

South Africa gears up to meet the expected demand for cash during 2010

As South Africa prepares for the 2010 FIFA World Cup it is par for the course that questions are arising concerning ATM security. With global attention squarely on South African crime statistics prior to and during the World Cup, the onus lies with the commercial sector to make cash withdrawal safer than it currently is.

Over the last ten years the demand for, and use of, independent ATM systems has increased the world over. This service, traditionally the domain of big banks, was first introduced to the British public back in 1967, when Barclays Bank installed its very first automated teller machine. Since then ATMs have been accepted as part of the mainstream banking system and now comprise the most readily accepted means of getting cash in both developed and developing countries. There is an estimated 1.5 million ATMs in use worldwide, with new cash points being installed daily - clearly supporting the notion that cash remains king, despite the popularity of credit- and debit cards, as well as EFT.

The success and growth of South African tourism, as well as continued urbanisation and the upcoming 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, have greatly increased the demand for secure and cost-effective cash points. Marc Sternberg, Managing Director of Spark ATM systems, has the following comment on the matter, "With a massive influx of visitors expected in South Africa during 2010, an accessible and secure place to withdraw cash will undoubtedly be a high priority, and independent ATMs are bound to be increasingly appreciated by both customers and merchants. Traveller cheque usage has dropped in recent years and those visiting South African cities during the World Cup will require plenty of hard cash to spend at hotels, restaurants, bars and other areas of entertainment. As the host country, we need to ensure that we can offer this as the majority of visitors will be from countries where it is the norm to find independent ATMs readily available."

As more and more retail outlets and hospitality establishments begin to make in-store ATMs available to their clients, consumers are fast becoming accustomed to the convenience factor and begin to expect its presence in everything from pubs and convenience stores, to supermarkets and hotel lobbies. Seen within a South African context, these ATM locations make a lot of sense, since banking facilities in smaller towns and rural locations are often extremely limited. Sternberg and his dedicated team aim to put the power back into the hands of consumers throughout South Africa and her neighbouring African countries, by giving them immediate, safe and convenient access to their cash by means of the installation of their independent ATM systems.

In First World countries, such as Australia, Canada, the US and the UK, convenience ATMs now represent over 60% of cash points in each country respectively. Due to the significant benefits for

both the user and the vendor, demand is steadily increasing in South Africa, with independent ATM systems already making up 15% of the market. With a banking system that ranks ahead of France and Japan, South Africa is set to become the Hong Kong of the African continent and, therefore, the market for convenience ATMs is showing immense potential.

As the year speeds to a close, the 2010 South Africa fever is gripping the nation as we prepare to welcome an approximate 1 000 000 visitors to our sunny shores; and with them the demand for safe, efficient and convenient access to their money. In order to meet this demand independent ATMs have been rolled out at an unprecedented scale, reinforcing the incredible foresight of convenience ATM providers like Spark ATM.

Are you concerned about ATM security in and around your business? Contact a Spark ATM representative today and reap the benefits of turning your premises into a secure ATM location.

Contact Details:

Email: info@sparkatm.co.za

Tel: 021 418 3330

Fax: 021 418 3331

Website: www.sparkatm.co.za