

PRESS RELEASE

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The three top stories at ITB Berlin on Thursday, 7 March 2019

Virtual Reality offers great opportunities for experiencing trade shows – Germany is worldwide leader in cycle tourism – Chairman of Malaysia Tourism on the prospects for medical and eco tourism

Berlin, 7 March 2019 – The Social Media Newsroom of ITB Berlin has online news from the World's Leading Travel Trade Show at <http://newsroom.itb-berlin.de/en>.

Virtual Reality offers great opportunities for experiencing trade shows

There are many stations along a trade visitor's journey where digital technologies can be meaningfully implemented. These range from trade show preparation and navigation at the show through to follow-up. This was one of the results of the discussion on VR at the ITB Virtual Reality Lab, in which David Ruetz, head of ITB and Prof. Dr. Cornelia Zanger of TU Chemnitz took part. Despite the general euphoria, the head of ITB emphasised that purely virtual trade shows would never be able to replace human contact at the real thing. Furthermore, there was no point in using this technology for its own sake. It needed to be understood as something that supported and enriched the brand experience.

Link: www.bit.ly/2C4vkHB

Germany is worldwide leader in cycle tourism

"Cycling in Germany is becoming increasingly popular." Coinciding with its twentieth anniversary and following the publication of its most recent Cycling Analysis, this was announced by the German Cyclists' Club ADFC. In 2018 some 5.5 million Germans took at least one cycling trip – a record figure. Frank Hofmann, deputy chairman of the association, was all the more pleased with the impressive trend, following the drop in figures for 2017, which was a very wet year. According to the ADFC Germans are also "world champion travellers on two wheels." Germany is not only the largest source market for worldwide cycle tourism but is also the market's leading destination.

Link: www.bit.ly/2TDCVqE

Partner country Malaysia is focusing increasingly on eco and medical tourism

In a video interview the chairman of Tourism Malaysia forecast that the country's participation in ITB would have a big impact on visitor numbers in the future. Among other things he emphasised the many opportunities for exchanging views with tour operators, and also highlighted the enormous prospects he saw for medical tourism in his country. Not least, he stressed the advantages of eco-tourism away from large cities. In particular, it gave the inhabitants of small villages a valuable opportunity to participate in the booming travel industry, and visitors could gain valuable insights into the traditional local way of life.

Link: www.bit.ly/2ETUNpf

Journalists and interested readers can find **news on the main topics at the World's Leading Travel Trade Show posted daily** at <http://newsroom.itb-berlin.de/en>. The Social Media Newsroom has news in German and English on every travel destination represented at ITB Berlin, plus trends and innovations in aviation, cruises, the hotel industry and travel technology. This news website also has the latest from the ITB Berlin Convention, the leading think tank of the global travel industry.

About ITB Berlin and the ITB Berlin Convention



Official Partner Country ITB Berlin 2019



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ITB Berlin 2019 will be taking place from Wednesday, 6 to Sunday, 10 March, and from Wednesday to Friday will be open to trade visitors only. ITB Berlin is the World's Leading Travel Trade Show. In 2018 a total of 10,000 companies and organisations from 186 countries exhibited their products and services to around 170,000 visitors, including 110.000 trade visitors. Parallel with the show the ITB Berlin Convention, the largest event of its kind, will be held from Wednesday, 6 to Saturday, 9 March 2019. Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for trade visitors and exhibitors. For more information please visit www.itb-berlin.com, www.itb-convention.com and the [ITB Social Media Newsroom](#).

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