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- COMMENTS
- It's a customer friendly feature, thanks NCR ...
 - Actually it moves NCR ahead of Wincor. The Wincor ...
 - I was one of the first field service engineers ...
 - There are a number of substantial errors in this ...
 - Correction to the article: The European Union ...
 - ATM withdrawal situations are becoming more and ...
 - Nowadays, installing skimmers on ATMs to steal ...
 - As a European I like the Visa Europe V Pay ...
 - The feature of PIN Change option at the network ...
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ATM Potential in Africa

Tags: Associations / Conferences, Middle East & Africa, Mobile Banking, Trends / Statistics, Wireless
10/14/10 - Mike Lee

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In RBR's latest press release entitled "China to become world's largest ATM market by 2015," one piece of information jumped out at me from the page more than any other and it wasn't about China, it was about Africa.

The startling information was contained in the chart "Average Volume of Cash Withdrawals per ATM per Month, by Region, 2009" and it actually made my heart beat faster. Here in South Africa we are not used to seeing Africa top of the charts in matters of technology and social progress. But there it was. The Africa and Middle East region top the world with an average of 3,914 cash withdrawals per ATM per month, compared to 1,631 in North America, 2,797 in Western Europe and 2,789 in Asia Pacific. In the past, I have encountered ATMs in South Africa which attracted over 20,000 transactions a month.

Across all regions, taking the 2009 figures in this chart into account, the average number of monthly cash withdrawals at an ATM was 2,601. So there is a global benchmark for owners and deployers to measure monthly cash transaction levels at each of their individual ATMs against.

According to the RBR press release, announcing its biennial ATM survey, "Global ATM Market and Forecasts to 2015," my home country will be the second largest ATM market in the Middle East and Africa region by 2015 behind Iran and followed by Nigeria.

During a keynote address at ATMIA's recent "ATMs and Cash in Africa" conference in Cape Town, Dave Mitchell, Head of the National Payment System at the South African Reserve Bank, revealed the size of the SA ATM market.

South Africa, as for the rest of the continent, is a "cash is king" society. A payment profile of retailers in the country from June 2007 to June 2009 shows that cash accounted for 2,678 million payments compared to 171 million by credit card and 186 million by debit card. The issued card base in the country stands at 52,728,656. South Africa had 21,025 ATMs at the end of 2009, 16,463 of which are bank ATMs. Vibrant independent operators like ATM Solutions, Spark ATM Systems and Cash Access accounted for the remaining 4,562 ATMs. South Africa's ATMs dispensed 450,023,300 cash withdrawals from July 2009 to December 2009 worth a staggering R272,503,769,643 [Source: South African Reserve Bank]!

It is also encouraging to see the growth in cell phone banking and internet banking. Between July and December last year, there were 109,141,595 cell phone banking transactions and 666,131,172 internet banking transactions. The World Economic Forum in 2010 rated South African banks as the 6th soundest in the world. South Africa's increasing technological sophistication in banking co-exists happily with the country's strong retail cash culture. With Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, announcing plans to enter the African market, with the company's preliminary offer to buy the Johannesburg-based retailer Massmart Holdings for about \$4.2 billion, the potential for increased retail competitiveness and growth in South Africa is significant, all of which will benefit the ATM industry and cash usage in the long-run. During the recession, Wal-Mart showed a marked increase in cash use at its tills.

Another important factor which could see a spurt of growth in the ATM and card

ATM INSIGHTS

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About Mike

Mike Lee is CEO of the ATM Industry Association



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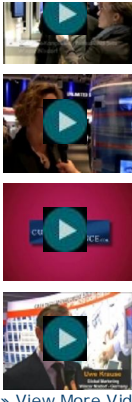
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sectors in Southern Africa as a whole is the [SADC](#) (Southern African Development Community) Payment System Project working towards union by 2018. This is a huge payments project involving the creation of a potential single currency monetary union which will lead to much greater integration of payments systems across the fifteen member states, including ATM and card networks, with a view to promoting free trade. The SADC region would have a population size of 257.7 million and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 471.1 US\$ billion. The SADC payments project could lead to greater economies of scale and spur on technological development in the lesser developed markets in this evolving regional community of economies.

The other piece of data in the RBR press release which struck me as amazing was the sheer volume of cash being withdrawn in the world: a total of 62 billion ATM cash withdrawals worldwide in 2009 is forecast to rise to 94 billion cash withdrawals in 2015.

Right now, the future picture for cash and ATM use in Southern Africa, and across the world, looks very promising indeed.



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