

## UFI Latin American Conference successfully launched in Mexico City

*Mexico City* – 20 September 2018: UFI's inaugural Latin American Conference took place on 18-19 September at the World Trade Center, Mexico City. The event was the perfect opportunity for participants to discuss common strategies for different realities in Latin America. 14 speakers from around the Americas shared their insights and experiences with the audience, while deep dive sessions and networking breaks provided valuable time for focused conversations and further discussions. Around 120 delegates from 16 countries attended.

"This conference exceeded our expectations as UFI's first-ever major event focused on Latin America. It is great to see that the work we have put into this together with the UFI team has paid off," says Pepe Navarro, General Director E.J. Krause Tarsus de Mexico and UFI Latin America Chapter Chair.

As the conference took place on the anniversary of the 2017 Mexico City earthquake, the opening session focused on the way exhibition organisers and venues react to such events – from earthquakes to hurricanes to health scares. Jaime Salazar (CEO of UBM Mexico), Michael Ryan (Group Exhibitions Director of FESPA), and Ed Kelley (Director General of the WTC Mexico) shared their experiences along with Juan Gabriel Tamez (Director General of Expo Guadalajara).

Another key session called "Expos in times of crisis" focused on the ups and downs in Latin America, with industry leaders from the region sharing how economic and monetary crises have influenced the exhibition industry, and what lessons and positives the industry can take from this. Juan Pablo de Vera (Senior VP for Latin America for Reed Exhibitions) and Marco Basso (President of Informa Brazil) gave the Brazilian perspective, and Marcos Gottfried (CEO of Tradex Exposiciones) added his Mexican experience. One common statement was that trade show organisers in Latin America are probably the most experienced experts in the industry globally when it comes to flexibility and the ability to respond to and overcome crisis situations.

Further sessions focused on digital transformation in Latin America, best practices from Mexico, and business opportunities for Latin American companies in the US. The conference closed with technology expert and investor Marco Giberti (CEO of Vesuvio Ventures), who talked about what impact digital disruption might have on the exhibition industry.

Participants were able to download the speakers' presentations on-site using Poken technology. For UFI members, all recorded sessions will soon be available in the member section on the [www.ufi.org](http://www.ufi.org) website.

As the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, UFI regularly organises regional conferences around the world as a core activity. "As the number of UFI members in Latin America is growing steadily, we are very happy that we can expand our services and activities here. One year ago, we were able to bring in Ana-Maria Arango as Regional Manager and open our regional office. Now, less than twelve months later, we have already organised our first major event for the region. We look forward to working with the industry and associations in the region to offer broader support for their businesses," says Kai Hattendorf, UFI MD/CEO.

UFI co-located this event with the XXI. AMPROFEC Congress, where UFI also hosted a session and held a meeting for UFI members.

The inaugural Latin American Conference was hosted by AMPROFEC and took place at the World Trade Center, Mexico City. It was also supported by UFI's Diamond Sponsors: The Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and Global Experience Specialists (GES). A wide range of sponsors also backed the event. Full details of the UFI Latin American Conference 2018 can be found on the event website: [www.ufi.org/mexico2018](http://www.ufi.org/mexico2018)

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*About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the leading global association of the world’s 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 directly represents around 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 760 member organisations in 87 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 1000 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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