

UFI LatAm Conference brings industry leaders from across the region together for three-day hybrid meeting

- 200 delegates from 35 countries tuned in and networked online
- 32 speakers shared their expertise and vision for the future of the industry from a Latin American perspective
- The event was broadcast from Corferias, Bogota with speakers joining in person from Mexico and Bolivia

Paris, 17 August 2021: Across three days, the 2021 UFI LatAm Conference reconnected a pandemic-affected exhibition industry community across Latin America. Led by Ana Maria Arango, UFI Regional Director for Latin America, the digital event offered participants a blend of keynote sessions and expert content, as well as networking, matchmaking and business development opportunities. Speakers from across the region and beyond provided updates and insights into topics as diverse as government policy updates, best practices on adapting events to the current context, and opportunities and trends. Meanwhile, industry experts covered global opportunities from a Latin American perspective.

Open to all industry professionals, the conference was attended by 200 exhibition industry leaders from 35 countries. Colombian-based Incontacto provided the platform which offered simultaneous translations in Spanish, English and Portuguese and allowed delegates to network face-to-face and continue discussions in between keynotes. More interactivity and engagement were provided by Beekast.

The event was hosted at Corferias, Bogota, where Arango was joined in person by UFI's LatAm Chapter Chair José (Pepe) Navarro Meneses (Tarsus, Mexico) and Vice-Chair Raul Strauss (FEXPOCRUZ, Bolivia). The Chapter leadership took the opportunity of the visit to meet with colleagues from AFIDA and UFI members in Colombia to discuss the ongoing crisis and how UFI can support the region in the coming months.

Several speakers focused on the new reality organisers must adapt to in the digital event space. Francisco Sotomayor, Managing Director of GL events Chile, shared experiences from the digital edition of one of his major shows – EXPOMIN – and how they managed to deploy a subscription model to better serve clients. “We are still trying to find ways to monetise our events, and the subscription model is an option to generate revenue whilst adapting to our clients’ needs,” he says.

Andrés López Valderrama, Executive President at Corferias, talked about the new competencies companies must embrace to respond to crisis and change at this time of uncertainty. For him, the top priorities are talent management, mental health, and customer focus and retention, as well as opportunities to help organisations respond to any future threat or change in the ecosystem.

Rolf Pickert, CEO of Messe Muenchen do Brasil, focused on lessons learned from organising several types of digital engagements with clients. “Hybrid solutions are a part of life; they are nothing to be scared of,” he says.

The conference provided updates on the reopening of the region, with some countries already up and running, and others struggling to secure a “go date”. Exhibitions are the fastest of fast tracks to economic recovery, and government recognition and support are essential. Fatima Facuri, Brazilian Associations of Event Companies, ABEOC, confirms: “Exhibitions and business events have a huge role to play in our economic recovery (after COVID).”

UFI's Arango says: “Of course, we would have preferred to meet in person, but this year's conference offered positive outcomes in terms of lessons learned and a view to what's coming next. On behalf of the UFI team, I want to thank the speakers and panellists for delivering such compelling and valuable content. UFI members can catch up on all the sessions in the member section of the website, once the event platform closes.”

Attachments:

[- UFI LatAm Conference visual](#)

[- Photos of the LatAm Conference](#)

About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the global trade 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 more than 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 800 member organisations in 83 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Around 1,000 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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