



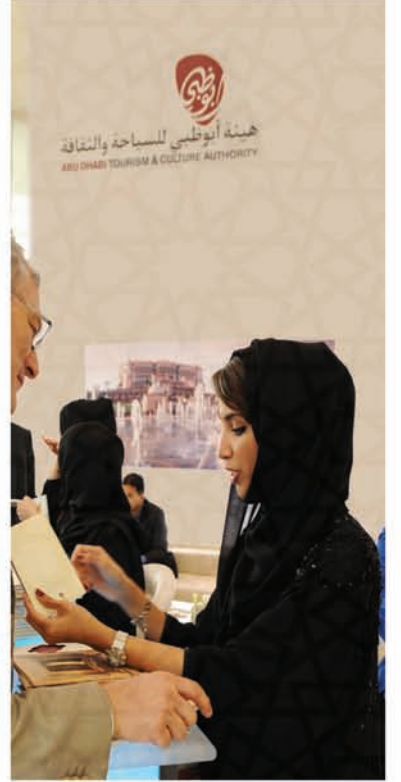
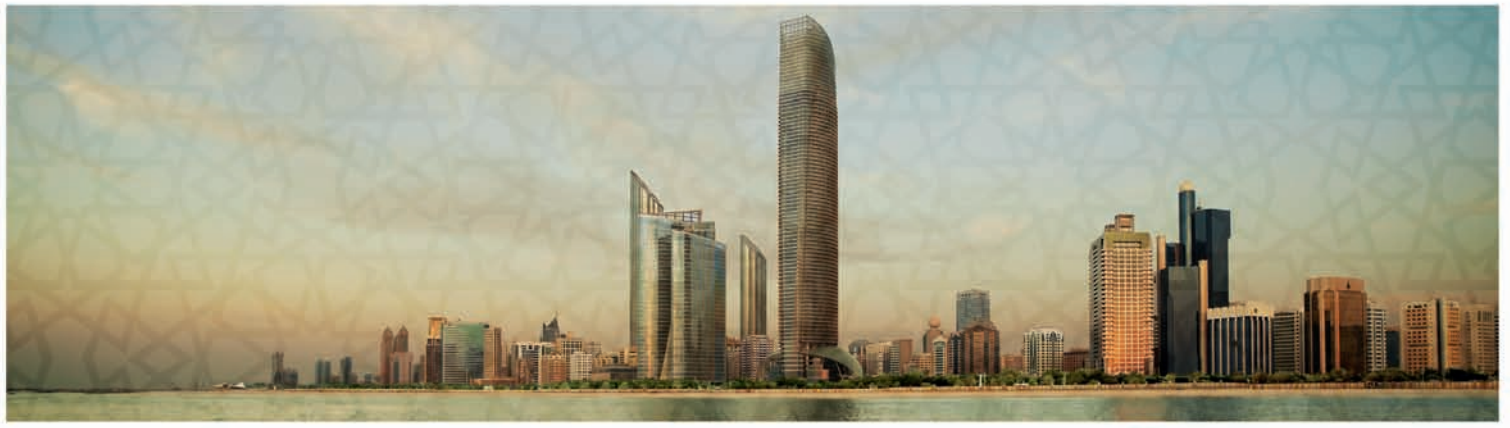
New European Economy

TOP

10

MOST INFLUENTIAL
COMPANIES & BUSINESS
DESTINATIONS

2014



There's more to meetings and incentives in Abu Dhabi!

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✍ Fergal Hogan

New European Economy's Top Ten Most Influential Companies & Business Destinations List celebrates those who have reached the pinnacle of achievement in terms of excellence and market influence. The list reflects the nominations, suggestions and contributions of the New European Economy readership (submissions made via email surveys) and analyses new trends to unearth the best and the brightest pioneers in business today. The featured companies represent the zenith of achievement across a wide variety of fields of expertise.

Some of the names on the list will be very familiar, and some possibly won't. Pride of place at the top of the list goes to Volkswagen. The company needs no introduction – it is part of our everyday lives. Constantly innovating in anticipation of social conditions and trends, the Volkswagen Group is listed as the most sustainable automaker in the world's

leading sustainability ranking, the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices. Volkswagen is outperforming competitors in Europe, has enviable positions in growth markets such as China and Brazil and has good momentum in the US.

Of course, companies such as Volkswagen don't start out as multinational giants. At some point, successful companies outgrow their national markets and start looking to further horizons. Several of the companies featured on our list facilitate the process of foreign trade, making it easier for ambitious exporters to gain the local expertise that can set them on their way to international growth.

Take Atradius, for example, which provides credit insurance covers against the risks of non-payment that can arise during that credit period between parting with goods or services and the due date of payment. Atradius allows exporters to concentrate on future sales without the worry of past debt and offer customers competitive credit terms. Then there's Germany Trade & Invest, which

informs clients about investment opportunities in Germany and general investment conditions in the country.

"Of course, companies such as Volkswagen don't start out as multinational giants. At some point, successful companies outgrow their national markets and start looking to further horizons."

For several years, now, investors have been becoming increasingly positive about the Middle East. The region has a large population that is also one of the youngest and wealthiest in the world. The possession of vast natural resources and increasing oil prices have created substantial budget surpluses among oil exporters, which have helped governments

to increase their spending on infrastructure projects and efficiently drive their diversification efforts.

Abu Dhabi and Dubai in particular are making a big push to turn their cities into centres of business. Their respective convention bureaus, featured on this list, aim to drive and support the development and promotion of business events tourism throughout their emirates. They champion the emirates as dynamic global business events leaders and prove a truly excellent service in assisting with planners needs and acting as a one-stop-shop offering free advice, help with planning and local knowledge.

Finally, Novartis and AbbVie are addressing some of the world's most serious healthcare challenges. They are market leaders in preventing and treating diseases, thereby easing suffering and enhancing the quality of life. They are committed to advancing science and building a sustainable future by providing solutions for the diseases that come with ageing, thereby relieve the burden on health systems.

Volkswagen

01



Volkswagen is the second largest automaker in the world, has three cars in the top 10 list of best-selling cars of all time, and ranks first of any automaker in terms of spending on research and development. Not a bad list of achievements for a company founded in 1937 with the goal of creating an affordable "peoples' car". Its mission has not changed much: It still aims to meet its customers' demands for individual and affordable mobility, but now through sustainable technologies. Volkswagen wants to be part of the solution and not the problem in a world where resources are becoming scarcer, emissions regulations are tightening, and booming cities require new and intelligent traffic and mobility concepts.

Dubai Convention Bureau

02



The Dubai Convention Bureau aims to establish the Emirate as a leading business tourism destination. It does this by helping clients plan, organise and manage every aspect of their MICE event. The bureau is a division of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, which recognises that congress development is vital to overall tourism success. It provides free and impartial advice and communicates the important message that Dubai remains a dynamic destination where it is easy to conduct business. The bureau is making excellent progress, helping to ensure that the International Convention and Congress Association now ranks Dubai as first in the Middle East and as one of the major international meeting destinations globally.

Elite Capital & Co. Limited

03



Elite Capital & Co. Limited is a private limited company that provides project related services including management, consultancy and funding, particularly for large infrastructure projects. ECC offers a wealth of experience in banking & financial transactions and has a range of specialized advisory services for private, SME or corporate clients. When required it can also customize and structure products and services to meet the specific needs of clients. It will continue to customize, structure, create and implement funding products and services as the need requires. ECC has made strategic alliances with several organizations and companies which have given it access to international markets in Asia, Africa and Middle East.

The Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau

04



Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau drives and supports the development and promotion of business events tourism throughout the emirate efficiently, effectively, and transparently, and in partnership with all its stakeholders. Its main mission is to champion the emirate as a dynamic global business events leader. The Bureau can assist with any planners' needs and acts as a one-stop shop, offering free advice, help with planning and local knowledge. The Bureau has created a range of incentives – under Advantage Abu Dhabi branding – to encourage organisers and planners to stage events in the emirate. The incentives are tailored to major conferences and corporate meetings business.

Royal Dutch Shell

05



Royal Dutch Shell is the second-largest company in the world in terms of revenue and one of the six oil and gas so-called super-majors. With operations in over 90 countries, Shell is active in every area of the oil and gas industry, including exploration and production, refining, distribution and marketing, petrochemicals, power generation and trading. With global energy demand rising, Shell is aiming to find ways to deliver more, cleaner energy and helping find ways to use it more efficiently. It believes that the most practical, commercially viable way to reduce carbon dioxide emissions over the next 20 years will be via lower-carbon biofuels.

Novartis

06



Novartis discovers, develops and markets innovative products to prevent and cure diseases, ease suffering and enhance the quality of life. Created in 1996 through the merger of Ciba-Geigy and Sandoz, Novartis is a global leader in pharmaceuticals generics, vaccines and consumer health products. Novartis collaborates with others to help address some of the world's greatest health challenges, largely through philanthropic and not-for-profit programs. It concentrates its efforts on controlling and eliminating diseases such as malaria and leprosy, pioneering new business approaches to reach underserved patients, and finding new solutions to improve health for people around the world.

AbbVie

07
abbvie

AbbVie is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on addressing some of the world's greatest health challenges. The company began life in 2013 after Abbott Laboratories separated into two publicly traded companies, one focused on diversified medical products and the other on research-based pharmaceuticals. AbbVie has 25,000 employees, a business and investment model designed to address unmet patient needs, and proven commercial capabilities, infrastructure, and expertise. AbbVie was listed on the 2014 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index for its leadership in responsible economic, environmental and social performance.

Atradius

08



Atradius, founded more than 80 years ago in the Netherlands, provides trade credit insurance, surety and collections services worldwide. With a presence in 50 countries, the company has access to credit information on 100 million companies, enabling it to make around 20,000 credit limit decisions daily. Its mission is to strengthen our customers' credit management and support their growth by providing them with accurate assessments of the payment default risk of their buyers, effective collections of overdue invoices and reliable surety protection against a range of contractual defaults. Atradius has a 31% share of the world credit insurance market, expanding its product portfolio with innovative credit management solutions and product enhancements.

Germany Trade and Invest

09
GERMANY
TRADE & INVEST

Germany Trade & Invest is the economic development agency of the Federal Republic of Germany. The organization promotes Germany as a business and technology location and supports companies based in Germany with global market information. It provides up-to-the-minute foreign trade information to local businesses seeking to expand in international markets via a team of industry analysts spread across the globe that compiles constantly updated country reports. It also secures and creates jobs in Germany, placing a special focus on the economic development promotion of the new federal states (eastern Germany) and Berlin. Germany Trade & Invest has offered the highest levels of German foreign trade expertise under one roof since 2009.

The Hotel Cascais Miragem Health & Spa

10



The Hotel Cascais Miragem Health & Spa is a five star conference resort, located on the Lisbon Coast, in front of the Atlantic Ocean, the beach of Cascais, walking distance from shops and museums. The hotel is located 15 minutes from Sintra and 25 minutes from the international airport and Lisbon. The 192 guestrooms include 15 Suites with breathtaking views of the Ocean and Bay of Cascais. The hotel's conference centre has a total capacity of 1800 people, divided between 18 meeting rooms, the largest one for 650 people in theatre style. The hotel also features a spa & health centre by Holmes Place with over 3000 m², poolside terrace, restaurants and bars, gallery of shops.

Dubai: A remarkable city for business events

Dubai has established a strong international reputation as a vibrant and diverse destination with a quality hospitality offering, first-class infrastructure and a range of headline grabbing attractions. While the city is well known for luxury, it also offers great value for those travelling on a budget.

The emirate's infrastructure is such that doing business in, and from the city is easy. Transport is expedited by Dubai International Airport (DXB), one of the busiest in the world in terms of international traffic that is served by over 145 airlines flying to 260 destinations across six continents. In addition, Dubai's second international airport, Al Maktoum International at Dubai World Central (DWC), opened in October 2013 and is set to increase the emirate's global accessibility even further.

Within the city itself, transport options abound. These include the Gulf region's first-ever metro system, as well as well-priced taxis, water taxis, buses, chauffeured cars and the soon to be launched tram network.

In terms of accommodation, there are currently over 89,000 hotel rooms in stock ranging from seven-star luxury to pocket-friendly mid-ranged options. Estimates show that 15,000-25,000 hotel rooms will be added to the market by 2016, increasing the options available to international visitors.

For business events, Dubai's many hotels also offer a plethora of flexible facilities – whether that's simply a meeting room for 10

people or a convention for tens of thousands. And of course, this is all supported with the expansive facilities offered at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) – the host for over 50 per cent of all exhibitions in the Middle East region.

Backed up by a professional service and a 'can do' attitude, business event organisers appreciate the opportunities on offer in the city, which goes some way to explaining why Dubai has been named among the top three most vibrant cities in the world in the latest City Momentum Index released by the realtor, Jones Lang LaSalle in January 2014.

Dubai is one of the world's safest and fastest growing tourist destinations. For incentive delegates it offers an array of truly memorable experiences, with itineraries that can capture the essence of Arabia with desert safaris, dune bashing, falconry and camel riding; while adrenaline junkies can go sky-diving over

Palm Jumeirah, dive with sharks at the Dubai Aquarium or go skiing at the world's largest indoor snow park. VIP groups, on the other hand, can take a seaplane or helicopter ride over the city and indulge in afternoon tea at the Burj Al Arab.

The possibilities in Dubai are endless – where else can you wrap up your meetings and spend time at the beach, snow skiing or testing your limits in a 4x4 while dune bashing in the desert? 🌟

For more information and enquiries, please contact Dubai Business Events - the official Convention Bureau and a division of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing.
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www.dubaibusinessevents.ae





Interview with Steen Jakobsen from Dubai Convention Bureau

Dubai has a reputation as the destination of choice for those seeking luxury and glamour, but what makes it a good place for a meeting of business delegates?

While Dubai certainly offers luxury and glamour that can impress the most well-heeled travellers, the city has a wide range of hospitality and venue options that provide tremendous value for business delegates.

The city, under Tourism Vision 2020, aims to attract 20 million visitors by 2020, up from the 10 million who visited in 2012. To do so, significant steps have been taken to ensure that hotels are available across all price points and that there is a steady increase in the number of business and leisure events taking place here.

In terms of infrastructure, Dubai has excellent air connectivity with two international airports connecting hundreds of destinations across six continents. Hotels abound and meeting venues range from the cavernous halls that make up the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) to the numerous ballrooms and meeting rooms that are present at almost every hotel in the city.

In addition, the local transport options include the metro, taxis, buses and chauffeured cars, as well as the soon to be launched tram network, making it extremely easy to get around.

To cater to all kinds of visitors, Dubai is increasing its already world-class destination offering across attractions, infrastructure and services to enhance the overall visitor experience.

The emirate is also working to leverage Dubai's position as the business hub of the region and further highlight Dubai's credentials as a global business destination. To do so, it is increasing coordination across stakeholders, improving the current business tourism offer by growing existing events into mega shows, creating new shows in identified sector gaps and making Dubai a dynamic hub for major conventions.

Furthermore, Dubai is increasing business tourists' use of leisure touch points and is encouraging visitors to extend the length of their stays and return for leisure trips. The emirate's philosophy in this regard is that today's business visitor is tomorrow's leisure tourist.

Finally, the city is aiming to maintain and increase amount of independent business travellers by adding value to their visits, and making sure that Dubai is the easiest place to do business.

Dubai has won the right to host World Expo 2020, the world's largest and most

prestigious exhibition. What other events are in the pipeline?

Dubai won the bid to host World Expo 2020 on November 27, 2013, and will build a new site to host the event at the Dubai Trade Centre in Jebel Ali, a 438-hectare site which will include a dedicated 150-hectare gated area.

Visitors to Dubai, therefore, will benefit from the enhancement of infrastructure which hosting Expo will result in, both before and after the six-month long event takes place.

In the run-up to 2020, Dubai will host a number of major international conferences. While nowhere close to the scale of EXPO 2020, the emirate will be welcoming delegates for the 19th Conference of International Association of Prosecutors in November 2014, the 34th International Congress of the International Society of Blood Transfusion in 2016 and the Congress of the Society for Brain Mapping & Therapeutics Program (SBMT) in 2017, amongst dozens of other major events.

Meetings and conventions are often about more than just business. What incentives does Dubai offer in order to create a truly memorable experience?

Of course, Dubai is far more than just all about business. It's one of the world's safest and fastest growing tourist destinations. For



01. Steen Jakobsen.

01.

incentive delegates it offers an array of truly memorable experiences, with itineraries that can capture the essence of Arabia with desert safaris, dune bashing, falconry and camel riding; while adrenaline junkies can go sky-diving over Palm Jumeirah, dive with sharks at the Dubai Aquarium or go skiing at the world's largest indoor snow park. VIP groups, on the other hand, can take a seaplane or helicopter ride over the city and indulge in afternoon tea at the Burj Al Arab.

Alternatively, activities can include a visit to the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world, or a trip to the Dubai Mall to witness the world's largest choreographed fountain system in action at the 30-acre manmade Burj Khalifa Lake every evening.

The possibilities in Dubai are endless – where else can you wrap up your meetings and spend time at the beach, snow ski or test your limits in a 4x4 while dune bashing in the desert?

As part of the Tourism Vision 2020 initiative, Dubai aims to significantly increase

its visitor numbers and tourism revenue, what role does Dubai Business Events have in achieving this goal?

Dubai Business Event's (DBE) main goal is to position the Emirate as a premier business events destination and grow international visitor numbers at key business events. As a result, increasing visitor numbers and tourism revenues under Tourism Vision 2020 is a natural extension of the bureau's remit.

Between 2005 and 2012, visitor numbers to Dubai doubled from 5 to 10 million and by 2020 we will double the amount of visitors again, so that we are welcoming 20 million visitors per year.

We will also treble the economic contribution of tourism, from approximately 75 billion dirhams in 2012 to 215-230 billion dirhams in 2020.

In order to achieve this, Dubai is following a clear and implementable strategy to increase visitor numbers, doubling the amount of leisure tourists to 17 million and growing business visitors by between 50-75% to more than 3.5 million.

To meet and exceed the targets for business visitors by 2020, DBE's overall strategy focuses on three things. First, to grow Dubai's market share in international business events, those events that find new destinations each time, and to grow our market share of those. Second, to grow the number of events taking place in Dubai on a yearly or at least on a regular basis; those that are home-grown in Dubai and will only take place in Dubai. Third, to grow the number of visitors taking part in all business events in Dubai.

DBE also encourages business visitors to stay for longer periods by communicating and continually enhancing the breath of the destination offering, and to encourage them to spend more while they are in the city by ensuring they know all of the options open to them while they are here.

Thirty years ago, Dubai was mostly desert. How do you see the city developing over the next 30 years?

Dubai has shown the world that it has the will and the ability to achieve the impossible. As one of the world's most exciting destinations, I think the city will continue to inspire the world with headline grabbing attractions that defy conventional thinking.

Dubai is carving out a rock solid reputation for itself as a city that pioneers remarkable experiences that make the world want to visit and revisit. Its ambition is to become the world's most visited city, as well as the world's leading family, leisure, events, and business destination. I have no doubt that the emirate will achieve these goals in the coming years.

Dubai will continue to redefine traveller expectations with innovative products and by ensuring the highest standard of service at every stage of a visit. The city will also move from being the regional events and business hub to a world leading events entertainment, and business destination. I have no doubt about that. 🌟



Interview with Dr. Faisal Khazaal, LLD, PHD, KGCC of Elite Capital & Co.

Elite Capital & Co. is listed in 3rd place in the 2014 "10 Most Influential Companies in the World."

Can you explain the nature of Elite Capital & Co's enterprise and who are the main people behind the business?

Elite Capital & Co's services are suitable for all types of infrastructure projects in either Greenfield (pre operations stage) or Brownfield (operations stage) including but not limited to sea ports, airports, railway, bridges, roads and highways, water and sanitation utilities, energy, communications, hospitals, schools and social infrastructure etc. This includes other projects or activities that impact positively on the relevant country's basic infrastructure including the manufacturing of components used in infrastructure (such as cement and steel) and infrastructure associated with mining and agribusiness.

The main people behind the business are three:

1. Dr. Faisal Khazaal, Chairman & Funder; Defining the strategic direction of the company and identifying new business channels and opportunities.
2. Mr. Gurdip Matharu, President and CEO; Managing the day to day operations of the company, and performing the functions of Compliance Officer and Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO).
3. Mr. Simon Thomas, Vice President for Finance and Board Member; On-Boarding

of clients, providing investment advice where applicable, and receiving/transmitting of orders.

However, The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Orthodox Church has appointed Elite Capital & Co. Limited ("ECC") to manage the portfolio of the Church (starting from Monday 6th of January 2014). The funds may be utilized for funding "Green Energy" projects and other similar ventures under the sole discretion of ECC. Note: This appointment was granted to Elite Capital & Co. Limited by the Church's "Primate of the Americas" and "General Fiscal Agent" in 17th of December 2013.

You recently changed your company name from Legal Escrow Services Limited to Elite Capital & Co. What inspired this change?

After the decision made by the Elite Capital & Co.'s Board Members to expanding the services we offer in EEA and UK the company's name has been found not suitable for the new image of the company and so was changed to the current name.

Can you describe some of the projects that you have recently been engaged in?

Sample Project 1 - Ranch and Game Park in Zambia (Africa): Elite Capital is working with the owner of a Ranch and Game Park in Zambia to provide funding for the following:

- Establishing Moringa plantations and processing plant. (Moringa peregrine is a tree whose pods contain nut-like seeds that are beneficial to the body when used for everything from cooking to cosmetics, and there is high demand for supply of this product)
- Improve and upgrade the infrastructure of the property to facilitate selling of 40 individual villas in the Game Reserve.
- Establish infrastructure for game breeding program and wildlife conservation.

The property is located within the prime tourism area of the Luangwa Valley in the Lower Zambezi River, an area boasting a beautiful and varied ecosystem. This is the setting for an incredible wildlife conservation, exclusive property co-ownership and agriculture venture which incorporates the miraculous and profitable Moringa plant.

The property is fully unencumbered, and the owners of the property are issuing Promissory Notes in favour of Elite Capital, endorsed by a major South African Bank. Elite



01. Dr. Faisal Khazaal, LLD, PHD, KGCC
Founder & Chairman
Deals Secure Group Holding Co., GP

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Capital is to provide project financing up to US\$60 Million against the Promissory Notes.

Elite is also negotiating Lloyds of London insurance against the project and the financing.

Sample Project 2 – Retirement Community Project (USA): The Community property development project caters for health care, frail care, and older age care facilities. It is well placed in terms of locality and service offerings.

The current “as is” appraisal is US\$9.7million, with work already underway. The completed project is valued at US\$48million. The client is requesting US\$48million in loan

facilities against Promissory Notes issued by the Applicant and endorsed through a major US bank.

The client has requested a two year holiday wherein they service only the interest. The opportunity to build a brand and to rollout similar facilities may be very well received in the market and will indeed fill large gaps in the health and hospitality care spaces in the USA.

Is it a good time to be involved in facilitating infrastructure products in the UK and Europe? How do you see this market developing in coming years?

Infrastructure projects require specialist

knowledge in terms of design, planning, financing and implementation. Elite Capital’s staff have this specialist knowledge, so are well placed to engage with infrastructure projects and the respective clients.

There are many infrastructure projects being implemented in the UK, Europe and beyond. The more established countries typically have their own resources and finances for implementing such projects, but the developing countries are in need of knowledge and finance. Therefore, it’s a good time for Elite to be involved with infrastructure projects, both now and for the foreseeable future.


5. What distinguishes your service offering from those of your competitors?

Typically only the largest consulting firms (such as Ernst and Young, PwC, etc) have the specialist required for infrastructure projects. Elite Capital & Co. has the advantage of being more flexible in bringing solutions to these projects, as we have a flat management structure and can therefore be more efficient in providing solutions.

Most importantly, Elite Capital & Co. has access to finance for such projects, which in today’s financial climate is the company’s “Ace card”. ♠

Abu Dhabi Sets a MICE Trap

As Abu Dhabi celebrates being named 'Middle East's Leading Meetings & Conference Destination' in the 2014 World Travel Awards comes news of another major convention win and of a push upmarket by one of its key destinations to stand out on the global MICE scene

 Fergal Hogan

AIC's On Its Way

Over 500 of Asia Pacific's leading travel industry professionals will be in Abu Dhabi this October for the biennial Abacus International Conference (AIC) to be held at the state-of-the-art Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit on Yas Island. Delegates will fly into Abu Dhabi to evaluate and debate the latest technological innovations around travel in the context of the trends now driving booking behaviour across the 31 regional markets.

Abacus said its choice of Abu Dhabi as its 'Exclusive Destination Partner' reflects the UAE capital's emerging role as a gateway for business and leisure travel from Asia Pacific and the company's own desire to highlight how strategic investment in network infrastructure stimulates demand.

"The Middle East's aviation brands are now themselves trending in Asia Pacific, with the region's award-winning hubs attracting over ten-fold increases in bookings on the most popular routes, year-on-year. Abu Dhabi is the right setting to talk about ground breaking growth and enterprise," said Robert Bailey, President and CEO for Abacus.

Set Sail for Yas Island

The leisure and entertainment district of Yas Island – which boasts no less than 600 meeting rooms and is already on the receiving end of a 30% increase in across-island events and

conferences – is going all out to capture a bigger slice of the international MICE market.

With its catchline – Meet. Stay. Play – the island's destination management team has released a completely refreshed Event Planners Guide for the entire island, in Arabic and English with French, German, Mandarin, Portuguese and Russian versions due out soon. The team is hoping to win business with its Yas Island Events proposition, which can cater to events from 20 delegates to 2,000.

"This is the destination for planners wanting something different for their next event and who want seamless, professional delivery and a memorable experience," said Clive Dwyer, Director Destination Management at Miral Asset Management, which is responsible for Yas Island's promotion.

"We have an incredible location – just 10 minutes from Abu Dhabi International Airport, 25 minutes from downtown Abu Dhabi and 45 minutes from Dubai," explained Dwyer. "Planners have seven hotels to choose from, from affordable to luxury – which translates into 2,000 rooms and 116 hotel meeting rooms and event spaces that can be utilised in an integrated programme or book separately. Additionally there are 55 restaurants and nightlife on the doorstep."

Adding to the island's appeal is a highly experienced collection of AV, food & beverage and event managers ready to help and theme

events and its headline Yas Marina Circuit, which hosts the annual F1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the UAE's best theme parks in the shape of Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld, the Yas Links championship-ready golf course and du Forum, which is home to major events and concerts.

Team Building Saadiyat Style

The five-star, beachfront Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi Hotel and Villas on Saadiyat Island has moved into the team building business with its own in-house activity programme. "Our location just a short drive from the city centre, fronting an environmentally protected beach and with landscaped gardens provides the perfect scenario for memorable team outings," says General Manager Stuart Deeson.

The hotel's team building squad has come up with programmes to motivate, enhance team dynamics and reinforce relationships in an out of office environment of the purest, cleanest air in Abu Dhabi, while participating in exhilarating team building activities.

"Our team can develop personalised corporate team-building programmes to suit each company's objectives and needs. Suitable beachfront areas are within a minute's walk of the hotel and can play host to an array of imaginative activities for a team event, a conference, an away day, a fun day or a team meeting," adds Deeson.

The hotel's team building activities include beach volleyball, a survivor challenge, raft races, scavenger hunts, cocktail classes, a pearl tour, and a fish market visit with the hotel's team of chefs. "The suggested activities and many more can be arranged directly at Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi. There is no need for a third party anymore," says Deeson.

"This is the destination for planners wanting something different for their next event and who want seamless, professional delivery and a memorable experience,"

will now have a 1-1 ratio of hosted buyers and exhibitors.

Having consulted the industry both regionally and internationally, the event has been transformed into a concept that is both simple and efficient yet dynamic, designed to meet the demands of an ever-changing market. Foremost in this transformation is that IBTM Arabia will be an all-inclusive solution where an innovative meeting pod design customised with the exhibitor's corporate branding will give privacy to meetings between hosted buyers and exhibitors. Exhibitors will pay one price and their meeting pod will be ready on arrival for them to get straight to the business of meetings. Everything is included in the price – there are no additional stand, freight or build costs. ✪

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Le Royal Meridien
Bags Awards

The recently refurbished, five-star Le Royal Meridien Abu Dhabi has secured a brace of awards at the 10th Middle East and North Africa Travel Awards.

Now in its trophy cabinet are: 'Best 5 Star Business Hotel' Platinum Award and Gold in the 'Best Conference and Convention Hotel' category. Following refurbishment, the hotel now boasts improved dining destinations, public areas and rooms.

New Dynamic Format for IBTM Arabia

IBTM Arabia is the new name spearheading a transformation of the former annual GIBTM show. The event will also have a new location – the 5-star St Regis Hotel Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi, with a new date, from 10-12th February 2015. Key IBTM Arabia highlights will include a closed door and exclusive new event format with a mutual matching system of business appointments, more touch points for exhibitors and buyers than any other event in the region, and an all-inclusive pricing structure. The new event



An interview with Mubarak Al Shamsi

Director of the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau.

The Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau aims to drive and support the development and promotion of business events tourism throughout the emirate efficiently, effectively, transparently, and in partnership with all its stakeholders. Its main mission is to champion the emirate as a dynamic global business events leader. The bureau can assist with planners needs and acts as a one-stop shop offering free advice, help with planning and local knowledge.

Abu Dhabi has a reputation as the destination of choice for those seeking luxury and glamour, but what makes it a good place for a meeting of business delegates?

Well, there are a number of factors. Abu Dhabi city is the capital of the United Arab Emirates and an international oil & gas hub, so it understands business and business people and is well versed in catering to their needs. We have superb hotels and venues, as you would expect, and all are equipped to the highest possible standards.

Perhaps what gives us an edge, though, is our geographic diversity. Abu Dhabi city is an island, so you're never far away from the sea. You can meet during the day, take sunset cruises at night, get up early for guided tours

of our mangrove national parks, swim, dive, paddle board – you name it, we have it in terms of water sports because Abu Dhabi is at one with the sea.

If you're talking about the wider emirate, we have venues – historic and modern – in historic oasis towns, in the desert among the highest dunes in the world, and on a nature-based island.

An imaginative meetings product has grown out of this rich diversity. You can meet in forts, in an Arabian Village, amidst a dune-filled landscape or on an island you'll share with 10,000 free-roaming animals. I think it is this rich diversity which sets us apart.

And some of this product makes for a truly focussed meeting – Arabian Nights Village for instance has no TVs, just an emergency internet line and little mobile connectivity – if you can't focus there, you can't anywhere.

Our team building product has also taken on a new lease of life with sailing expeditions where your teams become the crew, sand skiing competitions or even water ball tournaments in the mangroves.

Dubai has won the right to host World Expo 2020. How does Abu Dhabi go about competing with its neighbours, and are there

any major events in the pipeline?

Rather than compete, we complement. We have a very reasonable average room rate of US \$155 and represent fantastic value for money when you consider our costs against the very high standard of facilities and service offered. We have won a number of major conventions over recent years – our most recent win being the 3rd and 5th Middle East and Africa Osteoporosis Meetings of the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF).

The meetings are the result of a two-year deal between IOF, ourselves as the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau and Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Centre (ADNEC).

The events will be held in December 2015 and December 2019 and will bring around 1,500 scientists, physicians, patient, medical societies and corporate partners from across the UAE, the wider Middle East and Africa to Abu Dhabi city. The meetings are aimed at advancing understanding of osteoporosis and promoting worldwide awareness, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

IOF said it chose Abu Dhabi for these meetings – which are the largest and most influential bone events in the region – because of its ability to galvanise all destination stakeholders in delivering the support necessary for



01. Mubarak Al Shamsi.

01.

the success of the conferences and for its overriding commitment to excellence in healthcare.

These conference wins add to a growing number of major congresses which have committed to Abu Dhabi over the coming years, many from within the healthcare or related fields.

Meetings and conventions are often about more than just business. What incentives does Abu Dhabi offer in order to create a truly memorable experience?

We have an Advantage Abu Dhabi incentive that offers a range of support mechanisms, and should the business be a major convention

we pull together a 'host city committee' that works with all stakeholders to ensure the event is delivered as smoothly as possible and that the delegates and attendees are offered incentives across our whole offering.

Abu Dhabi has significantly expanded its business travel market in recent years, what role has the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau played in achieving this?

Well, we cannot take all the credit because there has been a considerable amount of pro-activity from both the public and private sector. I think in many ways the Bureau has been an influencer and conduit for business wins. We

have brought together many associations and public sector organisations to work with us on major pitches. We offer incentives and we have an active Industry Development Committee dedicated to the sector that is chaired by us but has a range of associated stakeholders on board to help discuss and highlight issues that we then try to systematically address.

In recent decades, Abu Dhabi has been transformed from a quiet backwater of fishers and pearl divers into one of the most modern cities in the world. How do you see the city developing over the next few decades?

The government of Abu Dhabi has the Plan Abu Dhabi 2030: Urban Structure Framework Plan, a comprehensive plan for the development of the city of Abu Dhabi that will guide planning decisions for the next quarter of a century.

The government also announced the establishment of a new urban planning council to oversee the implementation of the plan and the further development of urban planning policy.

Plan Abu Dhabi 2030: Urban Structure Framework Plan was created to deliver upon the vision of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, for the continued fulfillment of the grand design envisaged by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and the ongoing evolution of Abu Dhabi as a global capital city.

Through ten individual policy statements, the plan specifies land uses, building heights and transportation plans for the entire metropolitan area of Abu Dhabi. Under the plan, the city is projected to grow to over three million people by 2030. The plan is available to all online and I would recommend anyone interested in our capital to view it. I think they'll be impressed and discover a city with a very well thought out future indeed! 🌟

Art in Motion

Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium

The 25,000-seat, 45,000sqm Hazza Bin Zayed stadium is split over three levels, and is hailed as one of the most modern and unique sporting venues in the Middle East. It is one of the most sophisticated sports venues in the region and is poised to become a central destination for citizens and residents in the United Arab Emirates, as well as tourists visiting from all over the world.

The Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium is an architectural marvel and one of the most impressive and technologically advanced sports venues in the UAE. It is also now home to the region's most successful team – Al Ain Football Club. It can accommodate 25,000 spectators and was completed in a record time of just 17 months, measuring up to the very best international standards.

The stadium covers an area of 45,000 square meters and is 50 meters high, making it one of the tallest buildings in Al Ain City. It hosts more than 3,000 premium seats, one of the highest ratios of premium seating in the world for football stadia. The inspired design of the outer façade is based on the trunk of the palm tree, an integral part of the UAE's heritage and legacy.

This is the first stadium in the world designed specifically to embrace and harness shade featuring a unique parasol roof to fully shade all fans, the roof of the stadium is an iconic part of the entire development. The result is a stadium that is open and passively cooled, providing an intimate and engaging atmosphere for the proud and patriotic Al Ain FC fans to get close to the action on the pitch.

The outer shell of Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium is made up of 600 independently mounted fabric panels with independently controlled LED lights, capable of covering the surface of the structure with pre-selected colored lights or designs, which can be seen from 360 degrees by all passing traffic and visitors – a beacon in the landscape.

The stadium offers the ideal and ultimate setting for your event. It is available on non-match days as an inspiring, multi-feature location for a broad range of functions. Delivering lively ambience and modern facilities (including audio visual) to provide the best possible environment for a successful occasion, our service providers offer advice, planning and organizational expertise to bring your ideas to life.

Ten private corporate boxes and three luxury lounges with a total capacity of up to 700 people, as well as a dedicated area for VIPs and senior visitors have been allocated across the second floor.

Mixed Use Development Project

The iconic Hazza bin Zayed Stadium represents the cornerstone of an exceptional environmentally friendly mixed-use development project with the total size exceeding 500,000 sqm. The development is being constructed in phases which includes residential, commercial and entertainment areas as well as a luxury hotel and sports facility. The buildings will be linked together by a network of pedestrian walkways and a chain of restaurants, cafés and retail outlets giving shape to the new downtown of Al Ain located in the Al Towayya neighborhood.

The state-of-the-art Stadium and development aims to create an integrated sport and entertainment destination for citizens and





residents in the United Arab Emirates, as well as a landmark for tourists visiting from all over the world and a new destination reflecting the principles of health and well-being and encourage a sportier lifestyle.

The residential area includes a community of more than 700 residential units ranging from 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms within quality low-rise comfortable buildings and surrounded by a number of attractive public green spaces that integrate colorfully within the district to provide a family friendly atmosphere and sense of well-being that will enable tenants to enjoy a unique and healthy lifestyle. The area also includes sports facilities including cycle and walking tracks, designed in contemporary and sustainable style.

The commercial area includes two office buildings of 20,000 sqm, allowing tenants to meet their business requirements with a high

level of amenities. The strategic location of the buildings will also give tenants the benefit of enjoying the chain of restaurants and retail outlets including convenient parking, shared concierge and security services.

The Contemporary Aloft Hotel is considered one of the most important components and the focal point of the project. The hotel, operated by Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide management, offers 172 distinct rooms and 2 presidential suites. With its strategic location near the stadium it, once completed in 2016, will offer the ideal destination for locals, business and leisure travelers seeking a fresh and modern hotel experience.

The retail area will consist of restaurants and retail stores with a total of 50 units throughout the development making it the focal point for all sports and social gatherings. The restaurant and café area is located near the hotel, linked together with a pedestrian design that provides access to as many as of the development's destinations as possible and provides a location for a variety of high-end restaurants and coffee shops.

The masterplan has been conceived as a Town Center with the full array of services, conveniences and diversions with 4 distinct, districts that will offer a range of different experiences in one destination.

Plaza: The vibrant and active central Plaza area will stand as the heart of the project for all sports and social gatherings.

Healthy Living Quarter: The Northeast of the site has been designed around principles of healthy living and eating including the Sports Center "Gold's Gym" occupying over 60,000 sqft.

Family Entertainment Zone: The Family Zone will look to embody the sport and leisure character of the development whilst also providing entertainment and food and beverage offerings.

Food and Beverage Hub: This district will be an intimate destination formed around a series of interconnected courtyards, with each courtyard representing its own character to provide variety and a sense of discovery for visitors. ➤



Get on point

YAS Events Centre at YAS Marina circuit is home to the most unique and diverse corporate incentives offering

When it comes to a totally comprehensive and unique setting for business events in the

Middle East, Yas Events Centre would feature at the top of any company's wishlist. True to its motto of "We Mean Business", Yas Events Centre, the business hub at Yas Marina Circuit, offers an unrivalled proposition for corporate hospitality, meetings and incentives. Situated on Yas Island, a business and leisure destination conveniently located between Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the circuit is perfectly placed to take advantage of the millions of business travellers that head to the Emirates each year.

Yas Events Centre, at Yas Marina Circuit, offers the most extensive and unique event facilities in the region, capable of offering trackside team-building days, large-scale conferences and VIP gala dinners, to name a few and provides a unique backdrop for any event. Located at the heart of the track on top of the pit building, the prestigious Paddock Club offers spectacular circuit views. Recently renovated due to increased demand for the 2014 formula 1 Etihad airways Abu Dhabi grand prix product, the Paddock Club expansion added 2,000 square metres and can now offer 12 suites in a range of configurations to a maximum of 480 guests per suite. The work

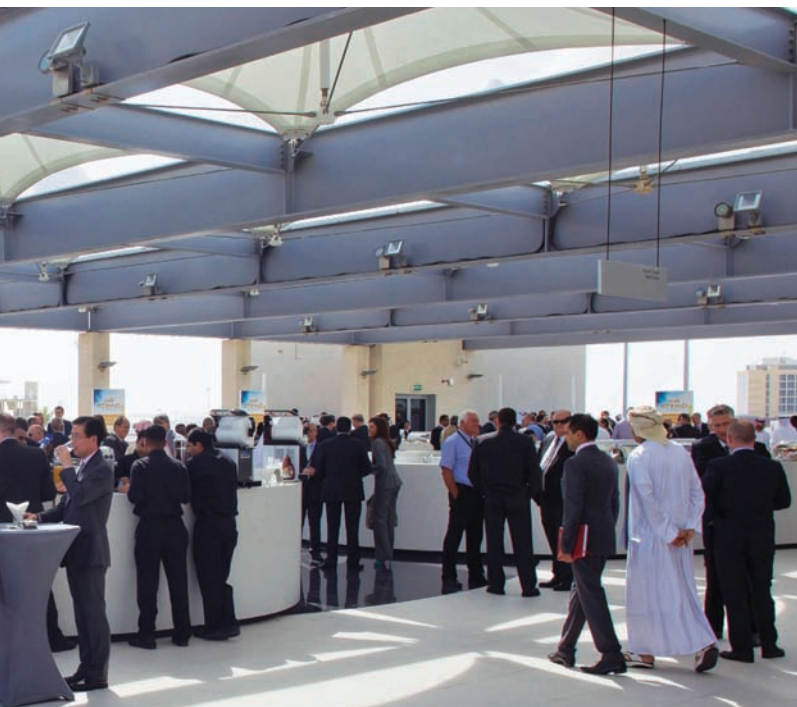
means that Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit now boasts a total of 34,000 square metres of multi-purpose, indoor venues.

Its extensive array of locations means that Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit can host any size event – from intimate board meetings, and 1,000-delegate conferences and exhibitions with superb in-house catering, AV capabilities and support services, all the way up to 20,000 guests for a gala dinner event. In April, Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit broke records in the UAE when it played host to 16,000 staff from a leading international company attending a getaway incentive. Few venues in the region can support such large-scale gatherings so effectively.

The bustling heart of Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit are the GP Halls. With 1,177 square metres of floorspace, which can be divided into separate zones, the Halls can support three events simultaneously and can host up to 1,000 guests. To take your event outdoors and enjoy Abu Dhabi's climate, the South Circuit provides an excellent setting for gala functions, all with unparalleled views of the F1® circuit and Yas Marina.

When it comes to evening and post-conference receptions and parties, The Luna Lounge with its views of the F1® track, Yas Marina and futuristic Yas Viceroy Hotel is perfect. Taking advantage of Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit motorsports >





"Its extensive array of locations means that Yas Events Centre at Yas Marina Circuit can host any size event – from intimate board meetings, and 1,000-delegate conferences and exhibitions with superb in-house catering, AV capabilities and support services, all the way up to 20,000 guests for a gala dinner event."



pedigree, the Main Pits area can provide high-octane glamour to any event, and Yas Central is ideal for smaller off-site C-level gatherings. The versatile Marina Suites are suitable for bespoke activities, such as car launches and can provide options for any requirement. More intimate, private retreats can be enjoyed at one of the Team Villas. Tastefully decorated in Italianate style, the three story, private venues offer both indoor and outdoor spaces. The Business Centre can support media operations and state-of-the-art AV facilities for up to 461 visitors.

As the UAE's home of motorsports, Yas Marina Circuit's MICE solutions would not be complete without on-track incentives. Companies can give their clients or team members a Corporate Driving experience on the track with a wide range of vehicle options, including the Aston Martin GT4 to FormulaYAS 3000 or Yas SuperSport SST. Packages can be tailored to requirements from Premium Full Day to Half Day packages to Club Yas team building exercises. 🌟



For more details on how Yas Marina Circuit can add value to your corporate MICE agenda, please visit www.yasmarinacircuit.com/en/yas-events-centre. Queries can be emailed to Sales@ymc.ae or you can discuss your bespoke event solution with our dedicated team of specialists on +971 (0) 2 659 9393.

WHEN IT COMES TO EVENTS

WE MEAN BUSINESS



High-end audio
visual equipment

Expansive
outdoor spaces

World-class
technical support

90 highly trained
professionals

Flexible venues
accommodating up
to 1000 guests

Be it turn-key solutions, state-of-the-art facilities, tailored services or our dedicated team of creative and technical consultants, Yas Events Center is where events come to shine. so whether its a product launch, corporate meeting, industry exhibition or a teambuilding retreat, were here to make it happen.

For event inquiries or bookings, call our Corporate Sales Team on +971 (0) 2 659 9333. www.yasmarinacircuit.com

WHERE INFRASTRUCTURE MEETS INNOVATION

The regional commercial hub and gateway between East and West, Dubai is a city built on innovation and infused with opportunities. The city's diverse knowledge base and community of trained professionals makes Dubai the ideal location for association conferences, corporate meetings and incentive events. Direct access from over 260 destinations worldwide, an array of venues, over 85,000 hotel rooms in all categories and numerous exciting activities in and around Dubai, make this city the most remarkable destination for successful business events.

