

Africa's Big Seven Goes Big In Africa

With less than a month to go until Africa's Big Seven (AB7), buyers from 21 African countries have already pre-registered for this world-renowned food and beverage expo. AB7 takes place from 22 to 24 June at Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand, near Johannesburg.

Event organiser John Thomson says there has been a significant increase in interest from buyers from the rest of the continent in the past three years.

Growing Interest in Africa

"The growing interest and participation of African countries in AB7 is hardly surprising. Africa's economy is the fastest growing in the world; its middle class population has tripled over the past 30 years, and is expected to exceed 1.1 billion by 2060," says Thomson.

"Africa is playing an increasing role as a hub for driving both inter-Africa and intra-Africa business in the food and beverage industry. And Africa's Big Seven is the platform where traders can find thousands of products in hundreds of categories from over 40 countries, all available at one time and in one place. AB7 removes barriers for business, both geographic and time-based, allowing traders from around the world to focus on the 'business of business'," adds Thomson.

Thomson expects interest and participation in AB7 from African

countries to increase steadily over the coming years as the trend of urbanisation and industrial development continues and expands.

Visitors and exhibitors have already registered from these African countries - Algeria, Botswana, Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritania, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Mauritius, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

AB7 offers visitors a multitude of benefits and attractions, from its online match-making service, to conferences and workshops, and the ultimate aim - direct contact with new suppliers, new products, special offers and better prices.

DrinkTech Africa Conference

For the first time this year, DrinkTech - a component show of AB7 - will host an industry conference. DrinkTech Africa encompasses bottled water, carbonated drinks, hot drinks, beer, wine and spirits, milk and liquid dairy products, liquid food, fruit juices, energy drinks and wellness drinks. The one-day conference, titled *Spotlight on Beverage & Liquid Food Manufacturing and Marketing in Africa: A DrinkTech Conference*, takes place on 24 June 2014.

Find Your Match at AB7

The show's hugely popular, free business matchmaking service is another reason for the show's growing support. This popular and highly effective online business matchmaking service

enables exhibitors and visitors to pre-arrange meetings with pre-selected people online, weeks before the show. The service saves time so visitors and exhibitors can attend more meetings on each day of the show.

SAITEX Hosts Import and Export Workshop with AB7

Show organiser John Thomson stresses the need for participants at AB7 and SAITEX to be informed about the dynamics of international trade. For example, many African countries are diversifying their economies by creating opportunities for trade and investment by foreign companies. This is in order to reverse or adapt the current trend of mainly agricultural commodities and mineral exports out of Africa and local demand for manufactured goods imports.

The Southern African International Trade Exhibition (SAITEX), together with AB7, will host an Import / Export workshop on 24 June 2014. The workshop will introduce the fundamentals of trade for beginners. The workshop will discuss proper planning and execution, efficiency and compliance, optimisation of operating procedures, incentives, finance, logistics, markets, marketing, and training and support.

“The workshop will help beginners in the trade to reach prospective buyers and discover what international marketing approaches they should use,” explains Stephen Oehley, Director of South African Trade Promotions, organisers of the workshops. “Newcomers to the industry will also learn about

various import/export payment methods and how to do risk assessments. The final part of the workshop will focus on constructing an export marketing plan.”