

UFI MEA office relocates to UAE Expo Centre Sharjah supports move with 3 year hosting agreement

Paris/Sharjah - 10 October 2013: The UFI Middle East/ Africa regional office was inaugurated today in a ceremony held in Sharjah, UAE. Based on a generous three-year agreement, the UFI MEA office has now relocated to host venue Expo Centre Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. The UFI Middle East/Africa Regional Office supports UFI's members in the region, enabling them to profit from networking opportunities, to develop industry information resources and to implement a variety of education programmes. UFI is the global association of the exhibition industry with member organizations in 85 countries.

The official opening ceremony of the office in Sharjah was attended by several UAE dignitaries, exhibition industry professionals, and UFI members from the region. UFI MEA Chapter Chair Abdul Rahman Al Nassar, and Vice Chairs Ahmad Baabood and Saif Al Midfa presided at the ceremony alongside UFI's Managing Director Paul Woodward and Regional Manager Ibrahim Alkhaldi.

Saif Al Midfa, CEO, Expo Centre Sharjah applauding the move, said, "we are very glad to host the UFI MEA office at Expo Centre Sharjah. I would like to thank the Chapter Chair, Abdul Raham Al Nassar for his efforts in supporting the UFI regional office and his help to relocate it here. I am convinced that the benefits from UFI's presence, especially with regard to information, networking and education, will continue to serve the business objectives of members throughout the region".

Speaking on the occasion Ibrahim Alkhaldi noted, "We thank our previous hosts in Abu Dhabi and Kuwait for their gracious support which enabled UFI to develop much needed programmes and services for the exhibition industry in the region. The work of this UFI office has been much appreciated and we are delighted that our members will benefit from uninterrupted service in the years ahead." Recent UFI research shows that the exhibition industry in the Middle East continues to grow. Since 2006, there has been a 14% increase in the number of trade fairs organized and a 21% increase in available exhibition space despite the sudden eruption the Arab Spring in 2011 and the major global economic crisis in 2008.

UFI is the association of the world's leading tradeshow organisers 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 630 member organisations around the world. Over 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.

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Expo Center Sharjah supports move with 3 year hosting agreement (continued)

The move to Sharjah comes after ADNEC, Abu Dhabi and KIF, Kuwait hosted the UFI Regional office consecutively for eight years. Paul Woodward, UFI Managing Director, commented, “UFI recognises the great importance of maintaining a base in this region to serve actively the needs of our members in both the Middle East and Africa. We are truly grateful to our Regional Chapter leadership and to the office hosts for the special support they provide us. We look forward to a long and fruitful presence in Sharjah as the exhibition business continues to develop and thrive across the regions we serve from this office.”

For additional information on UFI, its programmes and services, please go to www.ufi.org or contact:
Lili Eigl, UFI Communications Manager
lili@ufi.org