

PRESS RELEASE

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ITB Berlin 2018: Strong economic boost from the World's Leading Travel Trade Show®

High demand by exhibitors again – Around 10,000 exhibiting companies from 186 countries and regions – Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is the first German federal state to be the official partner region of the World's Leading Travel Trade Show® – Revolutionary forms of travel, overtourism and digitalization are key topics at the ITB Berlin Convention – Focus on luxury travel – The Medical Tourism segment expands – Travel Technology is booming – ITB: a new international umbrella brand

ITB Berlin reflects worldwide dynamic developments and growth in the travel industry. From 7 to 11 March 2018, the World's Leading Travel Trade Show® will again be the industry's meeting place and must-see event, devoting itself to innovative and forward-looking trends in the travel industry, politics and business. In the future, ITB will present itself as an international umbrella brand and focus not only on promoting the annual event in Berlin. This re-orientation on a global scale means a concentration of three formats, the trade shows in Germany (ITB Berlin), Singapore (ITB Asia) and China (ITB China), under one label. At the 52nd edition of ITB Berlin around 10,000 tourism companies from 186 countries and regions will be represented on an area covering 160,000 square metres at the Messe Berlin fairgrounds. Over 80 percent of the exhibitors are from abroad. Once again the organisers expect more than 100,000 international trade visitors seeking prosperous business opportunities as well as many thousand members of the public on the weekend, who will be able to find inspiration for their next trip.

"In 2018 ITB Berlin remains strongly in touch with the industry's trends. We provide a forum for pressing issues such as overtourism, revolutionary forms of travel and digitalization as well as topical themes such as luxury travel, technology and sustainability. ITB Berlin has firmly established itself as an international brand and above all stands for acquiring industry contacts from around the world and industry knowledge that is first-hand. It is the logical consequence of positioning ourselves as the leading market force and opinion-former of the global travel industry", said **Dr. Christian Göke, CEO of Messe Berlin**.

The focus is on this year's partner region **Mecklenburg-Vorpommern** which, taking as its slogan 'The Spirit of Nature', will have information on its wide range of products in a number of locations, including Hall 6.2. and 4.1. The German federal state will also be organising the big opening ceremony on the eve of ITB Berlin at the CityCube Berlin. For the first time since ITB Berlin began the event will leave a zero carbon footprint. **Manuela Schwesig**, Minister President of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: "The World's Leading Travel Trade Show gives us a unique opportunity to showcase the attractions of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to the world. The state will present itself as a modern, successful and extremely diverse holiday region. In particular, we would like to welcome more international guests to our state".

ITB Berlin Convention 2018: Top-Notch knowledge from industry experts

From 7 to 10 March 2018, at several sessions, the leading think tank of the global travel industry ITB Berlin Convention will be devoting itself to a number of topics, including **overtourism, revolutionary forms of transport** for business and private travel, plus the challenges of and future prospects for **artificial intelligence** in the travel sector. Together with Zambia, the Convention & Culture Partner, and the WTCF, the co-host of ITB Berlin Convention, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the partner region of ITB Berlin, will officially open this years convention program in the morning of 7 March. Afterwards, in a keynote speech **Jane Jie Sun, CEO of Ctrip.com**



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International Ltd., will examine the topical subject of 'Tourism: the Gateway to Global Peace and Prosperity'.

On Thursday, 8 March, at the ITB Marketing & Distribution Day, high-ranked representatives of the international tourism industry will discuss future trends such as sharing economy and big data. In his keynote speech on 'The Evolution of Airbnb and how Global Travel is Changing', **Nathan Blecharczyk, co-founder and chief strategy officer of Airbnb and chairman of Airbnb China**, will provide an update on the latest developments at Airbnb and an insight into the changing travel market. Afterwards, in an ITB CEO interview with **Philip C. Wolf, founder of Phocuswright and serial board director, Mark Okerstrom, the new CEO of Expedia**, will respond to a number of questions: What are the global growth strategies of this travel industry giant and what new technologies and market challenges does Expedia face?

On Wednesday, 7 March, ITB Destination Day 1 will look at 'Overtourism', currently a much-discussed topic. **Mato Franković**, mayor of Dubrovnik, a representative of the city of Barcelona and **Frans van der Avert**, CEO of Amsterdam Marketing, will reveal their recipes for success and the lessons learned for managing tourism destinations. On Wednesday afternoon, attention will focus on an up-to-the-minute topic, namely the 'The Revolution of Travel'. **Dirk Ahlborn, CEO of Hyperloop Transportation Technologies Inc. (HTT) and founder and CEO of JumpStarter Inc.**, will talk about tomorrow's transport system and the future role of Elon Musk's hyperloop technology. At a further session the 'Revolution of Travel' will become reality. Technology pioneers including **Dirk Ahlborn** and **Alexander Zosel, co-founder of Volocopter GmbH**, will provide an update on their revolutionary projects and discuss commercial prospects and business models. The latest findings of the **market survey conducted by ITB Berlin in collaboration with Travelzoo** will be eagerly awaited. In this survey for ITB Berlin the international publisher of exclusive travel deals researched the opinions of travellers from Europe, America, Asia and Australia on new forms of transport and the approval ratings they gave.

Focus on luxury travel at ITB Berlin 2018

Luxury travel is booming, and at the same time the general attitude towards the market is changing. Affluence is no longer defined by glitter and an exhibition of wealth. Both the challenges and the opportunities that this change can bring concern the industry, and from 7 to 11 March 2018 will thus be key topics at ITB Berlin and ITB Berlin Convention. The **Loop Lounge @ ITB** will be celebrating its debut in Hall 9. In cooperation with Lobster Event, ITB Berlin has created a new platform for networking exclusively with a selected group of exhibitors. On Thursday of the show the first **ITB Luxury Late Night** will provide an opportunity to cultivate the contacts made. At this new outstanding networking event at Orania.Berlin, a new Boutique Hotel, exhibitors will be able to meet leading buyers from the global luxury travel market. The event will be opened by **Dietmar Müller-Elmau, the managing director of Schloss Elmau**. Participation is by special invitation only.

Networking at the MICE Hub and the new ITB MICE Night event

Creating a festive atmosphere at events, evaluating events and managing diverse audiences – these are just some of the topics which the **ITB MICE Forum** will be examining at this year's ITB Berlin Convention. The forum targets visitors representing the Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Event industry and will take place on 8 March 2018 in the Convention Hall 7.1a (Room New York 2) from 10.45 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. The Association of Event Organisers (VDVO) is the official partner of the MICE event. This year the **MICE Night**, an exclusive event, will be celebrating its debut. In cooperation with ITB Berlin, the VDVO will extend an invitation to join the event at the International Club Berlin, which is within easy walking distance from the fairgrounds. At this event, representatives of the industry have the chance to meet fellow industry members in an informal atmosphere and discuss the day's topics. The **MICE Hub** will also offer opportunities for networking. Taking as its slogan 'Meet the MICE Minds', the VDVO will be presenting industry experts and exhibitors at the MICE Hub, a special display area on stand 200 in Hall 7.1a.

Medical Tourism segment expands

Following last year's successful launch of the important and fast-growing **Medical Tourism** segment, growing demand means it has had to relocate to a larger hall (21b). In addition to a wide-ranging program of presentations and lectures at the Medical Hub at the Medical Pavilion, the **Medical Media Lunch** will take place for the first time at the Medical Tourism Pavilion on Wednesday, 7 March from 1 to 2.30 p.m. Afterwards, the Medical Travel Quality Alliance (MTQUA) will present the world's ten best clinics catering for medical tourists. On Friday, 9 March, taking place at the Capital Club on Gendarmenmarkt in Berlin, the exclusive **ITB Medical Night** will also provide an opportunity to network. With its project entitled 'Healthy MV' as well as four exhibitors, the partner region Mecklenburg-Vorpommern will also be promoting the benefits of medical tourism.

High growth in exhibitors from China

At ITB Berlin 2018 the number of exhibitors from China is growing especially fast. The online portal **Ctrip** will be exhibiting its products at ITB Berlin for the first time. Other newcomers from China will include Flightroutes, Ucloudlink, Letsfly, Qyer and Qup. For the third year running ITB Berlin will be organising the **ITB Chinese Night**, where invited participants can find out more about the Chinese travel market, exchange views and establish new contacts. This year's event on Wednesday, 7 March is being co-organised by Jin Jiang International and Ctrip and will welcome around 300 representatives of the travel industry (<http://www.itb-china.com/itb-berlin-chinese-night/>). At the **ITB China 2018 Preview** on Thursday, 8 March, from 4 to 6 p.m. at the CityCube Berlin (<http://www.itb-china.com/itb-preview-event/>), visitors can also find out about the fast-growing travel market and major attractions at ITB China, which from 16 to 18 May will be taking place for the second time in Shanghai.

Travel Technology continues to boom

This year, growth and dynamic expansion will again be the hallmarks of the Travel Technology halls and the eTravel World. Exhibitors including eNett, Traso, Triptease and Paymentwall, which have increased their display areas, returning exhibitors, among them Travelport, as well as the Hospitality Industry Club, a newcomer, will highlight the excellent prospects for this fast-growing segment. At the **eTravel World** in Halls 6.1 and 7.1c, visitors to the eTravel Stage and eTravel Lab can once again find out about the innovations of the future and their potential impact on the travel industry. The focus will be on future-oriented topics such as blockchains, social media and voice recognition. On 7 March at 10.30 a.m. on the stage in Hall 6.1 David Ruetz, Head of ITB Berlin, and the humanoid robot Pepper will jointly open the eTravel World.

New events this year include the **Hospitality Tech Forum**, featuring hospitality industry topics, and the **Start-up Day** in cooperation with Verband Internet Reisevertrieb (VIR), Germany's leading association for the online travel industry. On the same day start-ups from Europe, America and Asia will come together on the eTravel Stage in Hall 6.1. At a start-up competition and a number of sessions the new digital community will present its travel technology innovations.

ITB Career Center: an even bigger international attraction

This year, the ITB Career Center is again offering students, graduates and those in search of a new career all kinds of opportunities to find out about their job chances in the tourism industry. Hall 11.1, where over 50 exhibitors from Germany and abroad will be represented, is the place to head. This year, international participation in the hall will be even higher than in past years. Universities from Hong Kong and Latvia will be represented for the first time. As in 2017 The German Federal Employment Agency is the exclusive partner of the ITB Career Center. On Friday, 9 March from 5 to 5.45 p.m., ITB Berlin will be celebrating a debut with the **Company Slam**, a new format at the show which gives company representatives 90 seconds to pitch their companies in an original and creative manner.

Growth in two popular segments: LGBT and Adventure Travel

Adventure tourism and sustainable travel seem particularly important for the younger generation. This trend is reflected by the fact that Hall 4.1 is fully booked. This year it will be the fifteenth time that the focus in Hall 4.1 will be on Adventure Travel & Responsible Tourism. Visitors to the 13th Pow-Wow for Tourism Professionals will find out more about the trending topics in the sustainable and responsible tourism segment from lectures and discussions at two stages. The key topic this year will focus on coastal protection. At ITB Berlin 2018 the Gay and Lesbian Travel (**LGBT**) segment will be even bigger and even more diverse. This year, this fast-growing segment will feature a number of new exhibitors at the LGBT Travel Pavilion (Hall 21.b). At the LGBT Presentation Corner, now a firmly established event, there will be lectures on the latest topics, workshops, product presentations and numerous networking events. On Friday, 9 March at 12 midday at the Palais am Funkturm, the presentation of the **LGBT+ Pioneer Award** will take place for the first time. This award is made annually to outstanding destinations, tourism companies and personalities representing the LGBT travel market.

High exhibitor demand sets the tone

This year, demand for places at ITB Berlin is particularly high from Arab countries, Asia and South America. As an emerging travel destination the United Arab Emirates (Hall 2.2) are now expanding into the market. Abu Dhabi has almost doubled the size of its stand, and the displays of Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah are much larger than last year. In Hall 26, Vietnam and Laos will be occupying more than twice the floor size of 2017. Japan has also significantly increased its representation. A number of exhibitors including Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar and Taiwan will be welcoming visitors on two-tier stands. All the regions from the Caribbean are exhibiting in Hall 22a, a clear sign that after the devastating hurricanes tourism is more important than ever to these islands. Martinique and Jamaica have even increased their stand size.

Egypt (Hall 4.2) will be making an emphatic return with a larger stand. Equally, as the largest exhibitor at ITB Berlin, Turkey will again be demonstrating that this colourful destination has lost none of its fascination. In Hall 3.1 bookings by the US and Russia have reached last year's levels, while waiting lists exist for Ukraine and Tajikistan. The same applies to Nepal and Sri Lanka in Hall 5.2, where demand for individual stands is particularly high. In Hall 5.2b, where India is featured and which once again is fully booked, it was not possible to meet all the open requests. Rajasthan with its picturesque palaces will be represented again in 2018, along with numerous co-exhibitors. The state of Jharkhand is a newcomer to the show, as are Earth Routes and many smaller tour operators in this hall, where ayurveda and yoga will be major attractions again.

At ITB Berlin 2018 **European destinations** will also be attracting more attention with larger stands. Accordingly, the Czech Republic (Hall 7.2b), the UK (Hall 18) and Sardinia (Hall 1.2, featuring Italy) will be occupying larger stands. In Hall 1.1 Portugal will be exhibiting its products on an area that has grown by one-third. This year, in addition to Hall 15, Polish regions and hotels can also be found in Hall 14.1. Demand by Romania and Slovakia is high in Hall 7.2b, where there is a waiting list. The same applies to Hall 1.1 which features Greece. After a long absence Belize, Guayana, French Guiana and the Turks and Caicos Islands will be returning in 2018.

About ITB Berlin and the ITB Berlin Convention

ITB Berlin 2018 will be taking place from Wednesday, 7 to Sunday, 11 March, and from Wednesday to Friday will be open to trade visitors only. ITB Berlin is the World's Leading Travel Trade Show. In 2017 a total of 10,000 companies and organizations from 184 countries exhibited their products and services to around 169,000 visitors, who included 109,000 trade visitors. Parallel with the show the ITB Berlin Convention, the Leading Travel Industry Think Tank, will be held from Wednesday, 7 to Saturday, 10 March. Zambia is the Convention & Culture Partner of ITB Berlin 2018. The World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) is Co-Host of the ITB Berlin Convention. Ctrip.com International, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey are Platinum Sponsors. Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for trade visitors, media representatives and exhibitors. More details are available at

www.itb-berlin.com, www.itb-convention.com and at [ITB Social Media Newsroom](#).

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