Harry found...

Monte de Dios is a privately owned venue that could almost be termed the 'Sleeping Giant of Pretoria'. Nestled against the picturesque mountain, the property consists of an exquisite Spanish Equestrian Villa along with a newly built 500- to 600-seat venue.

On entering the property you experience this wonderful country feel as though you are away from the city, even though it is actually quite centrally located – the Menlyn Shopping Centre is only 12 minutes away.

With fine facilities, outstanding catering and professionally trained staff, Monte de Dios ticks all the right boxes to be the first potential choice when deciding on a venue that is different to all the rest.

The venue can cater for any type of meeting, from a small intimate conference for the board of directors consisting of as few as 20 people, to a corporate conference of up to 600 delegates.

Conference packages can be tailored to specific requirements and include options such as a full-day package that includes a full English breakfast, morning tea, lunch, high tea

and dinner, either as a buffet or plated.

Monte de Dios also offers the latest and best conference equipment, which is available on site along with experienced technicians on hand to assist with any difficulties. All technical requirements can be supplied by the venue's preferred supplier, EPH Productions.

In a nutshell, Monte de Dios could be ideal for the following types of functions:

- Day conferences
- Special events (e.g. product launches and road shows)
- Gala dinners
- Year-end functions

The only potential draw-back is the fact that Monte de Dios only has six (stunning) double rooms. However, with various partnerships put in place with neighbouring hotels (including a complimentary shuttle service) this shouldn't be a 'make or break' factor.

Flexibility is definitely a key strength of this new venue, which will grow and could surely become a pleasant surprise for the industry. ■

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Compliance: *how loyalty programmes are changing the game*

Loyalty programmes have become a multibillion-dollar revenue stream for travel suppliers, with airlines and hotel brands reinventing the way they target individuals – a growing headache for travel buyers enforcing compliance. **Dorine Reinstein** reports.

LOYALTY programmes, long the lynchpin of any successful airline or hotel marketing strategy, are in the midst of a massive shift.”

This is according to a Skift (an intelligence and marketing platform in travel) trends report, ‘The Reinvention of Airline and Hotel Loyalty Programmes’. This investigates how factors including downward pressures on reward value, key technological shifts in how consumers search for and use travel information online, and more transparent sources of price data are leading marketers to rethink the value and the purpose of long-standing loyalty programmes, often with important consequences for consumers and the industry.

Loyalty programme models, which traditionally worked on a ‘points for rewards’ basis, are changing. With advancements in technology, suppliers, now

more than ever, have access to data that tells them what their customer wants and how they can influence their buying behaviour.

These changes, particularly, have important consequences for travel procurement managers and their travel policies.

Gen Y travellers are especially hard to manage in this regard, says **Monique Swart**, founder of ABTA. It is not uncommon for Gen Y travellers to book outside policy to get miles, she says. “The debate has now moved on to the issue of compliance and how to prevent travellers from booking out of policy.”

Ben Langner, md of Carlson Wagonlit Travel, says the problem is not confined to Gen Y travellers and the interest in loyalty programmes cuts across all generations, which often comes at a cost to the company.

The cost of the pull of loyalty programmes and the ensuing non-compliance can

be considerable. This is largely because the structure of loyalty programmes has changed over the years. Increasingly, loyalty programmes are offering higher rewards to those travellers who buy the highest-priced services.

This could lead to problems for corporates. For example, if points are awarded based on the ticket price, travellers may consider booking their ticket seven days in advance of travel, when prices tend to be higher, rather than 14 or more days in advance or more.

An analysis conducted by the US CWT Solutions Group, Carlson Wagonlit’s consulting division, showed that the higher a traveller’s status within a loyalty programme, the higher their Average Ticket Price (ATP). The ATP of tickets booked by travellers with airline status measured 15-20% higher than the ATP booked by travellers without status on the same routes.

The solution to the challenge

is simple, says Swart. “Companies need to have a stronger focus on traveller compliance and pre-trip authorisation, with bookings outside of policy (or those that are not the least expensive option) flagged so that the traveller has to explain why that option was taken. If it was taken due to miles, this needs to be stopped.

“Some companies don’t allow their travellers to be part of any rewards programmes for this reason, and some also negotiate directly with the airline or hotel so that the rewards belong to the company.”

Langner agrees that each organisation should have clear guidelines and appropriate approval processes. He says actual traveller behaviour should be monitored, evaluated and adjusted on an ongoing basis to support the organisation’s objectives in general, and specifically in terms of selected suppliers.



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How to ensure compliance

TO HELP encourage compliance, it is not uncommon for companies to build an internal loyalty programme that tracks and rewards traveller compliance.

Gamification can be a powerful tool, says **Ben Langner** of CWT. "Gamification solutions are a good way of communicating and 'teaching' members of the company or organisation the details of their travel policy."

In some instances, travel buyers can also work with the supplier to help ensure compliance. **Fiona Angelico**, global and national sales and marketing manager of Thrifty Car Rental, says the success of a loyalty programme lies in working with the TMC to make sure the preferred agreements are respected. "Loyalty programmes can assist suppliers to become a preferred partner

in the future if they are designed around the company's unique requirements.

More suppliers are designing corporate loyalty programmes with company benefits in mind, and not the traveller.

Tsogo Sun has designed a corporate rewards membership specifically for corporate travellers.

Marion Hudson, relationship marketing manager of Tsogo Sun, says the difference between Tsogo Sun's corporate membership and an individual membership is that SunRands earned by guests with a corporate membership are the property of the company rather than the individual.

Hudson adds that there is an area of overlap between the

Tsogo Sun Rewards Programme and preferred agreements with suppliers, which is the discount benefit. "Although individual rewards programme members travelling under a contracted

company rate do not receive the rewards programme discount, they are still entitled to make use of the other benefits associated with the programme, including earning

SunRands."

Air Namibia's loyalty programme, Reward\$ also gives corporate clients the option to choose whether they want to accrue miles per their individual membership or on their corporate account, thus providing them with the option to have the full benefit given

back to the company or the individual.

Langner says finding a solution that benefits the traveller, the supplier and the company is the ideal. He explains that the traveller who subscribes to the loyalty scheme of their organisation's preferred supplier wins because they can redeem points for travel or other benefits; the organisation gains, as the traveller supports the preferred supplier and the supplier gains through increased business. He says: "It's always more powerful when one can succeed in aligning the interests of the individual traveller with those of their organisation. So, if the traveller participates in the loyalty schemes of his company's selected suppliers and service providers, it can only be positive for all three parties – the traveller, his organisation, and the supplier!"

“Gamification solutions are a good way of communicating details of the travel policy.”

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Airlines				
Programme	Mileage expiry	Partners	Non-related point accrual	Unique selling features
Air Austral Capricorne	Three years	Codeshare flights carrying UU numbers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award flights on UU on one-way basis • Automatic upgrade twice yearly to premium Capricorne status when 12 500 points reached in 12 months • Awards for companions, excess baggage or upgrades • Additional benefits for higher tier members • Extra 5kg baggage allowance
Air Botswana Teemane Club	Three years. Status is evaluated towards end of every second year for downgrade/upgrade or to maintain the same status	The airline is working on establishing partners, which will be announced in due course		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority wait listing, check-in and boarding, excess baggage, and exclusive benefits • Use of Pula Lounge at Gaborone and Shongololo & Mashonja at OR Tambo for Gold and Diamond members. Diamond members can invite one guest • Miles credited post-travel with proof, i.e. boarding pass • Members have the catalogue redemption option where they can buy merchandise using miles
Air France KLM Kenya Airways Flying Blue	20 months. May be indefinitely extended depending on activity	SkyTeam members, Alaska Airlines, Airalin, Air Mauritius, BA Comair, Bangkok Airways, Air Corsica, Copa Airlines, GOL, Japan Airlines, Jet Airways, Ukraine International Airlines, Hop!	Hotels, car rental and retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flying Blue Petroleum Club: an exclusive Air France and KLM service for oil and gas industry professionals • Flying Blue Golf membership • Members can purchase gift miles • Additional baggage allowance • Free or discounted seat plus economy comfort seats • Business-class lounge access
Air Mauritius Kestrel Flyer	Three years		Car rental, hotels, duty-free outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family points • Extra baggage allowance • Up to 15% discount on helicopter services • Dedicated reservations/check-in counters • Bonus 300 miles for Internet check-in • Cash and miles redemption
Air Namibia Reward\$	Five years. Awards requested before expiry must be used within 12 months			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferable to family or friends • Free flights, excess baggage payment and upgrades • Enrolment bonus of 500 miles on first flight after enrolment • Bonus 300 miles for online registration and provision of e-mail • Corporate enrolment plan
British Airways/ BA Comair Executive Club	Avios points valid as long as customer collects, spends or purchases at least one Avios point every 36 months	Aer Lingus, Alaska Airlines, Open Skies, oneworld alliance members	Hotels, car rental, foreign currency, credit card companies, BA and other retail outlets, airport and valet parking, household accounts, petrol and supermarket purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward Flight Saver allows members to fly JNB-MRU for a R700 flat fee return • Over 170 lounges worldwide • Flight upgrades for two • Silver partner card • Luxurious Concorde Room lounges • Two additional bags when travelling in World Traveller/economy class or Euro Traveller on any route
Cathay Pacific Asia Miles The Marco Polo Club	Three years	oneworld alliance members	Travel, leisure, dining, retail, telecoms, finance and insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed seat reservation • Extra leg-room seat • Excess baggage allowance • Lounge access • 2 miles earned for every HK\$5 spent on inflight duty free
Delta Air Lines SkyMiles	No expiry	SkyTeam alliance partners, Air Tahiti Nui, Alaska Airlines, GOL, Great Lakes, Hawaiian, Virgin Atlantic, Virgin Australia	Co-branded credit card, car rental, entertainment, wireless, financial, travel, dining, retail, hotels and shopping, partner points to miles conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mileage upgrades from M/B/Y-class to business class • Higher tier Medallion members qualify for extra luggage, priority check-in and waitlist, unlimited upgrades on domestic flights, discounts or free seats, same-day stand-by, same-day confirmed, discounts on Delta Sky Club • Diamond and Platinum members qualify for options including upgrade certificates, bonus miles, Delta Sky Club one-day passes • The 2015 SkyMiles programme: earn miles based on ticket price and SkyMiles status; one-way awards; Miles + Cash • Additional benefits for higher tier members
EgyptAir EgyptAir Plus	Three years	Star Alliance members	Hotels, cruises, car rental, restaurants, shopping, financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades, lounge access, extra baggage allowance, priority standby and baggage handling • Membership for up to five family members • Additional benefits for higher tier members
EI AI Matmid	Three years	American Airlines, Qantas, SAA, AeroMexico, Sun d'Or. Also codeshare agreements on SWISS, Czech Airlines, Iberia, Vietnam Airlines, Siberia Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines	Hotels, car rental, restaurants and shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonus tickets valid for one year • Purchase of upgrades, economy-class-plus seats and extra bag for TL members, utilising points
Emirates Skywards	Three years	Japan Airlines, Korean Air, Qantas, SAA, TAP Portugal Operating in other regions: Alaska Airlines, easyJet, Jet Airways, JetBlue, Jetstar, Virgin America	Hotel partners, car rental, financial, retail, leisure and lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excess baggage privileges of 12kg-20kg depending on tier • Lounge access for Gold members even when travelling in economy class • Lounge access for a guest on the same Emirates flight, when member is travelling first or business class • Guaranteed seat reservation, even on fully booked flights
Ethiopian Airlines Sheba Miles	Three years	Star Alliance members, ASKY Airlines, TACA Airlines	Shopping, lifestyle, car rental, hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority waitlist, standby, check-in, boarding, baggage handling • Personalised luggage tag • Extra baggage allowance • Lounge access
Ethihad Airways Air Seychelles Ethihad Guest	Three years	Brussels Airlines, Oman Air, Jet Airways, Sri Lankan Airlines, Virgin Australia, American Airlines, airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Air New Zealand, Alitalia, ANA, Asiana Airways, Bangkok Airways, Czech Airlines, Garuda Indonesia, Hainan Airlines, Korean Air, Malaysia Airlines, Royal Air Maroc, Ukraine International Airlines	Car rental, hotels, telecommunications, shopping, financial partners, leisure and lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Mile Redemption: fly once and enjoy instant rewards • Miles Plus Cash: Use miles and cash combo for redemption, while still earning miles on cash spent • Earn one mile for every mile flown, even on promotional or discounted tickets • No black-out periods • Redeem miles on flights, upgrades, products and services using exclusive Reward Shop

Airlines

Programme	Mileage expiry	Partners	Non-related point accrual	Unique selling features
LAM Flamingo Club	Two years		Hotels, car rental, fuel products, telecommunications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive desk check-in • Additional 5kg luggage on domestic/regional flights; 10kg on intercontinental flights • Special benefits on partner programmes • Additional benefits for higher tier members
Lufthansa SWISS Miles & More	Three years	Star Alliance members, 21 additional carriers	Car rental, hotels, shopping, telecommunications and more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers with a lump sum of 18 000 award miles can use miles to pay for taxes and fees on award flights within Europe operated by Lufthansa and selected Miles & More airline partners • No black-out periods • Use miles to pay for special events
Qantas Qantas Frequent Flyer	No expiry if member earns/uses points once every 18 months. Excludes family transfers	Emirates, oneworld alliance and others	Credit cards, hotels, car rental, travel, shopping, financial, entertainment, dining and business services (Note: some point accruals are not applicable to non-Australian members.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra checked baggage allowance • Preferred seating and access to selected Qantas Classic Award seats • Priority waitlist, airport standby, check-in • Additional benefits for higher tier members
RwandAir DreamMiles	Silver, Gold and Diamond tiers: two years Emerald tier: none	Codeshare and interline airline partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed economy-class seats on international and domestic flights • Priority waitlist • Access to business-class counters • Priority baggage tags • Extra baggage allowance • Business-class lounge access when travelling in economy • Dedicated assistance number • 500-mile bonus for flights taken during member's birthday month
Singapore Airlines KrisFlyer	Three years	Star Alliance members, SilkAir	Over 120 global non-airline partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miles earned on lower booking classes; 50% of miles flown in Q Class and 10% of miles flown in V Class • 5 000 miles required to start redemption
SAA Voyager	Three years; can be extended by one year (T&Cs apply)	Star Alliance members, SA Express, Airlink, Airlink Swaziland, El Al, Jet Airways, Qantas, Emirates, Virgin Atlantic, US Airways, TAM, Etihad, Mango (redemption only)	Car rental, financial, hotels, property, retail and lifestyle, fuel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade to Silver Status at 25 000 miles or the required sector criteria, to Gold at 50 000 miles or the required sector criteria, and to Platinum at 100 000 miles or the required sector criteria • Upgrade to Lifetime Platinum tier at 100 000 tier miles or the required sector criteria on the services of SAA only, for six consecutive years
Thai Airways Royal Orchid Plus	Two years	Star Alliance members and others	Airline, hotel, car rental, credit card companies and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10kg extra baggage for Silver status; 20kg extra baggage for Gold status • Complimentary upgrade on Thai flights for Gold members • Access to Thai and Star Alliance lounges for Gold members • 50% award redemption for Gold members
Turkish Airlines Miles & Smiles	Three years	Air Canada, Air China, Air New Zealand, EgyptAir, Lufthansa, Shenzhen Airlines, Singapore Airlines, SAA, Spanair, SWISS, TAP, Thai Airways, United Airlines, Jet Airways	Hotels, car rental, financial, telecommunications, technology, vehicle purchases, fuel products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn through the Shop & Miles credit card • Free tickets or upgrades for traveller and companion • Membership card can be used for self-service check-in • Priority reservation
Virgin Atlantic Flying Club	No expiry if account is active. Alternatively, three years	Air China, Air New Zealand, All Nippon Airways, Cyprus Airways, Delta Air Lines, Gulf Air, Hawaiian Airlines, Jet Airways, Malaysia Airlines, SAS (earning only), Singapore Airlines, SAA, US Airways, Virgin America, Virgin Australia (formerly Virgin Blue)	Hotel partners, car rental, credit cards, dining and rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Clubhouse lounge passes if a member achieves 60 tier points in a year • A one-cabin, round-trip upgrade for two people on any booking made directly if Gold member achieves 80 tier points in a year • Birthday bonus of 2 000 miles for Gold members • 2 000 miles bonus for Silver members on renewal of status

Key

- oneworld alliance partners: Air Berlin, American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Finnair, Iberia, Japan Airlines, LAN, TAM Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas, Qatar Airways, Royal Jordanian, S7 Airlines, Sri Lankan Airlines.
- Star Alliance partners: Adria Airways, Aegean Airlines, Air Canada, Air China, Air India, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, Avianca, Brussels Airlines, Copa Airlines, Croatia Airlines, EgyptAir, Ethiopian Airlines, EVA Air, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Shenzhen Airlines, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, SWISS, TAP Portugal, Turkish Airlines, Thai and United.
- SkyTeam partners: Aeroflot, Aerolineas Argentinas, AeroMexico, Air Europa, Air France, Alitalia, China Airlines, China Eastern, China Southern, Czech Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Garuda Indonesia, Kenya Airways, KLM, Korean Air, Middle East Airlines, Saudia, Taron, Vietnam Airlines, Xiamen Air.

Car Rental

Programme	How to earn points	Participating partners	Benefits
Avis Rent a Car Presidents Club Preferred Service Small Corporates and Individuals Programmes	Vehicle rental		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed reservations on key car groups • Preferred parking of vehicles at rental locations • Waiver upgrades • Signed master rental agreement • Preferred service counter • Renter profile in Avis Wizard System • Free rental days • Airline frequent flyer miles

Car Rental

Programme	How to earn points	Participating partners	Benefits
First Car Rental First Club Card Corporate Show & Go Card	Vehicle rental	Hotels, American Express Hotel Express	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free days • No branch visits • Direct from plane to car • Mobile checkout in one minute
Hertz Hertz Gold Plus Rewards	Qualification period runs January 1 to December 31. Membership status updated the following April		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed reservations for President's Circle tier • Access to designated parking stalls for Five Star and President's Circle members • Rewards and exclusive offers • Free rental days for President's Circle tier and Five Star members after 10 rentals in one calendar year
Thrifty MyBucks	Vehicle reservations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn MyBucks which can be redeemed on future reservations.

Hotels

Programme	How to earn points	Participating partners	Benefits
Accor Le Club	Stay at 2 000 hotels from budget to luxury	Club Med, Europcar, Lenôtre (France only), Shell, TAM, Itau (Brazil only), HSBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four tier membership: Essential, Connected, Upgraded and Even More VIP • Transfer points to participating partners • Points never expire • Free Internet • Advance access to private sales on accorhotels.com
Carlson Rezidor Gold Points Gold Points Plus	Club CarlsonSM offers 20 Gold Points per US\$ spent on hotel nights, plus all meals and beverages charged to the customer's room. Bonus points earned for online bookings. Club CarlsonSM for Planners is a rewards programme exclusively for meeting and event planners. 1 000 participating hotels	Budget, Avis, and selected airline partners	<p>Red tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points for hotel stays, food, beverage, meetings and events • Discount on food and beverage • Free Internet • Free awards nights <p>Silver tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Red, plus: • Complimentary room upgrade • Elite member service line <p>Gold tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Silver, plus: • In-room welcome gift • Guaranteed room availability up until 72 hours <p>Concierge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Gold, plus: • Guaranteed room availability up until 48 hours • Free continental breakfast
City Lodge The Lodger Club	Points earned by processing bookings online while logged into your account (valid for three years)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discounts on rack rates • Free accommodation offers • No loss of points when redemption bookings are cancelled/amended
Hilton HHonors	Points accrued at 4 000 hotels and resorts in 90 countries, and with participating partners	Airlines, car rental rail, cruise, mobile, online, financial, shopping and dining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free spouse stays • No expiry of points while members stay active • No black-out dates • Upgrades for elite members • Earn points and air miles for same stay
InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards	Hotel stays at any of IHG's over 4 700 hotels worldwide, airline and car rental with partners	Points for everyday spending with IHG Rewards Club partners and while shopping and dining. Members can use their points to redeem hotel stays virtually anywhere in the world – even competitor hotels. Car rentals with well-known local and global providers at airports worldwide with Cars Anywhere. Flights on over 400 airlines with Flights Anywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No expiry on points and no black-out dates on Reward Nights • Free Internet • No black-out dates for Rewards Nights • Fast track to Elite status when guests explore IHG's portfolio of hotel brands • Members can redeem faster rewards by using a combination of Points & Cash
Premier Hotels and Resorts Royalty Club	Hotel stays and food and beverage spend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive 10% back as credits in Royalty Rands on accommodation, restaurant and bar spend for all Royalty Club Members on an individual basis • Credits on selected purchases at each hotel (1 Premier Royalty Rand = 1 Premier Credit)
Protea Hotels Prokard	Earn up to 10% of accommodation spend in Prokard rands at Protea and African Pride Hotels	Budget Rent a Car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 10% discount on BAR of the day in SA and 20% in Africa • 5% off online special offers • Members earn up to 10% of their room revenue back in Prokard Rands • Guaranteed redemption of Prokard Rands, even during peak periods • Prokard rands can be redeemed as partial or full payment on hotel bill • Dining discounts of up to 50% for Gold members even if not staying in the hotel
Tsogo Sun Frequent Guest	Earn Sun rands on accommodation rates and services. Valid for two years	American Express, Nedbank Greenbacks, SunSwop and Europcar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn 5% to 15% Sun Rands on qualifying rates and items • 10% accommodation discount at luxury and full service hotels, 5% accommodation discount at select service hotels • 7.5%-20% F&B discounts at hotel-owned restaurants and bars • 1 GiG Free Wifi per room, per day • Redeem SunRands towards accommodation or meals and drinks at Tsogo Sun hotel-owned restaurants and bars • Entertainment and event discounts as determined for each event • Like-for-Like status match at Tsogo Sun casinos and entertainment destinations
Starwood Starwood Preferred Guest	Earn points at more than 1 100 hotels. Starpoints do not expire as long as there is activity once every 12 months	Airlines, car rentals, financial, retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free nights, free flights, room upgrades, gift certificates, and transportation • No black-out dates • Rewards for hotel services • Online redemption • Access to Once-In-A-Lifetime Moments, an exclusive online auction where Starpoints can be used to bid on extraordinary events and once-in-a-lifetime experiences
Three Cities Exceptional Rewards Programme	Up to 10% CashBack rewards on accommodation spent at participating hotels	Lifestyle partners, car rental and more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 25% off dining • Accommodation discounts loaded electronically on to membership card • Free accommodation vouchers and free birthday stay for Gold card members • Rewards can be used to settle guest accounts in part or full • Automatic room upgrade to a suite (subject to availability)

Disclaimer: The table contains a selection of the benefits offered by those loyalty programmes that supplied information.

Any airline, any seat, at any time

DINERS Club South Africa is on an aggressive campaign to get new members – and get those members spending on their Diners cards – with the launch of its new loyalty programme, ClubMiles.

Unlike other loyalty programmes, ClubMiles offers cardholders more choice and flexibility when it comes to air travel.

Members can book any airline, any seat at any time. Cardholders now have the flexibility to travel with their airline of choice after earning miles on their Diners Club cards. They can use ClubMiles to pay for their ticket – and airport taxes too.

ClubMiles can also be redeemed for stays at over 45 000 hotels worldwide along with car rentals from early 2015.

Ebrahim Matthews, md of Diners Club SA, says: “Many of our cardholders require flexibility in choosing flights and seats with no block/black-out periods, and flights to any destination.

“The number of airlines operating to and from South Africa has grown substantially over the years and the offerings need to keep pace. Diners Club ClubMiles will give our members a new and innovative approach

to travel that puts the cardholder in control.”

A dedicated website allows cardholders to enter their desired air travel requirements and immediately access all available airlines flying their chosen route, as well as the miles required for their trip.

“Members are guided through the booking process and tickets are issued electronically,” Matthews says. “Plus, if they fly on an airline and are also members of their loyalty programmes, they will earn the relevant rewards there too. There are no restrictions on bookings – if the seat is available you can use ClubMiles to book and pay for it.”

Diners Club is the only financial services provider to offer its card members a choice of linking to both SAA’s Voyager and BA’s Executive Club Avios. The new ClubMiles programme now offers cardholders a third option of being able to choose any other airline too.

The ClubMiles programme also offers Diners Club members the option to buy additional ClubMiles using a Diners Club card as well as to link secondary cardholders. Another benefit is that members get free basic travel insurance cover if they are under 74 years of age.



PHOTO: INDIGO HOTELS

The Address Boutique Hotel in Mauritius

Book at Indigo’s new hotel, earn miles

Mauritius-based corporate hotel group, Indigo Hotels, recently unveiled its new boutique corporate hotel, The Address.

Situated in the residential area of Port Chambly, 20 minutes from Grand Baie and 10 minutes from Port Louis, the property features 42 rooms; a Japanese restaurant, Izumi; and La Fourchette, a Mediterranean alfresco dining experience overlooking the piazza. The Piano Rouge lounge bar and the Aqua Bar next to the pool, complete the dining and drinking options.

The Address also has an iSpa fitness and wellness spa.

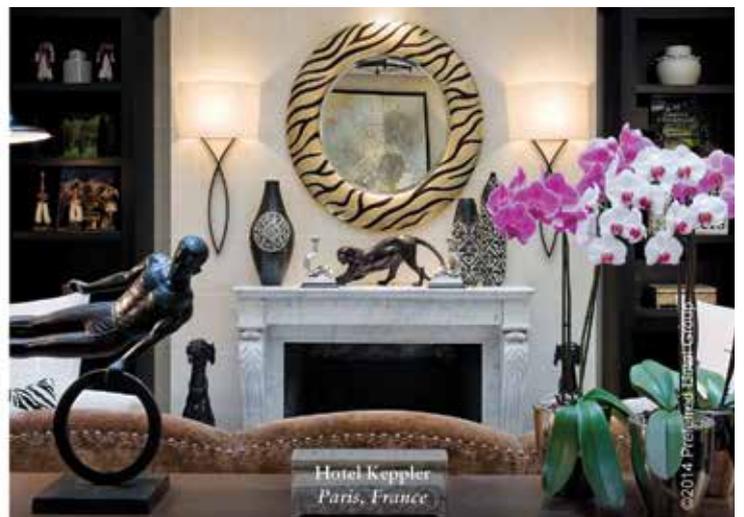
Air Mauritius has an agreement with Indigo Hotels that allows corporate clients to earn Kestrelflyer Miles based on the total invoice, including extras. Miles are doubled for Friday- and Saturday-night stays. Gold card holders can get free upgrades at La Bourdonnais and spouses will be accommodated free of charge (room only). Other benefits include discounts on massages and VIP courtesy packs in rooms, according to Kestrelflyer status.

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R		66.789.25
R		122.666.50
R		239.654.94
R		222.852.06
R		258.223.50
R		321.856.82
R		255.120.98
R		52.562.23
R		230.056.55
R		61.563.29
R		100.111.22
R		58.220.89
R		62.000.99
R		250.700.42
R		350.000.00
R		1.599.25
R		62.256.35
R		78.630.83
R		125.202.36
R		78.700.85
R		3.987.26
R		102.654.88
R		165.741.36
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iPrefer records significant uptake

IT HAS been just over a year since the Preferred Hotel Group launched iPrefer, during which time the programme has seen considerable uptake.

In its first year, iPrefer has generated a 52% increase in group loyalty member enrolment and 120% increase in active members. What's more, iPrefer members have spent on average US\$110 (R1 232) more per booking at participating hotels than travellers who are not enrolled in the programme.

iPrefer currently has 1,2 million active members.

The points-based guest loyalty programme enables travellers to book stays at hundreds of independent hotels worldwide and to be rewarded with points, status, special benefits and a flexible redemption process.

With more than 500



PHOTO: THE PREFERRED-HOTEL GROUP

The Cape Royale Luxury Hotel & spa in Cape Town.

properties offering iPrefer benefits, the programme offers greater value to corporate travellers and meetings and incentives groups who favour the independent

hotel experience.

Members of iPrefer receive one point for every US\$1 (R11) they spend on nett room reservations booked through eligible channels.

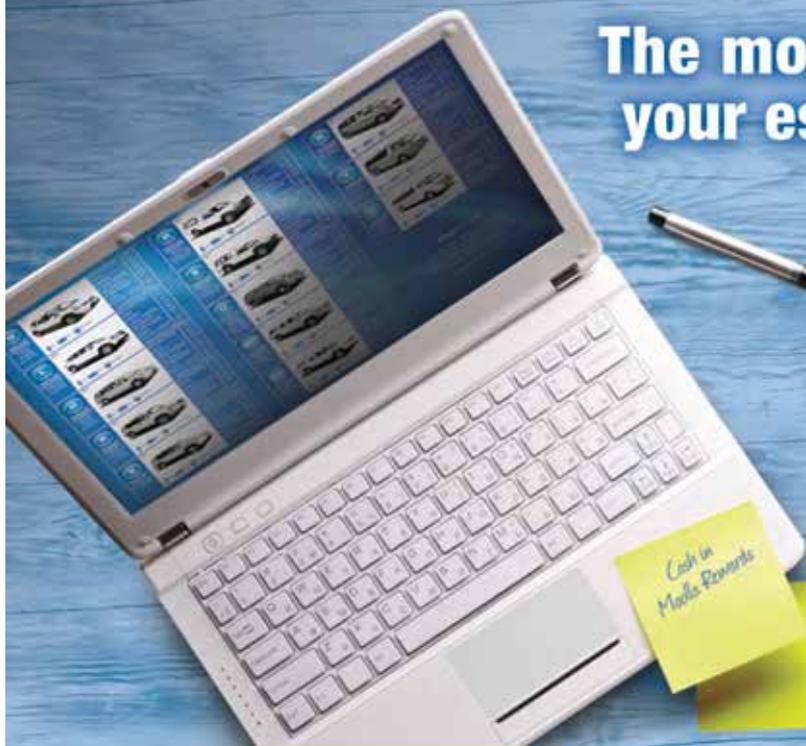
Travellers want more choice

AS MOST airlines begin changing their loyalty programmes to truly reward only their most profitable clients, travellers are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the programmes.

According to a customer engagement survey released by loyalty marketing firms, Colloquy and FanXchange, more than half of American members of loyalty programmes (54%) are unhappy with the options offered by their loyalty programmes and 48% of travellers are frustrated with the redemption process.

In a recent WebFlyer survey, 81% of respondents agreed that loyalty programmes had 'got worse in rewarding loyal customers over the past 25 years'. ■

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Counting the cost of containment

Government is said to be leading the way with its cost containment measures but is this a good or bad thing for the corporate travel industry?

Chana Boucher speaks to industry stakeholders about the impact these measures have had.



Dalu Majeke, National Treasury, chief financial officer



Clifford Ross, ceo, City Lodge Hotel Group

IT HAS been an interesting year for government travel, following the announcement in November 2013 that there would be a crackdown on wasteful expenditure. This year, all government departments have been required to implement the cost containment measures proposed by the Department of National Treasury in former Finance Minister **Pravin Gordhan's** medium-term budget policy statement last year, which has meant TMCs booking government travel have had to align their policies too.

According to **Dalu Majeke**, National Treasury chief financial officer, the measures were introduced to curb excessive spending on frills and to promote fiscal prudence. "The world is yet to recover fully from the impact of the global economic crisis from which South Africa was not spared. Given the economic problem of scarcity it is imperative that resources be used effectively and efficiently to achieve economic and social

objectives," he says.

In October last year, Cabinet resolved that all departments, constitutional institutions and public entities must ensure that appropriate control measures were instituted to provide reasonable assurance that all expenditure in their institutions was necessary, appropriate, paid promptly, recorded accurately and reported accordingly.

Some of the measures that affect the travel industry include, among others, the purchase of economy-class tickets for employees where the flying time is five hours or less; domestic hotel accommodation not exceeding R1 300 per night per person including dinner, breakfast and parking; employees not being allowed to hire vehicles from a category higher than Group B or the equivalent; limiting international travel to meetings or events considered to be 'absolutely critical'; obtaining at least three accommodation quotes; and planning air travel properly to use restricted airline tickets as opposed

to the more expensive, flexible tickets.

What has the impact been?

"Government's priority and focus is on service delivery and this has not been affected, despite an average reduction of 13,9% in travel expenses for January to June 2014 compared with the same period of the previous year for provincial and national departments," says Majeke.

He adds that the measures could not have been achieved without the support and partnership of the corporate travel industry. "They have assisted in negotiating good deals with hotels, helped to improve planning in terms of booking flights early and have created more partnerships with airlines in order to get good deals."

According to **Sailesh Parbhu**, md of XL Nexus Travel, there have been notable changes to spend. "Some travellers put in a lot more appointments on a trip so a second

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Sailesh Parbhu, md, XL Nexus Travel



Shereen Morolo, ceo of Public Sector, Tourvest Travel Services

trip is not necessary and certain departments are making use of videoconferencing to ensure compliance to cost saving."

Shereen Morolo, Tourvest Travel Services' ceo of Public Sector, says spend has increased in some aspects and decreased in others. For example, she says where costs have increased, it's as a result of government placing a cap on accommodation where previously they spent less.

She adds that TMCs have had to align their systems to ensure that they are able to assist government by engaging with suppliers. However, Morolo says there is no additional admin required. "It's essentially about ensuring that the relevant negotiated rates are loaded and available."

Parbhu agrees, saying that the measures have actually eased the administrative work since it is a specific set of rules being applied. He says the paperwork process has remained the same. "TMCs that usually tailor make their customers' services to their travel requirements can easily adjust to these measures."

Clifford Ross, ce of the City Lodge Hotel Group, says it appears

that significant efforts are being made by government travel buyers to keep within the stipulations and cost containment measures introduced by Treasury. According to Ross, the R1 300 per night policy fits perfectly within the scope of the rate philosophy of the City Lodge Hotel Group's brands. "There should be some benefit derived for the group from this new policy."

However, he adds that administration of the policy is still not perfect as its interpretation is not as clearly defined as it should be within all government departments. "Allowances allocated for meals differ vastly from department to department and should be standardised," he says.

What are the challenges?

"Financial management has always been a challenge, however if you ensure transparency and accuracy there is a real effort from government to work within the guidelines of the Public Finance Management Act," Morolo says. She adds that the cost containment measures are necessary, serving as a clear guideline to government

departments to ensure compliance with their travel policies.

Parbhu says: "When one decides to work in this market segment you have to understand the space you're playing in and ensure that your business processes are adaptable and flexible to each department's requirements. Going in without integrating your systems and procedures and aligning them with the department processes will prove challenging."

He adds that it is necessary to build a partnership with government through delivery of a seamless service so that the officials can do their work with confidence, knowing the TMC is effectively handling their travel arrangements. "If the TMC doesn't deliver, the official doesn't fly to make their meeting and this could lead to a disastrous chain of events. So we have huge responsibilities in our delivery to government."

For City Lodge, Ross says government business is a growing sector of the group's overall market mix and one that will be encouraged by driving awareness of the products and brands that the City Lodge Hotel Group offers.

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Government groups: the risks and rewards

Government travel has its challenges but TMCs dealing with groups believe the business is worth pursuing. **Michelle Colman** reports.

WHILE group travel in general requires the attention of master organisers, government groups have more peculiarities. They are more complex, says **Shereen Morolo**, ceo of Tourvest Travel Services' Public Sector division. Group sizes fluctuate until the actual conference or event date. Confirmed numbers of attendees alter so regularly that they are often changed on site, she says. There are numerous changes along the way and a very specific protocol must be adhered to.

For **Sailesh Parbhu**, md of XL Nexus Travel, the difference in servicing government groups lies in handling confidential details with sensitivity. Safety and security, too, are paramount and often lead to last-minute changes, he says. Safety concerns have a bearing on many details, such as the type of accommodation booked for VIP officials and their protectors.

Principal officials' diaries also bring pressure to the process, says Parbhu. Further, an unforeseen event can mean widespread cancellations. "For example, when Madiba became gravely ill, international travel was kept to a minimum."

Then there's the stress of obtaining final approvals and orders, often across more than one government department. Former BCD Travel md, **Kananelo Makhetha**, says it is not a complicated process but many delays are encountered that can

end up being costly for the TMC. Morolo concurs, saying that while some departments are willing to pay deposits and lodge pre-payments, approval is always slow and if the budget is exceeded for some reason, only the contracted rate will be payable.

Government budgets have tightened and cost containment and austerity measures are being observed all round. Makhetha notes that government groups do try to save where possible but lengthy approval processes are often their undoing. By the time they get the green light from decision makers, deadlines to secure better rates have expired.

But it's worth the effort, TMCs say. "Frankly, in this current economic climate where most corporates are downtrading, it's important to explore different market segments, including the public sector, for growth," says Morolo.

"It's most definitely worth it," believes Makhetha, "provided all decision makers assist to make the process more streamlined and minimise red tape." And an upbeat Parbhu says: "It is exciting to be part of the change and development of our country. We can add the value of the seamless service our government needs to fulfil their service mandate to our people. One cannot measure that in monetary terms but rather as a co-contributor to ensuring we all meet the objectives of building a better nation."

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But beware...

Expressing a more cautionary take on the subject of government travel is Uniglobe ceo, **Mike Gray**. "Over the last 15 years as ceo of Uniglobe, a franchise system that has really tried to support new entrepreneurs in the travel business, I have gone from hopeful and excited to shocked and appalled to total disillusionment and cynicism about the potential of government travel to enable the development of emerging entrepreneurs and small service businesses, which we all know are the only engines for growth in jobs.

"I have seen many franchisees lose their businesses and their life savings on government business, to the extent that I now counsel all new franchisees to stay away from this area of what looks like

low-hanging fruit."

Besides no or late payment, Gray says he has witnessed a litany of bad behaviours that include:

- underpayment because travellers have not stuck to the approved travel;
- hired vehicles not returned, sometimes for weeks (following which government, instead of disciplining staff, underpays or fails to pay the TMC at all);
- accidents and fines incurred while driving hired cars.

Gray believes budgets are out of control, supported by the fact that few government departments or entities have clean audits. "There is a lack of professionalism and ethics in the accounting and finance area, which can lead to bribery and corruption. I have had more than one franchisee, waiting for outstanding accounts for 90 to 180

days, ask me if they should pay the 10% to 20% bribe requested. Another asked about paying R100 000 for winning a tender. This also reflects government officials' total lack of understanding of our thin margins, tight payment deadlines and high guarantees required by Iata."

That said, Gray believes that if government travel were properly managed, the sector could be a huge growth catalyst for emerging and small travel and tourism businesses, with government's control of over 50% of direct business travel spend in South Africa and 25% indirectly through contractors and suppliers, as well as its promotion of BBBEE procurement. "It just requires clear vision, sound strategy and ethical and professional implementation," he says.

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Gov works with Asata

THE Association of Southern African Travel Agents is working with the South African National Treasury on the development of an effective travel procurement framework for government travel to control excessive travel spending.

In 2013, former Finance Minister **Pravin Gordhan** announced that there would be cut backs on all business travel perks, such as first-class flights, and demanded the withdrawal of official credit cards. He said: "As government, we acknowledge that we too must provide value for money. Although most government spending is effectively managed,

there are many opportunities to cut or minimise costs and stop abuse."

Otto de Vries, ceo of Asata, says the association's Member Advisory Forum has been working closely with Treasury on the development of a travel procurement framework – a document that will form the basis of National Treasury's business case.

He says the current focus of the collaboration is on the development of a Code of Conduct and governance framework and the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between National Treasury and Asata.

KZN implements new online solution

The KwaZulu Natal provincial government has embarked on the implementation of Travelit, Tourvest's online travel management solution for government, within the governing body's various departments. The technology was

successfully implemented across eight of the departments from October 1. Compliance, both in terms of the departmental subsistence and travel policy, and the national treasury cost containment measures, are the primary objectives of the implementation. ■



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'The businessman's airport'

Lanseria's passenger traffic has grown exponentially since it was first established, with just over R1,8 million people having passed through the airport over the past year. What makes Lanseria such an attractive option for business travellers?

Debbie Badham investigates.



PHOTO: LANSERIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

THERE is no doubt that Lanseria holds a particular appeal for corporate travellers – so much so that marketing and media manager for Lanseria International Airport, **Claudette Vianello**, dubs the hub 'the businessman's airport'. "We see a large amount of business travel," she says, adding that the airport's location and convenience are a plus.

Hein Kaiser, spokesperson for Mango Airlines, agrees: "The airport's proximity to major business centres is highly favourable when it comes to domestic departures and arrivals in Johannesburg."

A number of different business hubs are close to Lanseria. Marketing manager of kulula.com, **Shaun Pozyn**, says areas such as Midrand, Pretoria, Krugersdorp and the northern suburbs of Johannesburg all have good access.

"We see a significant amount of passenger traffic from Pretoria," says Vianello. She adds that the very purpose of Lanseria has been to

provide travellers with an efficient travel alternative. "Right from the beginning we identified that we wanted to offer a different kind of travel experience, specifically a more convenient experience."

Lanseria is growing rapidly and it's vital to executives that it maintains a service offering that affords them the efficient

experience with which it has become associated. "This is so important to us that we are constantly revisiting our service offering and measuring the convenience of the travel experience we provide," says Vianello. She points out that the very design and feel of the airport are testament to Lanseria's commitment to time-saving and efficiency.

Kaiser believes Mango's service offering is well-suited to the airport's value proposition around

convenience and efficiency. "We find that it has not been a case of having to adapt our service offering to complement theirs but rather that we enhance one another operationally. For example, Mango's efficient ground handling and process management help ensure the airport achieves optimal time performance."

Pozyn agrees, saying that kulula.com is equally focused on providing travellers with as smooth a travel experience as possible. "We are all about making

flying easy," he says. "In fact, the word kulula means easy in Zulu and is part of the reason we have such a great alignment with Lanseria."

The benefits that follow on from time saved at an airport are significant. "As the saying goes, 'time is money' and for the average business traveller this could not be truer," says Pozyn.

In an effort to continue driving efficiencies, Lanseria has implemented a number of innovations. One such initiative is its 'Ring and Ride' service, which provides travellers with an alternative drop-off point. The airport constructed a parking area at the bottom of the road, which runs through the airport next to the ExecuJet building. Travellers who need to be dropped off can take advantage of the free parking while they wait to be collected by the airport's Ring and Ride service. Vianello points out that this is very helpful in alleviating the congestion around the airport's primary drop-off zone.

The airport expects to see continued growth and development – in particular as the result of its new runway which was completed at the end of November 2013. "This will allow us to entice new airlines to the airport," says Vianello, adding that the airport will ultimately look to bring on board international airlines as well as other domestic carriers.

"We are constantly measuring the convenience of the travel experience Lanseria provides."

Mango posts record profits

IT'S been a good year for domestic low-cost carriers, Mango and Comair, with both airlines recording profits for the 2014 financial year – Mango's being a record.

Mango reported a nett profit of R40 million and a before-tax profit of R56,1 million for the fiscal ending March 31, 2014. This represents the airline's highest-ever profit, compared with a before-tax profit of R36,9 million for the previous financial year.

According to the airline,

revenue increased by 42% as a consequence of capacity growth of 25,62% and an average load factor hike to 82,35% along with tightened yield management.

Meanwhile, Comair reported a 16% increase in nett income from last year to R265m, for the period ending June 30, 2014. Turnover grew 17% on improved yields and an increase in passenger numbers in one quarter.

During the period in review, Acsa reported a market decline of 0,4% domestically.

"It has been a fantastic year

for Mango," said ceo, **Nico Bezuidenhout**. "The narrative of our business case, as set down in 2006, continues to bear fruit as Mango achieves its second successive profitable fiscal and sixth profitable full fiscal out of seven completed."

However, Bezuidenhout cautioned that the current fiscal indicated an economic hangover as a consequence of on-going fuel price and currency fluctuations. "This year will see greater challenges and increased pressure on margins and," he

added, "with a new market entrant on the horizon, both load factors and revenue across the sector will be under pressure."

During the period in review, Mango launched scheduled operations to its first international destination with twice-weekly flights between Johannesburg and Zanzibar. The airline also launched three weekly frequencies between Johannesburg and George plus a fourth in early 2014 and added two B737-800 aircraft to its fleet. ■

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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



8. ZAMBIA

Dreams. Pay for two nights, stay for three nights at the Royal Livingstone. Rates are from R7 720 per person sharing. Package includes return flights between Johannesburg and Livingstone, return airport transfers, three nights' accommodation, daily breakfast, unlimited access to the Falls, park fees and Zambian government tax. Offer is valid until November 30. Rates exclude airport taxes of approximately R3 260 per person.

1. DUBAI

MSC Cruises. Dubai Special – inside cabin from R6 429 per person sharing. Offer includes seven nights on board MSC Orchestra, meals and entertainment. Departure dates: December 13, 20, 27 and January 17, 24, 31. Children under 18 cruise free when sharing a cabin with two full-paying adults. Free on-board credit valid from January 3-10.

2. CAPE TOWN

Vineyard Hotel. Special occasion package from R1 245 per person sharing, per night. Rate includes accommodation with breakfast, five-course set menu, sparkling wine in the room, romantic turndown, late check-in at 14h00 and a free upgrade to next available room type. Offer expires April 30.

3. MULDRSDRIFT

Recreation Africa Leisure Industries (RALI). Weekend retreat package at Misty Hills Country Hotel. Deluxe room on bed and breakfast basis. Rates from R650 per person sharing or R1 032 single. Offer valid until December 28.

4. UNITED STATES

Travel Vision. Disney's All Star Music Resort

from R23 935 per adult sharing. Package includes return airfare from Johannesburg, airport taxes, seven nights' accommodation, complimentary Magical Express return airport transfers, five-day Magic Your Way Base Ticket, free transportation throughout Disney parks. Kids under 18 stay free and only pay for entry to Disney parks, flights and taxes. Valid for travel from January 5 to February 11.

5. CHINA

Ican Holidays. Eight-day winter packages from R8 950 per person. Package includes four nights in Beijing, three nights in Shanghai, transfers, three- and four-star accommodation, certain meals, entrance fees, daily tours and local guides. Package is available from November 15 to February 28.

6. PHUKET

Qantas Holidays. Land-only package at the three-star Sunset Beach Resort. Rates are from R3 398 per person sharing. Package includes seven nights' accommodation, daily breakfast plus return airport transfers. Offer expires December 23.

7. MAGALIESBERG

Shumba Valley Lodge. Bill Harrop's "Original" Balloon Safaris promotion – R2 290 per person. Promotion includes

accommodation, breakfast and a balloon safari. Rate excludes transfers. Upgrade to suite subject to availability. Offer is valid until December 31.

9. SANDTON

Protea Hotel Balalaika. Summer promotion – weekend special from R440 per person sharing (R880 single rate). Special includes standard room accommodation, 25% off breakfast in The Colony Restaurant, complimentary Gautrain and Sandton shuttle, access to in-house gym and complimentary WiFi. Valid for stays until March 31 from Friday to Sunday. Minimum two-night stay required.

10. AUSTRALIA

Team Sports. Cricket World Cup 2015 – semi-final and final tour packages from R27 700 per person sharing. Offer includes three nights in Melbourne, three nights in Sydney, breakfast daily, hotel and stadium transfers and tickets to the semi-final and final. Travel dates are from March 25-31. ■

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

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