



Exhibition industry CEOs brave Istanbul snow

Istanbul, February 3, 2012: Despite heavy snow and the coldest weather for more than 25 years severely disrupting air travel, more than seventy of the exhibition industry's CEO leaders gathered in Istanbul for this year's UFI CEO Forum from 1 – 3 February. Hosted this year by IFM – Istanbul Expo Center, the event is UFI's most exclusive gathering of the top leadership of exhibition organizing companies. The host of the event, made up for the cold by warmly welcoming all the participants to the historic and beautiful Pera Palace Hotel set in the heart of old Istanbul.

Haluk Kanca, General Manager of IFM, commented "this was my first UCF and I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed it. There were group dynamics at play that I have never seen at another industry meeting. The programme was really educational and the occasions to do business were numerous. We have been very happy to have had the opportunity to host this 10th edition of the UCF".

UFI President, Arie Brienen, commented "for those delegates who were able to make it, the reward was great – a very special event with a unique atmosphere".

Speakers included Freek Vermeulen, Associate Professor at the London Business School, who set the pace with a provocative look at common "pathologies" within organizations including collective inertia and management myopia. The Eurozone crisis was inevitably at the heart of the discussions as many CEOs based in Europe voiced their concerns on the situation. Economist Roger Martin-Fagg's warned of at least two more years of tough times. A panel discussion on core competencies gave a lot of food for thought: speakers included CEO of MCH Group Ltd. René Kamm, famous for many shows including Baselworld, Deutsche Messe Hannover AG's Andreas Gruchow and Nancy Hasselback of Diversified Business Communications.

Steve Monnington of Mayfield Media Strategies led a panel discussion on the Turkish market with Douglas Emslie from Tarsus and Feridun Bayram of the Marmara Fair Organization. Working in this market can present numerous challenges but with 8.8% growth for the second quarter of 2011 (Financial Times) it is clearly a country which merits the attention that the international organizers have been paying it.

MCI's Jurriaen Sleijster kicked off day two by drawing parallels with trade associations and event organization. Many of the forces driving this industry could be linked to the exhibition industry, he said. Jonathan Margolis was known to many through his *Financial Times* column and his predictions for the future included an increase in digital legacies, in "artificial intelligence" and black vegetables!

UFI is the global association of the world's leading tradeshow organizers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI's main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry.

UFI represents over 550 member organizations in 84 countries around the world. Almost 900 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

For additional information, please go to:

www.ufi.org or contact

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