

UFI Summer Seminar 2004 Examines EU Enlargement Impact on Trade Show Sector

Paris/Zagreb – June 16, 2004 The UFI 2004 Summer Seminar hosted by Zagreb Fair in Croatia from June 14-16, 2004, brought together exhibition industry specialists from 33 countries to review the current state of the trade show sector.

Organised by UFI - the global association of the exhibition industry, the seminar was open to participation by all industry professionals with a particular emphasis on issues from a marketing perspective. This internationally recognised seminar is a key opportunity to exchange current information on trends and techniques in the exhibition sector.

The 2004 UFI Summer Seminar theme "Spice Up your Exhibition Business and Explore New Markets" focussed on the opportunities and challenges arising from the EU's enlargement. Keynote speaker, Ernst Raue of Deutsche Messe AG Hannover, Germany, examined the impact of the admission of 10 new EU member states and the arrival of more than 75 million consumers as both an opportunity to develop new markets and investments, and a threat of serious competition. The question as Raue so clearly stated it is simply that "while it is true that there is enormous demand in the accession countries for goods and services which will allow them to modernize their economies, the question is: Which ones? What things do they need the most? And which trade fairs represent the right response to this demand?"

There are some obvious growth sectors such as agriculture and construction goods and equipment which have experienced strong growth since the start of the liberalization process in Central and Eastern Europe. However, focussed tradeshow can sometimes go in surprising directions as evidenced by the recent success in Poland of an exhibition targeting church equipment.

Today there are one or more significant exhibition centers in each of the ten new EU member states. Nationally focused events promise the greatest opportunity, allowing their organizers to develop new exhibitor and visitor potential

There are benefits for both sides, as the interests of the new member states begin to merge with those of the old EU member states. Raue pointed out that “the flow from East to West strengthens the existing flagship tradeshows. At the same time the flow from West to East increases the level of prosperity in the accession countries, as a result of new orders, new jobs and increased income.”

Other Summer Seminar topics presented case studies showing the marketing opportunities open to the exhibition industry in Asia and Russia. Additional topics included how to “clone’ successful tradeshows in new markets and how to build successful global brand strategies. Summer Seminar speakers and participants were in full agreement that the challenges experienced in one region shared many common threads with those on different continents.

Vincent Gerard, UFI Managing Director, summarized the objectives of the Seminar, by saying, “the opportunity to meet and exchange experiences at this session has been invaluable. Our participants from nations around the world have been able to profit from this opportunity and to build strong and lasting professional ties.”

UFI, the global association of the exhibition industry, promotes, serves and represents the trade fair and exhibition industry worldwide. Via its 256 member organisations, including the world's leading show organisers and fairground owners, industry partners, and 39 national and international associations, UFI is present in 72 countries in 155 cities on 5 continents. Members are responsible for the management and operation of over 4,000 exhibitions around the world.

For additional information please contact:

UFI

Ms Lili Eigl, Manager Communications
35bis, rue Jouffroy-d'Abbans, F-75017 Paris

tel: +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12

email : lili@ufi.org

www.ufi.org