

Bit Milan is becoming more and more popular, with an increase in quality, matching and content

- 14,673 business matches arranged and accomplished, with an increased conversion rate of 43%
- 1,500 buyers from 79 countries, in particular from Central and South America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia and the USA.
- 6,750 individuals taking part, great success for the new fixtures in the themed areas, identified by an advisory board of experts

Milano, 14th February 2018 – Yesterday saw the final day of an extremely dynamic edition of **Bit - International Tourism Exchange**, with **46 thousand** visitors, **2,550** representatives accredited by the Italian and global media, including **500 travel bloggers** and **1,500 top Italian and international profiled buyers** from **79 different countries**, with particularly large delegations from **Central and South America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia and the USA**.

“With more than 34,100 booked meetings and almost 15 thousand meetings all done and dusted and business matching has cemented its status as one of our top strengths” - says Fabrizio Curci, CEO of Fiera Milano Spa. “The conversion rate that has increased to 43% (from 29% in 2017), underlines our ability to organise an increasingly targeted match between supply and demand. Bit has once again proven to be a leading platform for the building of relationships for Italian operators, as well as a point of reference for the entire Euro-Mediterranean area”.

The outstanding quality of the content, with data, trends and specialist insights, is also worth highlighting, considering that it renders the Bit formula especially effective and supports the operators in their challenge to meet the ever-personalised and multi-targeted requirements of the modern-day tourist industry. The operators particularly appreciated the equal involvement of both operators and travellers and the opportunity to kick-start new partnerships and collaborations.

“Once again, this year we are extremely satisfied with this key event, which has confirmed its role as an important occasion to strengthen our relationship with the sector players and travel agents that continue to represent our main distribution channel. We also appreciated the opportunity provided by Sunday’s opening to the public, since this generated an excellent turnout. For us, 2018 is a year awash with new developments and our participation at Bit has enabled us to explain this in great detail to all those who came to visit us at our stand or press conference”, confirmed Leonardo Massa, MSC Crociere Country Manager.

An exceptionally successful event was also enjoyed by **Antonella Prete, Manager of the Tourism & Attractions sector for the Lombardy Region**, who added: *“The outcome of the 2018 edition of Bit is both positive and encouraging. Thanks to the trade fair, we were able to launch an important collaboration with the Region of Puglia, intended to promote differences. Our projects are becoming increasingly international even if, for the time being, it tends to be Italians who are most interested in our region”.*

“One of this year’s novelties has been the announcement that the 2018 Giro d’Italia will be starting in Israel; the dedicated corner was a huge success and actively involved the public, press and operators”, added Mariagrazia Falcone, Manager of the Press & PR Office of the Israeli National Office of Tourism.



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The international buyers were also satisfied and found Bit to represent an irreplaceable **observatory on trends**, in addition to a platform to build relationships with Italian and international operators in equal measure.

“At Bit, I witnessed a great deal of innovation, new trends and new ideas, and it also turned out to be an extremely useful occasion for networking and entering into contact with organisations that offer alternative high-quality solutions, such as villas and more ‘minor’ islands, which meet the needs of our more exacting customers”, commented the director of a leading **Mexico City**-based MICE operator.

“We met countless operators and I’m not just talking about Italians. We made numerous contacts, for example, with companies in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, as well as other countries in the Far East. Italy attracts predominantly affluent tourists from the Middle East interested in shopping and the Italian dolce vita”, added the General Manager of one of the main **Beirut**-based tour operators in the **Middle East**.

“I’m a Bit veteran and I think that this edition marks a significant change of pace”, concluded the Executive Director of a leading **Budapest**-based East European tour operator. *“In Eastern Europe, interest in Italy as a travel destination is growing and moving away from the large cities to more outlying areas, with great potential for the future”.*

The increased **quality of the content** comprising the extensive events schedule was also highly regarded. This year, **over 90 meetings** organised by **Bit and No Frills**, in addition to **in-depth insights in specialised areas**, identified with the collaboration of an **advisory board of experts** in their respective fields: **over 6,750 people** took part, alongside the many different events organised directly by industry operators.

Last but not least, the **social impact** of the event was once again significant: the **sentiment was predominately positive**, while #Bit2018 featured as a **trending topic on Twitter** throughout the three-day event, reaching **2,313,765 people**. Over **39,500,000 hashtag impressions** on social media (sources: Keyhole, Tweetreach, Talkwalker and TweetBinder).

Save the date for the next edition, which will take place at **fieramilanocity from 10 to 12 February 2019**.

For event updates: www.bit.fieramilano.it, @bitmilano, #Bit2017.

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