

## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM ABU DHABI

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 VOLUME 2



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### FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Visitors from around the world emphatically reiterated Abu Dhabi's outstanding reputation as a global tourism destination of choice. Our outstanding world-class offering leverages Abu Dhabi's positioning as a leading city that prioritises heritage, culture and leisure and has led to year-on-year growth in tourists.

2019 was a landmark year for Abu Dhabi. The strategy of Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) combined the appeal of its world-renowned attractions and bespoke experiences with its growing influence as a business hub, particularly within the meetings, incentives and exhibitions throughout the region.

Creative tactical campaigns drove footfall across our assets as we welcomed a record number of tourists from various geographies. We attracted ideal events and further expanded on our large-scale experiences by creating festivals that are integrated across B2B2C, while also ensuring we stayed true to the heritage and values of our communities.

From hosting the Special Olympics World Games, which cemented Abu Dhabi as a global capital built on diversity and inclusion to the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, which remains the most prestigious race on the F1 calendar, the past year has undoubtedly created unforgettable memories and indelible impressions.

Abu Dhabi welcomed 11.35 Million visitors, a record number of international visitors in 2019 at 10.5% increase from 2018. India retained its position, as the top non-UAE nationality for Abu Dhabi hotels with a total of 450,000 guests in 2019 and China came second with a total of 396,000 visitors.

2019 also witnessed a recorded robust growth across the key revenue metrics including AED 5.8 billion in total revenue, AED 3.2 billion in room revenues and AED 2.0 billion in F&B.

We have made strategic investments into the emirate's leisure, entertainment and cultural assets ensuring we appeal to visitors and residents of all backgrounds. Combined with a calendar of events that are designed to attract the business and leisure traveler, we have successfully created a destination experience through our immense value propositions. By working closely with industry stakeholders from the UAE and overseas, we constantly innovate to add new experiences to Abu Dhabi.

We are particularly proud of our eco-tourism initiatives that are testament to our commitment to championing and promoting sustainable tourism. From making positive environmental, social, cultural and economic contributions, these new initiatives are also able to raise awareness on our bio-diversity.

As we look ahead to 2020: Towards the Next 50 Years, we can confidently build on the solid foundations of our mandate, as we continue to collaborate closely with Abu Dhabi's tourism industry partners. From offering our advisory counsel to steering frontline service providers towards our standards of excellence, we are well-positioned to enhance the appeal of our destination across all demographics. We anticipate another fruitful year, in which we can increase the understanding of our unique culture, both in its heritage and future manifestations, with an aim of enlightening both this generation and those to come.

### Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak



### FOREWORD FROM THE ACTING UNDERSECRETARY

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) is constantly working to raise the contribution of tourism to the GDP of the emirate. While raising global awareness of Abu Dhabi as a destination of choice by promoting our diverse assets to the world is one of our primary objectives, we are equally strategically focused on identifying key international source markets.

In 2019, we undertook the task of measuring the tourism sector and its impact on Abu Dhabi's economy. The first objective of the task was to define the tourism sector as it relates to the economy of Abu Dhabi, and the second objective was to provide a methodology for the calculation of tourism GDP and employment in a way that is consistent with standard industry accounts and international best practice.

We took this forward by building and maintaining a comprehensive series of integrated models that measure the economic impact of tourism within Abu Dhabi.

The work commenced by DCT Abu Dhabi in 2019 includes developing a statistically and economically robust framework to assess the economic impact of tourism on Abu Dhabi, including the production of Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) specifically for the Abu Dhabi tourism sector and its role in the Emirate's economy.

Abu Dhabi's tourism proposition has grown multifold in recent years. Our asset portfolio, which included Louvre Abu Dhabi, Manarat Al Saadiyat, Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and Qasr Al Hosn, added the opening of Qasr Al Watan (Presidential Palace) for the first time to visitors in 2019.

Our campaigns are targeted and curated to appeal to specific geographies by promoting our greatest events and experiences. In 2019, we built on the Abu Dhabi Experience with the Extraordinary Summer Campaign that collaborated with interested Destination Management Companies and attractions with an initiative that was designed to increase visitors between July and October. We significantly exceeded our initial targets through successful outreach to the source markets of China and India and working closely with DMCs to offer appealing tour products to their markets.

Our ever-growing number of tourism accolades and awards has helped position Abu Dhabi as a global hub for business, sports, leisure and culture. We continue to attract hosting high-profile international events such as Special Olympics World Games, Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, while building on our legacy events such as Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Abu Dhabi HSBC Championships, Mubadala World Tennis Championships, Abu Dhabi Art, Culture Summit, Abu Dhabi Classics Music Season and Abu Dhabi Food Festival.

We also ensure that we retain the community spirit and family appeal at the heart of all our events and experiences. DCT Abu Dhabi hosted the inaugural edition of Abu Dhabi Family Week. The 10-day, family-oriented event featured the iconic Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards for the first time in the region and brought together over 83,000 visitors from the UAE and the region.

Contributing to the success of DCT Abu Dhabi and Abu Dhabi's tourism agenda is the capital's positioning as an important center for the MICE industry. Abu Dhabi Convention & Exhibition Bureau (ADCEB) is the emirate's leading body overseeing and supporting the development and promotion of business events in Abu Dhabi.

Through its offering as a world-class venue provider for international exhibitions, conferences and live events, Abu Dhabi's consistently high standards of venue facilities, management and client relationships are complemented by its global partnerships with key industry experts including SITE, IAEE, ICCA and PCMA.

By bringing home the 'Middle East's Leading Business Destination' honour at the World Travel Awards in 2019, Abu Dhabi cemented its position in this sector.

While we draw great pride from our accomplishments of the past year, we are focused on the future. We are determined to pursue an 'always on' attitude that will ensure we remain true to our mandate in 2020 – as we work towards realising Abu Dhabi's tourism ambitions over the next 50 years.

### Saood Al Hosani

### BRANDS



**Destination** 

· Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau

Abu Dhabi

• Abu Dhabi Calendar

• Abu Dhabi Events Bureau









نظام ترخیص الفعالیات EVENTS LICENSING SYSTEM





















### Tourism & Marketing Sector

- Abu Dhabi Culinary Season
- · Abu Dhabi Festival
- Events Licensing System
- Mother of the Nation
- Emirati Experience
- Industry Development Committee
- New Year's Eve #InAbuDhabi
- Al Nukhba Awards Ceremony
- Summer #InAbuDhabi
- Abu Dhabi Calendar
- Retail Abu Dhabi
- Tourism Investment Assets Sole Proprietorship L.L.C.
- Abu Dhabi Medical Tourism
- Abu Dhabi Family Week
- · Games & Tech Week Abu Dhabi
- Hala Bilkhaleej
- Abu Dhabi Showdown Week
- · Abu Dhabi Race Week
- Eid #InAbuDhabi
- Abu Dhabi Tourism and Data Analytics Forum

CHAPTER

### VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### AWARDS 2019



### WAF: WORLD ARCHITECTURE FESTIVAL AWARD:

Qasr Al Hosn, Al Musallah, Religion

### WAF: WORLD ARCHITECTURE FESTIVAL AWARD:

Qasr Al Hosn, Al Musallah, Culture

### DEZEEN: REBIRTH PROJECT

Qasr Al Hosn: The Fort,

### WAN AWARDS (ARCHITECTURE-CONCRETE)

Qasr Al Hosn- Al Musallah

### **ITALIA TRAVEL AWARD:**

We were (top 3) in the category, of Preferred Tourism Board, (Brand USA won the category).

### NTIA

Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi were nominated as a finalist but didn't make it to the final stage

### WOMEN IN TRAVEL AWARDS

Best tourism Board, Australia.

### ABU DHABI ART, MESE MIDDLE EAST EVENT SHOW AWARD

Flash company comes 1st rank.

### WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS

Middle East's Leading
Business Travel Destination 2019

### MIDDLE EAST'S LEADING TOURIST BOARD 2019

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority

### TV &FILM AWARD

New York Festival, World'd Best Television & Film: Finalist Winner, 2019 Finalist

### CFFT

Film Latvia festival, Winner

### ZAGREB TOURFILM FESTIVAL

Zagreb, Croatia

### THE GOLDEN CITY GATE

ITB-Berlin, Berlin, Germany

### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM AWARDS 2019

Best National Tourism Board Campaign

### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AWARD

World Best Tourism Board

### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AWARD

Best Highly Developed Destination

### **GRAND PRIX CIFFT**

for the World Best Tourism Commercial 2019

### WTM AWARD

'Best influencer'
(Digital campaign Promotion)

### WTM, BEST CITY BREAK AWARD

at the annual Selling Travel Agents Choice Awards.

### **AMORGOS**

Film What makes an extraordinary story

CHAPTER 1 - VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES CHAPTER 1 - VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### **VISION OF THE SECTOR**

The Department of Culture and Tourism — Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) is charged with supporting the evolution of Abu Dhabi into a world-class destination, and committed to conserving, promoting and leveraging Abu Dhabi's heritage, culture and tourism assets, while also reinforcing Abu Dhabi's position as a forward-thinking tourism destination.

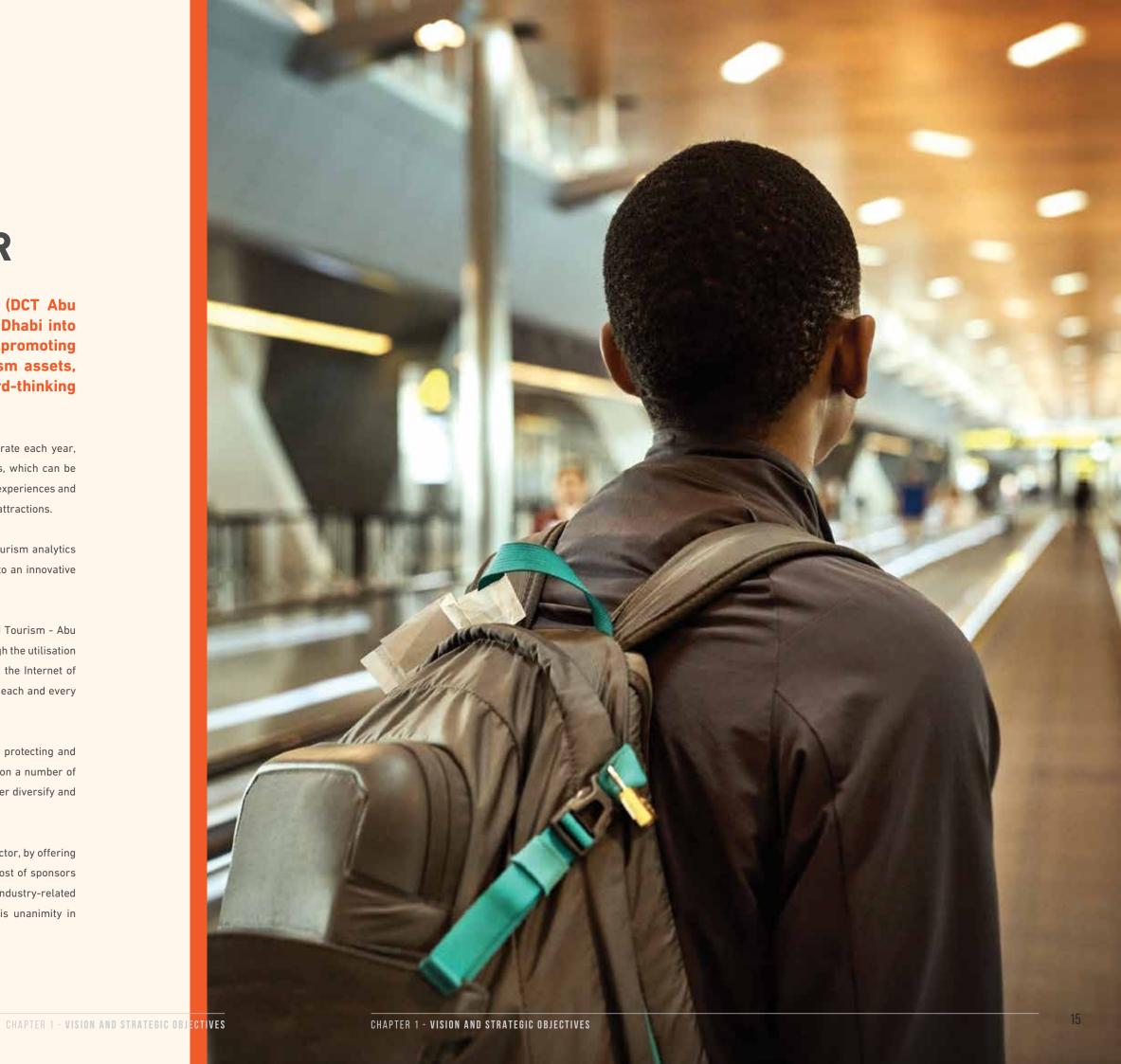
This involves working to incrementally increase the number of visitors to the emirate each year, while creating an engaging and inspiring experience for each one of these visitors, which can be achieved by offering them outstanding leisure activities, family-friendly fun, cultural experiences and business opportunities, and also utilising Abu Dhabi's host of picturesque natural attractions.

Utilising the latest in cutting-edge technology, specifically the latest advances in tourism analytics and data analysis, is crucial in this, in that it supports Abu Dhabi's development into an innovative tourism capital that offers a bespoke experience to each visitor.

By incorporating advanced analytics into our strategies, Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi will be able to create distinct advantages for the entire tourism industry. Through the utilisation of state-of-the-art technologies, including the likes of data lakes, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, as well as 5G connectivity, we can dynamically personalise our offerings to each and every visitor to our emirate.

Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi is also entrusted with expanding, protecting and promoting the emirate's cultural and tourism assets. Part of this has been a focus on a number of niche tourism sectors, including medical tourism and cruise trips, which again further diversify and improve our appeal to visitors.

The organisation also supports long-standing investment in the emirate's tourism sector, by offering an ever-increasing array of events and attractions, working in conjunction with a host of sponsors and industry stakeholders to achieve these goals. Additionally, it provides crucial industry-related guidance across all fields to its tourism industry partners, thus ensuring there is unanimity in ambition in Abu Dhabi's drive towards excellence.





# 

### **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

28.5 MILLION WEBSITE VISITS

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's (DCT Abu Dhabi) website received 28.5 million visits as a result of marketing and promotional campaigns.



Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi has broken the world record for the 'Largest Augmented Reality (AR) Screen', as part of a pioneering augmented-reality advertising campaign to promote the UAE capital as a world-leading holiday destination.



The new marketing campaign utilised the famous 40-foot digital billboard known as Piccadilly Lights in the heart of London, transforming the screen into an interactive augmented-reality experience to showcase some of Abu Dhabi's most iconic landmarks, with the huge AR screen recognised by the famous Guinness Book of World Records as part of the project.

5.1
MILLION
GUESTS

15
MAJOR EVENTS

The hotel sector in the Emirate witnessed an increase in guest numbers to 5.1 million as a result of the efforts made by Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi to develop the tourism ecosystem. Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi organised 15 major events, including prominent activities in the field of sports and entertainment (UFC and T10, and concerts such as those by Bruno Mars and Eminem), in addition to a variety of other marketing and promotion efforts

Excavations carried out by the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi on Marawah Island found the oldest human settlement in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi dating back 8,000 years.

New archaeological finds have been discovered at the "Hili 2" site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It revealed details of daily social life in Al Ain during the Iron Age

The Church and Monastery of Sir Bani Yas was also opened as the first Christian site to be discovered in the country

16
INTERNATION
AWARDS WON

The Emirate of Abu Dhabi won 16 international awards in the field of tourism and culture through its participation in leading international events, among them the campaign "Abu Dhabi: Your Extraordinary Story" at the 2019 Golden City Awards.

### **OUTCOMES**

35,000 FILLED HOTEL NIGHTS

Four marketing and promotion campaigns contributed to increasing tourism, while the hotel support programme filled 35,000 hotel nights in the capital.

450,000 SALES LEADS The promotion of the Abu Dhabi Events Calendar, Abu Dhabi Summer Season and Abu Dhabi Winter Season resulted in the transfer of 450,000 sales leads to hotels and event organisers.



Awareness of Abu Dhabi as a leisure destination increased by 5% reaching 77% in 2019.

A 2% increase in the number of hotel guests compared to last year and a 7% increase in hotel revenues. Revenue for each available room (Revpar) increased by 6% and the average room rate was 5% higher compared to 2018.

425,000
ATTRACTED
VISITORS

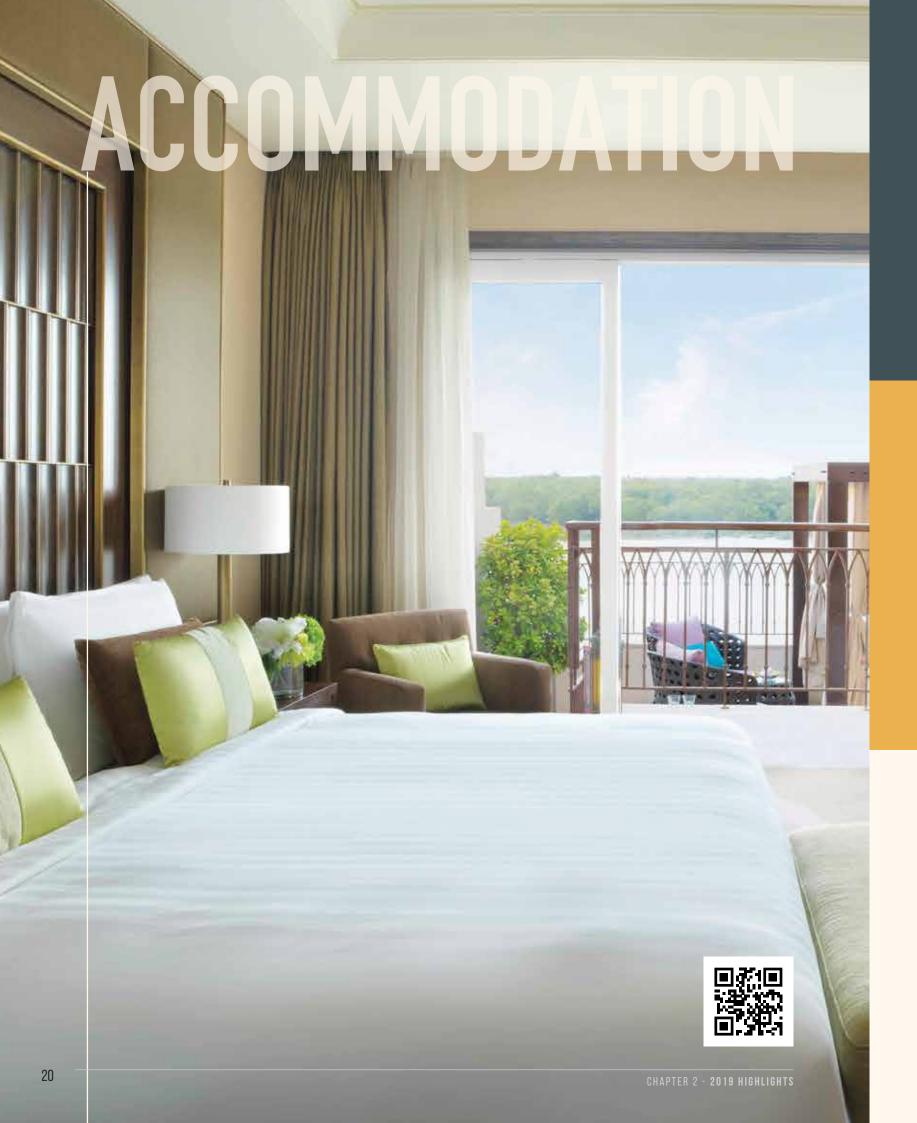
Various activities organised through Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi attracted approximately 425,000 visitors during the year, which contributed to promoting the Emirate of Abu Dhabi as a leading leisure destination with innovative events.

91% of Emirati citizens who have been contacted in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi regonise the important role played by Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's culture site in promoting Emirati national identity.

Excavations revealed new evidence of advanced urban, artistic and technical achievements by inhabitants of Abu Dhabi during the Neolithic and Iron Ages.

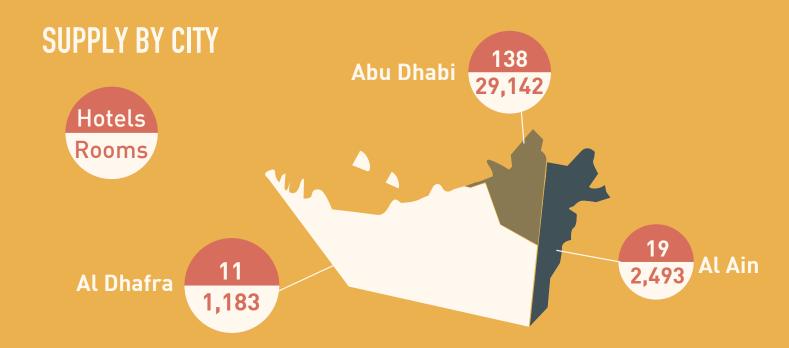


Promoting Abu Dhabi as a tourist and cultural destination that adopts competitive international best practices by winning prestigious international awards.

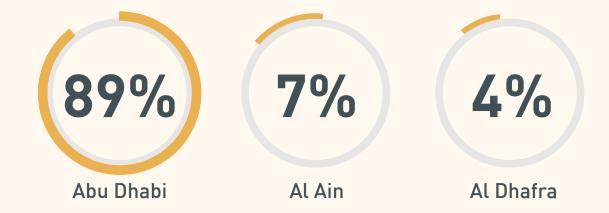


### **HOTEL INVENTORY**

168
HOTELS

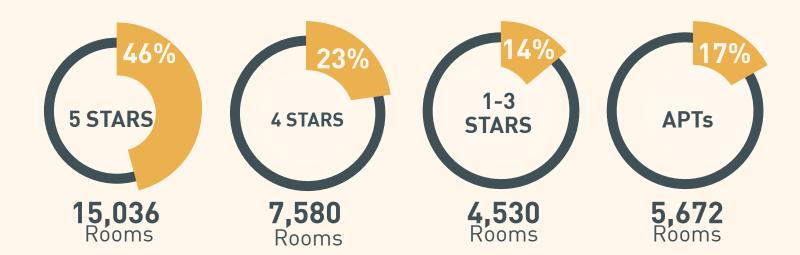


### **DISTRIBUTION OF ROOM SUPPLY BY CITY**

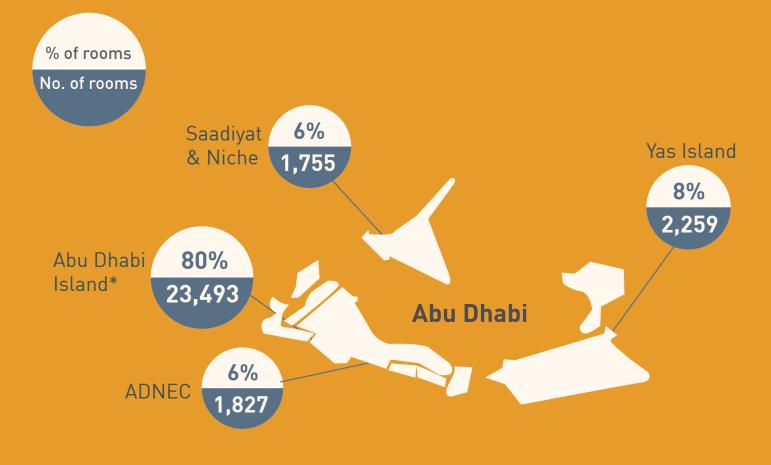


CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

### DISTRIBUTION OF ROOM SUPPLY BY CATEGORY



### DISTRIBUTION OF ROOM SUPPLY BY ABU DHABI ZONES



\* Abu Dhabi Island includes Corniche, Marina, Bateen, Al Markaziyah, Al Zahiya, Al Maryah Island, Al Reem Island, Al Maqtaa Creek, Al Gurm Corniche, Zayed Sports City, Khalifa City & Raha Beach

### HOTEL PERFORMANCE

### **HOTEL GUESTS & OCCUPANCY**



### **ANNUAL GUESTS TRENDS (IN MILLIONS)**



### **HOTEL REVENUES**

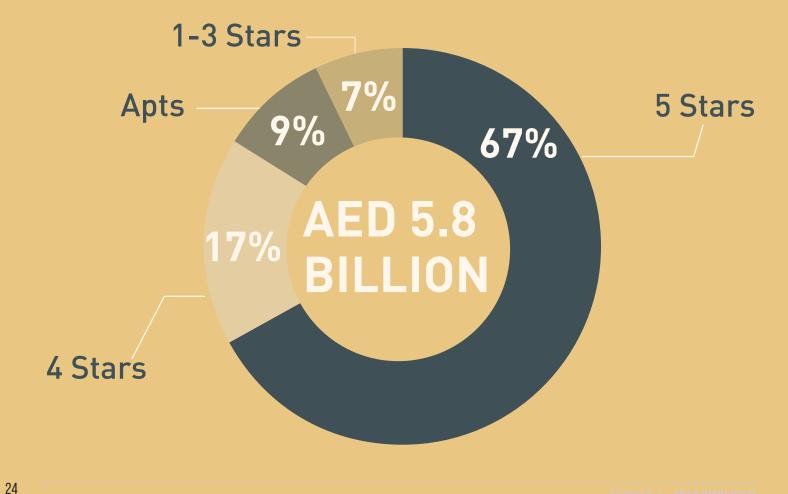
5.8 Billion AED (6.6% FROM 2018)







### TOTAL REVENUES BY CATEGORY

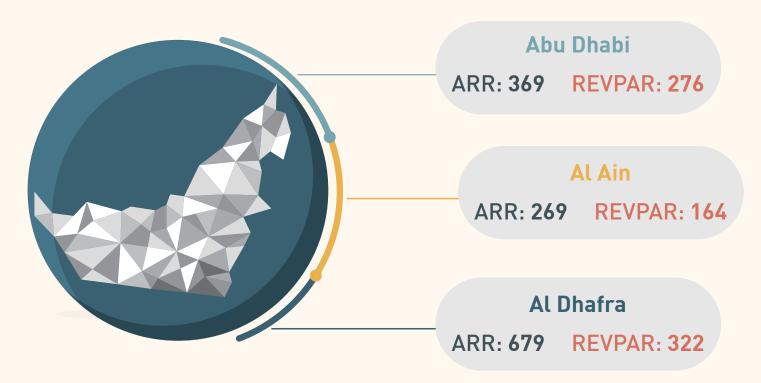


### HOTEL ARR AND REVPAR

ARR (AED) 369 **+4.7%** from 2018

REVPAR (AED) 269 **+6.4%** from 2018

### **HOTEL ARR & REVPAR BY CITY**

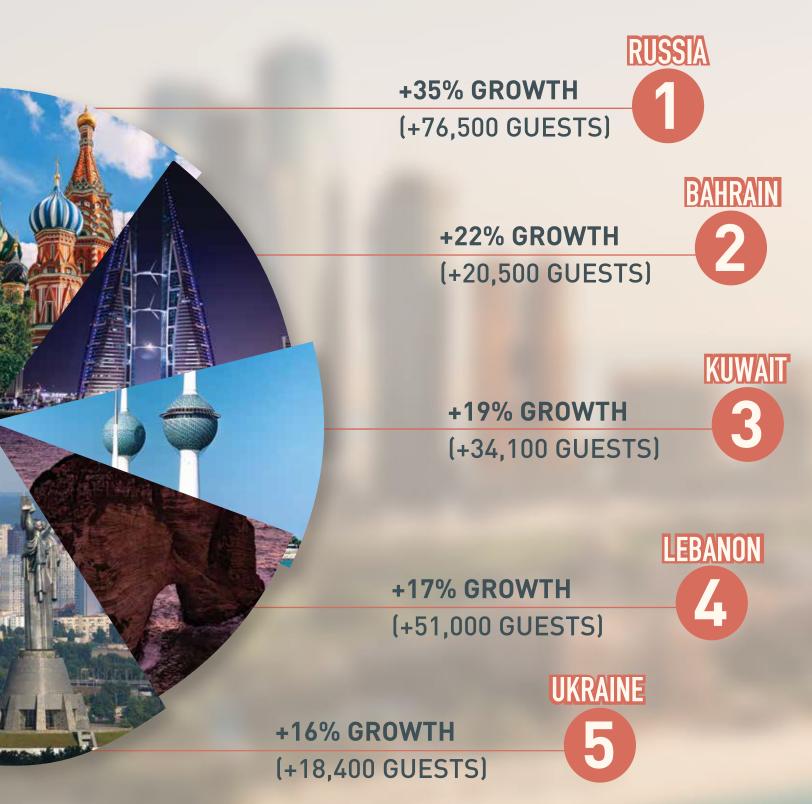


### **HOTEL ARR & REVPAR BY ZONE**



### HOTEL GUESTS NATIONALITIES

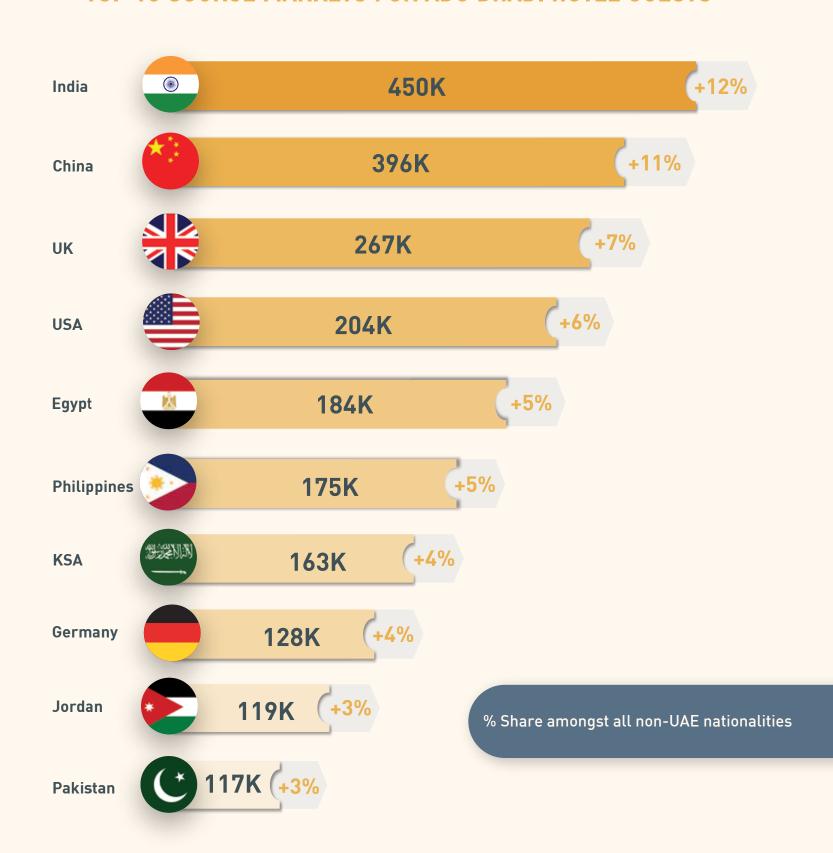
### TOP 5 FAST GROWING MARKETS FOR ABU DHABI HOTELS



Fast Growing markets are based on markets recording a minimum of 18K Guests in 2019

### HOTEL GUESTS NATIONALITIES

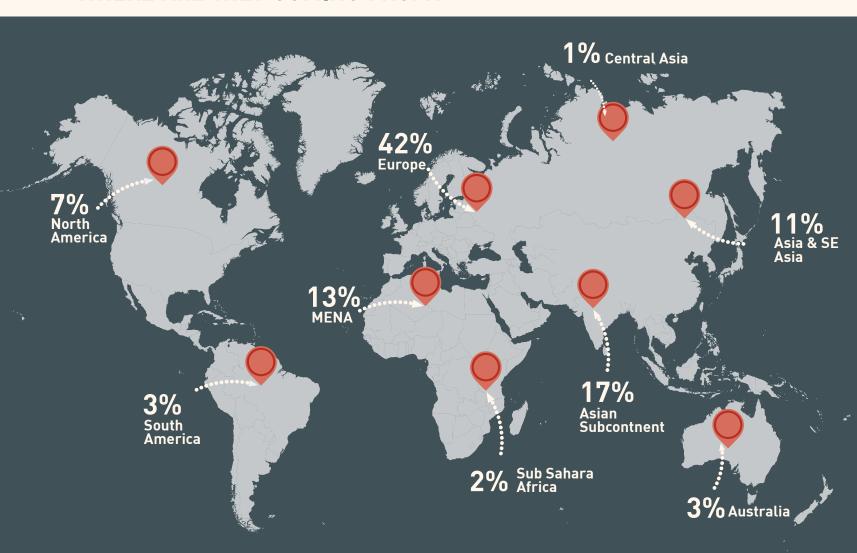
### TOP 10 SOURCE MARKETS FOR ABU DHABI HOTEL GUESTS



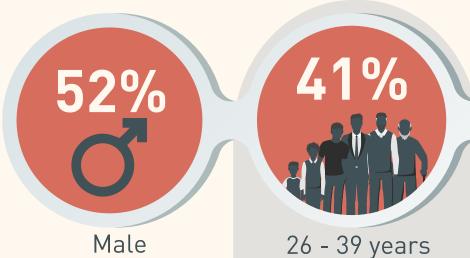
27

# ABU DHABI INTERNATIONAL 28

### WHERE ARE THEY COMING FROM?



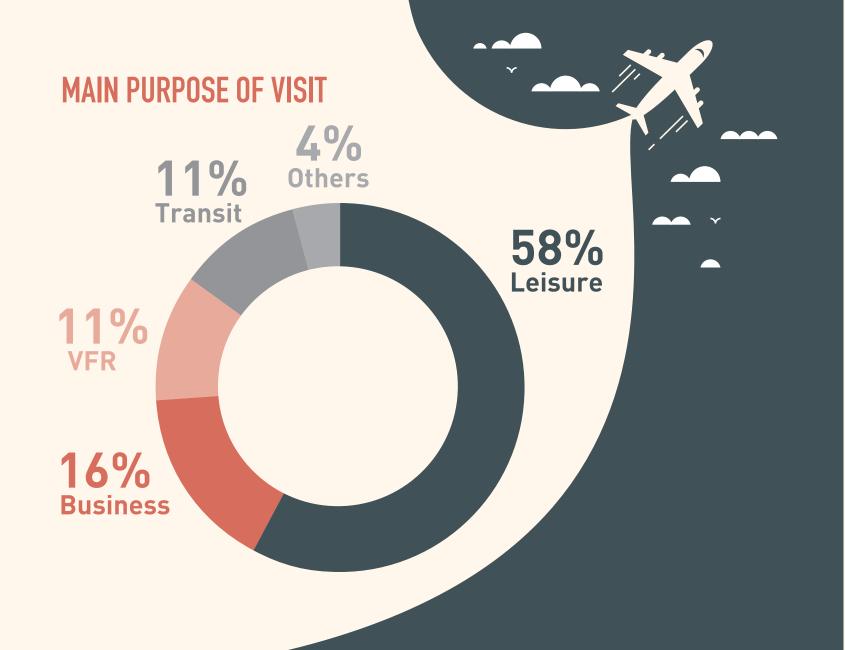
### PROFILE OFINTERNATIONAL VISITORS



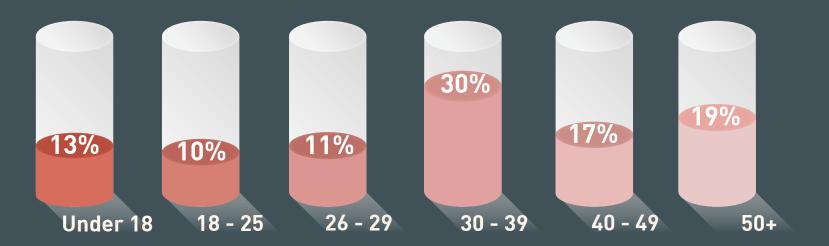


Accompanied by spouse

CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS



### **AGE GROUPS**

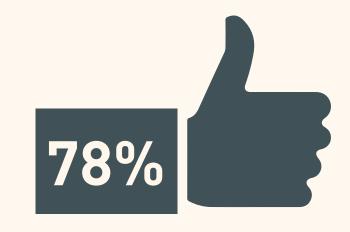


### ABU DHABI EXPERIENCE

**Overall Satisfaction** 

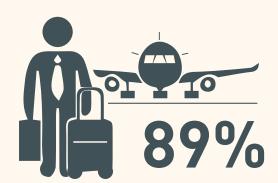


**Exceeded Expectations** 



### Willingness to visit again

CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

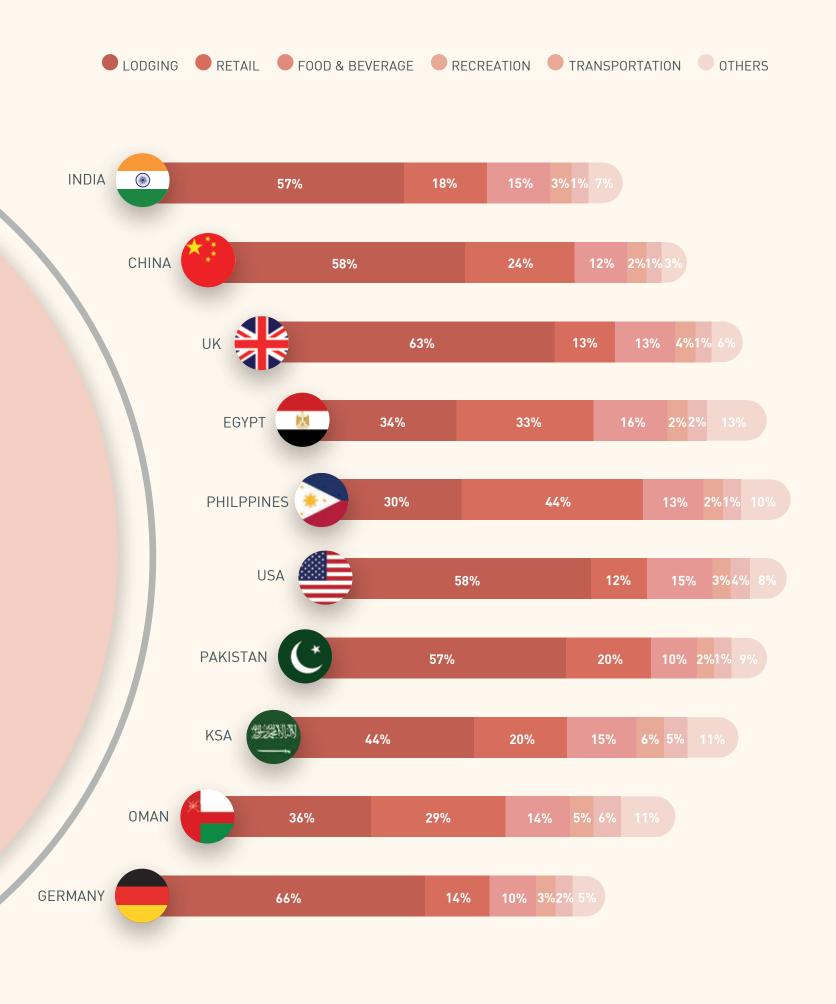




CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

### VISITOR SPEND ACROSS KEY CATEGORIES









In the tourism sector, we consider data and analytics to be a crucial part of our mission to grow. We are big believers in using the latest innovations to tackle challenges and we diligently scour the globe for the latest technologies that we can adopt.

Leveraging advanced analytics as part of our strategy will bring important potential benefits for all sectors of the tourism industry. Emerging capabilities such as cloud computing, data lakes and the Internet of Things in the era of 5G connectivity will allow us to personalise experiences for travellers in real time.



### **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

- Abu Dhabi Hotel Inventory, Future Supply & Strategic Gaps? by Ziad Ali Mohamed, Business Intelligence Director at DCT Abu Dhabi.
- Growth in the Travel Industry, by Hany Abdelkawi, Head of Travel at Google
- · Speech titled `Let the Customer Speak', Wouter Geerts, Senior Research Analyst at Skift,
- · Speech titled `Aspiration vs Reality of the Future of Travel', Rafat Ali, the Founder and CEO of Skift.
- Global Trends in the Travel Market by Carolyn Kremins, President of Skift
- Driving Transformation to the Intelligent World by Faisal Ameer Malik, Chief Technology Officer at Huawei Technologies
- Visitor Journey and Profiling Using Telecom Data by Jose Pablo Redondo, Head of Big Monetisation at du
- Unlocking Transformation: Building the Future of Travel through Data at Scale, by Ian Di Tullio, Global SVP Guest Services at Accor

### **KEY PANELS:**

- F&B & Retail Analytics by Cyrille Fabre, Head of Consumer Products and Retail at Bain
- Predictive Analytics in Abu Dhabi Hotel Markets, by Olivier Jager, CEO & Co-founder of Forwardkeys, Philip Wooler, Area Director MEA of STR, and Amr El Nady, Head of Hotels & Hospitality for MENA at JLL
- Why Data Transparency and Trust are Key to Customer Experience', by Louise Blake, VP of Data at Seera Group, Matthew Webb, Global OTA Customer Data & Analytics at Travelport,
- DMC Data: Pricing Dynamics of Online Bookings by Albert Dias, Co-founder of Musafir Business, Justin Reid, Director of Europe & MEA at TripAdvisor
- Role of Analytics in Hospitality Industry by Philip Wooller, Guiliano Gasparini, Senior VP at Aldar In parallel with the lectures in the Auditorium, Manarat Al Saadiyat's Theatre hosted several workshops and presentations:
- The Evolution of Customer Segmentation by John Paterson, Head of Enterprise Analytics for Etihad Airway
- Economic Modelling and Forecasting Methods by Scott Livermore, the Managing Director and Chief Economist from Oxford Economics Middle East
- Visitors Forecast Methodology and Impact to Abu Dhabi by Sumathi Ramanthan, Director of Destination Marketing at Expo 2020
- Hospitality Demand Forecasting in the GCC Region by Nilotpal Kanti Sinha, Senior Data Scientist at DCT Abu Dhab
- Visa Purchasing Power and Journey of Abu Dhabi-bound Tourists by Ghana Mahanty, Senior Director and Head of Data Science on MENA and SSA from Visa
- Creating Tomorrow's Destination Experience Through Digital Transformation, by Mamoun Faisal, Director of Information Technology at Farah Experiences
- The Internet of Things' by Khaled Abou Nader, Chief Product Officer from Publicis Media

3D CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS CHAPTER 2 - 2019 HIGHLIGHTS CHAPTER 3



## TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT



### **Ecotourism**

Ecotourism is a growing segment of the global tourism industry that is making significant positive contributions to the environmental, social, cultural and economic wellbeing of destinations and local communities around the world.

The segment aims to conserve and protects areas of natural beauty, educates visitors on ecological aspects of a destination as well as providing culture ecotourism aspects in addition to empowering local residents to continue to live a sustainable life via tourism income.

In line with this global trend and in cooperation with the Department of Municipalities and Transport, the Department of Culture and Tourism is working on unlocking a total o five natural sites. These will be made available to the public in Q1 2020 as part of Government Accelerators Programme - Ghadan 21.

### 1 Al Reem Mangroves:

located in the heart of Reem Island, the site is considered a preservation project for the protection of the valuable mangroves of Abu Dhabi, and it provides ecotourism activities, such as kayaking, bird watching.

### Habitat Island:

provides an ecotourism beach experience in close vicinity to Abu Dhabi island. Activities available on the island include snorkeling, swimming and beach games.

### Jabal Hafeet:

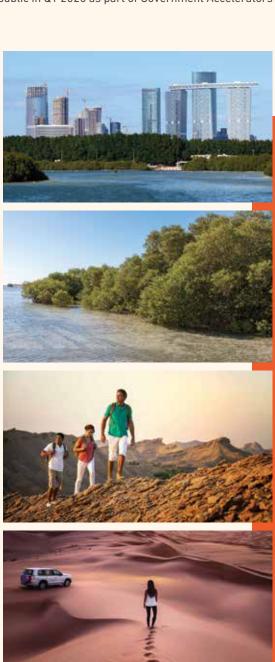
provides a safe path for visitors, hikers and bikers to enjoy the heights of the mountain with its glorious views. Spaces for food trucks, resting areas with shades and other facilities will be available.

### / Swaihan Desert area:

the desert space provides a haven for desert lovers and campers. All facilities will be available for the experiences. In addition, of plenty of information about the fauna and flora of our desert area is shown on signs all alone the tracks created.

### Ghantoot Forest:

has the possibility of creating a delightful stop between Abu Dhabi and Dubai highway. There is an easy to reach picnic area and activities such as biking and walking.





A marketing and promotional campaign was organised in China - deemed to be one of the biggest source markets for seniors - to increase the number of senior visitors staying a minimum of two nights in Abu Dhabi.

Senior visitors were given a tailored tour of the capital, showcasing Emirati culture, visits to the Emirati Majalis and a taste of local cuisines under the guidance of an Emirati tour guide.

CHAPTER 3 - TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER 3 - TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT



### 12th World Medical Tourism and Global Healthcare Congress

October 15 – 17 2019

Celebrating its 12th year in the fourth fastest-growing country in the world, the event presented industry stakeholders and key leaders with an exclusive opportunity for one-on-one networking with the industry's largest buyers in a business-development-inspired event.

Recent case studies and buyer-focused educational summits and sessions further enhanced the experience. Figures for the conference:





### **Cruise Tourism**

The Abu Dhabi cruise industry has experienced phenomenal growth since the Emirate welcomed its first cruise liners in 2006.

Maritime tourism in Abu Dhabi witnessed immense growth in 2019, which has been hailed as a record-breaking year for the sector in the UAE capital. More than 518,000 cruise visitors arrived at the city's ports throughout the year, showing a 46% increase compared satisfaction with the services at the city's cruise terminals, with the overall satisfaction level of the Sir Bani Yas terminal reaching 85%, while the satisfaction with the Mina Zayed Port was at 90%.

193 Cruise Calls

3% (from 2018)



~518,000 Visitors

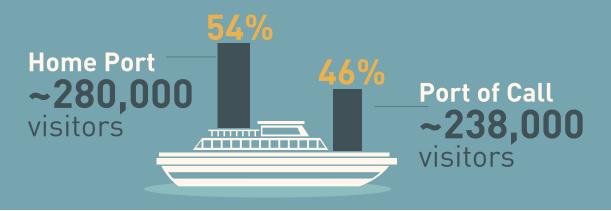
(from 2018)



### **CRUISE VISITORS BY PORT**



### **CRUISE VISITORS BY TYPE OF CALL**



### 518K 330K 354K 170K 280K 2015 2017 2019 2016 2018

+204%

2015-19 growth in cruise visitors

### CRUISE VISITOR SATIFACTION WITH ABU DHABI



**Expectations** visit again **Net Promoter** 

Score (NPS)

Satisfaction



### Seatrade Global, Miami **Beach Convention Center**

### 8-11 April 2019

Bringing together buyers and suppliers for a four-day conference and three-day exhibition, the gathering attracted more than 11,000 registered attendees, 700 exhibiting companies from 113 countries and 300 international journalists, making it the cruise industry's epicenter of ideas, products and services.

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi led a delegation to the event, comprising partners such as Abu Dhabi Ports, Etihad Airways and the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs - Abu Dhabi.



### **Seatrade Europe**

The Department of Culture and Tourism -Abu Dhabi led a delegation to attend the Seatrade Europe Cruise and River Cruise Convention in Hamburg, Germany.

The participation came with an aim to showcase the latest trends and discuss cruise sector innovations.

The event – which brought together more than 250 personnel from over 20 cruise line brands – offered opportunities to build and strengthen long-term partnerships, and explore new business opportunities with global industry pioneers, experts, and influencers.



### **Yacht Tourism**

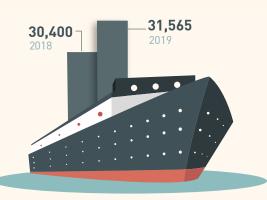
### 25-28 September 2019

In collaboration with Abu Dhabi's Department of Transport (DoT), and Abu Dhabi Ship Building Company, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, participated in the Monaco Yacht Show, Europe's largest in-water display of yachts, for the first time which brought together yacht industry leaders from all around the world.

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi sponsored the Captains and Crew Lounge at the exhibition, as well as showcasing Abu Dhabi as a leading superyacht destination by presenting its latest products and services to key players in the industry through an interactive exhibit. The exhibition highlighted the latest improvements to yachting legislation in the capital, including cruise permit extensions from 21 days to six months, charter permits, and immigration and customs permits at marinas.

### Important figures about the event:

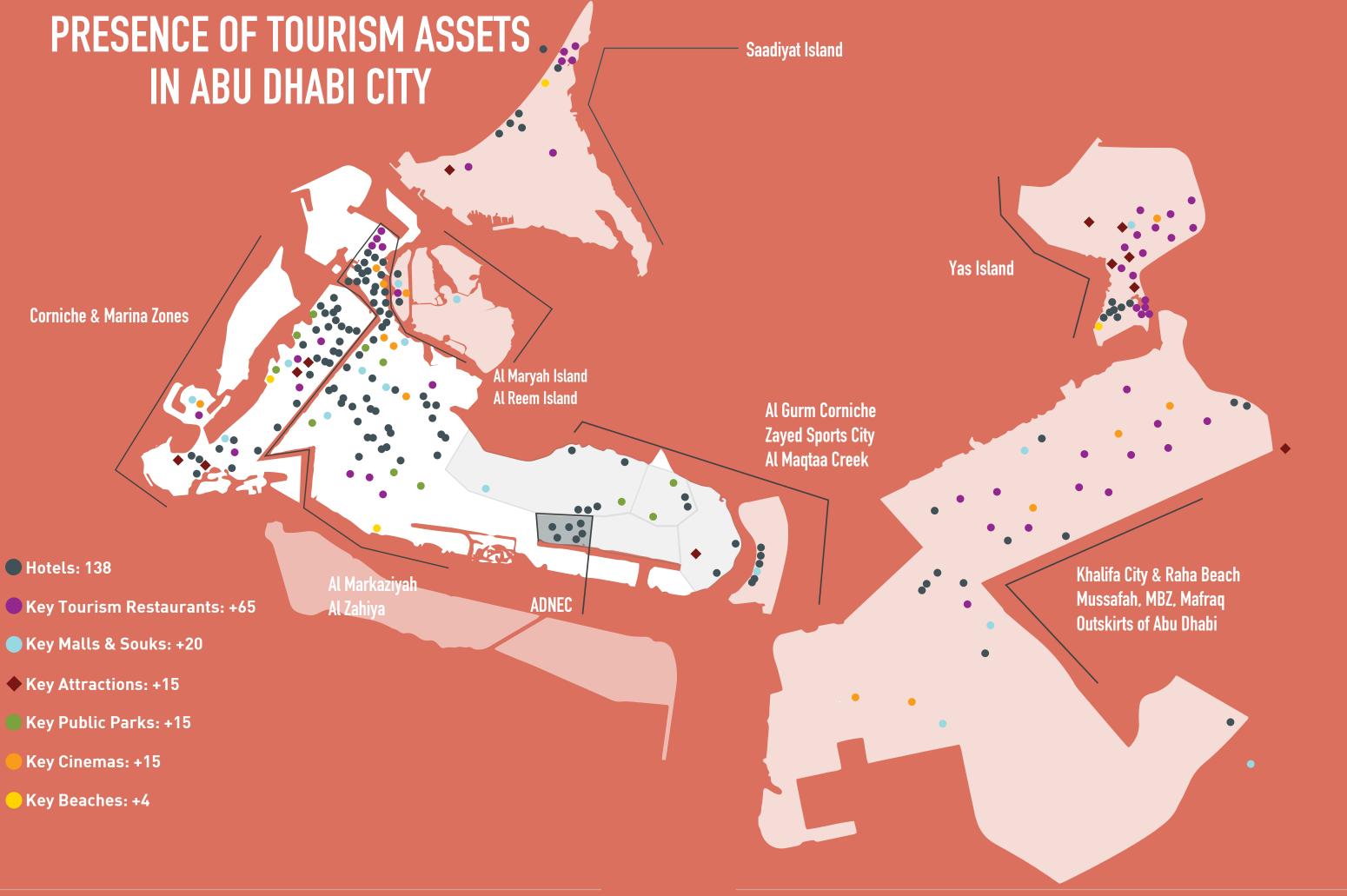
A slight increase in visitors this year (from 30,400 in 2018 to 31,565 visitors in 2019)



600 top-notch exhibitors



CHAPTER 3 - TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER 3 - TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT





### **EVENT LICENSING**

+13,000

**A+71%** (from 2018)

Licensed events attracted +23,700 Speakers



### BY TYPE OF EVENT

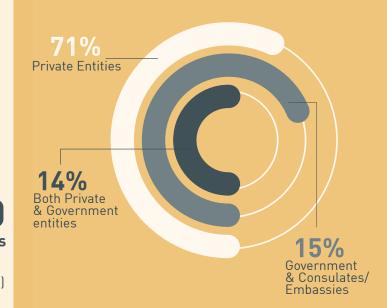


**+19%** (from 2018)

40% Leisure

**+419%** (from 2018)

### BY EVENT SPONSORS





### 2019 POLICIES



### **Economic Impact Model for the Tourism Industry**

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi is constantly working to build and maintain a comprehensive series of integrated models measuring the economic impact of tourism within Abu Dhabi.

The work commenced in 2019 includes developing a statistically and economically robust framework to assess the economic impact of tourism on Abu Dhabi, including the production of Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) specifically for the Abu Dhabi tourism sector and its role in the Emirate's economy.

Measuring the tourism sector has two major objectives. First, it defines the tourism sector as it relates to the economy of Abu Dhabi, and second, it provides a methodology for the calculation of tourism GDP and employment in a way that is consistent with standard industry accounts and international best practice.

### This strategic initiative has the following overreaching objectives:

- Support the monitoring of results for Abu Dhabi initiatives focused on the tourism sector;
- Optimise the contribution tourism can make to achieving the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030;
- Provide core tools to support strategic planning and policy analysis;
- Support the day-to-day decision making of the Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi;
- Provide core inputs into reporting mechanisms that will support further marketing and promotion of Abu Dhabi as a destination for both tourism and tourism investment.

CHAPTER

### **LEISURE EVENTS**

With unmissable world-class attractions, bespoke experiences, and a well-rounded calendar of events, Abu Dhabi has continued to cement its position as a globally leading event destination for leisure and entertainment.





### TO INTRODUCE HIGH-PROFILE, GLOBAL EVENTS TO DRIVE EXTENDED STAYS

- To firmly anchor Abu Dhabi as a leading host of world-class events through its ever-growing expertise
- To introduce high-profile, global events to drive extended stays





The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi continued to present the capital with a portfolio of hero events activating the entire city, including the Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019, Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship, Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, Mubadala World Tennis Championship, Abu Dhabi Food Festival, Abu Dhabi Art and Abu Dhabi Classics Music Season.

Committed to promoting the multitude of diverse offerings the capital has to offer, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi is committed to securing new events and collaborating with a diverse cross-section of new and existing stakeholders to drive a thriving tourism sector that enriches the lives of residents and visitors alike. Abu Dhabi's annual events calendar, created in partnership with the Abu Dhabi government, local and international events communities, along with the commercial and industrial sectors, aims to achieve two key objectives:

### Abu Dhabi continues to strengthen its portfolio by:

- · Expanding existing large-scale signature events
- Festivalising events centered around integrated cross industry B2B2C platform weeks and year-long activations, to increase visitor numbers and room nights, targeting both consumers and business partners
- Implementing campaigns to win bids for hosting major international conferences, theatrical productions and cultural exhibitions
- Nurturing the growth of new and innovative events that engage the community and bolster Abu Dhabi's international profile
- Identifying and developing strong industry enablers and programs to support the growth of event initiatives

CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR

### Focusing on a myriad of events from sports to culture and entertainment, Abu Dhabi was recognised on a global level with a number of acclaimed awards throughout the year.

Abu Dhabi's recognition with a number of prestigious accolades and the world leading tourism awards during 2019, is a testament to the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi and it's partners commitment to promote tourism in the UAE capital and position Abu Dhabi as a global hub for business, sports, leisure and culture. These awards included the Middle East's Leading Business Tourism Destination at the Middle East edition of WTA and Best City Break at the UK's Selling Travel Agents' Choice Awards.

### Abu Dhabi shined as a premium destination for sports tourism in 2019

with a number of awards after hosting some of the world's top sporting events, such as the FIFA Club World Cup, Formula 1 Etihad Airways Grand Prix, the first edition of the UAE Tour, the AFC Asian Cup 2019, the Special Olympics World Games 2019, Abu Dhabi Showdown Week powered by UFC 242 and the Brazil vs South Korea international friendly match.

Abu Dhabi was awarded the World's Leading Sports Tourism Destination during the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) Grand Final Ceremony 2019.

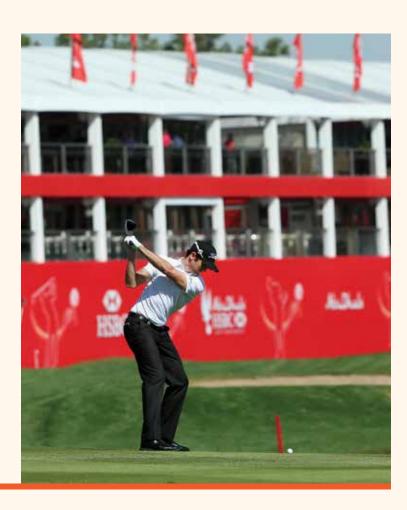


# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR

Abu Dhabi's Events Calendar continued to experience steady growth in 2019 with a myriad of flagship events, themed weeks, and year-long activations, showcasing the dynamic nature of the events scene in the UAE capital. Playing host to a multitude of annual events featuring the best among homegrown and renowned international touring productions, Abu Dhabi also continued to deliver city-wide flagship initiatives that have formed the tent-pole platforms and programmes required to attract large-scale event attendance and industry participation.



### 2019 ANNUAL EVENTS



### HSBC Golf Championship

16-19 January 2019

Hosted by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council, the world's top ranked golfers from the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) and European tours once participated in the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship presented by European Golf Association (EGA).

The 14th edition of the award-winning event returned to the iconic Abu Dhabi Golf Club in the capital. As part of the event's Rolex Series – the premium tournament category on the European Tour's International Schedule – this year's edition was one of the season's unmissable events, with the prize fund increasing to \$7million. Shane Lowry was the champion of Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship presented by EGA for 2019. The event welcomed 132 players and attracted a crowd of more than 80,000 spectators – a depiction of how the Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship has grown into one of the biggest events on the PGA European Tour calendar.

### **Red Bull Air Race**

8-9 February 2019

Hosted by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council, the '2019 Red Bull Air Race World Championship' was the fourteenth and final edition of the Red Bull Air Race World Championship series. Fourteen of the world's best air race pilots, including Martin Sonka, the new world champion, sparked their campaign for the overall title with the traditional season opener in Abu Dhabi.

50,000 spectators gathered to witness the race over the course of the weekend, which saw 14 pilots compete at speeds of up to 370 km/h, enduring forces of up to 12 g while navigating through a racetrack made up of inflated pylons.





### UAE Tour – Cycling

24-26 February 2019

After five successful years as the Dubai Tour and the Abu Dhabi Tour, a new, combined, UAE Tour was officially unveiled, featuring all seven United Emirates, hosted by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council. The tour included routes in multiple stages, with the first three hosted by Abu Dhabi, the fourth by Dubai, Sharjah and Ras-al-Khaimah, before the fifth stage crossed Sharjah, Ras-al-Khaimah and Fujairah. The sixth was in Ajman, Umm-al-Quwain and Ras-al-Khaimah, while the final stage saw a return to Dubai.

The 2019 UAE Tour was a total distance of 1,090km with a significant elevation gain of around 4,500 metres. With eighteen World Tour teams and two Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) professional continental teams kickstarting the race, a total of 140 athletes lined up at Al Hudayriat Island for the opening stage Team Time Trial.

The tour embraced 1,000 participants and 2,000 kids aged between 8-12.



### International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Triathlon Abu Dhabi

### 8-9 March 2019

Hosted by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council, Abu Dhabi's fifth consecutive ITU World Triathlon Series took place at Yas Island. The event was the season-opener of the ITU's Global World Triathlon Series, and welcomed the strongest elite field ever witnessed in Abu Dhabi with 112 athletes, including nine of the world's top 10 women and the full roster of men's top 10 athletes. The field, representing 27 countries from around the world, was highly decorated with Olympic and World Championship medals.

In addition to being the largest triathlon in the Middle East, the 2019 event became the most inclusive in history, as athletes participating in the Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019 competed. 33 Special Olympics athletes from 14 nations took part, including two athletes from the Special Olympics UAE team.

110 elite athletes raced on 8-9 March, with the 2,500 amateur athletes racing in their personal 'Olympic Games'.



### **Mother of the Nation**

### 12-23 March 2019

Attended by 100,000 visitors, Abu Dhabi held the fourth edition of the annual Mother of the Nation festival, which celebrates, commemorates and pays tribute to the living legacy and inspirational values of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation. The festival embodies the message, virtues and spirit of her Highness throughout multiple and diverse experience zones within a highly interactive atmosphere.

Stretching along a kilometer of Abu Dhabi's Corniche, the 2019 edition embodied the spirit of the Year of Tolerance and was also held in conjunction with the Special Olympics World Games. From musical and entertainment performances, to art exhibits and interactive workshops, the festival featured signature events and venues including Souq Happiness, Progress zones, as well as a Special Olympics Zone for the first time.

The festival collaborated with Intel to launch the event with highlights such as Cirque du Soleil BAZZARR, which made its Middle East debut at the event, the Abu Dhabi Fireworks Championship, the world's largest inflatable park and three entertainment stages that gave international and regional artists a platform to showcase their talents. There were more than 120 performances a day during the festival.



CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR



### **Abu Dhabi Engine Week**

28 March - 6 April 2019

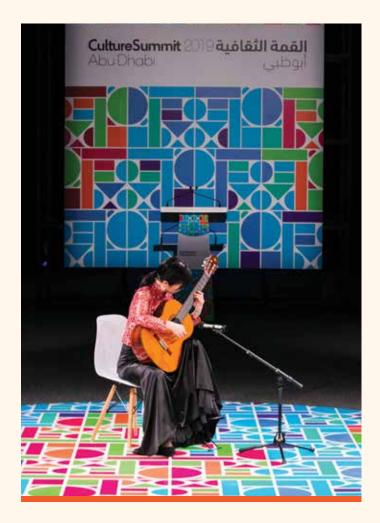
The capital held the UAE's inaugural Abu Dhabi Engine Week festival of cars and bikes during 2019. The event brought an action packed, 10-days of adrenaline-fuelled events and activities. Bringing carenthusiast and residents to the event, which expanded across the Emirate, Abu Dhabi Engine Week featured all-encompassing motor-themed events, as well as several music performances, attracting over 40,000 visitors to the capital.

Abu Dhabi Engine Week also featured:

FIA World Rallycross: A three-day long urban festival including on-track, off-track and after-race concert entertainment. For the first time in the Middle East and UAE, FIA World Rallycross of Abu Dhabi took place at Yas Marina Circuit. The event also featured US hip hop band Migos, who headlined the Friday after-race concert, accompanied by the best in local and international bands, DJs and performers.

Club Social: Club Social is a weekend festival, jam-packed with two days of live entertainment, water sports and kid-friendly activities, as well as a dynamic lineup of music performing to the picturesque set up of the ultimate beach festival. Featuring the best food concepts in town, visitors had the chance to get active with exciting beach sports, dance to the tunes of live musicians and DJs, float into the most colorful pop-ups, experience family-friendly workshops activities, and much more. Club Social also featured a ticketed live concert by Bastille on 29 March.

Custom Show Emirates: Abu Dhabi Engine Week also hosted the biggest custom cars and bikes show in the Middle East. The event attracted more than 24,000 visitors.

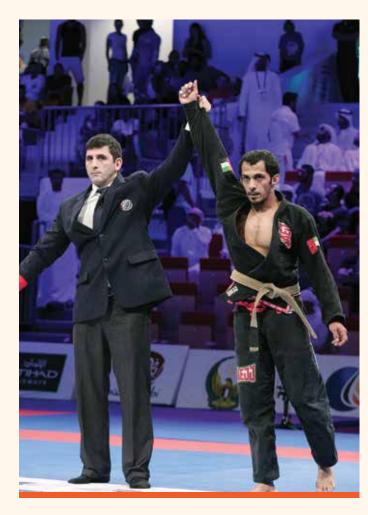


### **Culture Summit Abu Dhabi**

7-11 April 2019

Led by the Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi, Culture Summit Abu Dhabi 2019 took place for the third consecutive year, in collaboration with five global partners, including the Royal Academy of Arts, UNESCO, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, The Economist Events and Google. Crowned the 'Cultural Davos' of the Middle East, Culture Summit is a forum that convenes leaders from the fields of the arts, heritage, media, museums, public policy and technology, to identify ways in which culture can build bridges and promote positive change.

The 2019 edition of Culture Summit welcomed more than 480 participants from 90 countries, presenting a series of dynamic expert-led panels and workshops under a theme of "Cultural Responsibility & New Technology".



### Abu Dhabi World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship 2019

20-26 April 2019

Organised by the United Arab Emirates Jiu-jitsu Federation, the Abu Dhabi World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship 2019 hosted more than 7,000 elite athletes from over 100 countries, who fought it out for the championship titles.

The week-long event took place at Mubadala Arena and featured the Abu Dhabi World Youth Championship, the Jiu-Jitsu Masters Championship, and blue to black belt tournaments.

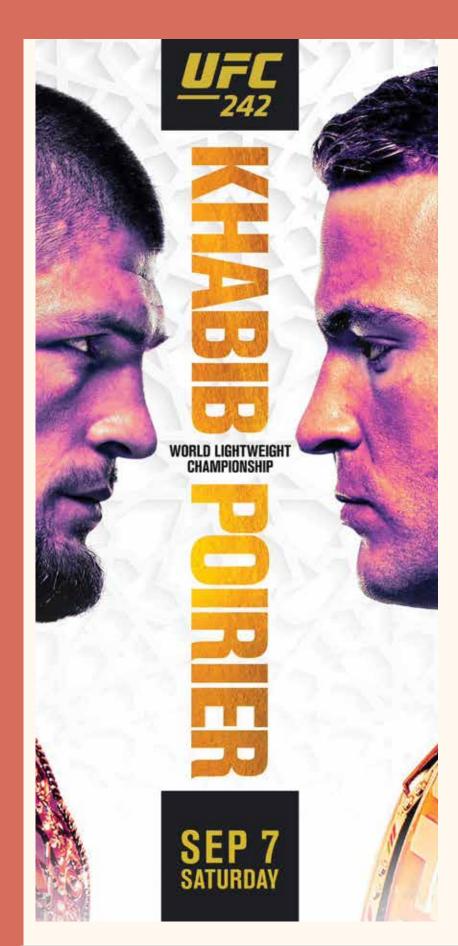
With numerous world No. 1 athletes in action in the capital, the finals of the Abu Dhabi World Professional Jui-Jitsu Championships 2019 saw 24 athletes from nine countries, including the UAE, contest 12 world pro titles in seven male black belt weight divisions and five female brown / black belt weight divisions.

Brazil topped the country rankings with a stunning total of 11 gold medals and three silvers. The United Arab Emirates and the UK tied second overall with two silver, and Norway came third with one gold.

The UAE came in second with two silver medals crowned to Faisal Al Ketbi in the men's 85kg division and Yahia Al Hammadi in the 110kg division.

CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR

### ABU DHABI SHOWDOWN WEEK



### 1-7 September 2019

Celebrating all that the city has to offer, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi inaugurated Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, comprising seven days of events throughout the city. Showdown Week was headlined by the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) 242, where fans gathered to watch lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedoy face interim 155-pound titlist Dustin Poirier battle for victory in the legendary octagon, for the first time in Abu Dhabi. Fans also witnessed history in the making with Abu Dhabi hosting its first all-female bouts with flyweight Joanne 'Jojo' emerging victorious as she went head to head with Andrea 'KGB' Lee.

Testament to Abu Dhabi's growing status as a global entertainment capital, UFC 242 was attended by 14,000 spectators, 55% of whom came from outside the UAE, while 15,000 fans also made their way to the Capital for the unmissable and debut performance by Red Hot Chili Peppers.

With events stretching across the Emirate including city-wide events and activations including pool and beach parties, retail promotions and F&B deals, Showdown week also hosted numerous gym activations, open workshops, autograph signings and meet and greet sessions. An activity-packed UFC Fan Experience Zone in The Arena - a new indoor, bespoke venue exclusively created for the event on Abu Dhabi's Yas Island.

Happening on the sidelines of Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, alongside the Emirate's various sports federations and entities hosted the all-new Abu Dhabi Muscle and Fitness Expo, which was attended by 6,000 spectators and featured leading exhibitors, seminars and competitions.

CHAPTER 4 - HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 CALENDAR



### NUMBER OF EVENTS AND VISITORS

45,973 **Total visitors** 

Total events











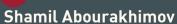














### **UFC FIGHT NIGHT**



Number of Fights

+14K Main Event Attendees

+5K UFC Weigh-in Attendees

Match Winner







# **CITY-WIDE ACTIVATIONS**



10

Participating malls with 30X activations



100K

Attendees to mall activations **GLOBAL REACH** 

+79M

**Broadcast Reach** 

**Digital** Media







Social Media

Press Event +6.5K





**Attendees** to Sports & Fitness Expo



17K

Attendees to Concerts & Parties



+300

**Participating** F&B outlets



ATL

Print +2M
Circulation +2M

OOH + 1 M



Total +12K

PR



Location 80% International 20% UAE/GCC





# Hala Bel Khaleej

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi celebrated the best in Khaleeji entertainment with the year-long Hala Bilkhaleej celebration featuring a line up of performers, including A-list artists, DJs and bands from the Gulf.

6 June 2019

The first of various performances took place during the Eid Al Fitr holiday at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), where 1,200 visitors enjoyed a headline performance by Hussain Al Jassmi, in addition to Balques Fathi and Eisa Al Marzouq.



# Abu Dhabi Family Week

19 to 28 September 2019



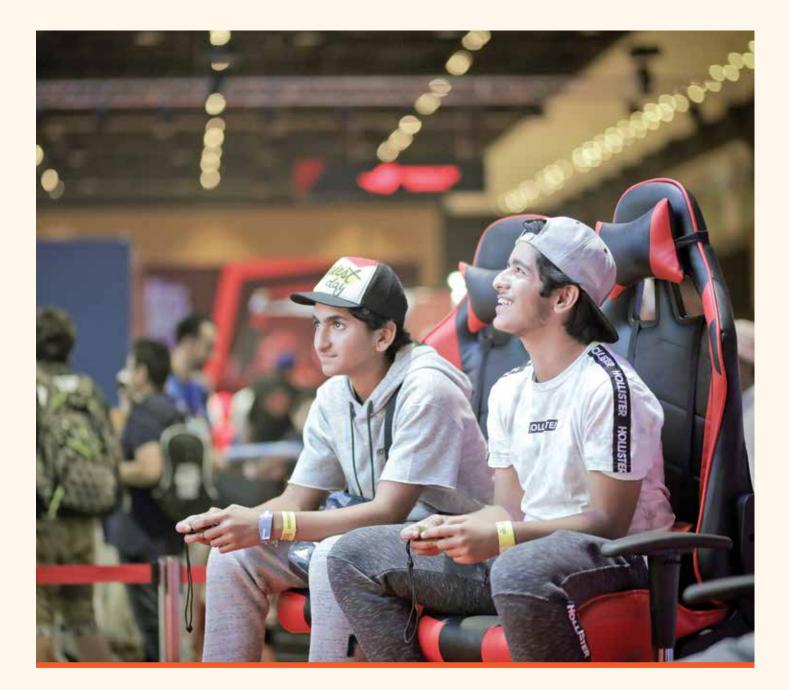
The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi hosted the inaugural edition of Abu Dhabi Family Week. The 10-day, family-oriented event featured the iconic Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards for the first time in the region, headlined by a performance by global super star Jason Derulo, alongside YouTube star Haifa Beseisso. The event also included performances by Mohamed Hamaki, Dyler, Conor Maynard and Al Walid Hallani.

In addition to live performing acts, Abu Dhabi Music Week also featured popular cartoon characters, interactive exhibitions and plenty of activities for visitors of all ages. During the Week, Abu Dhabi also played host to mega retail, culinary and hotel offers across the city.

The World of Nickelodeon provided an opportunity for young visitors to meet their favourite Nickelodeon characters, including Dora the Explorer, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, SpongeBob Square Pants, and Chase and Marshall. Key entertainment features included the SpongeBob Museum, mini-golf, arcades and slime zones.

For the first time ever, Pinkfong Baby Shark Live Musical also took place, featuring the original cast from Korea. Performing nine live shows, young fans enjoyed singalongs and the musical adventures of Pinkfong and Baby Shark.

Abu Dhabi Family Week brought together over 83,000 visitors from the United Arab Emirates and the region.



# **Games and Tech Week Abu Dhabi**

12-26 October 2019

Abu Dhabi played host to Games and Tech Week, which brought 12 days of action-packed gaming and tech events, alongside a series of activities, bringing 40,000 spectators to the annual event.

Returning for the third edition, Games and Tech Week Abu Dhabi also featured the annual gaming festival, Middle East Games Con 2019. As the region's leading gaming expo, the event also showcased the latest video games, gaming influencers, Esports, local artists, cosplay and all things gaming. The 2019 edition attracted more than 25,000 visitors over three days.

Gaming industry leaders also made their way to Abu Dhabi for the XLIVE Esports Summit for a series of B2B networking, panels and workshops bringing global industry.

Furthermore, Abu Dhabi Games and Tech Week also hosted Hack In The Box (HITB)+Cyber Week, where the world's top thinkers and cyber security experts shared their knowledge, ideas and techniques at a series of network security and hacking related conferences held annually around the world.





# **Eminem Concert**

25 October 2019

Superstar rapper Eminem made a long-awaited return to Abu Dhabi at Yas Island's Du Arena. The 15-time Grammy Award winning songwriter, actor and record producer was greeted with excitement as he performed to a sold-out arena of over 32,000 fans. Eminem was also joined on stage by American singer and songwriter Skylar Grey, who delighted fans with her vocal range, backed by an incredible string orchestra.



# The Jiu-Jitsu World Championship 2019

16-24 November 2019

The Jiu-Jitsu World Championship 2019 was organised by the Ju-Jitsu International Federation (JJIF) and hosted by the United Arab Emirates Jiu-Jitsu Federation at the Mubadala Arena in Abu Dhabi.

More than 1,500 fighters from 69 countries competed over nine days of competition that included the Open division, Masters, Para-jiu-jitsu and the Youth Worlds.

The event was entrusted to Abu Dhabi, the capital of Jiu-Jitsu, after the unprecedented successes achieved in the development of the sport, qualifying heroes and championships, as well as the organisation of major international tournaments on an annual basis (the Abu Dhabi World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship, and the Abu Dhabi Grand Slam Jiu-Jitsu World Tour).



# **Abu Dhabi T10 League**

15 - 24 November 2019

Since its launch in 2017, the rise of the T10 League, the world's only International T10 Franchise League, has been exponential, attracting more fans and cricket stars every year.

The Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi Sports Council and Abu Dhabi Cricket partnered to add this world class event to Abu Dhabi's growing sports portfolio. Sanctioned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) and licensed by the Emirates Cricket Board, it has become the third most watched league in the world, with a global audience of more than 100 million views in its third season.

The T10 League became unmissable as it became the newest official national sports asset of the United Arab Emirates, with daily triple-head matches, giving over 140,000 fans an incredible opportunity to watch 66 world-class players battle it at Abu Dhabi Cricket stadium, where Maratha Arabians were crowned as champions in 2019.

A five-year partnership will see Abu Dhabi become the new home of T10 cricket as it welcomes bigger international stars, a wider audience, increased broadcasters and an even greater fan experience.



## **Race Week**

21 November - 1 December

Making a strong entrance this year, 'Abu Dhabi Race Week' revved into town, giving fans 10 days of world-class and unmissable entertainment, concerts and parties across the city, with 'pitstop offers' at premium and fine dining restaurants, racing promotions at leading attractions, theme parks and golf courses, curated art and culture programmes and more. Alongside the thrills of the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Abu Dhabi Race Week hosted a myriad of activations in a super-charged atmosphere with live performances by the biggest names in music worldwide, race-themed hotel staycations and spa promotions with exclusive packages for theme parks and golf clubs, and an active night scene in full swing with racing-themed parties on land and yachts throughout the city.

34 hotels were onboarded, in addition to 12 attractions, eight nightclubs, 36 restaurants and 30 pitstops.



# The Etihad Airways Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

29 November - 1 December 2019

Hosted by Abu Dhabi Motorsports Management (ADMM) with sponsors Etihad Airways, Formula 1 rolled into the United Arab Emirates for the 11th edition of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

With racing, music, celebrity glitz and festivities happening all over the capital, the event was attended by 90,000 fans, 70% of which from around the world. The After-Race concerts featured the international artists Marshmello, Lana Del Rey, The Killers, Future and Gucci Mane.



# Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Marathon

6 December 2019

Organised by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council with ADNOC as the title sponsor, the ADNOC Abu Dhabi Marathon was the capital's biggest community sporting event. More than 17,000 people took part in the inaugural race, competing for a total prize fund of \$388,000 (Dh1.4 million), with the male and female winners of the full marathon each taking home \$100,000. Kenya's Rueben Kipyego and Vivian Kiplagat emerged victorious in the second ADNOC Abu Dhabi Marathon.

# Al Liwa Tal Moreeb Festival

26 December 2019 - 10 January 2020

The week-long Moreeb Dune Festival has returned to the Liwa desert near Abu Dhabi's border with Saudi Arabia, bringing with it the usual mix of traditional activities and modern motorsport action.

The thrilling dune challenges attracts the region's best and most powerful off-road vehicles and drivers and includes drag races, bike races, motor-cross tracks, camel and horse races, falconry competitions, classic car competitions as well as the Moreeb track for freestyle drifting. Run by the Liwa Sports Club, the feature event is a breathtaking race to the top of one of the world's highest sand dunes – the Moreeb Dune, whose name can be interpreted as "Terrifying Mountain".



# Asian Muaythai Championship 2019

17-21 December 2019

In 2019, the United Arab Emirates hosted, for the first time, the 2019 Asian Muaythai Championship in Abu Dhabi. The championship brought together more than 300 athletes and delegates from over 35 countries for a five-day action-packed competition at the Muaythai Arena along Abu Dhabi's Corniche.

Abu Dhabi also witnessed the inaugural 'Asian Youth Championship, which set the stage for juniors to compete in Asia's most significant medal-winning event.





# Ideas Abu Dhabi

27 - 28 March 2019

Ideas Abu Dhabi is a two-day ideas festival that brought together some of the brightest minds from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and around the world to explore, in depth, some of the great challenges and opportunities of our time. The third edition of the event was held at New York University Abu Dhabi and featured a powerful lineup of Emirati and international speakers from various industries including government, business, academia and media. The 2019 forum saw the likes of HE. Dr. Anwar Gargash, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Gordon Brown, Former UK Prime Minister, Mary Lou Jepsen, Engineering Executive, Facebook and Lucy Hawking, Journalist, Educator, Philanthropist discuss hot topics such as the dangers of a new cyber battleground and the latest efforts to understand and even enhance the human brain.



# Abu Dhabi Festival – Abu Dhabi Music and Arts Foundation (ADMAF)

7-30 March 2019

The Abu Dhabi Festival was presented and organised by the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation. This annual cultural celebration was held under the patronage of HE Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Tolerance, where the theme was 'Culture of Determination' and the Country of Honour – Republic of Korea.

The festival reaches out across the world through a number of joint commissions and international performances which promote music, art and culture. The 2019 festival hosted more than 100 events, 18 productions, two commissions across 25 venues with more than 500 artists from 17 counties.



# Liwa Date Festival

17-27 July 2019

The 15th edition of the Liwa Dates Festival was organised by the Cultural Programmes and Heritage Festivals Committee. Taking place in Abu Dhabi's Al Dhafra Region, the annual event has become one of the area's main attractions with tens of thousands of visitors from all over the United Arab Emirates coming to visit. The festival once again featured a hugely popular range of internationally acclaimed Emirati heritage activities and competitions. Over 700,000 visitors came from near and far to take part in the event as spectators. The Liwa Dates Festival remains a popular forum for learning about Emirati customs and traditions.



# Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF)

24-29 April 2019

The 29th edition of Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF) – an event which provides a prominent marketplace for the publishing industry in the Middle East and North Africa, was inaugurated by His Highness Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. The India pavilion was 2019's Guest of Honour, and ADIBF's programming was dedicated to reflecting and showcasing the diversity and richness of the country's culture. The pavilion brought a delegation of more than 100 members, including publishers, literary critics and authors.

ADIBF 2019 attracted impressive footfall, with visitors' numbers increasing by 18 percent compared to 2018. The fair welcomed 1,010 exhibitors from 50 countries and showcased more than 500,000 titles in multiple languages.



# Abu Dhabi Classics

This 2019 edition of Abu Dhabi music season, organised by the Department of Culture and Tourism -Abu Dhabi, brought a host of world-class national and international dynamic and diverse programmes of classical and traditional music in the capital.

The programme offered classical delights that included world-renowned orchestras and soloists, inspiring ballets, and renowned artists from the Arab World, as well as a vast variety of performing arts, bringing together the strongest line up to date.





### 30 October - 16 November, 2019

National Traditional Handicrafts Festival

The 6th National Traditional Handicrafts Festival is a platform created to encourage and support practitioners of these crafts. Held under the theme 'Crafts of the Ancestors, Pride of the People', the festival offered visitors the chance to appreciate the history of the region and the ingenuity of our ancestors. The festival featured traditional performances and a range of activities that represent various elements of the United Arab Emirates' s unique culture.



# **Nurai Fest**

22-24 November 2019

Abu Dhabi's luxury private resort Zaya Nurai Island was the site for the first ever NuraiFest attracting more than 2,500 people.

This high life festival offered something for everyone, from pool parties in different corners of the island to sunset beach parties, all culminating with the VIP Estate party where world-renowned DJs such as Audiofly, Steve Lawler, Tiga, wAFF, M.A.N.D.Y, Satori live and Serge Devant performed on both days.



# **Abu Dhabi Art Fair**

21-23 November 2019

The Abu Dhabi Art Fair is an annual event that presents innovative and established galleries from around the world. The 11th edition of Abu Dhabi Art Fair created 9,341 attendees, featured a range of new initiatives, local and international leading artists and curators. Abu Dhabi Art Fair continues to provide an important sales platform for participating galleries while also offering these galleries an opportunity to display ambitious installations and site-specific works by their artists to a huge audience.



# Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival

29 November 2019 - 1 February 2020

The Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival, organised by the Ministry of Presidential Affairs was held, alongside the United Arab Emirates' National Day festivities. Hosted at Al Wathba, the festival featured the Union March, live music, art exhibits and dancing, as well as a grand pavilion and exhibition that showcased the United Arab Emirates' heritage and culture. The 2019 edition saw participants from 40 countries and featured dedicated events and special recreational activities for children including a theme park and a playground.



# Winter Wonderland - Galleria

5-24 December 2019

Held at the Galleria's Waterfront Promenade, Winter Wonderland provided a festive event of fun activities. The engaging and entertaining event included parades, a snow zone, roaming ballet performances, music and a variety of children's art and craft workshops.



# **Al Dhafra Festival**

9-25 December, 2019

Supported by the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi and organised by Abu Dhabi's Cultural Programmes and Heritage Festivals Committee, Al Dhafra Festival is a unique showcase of Bedouin lifestyle. The festival featured an array of heritage activities including poetry recitations, camel racing and auctions, a traditional market for the United Arab Emirates' heritage industries and children's IP shows.



# Mubadala World Tennis Championship

19-21 December 2019

Mubadala World Tennis Championship has provided Abu Dhabi with a world-class sports entertainment event since 2009, and the 12th edition was no exception.

The invitation-only event welcomed the world's most talented tennis players competing in a single elimination series of matches across three days.

Four-times and defending champion Novak Djokovic returned to Abu Dhabi to defend his title, alongside the World No. 1, Rafael Nadal, and the 2019 Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) World Tour Finals Champion, Stefanos Tsitsipas.

Rafael Nadal clinched his fifth Mubadala World Tennis Championship title in a three-hour epic match with Stefanos Tsitsipas.

# RETAIL-LED FAIRS



# **The Rage**

6 to 8 March 2019

The Rage Festival is a unique winter fair concept that combines live theatre and stand-up comedy, with the latest fashion trends and a wide range of foods and beverage for attendees to enjoy.

The event also featured a series of coffee exhibits by local and international vendors, and performances by local artists such as Eisa Al Marzouq and comedian Al Comedy, which was added to the event's programming for the first time in 2019.

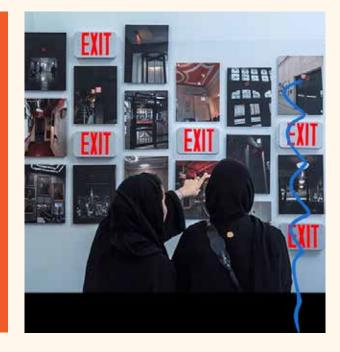
# Festember: Project Warehouse

15-18 May 2019

Festember returned in 2019 with Project Warehouse at Du Forum for the first time this year.

Project Warehouse featured fashion, lifestyle arts and entertainment for the entire month of Ramadan. Artistic themes were at the core of Project Warehouse, ranging from female empowerment to rural Emirati life and historic mining communities from across the region.

The event also showcased the work of various local and international artists, and featured 30 retail vendors, 16 F&B outlets, 11 artists, and 20 entertainment acts.



# FLAGSHIP CITY WIDE INITIATIVES



# Abu Dhabi Culinary Season

31 October - 14 December 2019

The inaugural Abu Dhabi Culinary Season was a six-week gastronomic affair which celebrated Abu Dhabi's global food influences, world-class restaurants and acclaimed chefs, while also delighting foodies with delicious offers and events. The season attracted more than 100,000 residents and international visitors alike, as well as over 300 participating restaurants from across the Emirate.

The season featured three main culinary events, which attracted over 112,000 visitors, including Mega Mela, Taste of Abu Dhabi and World of Food Abu Dhabi, as well as the B2B international food and beverage trade platform SIAL Middle East, and the Time Out Restaurant Awards, which named 64 winners across 22 categories.

## Retail

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, in partnership with leading retailers and shopping malls, hosted Retail Abu Dhabi (RAD, which featured several key initiatives as part of the inaugural Retail Calendar.

Retail in Abu Dhabi initiatives included the Spring Sales, – Eid 24-hour Shipping Fest, Summer and Winter sales. The Spring sales contributed to increasing mall footfall during the season to over 5.4 million visitors. Meantime. The Summer and Winter sales resulted in a total of 200 million and 150 million Dirhams at the city's retail outlets respectively.



# **United Arab Emirates National Day Celebrations** Residents and visitors to the United Arab Emirates capital were invited to celebrate the Spirit of the Union at the 48th United Arab Emirates National Celebrations on the Corniche, organised by the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi. The spectacular celebrations were open to all members of the public and featured a 10-minute dancing fireworks show, pyro flyboard performers, pyro jet-ski performances, and a lasers and light show. The celebrations brought together the Emirate's residents and visitors to commemorate the UAE and created an unforgettable collective experience in a family-friendly atmosphere. Featuring captivating water and air shows by worldclass performers, the event was the best of its kind yet. The 10-minute dancing fireworks show spanned across a two-kilometre stretch concurrent with a laser and light show, and a number of world-class The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi also hosted a fireworks show at Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival at 8PM on the same day.



# Abu Dhabi New Year's Eve Celebrations

2 December 2019

Residents and visitors to the United Arab Emirates capital were invited to celebrate the Spirit of the Union at the 48th United Arab Emirates National Celebrations on the Corniche, organised by the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi.

The spectacular celebrations were open to all members of the public and featured a 10-minute dancing fireworks show, pyro flyboard performers, pyro jet-ski performances, and a lasers and light show

The celebrations brought together the Emirate's residents and visitors to commemorate the UAEand created an unforgettable collective experience in a family-friendly atmosphere. Featuring captivating water and air shows by world-class performers, the event was the best of its kind yet.

The 10-minute dancing fireworks show spanned across a two-kilometre stretch concurrent with a laser and light show, and a number of world-class performances.

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi also hosted a fireworks show at Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival at 8PM on the same day.

# BUSINESS EVENTS





Abu Dhabi continues to cement itself as a leading business hub and destination of choice for business travelers and professionals from the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry.

In 2019, the capital of the UAE hosted more than 250 business events, bringing in hundreds of thousands of professionals cumulatively from various industries including Oil & Gas, Defense, Healthcare, Financial and Urban Solutions. Testament to its growing reputation as a leading destination for business tourism, Abu Dhabi earned the title of the 'Middle East's Leading Business Destination' at the World Travel Awards in 2019.

The Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau (ADCEB) played a major role in 2019's success from a business events perspective. Acting as the lead body overseeing and supporting the development and promotion of business events throughout the emirate, ADCEB continues to champion Abu Dhabi as a dynamic global business events leader by working with international offices and stakeholders to raise awareness about Abu Dhabi's outstanding capability to host all types of corporate and non-corporate events and attract globally renowned conferences and exhibitions to the capital of the UAE. The Bureau operates as a one-stop shop for all business event planning requirements, offering assistance including tailored research and bid strategy to ensure competitiveness.

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# 

**Q1** 

# **JANUARY**

- PCMA Convening Leaders
- Energy Cities Alliance (ECA)
   Sales Mission (London)

# **FEBRUARY**

● IAPC0 Edge

# **MARCH**

IBTM Arabia/ICCA Panel

02

# **APRIL**

- ICCA Venue International Client/Supplier Business Workshop (Abu Dhabi)
- Association World Congress

# MAY

- IMEX Frankfurt
- Energy Cities Alliance (ECA)
- Promotional Breakfast for Association Convention Buyers

# JUNE

- Joint ADNEC Sales Mission (Brussels, Amsterdam, Vienna)
- ICCA Association Meetings ProgrammeSponsorship of Education Program
- Reception for Association Convention Buyers

03

# JULY

- Meetings Show UK
- Cvent Connect Las Vegas
- Sales Mission to China

# **AUGUST**

- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Convene and United States of America Sales Calls
- American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting
- Joint Etihad Sales Mission (Germany & Switzerland)

# **SEPTEMBER**

- IMEX America
- PCMA European Influencers Summit
- Middle East International Meetings Forum
- Sales Mission India
- Meet China B2B Tradesho

04

# OCTOBER

- ICCA Congress
- South-East Asia (SEA)
   Roadshows Jakarta,
   Kuala Lumpur and Singapore
- MICE Forum Asia (ITB Asia)

# **NOVEMBER**

- IBTM World Barcelona
- Strategic Partnership with Society of Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE)
- PAICE New Zealand

# **DECEMBER**

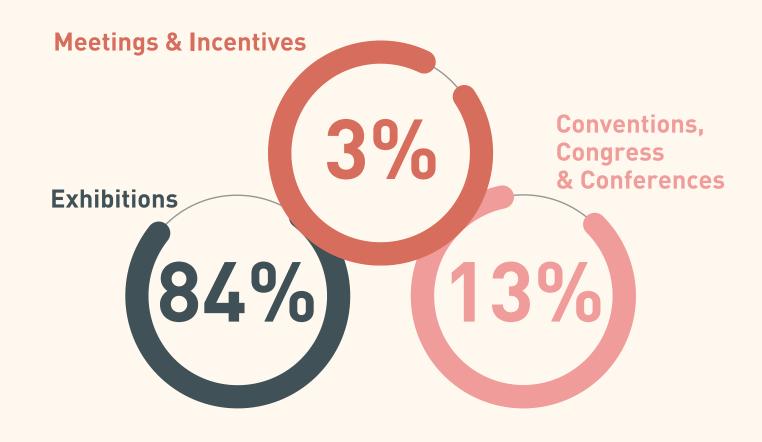
- Al Nukhba Appreciation Evening
- INTERaction B2B by AMEX
- China MICE Advisory Committee MOU Signing
- China MICE Industry Forum

# TOTAL DELEGATES THROUGH ADVANTAGE ABU DHABI

+584,200 for the events hosted from Jan to Dec 2019



# TOTAL DELEGATES BY TYPE OF EVENTS



# **Conventions, Congress & Conferences**

+74,100

No. of delegates attending **Conventions, Congress & Conferences** 



+45,600

Were International Visitor Arrivals (IVA's)



**Exhibitions** 

+493,430

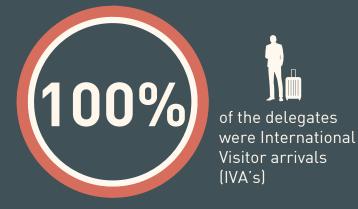
No. of delegates attending Exhibitions



**Meetings & Incentives** 

+16,640

No. of delegates attending Meetings & Incentive



**CHAPTER 5 - BUSINESS EVENTS** 

# **KEY INITIATIVES**



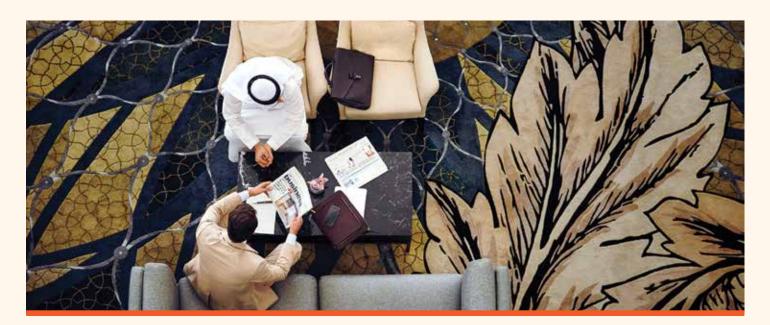
# **Advantage Abu Dhabi**

Advantage Abu Dhabi is a financial incentive scheme that acts as a catalyst to enhance social and economic development through the hosting of innovative and viable business events aligned with the Abu Dhabi 2030 Economic Vision.

In 2019, the Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi launched a specialised fund worth AED600m to develop entertainment, festivals and business activities in the capital as part of the Ghadan 21 programme. The fund works alongside ADCEB's Advantage Abu Dhabi Programme, unveiling additional areas of support to foster richer offers and encourage the curation of content and programmes for sustainable and multidisciplinary events.

ADCEB supported 121 business events under the Advantage Abu Dhabi support programme which brought in 584.200 MICE visitors to Abu Dhabi.

# **ADCB Advantage Abu Dhabi Summer Campaign**



# **Abu Dhabi - Experience The Extraordinary**

ADCEB launched the Abu Dhabi - Experience The Extraordinary campaign in June 2019 to increase meetings and incentive travel arrivals and to stimulate rooms nights and spending during the low summer season in Abu Dhabi. The campaign was applicable for MICE group arrival from June to October 2019. ADCEB provided both financial and non-financial support as a value add to the clients during their stay in Abu Dhabi. The support goes towards Emirati cultural experiences, attractions, team building, cultural performance and gala dinner; based on the size of the group.

To qualify for the support program, the corporates must stay minimum 2 nights in Abu Dhabi with half-a-day meeting, teambuilding activity or a gala dinner.

The campaign generated 21, 217 hotel room nights for Abu Dhabi over a period of 5 months (June – October 2019).

MARKET	NO OF VISITORS	HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS
CHINA	5,459	10,780
INDIA	1,782	6,267
FRANCE	40	200
GERMANY	480	1,390
ITALY	515	2,270
UK	548	2,352
USA	50	150
TOTAL	8,874	21,217

Results from the campaign



# **Al Nukhba Awards**

Al Nukhba is an initiative created by ADCEB and dedicated to the recognition of the Business Elite Programme's members for their contributions and outstanding efforts to position Abu Dhabi as a global leader in business events. The programme was designed to gather like-minded, highly motivated experts in various fields, in order to co-ordinate efforts to secure convention business for Abu Dhabi. In partnership with Al Nukbha Ambassadors since its inauguration in 2017 Abu Dhabi had submitted 83 bids across seven industry sectors and won 31 bids which resulted in 59,700 delegates visiting the emirate.

# **PARTNERSHIPS**



# **China MICE Advisory Committee**

ADCEB established the first ever dedicated Meetings Incentives Conferences Exhibitions (MICE) advisory committee comprising of the industry leaders from top MICE agencies in China to create awareness of Abu Dhabi as an appealing MICE destination via the advisory committee. By identifying and communicating trends, requirements and challenges within their market, the advisory committee will support ADCEB with increasing the number of MICE outbound travellers from China to the capital of the UAE. Additionally, the advisory committee will help improve the success rate of MICE business bidding for Abu Dhabi.



# International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)

The ICCA, which represents the world's leading suppliers in handling, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events, comprises of more than 1,100 member companies and organisations in almost 100 countries. Since its establishment 55 years ago, ICCA specialises in the international association meetings sector, offering unrivalled data, communication channels and business development opportunities. ADCEB's 2-year (2019-2020) partnership with ICCA will help position Abu Dhabi as an enabler of global business events education and provide exclusive access to leading association executives.



# **Society of Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE)**

The Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) is the only business events association dedicated exclusively to the global incentive travel industry. It consists of 2,500 professional association members located in 90 countries, working in corporations, agencies, airlines, cruise companies and across the entire destination supply chain.

Incentive travel, the "I" in MICE, is the fastest growing sector of the business events industry with the highest per capita spend and the widest supply chain. In 2019, ADCEB announced its partnership with SITE which will provide additional opportunities to raise awareness about Abu Dhabi as an upcoming MICE destination globally and to engage with SITE members.

# KEY BUSINESS EVENTS



## **MAX Life Insurance**

### 1-4 August 2019

MAX Life Insurance is an insurance company based in India, which was established in 2019. The company has 239 offices in India, managing assets worth USD 9.3 billion. The company is a subsidiary of the publicly listed Max Financial Services Limited and is the largest non-bank private-sector life insurer in India. The annual incentive trip for their top performers and families, which brought 1,123 visitors to Abu Dhabi. It was the emirates' largest incentive group during the summer season, which spur spending in Abu Dhabi.



# **JunHe Law Offices Incentive Group 2019**

### 25-28 October 2019

JunHe, one of China's largest and most reputable law firm hosted an incentive travel trip in the capital of the UAE. JunHe is the only Chinese law firm to be admitted as a member of Lex Mundi and Multilaw, two international networks of independent law firms. Over a thousand lawyers, partners and staff from China visited Abu Dhabi as part of the incentive travel trip and demonstrated latest achievements, discussed industry updates, and celebrated the firm's 30th anniversary.



# 4th Middle East International Meetings Forum (MEIMF)

### 18-10 September 2019

ADCEB hosted the fourth edition of the Middle East International Meetings Forum (MEIMF). With more than 100 participants in attendance for a programme focused on industry knowledge transfer and educational development, the forum provided attendees with a beneficial platform for industry development and proved successful for ICCA and the Middle East region.



# **24th World Energy Congress**

### 9-12 September 2019

A flagship event of the World Energy Council, the triennial congress offered a unique opportunity for participants to better understand energy issues and solutions from a global perspective. The 24th World Energy Congress was held in Abu Dhabi under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates. The event took place under the theme of 'Energy for Prosperity' and was attended by 18,000 individuals. The 24th edition of the congress was the first in the event's 95-year history to be hosted in a Middle Eastern city, and by an Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) member country.



# **26th World Roads Congress**

6-10 October 2019

The World Roads Congress has been a defining voice for the road infrastructure and transport industry since its establishment in 1908. The 26th edition of the congress was held in Abu Dhabi, making its debut for the first time in the Middle East and North Africa region. The congress was held under the theme 'Connecting Cultures, Enabling Economies' and was attended by over 5,000 delegates from around the world.



# 79th International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

22-26 September 2019

The World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is an annual congress organised by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) to provide industry professionals with the opportunity to meet, learn, share and exchange views. The 2019 edition held in Abu Dhabi saw the highest number of countries in attendance (118) and the highest number of people attending the conference for the first time, and from the GCC region. The congress featured a range of lectures, plenary sessions, poster exhibitions and section programmes.



# 24th International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX)

17-21 February 2019

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates and Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces, IDEX is the only international defence exhibition and conference in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region demonstrating the latest technology across land, sea and air sectors of defence. Celebrating its Silver Jubilee 25 years after its first edition, IDEX 2019 was attended by more than 108,000 visitors and 1,250 international exhibitors from 62 countries and hosted 200 official delegations and 33 national pavilions.



# **World Ocean Summit 2019**

5-7 March 2019

The World Ocean Summit is an annual event organised by The Economist Group to bridge the differing perspectives of business, government and civil society in how we manage and use our troubled seas. The 6th edition of this significant event was hosted in Abu Dhabi, bringing together more than 600 high level delegates, sustainable ocean experts, advocates and stakeholders. The event's overarching theme was 'Building Bridges' and featured a number of discussions around pressing issues relating to the sustainability of our oceans, such as illegal fishing, waste management, and blue carbon systems.



### FinTech Abu Dhabi

The third edition of the MENA's leading FinTech Festival was attended by 5,000 influencers and innovators from more than 70 countries who are pioneering the new wave of innovations across financial services. With over 2,000 participating start-ups and Small-Medium-Enterprises (SMEs), the event explored the next frontier of financial technology and innovation. This was the meeting point for the global FinTech community in 2019, featuring country delegations, over 130 speakers, the innovation challenge, the inaugural FinTech Abu Dhabi Awards for Excellence and a showcase of the world's most promising FinTech start-ups and scale-ups. 2019's edition also saw the first ever FinTech themed Youth Circle, which provided young people with a platform to exchange views and suggest initiatives to decision-makers and influential experts in the industry.



## **SALT Abu Dhabi 2019**

SALT (SkyBridge ALTernatives) is a global thought leadership forum and capital introduction platform encompassing finance, technology and geopolitics, the annual event brings together the world's foremost investors and thinkers for three days of high-level collaboration and networking. SALT made its debut in Abu Dhabi on 9 December 2019 in collaboration with Abu Dhabi Global Market. Attended by 1,000 leading global business professions from across the globe, the inaugural event reinforced the region's undeniable economic importance and investment opportunities. SALT Abu Dhabi featured over 200 globally renowned speakers and various panel discussions, covering topics such as venture capital opportunities, the Middle East entrepreneurship boom, artificial intelligence (AI), bilateral relations and policies, and other major investment advantages and opportunities in Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates.



# **Digital Next Summit 2019**

### 8-9 December 2019

The inaugural Digital Next Summit hosted by the Abu Dhabi Digital Authority and organised by Messe Frankfurt Middle East, presented a unique platform and opportunity to analyse, examine and understand how digital transformation is shaping the way governments across the world are embracing innovative technologies to achieve excellence. Held under the theme, 'Enabling Government of the Future', the Digital Next Summit discussed the key pillars of digital transformation which every government should explore, evaluate and engage with. More than 1,000 delegates attended the event, including over 200 government and policy makers and 40 high-profile speakers.



# **Abu Dhabi Sports and Fitness Expo**

### 5-7 September 2019

The third edition of the Abu Dhabi Sports and Fitness Expo brought together the top fitness companies in the region to display their trendiest and most innovative fitness products and technology. The expo was attended by 7,000 people, including 375 competing athletes from 30 different internationalities. It featured an inspiring line-up of fitness celebrities, international competitions including a Muay Thai Open Championship, as well as fitness classes for attendees of all ages to enjoy. The business-to-business-to-consumer (B2B2C) expo was part of the Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, culminating with the Ultimate Fight Club (UFC) fights.



# F1 in School World Finals

### 23-26 November 2019

F1 in Schools is an international STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) competition for school children aged 9-19, in which groups of 3-6 students must design and manufacture a miniature car out of the official F1 Model Block using CAD/CAM design tools. Active in 48 countries, this competition attracts a whopping nine million students – all competing for a spot at the 15th World Finals. The 2019 Abu Dhabi edition featured 723 competition participants who were grouped into 55 teams from 28 different countries.

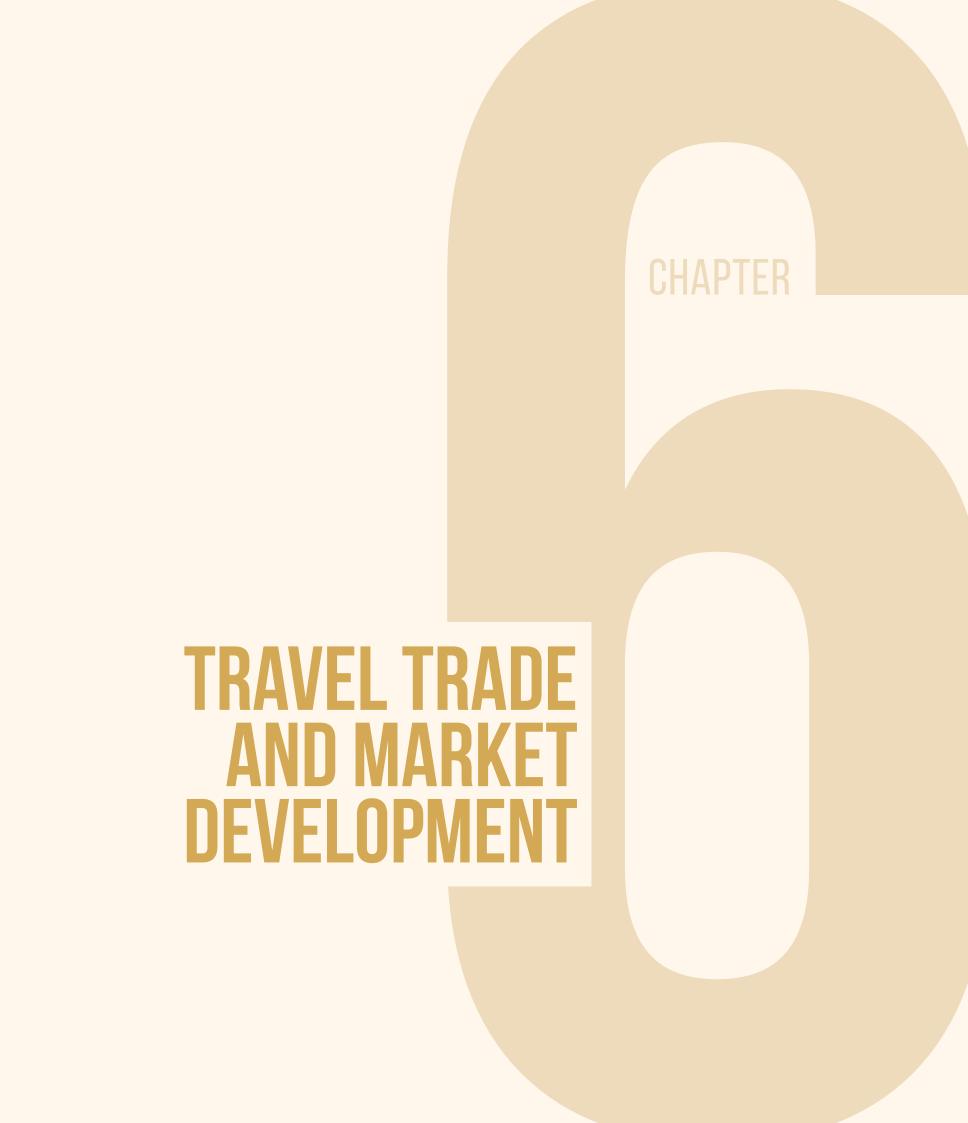


# Hack in the Box (HITB) Cyberweek

### 12-17 October 2019

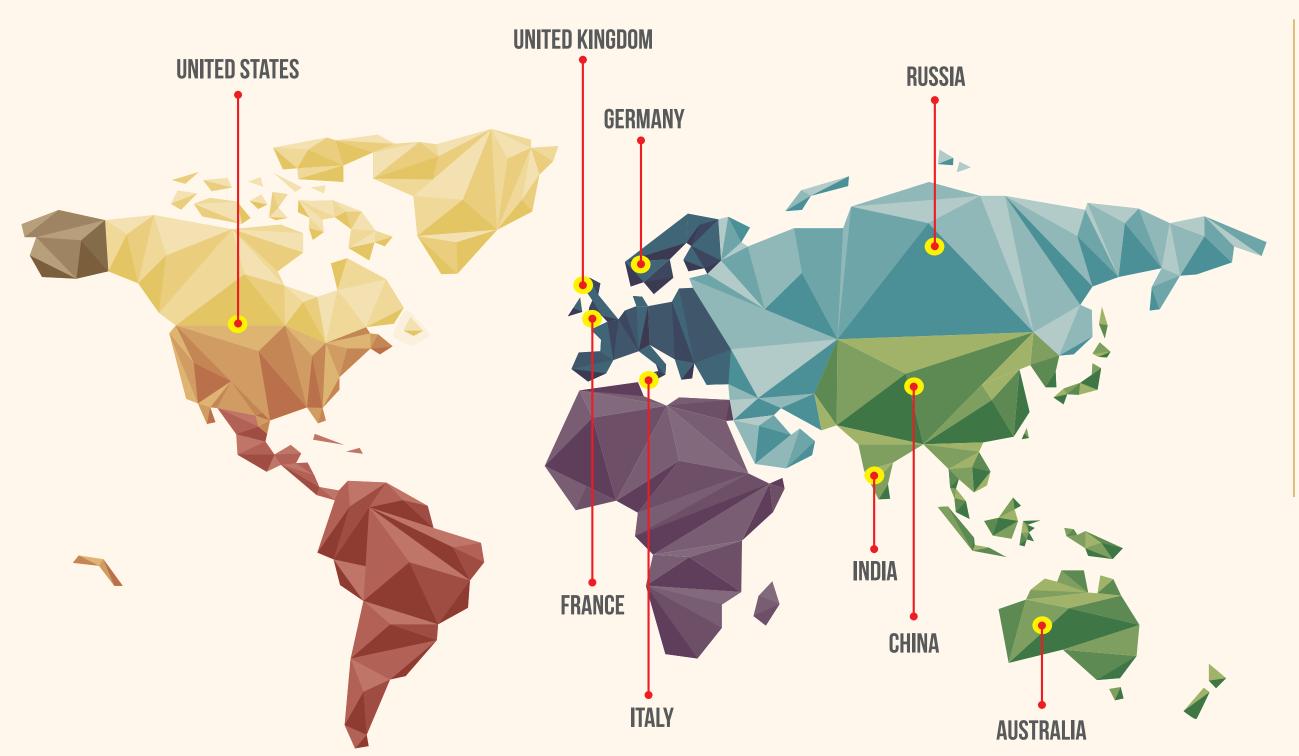
HITB is a series of network security and hacking-related conferences held annually around the world. The renowned event was brought to Abu Dhabi for the first time in 2019, bringing together more than 7,000 of the world's top thinkers and cybersecurity experts to share their latest knowledge, ideas and techniques among security professionals and students. With over 20 attended speakers, HITB Abu Dhabi featured cutting-edge technical talks delivered by some of the most respected names in the computer security industry. Additionally, the event hosted a number of competitions which featured over 97 participants from 24 different countries.





# TRAVEL TRADE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT (TTMD)

TTMD Global presence:
Department of Culture
and Tourism - Abu Dhabi
presentation offices
worldwide



The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi has organised a number of customised destination promotion campaigns in several key markets around the world with key trade and industry partners to increase destination awareness and boost inbound tourism respectively.

# KEY HIGHLIGHTS



# Two-year collaboration with Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing

For the first time, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi collaborated with the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) ran a joint promotional campaign in South Korea to increase destination awareness through a joint participation at the More Trip Travel Mart Trade exhibition.

The entities hosted one trade familiarisation trip for a total of eight agents, which ultimately resulted in five trade partners signing up.

## **Roadshows**

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi organised 13 roadshows in 35 cities in 14 countries. During the roadshows more than 1,000 business leads were generated for participating stakeholders. In addition, over 5,500 trade partners have been trained and educated to effectively sell the destination and its products and improve their knowledge and awareness of the destination. As a result, some of the partners included the Emirate of Abu Dhabi as a new product in their package .





# **Familiarisation Trips**

Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi organised 77 familiarisation (fam) trips. Over 1,000 trade partners visited the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to improve their knowledge by experiencing the destination first-hand. Familiarisation trips provide a highly targeted exposure for the destination and an opportunity for stakeholders to promote their products directly to distribution partners who will ultimately be selling the products to consumers. More than 150 Abu Dhabi stakeholders were featured in our fam trips.

# **Trade Exhibition**

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi participated in nine trade exhibitions in 12 countries in collaboration with Abu Dhabi stakeholders representing around 260 products in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi and its stakeholders' participation targeted tourism professionals who can be influential in either providing a means of penetrating further identified markets or can be used to spread market awareness in their countries of origin thereby, helping the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi to bring additional visitors to Abu Dhabi.



# HIGHLIGHTED EXHIBITIONS



# **Arabian Travel Market (ATM)**

In April 2019, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi led the largest ever delegation to the Arabian Travel Market, the leading global event in the region focusing in the inbound and outbound travel industry. A number of Abu Dhabi stakeholders including Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi Airports Company, Louvre Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi Convention & Exhibition Bureau, Al Ain Zoo, Al Ain Oasis, Cruise Abu Dhabi, hotels and destination management companies (DMCs), joined the Abu Dhabi pavilion to promote their products and services to increase the sales dealing with different hosted buyers from different countries.

# International Tourism Bourse Berlin (ITB)

In collaboration with more than 36 product representatives, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi participated in ITB Berlin, the leading B2B-platform for all tourism industry offers.



# London World Travel Market (WTM)

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi opened its World Travel Market (WTM) participation in London with the unveiling of an exhibit that showcased Abu Dhabi's USPs to visitors. The exhibition featured 33 key partners, such as Etihad Airways and Experience Hub, showcasing the diverse portfolio of attractions the city has to offer across the culture, entertainment and luxury sectors.

# **Sidebar Other Exhibitions:**

- 1. South Asian Travel and Tourism Exhibition (SATTE) in India
- 2. International Tourism Bourse (ITB) in China
- 3. International Tourism Bourse Asia (ITB) in Singapore
- 4. International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM) in France

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# Joint Marketing Programs (JMP)

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi initiated and implemented 124 JMPs with more than 1,000 individual elements. These programmes combine sales, promotion and media elements and were directly responsible for attracting over 645,351 hotel guests in 2019. In addition, the programmes were also successful in reaching over 30,000 trade partners and featuring more than 100 Abu Dhabi products.





Bei subtropischem Klima und ganzjährigem Sonnenschein erwartet dich mit Abu Dhabi eines der faszinierendsten Reiseziele der Welt. Das Größte der Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate wird dich mit seiner Vielfalt überraschen und begeistern.

# DEIN REISEBÜRO FREUT SICH AUF DICH







# **Key Events Hosted in Abu Dhabi**

### Meet China Workshop:

The Meet China Forum is the only UAE B2B event focused on the world number's one outbound market. Abu Dhabi hosted 'Meet China' on 3-4 September 2019, which brought together 100-strong group of Chinese travel buyers from about 10 cities to meet with leading tourism suppliers including top hoteliers, local destination management companies, leisure attractions and retailers.

# Accessibility

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi continues its partnership with Coral Tour Operator in cooperation with Tours offering direct charter flights from Moscow to Abu Dhabi via Ural Airlines.

Following the partnership, the expected number of visitors coming to Abu Dhabi through Odeon Tours from October 2019 to end of May 2020 is expected to exceed 8,000.

In addition, the department continues to collaborate with Air Baltic direct flights between the Latvian capital Riga and Abu Dhabi this autumn. The direct route will be available to passengers between October 2019 and April 2020 and will cover the entire winter season.

Air Baltic's main hub is based in Riga, but the airline will be providing travellers from both Estonia and Lithuania a chance to visit Abu Dhabi by offering direct routes from their secondary hubs in Tallinn and Vilnius respectively.



CHAPTER 6 - TRAVEL TRADE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER 6 - TRAVEL TRADE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

# CHAPTER

# **MARKETING**





The Destination Marketing team's efforts in 2019 focused on promoting Abu Dhabi as a global destination through different markets, segments and mediums, in addition to marketing Abu Dhabi's events to local residents and international tourists.

Moreover, the destination campaign's main role is to generate awareness and drive consideration in key markets. For each of the markets, a tailored strategy was developed based on data insights such as media penetration data and looking/booking window.

Throughout 2019, an always-on approach was actioned to maintain a constant conversation with Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi's potential audiences across the year. This strategy increases and maintains the recall rates of the brand through the targeted audiences keeping it top-of-mind, and delivers a higher ROI on a medium-long term basis.

Abu Dhabi's destination campaign focuses on generating <u>awareness</u> and <u>consideration</u>. As it reaches the right audience at the right time, it has a natural 'halo effect' on assisted conversions to stakeholders.

### **DESTINATION CAMPAIGN KEY FOCUS**







AWARENESS | CONSIDERATION | CONVERSION

### **CHANNELS UTILISED**





YOUTUBE



**SEARCH** 



SOCIAL



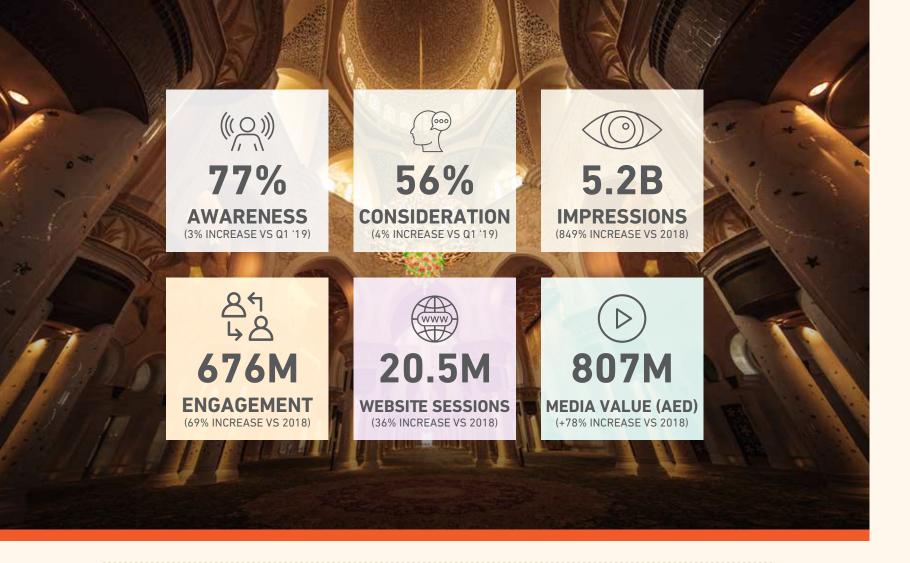
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Our Destination Marketing efforts in 2019 have been immense, promoting Abu Dhabi to the different segments in our key markets.

METRIC	UK	DE	US	IN	CN	RU
AWARENESS (Q4)	87%	79%	70%	92%	50%	86%
CONSIDERATION	43%	54%	46%	79%	54%	61%
IMPRESSIONS	671M	527M	587M	2B	713M	408M
ENGAGEMENT	90M	63M	71M	260M	61M	68M
VIDEO VIEWS	67M	44.9M	44.9M	187M	48M	28M
WEBSITE VISITS	2.8M	1.4M	2.3M	10.5M	2M	1.3M
OFFLINE IMPACTS	127M	96M	68M	10M	55M	27M

The destination campaign's main focus is to increase awareness and consideration which is tracked by Brand Tracker and media metrics (impressions, engagement etc.) but in parallel the following assisted conversions have been generated year-to-date (YTD).

# **GENERATING 'INTEREST'**







# **GENERATING BOOKINGS**









Abu Dhabi has presence on most global social media platforms by having 14+ profiles in 5 languages on 8 different platforms









(+111% VS 2018)



(+326% VS 2018)

**ENGAGEMENT** 

25

(+42% VS 2018)





Visit Abu Dhabi is present on the following social media platforms

















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In addition to that, global publishers help to address the misconceptions Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi struggles with in each market.















Bloomberg

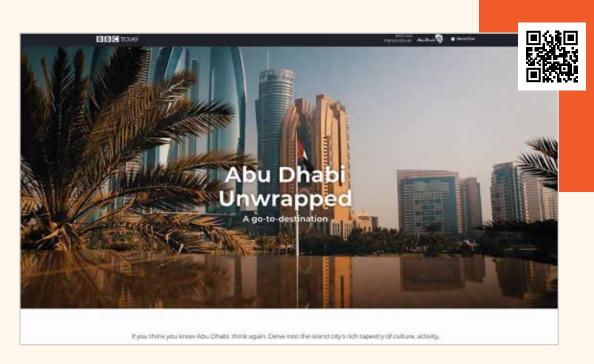


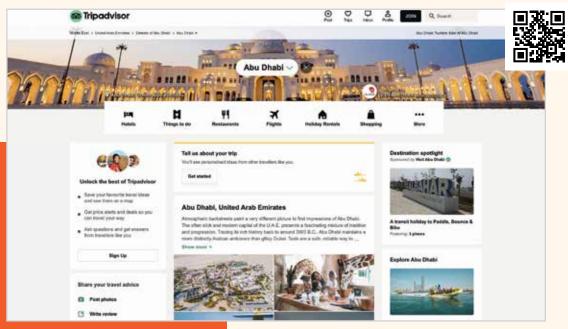






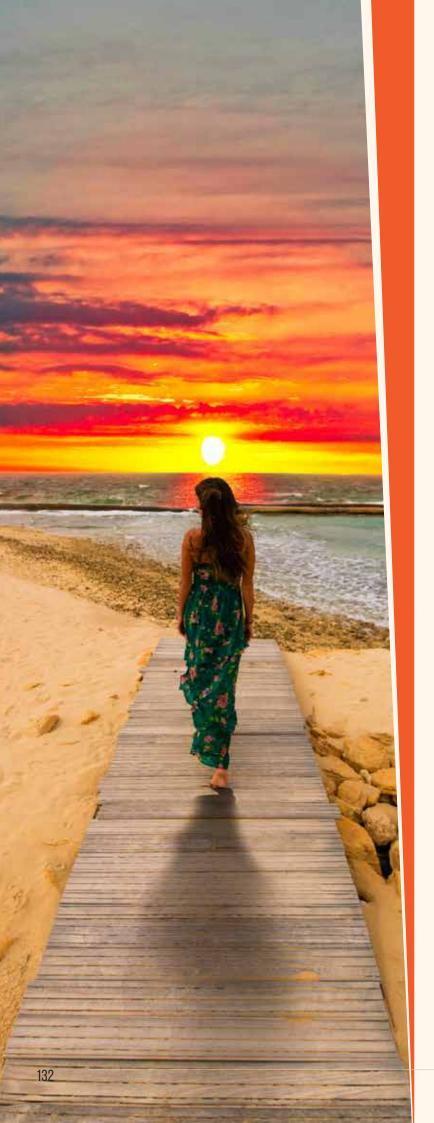






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Word of mouth is one of the most trusted forms of advertising for a tourism brand, as it relates to influencing the behaviours of potential tourists. This is where social media influencers come in handy.

Working with influencers allows Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi to extend content reach, increase brand trust and challenge misconceptions.

In 2019, Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi worked with 46 influencers from key markets to promote what Abu Dhabi has to offer. Each influencer had a different itinerary to suit their personal brand; creating authenticity and relevance to their audiences.

This resulted in 425 posts shared by the influencers, that achieved 163M impressions & 4.3M engagement.

46 **INFLUENCERS** 

425 **POSTS** 



4.3M **ENGAGEMENT** 

MARKETS	UK	US	DE	IN	RU	СН
REACH	41M	25M	26M	29.8M	34.4M	174M
ENGAGEMENT	1.1M	425K	992K	813K	1M	16M



































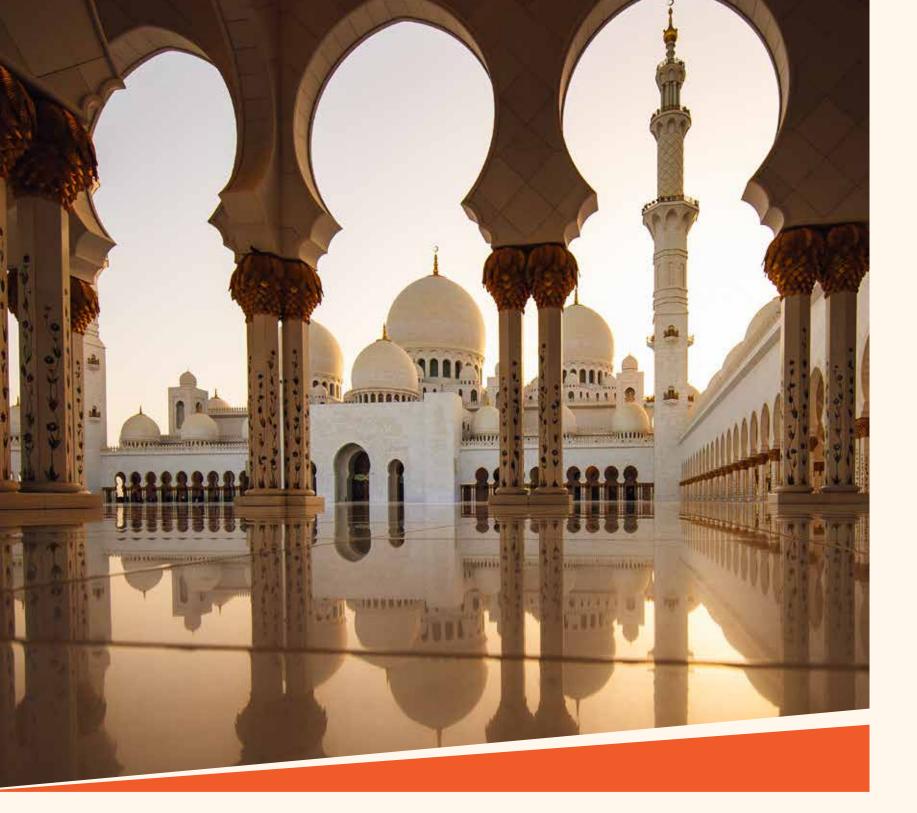






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The Destination Marketing PR team contributed to the achievement of the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi overall objectives. In addition, significant support was also extended to different media channels to enhance Abu Dhabi's reputation as a major events, business tourism and leisure destination.

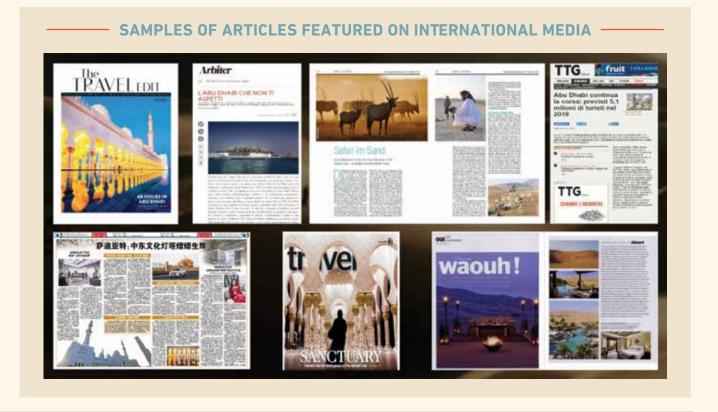
The Destination Marketing PR team also supports Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi's different teams including but not limited to; Travel Trade and Market Development, Convention and Exhibition Bureau, Events Bureau, industry and business partners in tier 1 and tier 2 markets, through developing a marketing communication strategy, planning, setting goals and tactics and maintaining a keen understanding of industry market trends.

# Strategic communication to build and maintain relationships with international media outlets

MARKET	CONSUMER FEATURES	CONSUMER MEDIA VALUE	TRADE FEATURES	TRADE MEDIA VALUE	TOTAL ARTICLES	TRADE MEDIA VALUE
DE	1913	23M	108	1.4M	4867	84M
UK	597	32M	351	6M	1323	43M
IN	623	10M	116	40M	739	14M
CN	452	63M	181	8M	1559	273M
US	2228	176M	62	222K	2290	176M
RU	568	6.6M	362	800K	9865	33M
FR	536	84M	81	2M	617	86M
IT	1127	57.6M	390	5.7M	1517	63.5
AU	1303	26M	121	1M	1424	27M







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ON SOCIAL, 1.2M PEOPLE FOLLOW THE BRAND ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS. AS FOR THE WEBSITE, IT RECORDED 2.9M VISITS SINCE IT'S LAUNCH, IN ADDITION TO 97K APP DOWNLOADS.



Since the re-brand in March, Abu Dhabi Calendar has had an always-on promotion to advertise the platform itself (website/app) plus all the events happening in Abu Dhabi

















DUE TO DIGITAL MARKETING,
WEBSITE TRAFFIC & COMPETITIVE
ENGAGEMENT HAS SEEN A BIG
INCREASE IN 2019 VS. 2018







221K
LEADS







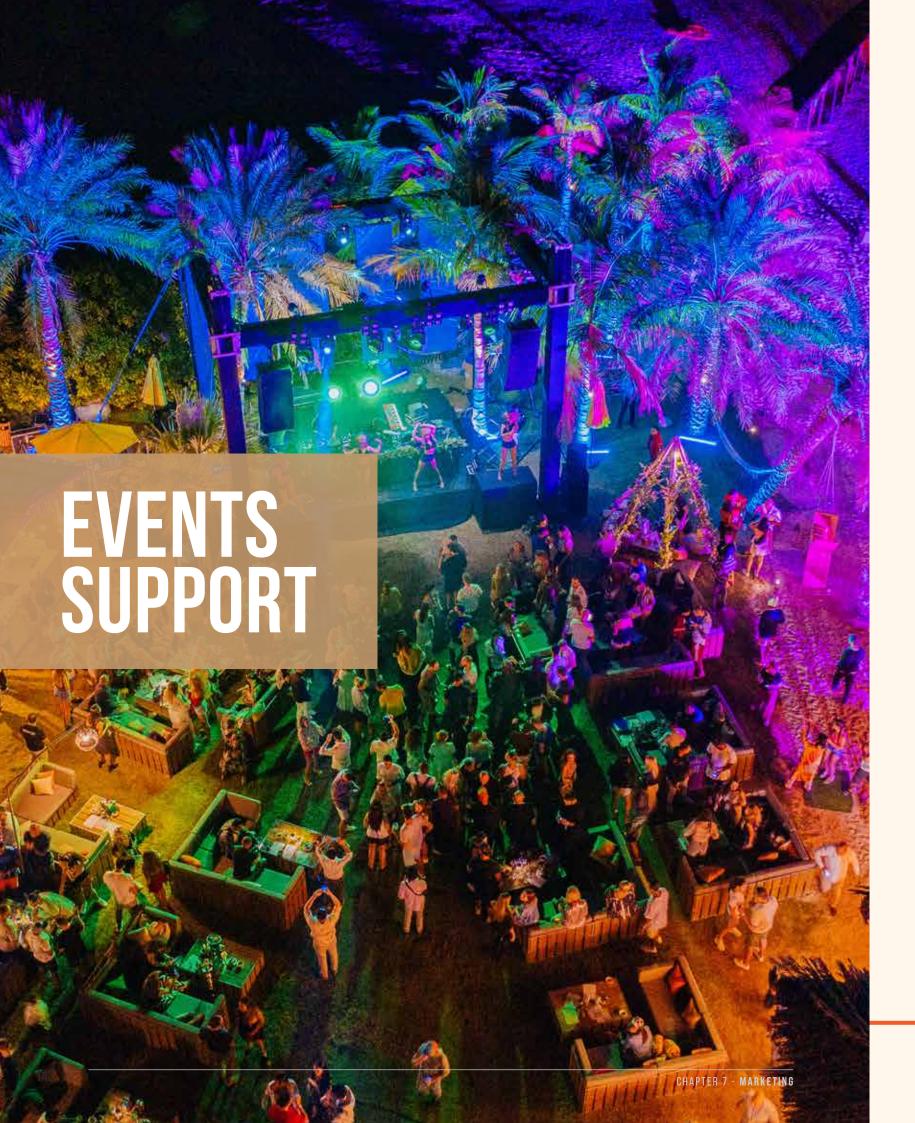


### ON SEP 22, AD CALENDAR RELEASED A NEW MOBILE APP ON IOS AND ANDROID WHICH HAS BEEN RECEIVING A HIGH AMOUNT OF ENGAGEMENT SINCE ITS RELEASE



views **4.6/5 4.8/5** 

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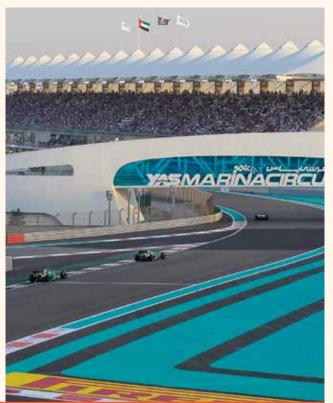


Abu Dhabi hosted a number of events throughout 2019. The Destination Marketing Team's role was to lead & advise on marketing these events following best practices.

After the end of each event, a detailed report was delivered to showcase the outcomes, insights and learnings for future campaigns.



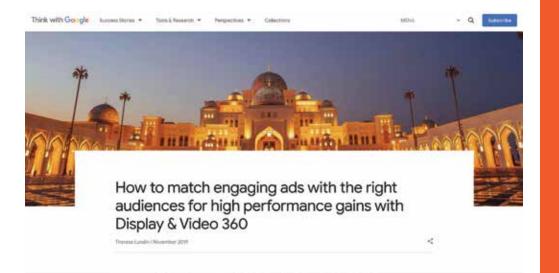






CHAPTER 7 - MARKETING





### **DYNAMIC CREATIVE CAMPAIGN** WITH GOOGLE



Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's digital marketing team and Google piloted a dynamic display campaign with +5,400 creatives in the UK and Germany across multiple audience segments. The campaign leveraged geo-location and a weather API for the dynamic elements and drove a massive increase in engagement with the AD as well as longer stays in Abu Dhabi.

5,400 dynamic creatives in UK/DE

300%-400% better CTR (click through rate)

34% longer stays

35% more bookings

Abu Dhabi advertised across one of the biggest digital screens in the UK at Piccadilly Circus. Instead of the traditional way of advertising, Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi worked on an augmented reality experience where people passing by could see themselves on the screen with a Ferrari World Abu Dhabi rollercoaster, Saadiyat beach or Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. Abu Dhabi broke the Guinness World Record as the "Largest Augmented Reality (AR) screen".

**AUGMENTED** 

**ACTIVATION** 

**REALITY** 

YouTube Originals

Innovative technology (AR) at scale

**Guinness World Record "Largest** Augmented Reality (AR) screen"

Global PR exposure (AED 820K media value)

4% Destination awareness uplift, 6% shift in misconceptions



This the first 360 campaign that Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi activated in a market that combines Celebrity activation (Xiao Zhan), Digital media, Offline Media, PR, Influencers and OTAs communicating Abu Dhabi in a seamless way, across the travel funnel via a cutting edge creative format (interactive film) which is the 1st interactive film on WeChat.

360 campaign that includes celebrity activation (Xiao Zhan), Digital media, Offline Media. PR. Influencers and OTAs

First interactive film on WeChat

**COLDPLAY SPONSORSHIP** 

For the first time, ColdPlay, released their album and transformed their tour to be a digital tour through YouTube. Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi jumped on the opportunity to showcase Abu Dhabi as an entertainment destination through having a 100% SOV on YouTube by having a roadblock of the concert in 23 markets and in parallel being the first advertiser in EMEA that advertises in the top 100 chart per market.

**Coldplay Album Live Stream sponsorship** in 23 markets

1st EMEA advertiser on Exclusive premium Youtube Music inventory (top 100 charts per market)

Awareness and consideration increase in all Department of Culture and Tourism -Abu Dhabi's key markets

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**DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM** - ABU DHABI'S **TRAVEL DSP** 



In 2019, Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's ambition was to generate and own as much data as possible about travellers and the deeper impacts of their communication on flight & hotel searches and bookings. That is where the partnership with Sojern came to life, by creating the first Travel DSP which is layering the Sojern travel audience data on the media bought through Google and housed on the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi owned account, enabling higher data capture, transparency in reporting, insights building and better campaign performance.

**Travel audiences in Department of Culture** and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's infrastructure

1st Travel DSP in MENA

Better campaign performance (135% lower CTR)

**Better conversion rates** (52% lower CPA, 77% lower CPI)

10% decrease in website bounce rate

**SNAPCHAT LENS** 

One of our rules of engagement is to re-create unforgettable experiences through media, and to transport our audiences, wherever they are, to the Abu Dhabi unmatched experience. Hence, the collaboration with Snapchat which aimed to create a 360 immersive Abu Dhabi gateway lens that showcases the Abu Dhabi key iconic landmarks. The lenses were also accompanied with snap video ads that complement the campaign with more information and attractions in Abu Dhabi. Campaign will launch in Q1 2020

**Transport users via Augmented Reality to** Abu Dhabi via 360 Snapchat Lenses in the **UK, Germany and India** 

Immersive experience that will resonate with Snapchat users

PR exposure of a case study from Snapchat



The most challenging market for Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi is China, due to its walled garden nature and lack of 3rd party tracking. Moreover, we were not able to connect all media in China together to ensure efficiency and user experience seamlessness. We pioneered a partnership with The Trade Desk where we are not only able to connect the dots in China, but are able to buy premium video inventory across the leading video platforms in China programmatically and tracked via MioZhen to give us full transparency and efficiency in China.

Programmatic advertising in China from HQ

3rd party tracking for media verification

Connecting all media for efficiency and user experience seamlessness

Full transparency and efficiency in China

**HOOTSUITE CASE STUDY** 

52% reduction on avg. response time Monitor the performance of the moderation

channels Better data social analysis for better

Hootsuite published a case study on how DCT has been using its platform in addition to Brandwatch (listening tool) to better manage Abu Dhabi's digital presence to boost tourism. Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi selected Hootsuite Enterprise to streamline and centralise content approvals, create a monitored moderation process, manage social media campaigns, and design reports to prove the impact of social media on the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's broader objectives.

teams interacting with Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi's social

audience understanding

**Excellence in usage of Social Media** 

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### **Year of Tolerance**

The United Arab Emirates declared 2019 to be the Year of Tolerance to highlight the country's status as a global capital for tolerance, and to emphasise tolerance as a universal concept and a sustainable institutional endeavour through legislation and policies.

The Year of Tolerance is aimed at entrenching the values of tolerance, dialogue, coexistence and openness to different cultures, especially amongst young people, which will reflect positively on society as a whole.

A tolerant approach has been adopted by the UAE since it was established, making the country a bridge of communication between the people of the world and their various cultures, in an environment of openness and respect that rejects extremism and promotes coexistence.

This theme of tolerance is reflected in the legacy of the UAE's Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who exemplified the principles of for bearance, acceptance of others and cooperation.

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi organised a host of events and initiatives in 2019 to support the Year of Tolerance, some of which are discussed here:

### SIR BANI YAS CHURCH AND MONASTERY REOPENING

The Church and Monastery on Sir Bani Yas Island, the first Christian site discovered in the UAE, reopened its doors to visitors following the implementation of conservation measures and site enhancements. The site, which dates back to the 7th and 8th centuries CE, is evidence of the longstanding tolerance to other cultures in the UAE.





# SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD GAMES

DCT Abu Dhabi supported and partnered with the Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019, which highlighted the UAE's support for People of Determination. More than 7,500 athletes representing over 190 countries competed in 24 Olympic-style at the first Special Olympics World Games in the Middle East and North Africa region. The Department commissioned visual art artists from all around the world and created inspiring art installation that have been installed in the Special Olympics Park in the Manarat Al Saadiyat garden.

#### **ABU DHABI MOSQUES TOUR**

The Department, in cooperation with the General Authority for Islamic Affairs and Endowments, launched its Mosques Tour Initiative. The initiative gave residents and visitors of any nationality and religion the chance to learn about the history and significance of Abu Dhabi's most iconic mosques, as well as providing an introductory overview of the religious and societal role of mosques.





#### **GUIDE TO TOLERANCE**

The Department released an exploratory guide about the legacy of tolerance in the UAE, which looked at examples of tolerance throughout the history of the country. The guide presented the UAE as an example in which people of all cultures thrive in a community based on mutual respect, peaceful co-existence and harmony.

### PANELS DEBATING THE NOTION OF TOLERANCE

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award organised a panel discussion in Moscow to highlight the pivotal cultural role of Russian-Emirati cultural dialogue. The 'Arab-Russian Cultural Dialogue' event further aimed to introduce Russian audiences to Sheikh Zayed Book Award initiatives and attract further nominations to its annual award. At the ITB exhibition in Berlin, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi had a dedicated wall on its stand for the Year of Tolerance.





# THEME OF TOLERANCE IN ABU DHABI BOOK FAIRS

Tolerance was one of key themes of the 29th edition of the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, Al Ain Book Fair and Al Dhafra Book Fair. The fairs featured a number of tolerance-themed events, highlighting the UAE's openness to other cultures and publications. At the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, India was chosen as the Guest of Honour, to celebrate the country's strong historic links with the United Arab Emirates.

# SYMPOSIUM ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE

The United Nations has declared November 16 of each year to be the United Nations' International Day for Tolerance' in an effort to promote mutual understanding and non-violence around the world. To mark the day, a number of initiatives and events were held, including a symposium titled 'Tolerance and Human Brotherhood at Zayed Central Library, which was attended by representatives of government institutions and school and university students.



CHAPTER 8 - YEAR OF TOLERANCE CHAPTER 8 - YEAR OF TOLERANCE



#### LIBRARIES ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF TOLERANCE

The Maktaba Library branches organised several initiatives and events for visitors from care centres for People of Determination and school students throughout the year. Activities included theatre shows, reading sessions and interactive art workshops. In addition, Maktaba organised the 'Happy Child Campaign', which aimed to bring joy to children suffering from cancer and heart disease. The campaign involved the delivery of toys and other items that had been donated by DCT Abu Dhabi employees, as well as providing the opportunity for volunteers to participate in cheering up the sick children in Sheikh Khalifa Medical City.



## COMMUNITY EXHIBITIONS WITHIN ABU DHABI ART

The annual Abu Dhabi Art saw its community partners and non-profit cultural organisations being offered spaces within the fair to highlight their initiatives, presenting displays that responded to the theme of the Year of Tolerance.

# WORKS OF ART REVEALED IN LOUVRE ABU DHABI

During a visit to Abu Dhabi by His Holiness Pope Francis and Dr Ahmad Al Tayeb, Grand Imam of the Al Azhar Al Sharif, two new works of art were unveiled at Louvre Abu Dhabi. The first, the 16th century wood carving Christ Showing his Wounds, is an addition to the Louvre Abu Dhabi permanent collection. The second item, four loose leaves from the famed Blue Qur'an, was loaned from the collection of the Zayed National Museum. The work aims to highlight the concept of tolerance between different faiths.





#### **CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND SYMPOSIUM**

The 7th GCC Heritage and Oral History Conference was held under the theme 'Zayed and Tolerance: A Community's Culture and Leadership Approach'. The conference papers and panels studied the school of thought of the late Sheikh Zayed and his way of embracing the concept of coexistence between people from different religions and faith.

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award hosted a conference on the role of tolerance in culture, literature and history, bringing together a distinguished group of Arab and international intellectuals, educators, writers and diplomats. The Cultural Foundation saw the 'Orient Pioneers: Western Travellers and the Arabian Peninsula' symposium, where prominent Orientalists and scholars of regional history examined the historical interactions between the West and the East.



#### MUSEUM EVENTS AND THE THEME OF TOLERANCE

Museums in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain hosted numerous events and exhibitions to mark the Year of Tolerance. This included the Cultural Connection event at Al Ain Palace Museum, which celebrated cultures from countries around the world, including Palestine, Russia, Kenya and Egypt, with artistic performances, traditional products, culinary experience and a range of workshops for children.

CHAPTER 8 - YEAR OF TOLERANCE CHAPTER 8 - YEAR OF TOLERANCE



# **UPCOMING EVENTS**



A full-fledged celebration of the Abu Dhabi World Jiu-Jitsu Professional Championship is set to take place on 10-18 April 2020. This year, the event is set to offer brand new events, with the aim of developing and enriching the experience presented to spectators and participants in addition to, attracting the wider community and international visitors to attend and participate in these events.

As part of the week, city wide activations and programming, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi will organise and source ticketed and non-ticketed events including a concert and a festival.



### **VIDCON**

VidCon, the world's largest celebration of online videos, is coming to Abu Dhabi for the first time. The four-day festival, taking place from March 25 to 28 at ADNEC, will bring together fans and creators for a range of attractions, activities, workshops and more.

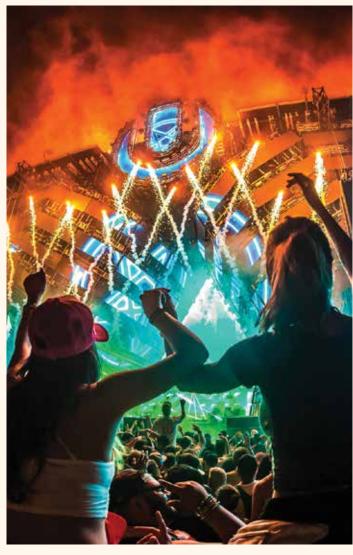
Fans of online videos can attend Q&As with online stars, attend discussions, performances and interviews. Video makers can also benefit from attending by learning to create better content, grow their channel, break into the industry, learn the ins-and-outs of online video and meet fellow creators.

A host of online stars have signed up to attend the inaugural event in Abu Dhabi including actor Alex Wassabi, Rawan and Rayan, Brent Riviera, Matt Steffanina, Ranz Kyle and Niana Guerrero, Naz, Lexi Rivera.

Ultra will host its first event in the United Arab Emirates this year as the debut edition of Ultra Abu Dhabi takes place on 5th and 6th March 2020. The global dance brand will take over Abu Dhabi's du Arena for two days of EDM and house music as its joined by Afrojack, Alesso, Eric Prydz, DJ Snake, Major Lazer and Nicky Romero.

Ultra-Abu Dhabi is organised in collaboration with the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi and will be the be the highlight of Abu Dhabi Music Week, a ten-day festival of music and dance that will light up the UAE capital from 1-14 March 2020.

# ULTRA – ABU DHABI



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Following the major success of the Special Olympics, the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi has worked to develop an Accessible Tourism Policy Framework to promote the destination as an accessible and inclusive destination of distinction for all tourists with a specific aim to enhance the experience of visitors with special needs.

Abu Dhabi's Accessible Tourism Policy, includes programmes and initiatives centered around the following key pillars:

- Physical Environment: Many facilities at key venues not truly accessible and need significant enhancements.
- Barriers to Information: Not enough awareness of facilities or support services for POD at major touchpoints.
- Communication: Regular training of service staff at all touchpoints and tour guides on effective communication and emergency response.

In line with the Abu Dhabi Government's sustainability agenda, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi has established a full-fledged Sustainability Policy Framework for the tourism sector in the capital. The framework covers strategic as well as operational aspects, to build a long-term forward-looking sustainable sector that is capable and resilient to manage economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism development and growth.

The framework includes 15 initiatives for sustainable tourism in the sector under the following six guiding principles:

- Transparent Destination
- Sustainable Destination
- Unique Destination
- Safe, Accessible Destination
- Inclusive Destination
- · Adaptive, Diverse Destination

