

Oman Air Staged A Strong Presence At ITB Berlin 2008

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Oman Air said its partaking at the world's largest travel fair in Berlin last week was a great success. The ITB Berlin continues to



grow they informed. According to the exhibitors, sales with a value of just under six million euros were finalised at and around the ITB Berlin. The leading trade show for the global travel industry not only included more exhibitors than ever before this year but also attracted more visitors over the past five days than it did last year.

In this regard, Corporate Communications And Media of Oman Air informed that ITB-Berlin's first show was in 1966 and almost immediately became the pre-eminent travel fair with its modest star of nine exhibitors from five countries. As part of measures to promote Oman as a leading global tourist destination, Oman Air has once again participated in the 42nd edition of International Tourism Exchange 2008 in Berlin, Germany, held between March 5 and March 9. It was a perfect platform to meet industry colleagues, make new and renew business relationships, but most of all, tell the world about our ever continuing success story.

This is the world's top event for the travel industry they stated. The ITB Berlin was indeed a massive success. Oman stand did successfully display the true essence of Oman, and has played a very significant role in reflecting the country's flourishing tourism and hospitality industry. It attracted hordes of visitors from around the world and captured their attention. With the participation of industry professionals, ITB exhibitors represent the entire service spectrum of the global tourism industry.

Travel to Oman is on the rise and perceptive European travellers have been gravitating to the very safe, peaceful, stable, and modern Oman, enticed to experience this remarkable country. They said that Oman Air would continue to work closely with the government to further develop international markets for Oman tourism. Oman Air marketing campaigns the Department notified are carefully targeted at selected markets in order to obtain the maximum returns for the country. An enormous volume of enquiries was received from buyers, and the public came in vast numbers too. We are more

than happy. Not only did the ITB Berlin create greater interest in our country on the German market, it also made us the focus of increased international attention. This trade show was an effective way of promoting our beloved country. Important business discussions were held with trade visitors. We highlighted our latest products, announce our newest routes and presented our superb Omani hospitality and our new route to Frankfurt as well as unveil details of our summer capacity expansion. They said that the official international tourism statistics show that the German tourist market is still one of the largest world markets, as German tourists spent last year about 5 R. 60 billion euros of which 83 per cent was spent on various tours in Germany and abroad, and the remaining percentage spent on business trips. Many journalists from television, radio, print and electronic media were present. CNN International supported ITB Berlin 2008, as Official Media Partner.

H.E. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Ali Al Harthy, the ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Germany who visited Oman's stand affirmed that Oman is becoming a more and more popular destination for European, Asian and Middle Eastern vacationers, saying that tourism is quickly emerging as one of the pillars of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos' Government Vision 2020 plan for sustainable development. With features such as wildlife, cultural heritage including UNESCO listed forts, an extensive coastline with spectacular sandy beaches, sunny climate, variety of water sports and recreation and unique archaeological sites of world significance, Oman is poised to be launched as an attractive international tourism destination, furthermore stands as one of the countries where tourists can enjoy a safe environment . Oman contribution at ITP - Berlin will play an active role in strengthening the historical relationship between the two brotherly countries Oman and Germany. It will also assist in supporting the economical cooperation opportunities especially within the commerce and tourism sectors.' he concluded.

Corporate Communications And Media of Oman Air added that all available space was taken at the ITB Berlin, which was taking place for the 42nd time. Because all 160,000 square meters of display space in the 26 halls on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds was occupied, increasing numbers of exhibitors are resorting to the construction of multi-storey stands. Just fewer than 40 per cent of the trade visitors came to the German capital from abroad in search of information about the latest trends in the industry. The accompanying convention was an outstanding event with a record number of attendees and it continues to attract growing numbers of international decision makers, including many top executives. Once again, they acknowledged that ITB Berlin has provided impressive proof of its position as a world leader in its field.

There is a mood of optimism in the international tourism sector and on the business travel market. Exhibitors revealed a high level of satisfaction with their participation in this event. The world's largest travel trade show attracted more exhibitors than ever before, with 11,147 companies from 186 countries presenting the latest products and services from the travel industry (previous year: 10,923 companies from 184 countries). Crowds of people came to the ITB Berlin each day and, shortly before it closed, attendance figures revealed a positive picture, with 177,891 visitors to the exhibition halls. Between Wednesday and Friday 110,322 trade visitors were registered (2007: 108.735). During the weekend, 67,569 members of the public also came in search of information. The surveys conducted at the ITB Berlin revealed that more than 70 per cent of the general public who attended intends to use a travel agency when making their travel arrangements.

Francesco Frangiali, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) said "We are proud to have again been



part of the ITB Berlin, which is a loyal and important partner of the UNWTO. The leading trade show for the world's tourism industry again confirmed its excellent reputation as a unique meeting place for the industry, experts, government representatives, and travellers themselves. The ITB Berlin has convincingly shown how our sector meets and implements sustainability criteria. This is one of the fundamental objectives of the UNWTO. We look forward to returning next year and continuing to develop our long-standing links with this event."

Corporate Communications And Media of Oman Air affirmed that the ITB Berlin is also an international media event. In addition to international news agencies, some 8,000 journalists from 90 countries attended. Politicians and diplomats were present in even greater numbers at the world's leading travel trade show, 171 from 100 countries (2007: 137 from 85 countries). They included 71 ambassadors, 82 ministers, and 18 state secretaries. Among the noteworthy news-items coming out of this year's ITB-Berlin show is the launch of a Far-East version of the show in Singapore in October of this year.

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