

WTM: OVER 50.000 PARTICIPANTS



The number of visitors to WTM 2008 increased by 12%. Similarly the numbers of total participants, exhibiting companies, as well as trade delegates went up.

Every year, November is the month when the travel trade professionals head for London. The annual **World Travel Market** that this year took place between the 10th and 13th November draws together the travel businesses from more than 200 countries and regions.

The final figures from this year's WTM reveal that the financial crisis considerably affecting tourism in many regions still did not harm the overall popularity of the fair. In total there were 50,171 participants which is an increase of 4% compared to the last year. The number of visitors rose by 12% and the number of the exhibiting companies increased by 4% to 5,631. Trade delegate attendance went up to 26,422, compared to 23,722 in 2007 (+12%).

Fiona Jeffery, WTM chairman, explained that even in the current difficult situation the businesses need to stay up to date with the global trends: "In these tough times for the industry, it is absolutely necessary for senior and middle management to come together, not only to conduct business and identify new contacts and markets, but also to discuss, debate and address the many challenges that lie ahead. The next year will be tough, but we hope World Travel Market has been able to help business secure a safer and more successful course for the future." Jeffery also emphasized the professional side of the whole fair: "Added to this, we were able to attract some of the world's leading economic, industry and highly specialist experts to assist and advise delegates. Hundreds of seminars, presentations, workshops, press conferences, meetings and debates were held during the four days."

Overall, WTM welcomed almost 100 new exhibitors this year. There were 20 new exhibitors in the UK and Ireland area, which is an increase by nearly 4%. The number of exhibitors from the Middle East and the Americas also rose. Especially among the Technology and Online Travel exhibitors there was a considerable increase - 11 new exhibitors (+9%).

The next year's WTM is scheduled for November 9-12.

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