

# IMEX in Frankfurt

## Impressive Arab presence

>Armin Gemmer



**B**usiness tourism is booming worldwide. The MICE sector (meetings, incentives, conventions and events) and the fairs which are concentrating on this target group are benefiting from this boom. In spite of growing competition, IMEX can repeatedly announce a new record.

Ray Bloom and Paul Flackett, who together with the German Convention Bureau (GCB) organized IMEX for the first time in 2003 appeared more than satisfied. "IMEX 2008 is breaking records both at the exhibition site and also with regard to the side events," Ray Bloom explained at the closing press conference.

With a 10 percent increase in visitor count from 2006 to 2007 IMEX could once again gain exactly as much in 2008. Today the fair counts 8,310 visitors from 97 countries and 3,400 exhibitors from 150 countries. It is already official: IMEX will go on, at least until 2013.

The German Convention Bureau (GCB), as the national host and co-organiser naturally has the biggest stand. In addition, the South European countries of Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece occupied a big exhibition area. But the Arab states, e.g. UAE, Jordan, Egypt and Oman with their impressive exhibition stands showed that they are able to offer business and MICE tourism excellent conditions. They occupied almost the entire south wing of the hall.

The next IMEX will be held from 26th to 28th May, 2009. ■

The business fair IMEX is one of the international highlights in the international meetings industry calendar. This April, for the sixth time, the exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events (which is abbreviated to IMEX) was held in Hall 8 at the Frankfurt fairground.

