

WTM Africa 2017 impressive increase in numbers

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The WTM portfolio is set to smash last year's achievement of \$7bn worldwide industry deals after posting impressive visitor increases at its recent 2017 events - WTM Latin America, WTM Africa and Arabian Travel Market.



All three events, which took place this spring, have recorded increases in numbers of exhibitors, visitors and meetings, while early indications are that 2017 is set to be a record-breaking event for business for WTM portfolio's flagship exhibition, WTM London, in November.

Now in its fourth year, **WTM Africa 2017** – held in Cape Town from 19-21 April – recorded a 17% increase in travel professionals and media, and a 9% increase in registered travel agents, with 21 different African countries represented. The total number of countries represented grew to 38, up 5.2%. Overall, there were 650 exhibitors. Over the three days of the event, WTM Africa 2017 facilitated 8,900 appointments. Representatives from Zambia, Ethiopia and Namibia were among 140 first-time hosted buyers from key and emerging source markets.

This year's **Arabian Travel Market** recorded a 7% increase in international visitors and a 10% increase in visitors from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to the event, which took place in Dubai from 24-27 April. For the second year in succession, visitor numbers smashed through the 28,000 mark, with 466 main stand holders representing 87 countries and more than 100 new exhibitors making their debut. The number of countries represented at ATM 2017, taken from all attendees, totalled 157. Furthermore, exhibition stand contracts signed during ATM 2017 for next year are up 38% year-on-year, with exhibitors keen to reserve their space for what promises to be a record-breaking event in 2018 as ATM celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Latin America's premier travel event, **WTM Latin America**, which took place in Sao Paulo from 3-5 April 2017, saw visitor participation up 20%, with representation from 50 countries, spread out among more than 600 exhibitors, with the show itself occupying a net area that was 20% greater than last year. More than 12,000 speed networking meetings took place and there was a 7% increase in the number of buyers participating over the first two days.

Meanwhile, WTM connect Asia – which took place in Pengang, Malaysia, 17-19 May - saw 52 buyers hold business meetings with 48 buyers.

Reed Travel Exhibitions Director Nick Pilbeam said: "The impressive growth at our three recently held events, WTM Latin America, WTM Africa and Arabian Travel Market, just goes to show the strength of the travel and tourism industry across the world. "It's our aim to bring the global travel and tourism industry together and to facilitate business to help the industry grow. The success of initiatives such as our Buyers' Clubs, speed networking, dedicated lounges and our events programmes that focus on the key industry issues, makes the WTM portfolio shows must-attend events for everyone who wants to do business in the travel and tourism industry."

WTM London is expected to generate even more business in 2017 following its most successful year ever, with business opportunities that generated £2.8 billion in industry deals last November. WTM London 2016 was attended by a record 51,500 participants – the highest number of exhibitor invitees and buyers in the event's 37-year history. WTM London takes place at ExCeL, London, from 6-8 November 2017.

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