

International visitor growth takes 2006 London Show to new heights

- OVERSEAS VISITOR GROWTH LIFTS OVERALL ATTENDANCE TO RECORD LEVEL
- VISITOR NUMBERS RISE FOR 71 OF THE 118 NATIONS REPRESENTED
- 35 TERRITORIES RECORD ALL-TIME HIGH REPRESENTATIONS
- 28 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED BY MORE THAN 100 ATTENDEES

A strong increase in international visitors has lifted attendance levels at the 2006 Amusement Trades Exhibition International (ATEI), International Casino Exhibition (ICE) and interactive gaming show (ICEi) to unprecedented levels with the overall participation reaching an all-time high of 24,913.

Marking a 2.6 per cent increase on the 2005 record-breaking figure of 24,278, this year's London Show, which took place at Earls Court Exhibition Centre on 24-26 January, comprised 15,114 ATEI-dedicated visitors and 9,799 in ICE/ICEi. Whilst UK attendance (13,535) was down 3.7 per cent year-on-year, the figure for domestic attendees was the second highest since the show began in 1939. A robust 12.4 per cent annual increase in non-UK industry professionals raised international involvement to a new high of 11,315, a figure which constituted 45.4 per cent of the total attendance.

Combined figures (ATEI + ICE/ICEi)

Of the 118 nations represented at the 2006 London Show, 71 recorded annual increases in visitor numbers, with 35 countries registering record-high levels and 28 providing 100 visitors or more. Vietnam and British Indian Ocean Territories

were represented by visitors for the very first time in 2006, taking the total number of territories participating since 1995 to 175.

ATEI only

ATEI's international attendance grew by 12.0 per cent to a record-breaking 5,553, although a lower number of UK visitors meant that the overall tally of 15,114 was down 1.0 per cent year-on-year. The proportion of international visitors to the coin-op show grew from 32.4 per cent in 2005 to 36.7 per cent this year.

97 nations were represented by visitors to ATEI 2006, of which 59 recorded annual increases in visitor numbers, with 13 registering record-high attendances. The British Virgin Islands and Macao were represented by ATEI visitors for the very first time, taking the total number of territories involved with ATEI since 1995 to 144.

Individual Nation Statistics

Due in part to the postponement of IMA, Germany was by far the outstanding nation at this year's show. A year-on-year increase of 63.1 per cent helped Germany to top the London Show's league table of overseas nations with an all-time high of 998 visitors. ATEI-dedicated visitors alone almost doubled (up 95.8 per cent to 564), emulating the overall jump from fourth to first place in the visitor rankings.

Spain significantly increased its presence: up 7.0 per cent to 533 in ATEI; up 7.1 per cent to 932 overall – a new national record! Despite these formidable growth rates, Spain dropped to second position in the London Show overseas visitor nation rankings, being overtaken by Germany.

The Netherlands increased its representation at the 2006 London Show. The number of Dutch visitors rose by 5.5 per cent

to an all-time high of 831, comprising 373 in ATEI and 458 in ICE/ICEi

Austria registered a record-breaking overall attendance of 743 (up 36.3 per cent year-on-year), as well as setting a national record for ATEI (302, +66.9 per cent). These figures helped Austria to fourth place in the overall overseas visitor rankings and fifth place in ATEI.

Italy's annual deficit of 2.5 per cent saw its 539 attendees take second place behind Germany in the ATEI visitor nation stakes. A 2.5 per cent fall in the overall show figure of 740 visitors put Italy in fifth position behind Germany (998), Spain (932), Netherlands (831) and Austria (743).

Bucking recent trends and overturning an anticipated decline, the USA scored an impressive 44.6 per cent increase in the number of ATEI visitors (240), helping to jump up to eighth place in the overseas visitor nation rankings. Adding in the number of visitors to ICE/ICEi, the overall US attendance of 667 (+21.5%) set a new national record and secured sixth place in the London Show rankings.

France recorded an annual increase of 26.8 per cent with 251 French visitors helping it hold seventh place in ATEI's overseas visitor nation league table. France climbed one place to seventh in the overall rankings, with ICE/ICEi visitors swelling the total attendance in London to 546 (+23.5%).

Sweden set a new national record of 525 visitors to the London Show, up 16.2 per cent year-on-year. Higher increases from other nations meant, however, that it slipped down one place to eighth in the overseas visitor league table.

The Irish Republic moved back into the top ten nations represented in London with an overall attendance of 389, up 11.1 per cent year-on-year. Ireland's ATEI component increased 15.9 per cent to 285.

Following adverse legislative announcements from the Duma just one week before the show opened, the Russian Federation, whilst increasing its ICE/ICEi participation, saw a 27.0 per cent fall in ATEI visitors to 116. This impacted on the overall attendance (366) which recorded a deficit of 6.6 per cent.

Belgium recorded a disappointing decline in both ATEI visitors (down 8.4 per cent to 197) and in ICE/ICEi (down 11.6 per cent to 129), overall down 9.7 per cent to 326. Belgium remains in ATEI's top ten visitor nation rankings, but has slipped to 11th place overall.

Canada set a new national record with overall visitor numbers climbing 34.1 per cent to 228, despite a 13.0 per cent deficit in the number of Canadians (40) in ATEI.

The Czech Republic climbed two places to 12th in ATEI's overseas visitor rankings courtesy of a 15.5 per cent increase to 142. Overall the rise was a more moderate 5.6 per cent to 208.

Poland increased its visitor numbers in ICE/ICEi but suffered a deficit (6.2%) in ATEI, falling from 162 visitors last year to 152 in 2006. This was enough to hold on to 11th place in the overseas visitor nation rankings. Overall, Polish representation was down 3.1 per cent to 187 visitors.

Hungary provided more ATEI visitors (137, +9.6%) in 2006, but a decline in ICE/ICEi attendance meant the overall figure was down 9.9 per cent to 173.

Taiwan provided 100 visitors to the London Show for the first time. This included 68 in ATEI (up 25.9 per cent year-on-year) and 32 in ICE/ICEi (+23.1%); an overall increase of 25.0 per cent.

The Slovak Republic broke national records for both ATEI (60, +39.5%) and overall (99, +4.2%) in 2006.

Korea also set new highs for ATEI (78, +81.4%) and overall (97, +86.5%) this year. A rising star from the Far East, Korea entered the top 20 nations (ATEI) and top 30 overall for the first time in 2006.

Japan had its greatest ever visitor presence in 2006, rising 19.2 per cent to 87 overall. This included a 33.3 per cent annual increase in the number of Japanese visitors to ATEI (44).

Other notable individual nations (ATEI + ICE/ICEi combined) included: Slovenia (311 visitors, +0.7%), Norway (175, +8.7%), Switzerland (172, +5.5%), Israel (156, +16.4%), Bulgaria (149, +58.5%), Finland (120, +5.3%), Serbia & Montenegro (105, +32.9%), Cyprus (96, +31.5%), Latvia (93, unchanged), Malta (93, +52.5%), Turkey (63, +65.8%), Croatia (62, +10.7%), Estonia (57, +50.0%), Romania (56, +27.3%), Philippines (31, +287.5%), India (24, +100.0%), Colombia (20, +122.2%) and Peru (19, +137.5%).

Looking at the ATEI only figures, other salient national statistics comprised: Greece (108 visitors, +3.9%), Finland (75, +5.6%), Israel (60, +36.4%), Slovenia (55, +129.2%), Cyprus (47, +11.9%), Turkey (37, +146.7%), South Africa (32, +68.4%), Malta (30, +100.0%), Latvia (29, +52.5%), Bulgaria (23, +64.3%) and Estonia (19, +216.7%).

The 2007 show takes place at London's Earls Court Exhibition Centre on Tuesday 23 to Thursday 25 January.

All figures quoted are subject to verification by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC)

2006 London Show Review Peter Rusbridge – CEO, Clarion ATE

“Although visitor figures are just part of what constitutes a successful exhibition, we are very pleased with the outcome of the first ATEI/ICE/ICEi shows held under the new ownership of Clarion Events. Attendance climbed to 24,913, just 87 short of

the landmark 25,000. All efforts will now be concentrated on passing that milestone next year.

“Certainly the driver for growth is the number of non-UK buyers making the journey to London. In ATEI the international proportion stands at 36.7 per cent, in ICE/ICEi it is 58.8 per cent and overall the figure is 45.4 per cent. Proof positive that we operate in and provide solutions to an international market place of sellers and buyers.

“Although there were fewer UK buyers than in 2005, this year’s figure remained the second highest on record and can be considered healthy against the backdrop of a less than dynamic coin-op sector.

“The postponement of IMA, the German fair, had a positive impact on the London Shows. Close to 1,000 buyers made the journey from Germany, many for the first time. The feedback we received from the German buyers is positive and we are optimistic about retaining their support for 2007 when the diversity of product on show is likely to be even greater.

“Whilst nations such as Spain, Netherlands, Austria, Italy, USA, France, Sweden and Ireland continue to provide their usual strong turnout of buyers, it is worth noting that the London Shows now have 28 countries generating more than 100 visitors each – a real sign of strength.

“Looking ahead, 2007 will be one of the most significant in the show’s history. The introduction of the new floor plan and the new floorplan configuration at Earls Court 1 will enable us to bring in the 50 or so new companies who want to exhibit and go some way to helping the 40 per cent of existing exhibitors who want bigger and better stands.

“If any industry professionals are waiting to make their first visit to the London Shows, 2007 will be a vintage year!”