

Press Release

Deutsche Bahn and *visitBerlin* collaborate in Asia

Joint trade fair appearances planned / More visitors from China expected in the future

Berlin, 1 March 2013 High-impact joint tourism projects to generate more demand from the Asia-Pacific region: the international sales department of Deutsche Bahn (DB), the German rail company, and *visitBerlin* are now working together intensively to promote Berlin and Germany in the important tourist markets in Asia. Both partners are pooling their know-how to meet this goal: *visitBerlin* promotes Berlin as a tourist destination worldwide. Deutsche Bahn's international sales department wants to build the international reputation of the train as the best way to get around Germany. To this end, they have developed a product that can only be bought by travellers from outside Europe - the German Rail Pass, a special pass that offers flexible travel within a certain period.

The Asian markets are handled through their own web page (bahn.com/international), as well as by sales partners and DB agencies. The network of sales partners in Asia now encompasses 18 agencies. Not only does this open up access to important growth markets, but it also focuses on measures that promote sales and enables tourist products to be booked directly. Sales activities in Australia and the Gulf States are also set to be expanded.

Burkhard Kieker, managing director of *visitBerlin*: "The interest being shown in Berlin by travellers from the Asian region, the Gulf States, and Australia is strong and it's growing all the time. Together with Deutsche Bahn as a strong partner, we can now promote Berlin right there in the travellers' local markets."

"For us, it's only logical to work with the capital", says Marc Giesen, the head of international sales at DB Vertrieb GmbH. "Marketing abroad for us is always a matter of destination marketing, and of course Berlin plays a key role in this. So we are very much looking forward to future collaboration."

From trade fairs to social media - a comprehensive action plan agreed

After an initial successful collaborative project in 2012 during a road show through Taiwan, Vietnam, and Thailand, future collaboration will be based on a joint action plan: the measures include appearances at fairs for trade and for end customers, such as ITB Asia, events for the travel industry with product training, and press and social media activities. The first joint project will be a road show through Thailand at the end of February 2013.

Positive economic development in Asia and an increased interest in travelling

The background to this commitment is the increased economic power of many Asian countries, and the related increased interest in travelling among the population. In terms of international sales at DB, this can already be seen from the significant increase in revenues from Asia compared to the previous year. The development offers a great deal of future potential for both partners: *visitBerlin* expects to see increasing numbers of visitors from

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these countries over the coming years, especially from China, while DB expects to see continued strong growth in the current year. Statistics from 2012 show that about 335,000 visitors came to Berlin from the Asian region, including around 70,000 from China alone. This is partly due to ease of restrictions on being granted a visa. The luxury tourism sector is a key issue for market development: the People's Republic of China has the highest number of self-made billionaires in the world.

Since China is an important market, *visitBerlin* runs a special information portal for Chinese visitors at laibolin.com: Laibolin is the transcription of three Chinese symbols into the Latin alphabet. It means "visitBerlin" or "come to Berlin".

(3,753 Characters)

visitBerlin

"We know Berlin". This is the slogan that Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, operating under the trade name *visitBerlin*, has been using since 1993 to globally advertise for Berlin as a travel destination. *visitBerlin*'s Berlin Convention Office markets the German capital as a congress metropolis. As a tour operator, the company offers a wide range of travel packages and also issues the official tourist ticket, the Berlin WelcomeCard. *visitBerlin* operates three Berlin Tourist Infos. The Berlin Service Center (Tel. 030-25 00 25) provides information on the complete spectrum of tourist services in Berlin. visitBerlin.de