



TRAVEL NEWS WEEKLY

DEVELOPMENT  PROMOTIONS



R7000 OFF PER PERSON
ON NEW BOOKINGS FOR 2016
DEPARTURES INCLUDING ANTARCTICA
*EXCLUDES ARCTIC & LE PONANT MEDITERRANEAN CRUISES

CALL 011 463 1170 OR VISIT WWW.DEVPROM.CO.ZA

INSIDE	NEWS BEACHCOMBER More value in Mauritius Page 4	NEWS TECHNOLOGY BCD launches new app Page 6	FEATURE <i>Into Africa</i> Agents need leisure training  Page 7
--------	--	--	---

Govt gets the ball rolling on new measures

DESPITE ongoing negotiations with the travel trade, National Treasury is pushing full-steam ahead with its new 'standard remuneration model', cutting rebates, overrides and volume-based incentives from suppliers to TMCs.

Last month, government departments reported that it was "business as usual" (see *TNW* April 27). However, only two weeks later, one government official says Treasury has now communicated strict guidelines to implement the new regulations and nett rates with immediate effect. He adds that there is still a lot of confusion around the new measures and that more discussions will take place with Treasury to gain more clarity on these.

BA Comair has placed a code on all tickets issued for government passengers, which means the agent cannot claim an incentive for the sale. **Brian Kitchen**, Comair executive manager of sales, told *TNW* government has negotiated a new deal with Comair that is non-commissionable. These private fares are accessed by inserting a specific deal number into the booking, which is linked to the negotiated nett rate.

"Both BA and SAA have received strict instruction from National Treasury that all government business is non-commissionable. I imagine any airline that wants government business will have to abide by the instructions of the Treasury."

SAA, however, has not been as quick to implement the austerity measures. Spokesperson for SAA, **Tlali Tlali**, told *TNW* that at present SAA has not changed the incentive agreements that the airline has in place for travel agents booking for government officials. "SAA will honour and maintain existing incentive agreements until these agreements reach their termination dates."

One travel agent, who spoke on condition of anonymity, says


Off to Phuket

Checkout Tours is offering special rates for various seven-night packages to Phuket, Thailand. Travellers can stay at the three-star Ibis Phuket Patong Hotel from just R11 195pps or the four-star Kantary Bay Phuket from R12 240pps. Various other accommodation options are also on offer and all packages include return economy airfares departing Johannesburg, approximate taxes, seven nights' accommodation, return transfers as well as a daily breakfast. These offers are valid for travel until October 31. Pictured here is Checkout Tours director, Giles Clinton, exploring Thailand. Photo: Megan Fischer

'You get what you pay for' – TMCs

DEBBIE BADHAM

TRAVEL management companies are finding themselves between a rock and a hard place, with corporate clients complaining that recent agency cut-backs and retrenchments mean they no longer receive dedicated service from consultants.

TMCs have hit back, saying it is no longer viable to offer value-added services when corporates are cutting back drastically on their travel spend.

Just last month, government went ahead with plans to cut overrides and volume-based incentives to TMCs. TMCs were given notice last month to restructure their business models and submit new service fee proposals to make up for any loss of income as a result of the government's move to scrap overrides, however the revised fees that industry submitted were rejected.

The root of the problem is that, in the past, TMCs offered many value-added services at no charge, such as a dedicated consultant to each account, says chairperson of the Global Business Travel Association, **Howard Stephens**. "But they can't do that any more," he says, referring to the current economic climate.

What's happening in the marketplace is that corporates are paying less but still expecting the same services they used to get, says **Claude**

Vankeirsbilck, chief sales and marketing officer of Tourvest Travel Services. "Ultimately, corporates will get what they pay for."

The issue is compounded by the fact that most corporate clients don't understand the cost involved in providing a dedicated service. In the past, the client may have delegated travel arrangements to their PA, and they can easily make the mistake of assuming there is little cost and effort involved, says Howard.

His advice for agencies battling this misperception is to play open-book with their clients. He suggests TMCs break down exactly how much it costs to run the different services they provide and then present this to their clients.

Total transparency is the answer to communicating added value to corporates, says **Allan Lunz**, md of Bidtravel, adding that Bidtravel is very clear about what the corporate is paying

EARN, REDEEM & ENJOY GREAT REWARDS.

Visit clubred.co.za


We try harder

To the point

EMIRATES Airline has announced a third daily flight between Cape Town and Dubai, starting July 4. Flight EK779 departs Cape Town at 20h05 and arrives in Dubai at 07h30. Flight EK778 departs Dubai at 10h50 and arrives in Cape Town at 18h30.



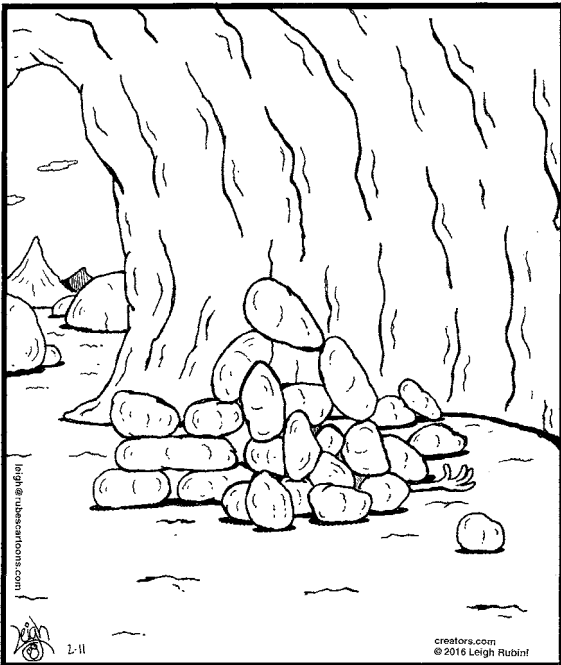
QuickTrav™
Software. Solutions. Support.

- Give your clients 24/7 online access to their QuickTrav documents and reports
- Reports are predefined by Agent and easy to manage
- Access controlled
- No data export / upload

WebDocs

Tel +27 11 4519100 sales@quicksoftware.co.za www.quicksoftware.co.za

Rubes® By Leigh Rubin



“jenga -- 5000 B.C.”

TNW
TRAVEL NEWS WEEKLY

www.etnw.co.za

Published by
Travel & Trade Publishing (Pty) Ltd
Printed by Juka Printing (Pty) Ltd

Phone: (011) 327-4062
Fax: (011) 327-4094
E-mail: tnw@nowmedia.co.za
Web: www.nowmedia.co.za
Address: Now Media Centre,
32 Fricker Road, Illovo Boulevard,
Illovo, Johannesburg,
PO Box 55251, Northlands,
2116, South Africa.

Founding Editors:
John H Marsh (1914-1996) Leona Marsh (1923-2003)

EDITORIAL
Managing Editor: Natasha Schmidt natashas@nowmedia.co.za
Deputy Editor: Debbie Badham debbieb@nowmedia.co.za
Journalists:
Darise Foster Dorine Reinstein
Susan Reynard Taryn Nightingale
Photographers:
Shannon Van Zyl
Megan Fischer
Production Editor: Ann Braun

GROUP PUBLISHER
David Marsh davem@nowmedia.co.za

SALES
Sales Director: Kate Nathan katen@nowmedia.co.za
Ad Co-ordinator:
Anthea Lucas antheal@nowmedia.co.za

PRODUCTION
Design Head: Dirk Voorneveld

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Circulation tvsubs@nowmedia.co.za

NOW Media
abc

SATC AND XL Travel team up

TARYN NIGHTINGALE

SOUTH African Travel Centre (SATC) and XL Travel have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on all preferred suppliers contracts. The deal gives both groups access to a wider pool of preferred suppliers' deals as well as the potential to earn higher overrides, says **Kekeletso Mokwena**, business development manager of SATC. "In addition to enhancing and contributing towards equitable potential override earnings for SATC members, we believe that this partnership will facilitate growth and prosperity in the emerging markets through networking with members who have great experience in the travel industry," says

Marco Ciochetti, XL Travel Group ceo. "It is one of our primary goals to promote ease of access to, entry and sustainable participation in the travel retail industry particularly for those emerging travel retailers who... are still finding

"This partnership will facilitate growth and prosperity in the emerging markets."

it difficult to operate in the mainstream of this significant industry. Synergy benefits, specifically in the area of preferred supplier arrangements, are envisaged to improve the commercial well-being of our members," says acting SATC ceo, **Yvonne Sprowson**.

The partnership does not affect the respective companies' brand identity or corporate structure nor does it create an expectation or precedence for a merger or takeover, the consortiums said in a statement. In 2014, SAA announced it would put SATC up for sale (see *TNW* March 19, 2014). At the time, XL Travel was rumoured to be in talks with SAA to purchase the SATC group. However, this latest development is a "separate matter entirely", says Kekeletso. Spokesperson for SAA, **Tlali Tlali**, told *TNW*: "Ownership structure of SATC has not changed as the entity remains a wholly owned SAA subsidiary. Appropriate announcements will be made should the shareholder intentions change about the future of the entity." ■

Govt gets the ball rolling on new measures

From page 1
Treasury invited several TMCs for personal discussions but that these discussions didn't go well. "Treasury doesn't seem to understand the travel industry. They don't want to ensure the sustainability of the travel industry in the country. We agree with what they're doing; it's important to clean up the process and ensure transparency. But, the process and the way they are going about it is amateurish," said the agent, adding that although the Treasury is good at directives, they fall short when it comes to taking into consideration behavioural change. "The latest initiative by Treasury to reduce the cost of travel by government departments is more than alarming," says **Allan Wolman**, director of XL Rosebank Travel.

"Can government dictate commercial terms to suppliers of services? Can they dictate how business is conducted between service providers and suppliers?" Allan believes the Competition Commission should address this matter, as government is imposing anti-competitive measures on the industry. "According to reports, government has engaged with only four TMCs with the exclusion of the rest of the travel trade and this in itself cannot be constitutional." Suppliers should also be called to account, says Allan. "Under a free enterprise system, protected by our constitution, are airlines prepared to adhere to what Treasury dictates? Airlines are probably supportive of this measure. Is this the thin edge of the wedge?"

Meanwhile, agents say it is time to turn the tables on government, putting a spotlight on behavioural issues. One agent explains that there is still an exceptional amount of outstanding payments owed by government departments to travel agencies around South Africa. "It's about time they address this as well." Loyalty points awarded to government officials should also come under scrutiny, says Allan. "Surely the accumulation of Voyager miles and other frequent flyer incentives must fall under the same regime as no commission? After all, the loyalty programme of an airline is a form of commission or reward. Will government employees be allowed to accumulate their frequent flyer miles for travel that is undertaken on official business?" ■

'You get what you pay for' – TMCs

From page 1
for, whether it be a certain amount for dedicated account management or a per-hour rate. He says, in the past where TMCs have offered these kinds of services free, one element would have been cross-subsidising another. "They probably cross-subsidised it out of supplier revenue and said 'well we are getting this revenue and that will cover us, therefore we don't need to charge for the service', thinking that's a clever way of trying to win business. But there's no free

ride, either they were making up the cost on tickets or recovering it some other way." **Monique Swart**, founder of the African Business Travel Association, agrees, saying that if corporates want a particular service, they need to pay the appropriate fees. She adds that part of the problem is that some agencies oversell themselves in terms of what they can actually deliver. "It was common for account management to be given away free," says **Monique Hilton**, md of BCD Travel and previously travel manager of Barclays.

The TMC also needs to ensure that it is offering a true consultation service and not just a "booking service" to demonstrate real value, says Hilton. Service should be promoted to clients as an outsourced consultancy, she says. "Corporates need to see it as investment in their programme." It's a two-way street, says Claude, adding that the customer needs to ensure that they are getting the value they're paying for and should hold the agency accountable. ■



WITH OVER 27 DIRECT DESTINATIONS IN AFRICA, WE'RE READY TO CONNECT YOU



SAA flies directly to over 27 destinations across Africa and with over 23 code share partners, SAA is the best way to connect with the African continent. If you're going places, so are we. Book your seat now at flysaa.com, call +27 11 978 1111 or contact your nearest travel agency.

BRINGING THE WORLD TO AFRICA. TAKING AFRICA TO THE WORLD.



SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Beachcomber launches new 'value-adding' app

BEACHCOMBER Tours has introduced a range of discounts via a special mobile app, available free of charge to South African travellers booking all-inclusive packages to Mauritius. Travel agents selling Beachcomber Tours packages do not earn commission on the app, but it does provide added appeal to travellers, says **Joanne Visagie**, Beachcomber Tours sales and marketing manager.

Beachcomber teamed up with Le Passeport service provider to design the app, which works as a "digital card" on iOS and Android smartphones. As

the exclusive partner of the offering, Beachcomber expects the service to encourage tourists to discover more of the island.

Launched on May 1, the app provides discounts of between 10% and 15% at more than 175 outlets in four categories: restaurants, shops, leisure and services. This includes fitness centres, nature reserves and tour organisers. The discounts are valid for the full duration of stays at Beachcomber's Shandrani Resort & Spa, Le Canonnier, Le Victoria and Le Mauricia hotels.

Hotel guests download the app using the hotels' WiFi and are given a personal

password. Outside of the hotels where WiFi or 3G network is available, customers have the option of being informed in real time of the proximity of outlets offering discounts.

"We're stepping all-inclusive up a notch and providing our guests with an innovative app that will bring them just a few clicks away from an even more personalised experience, a variety of benefits and great savings," says Joanne.

Le Passeport was originally designed by Oxymore some years ago for Mauritians and permanent residents only, and for a full annual subscription fee. ■

Malaysia gears up to attract families

HILKA BIRNS

TOURISM Malaysia wants destination marketing companies in South Africa and Malaysia to come up with more creative tour packages to entice more South Africans to visit the south-east Asian country, says **Musa Yusof**, senior director International Promotion Division Asia/Africa of the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board.

Despite a favourable exchange rate of R3,64 to one Malaysian Ringgit, tourism from South Africa to Malaysia has declined by more than 10 000 visitors a year since Malaysia Airlines pulled out of the South African market in 2012, he says. In 2015, 20 625 South Africans visited Malaysia, compared with 31 000 in 2012. He says lack of direct air access is the single biggest

stumbling block to tourism from South Africa.

Nevertheless, last year South Africans spent MYR 90m (R327.6m) in Malaysia, with an average length of stay of 8,3 nights.

Musa says Malaysia has great potential for more family and leisure-based tourism from South Africa, thanks to theme parks such as Legoland Malaysia in Johor Bahru, which includes a theme park, water park and hotel; and the world's first 20th Century Fox World, an animated movie-inspired theme park in the Genting highlands, is scheduled to open early next year.

Malaysia is also positioning itself as a shopping destination to rival China, with duty-free shopping in the whole of the country. Musa says the country provides South Africans with value-for-money self-drive holiday options because

it is politically stable, safe and secure and has a good road infrastructure, with the North-South Express Way stretching over about 700km from north to south on Peninsula Malaysia.

Being a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual society means there are many cultural events and festivals that South Africans will find interesting. Of particular historical interest for South Africans, says Musa, will be that Jan van Riebeeck's first wife, Maria, is buried in Malacca.

He says focus should also fall on Malaysia's natural attractions and outdoor activities, such as golfing, scuba diving, yachting, beaches, cruising, cycling, jungle trekking and eco-tourism. Malaysia is also home to several Unesco World Heritage Sites and the Unesco Langkawe Geopark. ■

Emirates introduces new baggage policy

EMIRATES has introduced a new baggage policy, effective for all its return outbound African flights. Adult and child passengers flying in economy class are allowed two pieces weighing 23kg each; adult and child passengers in business and first class may take two pieces weighing 32kg each. Infants flying in either class are allowed one piece weighing 23kg. The baggage allowance applies to all return Emirates flights commencing from Algeria, Angola, Ivory Coast, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. "Irrespective of the point of sale, the piece concept will apply for the entire journey," the airline said in a statement.

Etihad codeshares with South American airline

ETIHAD Airways and South American airline, Avianca, have announced a codeshare partnership. "Under the agreement, Etihad Airways will place its 'EY' code on Avianca-operated flights between Bogota and London Heathrow and Madrid Barajas, while Avianca will place its 'AV' code on Etihad Airways flights between Abu Dhabi and London and Madrid," Etihad said in a statement. From May, members of the Etihad Guest programme and Avianca's LifeMiles programme will be able to earn miles on the codeshare flights.

Ethiopian to launch flights to Newark

ETHIOPIAN Airlines will commence scheduled thrice-weekly flights to Newark Airport, New York, from Addis Ababa on July 3, via Lomé, Togo. This follows the airline's announcement in January confirming it would launch flights to New York's JFK Airport at the end of June. Ethiopian will deploy the Boeing 787 Dreamliner on the Addis Ababa-Newark route, with 24 business-class and 246 economy seats. Flight ET508 will depart Addis Ababa at 09h45 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, to arrive in Lomé at 12h00. The flight will then depart Lomé at 13h00 and arrive in Newark at 19h15. Return flight ET509 departs Newark at 21h15 and arrives in Lomé at 11h30 the following day. It departs Lomé at 12h30 and arrives in Addis Ababa at 21h15. Meanwhile, the airline has launched its second daily flight to Delhi, effective March 28. Flight ET 688 departs Addis Ababa at 15h50 to arrive in Delhi at 01h10 the next day. Return flight ET 689 departs Delhi at 09h30 to arrive in Addis Ababa at 14h00 the same day.

Air Seychelles ups Antananarivo flights

AIR Seychelles will operate an extra flight between Mahé, Seychelles, and Antananarivo, Madagascar, on Tuesdays, effective June 28. This is in addition to the current Wednesday, Friday and Sunday flights. The additional service, which will operate until January 10, will have the same flight numbers and times as the current schedule. Flight HM 0755 departs Mahé on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays at 10h05 to arrive in Antananarivo at 11h50. Return flight HM 0754 departs Antananarivo at 14h50 to arrive in Mahé at 18h35. The new flight will also be operated with an Airbus A320 in a two-cabin configuration with 16 business-class and 120 economy-class seats.

Upgrades for Los Angeles International Airport

LOS Angeles International Airport (LAX) is to undergo major upgrades costing US\$5bn (R79bn). The proposed construction period is from 2017 to 2023. The work includes an automated people mover, the LAX train, which provides access to the airline terminals; a facility that will accommodate several car-rental agencies; two pick-up and drop-off zones where passengers can park their cars, check in and get to their flights using the LAX train; and roadway improvements to enhance access. The train will be an elevated 3,6km transit system with six stations for passenger pick-up and drop-off, pedestrian bridges to airline terminals, parking garages, fixed facilities and a stop that connects to the Metro railway system. It will be free and can be accessed 24 hours a day. It will also connect to the rental car facility.

New national carrier for Senegal

THE Senegalese government has created a new national carrier – Air Senegal – following the closure of indebted Senegal Airlines. Senegal Airlines' closure was confirmed by the Senegalese state on April 11. The airline will fly out of Blaise Diagne International Airport in Senegal and a date confirming the launch of scheduled operations has not yet been announced.



Your moment has come to explore new worlds

ROBINSON

www.robinson.com

Experience your dream holiday with
all-inclusive made by ROBINSON

Brought to you by
puretours

Contact us on 0861 123 754 or robinson@puretours.co.za

TNW7546SD

It's time to take my daughter to school.

7.30am. The school run.

Being a Travel Counsellor means more time spent with my daughter at the school gates. It also means I can meet potential new customers when they drop their kids off too.

Charlotte Vassell.



It's time to run your own travel business.

Call: **021 300 1814**

Email: **beinspired@travelcounsellors.co.za**

Visit: **www.travelhomeworking.co.za**

travel counsellors



With us...it's personal

Umhlanga hotel expands

PROTEA Hotel Umhlanga is launching a new 15-storey tower that will add 119 rooms, restaurant, lounge and bar to the property. It will launch in the third quarter of this year. The property will offer 240 rooms in total, ranging from luxury to semi-self-catering to suit corporate and leisure travellers. The new conference rooms can host up to 150 delegates and there is also an eight-seat executive boardroom.

&Beyond upgrades Zimbabwe properties

&BEYOND'S lodges in Matetsi Private Game Reserve in Zimbabwe are undergoing a US\$10 million (R144,4 million) rebuild and refurbishment and are due to reopen on July 15. The lodges are 40km from the Victoria Falls. &Beyond Matetsi River Lodge features two camps, each with nine suites and a family suite. &Beyond Matetsi River House, a private villa, accommodates groups of up to eight people. The four-bedroom villa has a kitchen, indoor and outdoor dining areas, a private veranda overlooking the Zambezi River, a swimming pool and a fireplace. Guests can enjoy two daily game drives, bush walks, riverboat cruises and canoeing. &Beyond also offers a children's programme, WILDchild, which offers activities such as making fishing rods, fishing in the river and making plaster casts of animal tracks.

TMCs must embrace online tech

DARISE FOSTER

ONLINE technology is the way forward and TMCs need to embrace it to be able deliver better service to their clients, says BCD Travel marketing, communications and supplier relations manager, **Vanessa Krook**.

She was speaking at TNW following the launch of BCD Travel's TripSource mobile app – an Apple and Google Play application that allows travellers to keep all their BCD Travel itineraries on their cellphones. The app recently became available for BCD clients in Southern Africa.

Travellers download the free app and register, then receive their trips automatically within minutes. They are then given access to their trip details.

"This app also makes the travel consultant's life easier because it automatically sends information that may affect the traveller's trip – such as real-time flight alerts, check-in reminders and trip-sharing, which allows the traveller to send their itinerary to whomever they please," Vanessa says.

"With the app sending that information through to the client, the consultant does not have to remember to do so."

The app includes maps and directions, taking the responsibility away from the consultant and ensuring the traveller's journey is more organised, says Vanessa.

"Mobile will play a huge role in our traveller engagement strategy. Downloading and

using mobile apps such as this will help the traveller to appreciate the TMC more because they are made to feel important and remembered," she comments.

"Moving forward, TMCs and their consultants will have to focus on their emotional intelligence to be able to deal with travellers. We don't just want them to book flights, we want them to engage and talk," says **Monique Hilton**, BCD Travel md. "Technology such as this app will ensure that travellers are informed and forewarned of events that may affect their trips, while the consultant is there to build and maintain that relationship between the client and the TMC. I think this is where travel will go in the future." ■

Centara expands into five new destinations

CENTARA Hotels and Resorts is to develop new properties in Doha, Muscat, Dubai, Cuba and Turkey and expand its presence in the Maldives.

The group will open properties in Doha and Muscat by the end of this year – launching its first properties in the Middle East. In Doha, the Centara Grand West Bay hotel will have 261 rooms and suites plus 96 apartments that vary from one- to three-bedroom units. In Muscat, the 152-room Centara Muscat Hotel will offer a fitness centre, ample

meeting and event space, along with a premium lounge and roof deck.

There will be further expansion in Doha with two additional properties. Centara West Bay Residence and Suites will open in the second quarter of 2017 in the West Bay area close to the Centara Grand. Also in the pipeline, in 2018 a third luxury property will open in the West Bay area that will have 514 rooms.

Cuba will welcome its first Centara property in late 2017. The Centara Grand Beach Resort Cayo

Guillermo would have about 250 rooms and would be the first "truly five-star" product in the region, Centara said in a statement.

Additionally, the group will launch its first property in Turkey when the Centara Grand Lykia World Resort and Spa opens on the coastline of the River Koprucay. The resort will have 449 rooms, 10 restaurants and 10 bars and will offer an all-inclusive concept, allowing guests to experience a cash-free stay.

Lastly, the group will develop four new properties in the Maldives. ■

Massive new attraction for Abu Dhabi

MIRAL is developing a US\$1bn (R14bn) themed destination plus hotel (under licence from Warner Bros. Consumer Products) in Abu Dhabi, due to open in 2018. Construction is under way and rides are in production.

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi is being built on Yas Island, a business, leisure and entertainment destination and

includes the launch of the only Warner Bros-branded hotel.

The theme park will feature stories and characters from the studio's portfolio of DC Comics Super Heroes, including Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman as well as cartoon characters such as Bugs Bunny, Scooby-Doo and Tom and Jerry. Guests of all ages will be able to

step inside Gotham City and Metropolis, and experience the cartoon worlds of Looney Tunes, Hanna-Barbera and more.

The new development is alongside Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, and Yas Waterworld.

Annual visitors to Yas Island are expected to grow from 25m in 2015 to 30m in 2018. ■

To the point

QATAR Airways will increase capacity on its Johannesburg route, effective June 1. Daily flight QR 1364 and return flight QR 1363 will be operated by a Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, with 388 seats in economy and 24 seats in business class. Flight QR 1360 and return flight QR 1359 will continue to be operated by the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.



Regent
SEVEN SEAS CRUISES

ENJOYING THIS VIEW?
Win your place aboard Seven Seas Explorer®

- WIN A SUITE FOR TWO -

ABOARD SEVEN SEAS EXPLORER'S PREVIEW VOYAGE
Genoa to Barcelona | 2 July 2016 | 5 Nights

Sell any Regent 2016 sailing from now until 30 May 2016 and you'll be entered into our prize draw to sail on *The Most Luxurious Ship Ever Built™*.

Each qualified booking gives you one entry into the prize draw for a suite for 2 aboard Seven Seas Explorer's Preview Voyage from Genoa to Barcelona.

Happy selling!

T's & C's apply

General Sales Agent:

Janine Pretorius

Tel: 012 664 0925

Email: janinep@encorecruises.co.za

www.RSSC.com

Intro Africa

Africa has much to offer leisure travellers – but agents argue they need more training on the continent's offering. Darise Foster reports.

Agents need to learn more about leisure!

WHILE agents have a firm grip on certain African destinations, they require training on what the rest of the continent has to offer.

The majority of leisure travellers travelling into Africa are visiting famous attractions such as Victoria Falls and the Indian Ocean islands, travel agents revealed in a survey recently run on TNW's sister publication, eTNW.

Of the 313 respondents, 88 (28%) said their clients frequently travelled into Africa for leisure, 25 (8%) said they had never booked leisure travel for Africa, and a significant 205 (66%) said their clients only visited well-known tourist destinations.

But Africa has so much more to offer for leisure, argues **Gill Dewar**, md of GCD Consulting. "South Africans do not need to look far to have an amazing experience or ensure they get good value for money – Africa is safe and ready for leisure travel."

One survey respondent pointed out that agents needed more training on Africa's leisure offering to be able to talk confidently about it with their clients. "Africa has so much to offer, but due to a lack of knowledge

on our side and the fact that it is quite pricey, it is a difficult destination to sell."

Another agent said the reason Africa was an unknown destination for many consultants was because educationals and familiarisation trips were often hosted in European and Asian destinations but not in Africa.

"Companies often arrange training for staff to familiarise them with destinations and products in Southern Africa, however I do think we need more training for East Africa as it is a complex destination and is not cost-effective for companies to arrange staff educationals," one respondent said and suggested that agents use social media to keep up to date with new developments.

Tour ops up the ante

To assist agents in selling Africa, Thompsons Holidays recently launched its 2016 Africa Beach and Bush brochure, which is currently being delivered to agencies. The brochures cover Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, African river cruises, Namibia, Mozambique, Kenya and Tanzania.

"The brochure contains information on the most popular destinations in sub-Saharan Africa," explains Thompsons Holidays PR and media manager, **John Ridler**. It also includes maps and general information, including language, visas, health information, currency, weather and what things cost, he says.

A list of "memorable must-do excursions" to assist clients in planning their itineraries can also be found in the brochure, adds John. "Lastly, there is a directory of three-, four- and five-star hotels with a short description and the hotel's wow factor," he says.

TravelVision is also beginning to place greater focus on the African leisure market, according to sales and marketing manager, **Annemarie Lexow**. "Africa leisure was not one of our portfolio destinations, nor were the Indian Ocean Islands, however through our joint venture with Access to Africa – which has dealt with incentive groups and leisure groups in the past – we are learning more and becoming confident enough to offer leisure products to the rest of the market," she says.

Through the joint venture with Access to Africa, Travel

Hoanib Skeleton Coast. Photo: Flip Stander, Wilderness Safaris



River Cruises in Africa



Thompsons Holidays' recently launched brochure contains information on the most popular destinations in Sub-Saharan Africa, including African river cruises. Photo: Thompsons Holidays

Vision will train their sales executives who will then go out and train travel agents during their monthly agency visits. "So where there is a lack of knowledge or confidence in selling a particular product, they will set up training or agree on a time to sit and discuss that destination with that specific agency,"

Annemarie comments.

TravelVision's own consultants will also become more confident in selling leisure as a result, she says. "In as much as the travel agencies will be learning about these products, so will our own consultants. So we will be going on this learning curve of selling these leisure destinations as well."

Where to send travellers

SELLING Southern Africa is probably easier than selling North, East or West Africa, says **Gill Dewar**, md of GCD Consulting.

"Southern Africa has much better infrastructure than the rest of Africa, and also offers greater air connectivity options."

For instance, hotels in Nigeria are situated at least 20km out of town, says Gill. "It's the same in places like Ghana – and that is obviously very inconvenient for leisure travellers."

She points out that Kenya's leisure offering is great, but that it might be a bit expensive. "Tanzania is the same. Agents can easily sell these destinations to clients, but they are likely for travellers at the top end of the market," she says.

For travellers looking to visit Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda, there are a number of great adventure activities on offer. However, agents must become familiar with the abilities, requirements and personal preferences of their clients to ensure they send them on the right adventure, says Climbing Kilimanjaro senior tour consultant, **Annalé van Rensburg**.

"From climbing the highest mountain in Africa – Kilimanjaro – in Tanzania, to tracking Dian Fossey's

endangered Mountain gorillas in the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda – an absolutely life-changing experience – to tracking chimpanzees in the Kibale National Park in Uganda, these destinations have so much to offer leisure travellers," she says.

Close and convenient
Namibia is an easy destination for agents to sell because it is just a two-hour flight from South Africa, says **Michell Fourie**, sales and marketing manager, Air Namibia commercial services South Africa.

"In addition to that, Namibia's currency is one-to-one with the South African rand and SA rands can be used in Namibia – so there is no need for forex."

Namibia is a popular self-drive, car-rental destination, according to **Rebone Motsatsi**, executive at Avis Car Rental. "Both foreign and local markets enjoy driving to Namibia, with in excess of 50% of our rental volumes being leisure related for this destination."

Lusaka is also a great option for South African travellers, says Michell. "People seem to overlook Lusaka as a possible leisure option because it is well-known for corporate travel, but Lake Kariba, the Lower



Lake Malawi offers excellent snorkelling and diving opportunities.

Zambezi National Park and the town of Siavonga are a mere two-hour drive from Lusaka," Michell says. "They offer countless lodges across all price categories."

Gill recommends Malawi as a good destination for South Africans. "It's close to South Africa, there are great things to do, it's good value for money and the people are very friendly."

Salad Nthenda, vice consul of tourism at the Malawi Consulate, says while Malawi is relatively small, it offers a variety of experiences for travellers.

According to Salad, 25% to 30% of South Africans who visit Malawi do so for leisure.

"South Africans are attracted to Malawi's rare combination of bush, beach and highlands together with warm, friendly people who exude heritage largely untouched by civilisation."

Lake Malawi offers excellent snorkelling and diving opportunities, Salad adds. "There is also untouched

beauty, such as the over 400 species of orchid and other wildflowers which Malawi boasts."

A trip to Malawi also offers convenient travelling time as there are daily two-hour flights out of Johannesburg operated by SAA and Malawian Airlines, says Salad. "Additionally, South Africans do not require a visa to visit Malawi and a yellow fever certificate is not required either."

Travel agents should sell Malawi as an ideal and safe destination for clients looking for relaxation, sightseeing, fascinating history and authentic cultural experiences, says Salad. "The destination is perfect for those who are environmentally conscious and are looking to experience something different from their normal day-to-day life and are looking to learn about other lifestyles and cultures."

Up and coming

According to **Abel Alemu**, Ethiopian Airlines' regional manager for Southern Africa,

Ethiopia is also growing in popularity with leisure travellers because of the airline's status as the leading African carrier on the continent in terms of cities covered. "We are encouraging travellers to spend a day or two in Ethiopia when they are connecting on to other flights and we are seeing a lot of tourists coming into Ethiopia as a result."

While the majority of travellers visiting Ethiopia are elderly, young people will enjoy it too, says Abel. "Older travellers enjoy the culture and heritage of the destination while the nightlife appeals to the youngsters," he says. "Ethiopia treats foreigners well, and there is something on offer for everyone."

Botswana and Mozambique are also good options for leisure travellers, according to Rebone. "Chobe National Park, the Okavango Delta and the Tuli Block attract leisure travellers to Botswana, while visitors to Mozambique enjoy the Niassa Game Reserve and the Cahora Bassa Dam."

World Travel Awards 2016

Africa's Leading Hotel Brand
SERENA HOTELS

Kenya's Leading Business Hotel
NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL

Tanzania's Leading Hotel
DAR ES SALAAM SERENA HOTEL

Tanzania's Leading Hotel Suite:
Presidential Suite
@ DAR ES SALAAM SERENA HOTEL

Zanzibar's Leading Hotel
ZANZIBAR SERENA HOTEL

Tanzania's Leading Boutique Hotel
ZANZIBAR SERENA HOTEL

THANK YOU ALL
FOR VALUING US...
AS HIGHLY AS WE
VALUE YOU.

SERENA HOTELS
SERENA HOTELS
SERENA HOTELS

Africa's Leading Green Hotel
NAIROBI SERENA HOTEL, KENYA

Uganda's Leading Hotel
KAMPALA SERENA HOTEL

Uganda's Leading Hotel Suite:
Presidential Suite
@ LAKE VICTORIA SERENA RESORT

Rwanda's Leading Hotel
KIGALI SERENA HOTEL

Mozambique's Leading Hotel
THE POLANA SERENA HOTEL

Mozambique's Leading Hotel Suite:
Presidential Suite
@ THE POLANA SERENA HOTEL

JHB Reservations:
Email: reservations@serenahotels.co.za
www.serenahotels.com

Expedia® TAAP

TRAVEL AGENT AFFILIATE PROGRAM

Make Money for Jam!

Search and book over 269,000 hotels worldwide
and earn commission on hotel bookings!

To sign up go to www.expedia.com/taap
011 463 5251 or expedia@discovertheworld.co.za

More connectivity is a must

THE experts argue that some of Africa's great leisure destinations suffer from lack of appropriate air connectivity.

"The problem with leisure travel into Africa is that some of the best destinations are difficult for South Africans to get to," says **Gill Dewar** of GCD Consulting.

Mombasa, for instance, used to be perfect for leisure, Gill notes. "But then the direct flights were cancelled and people are unwilling to get there via Nairobi, plus travellers are now scared of the terrorism in East Africa."

Morocco is another destination that South Africans find intriguing but lacks air connectivity, Gill

says. "There are no direct flights to Morocco." Travellers are frightened of terrorism in the eastern part of Africa, which affects Egypt. So South Africans are missing out on those beautiful, exotic destinations, says Gill.

For other destinations there are a lot more convenient connections.

Air Namibia offers connections for South Africans through Namibia to Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Angola.

"Through our codeshare with Kenya Airways, we also offer connections from Windhoek to Nairobi via Lusaka," says Air Namibia's **Michell Fourie**.

Ethiopian Airlines flies to 54 destinations on the African continent from its hub in Addis Ababa, says

the airline's **Abel Alemu**. These include Accra, Abuja, Bahir-Dar (Ethiopia), Bamako (Mali), Brazzaville (Congo), Bujumbura (Burundi), Cape Town, Cairo, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Dire Dawa (Ethiopia), Djibouti, Douala, Durban, Entebbe, Harare, Johannesburg, Kigali, Kilimanjaro, Kinshasha, Lagos, Libreville, Lusaka, Malabo, Maputo, Melele (Ethiopia), Mombasa, Nairobi, N'Djamena (Chad), Pointe-Noire (Congo), Seychelles, Zanzibar and many more.

"We fly to almost every country below the Saharan region and in some places, like Nigeria and South Africa, we fly to multiple cities," says Abel. "Our attention has always been Africa."

Botswana – worth the extra spend

MICHELLE COLMAN

BOTSWANA is one of southern Africa's costlier wildlife destinations, but industry stakeholders believe its exclusivity and diversity still warrant the high price tag.

Botswana has long-espoused a low-impact, high-yield tourism model, which, while protecting its environment, has resulted in a reputation as the most expensive safari destination in southern Africa.

The country has shied away from development on a large scale, favouring small safari lodges and camps in remote locations. This has limited the number of tourists at any time, and impacted minimally on its resources. The tactic has also driven demand and prices up, and earned

Botswana a label for exclusivity.

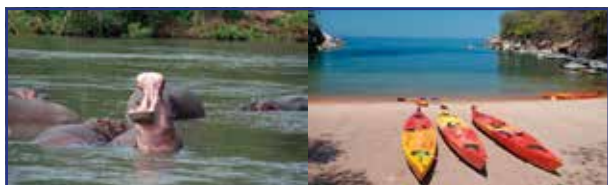
It is this very exclusivity that tour operators cite as one of the characteristics that sets Botswana apart. But perhaps the country would not get away with its high prices if it didn't combine this feature with phenomenal wildlife diversity.

An African Anthology promotes two camps in Botswana – Elephant Valley Lodge in the Kasane Forest, which is part of Chobe National Park, and Kadizora Lodge in the Okavango Delta. Director **Chris Anagnostellis**, comments:

"The unique offering Botswana has within its borders lends itself to an exclusive and 'bucket list' type of experience, ranging from a desert experience in

To page 10





Malawi Wildlife and Beach Tour 6Days/5Nights

Packages available from R13 560 PPS staying in Majete OR from R14 785 if staying in Liwonde National Park.

Includes: 6 days fully guided trip, accommodation on full board basis, start & finish in Blantyre, 2 activities p/ day (Sunset Cruise & Snorkelling trips), 2xGame drives and 1 boat safari.

Excludes: Flights and taxes.

Subject to availability.
Package is NETT.

Valid until 31 May 2016

Contact Details: Tel: +27 1123 48577
Mobile: +27 82 801 2015
Web: www.malawiconsulate.co.za
Email: tourism@malawiconsulate.co.za



TNW7538



Okavango Delta a bucket-list experience for travellers.

From page 9

the Kalahari, the impressive Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, the unique and diverse Okavango Delta, the vast Savuti to the Chobe region with its opportunity to view game from boats on the Chobe River.

Support for his sentiments comes from **Charles van Rensburg**, Botswana operations manager for Wilderness Safaris, which operates a range of ecotourism camps in Linyanti, the Okavango Delta and Central Kalahari. "Camps seldom exceed 16 beds and are located in truly magnificent and remote areas, meaning that food and other goods must be flown or trucked in. Owing to these locations Wilderness Safaris'

guests are guaranteed an unmatched wildlife experience when traversing in concession areas and rarely see another game vehicle during drives," he says.

The jewel in Botswana's crown is, of course, the Okavango Delta, also a Unesco World Heritage Site. Its maze of water channels introduces a facet that neighbouring wildlife destinations do not afford in such a big way, namely water-based game viewing. "Unlike other safari destinations in Africa," says **Rob Dixon**, senior marketing and digital manager for Sanctuary Retreats, "Botswana offers a combination of land and water safaris. Mokoro [dugout canoes] excursions provide a unique adventure

along the waterways of the Okavango Delta and are a special feature of safaris in Botswana."

Chris believes that Botswana's high price tag does not always hold true and that some shopping around does uncover competitive rates. "Over the last few years there has been a dramatic increase of lodges in certain areas, which has resulted in prices actually coming down, or more affordable options entering the market. An example of this is the Chobe region, where there is a multitude of lodges, hotels, bed and breakfasts, backpacker and camping accommodation. This has resulted in different price options," he remarks.



TNW7579

Catering to the experiential tourist

MICHELLE COLMAN

MUCH has been written about millennials and their leaning towards the experiential – their desire to learn languages or culinary and other skills, to volunteer in conservation, cultural and social situations, to be involved rather than simply to observe.

Tourism stakeholders the continent over are answering the ever-growing demand for experiential travel, resulting in some extraordinary experiences for the tourist wanting educational encounters, insightful interactions and adventurous escapades that leave life-long impressions.

1 Rhino tracking

Conservation activities bound to attract the experiential traveller include rhino tracking on foot in the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, an activity offered to guests staying at Wilderness Safaris' Toka Leya Camp in Zambia. Here guests can also avail themselves of a back-of-house tour, viewing the successful waste water management plant and greenhouse.

Rhino tracking is possible too at Wilderness Safaris' Desert Rhino Camp in Namibia, where guests can also learn about the

conservation work done in conjunction with Save the Rhino Trust Namibia.

2 Cultural immersion

In an effort to showcase the rich culture of Tanzania, Serena's lodges are offering guests a range of activities that include cooking, Swahili and traditional music lessons.

The cooking lessons are interactive and conducted by a chef who demonstrates local dishes. The language lessons cover basic Swahili words that are useful during the guests' safari.

Jogging and stretch exercise sessions are also conducted, giving guests the chance to enjoy fresh air in the natural environment. Lake Manyara Serena Safari Lodge has a 350m jogging track suitable for all ages. Mineral water is supplied and a certified first-aid guide is on hand.

The new activities are also available at Zanzibar Serena Hotel and Lake Duluti Hotel.

3 Conservation courses

Based in Nelspruit, EcoTraining specialises in training about nature. Courses are run in simple unfenced bush camps in the middle of wilderness areas in South Africa, Botswana, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The company's mission is to

educate people on the importance of wilderness and the processes that drive the world's natural ecosystems.

"We offer sleep-outs that involve driving from camp to a spot far off in the bush," says **Katherine Greathead**, marketing manager. It's sleeping rough, without the benefit of tents and ablutions. Participant take turns on night vigil, keeping a watch for nocturnal animals. They also learn about eco-friendly fire-making, camping and cooking with the bare minimum.

The company's one-week EcoQuest course will involve participants in activities such as a breeding project for rare and endangered Sable antelope, or witnessing a collaring, or the notching and capture of a large game species, such as lion, elephant or rhino.

4 Desert-adapted lions

Guests who spend three nights at Wilderness Safaris' Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp in Namibia can take advantage of an informative day's excursion to the Skeleton Coast. Dr Philip Stander, a desert lion researcher, is also based here and, when possible, guests can listen to his research presentations. ■

Births, deaths, marriages, promotions – we want to know! Please fax or e-mail TNW's Debbie Badham, at debbieb@nowmedia.co.za or (011) 327 4094.

Sure gets social!



Sure Travel recently hosted its Sure Travel Consultants Training Forum 2016 at The Bay Hotel in Camps Bay, Cape Town. Consultants from around the country met in the Mother City to discuss issues such as staying social media safe, protecting your brand and 'supplier speed dating'. A fun game show to test consultants' product and supplier knowledge was also enjoyed by all. Pictured here (from left) are master of ceremonies for the day, **Alex Granger**, ceo of The Possibility of You, and Sure Travel ceo, **Vanya Lessing** taking a selfie to commemorate the occasion. Photo: Sure Travel

Club Travel wins big...again



Club Travel was recently voted South Africa's Leading Travel Agency at the World Travel Awards 2016 for the third consecutive year. The agency also took home the award for South Africa's Leading Travel Management Company. "It is an honour to be recognised amongst the best! No matter how many times we've taken home a World Travel Award, it's still an immense honour to have our name read out on the night," said Club Travel franchise director, **Jo Fraser**, who is pictured here holding her agency's latest accolade.



Four winners were crowned at the Tsogo Sun Duke of Edinburgh Cup on Monday, April 11, following an exciting day of play on the Rockland and Woodmead courses of the Johannesburg Country Club. They won an exclusive chance to participate in the elite Duke of Edinburgh Cup 2016 World Finals in England this October. Pictured here (from left), are **Quinten Jansen** and **Riaan Jansen** representing Montecasino, winners on the Woodmead course; with **Eddie Wheeler** (golf director for the Duke of Edinburgh International) and **Noeleen Bruton** (group marketing director at Tsogo Sun). Photo: Tsogo Sun

Appointments

■ **Yolandé Bouwer** has joined Agentivity in the newly created role of general manager for Southern Africa. Based in Johannesburg, she will be responsible for the Agentivity business in key growth markets including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique. Yolandé



joins with 15 years of travel experience, most recently holding a senior position at HRG Rennies Travel, where she was operations manager for the global contact centre. Prior to this, Yolandé held the role of business manager for Rennies online. Previous employers also include Tourvest Travel Services, eolidays and Sure Circle Travel.

■ The Table Mountain Cableway Company has

announced the appointment of new managing director, **Wahida Parker**, who will take up the post as of June 1. A qualified attorney and internationally accredited mediator and coach, Wahida has years of corporate boardroom experience and holds non-executive and trustee positions on a number of boards. Her expertise also extends to brand management, public relations and marketing across traditional and digital media platforms.

Pick of the week

brought to you by



Bookkeeper/Accounts Assistant – Jnb (Mall of the South)

Lara Travel
Permanent position within well established agency. Knowledge of Quicktrav and BSP, reconciling and basic booking skills. Email: donna@laratravel.co.za

HR Manager – CPT

Quantex Recruitment Group
3+ years' HR experience, formal HR qualification + management/ staff supervisory experience essential. Leading corporate TMC. BEE – fluency in 1 African language essential. Email: bridget@quantex.co.za

Product & Marketing Manager – S/Suburbs, CPT

Quantex Recruitment Group
Remarkable Southern Africa knowledge & 6+ years' wholesale experience essential for top safari specialist. Excellent networking & marketing skills. Email: lee@quantex.co.za

Incentive Manager – Johannesburg

Lee Botti & Associates
North. Five years in an incentive role, dealing with packages in South Africa and surrounding areas! Highly sought! Salary to R27 000. Email: catherinep@nowjobs.co.za

Sales Representative– Johannesburg

Lee Botti & Associates
North. Well-travelled and seeking a position in the industry? Sales people wanted! Join the leaders! Salary R15 000. Email: catherinep@nowjobs.co.za

Operations Manager – Johannesburg

Professional Career Services
Company requires a knowledgeable and experienced travel manager with corporate and leisure exposure to oversee their travel division. R450 000 per annum. Email jeancv@pcs-sa.co.za

Spanish Travel Consultant – Johannesburg North

Professional Career Services
Design leisure FIT tailor-made itineraries. 3-5 or more years inbound tour operating experience. Preferably South American Spanish. Sal neg. Email: nonocv@pcs-sa.co.za

Corporate Consultant – Sandton

Equity Connections cc
Highly professional senior consultant to join market leaders. Book extensive international trips with round-the-world routings and handle some leisure spinoff. Email: equitycon@mweb.co.za

F.I.T/Groups Consultant – Sandton

Equity Connections cc
Experienced in-bound expert to handle Group and FIT bookings into South/Southern Africa. Suit intermediate with sound understanding of in-bound operations. Email: equitycon@mweb.co.za

Financial Manager/Accountant – Northern Suburbs

Wendy's Travel Personnel
Your stable track record in Financial Accounting in a retail travel agency essential for this role with successful, Travel Concern!! Email: wtp@icon.co.za

These adverts were selected from the vacancy section of www.travelinfo.co.za
For more details contact jobs@travelinfo.co.za

TNW Promote your product in our Game Lodges & Safaris Feature



Issue Date: 22 June 2016
Booking Deadline: 25 May 2016
Contact: dianac@nowmedia.co.za
Tel: 011 214 7334/7356

BidTravel shuts down OTA

DARISE FOSTER

BIDTRAVEL has shut down operations of its online travel agency, Webjet SA, with plans to repurpose the technology to cater for large corporates' in-house loyalty schemes.

Webjet.co.za ceased trading on April 30. The OTA was launched by BidTravel in July 2014 and was expected to "compete head-on" with market leader, Travelstart, offering SA leisure travellers a one-stop online shop to book flights, accommodation, car rental, and holiday packages.

"Bidvest was looking for a far quicker return on their investment than what Webjet yielded within its first two years of operation," BidTravel md, **Allan Lunz**, told TNW. "The decision was then made to terminate the initiative rather than incur additional costs."

BidTravel will now offer the technology as a white label solution to large companies with a high customer base looking to introduce

a loyalty programme that allows customers to earn and redeem points for travel – similar to Investec's loyalty programme, Investec Rewards, which is run by FlightSite. (Clients can redeem points earned by using their Investec Visa cards for flights, accommodation, car hire, tailor-made cruises, rail tours and holiday packages through Investec's OTA 'Travel by Investec'.)

"For example, if a company was looking to introduce a loyalty scheme, we would provide and run the technology for them. Travel will be booked on the company's website, under the company name, but the booking process will be facilitated by BidTravel technology," Allan says.

The idea is to move away from consumer-facing technology, rather operating in the background where BidTravel does not need to deal with or market to consumers directly, he says. ■



Hot winter deals!

Peermont Hotels, Resorts and Casinos is offering special rates on conference packages this winter. From just R285 per delegate, packages include venue hire, coffee and tea upon arrival, standard conference equipment, a mid-morning break with tea, coffee and refreshments, lunch, as well as a mid-afternoon break with tea, coffee and refreshments. Participating hotels include Emperors Palace in Johannesburg, Graceland in Secunda, Umfolozi in Empangeni and Frontier Inn in Bethlehem, amongst others. Kitted out in their winter warmers are (from left) Peermont international sales executive **Anna-Lize Scully**, with sales executive **Tanya Wichmann** and sales co-ordinator **Kabelo Matlou**. Photo: Megan Fischer

SAX grounding highlights industry issues

DARISE FOSTER

THE temporary grounding of SA Express has highlighted concerns in the South African aviation space, including the need for a "more level playing field" and competition on secondary routes, experts say.

Thousands of passengers were left stranded over the weekend of May 1 when SAX's Air Operator Certificate was suspended by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), after recent inspections and audits revealed deficiencies relating to the operator's safety monitoring systems.

"There are smaller routes where SAX is the dominant carrier. Where one carrier has the monopoly on a route, the public is only exposed to the decisions of one set of managers. Then if those managers get something wrong, everyone is left in the lurch," says aviation expert, **Joachim Vermooten**.

However, it's not that simple, say airline authorities. Increased competition on routes operated by SAX is not feasible as passenger

demand dictates which routes airlines operate, says Barsa ceo, **June Crawford**.

"I don't think the size of the market is conducive to large growth in the smaller markets," agrees Aasa ceo **Chris Zweigenthal**. "There are many people who self-drive."

"Where one carrier has the monopoly on a route, the public is only exposed to the decisions of one set of managers."

"Historically, the thin routes cannot easily sustain and support competition," says **Rodger Foster**, ceo of Airlink. He adds that with more competition, prices drop, which may not be sustainable for carriers operating the route. "Eventually there is a calamity and one carrier falls off," he says.

A lot also depends on the type of aircraft and capacity on the route, says **Theunis Potgieter**, Fly Blue Crane cco. "If you operate a 60-seater aircraft, there is enough demand.

But it wouldn't work for instance with a 180-seater aircraft."

Time for privatisation?

More than anything else, the SAX debacle proves the need for a level playing field within the South African aviation industry, says Rodger. "It is problematic that private airlines compete against state-owned carriers who are both competitors and rule-makers."

"Airlines are operating in a space where some carriers have to make profit and others don't; some can sell fares below cost prices while others can't afford to – yet all are competing for the same passenger," he says.

The Democratic Alliance has released a statement arguing that it is now time for state-owned airlines to be privatised. "It is obvious that the only way to save both the reputations and actual existence of SAX and sister airline SAA, is to privatise the failing state-owned entity and completely overhaul the management of the airline," DA shadow minister of public enterprises, **Natasha Mazzone** said. ■

impulsepoll
brought to you by eTNW and BRITISH AIRWAYS

Great attitudes grow great agents
What makes for an excellent entry-level travel agent?

- Attitude
- On-the-job training
- Love of travel and people
- Tertiary education in travel

53%
22%
17%
8%

For all trade enquiries please call British Airways 010 344 0127

BRITISH AIRWAYS