



UFI 2011 Open Seminar in Middle East “Discovers Regional Opportunities”

Paris/Sharjah, March 14, 2011: UFI’s Open Seminar in the Middle East, hosted by Expo Centre Sharjah (UAE) from March 14-16, has brought together over 75 exhibition industry professionals from 20 countries for a highly charged programme. As the leading annual event for exhibition industry professionals in the Middle East, this seminar attracts key decision-makers from around the world. The opportunity for the exhibition industry to exchange ideas and examine business opportunities in a non-political forum is particularly appreciated in today’s Middle East environment. Saif Al Midfaa, Director General of Expo Centre Sharjah, stated that, “the Middle East is facing new reforms and challenges all over. This makes it even more valuable that we meet here today to learn from each other and to gain a clearer vision of what is actually happening in the region”.

The theme of this year’s Open Seminar, “Discovering Regional Opportunities”, provides industry experts with a platform to discuss the creation of successful business partnerships in the Middle East within the context of existing economic challenges. Ibrahim Al Khaldi, UFI Middle East/Africa Regional Manager stated, “This is an exciting programme which brings global professionals to Sharjah in a meeting designed to help them explore new business initiatives in the exhibition sector”. The roster of speakers includes Simon Parker (UBM London), Ahmed Saleh Baabood (OITE Oman) and Jochen Witt (JWC Cologne) who will review partnership potential in the region and openings for profitable exhibition industry development. The options for creating successful multi-cultural marketing and exhibition sales management programmes will be examined by Neil Hickman (ExpoCentre Sharjah). A workshop led by Rashid Toefy (CTICC Cape Town) will have participants brainstorm on solutions geared to developing regional partnerships as the exhibition industry builds professional bridges between Middle East and African markets.

Paul Woodward, UFI MD and Seminar moderator, observed that, “While this has been a challenging few months in some parts of the Middle East, the exhibition industry can help to promote business initiatives throughout the region which support successful economic development. The participants gathering here in Sharjah today clearly believe in the region and the role the exhibition industry can play in its continued growth”.

UFI is the global association of the world’s leading tradeshow organizers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI’s main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry.

UFI represents over 550 member organizations in 84 countries around the world. Almost 900 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

For additional information, please go to
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