

# The digital dash for Africa

Africa's vast, untapped human potential is on the verge of incredible technological leaps forward with the rapid spread of digital technologies across the continent, along with the growing accessibility of NextGen technology.



Image source: Gallo/Getty.

Major obstacles facing the continent, include the structural challenges required to develop Africa's digital ecosystem, along with the importance of building a skills base. This topic, among many that have the power to truly propel Africa into owning its digital future, will be up for discussion at [AfricaCom](#), happening 12 – 14 November in Cape Town, South Africa.

[Connectivity](#) is the backbone of all economic opportunities and hence, Africa's 'thrival' (beyond sustainability and survival to a thriving digitally enhanced continent). The connectivity track and exhibition Hall also explore and showcase what is required for the enablers of this desired thriving continent, the telcos, to become fully digital.

Assisting in this evolution will be an entire plethora of [emerging technologies](#). What these are and how they can help secure a digital future for all, will be unpacked in a dedicated panel discussion on Wednesday 13 November that will cover:

- How can we maximise the transformative impact of innovative technologies on lives and businesses in Africa?
- Seeing short-term practical benefits from new technology rollouts
- How can we effectively scale these technologies to solve society's challenges?
- What are the key barriers to increased technology adoption? Who is best placed to overcome them?

The confirmed moderator for this session is Terryanne Chebet, General Manager, Metropol TV who will be joined by the Hon. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT & Innovation, Republic of Rwanda; Isabel dos Santos, Chair, UNITEL; Carole Wamuyu Wainaina, Chief Operating Officer, Africa50; Juliet Ehimuan, Country Director, Google Nigeria and Charlene Verzmoter, Head of Philanthropy, Microsoft.

The growth of digital will facilitate profound advancement for Africa on a number of levels. Perhaps the most impactful, aside from how it will enhance education and thus tomorrow's businesses, will be the changing of the current business landscape. [Enterprise Digital Transformation](#) will therefore be a key theme at this year's AfricaTech Centre Stage, a new show feature.

Sessions to look out for include:

- Technology is fundamentally re-shaping the way we do business: What should enterprise leaders expect in two years, five years, 10 years and 20 years, and how should they respond?
- How is Artificial Intelligence transforming African business and how can it be used to elevate African economies?
- Improving mining safety and retaining competitive advantage: utilising IoT to power Africa's largest industry
- Cyber security and data privacy: Don't let rapid digital transformation and technology adoption become a double-edged sword!

Also sharing their knowledge, will be some of the brightest women in world telecoms and technology, who will discuss industry trends, such as best practices of accessing global markets, opportunities and gaps on the continent, and an engaging Fireside Chat discussing what goes into deciding to invest in an idea.

The [Women in Tech](#) track will also turn over key issues for women in the industry ranging from the need for diversity in AI, to challenging the “bro-culture” coined by KRS Software’s CEO Lorraine Steyn, on the challenges women face in breaking into the industry, staying in it or returning to it, as well as making the industry more attractive for women, as well as how to attract top women talent to the industry through offering remote and flexible working conditions.

Speaking up and speaking out, is a power-packed line-up of dynamic women such as:

[Matsi Modise](#) (Furaha Solutions), [Baratang Miya](#) (GirlHype and Uhuru Spaces), [Carol Bouwer](#) (CB Productions), [Hannah Subayi](#) (South Suez Capital), [Tanya Van Lill](#) (SAVCA), [Anelisa Tuswa](#) (ETV), [Lebogang Miya](#) (Mari), Lethabo Motsoaledi (Voyc.ai), Siyabonga Tiwana (Skywalk Innovations), Nomso Kana (SEDA), [Emma Wade-Smith OBE](#) (HM Trade Commissioner for Africa), [Marilyn Radebe](#) (Black IT Forum), [Elisabeth Medou Badang](#) (Orange), Lorraine Steyn (Khanyisa Real Systems), Louise de Beer (Leadhome), Kutlwano Mofolo (Tech Savvy Kids), [Eugina Jordan](#), (Parallel Wireless), [Cassandra Enyan](#) (Google), Shivani Pillay (Uber) and Deseré Orrill (Ole!Connect).

Other highlights to factor in when visiting AfricaCom are:

## 1. IoT World Africa

## 2. AI Summit Cape Town

## 3. FinTech Africa

## 4. LeadersIn Summit

## 5. Connecting Africa

6. **Headliners** - free to attend and the full line-up is available [here](#).

More than 15,000 visitors will be building relationships and setting up deals at AfricaCom in 2019, along with tracking the line-up of heavyweight speakers and industry experts who will be sharing their knowledge and opportunities.

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