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H2 Fashion announces big-time participation in Dubai Shopping Festival

Hany Abu Omar: "DSF is a key platform that strongly supports the retail sector in UAE"

Dubai, UAE, 23 January 2013: H2 Fashion, one of the leading fashion retail groups based in Dubai, has announced big-time participation in the 18th edition of Dubai Shopping Festival 2013 (DSF). The UAE-based retail group participation covers 12 stores in Dubai.

The DSF participation gives shoppers extended offers until 18 February 2013. H2 Fashion has allocated 5 times higher budget for this year's edition in all stores in Deira City Centre, Dubai Marina Mall, Mirdif City Centre, Dubai Mall and Mall of the Emirates.

Hany Abu Omar, managing director of H2 Fashion said: "DSF is an international event that attracts millions of tourists each year, boosting retail sales. The event is supported by a huge marketing communications campaign which positions it on the global front. Moreover, the UAE public and private sectors are closely collaborating to make this event a success every year."

"Dubai is now competing on international level with shopping cities like London, Paris and New York in retail

sector in general and fashion sector in particular. We represent 5 global brands and operate 17 stores in UAE, 5 of which were launched in 2012," Abu Omar added.

H2 Fashion represents reputable international brands such as Jennyfer, a young and dynamic French brand targeting teenagers who are looking for trendy apparel at reasonable prices, Andrew's Ties, an Italian brand that manufactures men's shirts, ties and accessories exclusively in Italy in limited editions. Also, the company represents Golden point, an Italian franchise concept with more than 600 shops around the world that provides a wide assortment of hosiery, underwear and swimsuits. Moreover, H2 Fashion owns Lufian's franchisee rights in the UAE life style casual brand elegance men's wear and accessories as well as Galvanni, an Italian brand that manufactures men's, ladies apparel, shoes and accessories in Turkey and Italy.

"We are in progress of finalizing new store launches. The first quarter of 2013 will be a milestone leap for our operations in the country," said Abu Omar.



Bawadi Mall to launch mall-wide "Seek Your Comfort" campaign to ensure enhanced visitor convenience

Two additional entrances will guarantee maximum comfort to visitors

Bawadi Mall has maximized the comfort levels across all its facilities, including parking and access to passages, corridors, food courts, shops and entertainment under a campaign "Seek your comfort", topped by addition of two new entrances.

Leveraging its strategic location in Al Ain city and ample parking space, the new campaign aims at providing visitors with highest levels of convenience to enhance their shopping experience at the mall.

Khalid Shraim, Senior Marketing Manager, Bawadi Mall said: "Bawadi Mall follows a strategy hinged on crating the ultimate shopping experience, backed by highest levels of comfort. This strategy goes back to the time when the mall was designed. The comfort factor is reflected in the easy access to the shops and stores as well as convenient parking facilities."

Shraim added: "We at Bawadi Mall realize the importance of time to our visitors. All our efforts are focused on letting them get what they want in a record timing. Our visitors can access many shops inside the mall without having to enter the mall, which gives them the feel of shopping in stand-alone, high-street stores."

Bawadi Mall boasts a food court offering a varied fare, as well as more than 400 commercial tenants with whom the mall is working closely to ensure that the "comfort" factor is being maintained across the mall.

Shraim said that planning of shops in Bawadi Mall was done after a deep study which ensured that they are easily spotted by shoppers. He assured that the mall will continue its customer centric approach to ensure an ultimate and edutainment experience to all visitors.



SOUTH CAROLINA TO HOST WORLD'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE EXHIBITION ON UFOS, ALIEN ABDUCTIONS AND ENCOUNTERS

The world's first exhibition exploring the history of UFOs will debut at Broadway at the Beach in Myrtle Beach, S.C. in Spring 2013. The exhibition, entitled "Encounters: UFO Experience," presented by Intergalactic Brands, will feature more than 200 original artifacts, conceptual models, and documented film clips and recordings that support claims of ancient encounters through modern day sightings.

The exhibition will feature seven galleries that will showcase ancient alien encounters, the military's role in modern sightings, and pop culture's fascination with extraterrestrial life. Interactive aspects of the exhibition will enable visitors to personally experience an alien abduction that is based on observations and reports from alien abductees.

Encounters will allow visitors to learn more about the evidence surrounding famous UFO events in places like Area 51 and Roswell, and to reach their own conclusions about the many conspiracy theories swirling around such events. In addition, the exhibition's abduction experience will provide site, sound and sensory involvement in an interactive experience based on thousands of eye witness accounts of alien abductions.

The space travel gallery provides an impressive tour of past and present propulsion systems and how they have con-

tributed to modern day space programs. Science Fiction will also get its time in the spotlight as the Pop Culture gallery brings visitors face to face with replicas of props from Hollywood productions like ET, Close Encounters Of The Third Kind, and Men In Black.

"For the first time ever, people will experience the first comprehensive look at alien encounters all in one place," said Brian Bouquet of The Event Agency, the company responsible for developing the exhibition. "The unique and extraordinary content in our galleries have been provided by UFOlogists from around the world. Without the resources of these private collectors, this exhibition would not be possible. We plan to keep Encounters dynamic and fresh, so we'll always be looking for more contributions to the story it tells."

The Myrtle Beach, S.C. area was selected as the site to premier Encounters because of its convenient location along the East Coast and its popularity among vacationers 14 million of which visit the seaside town each year. But the major reason for choosing Myrtle Beach for the world premier is the area's connection to alien encounters. Sightings over the Myrtle Beach region have been reported for nearly 50 years. One of the largest sightings of UFOs occurred in August 2012 when hundreds of

people witnessed what appeared to be a large mother ship rendez-vousing with a smaller flying craft over North Myrtle Beach.

"The coastal area around Myrtle Beach has a well-documented history of multiple UFO sightings," said Bouquet. "In 2012 alone, 59 sightings were reported. Our company has staged successful exhibitions at Broadway at the Beach for the last two years. And, given Myrtle Beach's interest in UFOs, it seemed like the ideal place to launch what we expect will be an exhibition that will eventually travel around the world."

The family-friendly exhibition will be located on the northeastern side of Broadway at the Beach in a building distinguished by a flying saucer bursting from its side. Days of operation in April and May will be limited to Thursday through Sunday. Summer hours will be announced at a later date.

"We expect Encounters to be a very popular attraction at Broadway at the Beach," said Patrick Walsh, senior vice president of asset management with the Burroughs & Chapin Company, Inc., which owns Broadway at the Beach. "Whether you're a science fact or a science fiction fan or just curious about intergalactic travel and its implications for the people of earth, you'll find this exhibition to be immersive, entertaining and very, very memorable."



Best of Britain & Ireland

13-14 March 2013 IEC Birmingham

Decade of tourism development underway in Qatar



Photo caption: Qatar - One of the Middle East's fastest growing tourism destinations.

50 million passengers for new airport by 2015 as government ploughs US\$65 billion into infrastructure: Doha next destination for ATM 2013 road show

Qatar is one of the fastest growing markets in the Gulf, with business and leisure tourism on the ascendant as the country develops its infrastructure as part of a US\$65 billion investment plan ahead of its hosting of the 2022 football World Cup.

According to Qatar Tourism, the official government body, the country is entering a sustained decade-long period of development and growth, with over 85,000 new hotel rooms set to bolster current inventory by 2022. Alpen Capital's October 2012 GCC Hospitality Industry Report highlighted the 'slow but steady' growth in tourism receipts, which saw a CAGR of 15.9% in the period 2002 to 2011.

"Tourist arrivals in Qatar are expected to rise at a CAGR of 1.9% between now and 2022, and the government's US\$65 billion commitment to infrastructure development has proved to be a major incentive for long term investment by leading hospitality providers," said Mark Walsh, Portfolio Director, Reed Travel Exhibitions.

In 2012, the capital added to its upscale inventory, with the opening of the St Regis Doha and new Inter Continental Doha The City, as well as the country's first Hilton hotel. A second Four Seasons hotel is currently under development and budget brands are making an appearance with the popular Premier Inn chain debuting on the city outskirts later this year. Currently the luxury segment accounts for between 66 and 78% of supply while, mid-scale and economy supply is between 22 and 34%.

Qatar has an exceptionally strong presence at this year's ATM show with major organisations such as Qatar Tourism Authority, Katara Hospitality and Qatar Airways all participating.

"Katara Hospitality alone has more than 4,000 hotel rooms already operational or under construction and with the introduction of more and more budget properties, Qatar is committed to the development of a well-rounded tourism product in line with the 2030 national vision for a sustainable economy," he added.

Hotel room capacity in Qatar is expected to grow at a CAGR of 9.1% over the next five years, hitting US\$1.1 billion by 2016 (up from US\$0.6 billion in 2011). The country's national carrier, Qatar Airways will launch six new routes in H1 2013, growing its current network to 123 key destinations. Ground has also been broken on the new US\$14 million Doha metro network.

"As world-class infrastructure projects gives rise to new economic opportunity, with tourist arrivals expected to reach as many as 3.7 million by 2022, Qatar will see a transition from a predominantly business-led visitor profile to a stronger business-leisure mix with the football World Cup a milestone marker for the hospitality and tourism industry," commented Walsh.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, 2013 will see the show celebrate two decades of success.

Covering the entire week, the popular Seminar Theatre programme will address industry hot topics from developments in the aviation sector, inbound and outbound trends as well as the development of tourism over the last 20 years of Arabian Travel Market.

The line-up for this year's Arabian Travel Market will once again bring together the UNWTO regional tourism ministers' conference and the WTM Vision forum, which will focus on Middle East travel trends and the online travel market.



ATM meets Lebanese exhibitors in Beirut

ATM 2013 road show opportunity for industry to strategise ahead of May show

The Arabian Travel Market 2013 road show touched down in Beirut yesterday (Thursday 7 February), where representatives from Reed Travel Exhibitions, the organiser of ATM, met with Lebanese exhibitors.

Taking place at the Raoush Arjaan Rotana hotel, exhibitors including Anastasia Travel and Tourism, Rida International and World Net hotels, were given some top tips on how to make the most out of their participation at ATM 2013.

"This is an educational seminar to give exhibitors an update on this year's show and inform them about the new features of Arabian Travel Market, and how they can maximise their presence at the show" said Mark Walsh, Portfolio Director, Reed Travel Exhibitions organisers of Arabian Travel market.

"Such features include the revamped exhibitor portal and 'MY ATM online diary' where over 11,000 meeting requests were made between visitors and exhibitors during last year's show" added Walsh.

Having already visited Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, the ATM road show will travel to Jordan and Oman before concluding in Dubai on 11 February.

For more information on Arabian Travel Market 2013, please log on to:

www.arabiantravelmarket.com

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Jordan's 25-year master plan shows early promise with improved tourism revenues of \$3.47 billion in 2012

ATM 2013 road show arrives in Amman highlighting improved tourism numbers, investment and confident sector mood

The Arabian Travel Market (ATM) road show arrived in Amman yesterday (Sunday 10 February) to conduct an educational seminar at a time when Royal impetus is driving Jordan's ambitious tourism development

The Hashemite Kingdom is ploughing ahead with its 25-year master plan for sector development and government figures report a 15.3% increase in 2012 tourism receipts on 2011 figures, adding US\$3.47 billion to the economy.

According to Jordan's Central Bank, the increase in tourist revenues was due to the pick-up of inbound tourism numbers, with an increase in visitors noted from Iraq, Libya and the US in particular.

Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels' EMEA Q3 2012 Quarterly Newsletter reported that hotels in Jordan achieved the best trading results in the Middle East, primarily due to an 18.1% increase in occupancy. Amman was the best performing city in the Middle East & Africa region for the same period, with 30.4% RevPAR growth.

The Jordan Tourism Board will lead a host of high-profile participants to Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2013 which takes place at the Dubai World Trade Centre on 6-9 May, such as Amlak Hotels & Tourism Investment and first time exhibitor Belle Vue Hotels. Comm-

encing on the renewed optimism and confidence in Jordan, Mark Walsh, Portfolio Director, Reed Travel Exhibitions, said:

"Jordan currently has a pipeline of around 3,858 hotel rooms, with 2014 set to be a banner year for openings, with a number of high profile hospitality names making their market debut, and the country is definitely on the cusp of a tourism revival."

Leisure demand, thanks to the country's rich cultural heritage, remains the key tourism driver and one of the key elements of the Kingdom's tourism master plan is development in and around the Dead Sea and Aqaba with a number of hotels set to open in 2014/15, including the Westin Aqaba Harbour Resort & Spa, Starwood's Luxury Collection Al Manara Hotel and the JW Marriott Aqaba Hotel & Spa, along with the headline grabbing US\$ 1.5 billion Red Sea Astrarium - a Star Trek-themed amusement park.

"The current annual capacity of 3.5 million passengers at Queen Alia International airport, will be superceded by expansion plans to accommodate up to nine million passengers per year with the imminent launch of the new US\$750 million terminal, and a second phase taking that to 12 million in the coming years," added Walsh.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, the total number of visitors to the country fell by 7.3% in 2012, to 6,314,250, compared to 6,812,426 in

2011, however 4,162,367 overnight tourists were recorded in 2012, up a healthy 5.1% from 3,959,643 in 2011. The number of visitors heading to Jordan's key archaeological sites also dropped, although Petra Archaeological Park reported a 15% increase in December 2012 visitors against the previous year.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai and set to celebrate its 20th anniversary, the show has grown to become the largest show case of its kind in the region and one of the biggest in the world.

New to the 2013 event, ATM is launching the digital and technology day focusing on online travel developments and showcasing headline speakers from across the industry.

Taking place again this year is the New Frontiers Award, which was created to recognise outstanding contributions to tourism development in the face of overwhelming adversity.

The perennially popular industry Careers Day will wrap up the week providing the opportunity for visitors looking to make a career move to meet with the exhibitors' HR contacts looking for their next recruit.