

March 07, 2017

## ITB Berlin 2017 maintains its strong appeal

**26 halls fully booked – Around 10,000 exhibitors from 184 countries and regions – Botswana, the official partner country, sets an example for sustainable tourism – ITB Berlin Convention features the key topics ‘Safety & Security’ and ‘Artificial Intelligence’ – Launch of Medical Tourism, a new segment – Travel Technology continues to boom – 2017 debut for ITB China in Shanghai – Berlin Travel Festival previews its 2018 event**

The international tourism industry currently faces many challenges. Amid the latest geopolitical situation holidaymakers have become unsure about how safe it is to travel. From 8 to 12 March 2017 ITB Berlin will debate highly controversial issues and on the eve of the 51st edition continues to maintain its strong market position. At the World's Leading Travel Trade Show ® there is no sign that people's lust for travel has waned. Once again, the 26 halls on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds are fully booked. Over the course of five days more than 10,000 companies from 184 countries will be represented on 1,092 stands covering 160,000 square metres and will be showcasing the global tourism industry's latest products and trends.

Dr. Christian Göke, Chief Executive Officer of Messe Berlin GmbH: "As the world's most important gathering place for the tourism industry ITB Berlin above all brings people together. A million face-to-face meetings at ITB Berlin will do one thing in particular, and that is build trust, trust on which we increasingly depend in our business dealings, in a digitalised and globalised world that has become more and more difficult to understand."

Over 80 per cent of our exhibitors are from abroad. The organisers again expect more than 100,000 international trade visitors as well as many thousand members of the public on the weekend, who will be able to book their holidays directly at the show.

### Partner country Botswana focuses on sustainability

The spotlight will be on the partner country Botswana, which has been a regular exhibitor at ITB Berlin since 1983, and this year will be represented with 39 companies. Botswana will have information on its wide range of products and services in Hall 20, and place a focus on ecologically sustainable tourism. Visitors can also admire traditional dances as well as handicrafts from Botswana in Hall 4.1. On the eve of the show the partner country will host a spectacular reception at the opening event of ITB Berlin in the CityCube Berlin.

### ITB Speed Dating Day: 2,800 meetings in just one day

This year, on 9 March 2017 at ITB Berlin, two Speed Dating events will give buyers and bloggers an opportunity to meet with exhibitors from around the world, enabling them to establish valuable contacts all in one day.

On Thursday morning at ITB Berlin the ITB Speed Networking event will take place for the third time. Brief time slots will give leading buyers who are members of the ITB Buyers Circle a chance to meet and get to know exhibitors. Over 1,000 meetings have already been set up in the run-up to the fair. The exclusive ITB Buyers Circle gathers 1,000 leading buyers from Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Australia. Over the past five years the ITB Buyers Circle has become a sought-after meeting place for travel buyers from around the world. Some 80 per cent of the participants attend in a direct decision-making capacity, with a budget of more than 500,000 euros. More than one third of buyers even have over ten million euros and more at their disposal.

At the ITB Blogger Speed Dating in the afternoon exhibitors and bloggers will have an opportunity to hold brief meetings and talk about joint ventures or exchange ideas on



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future collaboration. A total of 1,800 meetings have already been arranged with the ITB Matchmaking Tool.

### **ITB Berlin Convention: well prepared for turbulent times**

From 8 to 11 March 2017 key topics at the ITB Berlin Convention will be the ever-deepening geopolitical crises and technological advances in artificial intelligence. This year, the main heading is 'Disruptive Travel: The End of the World as We Know It'. Last year's key topic on the services provided by humanoid robots will be continued in 2017 with a focus on artificial intelligence. On Wednesday, 8 March 2017, the ITB Future Day will focus on the mega trends in industry and society and key topics concerning the global travel and tourism industry. The findings of exclusive empirical surveys and examples of best practices from major market players and leading innovators will provide valuable insights and concrete decision-making help for shaping corporate strategies and measures. On 9 March 2017 the ITB Hospitality Day will also have information on artificial intelligence in the service sector. On Wednesday, 8 March 2017, day one of the Destination Days, the service robot 'Pepper' will give a live demonstration of its skills on stage.

### **Exclusive travel safety survey at the ITB Future Day**

In cooperation with the independent market researcher Norstat, the findings of a survey commissioned by the ITB Berlin and carried out by Travelzoo will reveal the scale of travellers' concerns in the world's main tourism source markets and what kind of information tourists consider helpful. One of the findings of this market survey is that for 97 per cent of the interviewees around the world the question of how safe a destination is plays an important role. Despite this, for the majority of those polled it has not dampened their desire to travel. This year only four per cent of Britons and six per cent of Germans and French respectively would prefer not to travel abroad for safety reasons.

### **'Year of Sustainable Tourism'**

The United Nations organisation UNWTO has declared 2017 the 'Year of Sustainable Tourism'. The focus is on the economic, ecological and social aspects that represent the sustainability goals of the Agenda 2030. On Friday, 10 March at ITB Berlin, the ITB CSR Day will be setting the tone. At the ITB Berlin Convention, high-ranking figures representing politics, science and business will discuss innovative concepts, examples of best practices and the economic prospects for sustainable tourism. The main topic this year will be 'Sustainable Food and Beverages in the Hotel Industry and at Tourism Destinations'. Besides the ITB Berlin Convention numerous other events will also dwell on the topic of CSR. Thus, a wide range of papers and discussions on sustainability will be taking place again, mainly on the two stages in Hall 4.1.

### **The future is digital**

For many years growth and dynamic expansion have been the hallmarks of the Travel Technology Halls and the eTravel World. Currently, 30 per cent of the exhibitors in the Travel Technology segment are newcomers to the show. The increasing presence of payment system providers also underlines the growing importance of travel technology.

This year, the eTravel World is fully booked again. Due to the high level of demand an extra hall has been set up. In Hall 7.1c visitors will find that first-time exhibitors make up around 60 per cent of those present. The eTravel World was fully booked as early as November 2016. Over 70 companies representing social media, big data and mobile travel services are represented in this fast-growing segment. At the same time the eTravel World is attracting more and more international exhibitors and especially startups from around the world. On Friday, 10 March at 11.30 a.m., for the first time startups can take part in an international pitching event powered by Phocuswright.

### **New segment: Medical Tourism**

This year at ITB Berlin, for the first time the important growth segment of medical tourism will receive its own platform. Medical service providers, hotels and destinations will be able to exhibit their products and services in the Medical Tourism Pavilion in Hall 3.2.

On Thursday, 9 March from 3 to 4 p.m., in addition to lectures and presentations, a Medical Networking Reception will take place in the Medical Tourism Pavilion in Hall 3.2.

### **High demand for space from exhibitors**

At the 51st ITB Berlin exhibitor demand for floor space is as high as ever. Turkey, which is looking positively towards the future, will be represented in its own hall again. Regardless of India's current economic crisis exhibitors from the sub-continent are participating in Hall 5.2b, which once again is fully booked. Among the European countries occupying larger display areas will be Croatia in Hall 1.2, France and Portugal in Hall 1.1, and the Czech Republic in Hall 7.2 b. Hall 26, featuring Asia, is fully booked again with waiting lists. Exhibitors from Indonesia will also be occupying more space. HanaTour, one of Korea's largest tour operators, will be represented on its own stand and for the first time. The stands of Caissa Travel Management, Beijing Nimbus Travel, China Inbound and the Dossen Hotel Group from China will be adding to the range of products displayed by one of Asia's leading growth markets in tourism. The growth potential of Middle Eastern countries will also be reflected at ITB Berlin. A total of 32 major exhibitors from the Middle East will be represented at ITB Berlin. The United Arab Emirates and Qatar Airways on an area of 3,380 square metres as well as Saudi Arabia on more than 300 square metres will be occupying larger stands than in 2016. The displays of the USA are expanding by 100 square metres. This year, Australia will also be represented on a larger stand, and its neighbour New Zealand will be appearing individually with its services and new products in Hall 5.2a. Several exhibitors from Africa and Europe are now back after a prolonged absence. Among them, Togo and Senegal can be found in Hall 21. Andorra is also back at ITB Berlin and will be represented in Hall 2.1.

This year, the stand of Convention & Culture Partner Slovenia in Hall 17 has grown too. Slovenia is sponsoring the Wi-Fi network on the entire grounds at ITB Berlin. In Hall 9 this year, visitors can find even more hotels, including the enlarged stands of Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, Hilton, Accor Hotels, Jin Jiang International and Expedia. Deutsche Hotel & Resort Holding is a newcomer this year and can also be found in Hall 9. Airbus is also a first-time exhibitor, in Hall 25. This is also where Aeroflot will be represented with its own stand for the first time. The number of car rental firms and tour operators in Hall 14.1 has also risen significantly.

### **ITB goes China**

This year, ITB Berlin is again organising the ITB Chinese Night, a networking event, to give interested visitors better access to the Chinese travel market. As a global brand ITB Berlin has become a household name beyond national borders. With the opening of ITB China from 10 to 12 May 2017 in Shanghai ITB Berlin will continue to build on and strengthen its market position in Asia.

### **LGBT – even bigger and more colourful**

This year, this fast-growing LGBT segment will feature a new Presentation Corner, where exhibitors can showcase their latest LGBT products. ITB Berlin currently boasts the world's largest range of LGBT travel services. The lectures taking place in Hall 21b and at the ITB Berlin Convention will focus on the world's first travel campaign with transgender models, on successful business models exploiting this market, and on LGBT-friendly destinations. This year, the big LGBT Pavilion in Hall 21b will feature numerous new exhibitors, including Hornet.com, the Illinois Office of Tourism, Aspen Snowmass with information on the big LGBT Skiweek, the Belmond Hotel Group, as well as ALAT.LGBT, the South American LGBT Travel Association. There will also be several newcomers at the show from Spain, including World Pride Madrid 2017, Valencia and Benidorm, ELLA – Lesbian Travel from Majorca and the Arona Tourist Board from Tenerife.

## **Even more employers at the ITB Career Center**

More employers than ever will be represented at the Career Center in Hall 11.1. Major tourism companies including DER Touristik, Marriott International and Sixt Autovermietung will be represented with their own stands. On the stand of the Federal Employment Agency, the Career Center's exclusive partner, personnel managers from Accor Hotels, Adina Apartment Hotels, Cruise Net Hamburg, Eurowings and Viking River Cruises, among others, will have information on current training and job vacancies. The job wall has 100 tourism vacancies alone being offered by exhibitors and the job market of the Federal Employment Agency.

## **Wide-ranging cultural products**

This year, the CULTURE LOUNGE is celebrating its tenth anniversary and will be bigger than ever before. In Hall 16 as well as Hall 15.1 trade visitors and culturally interested travellers will find over 70 exhibitors from nine countries. Inside the Culture Hall Flanders is the Culture partner of ITB Berlin. The CULTURE CONFERENCE LOUNGE is a firmly established part of the CULTURE LOUNGE, where a programme of cultural tourism events including lectures and presentations will take place.

## **Exclusive preview of the Berlin Travel Festival 2018**

Messe Berlin supports and is a partner of the Berlin Travel Festival, which will take place in the Arena, Berlin-Kreuzberg, from 9 to 11 March 2018. At this year's ITB Berlin the ITB Berlin Travel Festival will host a preview one year before its official launch. From 8 to 10 March 2017 at the Marshall-Haus an exclusive preview event in the shape of an interactive exhibition can be visited at the World's Largest Travel Trade Show®. The highlight will be a programme of stage events under the heading of 'People, Places and Memories'. This innovative format, combining a concept store for consumers and a new type of exhibition for the industry, is designed to be a new platform that stands for dialogue, inspiration and exploring new things.

## **About ITB Berlin and the ITB Berlin Convention**

ITB Berlin 2017 will take place from Wednesday to Sunday, 8 to 12 March. From Wednesday to Friday ITB Berlin is open to trade visitors only. Parallel with the show the ITB Berlin Convention, the largest event of its kind, will be held from Wednesday, 8 to Saturday, 11 March 2017. Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for trade visitors.

More details are available at [www.itb-convention.com](http://www.itb-convention.com). Slovenia is the Convention & Culture Partner of ITB Berlin 2017. ITB Berlin is the World's Leading Travel Trade Show. In 2016 a total of 10,000 companies and organisations from 187 countries exhibited their products and services to around 180,000 visitors, who included 120,000 trade visitors.

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