

## **DUBAI UNDERLINES COMMITMENT TO NIGERIA FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION AT AKWAABA 2019**

- **28 per cent year-on-year growth in overnight visitors' cements Nigeria's position as 17<sup>th</sup> largest source market**
- **Dubai Tourism continues to invest in innovative targeted campaigns and targeted activations to appeal to Nigerian tourists**

**Dubai, UAE, 6 October 2019:** Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) has reported a stellar incline in tourism volumes from Nigeria, Africa's largest source market for inbound traffic to Dubai, welcoming 113,000 overnight visitors in the first seven months of 2019. With impressive double digit growth, inbound traffic from Nigeria to the Dubai grew by 28 per cent year-on-year, cementing its position as the emirate's 17<sup>th</sup> largest source market. Dubai's diverse portfolio of attractions has experienced sustained interest amongst Nigerian travellers through ongoing strategic trade partnerships, bespoke integrated marketing campaigns, and always-on social media activations.



Building on ongoing efforts to provide a platform to broadcast Dubai's multifaceted comprehensive offerings to African tourists, Dubai Tourism, led by the CEO, Issam Kazim, showcased its support at the Akwaaba African Travel Market for the fourth consecutive year with a strong delegation of 21 Dubai-based partners, which included a team from Expo 2020 Dubai. West Africa's most prestigious travel trade event brought together industry stakeholders from across the public and private sector to provide a platform to share key market insights, further cementing the emirate's relationships with operators and offering the opportunity to promote Dubai's ever-evolving destination offering to a highly targeted audience. Winning the 'Best Stand' award for the fourth year in a row, the Dubai Tourism stand, which was the largest at the show, welcomed visitors and set an Akwaaba record with over 700 delegates attending its industry panel session. To the delight of the crowd, six of the nine Nollywood celebrities from the 'Dubai Faceoff' campaign made a surprise appearance on stage to voice their experience and admiration for the city. During the session, **Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM)** was joined by **His Excellency Fahad Obaid Mohamed Al Taffag, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Federal Republic of Nigeria** to provide market insights and an update on visitor figures. Other highlights included Dubai's diverse destination offerings and an overview of in-market campaigns.

The event also encompassed several strategic meetings with trade and media partners, including *TBI*, a key trade partner and one of the largest in Nigeria; *Megalectrics*, one of the largest owners of radio stations in Nigeria, as well as Dubai's other key trade partners *GHI Assets*, *NANTA*, *Seki*, and *Wakanow.com*.



As Dubai Tourism continues to represent itself as a model case study for tourism to the African travel market, it maintains its focus on increasing overall marketing activities including training workshops, trade activities (sales activations, fam trips) and campaigns as well as expanding upon the number of Dubai-based partners that participate in roadshows and events in the Nigerian market. Dubai-based partners present at Dubai Tourism's stand included American Hospital, Avani Deira Dubai Hotel, Copthorne Hotel, Dubai Health Authority, Emaar Hospitality Group LLC, Expo 2020, Golden Sands Hotel Apartments, Golden Treasure Tourism L.L.C, JA Resorts & Hotels L.L.C, Jumeirah Group, Mida Travels, Pacific Destination Tourism L.L.C, Rayna Tourism L.L.C, Red Apple Middle East Tourism LLC, Royal Arabian Destination Management DMCC, Taber Tourism, The Ritz Carlton Dubai, JBR, Travel Destination Online DMCC, W Hotel Palm Jumeirah, Wings Tours Gulf (L.L.C).

**Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM),** said: “The immense hospitality and genuine welcome we received during our time in Nigeria paved the way for a hugely successful Akwaaba Travel Market 2019. Our continued presence at industry events such as these is testament to our globally diversified market strategy to engage with key strategic partners, cementing our positive relationship with the African travel trade ecosystem.”

Further fostering growth across the African continent, Dubai Tourism continues to leverage its multi-layered marketing strategy, delivering specialised communications programming that recognises the power of social media in influencing travellers’ decision-making processes. This approach saw the launch of the ‘Dubai Face Off’ campaign, where Dubai Tourism successfully collaborated with trade partners WONTRA and Tour Brokers International to provide an exclusive travel package that let fans travel with ‘Nollywood’ celebrities. As part of the campaign, nine well-known Nigerian celebrities gave fans the rare opportunity to accompany them to Dubai, with the package offering flight tickets, entry visa, airport transfers, four nights stay at a 4 or 5 star accommodation, a desert safari experience, city tour, tickets to IMG World’s of Adventure, world class dining experiences, as well as designated time with the celebrities.

With strategic support from stakeholders across the city, the celebrity figures and their fans participated in a series of challenges that incorporated social media engagement, asking fans to vote on their favourite winners throughout their stay. The campaign surpassed projected results with over 200 fans travelling to Dubai for the exclusive campaign, while the celebrities received just under 31 million engagements on social media to boost the department’s ‘always-on’ social media strategy – which, to date, has exceeded the entire year’s forecasted engagement targets by almost 300 per cent.

**Issam Kazim, CEO, DCTCM,** commented on the campaign: “As Dubai continues to become a prime destination of choice for Nigerian travellers, we are committed to extending the potential of one of our fastest growing source markets by offering custom-made integrated marketing campaigns and trade activations that showcase the city’s world-class propositions and exceptional experiences on offer. The ‘Dubai Face Off’ campaign is a prime example of our endeavours to harness the power of user generated content and organic circulation in targeting segments eager for customised and diversified experiences.”

As the department continues to build on and cement its strong relationship with the Nigerian market, Dubai tourism has plans to launch a second targeted winter marketing celebrity campaign with out-of-



home advertising, radio, and social media activations to further engage Nigerian tourists and position Dubai as the destination of choice all year round.

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**About Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)**

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world's leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism's mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai's tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate's commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

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