

# ITB BERLIN THROWS UP SOLUTIONS TO THE CRISIS



More countries than ever take part. New strategies appear to conquer the world financial crisis along with new predictions for the tourism market.

Some may have suggested that major conventions and conferences involving tourism may be less frequented in light of the well-known crisis, yet the evidence seems to be suggesting otherwise. Top business people in the tourism sectors of a record 187 countries visited the **ITB Berlin 2009** in March. Often they discussed the ways they envisage the future of world tourism in the aftermath of the popping of the financial bubble about which the whole world has been talking for a number of months. The event was not shrouded in pessimism, yet was full of eager people intent on gaining new market approaches and new market understanding from those around them.

In fact, this year's attendance figures for the ITB Berlin beat all previous records, with **110.000 visitors** exceeding the standing record by some 10%. 42% of the visitors came outside of Germany from **a record 187 countries**. The first-time presence of Gabon was coupled with the introduction of the official status of Kosovo to increase the official number of participants.

Interestingly, most participants tended to predict the same thing. 52% stated that tourists are more likely to make shorter trips in the future. 60% said that local tourism should flourish in most countries and this particular scenario has mostly been relevant to the British market. 68% of those asked said that the demand for last-minute deals should grow.

All of these predictions reveal new opportunities for the tourism market and provide hope for the future in worrying times. In fact, 6 out of 10 of the participants even claimed that the crisis is irrelevant to their business activities at all.

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