

African opportunities explored at jointly-organized Cape Town Seminar

Paris, 21 March 2012: The UFI Open Seminar in the Middle East/Africa and Expo Summit Africa, organized by UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, in collaboration with Manch Communications, was held in Cape Town from 15 – 17 March. Hosted by the Cape Town International Convention Centre and moderated by the CTICC CEO Rashid Toefy, the event attracted more than 70 participants from the 18 countries in 4 continents who came from as far afield as China, UK, USA and Thailand. It was a ‘not-to-be-missed’ chance to have a closer look at the African market and in particular the “Reality, Potential, Access and Needs” as its theme proposed.

“We are particularly glad that UFI could successfully stage its first event in Sub-Saharan Africa and create this networking and knowledge platform for its members and the industry professionals at large in such a successful event. This was possible only with the involvement and support of our partner in this event Manch Communications, and our host CTICC” commented Ibrahim Alkhalidi, UFI Middle East Africa Regional Manager.

The CEO of CTICC, Rashid Toefy, was very happy to host the 2012 Seminar “it has been an immense pleasure for me to host this UFI Seminar/Expo Summit here in Cape Town, and to be able to share with the international exhibition industry the potential of this massive market”. He shared his plans to double the exhibition facilities within the next few years, a clear sign that business is booming in Cape Town.

Speakers at the event included Craig Newman of the Johannesburg Expo Centre who gave a clear illustration to understanding business in Africa during the UFI Middle East Africa Chapter meeting which preceded the Open Seminar. JWC Cologne’s Dr. Gerd Weber focused on the industry’s concern for infrastructure and the need to improve current exhibition facilities in many countries in the region. Sylvie Fourn of Reed Exhibitions France and Douglas Emslie, the CEO of Tarsus plc both provided interesting case studies on their experience of working in Africa and ‘geo-cloning’ some of their key brands in the region.

Essam El Haddad, Chairman of the Arabian Development Group in Egypt, gave a very frank account of the ‘Arab Spring’, with a detailed study of the implications on the economy in general and the exhibition industry in particular. Thorsten Kolbinger of Ungerboeck in Germany and Corbin Ball from the USA rounded off the event with a look at new technologies for the exhibition industry.

.....

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 560 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 www.ufi.org or contact

Lili Eigl

UFI Communications Manager

lili@ufi.org