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Oman Air Successfully Concludes Partaking At ATM 2009 A Report On The Arabian Travel Market

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Oman Air delegation is upbeat about its recent participation at the Arabian Travel Market 2009 (ATM) in Dubai. Oman Air stall drew a large number of visitors that approached to see and feel the new Business Class seat that was on display at the Dubai International Convention Centre. Travel industry chiefs who took part in ATM, the leading travel and tourism exhibition of the region dedicated to unlocking the business potential within the Middle East, remained optimistic about the industry's continued growth despite the harsh global economic conditions.

Usama Bin Karim Al Haremi of Oman Air's Corporate Communication and Media said, "Oman Air's stand was visited by serious business visitors, and we have received a positive amount of enquiries. The quality of participants and visitors who visit ATM has been consistently high. This year too, the event has enabled us to successfully raise awareness of our product offerings and additional routes. We did successfully exploit the show to outline our long-term commitment to growth, destination expansion and product development. Just having a presence at the event is positive and helps to raise brand awareness," he added.

The show also saw delegations, led by senior government ministers, from a host of international and Middle East nations and states. Al Haremi added that the authorities were seeking new cooperation opportunities and expected to minimize crisis' effects as much as possible during turbulent times. "Senior industry figures who attended the event predicted that the region would defy current global economic conditions to buck world-wide trends and international downturns in travel to record solid growth", he said.

Al Haremi brought to light the fact that the current global financial crisis might have influenced much regional travel and tourism players to shrink operations, exercise caution and to rethink strategies.

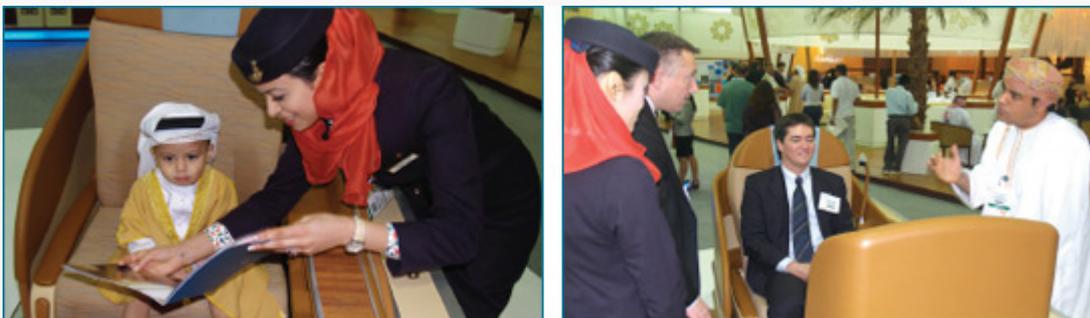


"While some have been downsizing operations, Oman Air is expanding. The national carrier of Oman is investing in a long term plan and when the market recovers, we want to be well positioned to take advantage of the travel market. Oman, and the region as a whole, is well placed to weather the current challenges and come out even stronger. In fact the Middle East is the only region which has seen an increase in air passenger traffic in March, when every other region saw a drop. Recent figures have shown that Middle East was the only region to see increase in air traffic in March 2009. The latest forecasts from the International Air Transport Association have the Middle East as the sole aviation market seeing demand growth this year, though the forecast of 1.2pc rise is overshadowed by a 3.8pc increase in capacity," Industry figures released.

The ATM 2009 witnessed a number of programmes that enhanced the event's knowledge-sharing capabilities, including expanded seminars, Travel Agents Day and Consumer & Careers Day. Among the new initiatives that were developed for this year's ATM was 'Hosted Buyers' Programme' which is an effective way for the industry's premium tour operators, buyers, decision makers and meeting planners to source products and services from leisure, Mice and Golf sectors. Another testimony to the effectiveness of ATM is the growing number of first time participants, which stood at 150 as against 120 last year.

The 2009 show also saw an expanded seminar programme, with more than 30 experts discussing a variety of key topics in 18 sessions. This biggest-ever programme reinforces Arabian Travel Market's commitment to promoting increased dialogue and debate to stimulate the market's recovery.

Added to these were a number of key industry reports - including Deloitte's 'The Middle East Hotel Performance Review', Catererglobal.com's 'Recruitment and Retention Strategies in the Middle East Hotel Industry' and EuroMonitor's 'Future Trends for Travel and Tourism in the Middle East' - that were unveiled during the four-day event.



Deloitte announced the findings of its report - The Middle East Hotel Performance Review - at Arabian Travel Market 2009. In this report, Robert O'Hanlon - Group Leader for Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure (THL) Industry for Deloitte & Touche Middle East - writes that the Middle East is in a more fortunate position than much of the rest of the world when it comes to hotel room occupancy amid

the global slowdown. "Despite current figures being lower than in previous years the Middle East was showing a projected two percent rise in international tourist arrivals which compared favourably with a global reduction of two percent." The report reads.

"Arabian Travel Market 2009 boasted more than 2,100 exhibitors and stand-sharers, from 69 countries, including 70 new-to-market representatives, as well nearly 60 national tourist bodies representing six continents. The show also saw delegations, led by senior government ministers, from a host of international and Middle East nations and states," Al Haremi stated.

He added that The Arabian Travel Market has seen phenomenal growth over the last five years, up from 12,500 m of space contracted in 2004 to 24,000 m in 2008, which is a clear reflection of the Middle East's own meteoric development.

Among the important visitors to the Oman Air's Stand at the ATM 2009 were His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of UAE and Ruler of Dubai who spent some time with the Oman Air delegation, also HH Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of the Department of Dubai Civil Aviation and Chairman of Emirates Group, who visited Oman Air's stand too. HH Sheikh Ahmed Al Maktoum was clearly impressed with the Business Class seat that was on display, and complimented Oman Air's team on the excellent invention and said that no Business Class product can be better.



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