



CLOSING REPORT

ITB China 2018: bigger and better!

Satisfied top-quality buyers and visitors – 15,000 attendees in total – well-attended ITB China Conference with 4,000 attendees – Timekettle and TravelFlan won 2018 ITB China Start-Up Award – many pre-registrations for next year's show: 15 to 17 May 2019



Visit Finland

Berlin/Shanghai, 18 May 2018 – Visitors, exhibitors and buyers were completely satisfied with ITB China 2018. In its second year, the success of ITB China is reflected in the heavy demand for floor space and a significant increase of visitors. Compared to the inaugural event in 2017 the gross exhibition space as well as the attendees rose by 50 percent undermining that ITB China is continuing its success story.



“With its 700 exhibiting companies from 80 countries as well as 15,000 attendees participating and China becoming the driving force for the growth of the global travel industry, ITB China is establishing itself as the must-attend event for anyone looking to establish a strong presence here. The results are remarkable considering it is only the second show. The performance is a strong base which promises even more growth next year”, said **Dr. Christian Göke, CEO Messe Berlin**.



The organisers extended the hosted **buyer program** this year. In all, there were around 800 buyers at the event, which is an increase of more than 30 percent in the number of buyers at this year's show compared to 2017. Diversity was very high again with Chinese buyers coming from over 300 different companies throughout China representing the full range of China's largest industry players. 73 percent of the Chinese Leisure, MICE and Corporate buyers came from mainland China (outside Shanghai), 24 percent from Shanghai province and the remaining 3 percent from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. More than **15,000 prescheduled appointments** maximised the business opportunities of both exhibitors and buyers. The organizers launched a completely new **matchmaking system** perfectly catering to the needs of both exhibitors and buyers using desktop, mobile, APP or Wechat interfaces.

Press Contacts:

Messe Berlin GmbH:
Emanuel Höger
Press Spokesman and
Press and Public Relations
Director Corporate
Communication
T: +49 30 3038-2213
hoeger@messe-berlin.de
www.messe-berlin.de

ITB China:
Julia Wegener
PR Manager
T: +49 30 3038-2269
J.Wegener@messe-berlin.de

Additional information:
www.itb-china.com

MB Exhibitions (Shanghai) Co., Ltd.
Management: Dr. Martin Buck,
Executive Director
4225 Wheelock Square, 1717
West Nanjing Road
Jing'an District, Shanghai,
200040 China

Lu Jun, Managing Director, China Travel Group Shanghai Co., Ltd. said: “ITB China was very well organized and set high standards in terms of the quality of both exhibitors and buyers. The show displays set off the exhibition and conference just perfectly. As a member of the China National Travel Service, I felt honored to attend this year’s show. I believe that this will surely lay a solid foundation for our future communication and cooperation with domestic and foreign counterparts, which we expect will come very soon”.

Ms. Lin Yan, Senior Vice President, Utour Group Co., Ltd: “As one of the largest travel operators in China we have gained a lot from ITB China. We expect and believe that ITB China will become the world's largest and most successful tourism exhibition. The reason why ITB Berlin is the largest travel show to date is that Germany was the largest source market back then, with 70 million German travelers going abroad every year given its population of 80 million. Since 2016, China has become the world's largest source country, so ITB China implies exceptional potential. ITB China expanded 50 percent over the last year and the event has developed rapidly. Both exhibitors and buyers are highly dedicated, especially buyers, which shows that the organizers of ITB China boasts in-depth knowledge on the Chinese market. Exhibitors presented highly differentiated products.”

ITB China focuses exclusively on the Chinese tourism industry with International companies and Chinese companies meeting with Chinese trade visitors. The exhibitors were coming from 80 countries as far as Argentina, Brazil, Chile or the Middle East, such as UAE as well as partner destination Finland. **Director, Head of Global Sales Promotion, Visit Finland** said: “Finland was the partner destination of this year’s show. We expect this co-operation with ITB China to further strengthen our position in China. This year Finland was represented at ITB China by 28 companies around Finland with a delegation of 45 Finnish travel industry professionals. Our goal at ITB China is to promote Finland as year round destination and to introduce for example Finnish Lakeland Region to Chinese travelers. Travel from China to Finland has been growing too rapidly. We expect this growth to continue also during the coming years.”

The year 2018 is a significant year for both China and Europe, ITB China has been an official partner event of the EU China Tourism Year, a major initiative launched jointly by the European and the Chinese governments. The exhibition featured a high number of individual national pavilions from all over Europe. In addition, the European Travel Commission had a strong exhibition presence on the show floor showcasing a multitude of European destinations. **Eduardo Santander, Executive Director, European Travel Commission:** “Unity is strength. Europe needs to remain competitive in China. Only through deeper cooperation with Chinese authorities and an increased commitment of the European tourism sector supporting targeted joint public-private

marketing initiatives, Europe will succeed in fostering more travelers from China. The strong cooperation with ITB China will help us reaching these goals.” Further **key partnerships** as part of ITB China included **China Tourism Association**, the largest industry association for China’s travel and tourism industry with 4,000 members, the **China Tourism Academy**, a research institution directly under the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) with a focus on studies in the tourism industry and **Wyndham Hotel Group** as the official hotel partner. The Wyndham Hotel Group is one of the leading international hospitality companies in the world and operates an extensive collection of 8,100 hotels across 20 hotel brands in 78 countries. By the end of 2017, the Wyndham Hotel Group was operating 1400 hotels in China, with the number of guest rooms reaching 138,787. The group has been steadily expanding brands that are already on many preferred lists, such as the award-winning Wyndham Grand, Wyndham, and Ramada.

For the **ITB China Conference**, China’s recognized travel think tank, which hosted around 70 sessions featuring 120 high-level speakers informing about the latest trends and developments in China, the event was also a success. With a total of around 4,000 (2017: 2,700) attendees the conference registered high levels of participation and an increase of almost 50 percent. The keynotes, lectures and workshops proved to be major visitor attractions again. The Conference featured sessions on Customised travel, which has become an important and fast-growing segment for Chinese travellers, with dedicated sessions devoted to sports tourism, Revenue Management for hotels or animal friendly tourism.

The new **Business Travel Day** and the **Education & Job Day** were also very well accepted by the visitors. On 17 May 2018 the ITB China Conference offered everyone working in the business travel market an ideal platform for training and networking at the **Business Travel Day**. Practical workshops with up-to-date information on methods and strategies provided both career newcomers and corporate travel managers with first-hand knowledge and updates. This year’s exclusive partners were CITS American Express Global Business Travel, Carlson Wagonlit Travel China and BCD Travel.

For the first time ITB China constituted the last day of the ITB China Conference, 18 May 2018, to a dedicated ‘**Education & Job Day**’ in partnership with Fudan University & Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI). Tourism management students and jobseekers attended the morning sessions of the Education Day, checked the job wall and were able to make immediate contact with personnel managers in the fully booked Job Area with more than 40 companies, institutions and universities, such as Ctrip, JinJiang, Sabre, Carlson Wagonlit Travel China or Wyndham Hotel Group, exhibiting.

Another highlight of the conference was the **ITB China Startup Award** taking place for the second time this year. It acknowledges outstanding new products and services that were introduced less than two years ago and which anticipate major market potential. For the first time there were two equal winners: **Timekettle**, a Shenzhen based company, convinced the jury with their WT2 translator, a smart and wearable real-time translating earphone. The Hong Kong-based travel platform **TravelFlan** won over the jury by providing travelers with a personalized and hassle-free travel experience with the use of AI Technology. For the first time Qyer and ITB China co-organized the **IT'S MY WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS** honoring Chinese key opinion leaders (KOL) as well as global destinations across all sectors of Chinese outbound travel at this year's show. Among the winners, was famous Chinese actress Ms. Huang Lu, who won in the category "Travelers of the year" or Chinese actor Mr. Xia Yu winning in the category "Pioneers of Travel & Tourism". The award honors companies for their innovations in order to help everyone involved in the industry meeting the needs of the Chinese travelers. The ceremony was followed by an exclusive Gala Dinner. Exhibitors to ITB China could talk and meet with China's most influential KOL's, in order to promote their destination.

The **ITB China Market Introduction Program** made its debut this year, too. The newly launched program was designed for international travel industry professionals who had no or little experience with the Chinese travel market. Companies or institutions who aimed to gather first experiences with the Chinese travel industry, could easily establish first contacts and got useful information about this dynamic industry and market. Inaugural partner, VIR (Verband Internet Reisevertrieb, Germany's leading association for the online travel industry) sent a delegation to China for the first time.

There was raising attention shown by the **media** at this year's show with 260 (2017: 150) registered Chinese and international journalists reporting from ITB China. The event offered numerous opportunities for **networking** and making new valuable industry contacts during many networking events, such the Opening Dinner on the eve of the show, the ITB China Cruise Night 2.0 sponsored by Ctrip, the Party Like a Finn, held by the partner destination Finland, the ITB China European Night powered by the EU- China Tourism Year as well as numerous late functions.

The date for **ITB China 2019** is already set: Wednesday to Friday, **15 to 17 May 2019** at Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre. Early committed exhibitors who register before **31 May** will benefit from an **Early Bird discount** of 15 per cent on their stand rental fees.

About ITB Berlin and ITB Asia

First launched 52 years ago, ITB Berlin is recognized as the most successful trade show for the global travel industry. Some 10,000 exhibitors from more than 180 countries regularly attend this event. Every year in October for the last ten years Messe Berlin has successfully organized ITB Asia in Singapore. Boasting 940 exhibitors from 113 countries, ITB Asia in Singapore has established itself as Asia's Leading Travel Trade Show. As the second show in Asia, ITB China will take place in Shanghai, one of the leading industrial cities in the People's Republic of China, and with a population of around 23 million one of world's largest cities. In contrast to ITB Asia, which reflects tourism in Asia as a whole, ITB China focuses entirely on the Chinese travel market.

About ITB China and the ITB China Conference

ITB China 2019 will take place from Wednesday to Friday, 15 to 17 May, at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre in Hall 1. ITB China is a three-day business to business travel trade fair that focuses exclusively on the Chinese travel industry. The ITB China Conference will take place parallel with the show and is co-organized by the leading conference organizer TravelDaily (www.traveldaily.cn).

More details are available at www.itb-china.com

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