
New milestone for Bahrain's expo centre

MANAMA: Three international business-to-business events held at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre (BIEC) during the first quarter of this year achieved its best performance, raising the game for professional exhibition and conference organisers in the region.

MEFTEC, the world's leading dedicated financial technology event, opened its fifth annual edition in the country to a sell-out audience whilst the delegate and exhibitor attendance at the 16th Middle East Oil & Gas Show & Conference (MEOS), Bahrain's premier petroleum event, was up 30 per cent on MEOS 2007.

Delegate attendance at the 10th International Congress of the Middle East African Council of Ophthalmology (MEACO) in Bahrain was the highest for MEACO and exceeded its delegate numbers at its Dubai Congress in 2007.

MEACO 2009 was the first-ever international Medical Association Congress won by Bahrain with more than 2,000 high-spending medical professionals and over 500 international speakers visiting the destination.

BIEC, the country's largest, interconnected and most flexible trade show and convention facility is managed by Bahrain Exhibition & Convention Authority (BECA).

Buoyed by encouraging policy measures including economic stimulus plans recently announced by governments in the Gulf, Bahrain's MICE industry is weathering the storm with a robust performance in the first quarter of this year.

It landed the World Academy for Laser Applications - WALA-Laser2009 Universal Conference and Exhibition with Anti-Ageing and Aesthetic Symposium account.

Running from October 19 to 21 at the BIEC, this three-day international medical event is expected to attract more than 1,000 delegates from all over the world particularly from Saudi Arabia, Iran and India, of which 120 are speakers from the laser profession including a few Nobel Prize winners.

WALA-Laser2009 is supported by the Arab League, GCC, American Society for Laser Medicine Surgery and King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre.

Elegant Training, the Bahrain-based organiser of the inaugural medical event, has booked 150 room nights for the speakers.

With approximately 200 companies exhibiting, the WALA meeting and exhibition is forecast to generate an economic impact of \$1.37 million for Bahrain.

BECA also converted a lead for the 21st Congress of the Arab Division of the International Academy of Pathology into a sale. This will run from December 6 to 8.

Several other potential new businesses are being explored by BECA, of which three are based in the US, two in Germany, one in the UAE and another in Bahrain.