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I-MICE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MICE INDUSTRY

FIRUZ BAGLIKAYA:
MICE HAS
BECOME A
SECTOR ITSELF
IN TURKEY

BAHADIR YASIK:
ISTANBUL
RETURNS TO
ITS OLD DAYS
IN CONGRESS
TOURISM

ijmex

SERDAR SOYLER:
YOU WILL FEEL HAPPY
WHEN YOU ARE IN TURKEY

TURKEY

WILL BE THE CENTER OF CONGRESS TOURISM

HUSEYIN KURT:
WE WILL ORGANIZE
A WORLD WIDE MICE
ORGANIZATION
IN TURKEY

THERE IS
ONLY ONE
ISTANBUL

WHY ISTANBUL
FOR CONGRESSES?

KERIM SIPAHILER:
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DESERVES TO BE IN
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IN INTERNATIONAL
MEETINGS AND
EVENTS!

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K. 3/8 Cağaloglu İstanbul
Tel:+90 212 511 25 61
Fax:+90 212 513 63 59
e-mail:info@turizmaktuel.com
www.turizmaktuel.com

OWNER AND MANAGING EDITOR

Sahibi ve Sorumlu
Yazı İşleri Müdürü
Hasan Arslan
harslan@turizmaktuel.com

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Projeler Koordinatörü
Doç. Dr. Volkan ALTINTAŞ
İzmir Katip Çelebi Üniversitesi Turizm Fakültesi
volkan@turizmaktuel.com

GENERAL COORDINATOR

Genel Koordinatör
Özcan Mutlu
ozcan@turizmaktuel.com

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Kurumsal İletişim Koordinatörü
Hakan Metin
hakan@turizmaktuel.com

PHOTOGRAPH EDITOR

Fotoğraf Editörü
Halil Tuncer
halil@turizmaktuel.com

MEDITERRANEAN AREA MANAGER

Akdeniz Bölge Temsilcisi
Halil Öncü
info@turizmaktuel.com

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UYMAYA SÖZ VERMİŞTİR.

WE AIM TO GIVE DIRECTIONS TO THE WORLD MICE SECTOR

*Doors of our association is open to anyone serving in the MICE sector.
All colleagues without being a member can register for the events.*



SERDAR SÖYLER
DIRECTOR – JOLLY MICE
PRESIDENT – I-MICE

MICE industry is a branch that serves to the establishments, contains all branches of tourism and internalized high level of service quality. MICE industry has a very big potential. To activate this potential is our duty.

Before the International Association of MICE Industry, there wasn't any corporation to represent our sector. We were feeling the lacking of it. We were speaking about our problems, sharing them but were not able move them into a official platform. Than we decided to founded International Association of MICE Industry.

International Association of MICE Industry aims to give directions to the world MICE sector with the events it organizes. Our goals are: to gather the shareholders of industry, to increase the collaboration of the shareholder, to create solutions for the problems of the sector, to establish a representing structure, to start new cooperations between members and shareholders, to strengthen the existing relations, to provide membership advantages to the members, to produce projects for the improvement of the sector, to create educational opportunities and ensure ethical continuity of the cooperations. Doors of our association is open to anyone serving in the MICE sector. All colleagues without being a member can register for the events.

As the association we care a lot about the education. We will collaborate with universities. We will provide qualified professionals to the sector.

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ISTANBUL OFFICE

Osmaniye Mah. Çağlar Sokak
Girişim Konakları A Blok
No.16/12 Bakırköy – İstanbul/Türkiye

T: +90 212 583 0078

F: +90 212 583 0074

M: +90 538 440 9532

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KIEV OFFICE

Kyiv, G. Kirpy 2a, Office 501
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CEREMONY



ALSO THE BOSSES OF CONGRESS INDUSTRY SAID 'ISTANBUL'

International Congress and Conventions Association-ICCA held its annual Board Meeting, held in a different destination every year, in Istanbul this year.

ICCA board meeting in İstanbul, obtained as a result of individual meetings and promotional activities of Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau's (ICVB) at IBTM World Fair last year, is also considered as a key of the return of the international congresses to the city. 19 ICCA Executive Board Members from different countries attended the meeting held between 14-18 February. In the event organized by ICVB and supported by Turkish Airlines, the natural and historical beauties of Istanbul were also introduced. Accommodation support for ICCA Board Members was provided by Conrad Istanbul Bosphorus. Members of the ICCA Board of Directors got together with Members of the Board of Directors of TUGEV-ICVB and sponsors in the dinner held on the evening of February, 15th, hosted by Hilton İstan-



bul Bomonti Hotel. ICCA President Nina Freysen-Pretorius thanked the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and ICVB for this successful organization. In her speech, Freysen-Pretorius also stated that public and private sector cooperation is very important and effective in order to bring more congresses to the destination. ICCA President Nina Freysen-Pretorius, who expressed her admiration for Istanbul, put into words her gratitude for being here. Afterwards, a gift was presented to Nina Freysen-Pretorius on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce of Istanbul and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of TUGEV-ICVB. The President of ICCA



stating that Istanbul has numerous beauties and is a city full of surprises said, "We have many ICCA members from Turkey. As ICCA we are very pleased about this. Our Turkish members have always been supportive. We wish them success." The event was also supported by: Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Turkish Airlines, Conrad İstanbul Bosphorus Hotel, Hilton İstanbul Bomonti Hotel, Portaxe, Çırağan Palace, The Sofa Hotel/Frankie Restaurant, Deluxe Golden Horn Sultanahmet Hotel, Levni Hotel & SPA, Mevlana Bazaar, DenDen Maritime.



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YOU WILL FEEL HAPPY WHEN YOU ARE IN TURKEY

If we want to have the right to say a word internationally in MICE sector, we need to increase the promoting activities. We should have international organizations done in our country.

Serdar Söyler, director of Jolly Mice and I-MICE President, saying that the guests preferring Turkey for MICE events find anything they look for in our country, underlined that Turkey has a very big potential for MICE tourism. Söyler also shared future projects of I-MICE with the Turizm Aktüel readers.

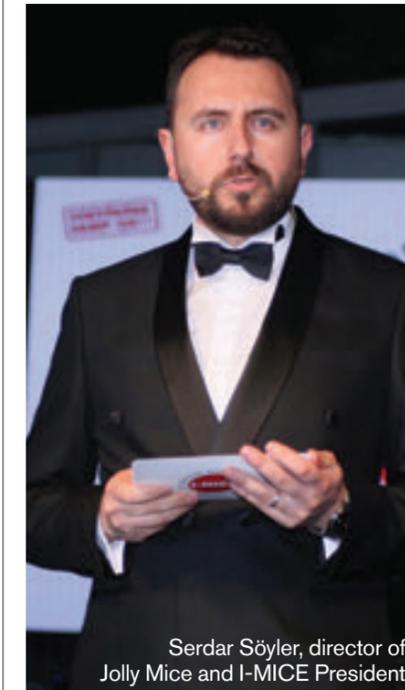
For a long time you give corporate service in the MICE sector and you represent the sector with the projects you reveal. In your opinion what would be the success criteria in MICE industry?

To be successful in MICE industry you have to have a flawless infrastructure and meeting organization, incentive trip, congress and event specialists in your team. The most important criteria of the success in this sector is to have all these qualifications.

Why do you think guests who prefer Turkey for MICE tourism choose Turkey?

Because they can find anything they are looking for. They can economically get the quality service from a team that thinks

ferent speeds. There are meeting places of good quality and equipped with high technology infrastructure. Thanks to



Serdar Söyler, director of Jolly Mice and I-MICE President

broadly structured sector?

There was no association to represent our sector. We received many good reactions when we opened our project to our fellow shareholders in the sector. Everyone wanted to be a member and collaborate. In a very short time we reached a level to represent our industry.

Would you tell us more about the future projects of I-MICE?

Our biggest project is to organize World MICE Summit in İstanbul. Among our perpetual targets there are: to create solutions to the problems of our sector, to give organizational sufficiency certificates, to organize vocational trainings, to provide the foundation of MICE departments in universities, to organize b2b meetings in the country and abroad, have representatives in the country and abroad, to organize networking events, to help the ones looking for a job and an employee.

I-MICE is preparing to host internationally reputable organizations. What

The guests preferring Turkey for MICE events find anything they look for in our country. They get the opportunity to work with experienced teams with the understanding of "there is no limit in service".

"there are no limits in service". They get happier when they come to Turkey. Because we are people who love to host guests with smiling faces and try to help them in any way we can.

How do you evaluate the MICE tourism news Turkey? What are the things that makes us different than other countries when it comes to technical and infrastructural conditions?

Turkey has a very big MICE tourism potential. Our country can easily be reached from any part of the world. Airlines, cruises and land route are the kinds of transportation that can be useful and in dif-

many boutique and chain hotels there are many alternatives for accommodation. With these features Turkey is very suitable for MICE tourism.

Could provide us some information about the International Association of MICE Industry of which you are the President?

International Association of MICE Industry is a big and important organism that includes and cares to represent all shareholders of MICE industry. We aim to make positive impact to the sector with the activities we did and plan to do in the future.

How did you succeed at gathering this

would be your words about this?

World MICE Summit is a very important project. We aim to gather worldwide shareholders of MICE industry and produce new projects all together. This excites us a lot.

Is there anything you want to add for closure?

If we want to have the right to say a word internationally in MICE sector, we need to increase the promoting activities. We should have international organizations done in our country. Also functional incentives for the MICE industry are needed. Industry professionals should act together for the solutions of the problems.

Serdar Söyler, director of Jolly Mice and I-MICE President

MICE HAS BECOME A SECTOR ITSELF IN TURKEY

The introduction of congress tourism in Turkey happened with HABITAT II in 1995 held in Istanbul.



Firuz Bağlıkaya,
the President
of TÜRSAB

Firuz Bağlıkaya, the President of TÜRSAB (Association of Turkey Travel Agencies), told *Turizm Aktüel* about how Turkey met with congress tourism and its development journey in our country.

Firuz Bağlıkaya, 3 months passed after your election as the new president of TÜRSAB. How would you evaluate these 3 months?

As the “Change Movement” and representatives; we first believed in change. We have revealed a wonderful spirit. We bunched up. We all worked a lot and succeeded. Now the election is over. We started to get together with all travel agencies. Right after the elections we attended in ITB Berlin Tourism Fair with the board members. Afterwards we took our place in our stand in the other important fair: MITT Russia. Both fairs were fruitful.

We have had important meetings with many ministers. We received support from all of them. I thank them again. We updated the 20% discount in museum tickets for agencies to 25% till the end of April. We had the word of Minister of Finance, Naci Agbal, on the “incentive per delegate” about the congress tourism. Now we are working on the MICE report that will be presented to the Ministry.

We got promise from Numan Kurtulmus, Minister of Tourism and Culture, on supporting us to expand our stands in the fairs in 2019. All the bids on TÜRSAB are open to all of our agencies. We have realized our first workshop about the problems of transportation and their solutions. The second one will be on May, 14th.

For the industry shareholders, we planned 50 organizations containing 25 inspiring panels and speeches and 25 personal growth trainings until the end of 2019. We have already organized two trainings.

If you don't sit on the same table with sector shareholders and speak about your problems and create projects in order to solve them, it is not possible to be successful. With this vision, with the presidency of our Minister of Tourism and Culture, participation of 9 important NGOs, initialized by TÜRSAB we founded the “Tourism Consultation Committee”.

Could you please give some information about the MICE industry?

Turkey met the congress tourism concept when HABITAT II was held in Istanbul in 1995. For congress tourism first thing to

of congress tourism. Besides historical, cultural and natural wealth of our country, with the hotels, congress centers, event centers and improvement of the technological infrastructure Turkey's share in the market has grown and our name climbed up in the list.

Turkish MICE industry has shown very good signs of improvement in the last 15 years with modern and international standard hotels, infrastructure and ease in accessibility thanks to Turkish Airlines and is more than a branch of tourism, it became a sector by itself.

In the past 2-3 years we overcame a fall in the list and in the demand. We believe that either public either private sectors leaping, projects, promotions and works will give Turkey its place.

When we compare Turkish MICE sector to the European countries, what are the characteristics that makes Turkey different than others?

Turkey with the rich historical and cultural treasure, hosts meeting and congress in the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Our country is an ideal destination with first class accommodation services, number of



have is restructuring of congress center or centers. Turkey had its first congress center, Lutfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Center, finished for HABITAT II. Before HABITAT there were congresses held in Istanbul but it is obvious that the turning point of congress tourism for Istanbul and for Turkey has been HABITAT II.

The increasing number of branches of international chain companies, the raise of the business trips, meetings with scientific content, motivational events for inlander and outlander customers, trips, launches, internationally participated sports games had a positive impact on the development

Especially Istanbul, recording a leap in this field, caught an increase of 280% in the number of the congresses of the last 15 years. It was in 40th place at the beginnings of 2000s, 17th in 20019. Between 2019-2015 it successfully protects its place in the top ten.

In the international congress and meeting tourism Turkey took the 19th place in the world with 190 international congresses and Istanbul took the 9th place in the world with 130 international congresses hosted. In 2015 Turkey was 18th with 211 congresses in the countries' list and İstanbul was 8th in the cities' list with 148 congresses.

facilities, easily accessible from major cities of the world, natural beauties and good climate conditions for lower costs in comparison to its alternatives.

International chain companies that have branches or offices in Istanbul, makes it an attractive destination for international congresses, meetings and event. Along with Istanbul Antalya, İzmir and Ankara steps forward. With the experience we gained in the accommodation sector, we serve with high standards.

Trained and experienced labor, accessibility with a 4-hour-flight, location advantages, cultural and historical heritage

registered in UNESCO World Heritage list, newly establishes congress and fair centers, various trip and activity opportunities, the network of our national airline company, our hospitality and rich cuisine are factors that make us special and differentiate us.

Why should European MICE agencies prefer Turkey?

As they will enjoy a flawless organization in high standard hotels, congress centers and meeting rooms, they will experience our hospitality and have the opportunity to live in the peerless ambiance of our city.

What would you say to the guests espe-

Can you follow the trends of the world?

The raise in the travel technologies, smart phones and tablets, the use of social media, shrinking world, fast transportation, face to face communication and similar factor have an impact on events as well. I want to say that as the country we follow many events in the world as trends and modify our events and organizations accordingly or use the tools appropriately.

In the world there is a concept called "bleisure" for the last few years. Basically it is a new kind of tourism, the combination of business and pleasure and is in the

more valuable while 60% said that they are more positive about bleisure than they used to be 10 years ago. When we open a little the concept of bleisure we come across to a not very complex tourism type. The travelers tired of meetings and panels want to make their travel more fun with trips, entertainment and concert, shopping, good food and activities that include local products and local culture.

This actually is a change very harmonious with the trend of inclining to the new and personal experiences. This concept makes countries like Turkey more special and



cially European agencies who prefers MICE operations in Turkey?

Our country is not dispensable with its features. Even when we had the security worries we were saying: "Turkey is as safe as the rest of the world." I can say that in this period, the worries about the security has disappeared. As we make up the shortage and increase the communication and collaboration of sector shareholders we have arrived to a better point. I can say that I am looking forward to host our guests specially the ones from the MICE sector.

In business tourism what are the trends?

agenda of the world in recent years. The separation of business and pleasure, with whom the sector is familiar comes to an end. Although there are still strict people with their agenda each day the number of people who combine both step go up.

According to the "The Bleisure Report", a research done by BridgeStreet in 2014, 60% of the travelers claimed to have done bleisure tourism while 30% said that they prolonged their business vacation by adding 1-2 days. Also 78% of the participants think that combining business with pleasure makes business deals and contracts

Turkey steps forward in the choices. The activities within the organizations (meetings, trainings, cingresses, etc) directly effects the level of satisfaction.

Finally, do you have anything else to say?

MICE segment is the pearl of the tourism sector. We can't deny that it is a big eco system with approximately 60 sub sectors and economies are fed by it and its contribution to the promotion and income of the sector. We are aware of its importance. That is why we have 2 MICE professionals in our board of directors. We are in closer relationship with the sector.



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TURKISH MICE INDUSTRY

Has the growing capacity to serve the sector and the world with meetings, incentives, congresses and events for the last 40 years with world standards and cutting-edge technology.

Turkey is at a very important point in the industry and a very preferable destination because of the geographical location. Service quality of the sector has reached a high level with the provided venue, technical equipment, creating thinking and design. 90% of the event and tourism service offered biggest companies of the world received positive feedback. Digital events developed in the last years in the world has been used in all events with current standard. Istanbul being the first to be chosen because of its location on 2 continents and then the other cities of Anatolia host MICE events and different organizations with the geographical beauties, historical texture



YAVUZ OZDEL
CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE
BOARD - FYM CREATIVE GROUP

and previous civilizations. International film industry, documentary industry, advertisements prefers the present natural wonders of Istanbul and Anatolia with the local hospitality. The guests visiting Turkey want to come back and suggest their friends to visit Turkey. Because of the globalization of the terror in the recent years, Turkey has started to gain its reputation 2018 and the demand increased. Istanbul has become an attraction center with the luxurious hotels, congress centers, events, cultural and artistic organization, entertainment activities and malls. Internationally corporate events, weddings, international sports activities are held in MICE and event industry. For

this big constructions we're finished and inaugurated with the cutting-edge technological infrastructure. In Turkey numerous cultural, artistic festivals and concert organization are held and internationals artists come to perform their art. With these activities spread in 365 days, there cities that live 24 hours. Turkish event companies organize different, creative and high tech events in other countries especially in the close ones. Turkish construction sector and industry firms are world widely known because of the high quality work and service provided by the managers, businessmen and workers in different locations for the chain companies. Turkish MICE agencies are awarded in foreign countries because of the good work they offer. Turkey will be an attraction point again like it used to be in the previous decades with its destinations and services.

BIG CHANGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL MICE ASSOCIATION

International MICE Association, one of the most dynamic associations of tourism sector changed its name as International Association of MICE Industry in the Extraordinary General Assembly.



International MICE Association decided to continue its work as International Association of MICE Industry in its 1st Extraordinary General Assembly held in İstanbul CVK Park Bosphorus Hotel in April 21st, 2018.

In the extraordinary general meeting numbers of permanent and substitute members are revised in 9+9 instead of 5+5. President Serdar Söyler giving information about the activities of the association said that they realized 7 trainings, 1 social responsibility project, 2 domestic fam trip and 3 network events for sector shareholders in 2017.

Hüseyin Kurt, Vice President drawing

attention that International Association of MICE Industry is of high energy, said that they have a lot to do and the energy needed comes from the executive board of 30 members. Hüseyin Kurt telling that in the new term they will take the steps with the shareholders continued as follows: "It should be remembered that if you don't sit on the same table with sector shareholders and talk the problems together there won't be solutions. If you don't create the projects together they won't be successful neither. With this context we included friends active in hotels, transportation, decoration, sound-light-technic, human resources, management, guiding, production, IT,

blueprint-printing, fair, animation and entertainment and floating establishment services in our new executive team."

MALI KANJI: WE ARE STRONGER NOW

"As work groups and commissions under the supervision of members of the executive board we put ourselves in for the duty of creating and started to take the action. Our belief in the success we will reach is profound" said Mali Kanji adding that they have an agenda of 3 years before them.

NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MICE INDUSTRY

Serdar Söyler - Chariman of the Executive Board

Hüseyin Kurt - Vice Chairman of the Executive Board

Işıl Özmen - General Secretary

Mali Kanji - Treasurer

Umut Kaya - Member

Serdar Uğur Girgin - Member

Nurçin Yürekli - Member

Ferhat Özdemir - Member

Kubilay Şahin - Member



EXPERT OF ENTERTAINMENT: HANDE GIRGIN

The elements of a joyous wedding organization is good music and light setup. Hande Girgin, Project Coordinator of Mavi Group Technical Production, explained the details of an unforgettable wedding.

The dreams guide our lives. The fairest of all dreams might be how we will be getting married. With the technology of today dreamlike weddings are a major dream of our lives. The starrings of a wedding is sound and lighting system after the bride and groom. You should be very picky with the music choices and lighting design of the place like you would be for the wedding dress of the bride, tuxedo of the groom, food you serve to your guests. The most important thing that will make that night very beautiful is the quality of the technical infrastructure, the music you choose with the dj. Music is made of many alternatives like the menu of the night. The general concept of the wedding, bride and groom's expectations, the age of guests are the factors that will determine the musics of the night. Dj and the hosts of the event should meet beforehand, the guests' profile should be introduced to the dj and with the experience of the dj a playlist that will not repeat itself and satisfy all age groups present in the ceremony. One of the stages of the organization is the entrance of bride and groom, their first

dance and the music during the cake ceremony. These 3 tracks should be picked very carefully. It should be remembered that these 3 songs will be remembered for the rest of your life. Unfortunately lighting is left as a secondary thing or even not taken seriously in the wedding ceremonies and other events. It is an important detail and generally not taken good care of. For instance a themed watch-out or robotic light show according to the concept of the night as the bride and groom enters and later will create a unique

atmosphere. All the guests watching your first dance from the LED screens is a detail that will make the night unforgettable. Of course all the things I am telling now are abstract concepts. This is exactly why the company you are working with should have good references in order not to face with bad surprises. The meeting you have one week before the event to rehearse and to coordinate with the company that you sign the contract one month before the event will calm your worries and lead you to the flawless wedding ceremony.



"Let us make
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About OLIVA

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SERDAR UĞUR ERGİN, THE TECHNICAL ARCHITECT OF THE DREAMLIKE EVENTS

MY MOST PRECIOUS HOBBY IS MY PROFESSION

The secret of Serdar Uğur Ergin who does his job flawlessly from A to Z and makes a difference wherever he touches is seeing his job as his hobby.

Mavi Group Technical Production, under the tutelage of Serdar Uğur Ergin offers DJ services to the conferences, congresses, meetings, organizations, weddings, special events, festivals, concerts, videos, advertisements, tv shows, fashion shows, sports activities, spring festivals and technical infrastructure and production services to the live performances since 2002. **Is it possible to leave all the technical details of an organization to your company or there needs to be another company for the details?**

Of course it is possible. Actually what we really care for is to finish the technical organization services by one hand. Therefore from beginning to the end every detail is

our job. Our company Mavi Sound, Light, Music, Video System Services under Mavi Group Technical Production is working very hard in the MICE sector and is one of the leading companies of the sector. Mv LED and Visuals Company specialised on projectors, LED screens, mapping and watch-out systems and giving professional visual service also in non congress, meeting, gala events and Mavi Plus providing professional decoration, stage, runway and truss serves under the roof of Mavi Group Technical Production.

What are the services you provide for the events?

We provide rental service for the tools for lighting, sound, music, stage, runway systems, backdrop systems, LED screen,

watch-out suitable for the concept, musicians and singers.

Could you please tell us about I-MICE Association of which you are one of the members?

I-MICE is an NGO found by the sector leaders in 2016 in Istanbul. I-MICE is operating as a very important and proud association as it consists of the whole sector, experienced teams, visionary identity, ethical structure. It is also important since it is the first Turkish MICE association in the world.

Mavi Group Technical Production is a member of YEPUD (Association of Creative Events and Planning) and I-MICE (International Association of MICE) and SITE GLOBAL.



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-  We bring together the business world with health and nature in the Ramada Resort Kazdaglari Thermal & SPA which is the best meeting hotel in the Aegean Region.
-  Ramada Resort Kazdaglari Thermal & SPA which is located pretty close to the Ida Mountain which has the second highest oxygen rate in the world, offers a fascinating meeting opportunity for all valued guests.
-  Our elegantly styled spa and thermal hotel consists of totally 121 rooms and event can be held up to 480 people in theatre style in ball room.



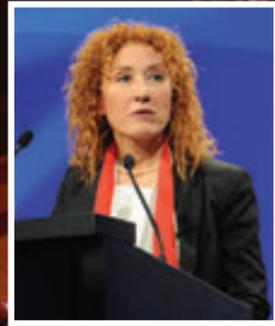
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CONSULTING - OWNER,
ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT OF
TURSAB, TURKISH TRAVEL
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TURKEY CLUB PRESIDENT

HOWEVER, THE CHANGE IS INEVITABLE

Turkey and its leading destinations may not be ranked at where we believe it deserves to be now, but it is not for long.

Would you give us an overall evaluation about Turkey's MICE industry and the destination's position with a current and near future perspective.

Turkish meeting industry and the destination itself has gone through some really

difficult times last couple of years.

However, the problems and the challenges we faced as the industry and the country were not much different than some other destinations dealing with similar issues except that the perception versus reality issue was not to our favour unfortunately.

As everybody admits, Istanbul was and is not more dangerous than any other city around the world, however the negative perception was somehow over our ability as the industry to change.

However, the change is inevitable. Turkey and its leading destinations may not be ranked at where we believe it deserves to be now, but it is not for long.

The industry, industry associations, local and national governments are all joining forces more than ever to restructure, reorganize and re-evaluate the position and the future of the meeting industry in Turkey to take strategic actions in the near future.

With an extensive knowledge, experience and service excellence, I believe our destination will continue to add value to the international meeting industry and with no doubt will regain its well-deserved reputation and place on the map of global meeting industry



OUTSTANDING BEACH FRONT LOCATIONS

LABRANDA Hotels & Resorts offer professional setting for all your corporate needs and meetings. Whether a meeting or conference space, look no further, as our hotels in the Mediterranean and Aegean region have it all!



Begin your journey with an unforgettable ceremony at the beach or a romantic honeymoon getaway in one of our dream suites.





TURKEY WILL BE THE CENTER OF CONGRESS TOURISM

Congresses are essentials of the tourism sector with its high profile participants. For the congress tourism that started to accelerate after a period of slowing down, new investments are on their way. Istanbul being the locomotive is followed by Antalya, İzmir and Ankara. Eskisehir starts to accelerate too. Here are congresses and their investments. **ÖZLEM KAPAR BAYBURS**

Congress and meeting tourism is the leading branch of the tourism sector as it is fastest to grow thanks to the high capacity and number of visitors. It constitutes 25-35% of the yearly income and occupancy of the hotels.

Mostly male guests from mainly European and American congress tourism origin stay 2 or 3 nights. The participants of high income groups like businessmen, managers, delegates of congresses spend 2 or 3 times more than tourists and this puts it in

a high profitable position worldwide. According to the numbers declared by International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) 12,293 congresses in accord with the standards of ICCA were held in 2016. According to the data given by ICCA on 2016, USA leads the list with 934 congresses and is followed by Germany with 689, England with 584. Turkey has successfully reached 18th place in 2015 but in 2016 with 103 congresses has fallen 19 steps and become 37th in the list. Although it seems very negative, the congresses planned point to a recovery, an upswing.

ISTANBUL THE LOCOMOTIVE OF THE SECTOR

In Turkey annually around 2000 nation-

al and international congresses are held. Istanbul is leading the list. There are 3 congress centers in Istanbul with world standards and strong technical infrastructure: Lütfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Center with the capacity of 2000 people, Istanbul Congress Center with the capacity of 3700 people, Haliç Congress Center with the capacity of 3000 people.

ICVB IS BEHIND THE WHEEL

The most important driving establishment in congress tourism in Istanbul, Istanbul Congress and Visitors' Bureau (ICVB), is working with full concentration to increase the number of congresses and meetings held in Istanbul and thus to raise its place in the list of favourite destinations. ICVB representatives attending international congress and fairs and meeting with association representatives tell the details about the Istanbul's present congress and meeting potential. ICVB organizing fam trips to the press members of world's congress industry's publications with wide circulation, tries to make Istanbul visible in every platform using the speed and effective force of social media as well.

NEW INVESTEMENTS WILL EMPOWER

Istanbul with its strong infrastructure and high capacity congress centers, hotels

with more than 100,000 beds is capable of hosting 30,000 guests at the same time says Tuğçe Memişoğlu, vice president of ICVB. "Istanbul is powerful enough to compete with many European cities with its beauty and growth potential."

GOOD SIGNALS FROM LUTFI KIRDAR FOR 2018

Güniz Atış Azrak, General Coordinator of Lütfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Center, informed that they have hosted 170,000 people this year so far in different events. "We hosted 185,000 people in 2015, 229,921 guests in 2014, 213,000 guests in 2013. The most intensive months of congresses are October-November and March-April-May. We are still negotiating for congresses in 2018 and I can say that there are 2 international congresses that 90% likely to be held in Lutfi Kırdar."

VAT EXEMPTION WOULD BE A BREATH

Timur Bayindir, President of Union of Turkish Hoteliers (TÜROB), says that the congress tourism requires long term planning. "Recently for a congress in 2020, proposals are given. We need to have strong hands for new congresses, which means that we have to develop marketing strategies. In the proposals given for congress tourism application of VAT exemp-



Timur Bayindir, President of Union of Turkish Hoteliers (TÜROB)



Güniz Atış Azrak, General Coordinator of Lütfi Kırdar Congress and Exhibition Center



Erkan Yagci, President of Mediterranean Touristic Hoteliers Association (AKTOB)

tion is the biggest difference. There should be VAT exemption for the companies or establishments coming to Turkey for congress tourism. This will comfort us in this period of distress."

CONGRESS ATTRACTION OF ANTALYA

There is 600,000 bed capacity and 175,000 seat capacity in Antalya for the congress tourism. ATSO Atatürk Congress Center, Glass Pyramid-Sabancı Congress and Fair Center, Antalya Expo Center, Mediterranean University Congress Hall and Konakli Congress Center are the main venues to host congresses. ICCA Congress has been a very important and barnburner organization for Antalya. G20 and NATO meetings are among the important events held in Antalya. Erkan Yagci, President of Mediterranean Touristic Hoteliers Association (AKTOB) says: "There are more than 400 five-star hotels in Antalya and each hotel has enough congress and meeting rooms. Now we are mostly hosting local congresses. We have the transportation and technical services of high quality to be able to serve for international organizations. In spite of negativity in the international markets, this advantages will provide the return. All indications show that 2018 will be better in general and congress tourism will get its share."





Tunç Batum, General Manager of Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort&Spa



Ekrem Demirtaş, Chairman of Executive Board of İzmir Chamber of Commerce



Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort&Spa



Seçim Aydın, Coordinator of Ankara Chamber of Commerce Congress and Visitors' Bureau.

İZMİR AND AYDIN FOR AEGEAN REGION

In İzmir there are many accommodation facilities with meeting rooms under their roofs. Also various profession groups and cultural-artistic centers have meeting rooms. Swiss Hotel, Hilton, Kaya İzmir Convention Hotel, Çeşme Altinyunus Hotel, Çeşme Sheraton, Wyndham Grand İzmir Özdilek, Richmond Ephesus Hotel, Özdere Paloma Pasha Hotels are some of the hotels that are constructed in accordance with congress tourism.

ASIAN AND PACIFIC COUNTRIES ARE TARGETED

"As İzmir, our hotel capacity is over 272 and bed capacity is over 50,000. We have alternative tourism in our city that supplements congress tourism. We are at a point where we can support the congress period's before and after with nature, slow food, culture, religion, cruise, gastronomy, fair tourism. In our 30 districts there are alternative destinations that can be included in the tour packages. It is not necessary

to organize the congresses indoor. "says Ekrem Demirtaş, Chairman of Executive Board of İzmir Chamber of Commerce.

ADDITIONAL SEAT ARE ON THE WAY IN DALAMAN

Tunç Batum, General Manager of Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort&Spa, stating that the have a capacity of 800-900 people continued as follows: "We will construct new halls. These new halls will operate in November 2018. By this the hotel would be able to host 1600 congress guests. The biggest union of Indian travel agencies, Travel Agencies Federation of India (TAFI) will have its congress with 700 people in between 27-29th of October in our facility.

THE FOCUS ON NATIONAL CONGRESSES IN THE CAPITAL

"In 6 congress centers in Ankara there are a total of 39 congress and meeting rooms with a capacity of 13,000 people. Besides these centers in 20 hotels of Ankara congress and meetings can be held.

The total number of congress/meeting rooms of these hotels is 206 and total capacity of them is 38,112. An average of 40% of the congresses held in Ankara is international. When we look closely to the sectors, medical, social sciences and engineering congresses constitutes 5% of all." said Seçim Aydın, Coordinator of Ankara Chamber of Commerce Congress and Visitors' Bureau.

ESKİSEHİR ASKS FOR A SHARE OF THE CAKE

Eskisehir is also ready to get its share from the congress tourism. Eskisehir Chamber of Commerce (ETO) is running a project named Eskisehir Fair Congress Center. In the center still being constructed on an area of 4000 square meters in the centrum, there will be a congress center. The complex that will include an auditorium with a capacity of 750 people, and 5 meeting rooms with capacities of 100, 50 and 25 people will be inaugurated as an investment in Eskisehir's congress tourism.



Our agency, starting its services in the tourism sector as a TURSAB 10080 Tourism Agency, started its commercial activities in İstanbul. Our company, with the principle of customer satisfaction and service quality, aims to use all the technology provided for the sector in this direction.

Our team comprises of experienced and dynamic people who have been active in the tourism sector and think that the service quality can increase with the customer satisfaction. Operational renting, transfer with a driver, meeting and event management, prize trips and international business trips are our areas of profession. Our main aim is to fulfill your event aim. Our principle is to carry out our business by being honest, respectful to other people and nature, aware of our social responsibilities and behaving convenient to the professional ethics.

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SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES OF COUNTRIES IN THE MICE INDUSTRY

While serving to the MICE industry; We are giving all local touristic services of the biggest companies and governments through our clients which are only travel agencies.



However there were difficult times when we practiced these. What was the difficult part? The destination's insufficient facilities. The we learned to ask that question in time: Is it possible to have MICE tourism at all destinations ?

IT IS NOT

Why? If your organization is just incentive organization, first you might say that you can do it in any country. Because in incentive tours the goal is to try the cuisine of that country, to get to know the culture, to learn the history and to see the geography. But even with this kind of tours ; there might be some problems . For example ; in that country there might not be the vehicle that you will use for MICE groups. The newest car might be a 2000 model or the most suggestible facility might have only 4 stars. Restaurants might be very good but the service might not. When you take all of

these little things your participants are left unsatisfied and unhappy. Their unhappiness will put you in a very bad position in front of 3rd persons and then you face with "why didn't you warn us then" questions. Especially organized international meetings, congresses, symposiums, team work meetings this lack of technical support might make you think of a different destinations: Because of hotels with a small accommodation capacity, lack of rooms big enough to host the organization, technologically insufficient systems in the country, not having enough qualified staff. When serving to MICE tourism we practice one of the most difficult jobs in the world. Each profession practices one or maximum 3 major components in their jobs, in our job we have to practice much more different components in order to obtain customer satisfaction. We have to organize the flight that will take the guest while arriving to our country and the menus of

the 3 meals she/he will get during the tour. Destination is the foundation of the event to-be-constructed. You chose your destination even before you chose your partner and you experience as much as your destinations contribution to your goal. At this point Turkey is a destination that serves to the MICE sector. It certainly should be utilized. One of the biggest reasons of this, as known, is the importance of hosting a guest, serving way of the service and giving importance to luxury that originates back in the Ottoman Empire period. It still has its place in our modern culture. Besides that ; Here is also strength of Turkish Airlines, the company with the most direct flights, there are the newest cars in the country, high technology is utilized in the events, there is attention in high levels on security. With all these you can comfortably have MICE events in Turkey. Do not forget: destination is the foundation of the event.



Istanbul Bosphorus Yacht Tours

Asia and Europe are like lovers longing for each other, and the Bosphorus is what brings them together, and one of the great witnesses of this love is Denden Yachts.

You may see the historical buildings next to each other and explore the unprecedented beauties of the Bosphorus, accompanied by one of our rental yachts.

Denden Yachts provide the comfort of a five-star hotel, offering cocktail and dining services, too. 8 well-appointed VIP motor yachts, turns your special days such as weddings, business meetings or surprise wedding proposals, into unforgettable experiences by exclusively organized Bosphorus Tours and Island Tours.

Our rental yachts are renovated every year, creating an enjoyable atmosphere through their interior design. With professional captains, team members and waiting staff speaking foreign languages, Denden Yachts is an institution that thoroughly regards the official procedures (insurance for guests, insurance for the yachts, tourism documents, port documents), as well.

Denden Yachts is confidently the one and only address to create the most pleasurable experience for its guests, be it summer or winter.

Our collaboration continues with the likes of Ciragan Palace Kempinski, Four Seasons Hotels, Swissotel, Shangri-La, The Raffles, St Regis Hotel, Polat Renaissance Hotel, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Hilton Hotel and advances even further.

We are the proud 4-time winner of "Best Event Yachts; Ace of Mice Award organized by Turkish Tourism Media Group annually.

We are also honored to have entertained some worldwide famous celebrities who visited Turkey, such as Rihanna, Lady Gaga, Hugh Jackman, Cristiano Ronaldo, Van Persie, Sultan of Brunei, Wesley Sneijder, Kelly Brooks.

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ISTANBUL RETURNS TO ITS OLD DAYS IN CONGRESS TOURISM

Bahadır Yaşık, Vice Chairman of ICVB, "ICVB continues to work in accordance with the foundation goals since its foundation."

The board of directors and executive board of ICVB consists of pioneer names and establishments of public and private sectors. ✎ **HASAN ARSLAN**

Bahadır Yaşık, Board Member of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ITO) and Vice Chairman of ICVB, told the works of Turkey's first destination promotion office, ICVB, and the future tourism route to the readers of *Turizm Aktüel*.

How was ICVB (Istanbul Congress and Visitors' Bureau) which is the big supporter of Istanbul's branding and promotion in international platforms, founded? What are the changes that it has gone through, since the foundation?

ICVB, being the first destination promotion bureau of Turkey, was founded as a

non profit and impartial, marketine and promoting foundation in 1997 under TU-GEV (Tourism Development and Education Foundation). The board of directors and executive board of ICVB consists of pioneer names and establishments of public and private sectors since the first day of establishment. This structure contributed a lot to the development of ICVB. ICVB accepts the membership of private sector. ICVB's members profile consists of 4 and 5 star hotels, congress organizing agencies (PMO/DMC), restaurants and suppliers of similar services and MICE companies. ICVB's operation in the scope of its mis-

sion which can be shortly summarized as promoting and marketing the destination as a whole in national and international congress sector, in general is same as the operation and standards of international congress bureaus. It needs to be mentioned that the administration of Istanbul's first official promotion web site howtoistanbul.com is given to ICVB by the Istanbul Governorship.

With taking over the management of howtoistanbul.com ICVB's "Visitors" department is activated.

What is the foundation purpose of ICVB?

The purpose of founding ICVB is helping the marketing as promoting Istanbul's organizational potential and infrastructure in congress, conference, fair and exhibition sectors nationally and internationally. Providing the branding of Istanbul, to advertise the congress tourism in our country and to help the development of tourism by city's and country's promotion.

What are the main activities of ICVB and what have ICVB done until today?

ICVB carries on the marketing and promotional activities in order to strengthen the Istanbul brand in congress and meeting sector and to ensure continuity of the market and awareness. We can give examples like organizing the meetings and

congresses of Ministry of Tourism and Culture, attending international workshops and sales markets, publishing and distributing visual promotion tools like *İstanbul Meeting Planner Guide*, supporting national associations in the period of preparing congress candidacy folders and presentations, hosting foreign purchasers in incentives, creating job opportunities by participating international fam trips, workshops and general assembly meetings of international corporations and representing our country and city while doing so. ICVB continues to work in accordance with the foundation goals since its foundation.

Is ICVB any international association?

ICVB is a member of ICCA (International Congress and Conventions Association), ECM (European Cities Marketing), DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International). ICVB is the only establishment to represent İstanbul in all of these associations.

What is the role of congress, fair and conference tourism for İstanbul's tourism in general?

For this it is necessary to understand the role of meeting and congress tourism for the destinations. Congress tourism ensures the development of the destinations. The delegates of the congresses have a purchasing power 3-4 times better than normal tourists. They have also a high level of traveling culture. Thus it revitalizes the commerce of the city including the hotels, restaurants, museums, entertainment venues, shopping malls, banks and even credit card companies and increases the tax income.

Also they have a potential of coming back to the city they love with their families, friends or business partners. They are the tourists with high purchasing power whose numbers should be increased in İstanbul. The verbal impact of these people has a role in the promotion of the cities as well. Meetings and congresses contribute also to the academic life and specialists' levels as it brings the scientific world to our door on important medical and tech-

nical subjects.

The destination and the calendar of congresses are decided very early. In this period of time preparations are done and cancellations are almost impossible. Hence congress sector is not effected deeply and quickly by the periodical political, economic crisis.

Congress tourism requires infrastructure, architecture, technology and service of high quality. This means improvement or development in the city life and in general image. As known congress sector because of the profile of the customer, expected equipment in the facilities and service standards requires high quality service offers and specialization. This brings the development and improvement in resources, use of technology and similar areas.

What is the position of İstanbul in world congress industry?

When we look at the distribution of congress tourism in the world, conventional North American and Western European countries have reached a level of saturation, and Eastern European countries, Mediterranean, Middle East and Asian Pacific countries increasing their shares of the market.

Istanbul will regain the congresses that it lost in last 2 years of discontinuation of tourism. Our works to make İstanbul the host of big congresses again continues.

What are things that should be done so that the tourism of İstanbul reaches deserved levels?

In congress sector we don't have any infrastructural problems. We have rooms and hotels big enough to answer the needs. However we need more 3 and 4 star hotels for congress and city tourism.

The active use of historical and cultural venues in congress and meeting sector increased the attraction of İstanbul but we need more than that. İstanbul needs to develop politics in congress and tourism sectors in accordance to the city's economic strategies and collaborate firmly with intellectual capacity with the universities, research institutes of the city.

WHY ISTANBUL FOR CONGRESSES?

Istanbul sets itself apart from other destinations with its dynamic nature and constant development. A magnet for dynamic and talented people from around the world, Istanbul is the ideal meeting destination with its vibrancy, modernity, swathe of new infrastructure and enviable position.

A city with a global outlook, Istanbul is a meeting point between East and West as well as being a leading congress destination offering unique and exciting venues. With its 7 convention and 3 exhibition centers the city has the capacity to host every type of event, from bespoke incentives to meetings for up to 30,000 participants. Combined with Istanbul's historic venues, palaces, cisterns, high-tech modern venues and more, it offers meeting planners a variety of remarkable options to create truly outstanding events.

Accommodation in Istanbul, with unique Turkish hospitality, is both numerous – at 112,000 plus beds – and diverse with a selection across the spectrum including more than 219 five-star and four-star hotels. Easily accessible from around the world, Istanbul is served most of the international airlines at its two airports. Turkish Airlines, has a network of more than 300 direct flights and flies to more countries than any other airline in the world, connecting Istanbul with 5 continents. Two billion people living within six hours' flying time of Istanbul and being the only city on two continents gives the city a unique and privileged position.

ISTANBUL CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Turkey's first destination marketing organization, the Istanbul Convention &



Visitors Bureau-ICVB was established in 1997 under the umbrella of the Tourism Development & Education Foundation-TUGEV.

A non-profit destination marketing organization, ICVB represents Istanbul around the world and is the leading resource for international associations and corporations seeking to hold events in Istanbul.

ICVB has played a key role in Istanbul's rapid rise in popularity as a destination for high-profile international congresses and events, ranking among the world's most popular congress destinations.

ICVB's members, cover the full spectrum of the meeting industry, including leading hotels, conference and exhibition centers, DMC/PCOs, restaurants, unusual venues and other companies involved directly or indirectly in the conference and incentive tourism sector. Working in close co-

ordination with its members and tourism industry associations, chaired by Istanbul Chamber of Commerce.

ICVB is also an active member of international meetings industry organizations such as the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA), European Cities Marketing (ECM) and Meeting Professionals International (MPI)

OUR SERVICES

ICVB offers a wide range of services designed to help promote Istanbul as a congress, meeting and incentive destination and also to assist organizers in creating fabulous events in the city; Bid Support. Venue Finding . Consulting & Advice. Site Inspections Promotional Materials . Delegate Boosting Kit. Online Congress Calendar Visitor Information.

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WE WILL ORGANIZE A WORLD WIDE MICE ORGANIZATION IN TURKEY

Turkey have been chosen because of many reasons ; like its position, its cultural and historical wealth, the national flight company's wide flight network, our people's hospitality, our personnel's capacity, is one of the leading preferred countries.

the region by a very important decision. Would you tell us about this process?

In an event in Haliç Congress Center two years ago, we put the problems in tourism on table with sector professional colleagues. Sector was getting through a tough time. There was a need for a mass interlocutor. Sector shareholders needed to sit on the same table and speak about the problems together. The problems in tourism needed to be solved. "If we can not sit on the same table and create solutions, it is not possible to be successful with these problems" we thought and by this vision and with about 30 founding partners' contribution, we founded our association.

What are the targets and ideals of I-MICE? Which long term and short term projects does I-MICE have?

The aims and missions of our association are; to create a new contact and collaboration opportunities between members and sector shareholders, to contribute to the existing communications, to protect the ethical frame between members and shareholders and to find solutions to their problems, being able to be a mass respondent to private sector and public and

to create advantages domestically and internationally.

Besides to provide trainings for personal growth and expertness of our members and shareholders, to organize fam trips for new domestic and abroad destinations for our member agencies, to organize projects/b2b events in order to contribute to the shares of sector shareholders and finally to be the guide of the MICE market in our country and in the world are among our missions as well.

I-MICE by including all shareholders of the sector creates an important formation breeze in the air. You also organize important certification programs for the personnel trainings which is a need in the sector. What are the reasons to do all these?

By the principle "happy personnel-happy guest" the more we organize useful events and trainings for the sector and shareholders the more the sector becomes happy.

When we plan the trainings we aim to develop the qualified labor that our sector needs. The trainings we have done until now were on persuasion science and im-



pact principles, critical thinking and decision making, NLP, protocol manners, general manners, emotional intelligence in business life, motivation of the personnel.

By the end of 2019 we will have made 25 panels and speeches by inspiring speakers under the roof of TÜRSAB. Along with those we will also have done 25 personal training programs. I want to express that all of these training are welcoming all sector shareholders and students.

Why does I-MICE raise the level? What are the reasons?

Our association has become a welcoming, project creating association that reaches people and creates benefit. In a very short time like 1 year, we organized 7 trainings, 2 abroad fam trip, 3 network events, 1 social responsibility project and sectoral surveys. We created new communication and collaboration opportunities between our shareholders.

We brought together the ones looking for

a job and the ones looking for a personnel. We informed the shareholders about the sectoral carrier news and sectoral developments. A lot of event and work has our signature underneath. Thus the expectations from our association have raised. With the motivation of being useful for the sector we continue so.

In short term projects ; You organize the Intenational MICE Summit in Turkey. What would you say about this?

We care a lot about this organization. The

tels, PCOs, MICE firms, administrators of cities' and municipalities' of brand value will come to our country. We plan to organize an important summit where we discuss the MICE sector's past, present and future along with the problems and solutions.

Is there anything that you want to add?

As the exigence of our responsibility, we had extraordinary general assembly in April. We had structural and functional changes in our plenum. We changed our

We care a lot about the International MICE Summit that we plan to do it in Turkey. We see this summit as a "prestige" organization in favor of our country.

negative perception in abroad of our sector and country needs to be switched very quick. With a correct organization and PR and press collaboration we have to provide our country and city to be back in the top of the list like it used to be. We see this summit as a "prestige" organization in favor of our country.

Within the "World MICE Summit", the foreign Ministers of Tourism, airlines, bureaus of congress and visitors, important NGOs, press, important chain ho-

name from "International MICE Association" to "International Association of MICE Industry". We increased the number of directors in the board from 5+5 to 9+9. We created our supervisory board of 3+3 members and disciplinary board of 3+3. Our association will be managed by an executive board and sub groups and commissions of 30 people. I can say that our association will have its name mentioned a lot in and out of the country in 2018-2021 term.



Founding partner of Oliva MICE, Vice President of I-MICE and board member of TÜRSAB Huseyin Kurt

Founding partner of Oliva MICE, Vice President of I-MICE (International Association of Mice Industry) and board member of TÜRSAB Huseyin Kurt told the founding purpose of International Association of Mice Industry and Turkey's position in the world's MICE industry in the interview with Turizm Aktüel. Turkey is seen in one of the countries in which the most important MICE organizations can be held. Why do you think **Turkey is being preferred? What are the things that make Turkey preferable?**

Turkey have been chosen because of many reasons ; like its position, its cultural and historical wealth, the national flight company's wide flight network, our people's hospitality, our personnel's capacity, our features of being organized very quick, solution oriented work and practicality, many active transportation tools in our infrastructure, rich cuisine, venues we have for congresses and events, the importance we give to technology and quality is one of the leading preferred countries.

In Turkey that already has a very good tourism potential you established the biggest MICE Association of Turkey or even

WHY HAVE A CONGRESS IN TURKEY?

The guests coming to Istanbul do not only attend to the meetings. They have the opportunity of seeing one of the most beautiful cities in World: Istanbul.

First I salute all my colleagues. All or most of you might think the reason why you should have a meeting in Turkey and in Istanbul. First of all your questions must be answered so that you can organize your meeting in Turkey. I want to answer your question with another one: Why don't you?

What do we need to have a meeting? Initially an adequate congress center or hotels with enough meeting rooms with enough capacity. Istanbul is a city that is able to satisfy these needs with 3 big congress centers and dozens of hotels. Istanbul already hosted hundreds of congresses and hosted the guests with no problem. Istanbul is also adequate with the total bed amount.

In Istanbul there are technical companies serving with the technical infrastructure in the level of the world standards. All kinds of technical tools exist for sound and display. Since there is experienced service and technical staff as well, there is nothing to worry about that. All vehicles and infrastructure is suitable for transfers and inner-city transportation. Subway line is spread in major part of the city. Especially to arrive to the airport and centrum is very easy and fast.

There are direct flights to Istanbul from cities of Europe and world. The guests coming to Istanbul do not only attend to

the meetings. They have the opportunity of seeing one of the most beautiful cities in World: Istanbul. Istanbul is not a city of just history and culture. This magnificent city keeps glamorising its guests with its rich cuisine that contents of local and world restaurants along with its natural beauty, peerless view and historical texture.

Guests as long as they create time, can also visit touristic highlights of the country such as Cappadocia, Ephesus, Bodrum, Hierapolis(Pamukkale), Antalya. The meeting can be held also in Antalya, the paradise on earth, famous city for its resorts and is assertive about congress tourism as well. Antalya has the needed infrastructure just like Istanbul.

I also want to underline that comparing to European centers, Turkey will be more economic alternative for all kinds of events.

"Ok with all these but what about security?" you are saying, right? You might be right but the security problems occurring time to time in Turkey are not exclusive to Turkey. You can ask the same question



IRVIN MANDEL **EYÜP PEHLIVAN**
HUMANITAS MICE

for any center in any world. But I can be very clear about that: in Istanbul, in Turkey, you are as safe as you are in any country or in any European city.

As Hümanitas, we are a MICE agency that serves both in country and abroad. In 10 years we have organized many national

and international congresses, meetings and incentives with our experienced team. We organized the EACID congresses in Kirghizistan, Kazakistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Albania, Serbia and Georgia, and WFHSS (World Sterilization Congress) in Antalya. We organized the meeting of pharmaceutical companies' and other firms' of different sectors year end assessment meetings in Antalya and Istanbul. We also organized many national company's congresses in different city's of our country.

We are ready to give the best quality service to your guests coming from any part of the world with our experienced team and technical infrastructure. We invite you to Turkey. We guarantee that you will be proud of the unforgettable meeting you offer to your guests.

our experience is hidden in your smile...



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TURKEY IS A COUNTRY WITH ADVANTAGES FOR THE MICE TOURISM

It is important not to cluster MICE sector in one region but to spread it.

This, while regains the outlander participants, would be an advantage for us.

Yağız Öngen, Vice Chairman of the Executive Board of Ramada Resort Kazdağları (Mount Ida) Thermal&Spa, telling the advantages of our country in the MICE tourism in his interview, introduced Ramada Resort Kazdağları Thermal&Spa which is an alternative destination in the MICE sector.

What are your thoughts about the MICE potential of Turkey?

Turkey is a country with many advantages in MICE industry. The 1/3 of our tourism

income is of MICE origin. The most important subject in this sector is to attract foreign firms to our country and distribute MICE industry to 81 cities. If we spread the sector to whole country, it will ensure development of whole country. It is important not to cluster MICE sector in one region but to spread it. This, while regains the outlander participants, would be an advantage for us. We will advertise turkey to the world again by MICE sector. Now people are not only interested in hotel,

company and provided services but also in natural, cultural and historical wealth and the things they can do in the area.

Our major problem is the perception. We need to prove again that we can host these organizations peacefully, securely and steadily. Unfortunately there is a bad reputation of our country abroad. MICE industry steps forward as a tool to change this.

When we compare Turkish MICE sector with the European equivalents, what are the things that differentiate Turkey?

Yağız Öngen, Vice Chairman of the Executive Board of Ramada Resort Kazdağları (Mount Ida) Thermal&Spa



The tourist arriving in our country can find whatever she/he looks for. Either mountain or sea, thermal, nature, either history or culture. All of these even more are present in our country. Our country already distinguishes from other countries with the quality of the service we provide, sectoral experience we have and the care we have about our guest. Technical infrastructure, organization and management of them, venue and venue management are at utmost professionalism. When we add our country's beauties to this, there is no reason not to be the first country to come to mind and preferred most in the MICE sector.

Why should European MICE agencies prefer Turkey?

First of all because of our experience. Turkey has overcome very big and important organizations. Then we have to put forward our countries beauty that no other country has. We have the potential to make a difference in all branches of MICE industry. We need to be aware of our potential and use it wisely.

How do you see the future of MICE industry in Turkey?

There is serious growth in MICE sector in our country. NGOs have a serious role in this growth and the sustainability of the



growth. The effort of International Association of MICE Industry of which I am proud to be a part, can not be denied. What matters is to unite all shareholders and work for the sake of our country together. That's why our association that started its path with the motto "Claim Your Sector!" is very much important. I hope that our country and sector will be at the deserved level in the coming years.

In the end, would you please tell us about the Ramada Resort Kazdağları Thermal&Spa of which you are the Vice President of Executive Board?

Our company with exception of a few branches is a company focused on tourism. We started our function in tourism

with one of the pioneers of eco tourism in Turkey, Öngen Country Hotel in 2000. Öngen Country Hotel is a very special facility built without harming one single tree. At the same time it is one of the first boutique hotels of Kazdağları.

After a few managership experience, our company has launched Ramada Resort Kazdağları Thermal&Spa in 2016. It is a eye catching hotel with Green Key that offers different activities, organic garden and advantages of the zone in which it is located. Thanks to these it hosted some very important events. Last year we were awarded as the Best Meeting Hotel of Aegean Region. Our hotel occupies a serious vacancy in providing an alternative MICE destination.



THERE IS ONLY ONE ISTANBUL

One Istanbul is the 3rd most popular city branding account on Instagram, and Istanbul is one of the most photographed cities in the world.

A collaboration between Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau, One Istanbul keeps growing strong on social media platforms, as well as through its highly popular photo contest. Istanbul, a vibrant crossroads of cultures and civilizations, never loses its popularity for millions of travellers. With one arm reaching out to Asia and the other to Europe, Istanbul stands out with its unique cityscape built on two continents and the breath-taking Bosphorus strait running through. Being the capital of two empires for more than 1,500 years, Istanbul is blessed with magnificent Byzantine and Ottoman monuments, which also makes it one of the most Instagramable cities in the world. Launched in April 2015, with a vision to become the key source of inspiration and information for both residents and visitors, One Istanbul's popularity keeps thriving. Within two and a half years, One Istanbul already built a powerful community of those who love Istanbul, no matter

if they live in or previously have visited it. The official social media handle @oneistanbul and the hashtag #oneistanbul is being tagged on thousands of amazing photographs by Instagramers every single day. This provides an endless flow of compelling and authentic visual content, to share on all One Istanbul's social and digital media channels. Thanks to talented professionals and amateurs alike, One Istanbul by far has the most engaging and visually stunning social accounts, compared to other metropolitan cities around the world. Istanbul's globally renowned beauty, historical and the cultural assets also attracted many of world's most followed photographers and Instagram influencers including but not limited to Christina Tan (@sassychrist1), Christoffer Collin (@wisslaren) and Gil Antolin (@luxury-worldtraveller). These talents repeatedly paid special visits to Istanbul past years and photographed some of Istanbul's iconic attractions, neighbourhoods and hidden gems, and shared their special mo-

ments with their loyal millions of followers on Instagram and Snapchat. This also helped One Istanbul acquire new followers and spiked the engagements through likes, comments and shares. Istanbul comes the third (following London and Paris) in the city ranking of "the most photographed cities in the world". It's no wonder, 532.000 One Istanbul tagged photographs and videos have been shared on Instagram to date and it's just getting bigger every day. This impressive success is also a result of One Istanbul Instagram Contest, an exciting and rewarding photography project. The contest bring participants together with all the colors of this incredible city. The goal of the contest is to emphasize the very well known assets and beauty of Istanbul to a global audience, as well as highlight the city's hidden gems through the lens of photographers, both Turkish and foreign. Instagram contest is open to public application and to take part is as easy as to follow @oneistanbul on Instagram, and then tag both #oneistanbul and #istanbul in the captions.



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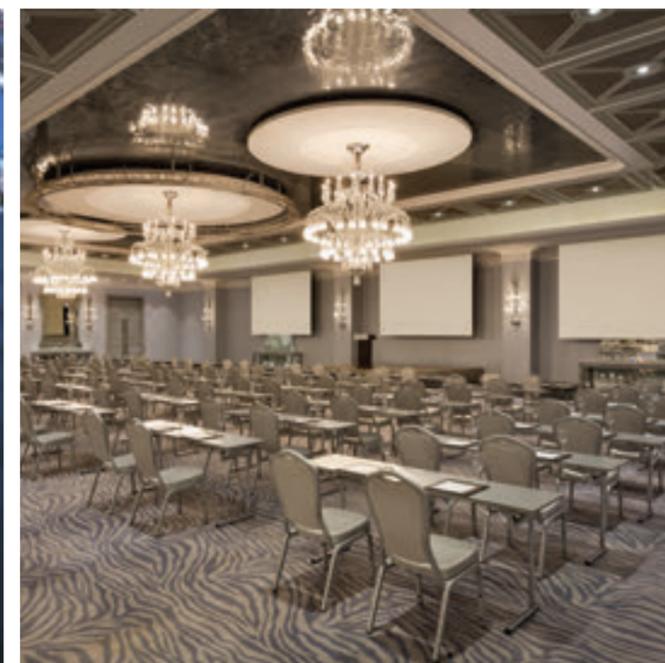


THE DIFFERENCE IS THE SYSTEM

The most important difference between European MICE players and us is the system. They continue with the system and quality management principals in the MICE industry that already etches in every aspect of their lives.



Deniz Dikkaya, Director of Sales and Marketing of Wyndham Grand Istanbul Kalamış Marina Hotel



Deniz Dikkaya, Director of Sales and Marketing of Wyndham Grand Istanbul Kalamış Marina Hotel, says that one of the factors of the raise in tourism of Turkey is MICE industry. Dikkaya says that the number of the branches with whom the sector works and to whom the sector gives a job is more than 100. Dikkaya told the readers of Turizm Aktüel about the differences between Turkish MICE sector and the European players.

Could you please tell us the place and the importance of MICE industry in the Turkish tourism?

One of the factors of the raise in Turkish tourism is the MICE industry. MICE is not

a system that can operate itself. The number of the branches with whom the sector works and to whom the sector gives a job is more than 100. The importance of MICE industry comes from this truth. The sector has a big economically connected family. As you know in 2018 we were in the 7th place in the congress tourism. Then because of the political and safety reasons that none of us had anything to do with in 2016 we reached down to the bottom. 2018 will be a very important year for tourism. If the trend of increase in 2017 continues, the sector will grow constantly. We as the tourism professionals took our lessons in this crisis period and are working accordingly. Hopefully

other sector professionals act sensible like us and our raise becomes steady.

When you compare Turkish MICE industry to the Europe, what are the things that differentiate Turkey?

Turkey is a country with 20 years of history in MICE industry. We are aware that likewise other branches of tourism we have to work very hard on MICE in order to compete with the developed world countries. The most important difference between European MICE players and us is the system. They continue with the system and quality management principals in the MICE industry that already etches in every aspect of their lives.

In the MICE industry where discipline and rules command, one needs to be of good quality and experienced in order to get the job. Unfortunately in our country in any address a MICE company can be established and start to operate just like

In the MICE industry where discipline and rules command, one needs to be of good quality and experienced in order to get the job.

that. The industry that provides the most income to the companies can not make that money in Turkey because of this under the counter agencies that pulls down the prices in order not to lose the job. The sector became a sector that not the quality but the customer wins and hotel, hotelier,

agency and organizers earn almost nothing. That is why the sector's big union has an important role.

Why should European MICE agencies prefer Turkey?

Turkey took its lessons from the past negative experiences. Our country will take its place next to the World's strongest MICE countries thanks to the natural and cultural characteristics, hospitality, leadership in gastronomy. European MICE agencies might increase their profits by bringing their customers to our country

that has high quality service, economic prices and high satisfaction rates. Also there are many service and product alternatives in our country that other countries don't have. At last our natural ability to solve problems very practically calms the European agencies.

Is there anything that you want to add on?

MICE industry is very important for our country. Because of this the players of this sector should not be limited just with their roles in the sector. We have to participate in the sector NGOs, most importantly in I-MICE, and raise reputation and awareness and collaborate in order to look at the future with hope.

ISTANBUL THE CITY OF MICE

The landlord of 3 empires, the connector of Asia and Europe, center of the world, the capital of the world and all beliefs, the most important MICE city.

Based on the world history, İstanbul, host of the most crowded events, is the magical city where people all over the world loves the most with its history and cultural texture.

Beginning from East Roman Empire then the Ottoman Empire and finally in the Republic period many were hosted in İstanbul. Mixing the actual conditions with its historical heritage, with the modern structures in world standards and cutting-edge technology infrastructure present for the service of MICE guests along with the hotels and congress centers İstanbul is declared to be capital of modernism.

İstanbul MICE industry, growing and renewing each day, satisfies the needs and expectations of people from all over the

world with its high tech congress centers and infrastructure higher than the world standards, hosts MICE guest perfect and makes everyone fall in love with it.

To organize MICE events in İstanbul has been always a privilege. With its museums, sea, history and cultural venues and most importantly the uniqueness of its people, İstanbul is a city to be in love with. When you think of the city's on which books have been written, İstanbul is one of the first names to come to mind. It is a city you can find the accommodation, transportation, food and beverage services in perfect shape. It is a city that lives 24 hours of the day with surprises. With direct flights thanks to the wide flight network of Turkish Airlines it is a city where



UMUT KAYA

FOUNDER - BOSS EVENT MARKETING
BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF MICE INDUSTRY
umut.kaya@bosseventmarketing.com

no borders exist. While the heart of the world MICE industry beats in Turkey, you can organize your MICE events in İstanbul, and using the advantages provided by the city itself, let your guests return their homes happily after an unforgettable trip to an unforgettable country. All seasons offer unforgettable memories and events for the visitors of İstanbul. It would be a privilege to be in this city in any time of the year.



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Co-Founder Ece Delen
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Destination Options and M.I.C.E

Destination Option is an incoming tour operator based in Italy, France, Morocco, Macedonia, Jordan, Turkey with licensed tourism offices and result of several years of experience in tourism business of the manager and a group of professional qualified experts and experienced guides. Established in 2009.

Our aim is to provide the highest quality in professional travel services for **M.I.C.E Tourism Industry** including ;

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- Arts & Crafts
- Pilgrimages

We are working only with outbound tour operators and %70 of them giving services to M.I.C.E tourism.

Destination Options is also a dynamic operator continually developing new trips focusing on some areas which are almost unknown to tourists

Our hotels' portfolio increases day by day to meet the needs and the expectations of our clients, looking for high standard of accommodation at extremely competitive rates in key destinations. We also organise famtrips for our clients to destinations where we are to introduce our team, business and quality we work. At Destination Options we fully realize that our success depends on our customers' satisfaction: that's why we undertake everything within our power to exceed clients' expectations in terms of quality and value. Our commitment to offer nothing but the very best is reflected in our vision & mission statements. We exist because of our customer and we are very grateful to our customers who have made us what we are today. We now strive to take our organization to the next level so that we can serve our customers even better and continue to keep them fully satisfied.

Destination Options also provide consulting services to travel agencies who wants to improve itself with new destinations .

"Destination Options" is all what you are expecting from incoming tour operator

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italy@destinationoptions.com

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Vetrocity Plaza , Flat 11 , No 241
Beylikdüzü/İstanbul
90 212 695 00 48
turkey@destinationoptions.com

JORDAN OFFICE
Al GARDENS street, Building 96 office 10
+962 799 818 989
jordan@destinationoptions.com

MACEDONIA OFFICE
Bul. St. Kliment Ohridski No. 45/1, local 10
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
+389 2 3174355
balkans@destinationoptions.com

FRANCE OFFICE
38 Rue d'Hauteville 75010 PARIS - France
+33 9 67 37 27 46
france@destinationoptions.com

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ISTANBUL DESERVES TO BE IN THE FIRST PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS!

We are a team that has accomplished many "firsts" in the Turkish event industry and we work a lot to continue being that way.



Kerim Sipahiler, the President of Sipahiler Events

Kerim Sipahiler, the President of Sipahiler Events that has accomplished many firsts in Turkish MICE industry, said that Turkish event industry with its competitive structure, creative solutions and customer focused approach is at an important level in the global arena. Sipahiler shared his opinions on the future of MICE sector with the reader of Turizm Aktüel. **Sipahiler Events is among the most im-**

portant MICE companies of Turkey and Europe. What is the secret of this success?

Sipahiler Events is established in 1994. We have team members that are with us since the day of our foundation, we have customers that work with us since the day of our foundation, and there are suppliers that we work together since that day. We love to continue our long term business relationship with our employees, our

customers and our suppliers. This is one of our main principles.

As I just mentioned, we are a team that has accomplished many things for the first time in Turkish Events Industry. We work a lot to continue being that way. There is a very democratic work environment in our company. The ideas our colleagues are very valuable for us. We are proud of the success of our former employees who made their first steps in our company, but had to

live and work in other companies for various reasons. So Sipahiler Events is a school!

Would you please share your opinion about Turkish MICE industry?

Firstly, I think it is more correct to use Turkish Event Industry instead of Turkish MICE sector. I try to follow the trends in the world as much as I can. In many major markets, the term MICE is not being used

anymore to describe the work that we are doing. Meeting & Events industry is being used more and more nowadays.

Turkish Events Industry is passing through turbulent times right now. Because of the reasons that we all know, in the last three years there is a shrinkage in the Turkish Events market. This shrinkage caused some serious decrease both in revenues and in profits. However Turkish Events Industry, with its competitive structure, creative solutions and customer focused approach, is at an important level in global arena. Our prior need is conducting a well planned marketing and PR campaign which aims to change the perception of the customers in target markets.

Could you please give us information about Turkish Events Industry's place in the world arena?

Not too long ago, like four years back from now, Istanbul was in the 7th place in the most preferred destinations meetings and events list. I think Istanbul having gone up to the 7th place, has the potential to go up to the first place if we have fair competition conditions and a peaceful work environment.



Richard Branson, Kerim Sipahiler

Most of the players in the Turkish Events Industry are very hardworking and dedicated. They do not avoid sacrifices when needed to reach their business targets. The only part that is not sacrificed is the level

of high service quality. I haven't seen any destination to compete with our dedication.

I believe that, as meeting and event destinations, the prices in Turkey and in Istanbul are much below than what should be. We have to carry this up to the deserved levels as soon as possible. Not only Istanbul but also Bodrum, Antalya, Cappadocia, Mardin and many other magical cities and regions whose names I didn't mention are the causes that Turkey has become an attractive destination. We have a cuisine that I think attracts our guests. The recently opened gourmet restaurants, coffeehouses and similar shops are the factor that elevates us.

One of our most important advantages is our hotels. The hotels and rooms standards of Turkey can be found in rarely in a few countries in the world. Our prices are very reasonable. But we need to work a little to increase both the number and the variety of congress centers and special event venues. Thanks to the existing ones, those that brought us today, however there should be more investments in that area.

Is there anything that you want to add?

We invited famous entrepreneur, founder of Virgin Airlines, Sir Richard Branson as the keynote speaker of the Istanbul TALKS Conference that took place in 16 March 2016. He, as a strong believer of Turkey, accepted our invitation. Besides his valuable contribution to our Istanbul TALKS Inspired Conference, he had some very striking words on security; "Terror can happen in any part of the world. It is not special to Istanbul or London or Paris or any other city. Thus we need to keep traveling to each other's country, to different destinations."

What he said was totally true. Thanks God! the level of terror declined to almost zero level when compared to two years ago. Our irreplaceable cuisine, high quality facilities, dedicated and hardworking teams, creative solutions and magical country, I strongly believe that we are prepared again to host our guests with legendary Turkish hospitality and professionalism.



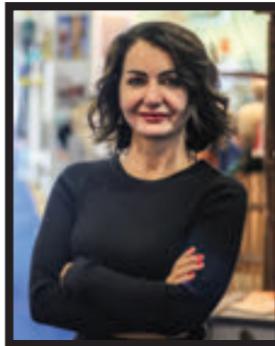
TURKEY HAS BECOME THE FAVOURITE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

Turkey being in the triangle of Asia, Europe and Middle East, attracts foreign participants because of regional closeness as an advantage of geographical location.

One of the sectors in which Turkey is leaping forward internationally is fair and congress sector. Turkey is hosting bigger organizations with the fair and congress centers that has modern infrastructure and quality service and state incentives. Today international and rather comprehensive fairs are organized in Turkey almost on every topic. Home textile, machinery, tourism, marble, construction are only a few of them. Very modern fairs where participant firms are creating very good business connections, guiding products and services of the sector are exhibited, investment for the future and intensive marketing happens domestically and internationally, are appreciated very much as successful organizations.

As a representative of this sector, I am proud that the fairs organized in our country has become a international brand.

A lot of our fair organizations are among the most important fairs in the world. Especially the fairs in Istanbul started to attract very much attention and started to take its place among the most important fairs of the sector. With these, Turkey is attracting attention of the international fair organizers. We observe that these firms are collaborating with local firms or else entering themselves in the sector with their own projects. The important reason for this is Turkey's spurt in the sector and geographical superiority. Turkey being in the triangle of Asia, Europe and Middle East, attracts foreign participants because of regional closeness as an advantage of ge-



NERGIS ASLAN
GENERAL MANAGER -
TUREKS INTERNATIONAL FAIR

ographical location. However I think what puts Turkey apart from other countries, provide this success and that the difference that will take the strategical role in future is hospitality and flexibility of the service. In the organizations held in other countries all services are standardized and are previously documented. With us, instant problems are interfered very quickly and the services can be changed according to the standard and the desire of the participant. This provides a very fruitful labor potential to the sector professionals.

In the end I can say that I think we should be ready to host leading fairs on more themes in the coming years.

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BOSPORUS TO BE PROMOTED AS A SEPARATE DESTINATION

Istanbul's pearl, Bosphorus, is a value to be promoted and commercialized separately with its accommodation and food and beverage facilities.

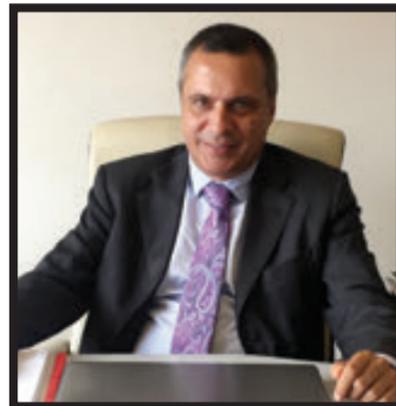
For touristic zones, to introduce themselves separately under another headline in their countries has been a common method. Moreover we witness that some destinations are promoted independently from their countries, some have separate booths from their countries in the fairs even without the name of their country being mentioned at all.

For instance Belek in the important fairs takes place not in the countries section but in the golf tourism section with its name only. Even, in the period when we were of lower tourism profile, a Turkish tour operator had a booth with the name of "Riviera Belek" just across the booth of Turkey, not getting into the negativeness of the name of Turkey and Antalya in that period. It succeeded pretty much in attracting visitors.

We see also that time to time Istanbul creates groups with touristic elements. But it is not successful as expected since it can't

get out of the small circle of Hagia Sofia, Basilica Cistern, Topkapi Palace, Blue Mosque, Grand Bazaar and Spice Market. Considering the worldwide positive image of Bosphorus, I think that it should distinguish itself. Bosphorus, is a value to be promoted and commercialized separately with its accommodation and food and beverage facilities.

Istanbul's this very precious area should step forward with its natural beauty, historical texture and architectural richness. The advertising Bosphorus as a complementary feature along with the other world widely known features will create a new touristic attraction around a new brand. This move will also help to create new products with rich content about Bosphorus where there are only a few hours of a boat trip but nothing else. Bosphorus already hosts a good amount of tourists with the hotels with peerless view and traditional fish restaurants. Unfortunately it remains very ordinary and poor when



GÖKALP ÖZDİKİCIOĞLU
GENERAL MANAGER
AGE TOURISM & EVENTS

there are very ordinary and poor seashores with rich content.

We have to talk about the mistakes as well. The folkloric shows organized in venues in basements in the city center in the past unfortunately moved to the boats on Bosphorus. The tourists are stuck with the repetition of the loud shows and the visual quality of Bosphorus has become secondary. However the unique and authentic shows prepared by competent musicians

and dancers would increase the brand value of Bosphorus and attracts the real travelers.

Within the frame of this main idea it will be very useful to plan festivals, artistic activities and authentic cuisine events and to promote them in the international level with a macro plan. Along with the involved establishments, the idea platforms created by NGOs can guarantee the success of this movement in medium term.

On the other hand, not only foreign tourists should be the target of this project. Also local tourists need events of good quality on Bosphorus. There should be new products with high quality for the ones who live in the city and who come to the city from other parts of the country.

We the tourism professionals are trying to do our share in this. As we try to create a public awareness and demand in the subject, we contribute to create authentic and rich content with our experience and with the belief we have in the importance of Bosphorus.

The boat trip "Songs and untold stories



with pleasure along the coast of the Bosphorus" during spring months on every Saturday between 5 pm and 9 pm is one of them. On the way up to the north with the daylight we listen to the interesting stories in the mansions, fortresses and palaces; on the way down to the beginning point with the moonlight we listen

to the songs written for the districts on Bosphorus. Then there will be a project with the songs written for Istanbul and Bosphorus in foreign languages and the series of stories not less than the stories of "1001 Nights".

We call every person who put their hearts in tourism to create and work on this.



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Working together for nearly 20 years with famous artists and groups in Turkey, Kosanadam organization is among the first in the industry with approximately 1,000 concerts that have been made in Turkey annually. Over the years, they have gained the trust of famous Turkish artists and groups.

Besides the M.I.C.E groups that are in our portfolio, we would like to inform you that we would be pleased to work with you, and we wish you a good season.

koşanadam

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