



# DUMA TRAVEL

## beating the drums of change

When you meet Themba and Nomvula Mthombeni, the first thing you notice is their sense of togetherness: they're a team, and it is this quality they have imbued into their corporate travel company, Duma Travel, which they own wholly between them.

Company Chairman and founder Themba's pedigree is impressive, with a BCom from Wits, both Honours and Masters in Business Leadership from UNISA, and top-notch travel qualifications from a Canadian Management Academy. After a distinguished corporate career in senior management and consulting, he ventured into his passion, travel.

Managing Director and qualified Chartered Accountant Nomvula brings over 14 years' experience in senior management to the table, along with a BCom and Post Graduate Diploma in Accounting from UCT.

Duma Travel opened its doors in September 2002, in Cape Town's Tygervalley, with Themba and Sunette Barnard (currently Group Travel Manager) being virtually the only employees – and their very first booking was two tickets to Durban on a low-cost carrier!

Things have moved at a phenomenal pace since then, Duma Travel is now one of the largest and fastest growing black travel management companies in South Africa, with 6 branches in the Western Cape and Gauteng, one opening soon in KwaZulu-Natal, and blue chip clients in the financial, petrochemical and government sectors.

The reason for Duma's success is simple, as Nomvula explains: "Our clients are not numbers, they are our business partners. As they grow, we grow to meet their needs. Personal attention, flexibility and unrivalled service 24/7 are what it's all about."

Clients like Old Mutual's Roddy Mann are the first to agree this is exactly why he has total confidence in Duma, whose expertise and commitment have earned them a large piece of his business.

Innovative products are part of the mix too, and Duma's 3-Step Travel Management Programme has had a hugely positive impact on the travel requirements of corporate clients, from both best practice and cost-saving points of view. Duma Travel offers some parts of the

programme free to prospective clients, who can then make their decision to go with Duma Travel based on actions, not just words.

Themba adds: "The current recessionary period calls for a complete revamp of company travel policies, practices and behaviour. Some tough questions need to be asked around issues such as modes of travel, need for travel, video conferencing, self-booking technologies, changing traveller behaviour, effectiveness of reporting and other monitoring mechanisms. The Duma Travel methodology is practical, fresh and robust to tackle every aspect of corporate travel today."

So, from two low-cost carrier tickets to a multi-corporate national portfolio, the journey of Duma Travel has been an exciting one, and one which both Themba and Nomvula have enjoyed every step of the way. This is a company that is without doubt beating the drums of change in the corporate travel industry.

