

# Phones could save US\$600m

## TECHNOLOGY

Information technology provider, **SITA**, has announced that using mobile phones as tracking devices could save airline's around US\$600 million a year by reducing flight delays.

Mobile phones have the potential to hold boarding passes, baggage tracking information, payment data and in the future even visa and biometric data. In addition location sensing would enable airlines to track passengers and send them messages, moving them towards their gates more efficiently. Technology for these devices is becoming increasingly more sophisticated and it is estimated that there will be five billion mobile customers by 2011. With 90% of airline passengers using phones, SITA's management believes the air transport industry

can gain from adopting these mobile technologies.

Hani El-Assaad, SITA's regional vice president for the Middle East and Turkey, said: "These digital travellers

will have on-demand access to a range of mobile-enabled services such as real time flight updates, self-service booking, check-in and boarding and mobile payments."



Hani El-Assaad: SITA's regional vice president for the Middle East and Turkey

# Bahrain Air starts flights to Jeddah

## ROUTES

Low cost carrier, **Bahrain Air**, has launched thrice weekly flights to the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah.

The service, which began last month, will increase to four weekly flights from September this year.

At present, flights operate between Bahrain International Airport (BIA) and King Abdul Aziz International Airport using an Airbus A320 aircraft with 12 premium class and 150 economy class seats. According to the airline's management there is growing demand for a business service and additional seat capacity.

Bahrain Air managing director Ibrahim Alhamer said: "Bahrain Air is set to provide the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East affordable travel without compromise on quality."