



CARINA BAUER -  
MARKETING & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, IMEX



## HELPING YOU PLAN YOUR MEETING AND CONFERENCES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR - THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

IMEX THE WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION FOR INCENTIVE TRAVEL, MEETINGS AND EVENTS AN INTERVIEW WITH CARINA BAUER - MARKETING & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, IMEX

### Can you tell us a little bit about IMEX - its history, exhibitors, and delegates?

IMEX was launched in 2001 with the inaugural exhibition taking place in 2003. It was founded by Ray Bloom, a well-known industry entrepreneur who saw a gap in the market for a major trade show in Germany. IMEX is unique in bringing together the largest international hosted buyer programme in the world (*where the buyers are flown in and accommodated by the organiser*), together with access to the huge outbound German buyer market. In total over 7,600 trade buyers attended IMEX 2006.

The 3,000 exhibitors are made up of national and regional tourist offices, convention & visitor bureaux, the major hotel groups, cruise lines, luxury trains, service providers, etc.

### How does Association Day work - and how does it help Association Managers?

The IMEX Association Day was set up to address the particular needs of association managers. Taking place a day prior to the opening of the exhibition each year, it gives association executives the opportunity to benefit from a full afternoon of education focussed on topics relevant to their everyday work such as membership recruitment and retention, risk management, negotiating with hotels and conference centres, and building communities online. This is the largest

gathering of association executives in Europe - a unique opportunity for association managers to learn and network with each other - a benefit which we understand is of great importance within this market.

It is a fun programme which ends with a great party at a five-star hotel in Frankfurt where the association executives can network with exhibitors from across the world.

We feel that the Association Day programme offers association managers an excellent additional benefit to attending the IMEX tradeshow.

### What about hosted buyers? How does this tie in with association managers attending the event?

Association buyers qualify for the hosted buyer programme if they are organising meetings, conferences or conventions for their association internationally. Qualification is through a simple registration form - either on paper or online - where association managers are also able to choose their date options and preferred airport locations. Once qualified, the IMEX hosted buyer team will organise the flights and accommodation for the buyer, which can be viewed online in the buyers-only login area of the IMEX website. As a part of the programme, we ask buyers to organise eight appointments in advance

of the exhibition. Appointments can be organised with any exhibitors the hosted buyer feels would be interesting.

The appointment process is made extremely easy via the IMEX online diary system. Buyers can research exhibitors in advance, request brochures online and also send RFPs (*request for proposals*). By setting up this system, IMEX organisers try to make the exhibition itself as time-efficient and effective as possible for both our buyers and our exhibitors.

**Registration for the Association Hosted Buyer programme is open from the end of October. For more information, or to register your interest in advance please contact Carina Bauer: [carina@imex-frankfurt.com](mailto:carina@imex-frankfurt.com)**

### Can you tell us about the background of delegates to IMEX?

Delegates are a mixture of corporate, agency and association buyers and come from almost 100 countries. Large numbers travel from Germany, the UK, Russia, Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and the US - but also from Asia, the Middle East, South Africa, Canada, India and South American destinations such as Brazil. Increasing numbers are also visiting from former Eastern European countries.

## WE WERE EXTREMELY PROUD TO HAVE WON THE AEO (ASSOCIATION OF EXHIBITION ORGANISERS) AWARD FOR 'BEST TRADE SHOW' AT THEIR ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY THIS SUMMER

### What about the background of hosted buyers?

For the most part, they are professionals who research, organise, plan, influence or make budgetary decisions for association meetings or congresses, conferences, corporate meetings and hospitality, exhibitions, incentive travel programmes, product launches, road shows, seminars and training programmes.

### Can you give us some background on your main sponsors?

The German Convention Bureau is IMEX's strategic partner; Lufthansa is the official airline and Star Alliance the official Airline Network. In addition, IMEX is endorsed by ICCA (*the International Congress & Convention Association*), SITE (*the Society of Incentive & Travel Executives*), DMAI (*the Destination Marketing Association International*); is a European Partner of MPI (*Meeting Professionals International*) and a Corporate Partner of AIPC (*International Association of Convention Centres*).

### Is there anything different or new about this year's IMEX that you'd like to mention?

With regards to the Association Day and Evening (16 April 07) we plan to continue to offer the IT Lab which was trialed this year; as well as a new innovation of a 'VAT doctor' who will be available all day for private appointments. We will also be extending the sessions run in German of topics of specific interest to those working in the German speaking markets.

We are also updating all of our technology systems and delegates will see a big improvement in the usability of the IMEX website, the online exhibitor search functions and the diary system. In addition, the IMEX Mobile Ex-

hibition Assistant, which was introduced into IMEX 2006 will be repeated and expanded giving delegates the opportunity to manage their time during the exhibition through their mobile phone.

We are also making efforts to continue our drive to become more environmentally friendly - encouraging exhibitors to make use of environmentally responsible suppliers and products through our exhibitor manual.

### How can delegates take advantage of the IMEX website to find out more about the event?

The IMEX website is continually updated and contains information on the entire IMEX event - from the Association Day, to the Future Leaders Forum (for students) to a search of all IMEX exhibitors. Nearer to the exhibition full information on the seminar and events programme is also available and for the first time delegates will be able to add such events to their online diaries.

Once registered buyers are able to use the website to make appointments with exhibitors and view their flight & accommodation details.

[www.imex-frankfurt.com](http://www.imex-frankfurt.com)

### Is there anything you can tell us about Regent Exhibitions Ltd - in terms of supporting delegates, exhibitors, sponsors, stakeholders, etc?

Regent Exhibitions is dedicated to the organisation of the IMEX exhibition and as such its key aim is to ensure that IMEX delivers the highest level of business opportunities for both our exhibitors and buyers. The entire team is dedicated to ensuring that the experience of taking part in IMEX is enjoy-

able, productive and efficient and as such we support all of our clients to take advantage of the marketing and business opportunities which IMEX presents - both during the exhibition and throughout the year.

### Anything else you would like to mention?

We were extremely proud to have won the AEO (*Association of Exhibition Organisers*) award for 'Best Trade Show' at their annual awards ceremony this summer. This follows our win in 2005 for 'Best Visitor Experience at a Trade Show' and is a testimony to the strength of IMEX.

## FAQ

### IMEX

The Worldwide Exhibition for Incentive Travel, Meetings and Events

**Where?** Messe Frankfurt, Germany.  
17 - 19 April 2007. Tuesday 17  
and Wednesday 18: 10:00 - 17:30 //  
Thursday 19: 10:00 - 16:30

**Who?** National and regional tourist offices, convention & visitor bureaux, the major hotel groups, cruise lines, luxury trains, service providers, airlines, trade associations, exhibition centres, etc. There are over 3,300 exhibitors representing more than 150 countries

**Find out more** Carina Bauer,  
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