

Global leaders of the exhibition industry gather in Milan to turn challenges into opportunities

- Globalisation, digitisation, talent management and sustainable development top of the agenda of the exhibition industry
- UFI reaches record membership counting 676 organisations from 82 countries
- Sergey Alexeev leads new UFI presidential trio to support the industry

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Just after the doors closed for the World Expo Milano 2015, over 480 participants from 53 countries have travelled to Milan for the 82nd Congress of UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry to focus on ever faster change for the global exhibition industry.

The association's 2015 General Assembly, chaired by Andrés López-Valderrama, UFI President 2014/2015, reviewed the results of the current year as well as future development plans.

Andrés López-Valderrama, UFI President, observed that, "In the fast changing global business environment, our role as the one truly global association for the industry is more important than ever before. Because each and every one of us must face global challenges while taking into consideration our local realities. In the past 12 month, we further enhanced our capabilities to address the drivers of industry change such as globalisation, digitisation and talent management; we managed to extend the reach of our working committees and addressed sustainable growth".

For globalisation, UFI continued to see a dramatic change on the 'shape' of the industry. New countries and regions are becoming increasingly important. At the same time, organisers in the more mature markets continue to have to reinvent their businesses. That is reflected in the changing mix of UFI's members.

Information technology has kept us busy now for some 20 years but we all sense that as digitisation sweeps through the business world with ever greater speed, there is much more to come. UFI is dedicated to helping its members to understand, adapt and to use these change to their advantage. Digitisation will also affect how our future staff and customers expect to do business and the task of recruiting and retaining talents for our businesses is even more important now than it has ever been.

Finally, UFI recognises that all businesses should be sustainable by being economically and socially sustainable as well as 'green'.

"UFI will continue to adjust its focus and services to reflect changing industry needs and support UFI members as they meet the business challenges of managing year-round communities," concluded López-Valderrama.

During the course of the last year, UFI approved the admission of new member organisations bringing its total membership up to 676 organisations from 82 countries. Membership in UFI is based on adherence to an exhibition industry code of ethics ensuring best practice throughout its international membership. The UFI General Assembly also bestowed the internationally recognised UFI Approved quality label on a select group of international exhibitions. All UFI Approved events must regularly audit and certify their event statistics. As of today, there are 932 exhibitions officially recognized as “UFI Approved Events”. The important opportunity for UFI is to engage even more fully with new members in regions where UFI and association membership in general are less familiar”.

At the conclusion of the 82nd UFI Congress, Sergey Alexeev, UFI’s 2015/2016 President (Vice-President of ExpoForum-International), will take over the President’s role from Andrés López-Valderrama (Executive President at Corferias, Colombia). “Sergey brings 30 years of exhibition related experience to the UFI president’s trio!

As the first Russian UFI President, he will certainly provide valuable insights for the development of UFI programmes in this country,” adds Andrés López-Valderrama. Completing the new presidential leadership trio of UFI is Andreas Gruchow (Member of the Managing Board of Deutsche Messe AG, Hanover, Germany)

UFI announced that its 83rd annual Congress will be held in Shanghai from 9 – 12 November 2016.

This year’s event is hosted by UFI member Fondazione Fiera Milano.

Attached:

- Photo of UFI 2015/2016 Presidential trio from left to right: Andrés López-Valderrama (outgoing UFI President); Andreas Gruchow (incoming UFI President) and Sergey Alexeev (UFI President 2015-2016).
- The full list of organisations approved for UFI Membership since the last UFI Congress in October 2014.
- The list of newly recognised UFI Approved Events for the same period.
- UFI 90th anniversary logo.

About UFI - The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry

UFI is the association of the world's leading tradeshow organisers 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 676 member organisations in 82 countries around the world. Over 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.

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