

UFI Asia-Pacific Conference held “face-to-face” again in Kuala Lumpur

- Close to 220 exhibition industry leaders from Asia and beyond gathered in Malaysia to discuss new opportunities and challenges for the APAC region
- UFI and MyCEB announce UFI education courses for industry professionals
- UFI and AFECA sign Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration

Paris/Kuala Lumpur, 7 March 2023: Approximately 220 delegates from more than 20 countries and regions attended the UFI Asia-Pacific Conference in Malaysia. The annual event was held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center (KLCC) and hosted by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB). It took place from 2-3 March and was followed by a post-conference city tour through the enchanting and historical city of Kuala Lumpur.

With many new opportunities and challenges facing the APAC region, exhibition industry leaders reunited to map out the years to come, four years after the event had last been held in Tokyo, Japan.

Malaysia’s Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), **YB Dato Sri Tiong King Sing**, opened the conference. He stated that UFI’s presence in Malaysia held significant meaning to the overall tourism industry of the country. He noted that as international travel was returning, “MOTAC is proactively supporting business events activities that will attract high-yield delegates to Malaysia and also promote our country as an international business events destination. I am excited to welcome the delegates of UFI to experience our country and recognise the great work between MyCEB and UFI.”

YBhg. Dato’ Sri Dr. Abdul Khani, CEO of MyCEB commented: “As an important driver of global economic growth, the business events industry is rising at a rapid pace again. We are fortunate to have won the confidence of UFI and this conference represents their trust in us to add value to UFI’s global following.”

Kai Hattendorf, UFI’s Managing Director/CEO, said: “Finally, we could re-united the exhibition industry community from the whole Asia-Pacific region again and face to face. The optimism and energy everyone felt during the two days of the conference show that our industry is not only recovering, but it will go beyond where we have been before the pandemic disruption.”

Over the two days of the conference, the programme delivered a broad range of topics and updates. Mark Temple-Smith, COO of Informa Markets, gave a global perspective on the re-opening of Asia after the pandemic and on the outlook. A panel of organisers and venues from China and Hong Kong shared their views on the situation there two months after the official end of the national zero COVID policies. Devangshu Dutta, founder of Third Eyesight, presented a detailed take on the rise of India and the opportunities for the exhibition industry there. On the second day, there were sessions data insights and marketing, industry advocacy and show development.

All sessions will be made available to UFI members and conference participants in the coming days as on-demand videos.

Participants also enjoyed a night out at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre (MITEC), a run through the KLCC park with the UFI Running Club and a city tour after the end of the official programming.

Education programme announced as conference legacy

One of the legacies of the conference will be specific education that UFI will organise and run to upskill event industry professionals from Malaysia and neighbouring countries. UFI and MyCEB agreed that UFI will produce the “UFI Certified Professional” programme in Kuala Lumpur in a few months. Dato’ Sri Dr. Abdul Khani said: “Moving forward, we truly hope the overall partnership with UFI will address the exhibition industry in Malaysia in tackling the challenges faced through the global sharing of key learning strategies to advance the industry.”

UFI and AFECA to collaborate

During the conference, UFI and the Asian Federation of Exhibition and Convention Associations (AFECA) signed a memorandum of understanding on future collaboration across topics including research and education. AFECA President Vincent Lim and UFI President Michael Duck announced the news to participants on the second day of the conference.

The UFI Asia-Pacific Conference 2024 will take place in Macau, hosted by the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM).

As the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, UFI organises annual regional conferences in Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East/Africa and Latin America, as well as the UFI Global Congress.

Full details of the UFI Asia-Pacific Conference 2023 can be found on the event website: <https://www.ufiasia.org/>

***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 820 member organisations in 85+ countries around the world are presently signed up as members. 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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