

Outside influences and other phenomena

by Luyton Driman

Greetings fellow exporters and aspirant exporters! In this column, I'll be sharing some news, information and other assorted tid-bits for you on a monthly basis. The info will be in real-time, ie things which have transpired in the last 30 days and in some cases, there will be the odd cross-references to my recently published book, 'Going the extra mile – A guide to trading in Africa'.

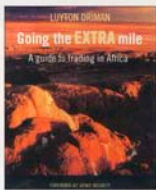
When you operate in and about the African continent, you cannot help but to be drawn into outside influences and other such phenomena and this case in point is one I want to share with you in this month's Africolog.

During the month of September, I travelled to Dubai in the UAE, one of my primary new destinations, (due to its heavy influence into the African continent – see my book Chapter 9).

The reason for the trip was to visit the annual GITEX show, which is a monster of a show indeed, covering two separate auditoriums, in different parts of the city. It mainly exhibits tons of new technology in the world of consumer electronics and IT and of course... everything is on sale (in the second arena).

Dubai city was overflowing with some 200 000 visitors to the show, all the hotels were full (and expensive), the taxis were doing a roaring trade and the heat hovered around 41°C on a daily basis... whine, whine, whine... well I'm not really because I love the bustle and activity and get very fired up when I am in this massive trading arena. There's something about the chatter of traders, agents and dealers; with their calculators, lap-tops and palm tops 'on fire', peppered with cross exclamations in English, Hindi, Arabic and many other tongues.

At the show I made some good new contacts and met with a number of old acquaintances and current customers. Basically, due to the heat most of my



Luyton Driman, author of 'Going the EXTRA mile: A guide to trading in Africa' will be writing a monthly column for Export SA for the next few months.

meetings were held at night, well from say 16:30pm until around 1.00am, at which time we generally ended up in one of many great Arabic restaurants (awesome food) After which I would head straight to the air-conditioned sanctuary of my hotel room, which was home for six days!

This was perhaps my sixth trip to Dubai and the reason I am telling you this is that I do practice what I preach in

my book and by this I mean, I prepared my trip. I cannot emphasise the importance to do this; people listen up – travel in and around Africa is very expensive! You have to make every ZAR count, especially if you are in a small company and have to s-t-r-e-t-c-h your budget. A word of advice, once you have decided what show you plan to visit, check to see if there are any of your own acquaintances going to the same show and pool your resources, by this I don't necessarily mean sharing rooms, but I do mean taxis, meals, show entrance fees and basics. If it is your first trip, you may want the company anyway! ■



Keeping an eye on your cargo and trade related risks

Eikos are specialist marine, trade and transportation risk consultants, providing leading edge risk financing and insurance products to SMME's, medium or large corporate businesses involved in domestic or international trade.

Johannesburg (+27)11 771-5400
Durban (+27)31 250-5100
Cape Town (+27)21 400-9000
London (+44) 207 326 8488

www.eikos.co.za

