



Travelport establishes direct operation in Kenya

Latest Travelport investment in east Africa in response to projected GDP growth of 5.6%

Nairobi, Kenya
Apr 5, 2013

Travelport, a leading provider of critical transaction processing solutions and data to the global travel industry, has today announced the launch of a new direct Travelport commercial presence in Kenya, one of Africa's fastest growing travel markets. In a clear demonstration of its commitment to the region, this new direct operation for travel agents in the country marks the latest milestone in Travelport's investment strategy in Africa.

Travelport is currently operating in 47 countries across the continent with more in the pipeline. Africa – and especially East Africa – is a key strategic investment area for Travelport, considering the healthy GDP growth in the region, which is expected to reach 5.6% in East Africa in 2013 (vs. the pan-African average of 4.8%).

The GDP in Kenya in particular is forecasted to reach 5.5% in 2013, driving increased travel through the region and establishing Kenya as an East Africa 'hub' for a growing number of international business organisations. (Source: African Economic Outlook)

Since 1997, Galileo, a Travelport global distribution system (GDS), has grown as the leading GDS in East Africa and was previously distributed in Kenya by Kenya Airways, the country's national carrier. With the new Travelport operation for travel agents now in place and an expanded Travelport team on the ground, the travel technology provider plans to introduce new customer support services and deploy a wide range of innovative products over the coming months, all aimed at helping Kenyan travel agents take advantage of the region's growth and earn new revenues.

"The Kenyan travel industry is growing at a pace and we feel that the interests of the travel agents in this region would now be better served by a wholly-owned and focussed Travelport operation," commented Mark Meehan, Managing Director, Travelport Africa. "While we cut over to our new direct operation, we will work closely with Kenya Airways to ensure a very smooth transition for our customers. Kenya Airways has been a longstanding partner and has successfully established our brand in this region. Its air content is still critical for our travel agency customers and we'll be continuing to offer all of Kenya Airways published fares and inventory with the current Full Content Agreement with Kenya Airways providing great value to all parties."

To head up the new Kenya team, Travelport has appointed Mr. Rajab Itambo as General Manager for Kenya. In addition, he will have responsibility for Travelport's business in Tanzania. Itambo began his travel industry career with Galileo in Kenya having joined Kenya Airways in 1998. He later joined Travelport in 2008 and has become an indispensable member of the team. Itambo will report into Martin Herbert, Regional Director for Travelport East Africa.

Over the past year, Travelport has been steadily growing its presence in Africa with the acquisition of its Galileo operation in Southern Africa last May and the entry into 10 new African countries over the past twelve months. As well as investing in an expanded African network, Travelport has also deployed new travel agency solutions across the continent, including new mobile offerings, such as Travelport Mobile Agent, and new point of sale technology, such as Travelport Smartpoint. It has also secured numerous full content agreements with many of Africa's fast-growing airlines and tripled the hotel content available in its system.

"Africa, and particularly East Africa, is predicted to continue growing considerably over the coming months and years, and we firmly believe that by building a more substantial, wholly-owned operation in Kenya, we will be well placed to provide enhanced customer service and grow our business in this important region," added Meehan.