



35bis, rue Jouffroy-d'Abbans
F-75017 Paris, France

T : +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12
F : +33 (0)1 42 27 19 29

www.ufi.org

UFI's "How to Audit" guide will ensure standardized exhibition data

Paris, 25 October 2007: As an integral part of its membership requirements, UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, has always required that its member organisers provide statistics on visitors and exhibitors which are independently audited in order to obtain UFI's "Event Approval" label. UFI has now updated these guidelines and developed clear procedures to be applied by auditors in future data verification. As UFI's members, the world's leading exhibition organisers, manage almost 4,500 exhibitions around the world, the application of these guidelines should have an important impact on the standardization of international exhibition auditing procedures. Cliff Wallace, UFI President, stated, "the objective of the UFI standard is to raise the quality of the exhibition industry internationally - not to impose new bureaucracy. 800 of the exhibitions organised by UFI members already proudly carry this UFI Label."

While national standards and, in some cases, laws may require more rigorous standards than those established by UFI, the UFI rules are expected to become the benchmark standard internationally. The new auditing rules provide guidelines on how data may be verified, who is entitled to undertake the auditing, the frequency of audits, and reporting standards.

The audits will include four elements: systems appraisal, exhibition inspection, database review and audit certification. Auditors must perform a verification methodology by reviewing the systems used by the exhibition organiser to administer ticket sales and control exhibition entrance. This will be supported by an exhibition inspection, which may take place unannounced if deemed necessary. Auditors are expected to carry out post-exhibition reviews of databases, verify ticket sales and registration procedures in order to justify the number and percentage of international visitors which must reach at least 10% of the total number of exhibitors or 5% of the total number of visits or visitors respectively.

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UFI's "How to Audit" guide will ensure standardized exhibition data verification (continued)

In order to retain the "UFI Approved" event label, each exhibition must provide an updated audit certificate at a minimum for every other edition of the event, except in the case of an event taking place less frequently than once every two years for which each edition must be audited.

Vincent Gérard, UFI Managing Director, compared the new auditing guidelines to those used in other media. Gérard stated that, "UFI's reinforced auditing procedures now provide our clients - exhibitors and visitors – with the certified, accurate data they need to evaluate exhibitions as a key element in the marketing mix. Without a doubt, this is good for the exhibition industry."

The current UFI Auditing Rules will be enforced from 1 January 2008 for all new UFI Event Approval requests.

UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, promotes, serves and represents the trade fair industry worldwide. Via its member organisations, including the world's leading show organisers and exhibition centres, national and international professional associations and industry partners, UFI is present in 84 countries on 6 continents. UFI members are responsible for the management and operation of over 4,500 exhibitions around the world.

Additional information on UFI and its programmes is available at www.ufi.org.

For further information, please contact:

Lili Eigl,
UFI Communications Manager
UFI Headquarters
35bis, rue Jouffroy-d'Abbans,
F-75017 Paris, France
Tel: +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12
Email : lili@ufi.org