

# Digitally transformed, integrated public transport vital for Africa's economic growth

The growth of Africa's middle class is to improving investor confidence, financial inclusion and contribution toward the formal economy and is, therefore, of the utmost importance to economic development. The emergence of this middle class has led to rapid urbanisation, with most seeking a better future and job prospects in the developed cities.



Research shows that by 2030, more than 50% of Africa's population will be living in cities. "This mass migration is already placing strain on the existing infrastructure. Available resources and the present modes of transportation are simply not equipped to accommodate the projected volumes. This is a challenge for most emerging countries including South Africa," commented Lawrence Kandaswami, managing director, SAP South Africa.

Cities need to develop and evolve just as rapidly, to accommodate the needs of the new urbanites that trade in the city. Technology has an important role to play, particularly in terms of transporting these urbanites. If the countries in Africa achieve this goal, technological innovation has the potential to bring about sustainable economic advancement with equal opportunity and quality of life for passengers.

## What are the driving forces behind the need to transform public transport?

- Rapid urbanisation and changing regulations shifting the risks to industry;
- Pressure on public cost and subsidies, driving the need for innovative approaches to future revenue streams;
- Increased emphasis on supporting and evolving existing platforms;
- Travellers' need for efficiency and transparency in pricing, including one-stop booking of travel with consistent pricing across various channels;
- Clear understanding of the various options for multi-trip or single trips across various providers.

The use of innovative technology emerges as an ideal solution to help transform the transportation industry, by driving a world class service through real-time collaboration and monitoring and providing insights to improve service delivery and enable cost reductions.

## Transformation of transport systems

Recent advances in technology and rapid adoption of smartphones have led to the connected traveler, who has constant



access to information via social and other channels. As a result, transport organisations are now able to deliver a personalised engagement, tailored to the needs of the individual passenger.

Kandaswami added that “there is a sense of urgency for transportation authorities and cities to transform their business processes in order to accommodate the needs of citizens for a reliable and accessible transport system. Technology has an important role to play in this transformation process by providing the underlying platform that supports the industry with an integrated system connecting all modes transport around the cities.”

Pioneering technologies such as the integrated SAP industry software for travel and transportation, for instance, provide a comprehensive, end-to-end solution that allows transport organisations to plan, schedule, predict and react with real-time insights to passenger behavior, travel patterns and transportation network conditions.

### **The benefits of a digitally transformed and integrated public transport system:**

- A transport provider network that is inclusive of all modes of transport;
- Transport is integrated therefore accessible, reliable, affordable and efficient;
- Development of new skills with the promise of further job creation;
- Provide the passenger with multi-touch points to create a seamless travel experience;
- A 360-degree view of the passenger to accommodate for varying traveler needs.

Technology is already helping the passenger travel industry across the world to deliver safety and a more integrated travel experience. SAP continues to invest in creating innovative solutions, which will enable sustainable economic growth for the continent's people.

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