

Survey Reveals Industry Could Do More for Responsible and Sustainable Travel



The travel and tourism industry could do more for **responsible and sustainable tourism**, reveals a survey that took place at World Travel Market 2011 - the leading global event for the travel industry - by exhibitor SustainIt.

As the travel and tourism industry continues to grow there is an increased emphasis on responsible travel. During WTM 2011 Technology and Online Travel exhibitor SustainIt, the leading software and data consultancy that specialise in sustainability performance, surveyed more than 200 WTM participants. This was to understand the industry's experiences of sustainability and responsible tourism and work out whether the industry really is engaging in the principles of sustainability.

More than seven out of ten industry professionals including hoteliers, airlines, resorts and tourist attractions believe the travel and tourism industry could do more to reduce poverty and support sustainable local economic development in destination communities. Only 18% of companies questioned have sustainable supply chains and procurement policies in place.

An increasing number of companies offer their customers carbon offsets, but only 26% of companies were looking at their own carbon footprint. Six out of ten industry professionals asked felt their company could do more to promote sustainability overall, with only 29% of employees not knowing if they had an targets or objectives to meet in these areas.

When WTM delegates were asked to identify the key responsible tourism issue for 2012, the survey ranked 'Increasing employee and customer engagement in sustainability' as the top issue. With only 29% of respondents believing their company **is** doing enough to promote sustainability and responsible travel/tourism to its employees and customers.

These two statistics coincide to unveil that the industry is informed and aware of sustainability on one hand but has a lack of employee and customer engagement on the other hand.

SustainIT Managing Director Charlie Stockford explains: "Our survey shows that whilst there is increasing activity and concern around sustainable and responsible travel and tourism within the trade, many employees are not aware of what their own company is trying to achieve and therefore are unable to share it with their customers.

We really hope that 2012 is a year where businesses start communicating and engaging far more with their employees about their sustainability and responsible travel programmes and that those companies who are just starting out realise the real positive impact a good sustainability programme can make to both their profitability and to the future of our planet."

Reed Travel Exhibitions Chairman World Travel Market and pioneer of responsible tourism Fiona Jeffery expressed that the key observations revealed are ultimately the key reasons why WTM World Responsible Tourism Day - an international day of action dedicated to help protect the world - was formed.

“Travel companies, destinations and professionals worldwide recognise that responsible tourism offers a valuable and exciting new dimension to travel and tourism. With this in mind, one of the key objectives of WTM WRTD is to help drive change by educating more responsible behaviour with the travel and tourism industry and travelling public.”

This year WTM World Responsible Tourism Day will take place on Wednesday 7 November at WTM, ExCeL London. For further information please visit www.wtmlondon.com or www.wtmwrtd.com

- The End -

About World Travel Market

World Travel Market, the leading global event for the travel industry, is the must-attend four-day business-to-business exhibition for the worldwide travel and tourism industry.

Almost 48,000 senior travel industry professionals, government ministers and international press, embark on ExCeL - London every November to network, negotiate and discover the latest industry opinion and trends at WTM.

WTM, now in its 33rd year, is the event where the travel industry conducts and concludes its deals.

WTM 2010 generated £1,425 million of travel industry contracts, revealed independent research by Fusion Communications.

WTM is owned by the world's leading events organiser Reed Exhibitions (RE), which organises a portfolio of other travel industry events including Arabian Travel Market and International Luxury Travel Market.

In 2010, RE held more than 460 events in 36 countries bringing together more than seven million people from around the world generating billions of dollars in business.

Reed Travel Exhibitions

Reed Travel Exhibitions (RTE) is the world's leading provider of exhibitions in the travel and tourism industry. Its wide-ranging portfolio of events around the globe covers leisure travel, luxury travel and the meetings and incentives industry.

The 12 events are; World Travel Market (WTM), Arabian Travel Market (ATM), International French Travel Market (IFTM), La Cumbre, International Golf Travel Market (IGTM), International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM), International Luxury Travel Market Asia (ILTMA), Asia Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME) (owned by Melbourne Convention Visitors Bureau), Global Exhibition for Incentive, Business Travel, and Meetings (EIBTM), Gulf Incentive, Business Travel and Meetings (GIBTM), Americas Incentive, Business Travel and Meetings (AIBTM) and China Incentive, Business Travel and Meetings (CIBTM).

RTE is a business unit of Reed Exhibitions. In 2010, Reed Exhibitions held more than 460 events in 36 countries bringing together more than seven million people from around the world generating billions of dollars in business.

Reed Exhibitions is owned by Reed Elsevier, the world's leading provider of professional information and online workflow solutions.

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