

Smart Cities Conference to focus on sustainable urban development

It is estimated that by 2050 the world's population is likely to hit a staggering 9 billion and that 80% of people will live in urban areas. These overwhelming numbers acutely affect South Africans as the influx of people into the cities often result in unplanned living areas built from corrugated iron, with little access to sanitation, clean water with poor or non-existent service delivery.

These unhygienic conditions can lead to disease, a climbing death toll, and increased crime.

In response, Topco Media will be hosting the first Smart Cities Conference and Expo in Durban from 6 - 8 June 2012. "We need to see this as a challenge, not a problem. We need to plan ahead on how to deal with so many people moving into the cities. Private sector holds the solutions to the dilemma; it's no longer business as usual and it's time we come together to do something," says Topco Media's chairman, Richard Fletcher.

A wide range of presentations

To achieve these goals, captains of industry and key decision makers will come together in Durban to discuss technologies and strategies around the creation of smart cities in South Africa, especially infrastructure and sustainable development. Presentations will include food sustainability, ICT resources and solutions, mobility and transport, water, health and safety, environmental sustainability, energy, financing, risk analysis and insurance, sports and education, buildings and waste reduction and recycling, and public administration.

"South Africa is an open canvas and full of opportunity. Looking ahead, a labour force eager for work and natural resources such as wind, solar, and wave power at our fingertips," continues Fletcher. "The Smart Cities Conference and Expo is about networking at the highest level, getting the decision makers in the same room as the corporates and entrepreneurs who may hold some of the answers."