

For Immediate Release

Exhibition leaders from 46 nations meet in Bogota for UFI's 81st Congress

Paris/Bogota – October 28, 2014: Over 300 delegates from 46 nations are gathering in Bogota for UFI's 81st Congress. Last hosted in Latin America in 1975, the UFI Congress, will bring together leaders and strategic thinkers for a 3-day review of the state of the exhibition industry. UFI's Congress will be hosted by regional industry association (AFIDA) and Corferias, Colombia's leading exhibition business, from 29 October to 1 November. Renaud Hamaide, UFI President, described the 3-day programme saying, "Our theme this year 'Fit to Compete' will have us examine new markets, new structures, new products and new revenue opportunities. We'll gain insight from the Latin American experience and apply this to new ideas at a global level."

In the exhibition industry, where the very nature of the business makes UFI's members as much competitors as partners, this annual gathering is a unique opportunity for delegates to enjoy networking and build new projects. Congress participants can 'expect to be amazed' by the expertise to be shared from a variety of professional disciplines as the group reviews the role of the exhibition industry within the marketing mix and looks at trends for the future.

In order to gain a good understanding what people in our industry consider important for being competitive, jwc, exhibition consultants from Germany, initiated and developed a survey amongst 900 individuals in the industry. With a response rate of nearly 20%, the survey yielded some remarkable findings. Some of the highlights are:

1. Overall, human resources, the right products/offerings as well as branding of shows are considered to be most important for the competitiveness of our industry as a whole as well as for the competitiveness of individual companies.
2. The majority of the respondents think that their company is highly focused and performing well when it comes to the branding of their shows
3. Respondents see comparatively little importance in the brands of their companies
4. For the future, respondents see the need for more focus on the areas of human resources, organization and pricing

Jochen Witt of jwc will present a more detailed analysis of the survey results in his Global Industry Review at the Congress. While exhibitions continue to hold a key place in the hearts of marketers who seek to ensure top-dollar return on investment for their event activities, there is an acknowledged perception that this face-to-face marketing medium must reposition itself as it competes in today's digital marketplace. Building on the findings of the survey, participants will examine a variety of key elements including IT, branding, pricing and product offerings in order to identify building blocks for future competitiveness. Linked to this discussion, delegates will examine how UFI can attract young talent to these unique exhibition platforms which reach out to a vast variety of market audiences.

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A number of additional internal UFI meetings, including the UFI Board of Directors Meeting, the UFI Annual General Assembly, UFI Regional Chapter meetings and a meeting of the UFI Associations' Committee which brings together over 50 national and international exhibition related associations, are also scheduled during this 81st UFI Congress.

The annual UFI Congress moves from region to region and will next be hosted by Fondazione Fiera Milano and Milano Congressi in Italy from 4-7 November 2015.

UFI, The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, promotes, serves and represents the business interests of its members in the exhibition industry worldwide. Via its 650 member organisations, including the world's leading show organisers and fairground owners, professional associations and industry partners, UFI is present in 82 countries on 5 continents. UFI Members are responsible for the management and operation of over 4,500 exhibitions around the world.

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