

Asia continues to be a draw for the duty free and tax free world with numbers up across the board at this year's TFWA Asia Pacific Conference & Exhibition. Companies broke the 1,000 barrier for the first time.

At a media briefing held yesterday at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands Expo & Convention Center – the home of the event since last year – Tax Free World Association President Erik Juul-Mortensen (*right*) expressed his delight at the success of the show, but promised to "base our learnings on feedback (from attendees) to say how successful we really were".

The four-day trade event, which finished yesterday, again broke records for exhibition space, exhibitors and attendance. There were a total of 2,683 visitors, up +9.4% from last year, from 1,022 companies, up +1.8% from last year's 985.

Of the visitor total, 982 were DF&TR operators and landlords (the key buyers), up +8.7% on 2013, from 255 companies (+6.2%).

They were able to see international and local brands from 261 exhibiting companies on 256 stands, compared with 253 last year, of which 61 were new or returning. In total they covered 8,400sq m of exhibition space on two floors [*a second level was added this year*] up +4% on last year.

TFWA describes the result as "an outstanding performance which reflects the dynamism of the duty free & travel retail industry in the Asia Pacific region".

Commenting on the addition of a new hall, Juul-Mortensen, told media yesterday: "The first year with a new hall is always challenging but now people have seen it... we are confident that the number of stands will grow on the new floor and that we will see more new and interesting exhibitors there next year."

Companies break 1,000 at TFWA Singapore show



He added that space in the new upstairs hall was likely to be increased depending on the size of demand. The show will again be at the MBS where TFWA has a flexible contract and is able to sign a year at a time with options on dates until 2017. Juul-Mortensen said: "We're now bedded in here." The dates next year – the 20th edition – have been fixed for 10-14 May.

ONE2ONE BUILDS STEAM

A total of 330 meetings (+10%) were facilitated by the ONE2ONE system which ties up delegates with the 36 airports and 26 airlines that were at the show. This was in addition to meetings on exhibitors' stands. Juul-Mortensen said the service was "going from strength to strength" as more and more people used it to establish new contacts in the region.

Attendance at Monday's conference – where controversial former Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, was the headline speaker – plus the four regionally-focused workshops, was also strongly up by +21% at 1,185.

Record attendances were also seen at the social events: 63 players competed in the golf tournament on Sentosa; 710 attended the Welcoming Cocktail in Raffles; 511 people came to the Chill-Out Party at Marina Bay Sands Skypark; and 517 attended the Singapore Swing Party at the historic Alkaff Mansion.

A video review of TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference 2014 will go live at the end of May at **www.tfwa.com**.

TFWA's next event will be the 30th Anniversary of its global exhibition and conference in Cannes, France at the Palais des Festivals (26-31 October 2014).

