

# ITB ASIA 2008: THE PREMIERE OF SUCCESSFUL FAIR



Asia's industrial potential is no longer disputed. The continent is also a very important global tourism industry player. Asians, however, do not rest on their laurels.

They are well aware of the world wide competitive environment. Messe Berlin, the organizers of the world renowned International Tourism Bourse (ITB) Berlin, took advantage of the situation and organized the very first Asian ITB in Singapore.

Singapore has become an official partner of the Asian ITB and participated on the organization of the event. The Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive of Singapore Tourism Board, Mr. Lim Neo Chian said they hoped the ITB Asia will become a prime platform for exploration of business opportunities in Asian tourism industry. The event took place between 22-24 October 2008 at the Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The actual interest of visitors exceeded the organizers' expectation. The 651 exhibitors occupied 10,600 square meters in the Exhibition Centre. At the beginning the organizers expected there will be only 500 exhibiting companies. Similarly, Messe Berlin expected approximately 5,000 visitors to come. The real number was 24.2 % more than the original expectation as 6,208 delegates arrived to see the event.

There were representatives from some 90 countries. National tourism organizations from all over the planet promoted their countries as tourism destinations. Exhibitors virtually from every sector of the tourism industry were present at the ITB Asia. There were representatives of travel technology companies as well as representatives of airlines. Among other conferences the delegates could also visit the ITB Asia Convention, where experts from the industry talked about the latest issues and trends.

This B2B event was not meant only for the big players. The organizers also gave space to small and medium-sized enterprises to present themselves. According to Messe Berlin small and medium-sized enterprises often provide the most innovative products in niche sectors such as ecotourism. To attract them to the event Messe Berlin gave them a price-friendly space offer. The bourse was so successful that the Director of Messe Berlin (Singapore), Dr Martin Buck negotiates to expand the floor space for the 2009 ITB Asia which will take place between 21st and 23rd October next year.

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