

INAUGURAL DUBAI CHINA CONFERENCE CONCLUDES WITH OVER 900 DELEGATE ATTENDEES

Dubai, UAE: 24 September 2018: Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) hosted its inaugural Dubai China Conference on 19 and 20 September at Atlantis, The Palm. The two-day event, which welcomed over 900 attendees, featured integrated workshops and informative guest speakers offering valuable insights from both Chinese and local industry experts. With panel discussions strongly attended throughout the event, guests were invited to deep dive into Dubai's China Readiness Strategy plus engage with presentations led by industry partners.



Breakout periods were also built into the two-day schedule to allow industry players to share knowledge during networking opportunities alongside partners such as Huawei, Ctrip and Tencent. There was also a series of engaging workshops hosted by Mafwengo, Fliggy and Alipay enabling attendees to meet the teams to discuss further potential collaborations, as well as Meituan and DaZhongDianPing which delved into the Digital Cooperation Trends in Dubai. The comprehensive programme demonstrated the clear appetite for attracting Chinese visitors and engaging with market leaders in the travel and technology space.

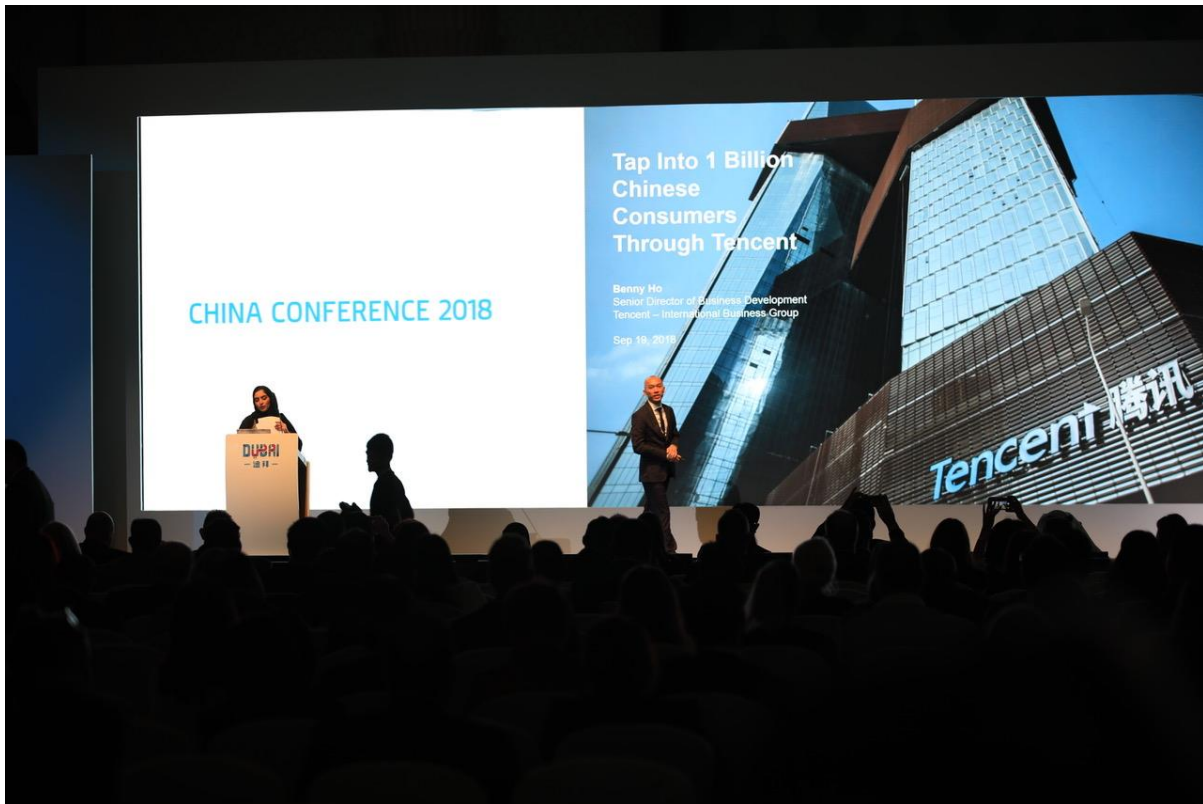
With exponential growth in overnight visitors from China, the event offered a clear indication of the market's rising prominence as one of Dubai's fastest growing source markets, after closing the first eight months of 2018 with a record 578,000 visitors – a growth of nine percent over the same

period in 2017. While demand from Chinese travellers is increasing at a quicker rate than capacity, visitation growth is supported by a 9.5 percent increase in air capacity over the last five years, and increasingly competitive ticket pricing. Furthermore, the percentage of those on China-Dubai flights who stay in Dubai has increased by 29.2 percent highlighting the increase in demand for elongated stopovers for Chinese tourists. Examining consumer spend of Chinese tourists in Dubai during 2017 compared to the same period in 2016, there was a six percent points increase in share of spend on hotels and local transport with a five percent increase in spend on leisure and entertainment. These positive figures were shared alongside an 11 percentage points rise in business travel when evaluating the main purpose of visits to Dubai.



The ongoing relationship between China and Dubai is underpinned by the emirate's China Readiness strategy. Incorporating a series of large-scale initiatives in collaboration with key strategic partners such as Alipay and WeChat Pay with the ultimate goal of further enhancing the visitor experience of Chinese tourists, the ongoing support and investment through private and public sector collaboration further reinforces the commitment from both markets.

Following the inaugural Dubai China Conference, partners and stakeholders shared their thoughts on the two-day event;



Her Excellency, Li Lingbing, Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Dubai said: "I would like to keep in close communication with Dubai Tourism to further promote a comprehensive bilateral cooperation, including the tourism industry."

His Excellency, Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai Tourism, commented: "Just as Dubai's destination offering has continued to evolve over recent years, so has our approach towards marketing it internationally. As Dubai continues to gain traction as a preferred destination of choice for Chinese travellers, we are actively working with our public and private sector partners and stakeholders to facilitate a city-wide conversation to continue to tap the true potential of this market. As such, the purpose of this conference has been to create a platform for industry leaders and partners to come together to not only share best practices and technical industry insights, but also encourage all stakeholders to find synergies that fuel our local endeavours in making Dubai more China-Ready. Seeing so many leading Chinese and local industry partners attend this event demonstrates the importance we both place on the relationship and the opportunities we feel it affords. Finally, I want to thank Atlantis, The Palm for their hospitality as the China Conference host, their considerable support in making this event as fulfilling as possible for all delegates is very

much appreciated.”

Roger Qui, General Manager of EMEA, Ctrip Destination Marketing, commented: “The China conference held by Dubai Tourism provides a great opportunity for communication as we will better understand the destination, whilst getting local partners to learn more about Ctrip. We are looking forward to strengthening our cooperation both with Dubai Tourism and all partners in Dubai so we can provide Chinese tourists with higher-quality and more professional stories.”

Jessica Pan, Dubai Country Manager, Alipay, said: “We are excited to be in Dubai and join the Dubai China Conference. It’s hugely important to get first-hand China market updates from Dubai Tourism, become closer connected to all local partners that are interested in Alipay and Alibaba Group and improve the China travellers’ experience.”

Ajay Mutreja, Senior Business Development Advisor, Fliggy, commented: “Personally, I am excited to be in Dubai and join the first Dubai China Conference. We have been looking forward to better understanding the work by Dubai Tourism plus getting closer connected to Dubai stakeholders who are interested in Fliggy, part of the Alibaba Group with a view to improving the China travellers experience in Dubai.”

Janus He, Outbound Business Commercial Head, Meituan & DaZhongDianPing commented: “It’s a great honour to be here in Dubai. We have had a very strong relationship with Dubai Tourism for the past two years and this Dubai China Conference will allow us to work in more creative ways and cooperate closer with Dubai.”

Mona Liu, Director of International Partnerships, Mafwengo commented: “We welcome the fantastic opportunity this Dubai China Conference brings. It helps us and the stakeholders to know each other better and build strong and lasting connections. We believe that tourism in Dubai will only increase and we are happy to be a part of it.”

Justin Chen, Managing Director of Huawei MENA Consumer Cloud Service Department said: “We are very pleased to join this conference and have met many potential digital partners. As a strategic partner to Dubai Tourism, Huawei Consumer Business Group will play an important role to discover and connect with partners and provide consumers with a better Dubai travel experience by SkyTone.”

Benny Ho, Senior Director of Business Development from Tencent International Business Group commented: “Dubai is our first strategic partner in the Middle East and an important flagship city to

promote smart tourism. We are very pleased to be invited to the Dubai China Conference, following our strategic cooperation announcement in April this year. We look forward to enhancing Chinese travellers' overseas experience in Dubai, as well as attracting more Chinese travellers to visit Dubai, together with the efforts of Dubai Tourism and local partners."

Timothy Kelly, General Manager and Senior Vice President, Operations, Atlantis, The Palm commented: "We are honoured and delighted to partner with Dubai Tourism to host this year's China Conference at Atlantis, The Palm. It has been a fascinating two days with opinion leaders, businesses and experts discussing the future trajectory of the region's Chinese tourism and media landscape. China continues to be a leading source market for us with a record-breaking 18% increase of Chinese guests during this year's Chinese New Year period. We look forward to welcoming more Chinese guests as they choose Dubai a must-visit tourism destination over the coming years."

Badr Abbas, Senior Vice President - Commercial Operations Far East, Emirates commented:

"With China being the largest trading partner of the UAE we, at Emirates, are pleased to contribute to the growth of trade between the two nations. Emirates was the first airline to establish non-stop connectivity between the Middle East and China and enhance China's trade links with the rest of the world, via Dubai, the hub of Emirates. China is an important business and leisure destination for Emirates and we are committed to offering Chinese tourists and business travellers a product that is at the forefront of innovation and has re-defined air travel - complementing perfectly the efforts of the DTCM to promote Dubai as a world-class destination. We would like to thank the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing for launching the Dubai China Conference as an initiative that will further reinforce strong trade relations and provide a platform that allows businesses across all sectors to explore new opportunities that will be mutually beneficial to both China and the UAE, including Dubai."

Olivier Harnisch, Chief Executive Officer of Emaar Hospitality Group, said: "The Dubai China Conference served as a strategic and forward-looking initiative to strengthen Chinese tourist arrivals to the city and to drive stronger ties between the UAE and China. Emaar Hospitality Group has a strong track-record of hosting Chinese visitors, offering them exceptional hotels in iconic locations that meet their aspirations. With plans to expand our Address Hotels + Resorts brand to the country and to open Address branded hotels and serviced residences in key cities, we look forward to

fostering our market leadership in welcoming Chinese guests as well as strengthening our geographic footprint in China.”

Sue Wheatley, Director of Sales and Marketing at Fairmont The Palm commented: “We were delighted to attend the Dubai China Conference. Insightful and engaging, the event enabled us to understand Chinese tourism further, importantly connect and network with partners and other stakeholders. In addition, gaining useful insights from the panel discussions focusing on business growth and opportunities from China for all Dubai stakeholders, in particular the future trends on digital engagement were an eye-opener.”

Jeannette Smit, Director of Sales and Marketing, Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai commented: “We enjoyed getting a deeper insight into China, one of the leading key source markets for Dubai. This was an exciting two-day conference with inspirational speakers, great panel discussions and networking events.”

William Harley-Fleming, Complex General Manager, Jebel Ali Golf Resort commented: “I thought it was fantastic, we are happy to see Dubai Tourism more heavily involved in this market, it’s good for us to be aware of that, and it makes sense really looking at the numbers today. We have made investments into this segment in some of the other markets we operate in, but I think it’s a good time to look into moving towards that direction here as well. We are looking forward to some of the Breakout workshops arranged with the companies that have flown in from China”

Freddy Farid, Gloria Hotels & Resorts Area General Manager commented: “I think it is a very informative session, in the sense that some of the information we were unaware of, especially the scale and size of the China market and how much emphasis Dubai Tourism is putting into it. We think it is a great initiative, the C-Trip presentation was really amazing, and the figures shared were quite compelling.”

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About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including

hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

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