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WTM VISION CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON CHANGING MINDSETS

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AFRICA - Delegates attending the [WTM](#) Vision Conference in Cape Town today (15 April) will hear how mobile technology, easier ways to pay, more low-cost flights and cheaper accommodation are fueling more travel within Africa, but the key to increasing the pace of change is through changing mindsets.

Part of WTM Africa's conference programme, WTM Vision, will feature exclusive research from Euromonitor International, which will reveal that, although prices are coming down and it's now easier to research and book, the biggest barrier to travel is perception among Africans.

Ronald Tinashe, research analyst at Euromonitor International, who will present the findings, says: "It's much cheaper for someone to fly from South Africa to the UK as opposed to going to other countries around Southern Africa. In addition, travel costs are a high percentage of people's disposable income.

"Although this is slowly changing, most Africans assume travelling is for high net-worth individuals – they have limited knowledge about the availability of affordable accommodation options, such as B&Bs and motels.

"But it's not just about income – it comes down to development and culture. Many Africans believe travelling is the last thing money should be spent on and the culture is not one in which people save money to travel."

Tinashe adds that one way to accelerate change is mobile internet. "Smart phones make it easier for airlines and other companies to interact, with apps that can allow users to quickly find out the cost of travel and realise it is more affordable than they may have thought."

World Travel Market, senior director, Simon Press says: "The research unveils the huge importance tourism plays not only in South Africa but across the continent. Yet currently, local people are unlikely to contribute because of several key factors. The availability of affordable travel options is one factor, but the barriers to travel in Africa are much more deep-rooted. As the Euromonitor International report shows, Africans have other priorities and the culture of saving up to travel simply isn't there.

"Yet things are very slowly starting to change. The advent of smart phones, low-cost carriers, government initiatives and easier payment options means that people are travelling – and are contributing to the economy."

WTM Africa takes place 15-17 April.

In other WTM news, the Istanbul Municipality, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Istanbul Convention and Visitors' Bureau have teamed up to be the official Destination Partners at WTM Latin America 2015.

The three-day event, takes place 22–24 April, at Expo Centre Norte in Sao Paulo alongside the 43rd Braztoa Business Meeting.

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