

TRAVTALK

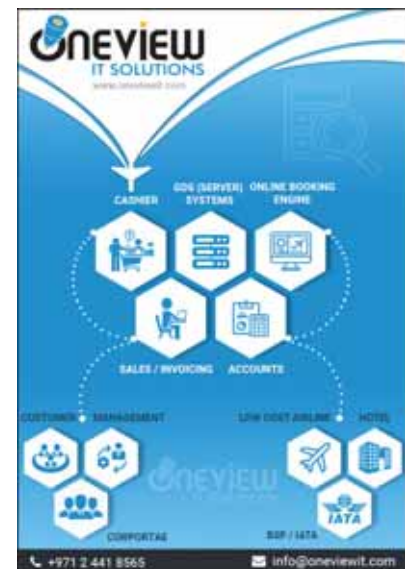


THE NEWSPAPER OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

Published from : ★ India ★ Middle East



CLAIM UP TO USD 1500*
when checked-in electronic items
are lost or damaged



Media Partner



All roads lead to Russia

Hosted by Euroexpo, the 24th edition of OTDYKH Leisure 2018 is set to be held from September 11-13 at Expocentre Fairgrounds in Moscow. OTDYKH or Leisure Travel Market, Russia's leading travel and tourism event, will once again witness a record number of participants from all over the world.



Anna Huber
PhD—International Project
Director, Euroexpo Exhibitions
& Congress Development

“OTDYKH Travel Market in Moscow is the perfect start for the upcoming winter season on the Russian inbound and outbound market. The 2018 edition will welcome over 800 exhibitors from 40 countries and 40 Russian regions, covering a total area of 15,000 sqm. The content rich programme will feature over 30

conferences, seminars, workshops, round-table meetings and case study presentations. The programme is set to reflect the major industry trends and will combine all relevant sectors of the tourism value chain including health, MICE, luxury travel, etc. Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) will be back to OTDYKH Leisure this year as partner country and will showcase Japanese offerings to visitors with a comprehensive entertaining programme.”



Fazil Ozmen
General Manager
Anex Tour

“The ease of visa facility by the visionary leaders of the UAE has seen a steady growth of Russian tourists to the UAE. For example, the season of 2016-17 witnessed 60,000 tourists while 2017-18 saw an increased number of almost 180,000 visitors. We hope to continue these impressive numbers further during this season as we expect to break the record. A majority

of these travellers with 40 per cent enjoy Dubai, another 40 per cent prefer Sharjah with Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah each enjoying 7.5 per cent and Abu Dhabi with 5 per cent. Among their key attractions, Dubai takes pride as the first place with the highest building, biggest aquarium and the city tour. They also enjoy the Grand Mosque and Louvre in Abu Dhabi, spend a day by the Indian ocean shore in Fujairah, try helicopter or yacht tour to see the city from the other side.”



Ekaterina Serebryakova
Head—Sales and Marketing,
Olta Travel

“With three offices each in Saint Petersburg, Moscow and Baikal Lake, we provide travel services in Russia, CIS countries and Baltic States. Among more than 50 countries, with which Olta Travel operates, Middle East is a very important market. We face an increasing interest to Russian destinations from tourists, which became even stronger after the FIFA

2018. Attending Leisure Moscow 2018 is an efficient way to expand your knowledge of destinations, establish new contacts and find reliable partners to significantly affect your business. Tourism professionals from the Middle East will find it useful to discover new destinations and their growing tourism opportunities. They are developing at a growing speed and in order to stand out from the competition, you need to be aware of the changes.”

India's first platform connecting Travel & Education

Travel

EDUCATION SHOW

November 17-18, 2018

- ★ Meet the key decision makers from pan India educational institutes
- ★ Tap the niche yet high volume segment
- ★ Accomplish 1800+ meetings in two days

For details, contact:

sarika@ddppl.com | +91-9810191852, punam.singh@gmail.com | +91-9811158785





An exceptional experience



...amidst the powder-soft sand, by the cerulean waves and under the tropical shade of the Maldives; our premier villa resort presents curated experiences in an all-inclusive offering.

A sneak peek in to our offerings here, www.heritancehotels.com/aarah

T: +960 6640375 | E: res.aarah@heritancehotels.com

H
HERITANCE
AARAH

Dubai to host maiden GIAS

Dubai will host the first Global Investment in Aviation Summit (GIAS) from January 28-29, 2019, with 500 top aviation industry officials from across the world in attendance.

TT Bureau

The Global Investment in Aviation Summit in Dubai is set to witness high-profile delegates from 40 countries including 20 aviation ambassadors, 10 knowledge partners, 200 aviation officials and 300 investors. The UAE authorities are investing Dh85 billion (\$23.16 billion) in airport development and expansion that will see its airports develop combined capacity to handle more than 300 million passengers per year.

"Our airlines and airports have been ranking consistently as among the best internationally. On compliance level, the UAE is ranked as a top member state of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. GIAS is the UAE's testament on how far we have achieved and of our commit-



ment to push the nation to be a global pioneer in this field. We anticipate accommodating 118 million passengers by 2023 at the Dubai International Airport, and 120 million passengers upon completion of Phase-II of the Dubai World Central, and 200 million passengers upon its completion," said **HE Saif Mohammed Al Suwaidi**,

Director General, UAE General Civil Aviation Authority.

The three-day international summit of aviation leaders will see a number of activities, including the GIAS Summit, GIAS Masterclass, GIAS Aviation Investment Destination, GIAS Investor Lounge, GIAS New Business Accelerator, GIAS Ambassadors, GIAS

Bilateral Meetings, GIAS Aviation Super Stars Closing Ceremony, among others.

GIAS Summit

This two-day event will focus on presenting the most attractive sectors in aviation for investments, its future outlooks, factors that will drive the region's development, public and private ventures, as well as government incentives to key projects in aviation. With key speakers, participants will get curated content with enormous relevance for their financial interests.

GIAS Investor Lounge

A special zone will be dedicated to top investment houses and investment corporations, development banks and sovereign wealth funds. This feature will allow them

to meet with official government representatives as well as project developers seeking financing and discuss the possibility of new ventures and partnerships.

GIAS Masterclass

On the first day, world experts and reference projects will gather to offer participants a 360-degree view on the best investment practices with interactive masterclass outlined for institutional investors and project finance managers looking to understand aviation finance. GIAS will feature international governments' investment proposals delivered by key government officials and top private sector executives whilst providing attending financiers with a perspective on ongoing and future projects. 



WYNDHAM GARDEN
Ajman Corniche



AJMAN CORNICHE HAS A NEW LANDMARK

Walk in, drop your bags and relax. It's time to unwind, surrounded by the calm blue waters of the Arabian Gulf. With 179 luxurious rooms, we look forward to your stay with us.

Experience some of the best cuisines in Ajman with our all-day dining restaurant and our specialty seafood restaurant. Indulge yourself with our pool bar, jacuzzi and spa.

Welcome to Wyndham Garden. It's your new address in Ajman Corniche.

Tel: 06 7014444

Fax: 06 7014455

WYNDHAMGARDENAJMAN.COM
INFO@WYNDHAMGARDENAJMAN.COM

Wyndham Garden Ajman Corniche is operated by R Hotels under a franchise agreement from Wyndham Hotel Group.

TRAVTALK

EDITORIAL

New era of tourism

The unprecedented rise of the middle class in today's global world has in turn resulted in the rise in travel and tourism sectors over the past few years. At first, some destinations were skeptical of the numbers with their offerings being unable to sustain these new-found travellers. However, Dubai under its Ruler **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**, Vice President, United Arab Emirates strategised a new game plan to ensure that all tourists who wish to travel are given the opportunity to do so according to their budget, hence the rise of the mid-market range of properties. The government of the United Arab Emirates ensures that trade and business opportunities are given their fullest support.

Regulations are made to ensure safety for all those living and travelling to the United Arab Emirates. As the safest country in the world and populated with over 200 different nationalities, the rulers have most certainly kept the flag high and ensured that everyone is able to enjoy their visit to the country. In terms of hospitality, one may argue that there are over 100,000 hotel rooms in Dubai, but this however was done with a proper plan and vision to enable opportunities to a much wider range of people to be part of the growth strategy.

Today, the government of the UAE has seen the prosperity of its strategies. It has obtained importance from across the globe for its mastermind plan to attract all classes of tourists. The rise of the middle class was an advantage they foresaw, hence the government supported the private sector and together they are on the right track to achieve their goals. Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah are certainly drawing a lot of attention from the corporate sectors by becoming hubs for MICE. Adapting to the new era of tourism, the United Arab Emirates is on a steady path to ensuring its goal of 20 million for 2020.

With Leisure Moscow scheduled to be held in Russia from September 11-13 and the ease of visa, the UAE has been successful in obtaining an increase of Russian tourists even at a time when they least expect it.

Our diversifying hospitality

For Europeans, Dubai is quite literally paved with gold and this image of luxury is what drives their visits, analyses **Dr Heather Jeffrey**, Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences, Middlesex University Dubai.

Having moved to Dubai less than a year ago, I have been surprised to receive at least one visitor a month. PWC reports that the demand for mid-market hotels will grow as younger visitors increase to Dubai. In June, The National reported that mid-market hotels made up around a quarter of the hotel offering. This rise in mid-market hotels, frequently described as budget, is often linked to price sensitivity and nationality of the tourist. Yet, new budget hotels in Dubai, unlike the traditional budget chain hotels found in the USA and Europe, are fitted out for a new class of tourist. This type of budget accommodation is fuss-free, social media worthy and has all the facilities independent travellers need.

While luxury attracts a certain target market, streamlined, tech-savvy accommodation attracts another. I don't think of this as budget accommodation but consider this new budget offering as spartan with simple hotels attracting creative tourists and tech users alike. The possibilities to create a more creative Dubai are endless, as smaller demographic demands more cultural activities for their buck. I expect the creative and events industries to develop in new directions as supply and demand find themselves in a race to provide something new.

“New budget hotels in Dubai, are fitted out for a new class of tourist. This type of accommodation is social media worthy and has all the facilities independent travellers need”

This does not mean that luxury hospitality offering does not have a place in Dubai, they certainly do and I believe they always will, perhaps evidenced by new openings such as the Mandarin Oriental this year. Yet, it can mean a more diversified offering to attract a range of tourists, including younger generations that do not want to speak with receptionists or waitresses, those that prefer to communicate on an app. Business in Alserkal, in the Design District and cultural attraction might all flourish, there will also be increased demand for home-grown products, souvenirs and eateries, with the right marketing of course. Alongside a more streamlined, less cluttered aesthetic and technological amenities, I am looking forward to a greener revolution.

Rove has already joined Green Key in its ambition to achieve a

more sustainable and eco-friendly operation. Sustainability not only makes business sense but is also increasingly demanded by guests. Greening your operations can be as simple as using larger refillable toiletries to more complex waste and water management systems; but whatever it is that you do, make sure that you find a compelling way to communicate it to your guests. In the hospitality industry, the smallest things can be a source of competitive advantage if we tell the right story.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same.)



Dr Heather Jeffrey
Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences,
Middlesex University Dubai

Ramada Ajman employs people of determination

Ramada Hotel & Suites Ajman provided employment to people of determination as part of its continuous commitment to reach out to the community and present equal opportunities for different members of the society. Under Ajman Tourism Development Department's Zayed Day for Humanitarian Initiative, in cooperation with the Ministry of Community Development, Ramada Ajman provided training and internship to Musab Abdul Raheem Jaber Saleh. A Jordanian national with hearing and speaking disabilities, Saleh worked with the front office department as bell boy cum valet parking driver for a month.



NCL eyes the MEA region

With a 51-year-old history of breaking boundaries of traditional cruising, Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) is now focusing on the Middle Eastern market. **Nick Wilkinson**, VP & MD, Norwegian Cruise Line, shares insights.

 TT Bureau

How important is the Middle Eastern market for cruising?

The Middle Eastern market has experienced significant growth over the last five years. This is due to the incredible support we receive from our travel partners across Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE who have done an amazing job in promoting cruising and opening up the market for all to enjoy.

Could you share more details on itineraries for the MEA region?

The recently revamped 2,500 passenger Norwegian Jade featuring new bars, restaurants and modern décor will sail from Civitavecchia in November 2020 and stop at the following ports of

call - Piraeus, Kusadasi, Rhodes, Limassol, Haifa, Port Said, Suez Canal, Safaga, Aqaba, Salalah, Fujairah and Abu Dhabi before disembarkation in Dubai. In December, she will cruise from Dubai to Abu Dhabi, Khasab, Fujairah, Mormugao Goa, Male, Colombo Phuket, Langkawi, Penang, Port Klang before disembarking in Singapore. The 2,000 passenger Norwegian Spirit will be undergoing a bow-to-stern revitalisation as part of the Norwegian Edge fleet refurbishment programme before cruising through the Middle East in March 2020. Following embarkation in Dubai, guests will stop at the following ports of call - Abu Dhabi, Fujairah and Muscat before heading to Male, Nosy Be/Nosy Komba, Port Louis, Port

Des Galets, Richard's Bay, Port Elizabeth and Mossel Bay before disembarking in Cape Town.

Have you already got agents for cruise bookings in this part of the world?

Yes, we've seen double-digit growth from our agents and a stark increase in the promotion and selling of our cruises in the last five years, with full distribution from leisure, MiCE and groups.

Why should agents sell the Norwegian cruises to ME travellers?

Our ships are perfect for families with children, large groups or those who want to travel solo. Our ships have up to 28 dining options, entertainment, call at 85 countries and visit over 275 ports of call.

“We've seen double-digit growth from our agents and a stark increase in the selling of our cruises in the last five years, with full distribution from leisure, MiCE and groups”

What benefits do the agents receive?

We are proud to run a programme called 'Partners First' which offers support, education and sales and marketing collateral to help them understand our product and drive sales. For the first time, we are offering a 3 per cent bonus commission on new bookings made between August 8-22 on selected sailings in 2019-20. 



WE CARE

Top Travel Trip

Your Trusted Travel Partner

B2B REINVENTED

REAL TIME UPDATES

SEAMLESS INTEGRATION

DETAILED REPORTING

COST OPTIMISATION

TRAVEL TRENDS

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

ENHANCED USER EXPERIENCE

+ 971 4 556 1010

joinus@toptraveltrip.com

www.toptraveltrip.com



Turkish, Amex GBT expand deal

Turkish Airlines signed a significant deal with American Express Global Business Travel (Amex GBT), one of the world's leading agencies for corporate travel. Amex GBT, considered as one of the largest global agencies in the sector, has more than 100 years of experience in corporate travel.

TT Bureau

Global agency Amex GBT, which aims to make the business travels much easier, productive and less stressful, both in terms of suppliers and travelers, serves in nearly 140 countries around the world, with 12,000 employees, to 8,000 customers.

With this agreement signed by **Milker Ayci**, Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee, Turkish Airlines and **Greg O'Hara**, Board Chairman, Amex GBT, Turkish Airlines expands its existing collaboration with Amex to a global partnership, which was on a regional scale between 2014-17 and including just Europe, North America and Asia/



Pacific regions. The global carrier which has added the South America region to the new joint service area with Amex GBT, will also become one of the airlines supported by Amex GBT at the top level, within the scope of this expanded agreement.

It is aimed to determine a common strategy on a global level and increase the cooperation between the managements of both parts at all levels along with this expanded partnership. Another goal at this point is to increase the cooperation in product development and sales for Marine

& Offshore, Travel and Lifestyle Services (TLS), and Meeting & Events segments. The promotion of Turkish Airlines' brand awareness and perception within Amex GBT organisation, as well as top level participation in all global events organised by Amex GBT, increasing the visibility of Turkish Airlines in Amex GBT's communication channels, acquiring new corporate customers through the joint data analysis studies, and also the promotion of sales activities are all the other subjects to be improved within this new business partnership.

Commenting on the agreement, Ayci said, "We are pleased to enter such an important business

partnership with Amex GBT. With this new agreement, which was existed on a regional scale and now expanded to global, we aim to increase our market share also in the corporate travel segment and be the most preferred airline for all business travellers worldwide."

What This Entails

➔ Turkish Airlines has added the South America region to the new joint service area with Amex GBT

➔ The airlines aims to increase our market share also in the corporate travel segment and be the most preferred airline for all business travellers worldwide

First Central records strong occupancies

With a year-to-date average occupancy of 81%, First Central Hotel Suites has enjoyed a robust first half of 2018.

TT Bureau

Superbly located within easy reach of Dubai's key business and leisure hubs, First Central Hotel Suites features 524 apartments perfect for long-stay accommodation. In close proximity to the hotel are Dubai Internet City Metro Station, Dubai Media City, Dubai Marina, Emirates Golf Club and Mall of the Emirates.

Wael El Behi, General Manager, First Central Hotel Suites said, "Our property has been one of the best performing hotels in the Barsha Heights area. From the very start our strategy has been to drive business across all verticals that has given us a steady mix of corporate, long-stay, leisure, e-commerce and FIT segment which in turn kept our figures



Wael El Behi
General Manager
First Central Hotel Suites

firm." The rest of the year looks equally promising for the hotel. Wael attributes this exceptional success primarily to the appeal of Dubai and its world-class infrastructure and attractions. ➔

Air Arabia adds Prague

Air Arabia's introduction of its new European destination, Prague in Czech Republic, direct from Sharjah, is set to further enhance travel between the two destinations. The inaugural flight to the city will commence on December 11.

TT Bureau

The 6-hour 50-minute Air Arabia flight to Prague will operate five times per week, every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. On Tuesdays and Sundays, the flight will depart from Sharjah International Airport (SHJ) at 08:00 hours and arrive at Prague Václav Havel Airport (PRG) at 11:50 hours, while on the return leg, the flight will depart from Prague at 12:35 hours and land in Sharjah at 21:40 local time. On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, the departing flight will leave from Sharjah at 15:30 hours and arrive in Prague at 19:20 hours; the return flight will depart Prague at 21:05 hours and arrive in Sharjah the following morning at 06:10 hours.




Adel Al Ali, Group Chief Executive Officer, Air Arabia said, "With the continued development of residents in the region and international tourists looking for value-for-money services, Air Arabia is focused on the continued expansion of its international routes. With the launch of the Sharjah to Prague route, we aim to offer our passengers the chance to discover the historic capital city, our newest destination in Europe to be available direct from the UAE."

“The launch of the Sharjah-Prague route will offer passengers the chance to discover the historic city”

A historic city famed for its Old Town Square and elaborately constructed Baroque buildings, Prague is the capital and largest city in the Czech Republic and one of the most popular touristic destinations in Europe. ➔

Lights, camera, action!

Embarking on its second edition, the Arabian Travel Awards is all set and ready to recognise key players in travel, tourism and hospitality at JW Marriott Hotel in Deira, Dubai on September 20, 2018. **Nikhil Jeet**, Convener, Arabian Travel Awards, shares details with **TRAVTALK**.

 TT Bureau

How will this year's awards be different from the last?

As an award ceremony recognising the best in the business and celebrating excellence, the Arabian Travel Awards this year promises to be bigger and better. After the first edition last year, marketing and promotion activities for the awards were instantly rolled out to increase awareness about the awards. Platforms such as Arabian Travel Market were used to promote the award ceremony and motivate winners. The winners celebrated their victory added to the publicity of the event. The black-tie formal ceremony this year will hopefully leave everyone celebrating and smiling.



How does one nominate?

The nominating and voting process is online. As the awards are by the industry and for the industry, we encourage participants to nominate

themselves and celebrate their achievements. Nominations receiving the highest number of votes are then declared winners after voting is closed. All the information regarding nominations is available on the website— www.arabiantravels-awards.ae. To nominate, one can visit the nomination page, where there are categories and sub-categories. Select the right option, fill the form and send it to us. We will send a confirmation email with a voting link.

What are the criteria for nomination?

As mentioned on the website, this is the information regarding the nominations. The rules for entry are:

- ❖ All entries must be travel and tourism products that serve the public or the industry.
- ❖ Your business is eligible to enter if it has been operational in its recent form for at least 12 months at the time of applying.
- ❖ Any entrants for New Hotel or New Resort categories will be eligible to enter if, at the time of applying, they opened within the past 12 months.
- ❖ If your entry relates to a specific project, it must have been completed and fully implemented at the time of applying.
- ❖ Any internet or technology products must have been operational for at least 12 months at the time of applying.
- ❖ All Entry Forms must be completed in English.
- ❖ Entries must reach Arabian Travel Awards by the published closing dates.
- ❖ Only complete entries will be considered.
- ❖ Entries must be submitted online.
- ❖ Once received, all entry forms and supporting documents become the property of Arabian Travel Awards and no returns of such material will be made. Arabian Travel Awards will not be held responsible if such documents are lost or damaged.
- ❖ The decision of Arabian Travel Awards will be final and cannot be challenged in any court of law. 

The emerging outbound

Organised by Luxury Connections along with Rwanda Consulate and RwandAir, Luxury Outbound Travel Market will be held at Sheraton Hotel and Resorts Abu Dhabi.


 TT Bureau

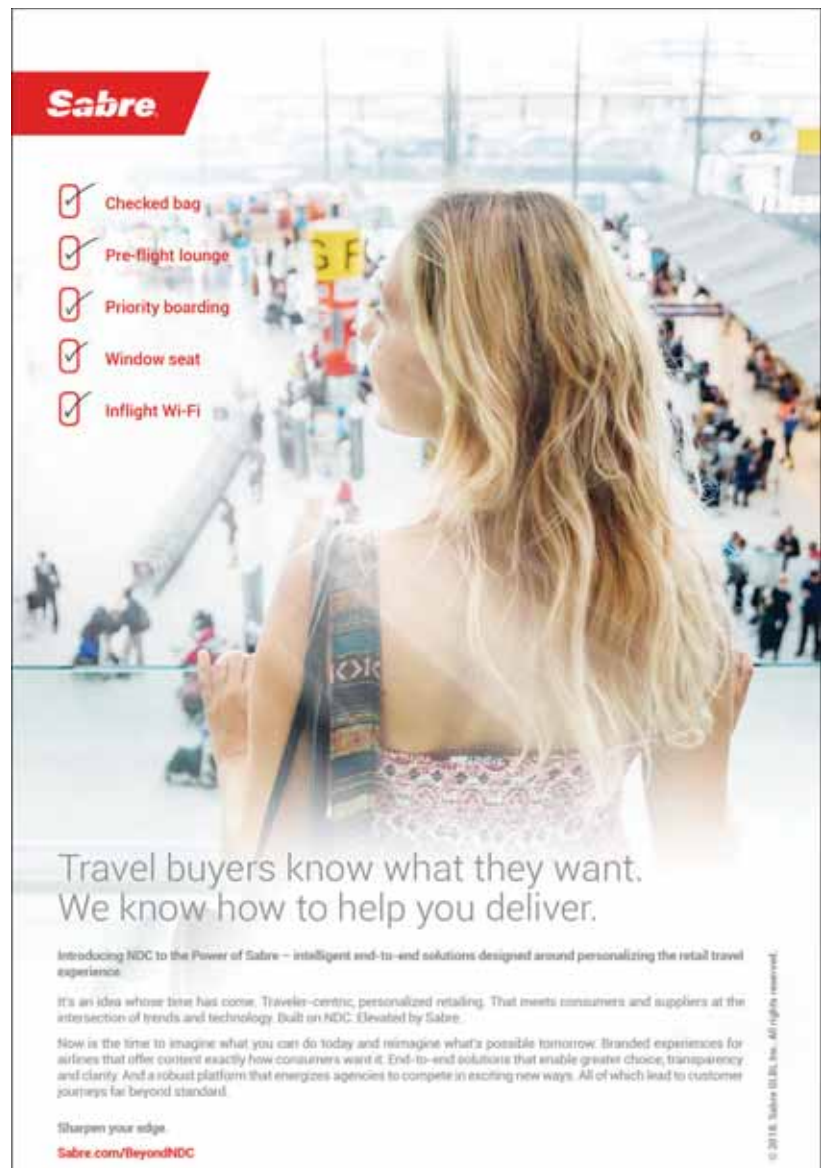
Over 120 decision makers from leading outbound travel companies of the UAE will come together for a powerful day of networking at the second edition of Luxury Outbound Travel Market on September 6. Among the tourism boards in attendance this year will be Turkey, Thailand, Seychelles and Zimbabwe with hotels from Georgia, hospitality partnership by Raviz Center Point Hotel Dubai, event production partnership by Purple MICE events, transportation partnerships with TLS Limousine and Koi Ride along with Oman insurance as the assurance partner and Hamdan Gallery. Aiming at the outbound travel destinations for 2019, the event promises a wide



Mario Anthony
Owner & Managing Director
Outbound Travel Events

Aiming at the outbound travel destinations for 2019, Luxury Outbound Travel Market promises a wide range of participation this year from Georgia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Azerbaijan

range of participation this year from Georgia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Azerbaijan. More details can be obtained by getting in touch with the organiser Mario Anthony on 052 3890592 and mario@luxuryconnections.dubai.com. 



Sabre

- ☒ Checked bag
- ☒ Pre-flight lounge
- ☒ Priority boarding
- ☒ Window seat
- ☒ Inflight Wi-Fi

Travel buyers know what they want. We know how to help you deliver.

Introducing NDC to the Power of Sabre – intelligent end-to-end solutions designed around personalizing the retail travel experience.

It's an idea whose time has come. Traveler-centric, personalized retailing. That meets consumers and suppliers at the intersection of trends and technology. Built on NDC. Elevated by Sabre.

Now is the time to imagine what you can do today and reimagine what's possible tomorrow. Branded experiences for airlines that offer content exactly how consumers want it. End-to-end solutions that enable greater choice, transparency and clarity. And a robust platform that energizes agencies to compete in exciting new ways. All of which lead to customer journeys far beyond standard.

Sharpen your edge.
Sabre.com/beyondNDC

© 2018 Sabre Global Inc. All rights reserved.

Art Marine's cultural trip

Dubai Properties has appointed Art Marine, the region's largest 360-degree leisure marine enterprise, as the operator of its marina at Culture Village. The 60-berth marina is located between Garhoud Bridge and Business Bay Bridge.

TT Bureau



“With an aim to transform Dubai into a major maritime tourism hub, we are proud to expand our maritime portfolio as we officially launch operations at the Culture Village Marina which, in addition to Marasi Marina, is the first fully operational jetty on the Dubai Water Canal”



Marwan Al Kindi
Executive Director—Sales and Sales Operations, Dubai Properties

The agreement mandates Art Marine, Dubai Properties' maritime partner, to manage the entire premises, including water and onshore areas as well as complimentary marina facilities and services, such as private parking, club car transfer for members and full staff assistance.

Speaking on the occasion, **Marwan Al Kindi**, Executive Director—Sales and Sales Operations, Dubai Properties, said, “We aim to strengthen Dubai's reputation as a city of the future and help drive its transforma-

tion into a major maritime tourism hub. In line with this priority, we are proud to expand our maritime portfolio as we officially launch operations at the Culture Village Marina which, in addition to Marasi Marina, is the first fully operational jetty on the Dubai Water Canal.”

Bruno Meier, Chief Operating Officer, Art Marine, said, “We are proud to partner with Dubai Properties to manage the Culture Village Marina. This project will allow us to leverage our strategic approach and considerable experience in customer service, cruise tourism and yachting as we continue to build one of the finest collections of yachting destinations in the region.”

Operational since 2017, the exclusive berthing location in the new Culture Village district offers the convenience

of connecting to the sea during all tidal states. Boat owners can opt for a leisurely cruise along Dubai Creek or enter Business Bay via Dubai Water Canal. Moreover, the marina provides easy access to Palazzo Versace Dubai. Culture Village is one of Dubai Properties' defining mixed-use developments, located along the shoreline of Dubai Creek amid tranquil green surroundings. The destination brings the sought-after waterfront living experience to the emirate's property market with its two distinct neighbourhoods – Dubai Wharf and Manazel Al Khor – that give residents and visitors a chance to step back from the hustle of urban life, while enjoying stunning views of Dubai Creek and the city in its background. The marina overlooks the Canal Promenade fringed by a verdant double grass lawn, as well as a park with a wooden playground that has been a runaway hit with its youngest visitors. Spanning over 46,000 square metres, the all-new public space features granite-paved piazzas to match the opulence of the adjacent Palazzo Versace Dubai. 🌊

BW Best Western PLUS
Pearl Creek



For business or leisure,
there's always
a little something extra.

Pearl Dining
Restaurant

Haji Ali
JUICE CENTER

faham
Shisha Lounge

IDENTITY
SALON & SPA

bestwesternplusdubai.com

[f /BestWesternPlusPearlCreek](https://www.facebook.com/BestWesternPlusPearlCreek)

[ig /BestWesternPlusDubai](https://www.instagram.com/BestWesternPlusDubai)

BW Best Western PLUS

P.O. Box 83163, Baniyas Road
Deira Creek, Dubai
Tel: +971 4 222 4555
Reservations: +971 4 226 6606
info@bestwesternplusdubai.com

Ethiopian rides high on success

Ethiopian Airlines announced a successful fiscal year 2017-18. Gearing towards its 2025 vision, the airline opened eight new international destinations while the number of passengers carried grew by 21 per cent topping the 10 million mark for the first time in the airline's history.

 TT Bureau

It was quite an interesting year for the largest African airline group when it announced its performance over the past fiscal year. In line with its 15-year strategic roadmap, Vision 2025, the airline registered success in financial, commercial, operational and customer service areas.

During the fiscal year, the airline was given for the first time in its history a four-star rating by Skytrax, a leading customer service rating organisation in the airline industry, putting it on par with other global airlines. **Tewolde GebreMariam**, Group CEO, Ethiopian Airlines said, "It was an exceptional year for Ethiopian with record performance in financial, operational, commercial



Tewolde GebreMariam
Group CEO
Ethiopian Airlines


and customer service areas. This historical performance is due to the commitment, hard work

and competence of my 16,000 colleagues with each one of them at all echelons of the company playing a critical role in this success. This performance is all the more exceptional given the very tough operating and competitive environment in Africa, where jet fuel price, our main cost driver, has soared during the year and is on average 30 per cent more expensive in Africa, our home market, than in the rest of the world. This remarkable result was also achieved in the backdrop of aggressive foreign carriers' penetration into the African market with the African airline industry collectively forecasted to lose money. The historical performance attests the soundness of our fast and sustainable growth plan, Vision

During the 2017-18 fiscal year, some of the key highlights were:

- ❖ Ethiopian introduced additional 14 new aircraft, more than one aircraft per month
- ❖ The airline opened eight new international destinations, namely Geneva (Switzerland), Chicago (USA), Bahrain, Kaduna (Nigeria), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Kisangani and Mbuji-Mayi (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Nosy-Be (Madagascar)
- ❖ The number of passengers carried grew by 21 per cent topping the 10 million mark for the first time in the airline's history and reaching 10.6 million passengers
- ❖ Freight carried grew by 18 per cent from previous fiscal year to attain 400,339 tons
- ❖ Operating revenue grew by 43 per cent from previous fiscal year to culminate at 89.1 billion Ethiopian birr (ETB)
- ❖ Net profit stood at 6.8 billion ETB

2025. During the next 2018-19 fiscal year, we aim to further grow our network, introduce record

number of modern fleet and greatly enhance the on-ground customer service." 



Travelwings

get your wings to fly



**FLIGHT
TICKETS**



**HOTEL
BOOKING**



**HOLIDAY
PACKAGES**



**FLIGHT
+ HOTEL**

Level 3, Latifa Tower, Sheikh Zayed Road,
Trade Center 1, Dubai, UAE

☎ 800-TWINGS (894647)
✉ customer.care@travelwings.com
🌐 www.travelwings.com

Recipe for success in hospitality



Being proactive, conducting careful research and analysing factors of importance of the target market are some of the traits that hold the flag up high for Ramada Beach, Ramada Ajman and Wyndham Garden Ajman Corniche. Expert hotelier **Iftikhar Hamdani**, Cluster General Manager of the three properties engages in a tête-à-tête with **TRAVTALK**.

Hotel owners vs managing companies

The partnership between the owners and the management companies of various properties have been suffering a great deal of miscommunication over the past few years. Hotel owners are the key investors who not only

past few years have been one of rift between the owners and management companies due to various reasons. Hamdani's shares, "The relationship between owners and management is purely commercial as we must understand that the owners have provided us everything on our request and if we fail to deliver,

Many facets of sustainability

In today's context, sustainability plays an important role in all fields – be they hospitality, human resources, travel, tourism, technology, trade and commerce, etc. Hamdani shares the relevance in terms of hospitality. "The sustainability initiatives at Ramada

TT Bureau

It has been just two months since the Wyndham Garden Ajman Corniche opened and it is already recording 96 per cent occupancy. When it opened in June, many were skeptical about the regular off season. Hamdani's game plan was different as the strategies he initiated to market this property were already implemented even before construction started.

Early bird catches the worm

Hamdani's unstinted work strategy has secured him a sustainable role in his career as a hotelier. In an interview about two years ago at an international travel event, Hamdani conveyed about the new project which at the time was not even in its piling stages. He shared the concept with his travel partners who book the properties. His careful research into new markets ensures that he keeps his head high no matter what

the tide may roll out; so in good times and bad, he has tricks up his sleeve to ensure that his stakeholders, owners, partners, guests and even staff are kept happy right throughout the year. "I started marketing this new property over one and half years ago as I had a vision in my mind. I also conducted my research on new markets, their needs to attract them to the emirate, ensure sustainability and avoid affecting the other two properties. It was of paramount importance to uphold the same occupancy at all three properties. Wyndham Garden is now open for business since June and has been running at 96 per cent occupancy despite summer. It was great to have received an overwhelming response from the German and Scandinavian markets. Tapping the right market with the correct price point and careful research is a way forward. As hoteliers, our aim is to increase ROIs for the properties."



invest their finances in business but also entrust various hotel management companies to take care of their business. The

it is up to us to make the right decision. We, in the UAE, are blessed to have the best rulers in the world as policy changes rapidly here to enable successful trade and tourism bonds. With the visa-on-arrival resulting in a tremendous influx of new visitors to the emirate, we as hoteliers should be able to get our piece of success in it by making use of novel strategies to get bulk business. It's important for hoteliers to become good businessmen too. If the owners are happy and they receive their ROI on time, we in turn will reap many benefits to the management and staff as they can receive good increments, bonuses and promotions."

Ajman were solely started as a revenue generating process as we were looking out for a new plan. It eventually turned out to be successful and made us go an extra mile and achieve certifications for our efforts. As management, we need to understand that human sustainability is very important in the hospitality trade. Before the launch of our sustainability programmes, a few staff wanted to resign for various reasons but we somehow managed to work out our revenues and provide them bonuses and increments; today, we have staff working for longer period at our properties. We believe that the core value of business is to give appreciation. 



RwandAir, Cozmo Travel ink deal

RwandAir has recently appointed Cozmo Travel as its Passenger General Sales Agent (GSA) for the GCC countries (Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia (Offline)).

TT Bureau

Timothy Njihia, Country Manager—UAE, GCC and Pakistan, RwandAir believes that partnerships play a very important role especially for airlines entering new markets. He further reiterated that the practice entails airlines sourcing competitively for established and well-known GSAs when entering particular markets which saves airlines associated costs for new market entry and development such as infrastructure and human resource while focusing on results. "We are already established in the UAE and we do cover the entire UAE market from a passenger and cargo sales perspective. This growth strategy, though offline, gives us an opportunity to assess the GCC markets for any other informed decisions in the future," said Njihia.



"This partnership was inked at the most opportune time with a significant population of African nationals working and residing in the GCC region. The focus will be to capitalise on the large network of destinations within the African continent served by RwandAir coupled by the excellent on-board services to further grow RwandAir sales as well as

The focus will be to capitalise on the large network of destinations within the African continent served by RwandAir coupled by the excellent on-board services

to establish the airline as a major African carrier in the GCC region. With an interline SPA agreement in place with flydubai enabling seamless transfer via Dubai onward to the various African

destinations served by RwandAir, customers will fly to their respective destinations with ease and comfort as well as extremely competitive fares," stated **Jamal Abdunazar**, CEO, Cozmo Travel.

With Cozmo Travel's extensive retail presence in all the GCC countries, RwandAir will be able to capitalise on Cozmo's network in the region ensuring a wider market reach. Likewise, Cozmo will be able to represent and sell the various RwandAir destinations within the African continent as well their expanding network into Asia and Europe.

SATGURU TRAVELS

- A Leading Global TMC
- Customer Centric
- Service Driven
- Technology Enabled

54 COUNTRIES
68 BRANCHES

A GLOBAL Travel Management Company

Corporate Travel

- 4,000+ Corporates Globally
- Travel Policies Compliant
- Travel Budget Optimization
- Data Analytics
- Traveler Tracking

Leisure Travel

- Customized Global Packages
- Trusted by over 1 million happy Travelers
- Value for Money
- Theme based destinations

+971 4 3688 667

info@satgurutravel.com
www.satgurutravel.com

25+ YEARS OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Your one stop Travel Provider

Air Ticket

Hotel

24 x 7

Holidays

Car

Insurance

Visas

MICE

Desktop travel search dominates

According to Sojern's Third Global Travel Insights Report 2018, desktop usage for travel search remains resilient despite the popularity of mobile phones. Desktops are definitely here to stay!

TT Bureau

The new report offers a quarterly look at travel trends from around the world. Sojern's data science team analyses billions of travel intent signals annually to help 93 per cent of the Fortune 500 travel brands to better understand the booking behaviour of travellers and how

to reach them with marketing messages.

"Even with mobile devices nearing global saturation, we continue to see that travel planning search volume remains desktop-heavy," said **Jackie Lamping**, Vice President—Mar-

keting, Sojern. "While there's clear evidence that mobile is playing an increasing role in the dreaming and inspiration phases of trip planning—mostly driven through social sharing on Facebook and Instagram—travellers still come back to their desktop in order to

research options in more detail, compare prices and ultimately arrive at a confident decision."

Sojern data shows that only 28 per cent of travel searches in the US came from mobiles in the last quarter. Lamping

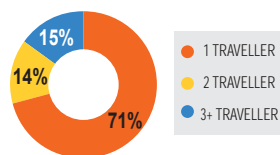
explained, "Many consumers still feel that the price comparison shopping experience is better on desktop—whether that's due to faster Wi-Fi or website load times, access to more content, or the ability to open multiple browsing windows simultaneously."

This new report provides insight into customer behaviour from travel searches looking back at Q2 of 2018 and looking forward at Q3. Top findings looking back at Q2 include:

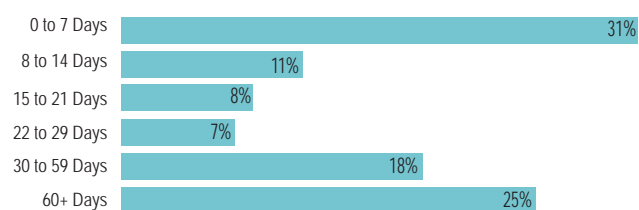
Top 5 Destinations

Jeddah
Riyadh
Cairo
Istanbul
Dubai

Party Size



Lead Time



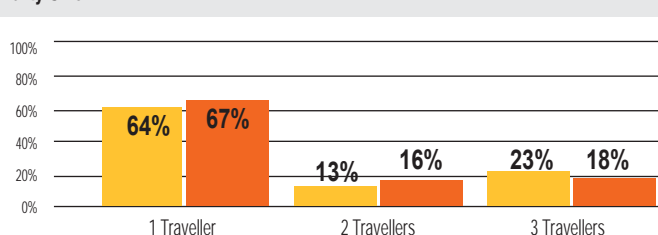
Device Usage

52%
Searches on Mobile

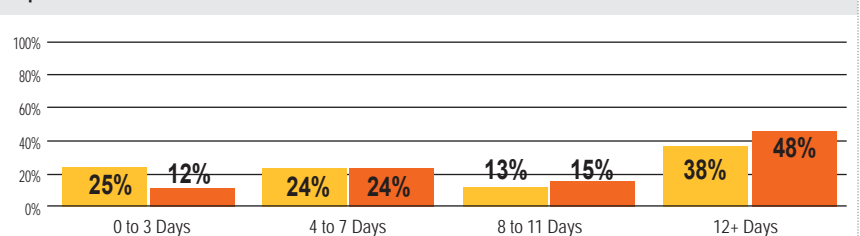
Top 5 Destinations

Istanbul Paris
Cairo Lisbon
Dubai London
Casablanca Manila
Jeddah New York City

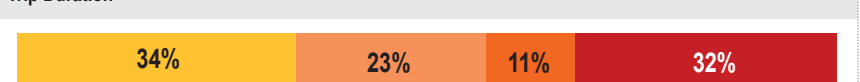
Party Size



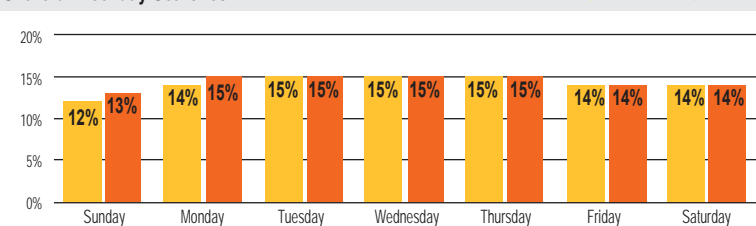
Trip Duration



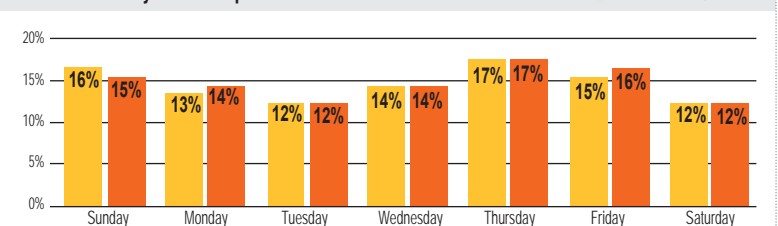
Trip Duration



Share of Weekday Searches



Share of Weekday Travel Departures



❖ Desktops rule the roost

Although mobile devices are abundant, Sojern's latest insights report indicates global consumers are still using the desktop for majority of their searches while planning travel. In North America, 72 per cent of travel searches were done on desktop during Q2. For Asia Pacific, it was 67 per cent and 64 per cent in Latin America. Though desktop reigns supreme in much of the world, mobile search is still dominant in two regions - Europe, and the Middle East and Africa; with 53 per cent of European travel searches on mobile during Q2 and 52 per cent in Middle East and Africa.

❖ Travelling solo tops the charts

According to our travel intent research, 71 per cent of Middle East and African travel searches were for solo trips during the months of April, May and June. Solo trips accounted for 69 per cent of North American travel searches, 67 per cent in Latin American, 63 per cent in Asia Pacific

and 53 per cent in Europe. However, when we look at upcoming travel searches for July, August and September, couple travel has been on the rise. Our data shows an increase in couple travel primarily for North America and Latin America. Europeans, in particular, are searching for more couple trips when travelling regionally. People in the Middle East and Africa are searching for group travel of three or more during July through September travel dates.

❖ Not everyone is searching for last-minute travel

In the second quarter of 2018, 65 per cent of travel searches for Asia Pacific started more than 30 days prior to the departure date. Similarly, 63 per cent of travel searches in Europe and 61 per cent in Latin America started more than 30 days in advance of the departure date, while in the Middle East and Africa the number stood at 43 per cent. Asia Pacific travellers were the heaviest planners of all regions with 45 per cent of their travel searches starting more than 60 days out from the departure date.

Cobalt Air joins Travelport

Travelport announced the signing of a multi-year content agreement with Cobalt Air which includes the use of Travelport's leading merchandising tool, Rich Content and Branding. This partnership will offer countless opportunities to drive sales to Cobalt Air.

TT Bureau

With its base in Cyprus, Cobalt Air offers regular flights to 22 destinations in Greece, the UK, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Spain, Israel, Denmark, Lebanon and the UAE. Under the new agreement, its full content and inventory will be made available for the first time to over 68,000 Travelport-connected agencies servicing hundreds of millions of consumers around the world.

With Cobalt Air joining over 260 airlines using Travelport Rich Content and Branding, agencies and travel bookers will also be given a graphically rich experience when searching for and booking the airline's



Paul Simmons
CCO
Cobalt Air

branded fares, as well as greater access to its ancillary offers. Through delivering these benefits, Travelport's merchandising tool will help drive increased revenue.



Philip Saunders
Vice President—Air Commerce, Europe
Middle East and Africa, Travelport

Commenting on the agreement, **Paul Simmons**, CCO, Cobalt Air said, "Working with Travelport will extend the availability of our flight options and better present our value to travel agencies and

travel buyers globally. This agreement is an important part of our distribution activity across Europe and the Middle East and Rich Content and Branding will provide us with a powerful advantage as we widen out the Cobalt Air offering in an aim to bring the world to Cyprus."

Philip Saunders, Vice President—Air Commerce, Europe Middle East and Africa, Travelport added, "We are delighted to welcome Cobalt Air to Travelport's platform and look forward to supporting its growth objectives. Our Rich Content and Branding solution will help promote the airline's brand and increase revenue by facilitating upsell of branded fares, ancillaries

and special promotions while continuing to develop Travelport's position in the Cyprus travel industry."

Cobalt Air was welcomed as a member of International Air Transport Association (IATA) in December 2017. IATA is the trade association and collective voice for 280 of the world's airlines from over 119 countries worldwide. Cobalt Air also has a full IOSA accreditation. The company was recognised as the Best Start-up Airline of the Year in the world in 2017 by CAPA – The Centre for Aviation. Extending its reach in the Middle East, Cobalt Air signed an interline agreement in June 2018 with Etihad Airways.

New in-destination App for travellers

■ Dubai-based global engagement and rewards solutions provider, the ENTERTAINER, partnered with leading independent foreign exchange business, Travelex to introduce an in-destination App to provide customers with

an array of offers across 16 destinations.

Travelex ENTERTAINER will open up thousands of new rewards for travellers exchanging currency. All they have to do is visit their nearest Travelex exchange bureau, exchange

money, receive App card and download the App to unlock and activate amazing offers in selected cities. Valid for 30 consecutive days after activation, the in-destination expert, Travelex ENTERTAINER, will also offer its customers a day

planner and a guidebook. Customers will have the ability to access the guidebook via the App within their chosen destination and will also have the option to download it for convenient use offline.

Travelex ENTERTAINER cus-

tomers in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Cape Town, Dubai, Durban, Johannesburg, London, Oman and Qatar will have access to 2-for-1 offers across Food & Drink, Beauty & Fitness, Attractions & Leisure, Fashion & Retail and Cheers categories.

Travelport

New Distribution
Conversation

Are you maximising value
from IATA's NDC?

For more information visit
travelport.com/ndc



Leading by example at Alpha DMC

Personality of the month



 Shehara Rizly

Currently heading the position of General Manager of Alpha Destination Management Hamadeh joined in 2000 as Regional Head—Sales for the MENA region and soon moved on to international sales where he successfully positioned Alpha as a market leader from Europe and developed new source markets into the destination. In addition to the daily micro-management of the company, Hamadeh is entrusted to oversee the business on a macro level, where the long-term strategy and the future of the business is being set. This includes the development of strategic global partnerships and identifying new opportunities as well as integrating advanced technologies and innovative service-delivery methods into their operations.

Success in a dynamic industry

Hamadeh shares tourism is challenging, dynamic, fun, exciting and continues to be a diverse industry where one continues to learn and discover various new cultures, places, people, languages on a regular basis. Success in the travel industry drives on having excellent people skills, communication, teamwork, dedication, flexibility and commercial awareness.

Achievements

He explains that among notable accomplishments in his career is

“You are up against global business trends and changing customer behaviour in this industry. You have to be ahead of the game and run with a clear vision on developments in the world of travel technology”

mentoring putting together a team of committed, well-trained, creative, and highly motivated team members. He explains, “In this industry, you can’t stop running. You are up against global business trends and changing customer behaviour. You have to be ahead of the game and run with a clear vision on what is coming up in the world of travel technology. This is another achievement of connecting the dots and being able to surf against the tsunami of the digital world by adapting to innovations to ensure the company is ahead of its competitors.”

Transformation of travel & tourism

The industry has witnessed a paradigm shift in trends and practices. Hamadeh mentions, “Travel has been reshaped by the latest innovations and technological advancements as well as massive development of facilities and attractions. Digitalisation has revolutionised the entire value chain of the industry. Prioritisation of tourism on national agendas by governments in the GCC has given it a major impetus. Accelerating growth of tourism is a massive investment in the sector along with relaxation of travel policies and strategic regional collaborations. Dubai has emerged as the largest tourism city by market size within the region.

Today we have the most iconic buildings and the best hotels, fabulous airports, superb global connectivity, expanding low-cost carriers, outstanding leisure attractions, year-long calendar of regional and international events and excellent quality of life.”

The passion for travel and adventure transformed into a career for **Samir Hamadeh**, General Manager, Alpha Destination Management. Having joined as Regional Head of Sales in the MENA region in 2000, Hamadeh heads a team of committed, well-trained and creative individuals.

OTAs vs traditional agents

Although technology plays a pivotal role in the trade, it is clear that traditional agents will never cease to exist. Hamadeh reiterates, “International tourism is expected to grow to 1.8 billion people by 2030. Technological connectivity and price comparison engines have, no doubt, shifted purchasing power to consumers. However, the web is a complex world that can be overwhelming with too much information and choices. That is when one needs to be guided by travel advisers who offer special experiences that consumers can’t easily get on their own. Therefore, it is important to start viewing customers not as mere units, but as guests seeking experiences. Travel specialists, particularly luxury travel agencies, are still in demand because only humans are capable of making some experiences happen.”



Taste of Sweden in Dubai



TT Bureau

The Sweden Beach Palace will consist of nine luxurious palaces, plus one super-sized version, set in the beautifully

Kleindienst Group, developer of The Heart of Europe, unveiled the first Sweden Beach Palace at Sweden Island. The Group's Chairman **Josef Kleindienst** showcased the property as part of the project to pioneer the freehold second home market in UAE.

landscaped, lush green surroundings of Sweden Island. Each property will have its own private section of beach, and unique to the palaces, a fully-owned piece of the marine area plot, including a private coral reef. The properties have been designed as second homes; Dubai's first purpose-built luxury area for UAE residents to own a holiday property in their own country, instead of jetting to the Maldives, Mauritius or the Seychelles. The second

home market is a new concept for Dubai. While New York has The Hamptons and multiple cities in Europe have their own countryside and seaside getaway spots, Dubai has lacked an area where people leave their primary property and head to a second home for the weekend.

Josef Kleindienst, Chairman, Kleindienst Group said, "The Heart of Europe is a unique and ambitious project aiming to develop Dubai's luxury freehold

second home market in an idyllic island location. Catering to residents and visitors who are looking for a dynamic, cultural experience, our developments at The Heart of Europe are set to boost tourism in the UAE. It will also offer investors the opportunity to choose from a range of high quality holiday properties that will be part of a vibrant touristic destination that includes hotels, restaurants and world-class attractions. Our journey till date has taken

us to the unveiling of the Sweden Beach Palace, one of the most luxurious freehold second homes in the UAE."

The first Sweden Beach Palace features seven plush bedrooms, each with its own en-suite bathroom. Five of the palaces will be fitted out with Bentley Home interiors, while the remaining properties will be bespoke to the individual owners. Each property will incorporate a gym and fitness centre. 



Join the region's largest travel technology congress.

REGISTER NOW!

www.traveltechme.com/register



2nd Annual
Travel Tech
Middle East

26 - 27
SEPTEMBER 2018
The H Hotel Dubai, UAE

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS



Albert Dias
Co-Founder & CTO,
Musafir



Geet Bhalla
CEO,
HolidayME



Mamoun Hmedan
Managing Director
MENA & India, Wego



Nabil El-Shafeay
Founder & CEO,
Visit & Go



Philip Jones
General Manager,
Movenpick Hotel Jumeirah

Premium Media Partner:



For Sponsorship Opportunities and Registration:

Call us at +971 4 243 4688
Email us at info@traveltechme.com

Organised by:



Travel Forward announces latest upgrade to its speaker line-up

Travel Forward, the new technology-focussed event co-located with WTM London, has added a cosmopolitan line-up of speakers to its conference programme, representing high-profile consumer brands and B2B tech providers from Europe and beyond.

The inaugural Travel Forward – comprising a conference, exhibition and buyer programme – will take place from 5 – 7 November 2018 at ExCeL London, UK.

The conference sessions take place on the first two days. Mike Croucher, chief architect for **Travelport**, will open the event on Monday 5 November with a keynote presentation, drawing on his vast experience of travel technology to deliver what promises to be a compelling perspective on the trends and innovations to watch.

Other speakers from the technology sector include Francesca Benati, who is vice president of online for Western Europe, MEA for **Amadeus**. She is also managing director for Amadeus' entire Italian business and will be on a panel talking about distribution on Tuesday 6th.

Travel Forward aims to position travel as part of the overall technology landscape, and has confirmed that **Dr Sue Black**, a technology evangelist with a PhD in software engineering, will deliver a keynote speech on the Monday.

Dr Black is a government adviser and has played a prominent role in championing the role of women in the technology industry.

While Amadeus and Travelport are pure-play B2B tech providers to the travel and hospitality sectors, technology is no longer a discrete silo within consumer brands.



Businesses such as **kiwi.com** and **Skyscanner** have built successful businesses based on proprietary technology, and senior execs from both will be part of the Travel Forward conference programme.

Skyscanner's Filip Filipov will also be speaking at Travel Forward. His CV confirms the extent to which travel technology is truly global – he was educated at Harvard in the US and INSEAD in France, before working for a VC firm in Bulgaria and in Singapore.

His session on the opening day will look at the theory and practice of blockchain, from the perspective of a truly global and innovative technology-based travel business.

Secret Escapes is well established in the UK and is growing across Europe. It uses TV advertising to build up awareness of its members-only luxury deals business and counts the investment arm of search giant Google as one of its backers. Co-founder and chief operating officer Tom Valentine will be part of panel on Monday 5, looking at how technology is changing the traveller experience.

He will be joined by Gunjan Verma, chief technology officer for **The Travel Corporation**, a US-based holding company which handles nearly two million travellers a year across its global portfolio of 29 brands, and Didier Pinson, chief information officer for **Rail Europe**, which distributes tickets from European rail operators to North Americans visiting Europe.

Elsewhere, the rail industry is also represented by Roberto Abbondio, managing director of new business for **Eurostar International**. On the Monday afternoon, he will talk about how dynamic packaging technology has helped it to become a successful tour operator.

The hospitality sector has arguably faced the most disruption from technology and will be prominent across Travel Forward. Distribution is the most obvious example of how hotels have had to adapt.

The airline industry, which invented travel technology in the 1960s with its computer reservation systems, is also exposed to changing tech trends.

Finally, the online travel agencies who brought online booking into the consumer mainstream, will also be featured. **Expedia Group** is now a global travel platform business, best known for expedia.com but with interests in corporate travel (Egencia), metasearch (Trivago), distribution (Expedia Affiliate Network), B2B rail technology (SilverRail) and much more.

Richard Gayle, Event Manager, Travel Forward, said: "Looking through the list of confirmed speakers shows that tech is now an integral part of every travel company across all sectors and geographies. Attendees at Travel Forward will be spoilt for choice when it comes to deciding which sessions to attend and the strength of the conference programme for our inaugural event confirms that we have identified and addressed a need in the market for a dedicated deep dive into travel technology."





A world of insights revealed

5,000 exhibitors
ready to inspire
and help grow
your business

Register Now
london.wtm.com

Official Media Partner



wtm

LONDON

5-7 November 2018

Follow us
#IdeasArriveHere

Wego partners with Airbnb

In order to provide more choices of accommodation for its Middle East clientele, Wego signed a partnership with Airbnb, thereby enabling more properties to appear on the Wego search results.

TT Bureau

With the addition of listings on Airbnb, travellers using the Wego metasearch apps and websites will have easier access to a wide range of local homes and other unique types of accommodation in destinations worldwide. Wego users simply have to enter their destination city and dates of travel, and follow the recommended filters to search for a wide array of Airbnb vacation rentals. This announcement comes at a time when MENA based travellers and inbound visitors to the MENA region have demonstrated an appetite for cost-effective holiday options.

As the leading travel metasearch player across the MENA region, Wego helps users to quickly compare the widest possible range of



Hadi Moussa
General Manager—MEA
Airbnb

accommodation options available in the marketplace, including hotels, serviced apartments, homes and villas and to compare rates across local and global travel agencies, hotel direct websites



Anna Trushkina
Director
Hotels Wego

and other merchants. Airbnb's accommodation marketplace offers access to millions of places to stay in more than 191 countries, from apartments and villas to castles and treehouses.

Speaking about the collaboration with Wego, **Hadi Moussa**, General Manager—MEA, Airbnb said, "The high quality range of properties on Airbnb will be a great addition for Wego customers who are seeking new accommodation experiences. We are confident that this partnership will contribute to diversifying the hospitality business in the region."

Anna Trushkina, Director—Hotels at Wego commented, "This partnership will significantly expand the supply of alternative accommodation on Wego and is perfectly matched with types of demand we see from Saudi Arabia and other GCC markets. Analysis of search and booking data from across the 60 countries worldwide that Wego

operates, shows that users from GCC countries have the longest length of stay, highest spend per night and most frequent instance of multiple room bookings to accommodate family groups. Based on all of this, we think that private homes, villas and apartments are a great fit for the needs of the market."

Properties Galore

Under the new partnership, Wego users will be able to view Airbnb properties across all destinations worldwide, including in perennial favourites with Wego users such as Dubai, Beirut, Istanbul, Amman, Marrakech, London, Paris and New York

Ctrip launches first travel concept store in DXB

Ctrip launched its first concept store at the Dubai International Airport-Terminal 3. It aims to provide 24*7 high quality customer service and in-destination products.

TT Bureau

As an important global hub, Dubai International Airport welcomes tourists from all over the world. The concept store is able to provide one-stop online and offline services, including travel guidance, consultation, transportation, catering, shopping and more. The opening of Ctrip's concept travel store marks the 2018 UAE-China Week and a fruitful cooperation with Dubai International Airport and Dubai Tourism. Ctrip's first travel con-

cept store allows tourists to enjoy greater value-added services upon their arrival. Travellers are able to experience Ctrip's one-stop in-destinations services from the selection and booking of local tour activities to enjoying services from local tour guides and more. On-site staff are on hand to provide 24-hour service in languages such as Chinese, English, Arabic and many more. The concept store is complete with 3 TV sets along with 5 iPad Pros. Ctrip has worked together with Dubai Tourism to design a variety of stop-over itineraries and local entertainment options for travellers in transit or only in Dubai. 🇦🇪



Amadeus widens portfolio

Amadeus' acquisition of TravelClick from Thoma Bravo for USD \$1.52 bn is set to expand Amadeus' presence in the hospitality sector.

TT Bureau

As part of the acquisition, approximately 1,100 TravelClick employees are expected to join Amadeus. Amadeus and Thoma Bravo expect to close the acquisition in the fourth quarter of 2018, following regulatory approvals.

Headquartered in New York, TravelClick provides innovative cloud-based solutions, including an independent and mid-size hotel Central Reservation System (CRS) and Guest Management Solution (GMS), as well as business intelligence and media solutions.

"TravelClick has a great team, great technology and a broad customer base, and we are looking forward to welcoming such a successful business into Amadeus," said **Luis Maroto**, President and CEO, Amadeus.



"Our ambition is to provide the hospitality industry with the tools they need to grow their businesses and deliver a great experience to their guests. The combination of our two portfolios will allow us to provide that to hotels of all sizes across the world."

"This deal marks the next stage in TravelClick's incredible

journey of success in delivering ground-breaking solutions for hoteliers," said **Larry Kutscher**, CEO, TravelClick. "I couldn't be more proud of our team or more excited about the impact our combined companies will have on the hospitality industry as we begin to deliver the next generation of innovation for hoteliers." 🇦🇪

VOTE NOW

ARABIAN TRAVEL AWARDS

20th September 2018

JW Marriott Hotel Dubai

WITH RECOGNITION COMES RESPECT

www.arabiantravelawards.ae

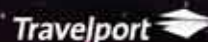
MEDIA PARTNERS



HOSPITALITY PARTNER



TECHNOLOGY PARTNER



For further details, contact:

sonia.butalia@arabiantravelawards.ae, nikhil.jeet@ddppl.com

NEW HOTELS

TRAVTALK brings you some of the latest and upcoming properties operational in Dubai.

★ **Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay**

Rooms/Suites
inventory : 270

Opening Date:
July 2018



Gulf Hotels Group (GHG), Bahrain's leading home-grown hospitality provider, announced the soft opening of its first UAE property, Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay. The four-star deluxe hotel offers a total of 270 rooms, including superior rooms to suites, which overlook the Dubai Water Canal. The hotel boasts fine-dining restaurants alongside impressive lounges and a banquet hall. Other facilities include meeting rooms, a swimming pool, fitness centre and spa.



★ **Royal Central Hotel - The Palm**

Rooms/Suites
inventory : 207

Opening Date:
July 2018

The rooms and suites are beautifully designed to meet the needs of discerning travellers. One of the biggest attractions of the resort is its striking location on the East crescent of the iconic Palm Jumeirah. Guests have beachfront access to one of the best private beaches in the city while enjoying unhindered views of the world-famous architectural landmarks such as Atlantis The Palm and Burj Al Arab. An array of recreational facilities at the hotel ranges from water sports to an outdoor infinity pool, gym and health spa.

★ **W Dubai - The Palm**

Rooms/Suites
inventory : 350

Expected Opening:
October 2018



The iconic W Dubai - The Palm will house 350 sea-facing guest rooms and suites on the West Crescent of Palm Jumeirah. Designed through the W lens, the Escape with six restaurants, juxtaposes the man-made geometric skyscrapers with the organic waves of the desert. The hottest ticket in town will be the DND Suites - W's version of the ultimate cabana. Flaunt your style to your heart's content with a private event within the three exclusive DND Suites, elevated hideaways adjacent to the WET Deck.



★ **Radisson Dubai Damac Hills**

Rooms/Suites
inventory : 481

Expected Opening:
Q4 2019

Radisson Hospitality AB, part of Radisson Hotel Group, has announced the signing of its first Radisson hotel in the Middle East at Dubai's Damac Hills. The new signing is in partnership with leading Dubai-based real estate developer Damac Properties. Radisson Hotel Group portfolio now features 81 hotels and more than 20,000 rooms in operation and under development across the Middle East region. The new upscale, full-service brand with Scandinavian-inspired hospitality, will be situated in Damac Hills.

Ensuring a memorable stay

With an aim to cater to families, Holiday Inn Dubai - Al Barsha strives to deliver a package versatile to the GCC market, thereby attracting kids with its latest campaign.

TT Bureau

Tastefully elegant 309 roomed (inclusive of 53 suites) Holiday Inn Dubai - Al Barsha, an IHG Hotel, conveniently located a few minutes from the Sharaf DG metro station on one side and in close proximity to Mall of the Emirates on the other, offers competitive rates in the market and has become a favourite among families. Its accessibility has made it as one of the most sought-after properties in the area for those who wish to indulge in a fulfilling experience in Dubai.



The latest family stay package by Holiday Inn Al Barsha is designed to make the kids feel important. If the kids are below 12 years, they can stay and eat for free, a programme popular at IHG properties. The special weekend stay package offers 50 per cent off on spa, 25 per cent off on food and beverage, late checkout, easy room upgrade to a higher category, complimentary Wi-Fi and a complimentary shuttle bus service.

From the 24-hour restaurant Gem Garden to the Thai and Indian outlets, all restaurants offer delicious cuisine that would enthrall your taste buds. On a Friday night, a must-try experience at Royal Buddha is the Dim Sum night.



Celebrating all things marine

Creek Marina will be home to the Vida Harbour Point, a 286-room upscale lifestyle hotel, similar to the harbour hotels in cities such as Singapore and Shanghai. It is scheduled to open in 2019.

 TT Bureau

Dubai Creek Harbour has unveiled one of the world's finest city-harbour getaways, the Creek Marina in the heart of Creek Island Dubai, the premier residential and leisure district of the 6 square kilometre mega-development, only 10 minutes from the Dubai International Airport and the iconic Burj Khalifa in Downtown Dubai.

With spectacular views of the Downtown Dubai skyline as well as the Dubai Creek, a one-of-its-kind waterfront destination, will be home to elegant residences, sweeping landscaped parkland, gourmet restaurants, cafes and entertainment venues. A winding boulevard encircles the Creek Island Dubai delighting residents and visitors with a breadth of unparalleled lifestyle choices. Several construction milestones have been achieved on the various residential developments in Dubai Creek Harbour. Creek Marina is set to open in December this year, even as preparations are ongoing to welcome the first residents in Dubai Creek Harbour by early 2019.


At Creek Marina, you explore, dream and discover a new way



of life by the very heart and soul of the city, the historic Dubai Creek, the cradle of commerce and culture. Creek Marina is also adjacent to the Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary, a haven for migratory birds including the famous pink flamingos as well as soothing stretches of mangroves. With the monumental Dubai Creek Tower shining bright and Dubai Square, Creek Marina

offers that perfect complement to a vibrant lifestyle choice that celebrates all good things marine. Nearly three-fourth of a kilometre long and about a quarter wide, the Creek Marina is billed to be the new Riviera of the Middle East. With its oyster design, a throwback to the city's rich pearling history, it will serve as a refreshing new leisure destination for visitors to Dubai from

all over the world and residents in Dubai Creek Harbour.

Creek Marina will have a capacity of over 81 single- and double-berths and will feature a dedicated world-class Yacht Club with an impressive array of shopping and dining facilities. Facilities such as fuelling services, upgraded power outlets and pedestal units will ensure smooth sailing for all. 

Other Attractions

 Creek Marina will also offer a selection of high-end retail, dining and leisure venues. Its vibrant promenade will welcome visitors with palm trees and feature trendy cafes, high-end restaurants, fashion outlets and street-food vendors too

DINE-IN, DELIVERIES AND CATERING

Arabian Centre, 04-2845164
Mobile: 050 4575243,
E-mail: kwalityrst@gmail.com

MOVEMENTS

Abu Dhabi Airports

► Abu Dhabi

Bryan Thompson has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of Abu Dhabi Airports. Thompson brings with him more than 25 years of international experience in various areas of airport management and operations, including ANS, terminal operations, strategy and planning, in addition to infrastructure and corporate development. In his previous role as Senior Vice President—Development at Dubai Airports, Thompson led the development of Dubai International Airport as well as Dubai World Central. In addition, he was involved in the strategic planning of Dubai 2020 and 2050.



Royal Central Hotel — The Palm

► Dubai

Central Hotels has appointed **Mohamed Hassan Youssef** as General Manager for Royal Central Hotel —The Palm. Youssef is a seasoned hotelier with over 20 years' of experience in the industry, including nine years in the UAE working with a number of leading brands within the region. He Mohamed began his career with a number of global brands, which included Sonesta Hotel & Nile Cruises, Swissotel Sharm El Sheikh, and Concorde Hotels & Resorts. Prior to joining Royal Central Hotel — The Palm, Youssef was Hotel Resident Manager at the Western Hotel in Abu Dhabi.



Danat Al Ain Resort

► Al Ain

Danat Al Ain Resort announced the appointment of **Khaled Sharabassy** as General Manager. Sharabassy brings with him an extensive experience of more than 22 years in the hospitality industry. Prior to this appointment, he served as the General Manager of Tila Liwa Hotel, a property managed by Danat Hotels and Resorts in Abu Dhabi. Sharabassy holds a degree in Hotel and Restaurants Management and has been affiliated with international hotel chains including Kempinski Hotels, InterContinental Hotels Group and now with Danat Hotels & Resorts group since 2008.



Reed Travel Exhibitions

► Middle East

Reed Travel Exhibitions (RTE) has boosted its executive team with the appointment of **Danielle Curtis** as regional Exhibition Director for the Middle East. Curtis takes on the overall responsibility for Arabian Travel Market (ATM), IBTM Arabia and all associated travel projects throughout the region. Curtis has over 15 years' experience within the events industry, including extensive knowledge of RTE's portfolio of events. Prior to her accepting her latest role, Curtis was events manager for IBTM Arabia following her position as contract exhibition manager for ATM.



Preferred Hotels and Resorts

► Dubai

Preferred Hotels & Resorts has designated **Nicolas Villemin** as Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa. In this role, Villemin is tasked with the retention and expansion of the brand's Middle Eastern and North African portfolio. Preferred Hotels & Resorts' portfolio in the region currently encompasses 21 member hotels, resorts and residences, located in the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Morocco. With 20 years of industry experience, Villemin brings a wealth of expertise from previous senior executive positions and consultancy roles for luxury hotel brands.



H Hotel

► Dubai

H Hotel Dubai has appointed **Amr Attwa** as its Director of Finance. With over 13 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Attwa started his career with Marriott International in 2005, where he developed and grew to hold several senior positions within the Finance department. He joined the H family following his recent post of Assistant Director of Finance at Lapita Autograph Collection – Dubai Parks Hotel. Attwa has extensive hotel pre-opening experience with Marriott International.



H Hotel

► Dubai

H Hotel Dubai has appointed **Ahmad Jaber** as Director of Digital Marketing. Jaber joined The H Dubai from AccorHotels where he was holding the position of Digital Marketing Manager at Raffles Dubai. He started his career in Abu Dhabi in 2015 as the E-Commerce Manager of Beach Rotana Abu Dhabi. In 2016, he then moved to Dubai to join Raffles Dubai. With vast knowledge in Digital Marketing, Hospitality, Strategic Communication, Media Production and Branding, Jaber will be responsible for looking after all marketing, PR and digital communications for The H Hotel Dubai.



TASTY AND TASTEFUL EXPERIENCES

For bookings and inquiries, please call +971 4 3277001 or email HA089-FB@accor.com



ibis Styles Dubai Jumeira
2nd December Street,
Al Mina Road Jumeirah 1,
P.O. Box : 121252, Dubai - UAE
Tel: +971 4 327 7001

ibis Styles Dubai Jumeira is operated by R Hotels (a member of R Holding) under a franchise agreement with Accor Hotel

Sabre

► Bahrain

Sabre Corporation has appointed **Sumit Chaudhary** as Head of Finance for Sabre Travel Network Middle East (STNME). Chaudhary will lead the financial operations for the Middle East, a key growth area for Sabre. He is tasked with optimising financial performance across the region as well as identifying and executing commercial and financial opportunities to help accelerate growth and create value for customers and shareholders. Throughout his 15 years of experience, Chaudhary has developed extensive knowledge in growing new business, building high performance teams and setting financial protocols in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.



YACHT CHARTERS & FISHING

Turn Wonderful Moments into Priceless Memories

Charter with Family and Friends

AED 500/- Per Hour Onwards



Pickup and drop off facility from hotels in Dubai

LUXURY PRIVATE CHARTER
DEEP SEA FISHING
SUNSET CRUISE



ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED COMPANY
www.alwaslyachts.ae

24/7 RESERVATION
04 2394760 / 04 2394761



Sharjah Collection

by mantis

Nested in the Kalba mangroves, Kingfisher Lodge by Mantis offers authentic experiences and means to unwind in the midst of one of the last protected wilderness of the region.

* The lodge is available on an all-inclusive package, full board including activities, spa treatments, beverages and Wi-Fi