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A Guide To The World of MICE and Tourism



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KOVALAM



TRIVANDRUM



KOZHIKODE



BANGALORE



COORG



KUMARAKOM

GATEWAY TO TIMELESS HOSPITALITY



KERALA

Kumarakom - Gokulam Grand Resort & Spa
Kovalam - Gokulam Grand Turtle on the Beach Resort
Trivandrum - Gokulam Grand Kozhikode-Gokulam Grand

KARNATAKA

Bangalore - Gokulam Grand Hotel & Spa
Coorg - Gokulam Grand Resort & Spa



KERALA

Cochin - Gokulam Park Hotel
Cochin - Gokulam Convention Centre
Munnar - Gokulam Park
Guruvayur - Gokulam Park
Kasaragod - Gokulam Park
Nalanda Resort

TAMILNADU

Chennai - Gokulam Park Sabari
Chennai - Gokulam Park, Ashok Nagar
Coimbatore - Gokulam Park

KARNATAKA

Bellary - Gokulam Park



KERALA

Guruvayur - Sree Gokulam, Vanamala
Guruvayur - Sree Gokulam, Sabari
Guruvayur - Sree Gokulam, Apartments
Thrissur - Sree Gokulam Residency, Amballur
Kollam - Sree Gokulam Residency, Oyoor
Manjeri - Sree Gokulam Residency
Thalassery - Sree Gokulam Fort

TAMILNADU

Gudalur - Sree Gokulam Highrange Inn

Dear Friends

Philippines are all set to host ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026 that marks the 45th anniversary of this event since its inauguration in Malaysia in 1981. The host country, Philippines of the ATF will welcome the global travel industry to Mactan, Cebu, for ATF 2026, happening from January 28-30 2026.

HICAP 2025 (Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific) in its 35th edition had hospitality experts focusing on hotel investment trends, new tech solutions, need of transparency and a major take on sustainability. The annual HICAP Sustainable Hotel Awards are designed to recognize hotels in the Asia Pacific region creating innovative new methods, strategies, and technologies to face today's sustainable development challenge, while providing tangible examples of sustainable best practices that can be replicated and adapted across the region.

Wego stands as one of the Middle East's most influential travel platforms, shaping how millions of travellers search, explore, and book their journeys. Since its launch in 2005, the driving force behind this evolution has been Ross Veitch, the CEO and co-founder, with a vision to make travel simpler, smarter, and more accessible for the everyday user.

In this exclusive interview, Ross reflects on how technology is changing travel, the trends driving today's bookings, the rise of AI, and what the next five years look like for the tourism landscape.

It was again a pleasure to experience COMO Metropolitan Singapore during my HICAP visit to Singapore. More so as this wonderful property was going to receive the HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award recognising hotels that embed sustainability into both operations and culture. This also provided me the opportunity to catch up again with lovely and delightful Ruby Garcia, GM, COMO Metropolitan Singapore. Basically from the Philippines, Ruby started her luxury hospitality career in Manila before working across Asia, the USA, and the Caribbean. In a tête-à-tête she opened up about the hotel as well as her career.

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For the first time, eVTOL aircraft — electric vertical take-off and landing models were on flying display. There were 4 eVTOL models that could redefine urban travel. The eVTOL flying display was led by Joby Aviation's revolutionary aircraft. The first eVTOL is scheduled to be launched for commercial passengers to travel within Dubai city by Dec 2026.

Al Maktoum International Airport will be the world's largest airport by scale, passenger volume – finally to serve upto 260 million travellers annually and being tech savvy embracing AI, biometrics as well as sustainability technologies.

The Dubai Airshow showcased a full-scale replica of Al Maktoum International Airport and many were in awe at the diverse range of residential zones, business sectors, cultural institutions, hotels, restaurants hospitals etc in southwest Dubai - Dubai World Central (DWC). Initially the airport expansion will serve 150 million passengers annually by 2032.

It was my meeting with the dynamic Alex Barnett, Acting Head of Commercial, Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide during an event in Singapore, that I got a chance to explore the group. Headquartered in Japan and with presence in more than 80 locations across the globe it's fast becoming an International brand and a force to reckon in the hospitality segment. Park Regis by Prince Singapore, was the first hotel from the group that we experienced.

HANNOVER MESSE, the world's leading trade fair for the manufacturing industry, attracting 4,000 + exhibiting companies is introducing a new exhibition format – the Defense Production Area – dedicated to state-of-the-art manufacturing technologies for the defense sector. This is in addition to the main exhibition areas are Automation & Digitalization, Energy & Industrial Infrastructure, and Research & Technology Transfer.



Chandragupta Amritkar

Editor

chandraguptaa@hotmail.com

editor@globalfeatures.info

Editor - Chandragupta Amritkar, Consulting Editor - Varsha, Special Correspondent - Pooja, Design - Manoj Durgam
Contact - Global Features, B-701, Customs Colony, Military Road, Marol Maroshi, Andheri(E), Mumbai-400 059, India.

Mobile - 91 9969935878/91 8850614577 e-mail: editor@globalfeatures.info/chandraguptaa@hotmail.com

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RHYTHM RESITEL

Get an Alternative Resid in India

For past several years NRIs, have been eyeing the Indian real estate. The economic and emotional factors are playing a vital role apart from the strong and raising rental yields. It's also your own sanctuary to visit when you and your extended family plans trips to India. It provides a long-lasting legacy for future generations, especially those who aim to provide their descendants with cultural identity and heritage. Another point NRIs are restricted from trading in currency and commodity derivatives. This also provides an opportunity for wealth creation and for investors who aim for diversification across geographies.

As per UNCTAD's Work Programme on International Investment Agreements, India has bilateral investment treaties with the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Singapore, Canada, Malaysia, and Mauritius. India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement can be vital. So is the India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), which includes provisions for investment protection.

WHY INVEST IN INDIA, YOUR COUNTRY

- Emotional yearning
- Cultural connection
- A home to return to during visits, for family gatherings or even for retirement.
- Stable political environment
- An independent judicial system
- Get an Alternative Residence
- Free from Global Market Volatility
- Get Regular Monthly Rents
- Potential for strong returns
- Growing tourism industry
- Favourable government policies
- Revenue-sharing

Own a piece of India and stay connected to your roots

- Depreciating rupee- giving increased purchasing power to NRIs

WHY IN HOTEL APARTMENTS

- Hotel apartments combine the features of a hotel and an apartment (with a kitchenette) offering a long-term stay option with more space than a standard hotel room.
- Rising demand for hotel accommodations
- While you reap the benefits we managing the property
- You get a residence along with hotel benefits
- Hotel apartments in the long run can substantially increase value of the property
- A growing trend of NRIs choosing to invest in India
- Huge opportunity for investors
- Potential for High Returns
- Diversification of Investment Portfolios
- Growing Demand for Luxury Real Estate
- Government Initiatives and Policies
- Luxury Residential Projects
- Commercial Properties



📍 Landmark Building, 3rd Floor Next to Mahindra Towers
HR Devrukhkar Marg Worli, Mumbai - 400018

✉ contact@rhythmrresitel.com

📞 +91 8767399399

ence



WHAT INVESTORS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND -

- One can invest in only residential and commercial, not agricultural land plantation property or farmhouses.
- Indian succession laws in case of multiple heirs
- Legal pathway of inheritance
- RBI guidelines
- FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) compliance.
- Taxation
- DTAA (Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement) between India and ones country of residence. India has a DTAA with over 80 countries.
- Modes of payment and certainly legal and proper documentation



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Philippines is all set to host ATF 2026

Come January and the global travel fraternity will convene at the
45th ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026 in Philippines



Philippines is all set to host ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026 that marks the 45th anniversary of this event since its inauguration in Malaysia in 1981. The host country, Philippines of the ATF will welcome the global travel industry to Mactan, Cebu, for ATF 2026, happening from January 28-30 2026.

Bringing together a dynamic mix of ASEAN Tourism Ministers, National Tourism Organisations (NTOs), senior officials, TRAVEX exhibitors, international buyers, and media, ATF 2026 continues its tradition of promoting ASEAN as one united tourism destination.

ATF TRAVEX 2026, the travel trade component of the forum, will once again highlight the diversity and strength of ASEAN's tourism offerings. Exhibitors representing ASEAN Member States will come together to engage with hosted buyers and international media representatives.

The three-day TRAVEX, taking place from 28 to 30 January 2026, will feature a packed programme of networking opportunities, and cultural experiences. Delegates can look forward to five pre-show tours and eight post-show tours, allowing them to explore the Philippines' wealth of destinations – from pristine beaches and island resorts to vibrant cultural and heritage sites.

A key highlight for exhibitors and buyers will be the 32 one-to-one business appointments, all of which can be fully scheduled prior to arrival in Mactan, optimising both efficiency and engagement at the event.

TTG Asia Media, which has a track record for delivering high quality business events for past TRAVEX where it was appointed, takes on the role of official TRAVEX Secretariat for ATF Philippines. To foster stronger ties and cultural

exchange, the host country has also prepared a line-up of social activities, including the Opening Ceremony, Welcome Reception and Dinner, and Closing Ceremony, ensuring delegates experience the warmth and hospitality that define the Filipino spirit.

Beyond business, ATF 2026 will also feature the ASEAN Tourism Conference, a platform for regional and international experts to discuss key tourism trends, challenges, and opportunities. The conference aims to strengthen cooperation among ASEAN's public and private sector stakeholders while inspiring innovative and sustainable approaches to tourism development.

"ATF TRAVEX continues to be a vital platform for building connections and driving growth across ASEAN," said Mr Darren Ng, Managing Director, TTG Asia Media. "We are proud to serve as the official TRAVEX Secretariat for ATF Philippines and look forward to an inspiring and productive edition that showcases the spirit of ASEAN tourism."



As preparations are well underway, ATF 2026 in Mactan, Cebu, promises to be a celebration of connection, collaboration, and creativity, where ASEAN's boundless horizons converge for a brighter tourism future.

#ATFPhilippines2026 #VisitSEAsia

About ATF

ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) is a cooperative regional effort to promote the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region as one tourist destination. ATF TRAVEX is the longest-running annual ASEAN leisure travel trade event, showcasing the largest contingent of ASEAN sellers. This annual event involves all the tourism industry sectors of the 11 ASEAN Member Nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam. Each year, the hosting of ATF is rotated among the member countries.

"Many of our awards celebrated sustainability and guest experiences"



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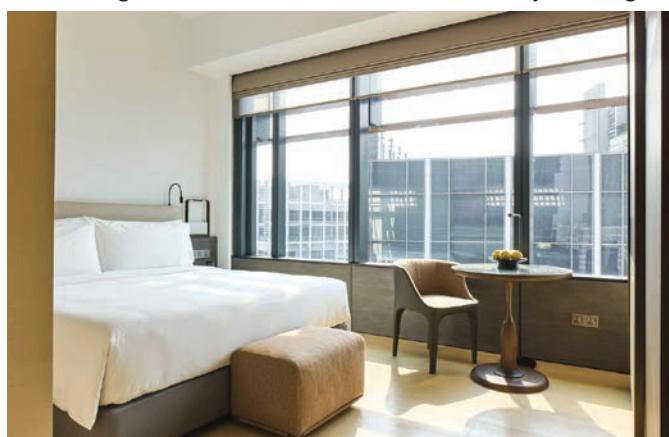


How was year 2025 for COMO Metropolitan Singapore?

Though 2025 was challenging it was defining year for us at COMO Metropolitan Singapore. We strengthened our sense of purpose as a team through consistently positive guest feedback praising the kindness of the team and the high standard of service delivered. Our focus in the New Year is to reaffirm what COMO stands for: refined experiences delivered with sincerity and care.

The year saw the hotel win numerous awards. Can you enlighten our readers on these awards and how has the feeling been among your staff?

The recognition we received in 2025 was incredibly meaningful,



particularly because many of our awards celebrated sustainability and guest experiences. For our team, these accolades were affirming. Hospitality is a people-driven industry, and seeing their daily efforts acknowledged on a larger platform instilled immense pride and motivation. It reinforced that excellence is not a one-time achievement, but a collective, ongoing commitment.

Some of our awards in 2025 were - Best New Hotel from Tatler Best-in-Class in Singapore, one of the Best Hotel Pools from Travel + Leisure Luxury Awards Asia Pacific 2025, Best Business & Leisure Hotel at Exquisite Awards 2025, Outstanding Product Engagement Award by Expedia Group, and of course, we were awarded the EarthCheck Silver Certification.

You won the prestigious HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award. Can you explain the category and what helped you achieve it?

The HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award recognises hotels that embed sustainability into both operations and culture. We won in the category of Climate Action. For us, sustainability is not a standalone initiative — it is woven into how we design spaces, source ingredients, support wellness, and engage our team. Awareness is embedded into operations: staff-run "No Single-Use Plastic Days," refillable amenities, biodegradable dining ware, and circular sourcing partnerships are some examples.

From responsible procurement and waste reduction to guest education and staff engagement, our approach has always been holistic. This award was a testament to consistency, long-term thinking, and shared accountability across the hotel.



Singapore has plenty of hotels and more in the pipeline. How do you look at competition and how does COMO make a difference?

Competition keeps the industry vibrant and progressive. At COMO Metropolitan Singapore, we do not aim to be everything to everyone. Our difference lies in intentionality — spaces that feel calm rather than crowded, service that is intuitive rather than transactional, and experiences rooted in wellness, design, and dining. We believe guests feel the difference when luxury is understated, personal, and genuinely meaningful.

What about demographics of guests?

Our guests are discerning global travellers — business leaders, creatives, wellness enthusiasts, and culturally curious individuals — who value quality over excess. While many visit for business, they choose COMO Metropolitan Singapore for its residential-style rooms, wellness focus, and unique dining experiences. Increasingly, we are also welcoming younger travellers who appreciate conscious luxury and purposeful travel.

What are your future plans for COMO?

Looking ahead, our focus is on deepening experiences rather than expanding for the sake of scale. This includes evolving our room offerings, launching iconic experiences, and continuing to integrate sustainability in ways that are both impactful and authentic. Above all, we want to remain relevant, resilient, and true to the COMO philosophy.

On a personal front, how did you get attracted to pursue a career in hotels?



I was attending college in the Philippines when personal circumstances led me to seek a job close to home that was manageable alongside my studies. Almost by accident, a casual search in my neighborhood led to a call from the Front Office at Mandarin Oriental Manila.

After my first year in hotels, I realised how much I truly enjoyed the work, and I was promoted to the Club Floor soon after. Three years later, I was offered the

opportunity to be part of the opening team at Anantara Maldives—the group's first property outside Thailand—which marked the true beginning of my career in hospitality.

What first inspired me—and continues to inspire me today—is the opportunity to create moments of comfort, connection, and joy for people from all walks of life.

How has the journey been?

The journey has been both enriching and humbling. Hospitality has taught me resilience, adaptability, and empathy, while giving me the opportunity to live in beautiful places, meet wonderful people, and experience diverse cultures. Every role, destination, and team has shaped my perspective and leadership style, making it a continuous journey of learning about people, cultures, and myself.

So many different brands as well as countries. Impressive. How has it been working in different cultures?

Working across cultures has been an important aspect of my career. It has helped me adapt my leadership style by being exposed to different cultures. While operational standards are generally consistent, effective leadership requires cultural awareness, and these experiences have made me more adaptable and effective in managing diverse teams.



What difficulties did you face as a hospitality industry as it is perceived as a man's world?

Like many women in leadership, I encountered moments where I had to work harder to be heard or taken seriously. However, I focused on competence, consistency, and integrity. I find that women tend to place a greater emphasis on empowering people to develop their working identity. I am encouraged to see the industry evolving, with more women stepping into leadership roles and supporting one another.

What are your goals as you move ahead?

My goal is to continue leading with purpose at COMO Metropolitan Singapore, creating a workplace culture that values both people and purpose. I want to continue championing genuine connection, elevated simplicity, and quiet confidence — values that shape not just our guest experience, but how we grow and collaborate as a team.

Hospitality trends at HICAP 2025



HICAP 2025 (Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific) in its 35th edition had hospitality experts focusing on hotel investment trends, new tech solutions, need of transparency and a major take on sustainability feels

Chandragupta Amritkar

Hospitality growth in Asia Pacific

- In Singapore the luxury segment is doing great with hotel revenues on the rise and Marina Bay hotels surpassing \$1,100 per night (eg during Formula One).
- India was described as a market in motion, especially a growing domestic travel base and lots of opportunities in tier 2 and tier 3 towns.
- China also is benefiting from growing domestic travel while a gradual recovery of MICE and international visitors is foreseen.
- Vietnam was highlighted as the rising star with investors praising the country's growing infrastructure and cost efficiency and Vietnam's hotel supply will continue expanding rapidly through 2027.
- In Thailand resort destinations such as Phuket and Koh Samui are thriving.
- Japan continues to draw private equity firms and Japanese hotels continue offering attractive margins with demand in iconic destinations.
- While Maldives luxury resorts dominated investor interest some panelists felt that a new era of affordable luxury in Maldives is a future feasibility.



- With strong domestic demand and a stable economy, Australia continues to draw global brands, especially Brisbane where 2032 Olympics is scheduled.
- Malaysia and the Philippines were seen as having great potential.

Some interesting views and pointers from speakers

- One of the major attractions was the trio of past HICAP Lifetime Achievement Awardees who reflected on the progress over 35 years and ahead – William E. Heinecke, founder & chairman, Minor International; Miguel Ko, chairman, CapitaLand Investment; and Anil Thadani, chairman, Symphony Asia Holdings who discussed at a panel moderated by Jeff Higley, president, BHN Group.
- “Experiential travel is not new. For some time, brand proliferation and standardisation caused the industry to move towards selling rooms rather than memories. This ‘new’ trend is really just a return to fundamental hospitality,” said Anil Thadani who co-founded Aman Resorts in 1987.
- Miguel Ko said “In this day and age, hotels can succeed by catering to one persona (at a time) as a small boutique hotel with 200 keys. There is no one size fits all anymore. The same traveller can have different personas and priorities when taking different trips – whether with friends, family, or for





business – and seek out products with a specific offering each time,” Hotels that want it all may soon fall out of favour while boutique hotels will thrive.

- The top hospitality trend to watch is branded residences “There’s a huge market for branded residences and they are spreading like wildfire,” said Thadani. Asia Pacific 2025 report projected a 180% growth in the number of branded residences in Asia-Pacific by 2031.
- Disruption by the likes of Airbnb and OTAs is not over. If these disruptions continue, even room service may become a thing of the past.
- Technology is there to help and improve, but especially in the hospitality line, the ability to touch and live in reality – that’s something very hard to get technology to replace.”
- Pan Pacific Hotels Group CEO Peng Sum Choe feels hotels are the flavor of the year and with a very good location in a city center will be expensive, but it’s a long-term asset.
- H World International has 12,000 hotels and about 1.1 million rooms, with most of them franchised. Jihong He, Chief Strategy Officer, H World Group & Executive Chair, H World International feels that it’s an essential paradigm for the company to have its franchises make a good return so it can keep up with massive growth. The franchise model must include the ability to renovate hotels at a lower cost.
- Alex Murray, vice president and regional head of Southeast Asia for Hilton said that for Hilton, it’s about working with their owners to ensure they have the right partner and deploy the right brands in the right applications at the right time.

HICAP 2025 Sustainable Hotel Award Winners Announced

The annual HICAP Sustainable Hotel Awards are designed to recognize hotels in the Asia Pacific region creating innovative new



methods, strategies, and technologies to face today’s sustainable development challenge, while providing tangible examples of sustainable best practices that can be replicated and adapted across the region.

- In the category of Biodiversity Action & Education, the winner was Khaolak Merlin Resort in Phang Nga, Thailand.
- In the category of Climate Action the winner was COMO Metropolitan Singapore in Singapore. The hotel is redefining urban sustainability through measurable climate action.
- In the category of Positive Community Impact, the winner was Six Senses Con Dao in Vietnam.
- In the category of Sustainable Design, the winner was Uga Chena Huts in Sri Lanka.

The HICAP Deal of the Year Award

- Patina Osaka in Osaka, Japan, was named Reggie Shiu Development of the Year Award. Finalists in the category also included Mandai Rainforest Resort by Banyan Tree in Singapore and Raffles Sentosa Singapore.



- 21 Carpenter Singapore and The Standard, Huruvalhi Maldives won Single Asset Transaction of the Year Award. Duxton Reserve Singapore in Singapore was also a finalist in the category.
- Standard International was named Merger & Acquisition of the Year. G6 Hospitality was also named a finalist in the category.
- Karan Mahesh, STR CoStar, was named Rising Star Award Asia Pacific award winner.

Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide

The acquisition of Ace Hotels by Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide was a hot topic. Yoshiki Kaneda, President & CEO of Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide, focused not only on the company’s \$90 million acquisition of Ace Hotels but also expansion plans outside Japan. With hotels in New York City, Brooklyn, Seattle, and Palm Springs, Ace will give a substantial reach to SPW in the U.S.

Speaking to Global Features Kaneda said, “With Ace (hotels) we will operate as a U.S.-based subsidiary of SPW while maintaining its strengths and original identity. Its our first lifestyle brand. Going ahead our strategic shift will be towards luxury and lifestyle outside of Japan.”

Dubai Airshow 2025: The future is here



The 19th edition of Dubai Airshow - a meeting point for Aerospace, Space And Defense Ecosystem - hosted over 1,500 exhibitors (21 country pavilions), 148,000+ attendees, 200+ aircrafts on display (ranging from commercial jets and private planes to advanced military assets, UAVs, eVTOL aircraft) including start-ups and 40 Indian exhibitors, reports our Editor, **Chandragupta Amritkar**

The largest ever edition of Dubai Airshow under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, VP and PM of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai opened with 8,000 square meters of new exhibition space to accommodate demand, industry leaders are convening in Dubai to define the future of aerospace, space, and defence. From major fleet expansions to cutting-edge technology showcases, the event delivered defining moments that propel aerospace forward.

Tim Hawes, MD, Informa Markets said: "Dubai Airshow 2025 opened with an electrifying start, showcasing the remarkable growth and cutting-edge innovation driving the aerospace industry forward. This year's edition is our most ambitious yet, offering a global platform for next-generation technologies that enhance efficiency, sustainability, and advanced mobility. Day one delivered major orders, and we expect even more transformative announcements in the coming days as industry leaders gather in Dubai to shape the future of aerospace."

EDGE Group utilised the platform as an opportunity to launch 42 new products and solutions, delivering one of the most ambitious launches in its history. EDGE Group has also signed numerous agreements, including MoU's with Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) to explore future collaboration across aerospace, defence, and related high-technology sectors, as well as with L3Harris Technologies to develop innovative solutions that will contribute to the UAE's growing defense capabilities.

Tawazun Council, representing the UAE Ministry of Defence and Abu Dhabi Police, announced 20 major contracts totaling AED 18.016 billion during the first three days of Dubai Airshow 2025. These agreements, signed with leading local and international industry players, underscore the UAE's commitment to strengthening its defence ecosystem and fostering private-sector participation in developing innovative, sustainable solutions for the future of national security.

Airbus had a great outing with adding new customers, partnerships and collaborations. Gabriel Semelas, President, Airbus Africa and Middle East, comments: "Dubai Airshow

is always an exceptional platform for industry innovation and collaboration, uniting the pioneers shaping the future of aerospace. This year continued that momentum, and we're proud to have signed landmark agreements – such as welcoming flydubai and Buraq Air as new customers and seeing Etihad Airways become the latest A330neo customer, while expanding its A350 fleet. We also secured new partnerships and extended our long-standing collaborations with Strata and Mubadala, reflecting the UAE's growing role in the global aerospace supply chain. As the Middle East continues to witness major growth and investment, the Airshow remains the ideal place to see this transformation in action."

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, chairman and CEO of Emirates Airline said that Emirates airline would be more than happy to add more seats to Indian destinations.

The General Directorate of Identity and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) – Dubai issued a special stamp on the passports of participating delegates and visitors from abroad to Dubai Airshow 2025.

This year night sessions were introduced featuring a Drone Show and Airshow After Dark. The other point of interest was the Space Pavilion along with a two-day Space Conference.





Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Pavilion

AAM took centre stage as visitors chance to explore electric aircraft and the future of urban transportation. For the first time, eVTOL aircraft — electric vertical take-off and landing models were on flying display. There were 4 eVTOL models

that could redefine urban travel. The eVTOL flying display was led by Joby Aviation's revolutionary aircraft. The first eVTOL is scheduled to be launched for commercial passengers to travel within Dubai city by Dec 2026.

And probably it's the next revolution in travel and hospitality industry as well as for the business community to solve travel woes. For hospitals it can be a boon and a big relief for patients and their relatives.

Starlink Wi-Fi on airlines is expanding its network

During Dubai Airshow Emirates airline created waves when it announced that it will deploy Starlink WiFi across its entire in-service fleet, comprising 232 aircraft in the next two years, beginning with Boeing 777 aircraft, at the conclusion of the show. The Starlink WiFi service will be free for all Emirates customers, across all cabins on Starlink-equipped aircraft, with one-click access that requires no payment or special Skywards membership.

The Boeing 777-300ER was on display at the Dubai Airshow so that visitors could experience high-speed connectivity first-hand while on the ground.

Starlink is Elon Musk's satellite internet service, operated by his company SpaceX providing a simple 'one-click-access' to passengers.

Starlink connectivity will enable Emirates customers to stream content, game, make calls, work, and browse social media throughout their journey on both seatback screens and personal devices simultaneously. This seamless integration delivers connected experiences at scale across all cabin classes. The airline will fit-out approximately 14 aircraft per month with Starlink, with installation on the Airbus A380 fleet commencing in February 2026.



Sir Tim Clark, President Emirates Airline said: "Partnering with Starlink is another defining moment in our continuous commitment to ensuring our customers 'fly better'. We're introducing the world's fastest Wi-Fi, elevating what passengers can expect from inflight connectivity, like seamless productivity, real-time communication with loved ones, and uninterrupted connection to their digital lives."

Chad Gibbs, VP of Starlink Business Operations, SpaceX, said: "With Starlink onboard your Emirates flight, you'll be able to stream, game, and have seamless video calls, just as you can do on the ground. We're excited to transform Emirates' travel experience and support the rapid installation of Starlink while maintaining focus on delivering overall quality of service."

It's also been shown that Wi-Fi speeds from in-flight Starlink internet are actually faster than you might get at home. If that seems counterintuitive, consider that Starlink's fleet of 7,000 low-Earth orbit satellites are a lot closer to your in-flight connection than the 22,000 miles that separate your connection at home with geostationary satellites.

Delivering download speeds of 100–250 Mbps (with peaks up to 450 Mbps), upload speeds of up to 10-25 mbps, and latency under 99 ms, Starlink enables all passengers to enjoy activities such as

Several orders and deals were announced during the show

- A multi-billion-dollar commercial order from Emirates - an order for 65 Boeing 777-9 aircraft, powered by GE 9X engines, worth US\$ 38 billion.
- Ethiopian Airlines committed to purchase 11 additional 737 MAX jets enabling the airline to grow its regional and international networks and expand its Addis Ababa hub.
- Boeing and TAAG Angola Airlines announced an agreement to extend training programs for pilots.
- Airbus Helicopters welcomed Bristow Group, a global leader in innovative and sustainable vertical flight solutions, as the newest operator of the Airbus H160. It will introduce up to five H160s into its fleet for offshore energy missions across Africa.
- The UAE's Tawazun council also announced eight deals totalling AED 3.766 billion, including contracts signed with Global Air Navigation Services (GANS), GAL, International Golden Group (IGG), Maximus Air, and Abu Dhabi Shipping Agency LLC (ADSA).
- flydubai placed a new order for 60 GEnx-1B engines from GE Aerospace to support its upcoming fleet of 30 Boeing 787-9 aircraft.
- flydubai and Airbus signed a landmark agreement to purchase 150 A321neo aircraft, with options for 100 more, marking the first time the airline has placed an order with Airbus. The agreement is valued at US\$ 24 billion, and deliveries will start in 2031.
- Etihad Airways placed an order for six A330-900s – making it the latest A330neo customer – along with seven additional A350-1000 aircraft and three A350F.
- Gulf Air announced an order for 15 Boeing 787 Dreamliners
- AerCap announced that South African low-cost carrier FlySafair signed a lease agreement for five Boeing 737 family jets, three 737 MAX and two 737NG.

video streaming, video calls, VPN access, and online gaming—simultaneously.

Starlink's optical space lasers transmit data throughout the Starlink constellation, providing continuous service in areas far from SpaceX ground stations - providing coverage for your flights over the open ocean and in polar regions.

Starlink is spreading its wings. A growing number of airlines are using Starlink Wi-Fi, including Hawaiian Airlines, United Airlines, WestJet, and Qatar Airways. Other airlines that are rolling out or have announced plans to use Starlink include Emirates, British Airways, Air France, SAS, Virgin Atlantic, China Airlines etc.

Al Maktoum International Airport to be the world's largest airport

Al Maktoum International Airport will be the world's largest airport by scale, passenger volume – finally to serve upto 260 million travellers annually and being tech savvy embracing AI, biometrics as well as sustainability technologies.

The Dubai Airshow showcased a full-scale replica of Al Maktoum International Airport and many were in awe at the diverse range of residential zones, business sectors, cultural institutions, hotels, restaurants hospitals etc in southwest Dubai - Dubai World Central (DWC).

The airport expansion will serve 150 million passengers annually by 2032, with a final capacity of 260 million travellers. Plans are afoot to use advanced engineering, biometric processing, AI-based security screening, have sustainable design, integrate transport systems including Etihad Rail.

DWC is expected to be five times the size of the existing Dubai International Airport (DXB) with five parallel runways and an astonishing 400 aircraft gates. But the best part is that Etihad Rail (UAE's national railway project) will have a scheduled stop at Al Maktoum International Airport. Etihad Rail will connect key cities - Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, Al

Ain, Ruwais, Al Mirfa, Al Dhaid, Ghuweifat (Saudi Arabia), and Sohar (Oman).

A major international boost to Dubai's aviation future was announced today at Dubai Airshow 2025 as the UK Export Finance (UKEF) issued a US\$3.5 billion Expression of Interest letter to support participation of UK's businesses in the US\$35 billion expansion of Al Maktoum International.

Emirates airline will also invest \$10-12 billion (Dh36.7-Dh44 billion) in Al Maktoum International Airport. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, chairman and CEO of Emirates Airline is confident that it will be smooth sailing in terms of funding the transition from Dubai International Airport to Al Maktoum International Airport by 2032.

Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports said, "The Al Maktoum International Airport expansion project represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rethink how an airport should work and how the journey of the future should feel."

The expansion of Al Maktoum International Airport will deliver an airport designed for the next 50 years of aviation growth.



UK Minister for Trade Sir Chris Bryant, Khalifa Al Zaffin, executive chairman of the Dubai Aviation City Corporation and Dubai Airports CEO Paul Griffiths

Dubai Airshow returns from 15-19 November 2027 at DWC, Dubai

Christmas cake mixing ceremony @ Gokulam Park Sabari OMR

The cake mixing ceremony in hotels is a festive, pre-Christmas ritual. This traditional ritual is fast turning into a joyous event involving fun, social, and media-friendly gathering for hotels to create festive cheer and community bonding. It was no different at Gokulam Park Sabari OMR that hosted the traditional Christmas cake mixing ceremony where chefs, invited guests and media were made to don Santa hats and mix ingredients for Christmas cakes.

Hosted by the groups MD, Baiju Gopalan, and co-ordinated by the Cluster GM, Anand Ramachandran and Corporate Chef Arul Selvan the group invited dignitaries from the city, police force, hospitality professionals, corporate heads, principals and heads of colleges and universities, editors and TV channel heads.

The hotel had a wonderful Christmas décor and all of us relished cake mixing ceremony with the Santa uniform and caps. Kids enjoyed the event and a small award ceremony at the hands of Baiju Gopalan was



also held. Post that all the guests were invited to a special high tea prepared by the corporate chef that included snacks, desserts, wines, and tea & coffee.

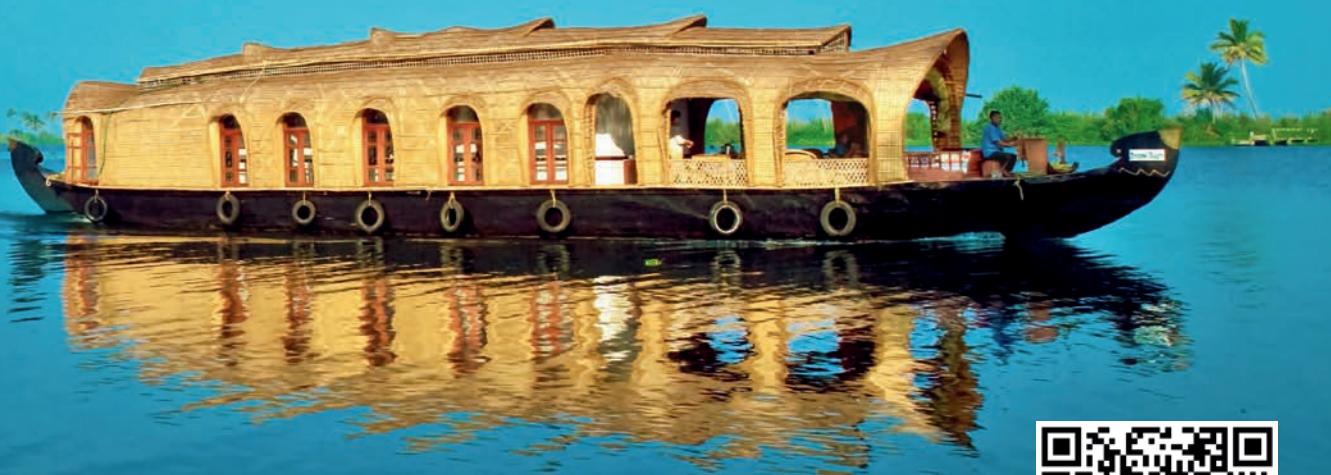
Gokulam group that runs 25 hotels in southern India holds this festive ritual annually across its select properties.



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ITB Berlin 2026: 60 years of connection



In 1966, the first ITB Berlin took place with just nine exhibitors, marking the beginning of what would become the world's leading travel trade show.

As the count down for the 60th anniversary of ITB, Berlin, begins, the world's leading travel trade show, is looking back at numerous posts highlighting key milestones that have shaped the industry over the past six decades. Even after 6 decades, ITB Berlin is recognized as the world's leading travel trade show, bringing together exhibitors from the airline, hotel, and technology providers, to network and exchange ideas. ITB Berlin is a major platform for innovation and market trends in the travel industry, and its 60th anniversary is a testament to how tourism builds bridges.

Dive into the history and future of the world's leading travel trade show, and explore the milestones that have shaped global tourism – from the introduction of the first jumbo jet to the launch of Instagram.

Join the conversation on social media using #ITB60.



On 9 February 1969, Boeing took flight with the first jumbo jet, opening the skies to longer journeys, more destinations, and cheaper fares for travelers everywhere. A game changer that made exploring the world easier than ever.



The 1970s marked a milestone in travel history: Package holidays became wildly popular, revolutionizing the way people explored the world. Travelers booked through agents, pre-paying one inclusive price, then spent more enjoying their destination.



In 1973, Maureen and Tony Wheeler took their travel knowledge and wrote it into a guide, thus establishing Lonely Planet. Their first guide was called Across Asia on the Cheap, and have since developed more than 800 guides for a diverse range of countries.



In 1979, Texas Airline became the first to introduce a frequent flyer program. The program encouraged both passengers as well as crew members to fly to different destinations. From free flights to frequent flyer points, the program made travel more rewarding.



In 1999, the European Union established the Euro as the common currency. This change united Europe with a single currency and made travel across borders smoother than ever.



In 2007, Airbnb was born when two roommates in San Francisco, struggling to pay rent, offered air mattresses and breakfast to travelers. Fast forward to today, and millions of people have found unique stays and unforgettable experiences all over the world.



Travel, innovation, and unforgettable moments

in begins in 2026, the organisers plan to take you on a journey through six decades of travel history with shaped the travel industry.

world's largest travel trade show, getting the global tourism industry professionals, including tour operators, and discuss business at a single venue on a single platform. Established in 1966 it continues to serve as the travel and tourism industry. The event even today is driven by curiosity, passion, and the belief that

travel trade show - on a very special journey through time. On this double spread we highlight the events of the Euro to the birth of ITB Berlin, and the rise of platforms like Airbnb.

the 60th edition from 3 - 5 March 2026 in Berlin



International frequent flyer programs began with the first airline frequent flyer programs, which brand loyalty and a larger desire to travel to different destinations. As frequent flyers began to upgrade, these programs made air travel more rewarding.



In 1983, the first commercially available mobile phone, the Motorola DynaTAC 8000X, hit the scene and forever changed how we stay connected, especially when traveling - creating meaningful and lasting connections with each other.



The 1990s marked a turning point in travel history: Biometric security and paperless flying began to take off, making airports more efficient and journeys smoother than ever before. No more endless lines or printed paperwork – just a simpler, faster way to fly.



In 1994, the world witnessed the opening of the Channel Tunnel, also known as the Eurotunnel, a ground breaking engineering marvel that connected UK to mainland Europe. For the first time in history, travellers could journey from England to France beneath the English Channel, traversing 50.5 km of tunnel.

In 2010, Instagram launched and forever changed how we share and experience travel. From stunning sunsets to hidden gems, Instagram turned the world into a visual playground, inspiring wanderlust one post at a time. Over the years social media has grown changing the way we travel.



In 2015, Japan introduced the world to the first hotel staffed primarily by robots. The Henn-na Hotel greeted guests with multilingual robots, including a bow-tie-wearing velociraptor and humanoid androids. Automated trolleys transported luggage, facial-recognition technology replaced room keys, and in-room robots managed lighting and provided information.



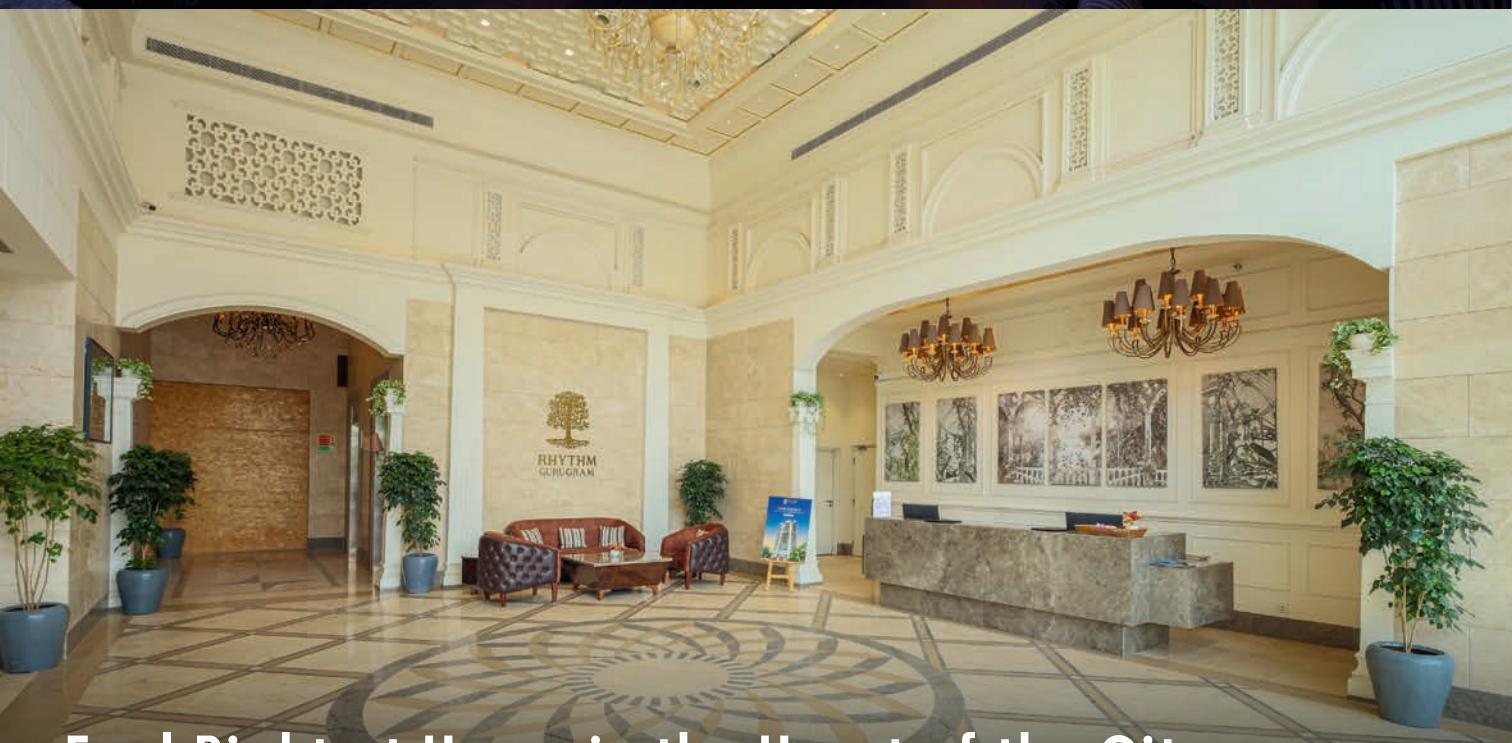
Throwback to 2016, travelers! That's when the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set a new global vision for climate action, equality, and community empowerment.



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Park Regis by Prince Singapore: A modern sustainable hotel

It was a great experiencing Park Regis by Prince Singapore - the recently renovated ecofriendly and tech savvy hotel in Singapore feels **Chandragupta Amritkar**



It was my meeting with the dynamic Alex Barnett, Acting Head of Commercial, Seibu Prince Hotels Worldwide during an event in Singapore, that I got a chance to explore the group. Headquartered in Japan and with presence in more than 80 locations across the globe it's fast becoming an International brand and a force to reckon in the hospitality segment.



Alex Barnett

Alex was kind enough to invite me to cover his hotels globally whenever I am in that part of the world where they have a presence. So when my invite came to cover Singapore FinTech Festival (SFF), I decided to use this opportunity to cover Park Regis by Prince Singapore. Coordinating with Alex, who in turn connected me to the hotels GM, Anthony Phillips.

Arriving early morning into Singapore, the airport pick up was all ready for my arrival. A pleasant 30 minute's drive, conversing with the driver I got some local insights, I reached the hotel. The check-in was quick with a very attentive reception.

Park Regis by Prince Singapore is a stylish 4-star Singapore hotel with lots of greenery. Located in the bustling Clarke Quay district, close to two MRT (metro) stations, I found the location of the hotel very convenient. A short walk over the pedestrian bridge is Clark Quay with plenty of bars and restaurants including Indian restaurants.

The hotel has 203 guest rooms. The GM, Anthony Phillips and Shaun Chan, Director of Marketing took me on a tour of the property. "We have recently refurbished all our rooms. Spread across seven floors we have various categories of rooms with a few providing direct access to our resort-style pool with waterfall. You may have also noticed that our rooms have plenty of natural light," said Anthony Phillips. With 25 years of experience in hotels and resorts globally, Anthony's breadth of operational expertise right from food & beverage, hotel operations, nurturing talent and

motivational management is clearly visible as you interact with him. He recently moved into a Global Operations role overseeing hotels in Australia, Singapore, Indonesia and India.

The GM was kind enough to provide me with a Studio Suite King that had lots of natural daylight and a view of the cascading water and the pool. The in-room amenities includes a personalised yoga mat (yoga sessions are offered on Tuesday and Thursday), a Nespresso coffee machine, and an assortment of tea selections for in-room refreshment. As an eco-conscious hotel, the Studio Suite King is equipped with hot and cold filtered drinking water dispensers (this truly saves wastage of water and use of plastic bottles), which I feel hotels in India should start implementing.

What caught my attention was the open shelving in my room. Having been to 800+ hotels I have noticed the trend of open shelving in hotel rooms is growing providing modern aesthetics thus creating a more airy, boutique feel while also focusing on space optimization. For some lack of storage (no drawers) space can be an issue. "Smart storage solutions - an open wardrobe, shelves, hanging spaces will be the future. Also if you notice there are two closed shelves at the top. These have all the wiring systems, giving it an aesthetic look," said Anthony. The hotel truly uses cutting-edge technology including the wooden keys.

The breakfast has a great selection of fresh food and great bakery items. They have a fully-equipped gym, exclusive meeting rooms - an exclusive pillar less meeting room accommodating up to 50 guests. The pool looks tempting especially in warm weather - an ideal place to chill or have a swim.



TOURISE 2025: Emerging Trends Shaping the Future of Travel



The inaugural TOURISE Summit in Riyadh was a landmark event where more than 120+ global leaders, innovators, changemakers, media voices, and industry powerhouses from every tourism industry gathered to discuss the ever-evolving sector. His Excellency Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Minister of Tourism of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of TOURISE, said, "This summit is a launchpad for groundbreaking ideas and bold solutions that will drive our industry forward."

The conversations I had and the sessions I attended made one thing clear - travel is no longer just about flights and hotels. It's about meaning, connection, personalization, heritage, smarter systems, and experiences that genuinely matter.

AI is accelerating faster than the industry can keep up, new traveler behaviors are reshaping demand, and destinations are rewriting their identities to stay relevant. These emerging trends are defining the next decade of exploration.

Cultural, Immersive & Meaningful Travel

The panels explored how AI-powered companions, interactive storytelling, and immersive virtual layers can help travelers engage more deeply with culture rather than just observe it. They want to feel the heartbeat of a place, meet its people, understand its roots, and slow down enough to truly absorb it.

Dr. Miguel Sanz, General Director of the Spanish Tourism Institute and President of ETC, emphasized that communities must be at the center. After building strong tourism economies, destinations now need to ensure locals help shape and benefit from the visitor experience. H.E. William Rodríguez López, Minister of Tourism of Costa Rica, shared how Costa Rica's "Pura Vida" philosophy naturally embodies slow, immersive travel by connecting visitors to local people, biodiversity, and daily life.

Sports, Concerts & Mega Events

Sports tourism has always been influential, but now it is emerging as one of the most powerful engines of global tourism. From the FIFA World Cup to Formula 1, and even pop culture like Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, mega events are reshaping travel patterns, boosting international arrivals, community pride, and reframing global perceptions of host destinations.

H.R.H. Abdulaziz bin Turki bin Faisal Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Sports, spoke about how sports have become a unifying force in Saudi Arabia. Cristiano Ronaldo, now a proud Saudi resident, is bringing global attention, fandom, and economic uplift.



Cruise Travel: Sailing Into Tomorrow

Another major theme that stood out for me at TOURISE 2025 was the remarkable rise of cruise travel. What used to be perceived as a niche or seasonal vacation choice has now evolved into one of the fastest-expanding segments in global tourism.

Chris Theophilides, CEO of Celestyal Cruises, captured the heart of the experience: "Cruising isn't transportation- it's a lifestyle." Lars Clasen, CEO of Cruise Saudi, shared how Saudi Arabia is emerging as an exciting new cruise destination, backed by heritage investment, innovation, and hospitality-driven development.

Wellness Tourism: The Rise of Longer, Healthier Travel

Wellness tourism is shifting in a big way, and this movement is no longer about spas and surface-level relaxation. The sessions showed that this is a far deeper, more scientific, and more emotionally anchored trend. It is driven by burnout, digital overload, chronic stress, and a growing global awareness of longevity and mental well-being.

Ingo Schweder, CEO of GOCO Hospitality, shared his insights on how modern travelers are looking for more than massages and spas - they want health programs, personalized nutrition, recovery therapies, and emotional wellbeing journeys that are rooted in authenticity.

A moment of stillness, a genuine human connection, the scent of a natural space, or the taste of clean, nourishing food can be the greatest indulgence. Wellness, ultimately, is becoming both a lifestyle and a new definition of luxury in travel.

Intelligent, Seamless Journeys

The future of travel is moving toward a frictionless ecosystem, and seamless service is now the minimum expectation. But even as technology takes over repetitive tasks, the real differentiation will come from human warmth, thoughtful hospitality, and experiences that feel genuinely cared for.

Travel infrastructure is becoming more intelligent. Zubin Karkaria, CEO of VFS Global, showcased how AI is revolutionizing visa processing through advanced documentation verification, fraud detection, and the VFID "visa at your doorstep" service, allowing applicants to complete biometrics from home.

The map for travel was drawn at TOURISE, and it's paved with intention, innovation, and deeper connections.

Pooja Amritkar

Ross Veitch on Wego's AI Evolution & Tourism Landscape

Wego stands as one of the Middle East's most influential travel platforms, shaping how millions of travellers search, explore, and book their journeys. Since its launch in 2005, the driving force behind this evolution has been **Ross Veitch, the CEO and co-founder**, with a vision to make travel simpler, smarter, and more accessible for the everyday user.

In this exclusive interview with **Pooja Amritkar** at TOURISE Riyadh, Ross reflects on how technology is changing travel, the trends driving today's bookings, the rise of AI, and what the next five years look like for the tourism landscape.

TOURISE 2025 is focused on technology and travel, and AI is rapidly reshaping industries everywhere. How is Wego integrating AI into its products to enhance the user experience?

AI has been a highlight this week, especially with TOURISE discussion panels and sessions. And since Wego is fundamentally a tech company focused on solving problems for travelers, this is a natural evolution for us. We've been doing machine learning at scale for more than a decade, but we're now fully embracing the new generation of AI tools and capabilities.

Across the company, we're automating everything we possibly can, including finance, operations, customer service, and marketing. And on the product side, AI now allows us to build features of personalization, prediction, and real-time assistance that genuinely enhance the user experience.

Are there any specific AI-driven features users should look out for?

Absolutely. There are major AI systems gaining traction and these platforms allow companies like ours to create and build functionality that users can summon directly from within a chat interface.

Travel, however, requires a lot of specialized abilities, such as shopping, comparing, booking, and the big AI models partner with companies like Wego to add those layers of expertise and functionality. The exciting part is that users can now engage with a conversational interface they're becoming very comfortable with, while the AI layers its intelligence over our travel-specific systems.

There's been a noticeable rise in wellness and slow tourism. Have you seen that shift influence booking patterns on your app?

Absolutely. There was a panel session earlier where we were talking about people traveling specifically for longevity treatments. Some treatments aren't available in one country but are available in another, and people who have the means are traveling to access those services.

Medical tourism has been around for a long time. But I also think that the world is moving faster and faster, and we're more connected than ever before. I think this trend is only going to grow as travelers seek deeper, more restorative experiences, take long breaks where they can truly disconnect, recharge, and rejuvenate.



How do you see the aviation landscape evolving in the Middle East and North Africa over the next five years? And how are low-cost carriers shaping travel patterns?

The aviation marketplace in the Middle East, specifically the Gulf, is very vibrant. There's a lot of competition among the full-service carriers, and for most travelers going to most places, passengers have excellent alternatives among these major airlines.

Riyadh Air is joining the game as well. They've just started their first service to Riyadh-London, and they'll be launching new destinations fairly quickly. On the low-cost side, there are quite a few options like Flynas, flyadeal, Flydubai, and now some European low-cost carriers are entering the Gulf market. So whether you want to travel budget-friendly or full service, you've got plenty of options.

What I'd like to see, especially with respect to India, is more slots opened up for Gulf carriers. I'd love to see the number of daily flights between the Gulf and India expanded.

Which emerging travel trend is exciting you the most right now?

When I was younger, instead of going to university, I went backpacking, and when I had to get back to Australia, instead of flying, I took about six months and went overland. I travelled through the Soviet Union as it was breaking up, then down through Iran, Georgia, Azerbaijan, into Pakistan, through the Wagah border into India. I went down to Goa and spent about a month chilling out there. I think that kind of slow travel, where the journey is as much the goal as the destination, really changes your perspective on the world. You meet a lot of people along the way. I encourage young people to do it while they can. In today's fast-paced world, slow travel is more relevant than ever.

wire and Tube 2026: A hotspot for innovation



The success story of wire began back in 1967 with the first 'wire style exhibition' in London. When wire took place for the second time in 1970 in 1986 to move wire to a new, even more centrally located site: Düsseldorf. What began in Düsseldorf in 1986 with 488 visionary exhibitors and 21,000 trade visitors became the driving force for an entire industry. Today, wire has over 1,500 exhibitors on around 67,000 square metres and 60,000 international visitors who come to Düsseldorf as movers and shakers and forward thinkers. And because development never stands still, the organisers are setting a new benchmark in 2026: together with Tube, which has been appearing alongside wire in Düsseldorf since 1988, they are expecting over 2,500 exhibitors on 120,000 square metres of concentrated innovation space.

With the new special area World of Cables, they are also creating a platform for the first time that puts finished wire and cable products, i.e. end products, in the spotlight and shows how these essential components are changing entire industries.

The new wire & Cable FORUM

The international wire and cable industry can look forward to another highlight in 2026: the new wire & Cable FORUM will be presented for the first time in hall 13 at Düsseldorf Fairgrounds.

Following the success of the Tube FORUM 2024, wire is thus sending another strong signal for knowledge transfer and networking. The new wire & Cable FORUM will be a central meeting place for everyone who wants to actively shape the future of the wire and cable industry. International industry



experts will give exciting presentations providing insights into current developments – from digitalisation and automation to sustainability and new materials and production processes. The programme will be complemented by inspiring panel discussions and a wide range of networking opportunities that promote direct exchange between speakers, exhibitors and trade visitors. Admission to the forum is free for all trade fair visitors.

'With the new wire & Cable FORUM, we are creating a place where innovation and networking come together in a unique way,' says Daniel Ryfisch, Director wire & Tube at Messe Düsseldorf. 'Our goal is to offer the global wire and cable industry an even stronger platform for knowledge transfer and partnership-based exchange – right in the middle of the lively trade fair action. For exhibitors and visitors, this means even more visibility and business potential.'

With a strong focus on content and real added value for the industry, the world's leading trade fair Tube 2026 will kick off on 13 April 2026 in Düsseldorf. For the first time, the Stainless Steel & Nickel Alloy Tube & Pipe Market Insights Day 2026 will be held at the event focusing the attention of the international tube industry on what matters now and in the future: markets, trends and strategic perspectives for stainless steel and nickel alloy tubes.

Electric vehicles in the fast lane

A new era of mobility is electrifying the automotive industry. All around the world, electric cars are in the fast lane, with adoption and demand continuing to rise. This is great news for the environment, because battery-powered vehicles don't produce any direct CO₂ emissions. And if the electricity comes from renewable sources, their carbon footprint drops to zero. Electric cars and the



energy transition are a match made in heaven! This synergy is made possible by high-performance components from the cable and pipe industry.

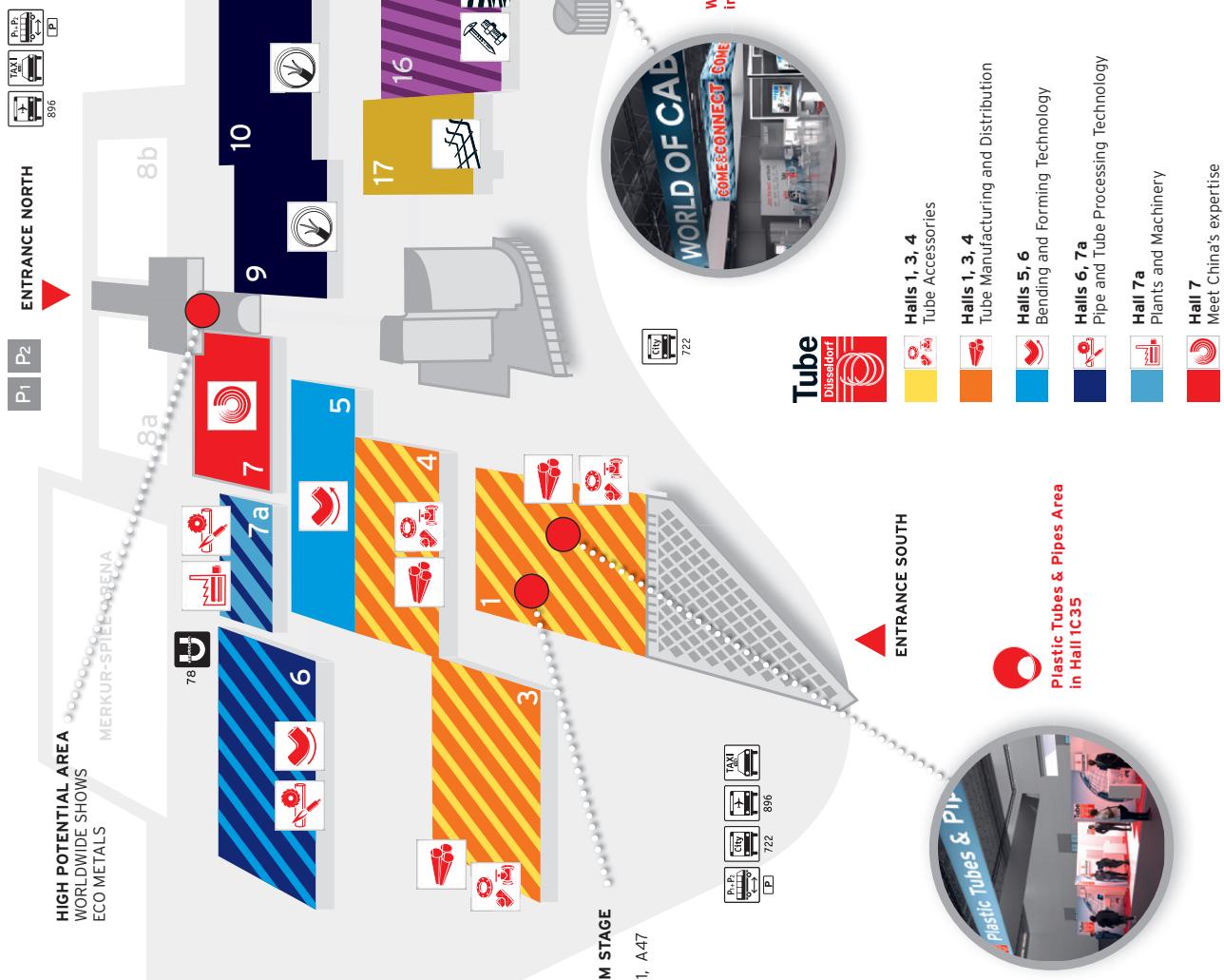
The market potential for e-mobility is enormous. For example, cables are needed to plug vehicles into charging stations, and to carry electricity from the charging port to the battery. Cables transport current through the inverter to the electric motor. Interior wiring supplies power to high-voltage components like air-conditioning compressors, or electric heating and cooling systems. High-performance wires and cables are essential to keep vehicles running smoothly.

wire & Tube Expo will take place from 13 to 17 April in Düsseldorf

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HANNOVER MESSE 2026:

Introducing a new exhibition format

HANNOVER MESSE, the world's leading trade fair for the manufacturing industry, attracting 4,000 + exhibiting companies is introducing a new exhibition format – the Defense Production Area – dedicated to state-of-the-art manufacturing technologies for the defense sector. This is in addition to the main exhibition areas are Automation & Digitalization, Energy & Industrial Infrastructure, and Research & Technology Transfer.

The Defense Production Area

This new specialized platform will feature companies showcasing actionable solutions to help the defense and security industry scale its manufacturing capacity rapidly, efficiently, and with a focus on security – embedded in the industrial environment.



The Defense Production Area in Hall 26 will provide a central platform for manufacturers and suppliers with technologies, machines, systems, or components that are used in the manufacture of security-relevant products.

"HANNOVER MESSE shows how artificial intelligence, digitalization, and automation are making the factories of today and tomorrow more efficient, flexible, and productive," says Dr. Jochen Köckler, Chairman of the Managing Board of Deutsche Messe AG. "The new Defense Production Area offers visitors from the defense and security industry in particular a central location to learn about solutions for scaling their production safely and efficiently."

Visitors will discover solutions spanning the entire industrial value chain, from automation and additive production to digitalization and innovative materials. This new platform fosters direct connections between suppliers and users, facilitating targeted dialog on industrial production for security-critical applications.

Attractively located in Hall 26, the Defense Production Area offers powerful synergies with directly neighboring segments dedicated to robotics, logistics, IT/OT security, IIoT, and Wireless & Cloud.

The cooperation partner is Defence & Security Equipment International Germany (DSEI Germany), which is set to debut at the Hannover Exhibition Center in March 2027.

Technology transfer

Technology transfer is essential for manufacturing companies to remain competitive, because research enables new digital tools, innovative materials and scalable production processes. HANNOVER MESSE brings theory and practice together, promoting cooperation between industry, science and politics.

One of the three main exhibition clusters is "Research & Technology Transfer" in Hall 11, where institutions, universities, young companies, and entrepreneurs present their innovations, projects and prototypes for manufacturing now and in the future.

The focus is on the results of basic and applied industrial research as well as the transfer of market-ready technologies into industrial applications. Visitors discover pioneering developments in fields such as artificial intelligence, bionics, intelligent textiles, nanotechnology, new materials, and quantum technology. Visitors also benefit from direct synergies with topics such as additive manufacturing, renewable energy, green hydrogen, lightweight construction, and robotics.

"Advances such as artificial intelligence, collaborative robots and extremely resilient, ultra-lightweight materials highlight the importance of research and development in manufacturing. Such technologies enable efficient, precise and energy-saving processes in factories and plants," explains Iris Moser, project director of research and technology transfer at HANNOVER MESSE. "HANNOVER MESSE showcases these and many other technological breakthroughs. Visitors learn how to integrate new and further-stage developments into the adjacent exhibition areas 'Automation & Digitalization' and 'Energy & Industrial Infrastructure'. Hall 11 is the ideal location for representatives from established companies, associations, political organizations, media outlets, and investment firms to discover new, market-ready research and potential partners."





Startups: More than 200 young companies provide inspiration

Startups drive industry forward by quickly implementing innovations and introducing new technologies that encourage established companies to modernize. They promote competition, create jobs and have the potential to become market leaders. More than 200 young companies exhibit at HANNOVER MESSE's Startup Area in Hall 11. Their offerings range from energy management and predictive maintenance software to an AI-controlled manufacturing platform and the world's first reusable system for transporting small satellites into low Earth orbit. The program will also include pitches, masterclasses and networking events.

Brazilian President Lula da Silva to open HANNOVER MESSE 2026

The official opening ceremony of HANNOVER MESSE 2026 will see Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, inaugurate the event together with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

HANNOVER MESSE 2026 is scheduled from April 20-24

HANNOVER MESSE

20–24 APRIL 2026



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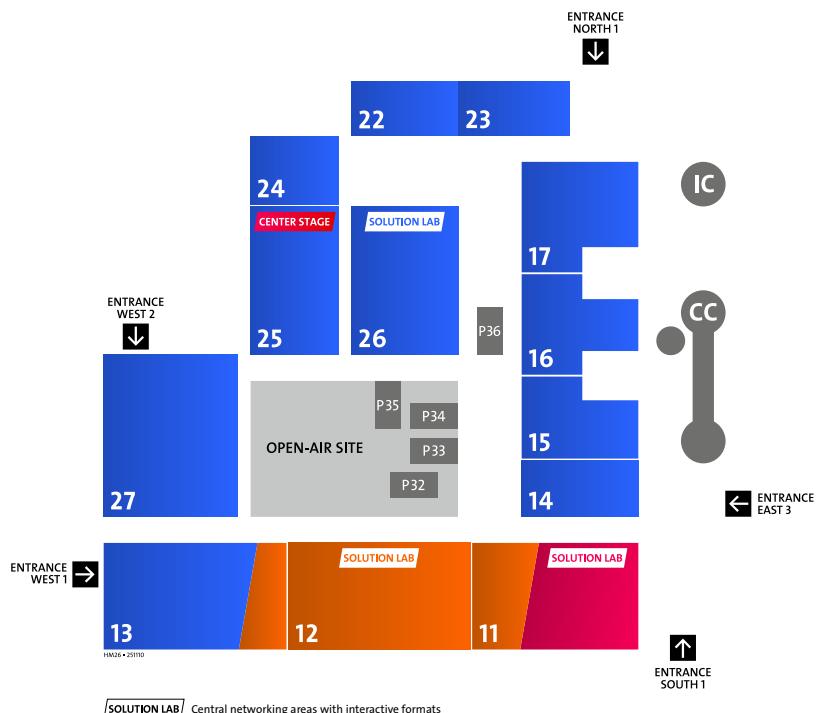
- AI in Manufacturing [Hall 27](#)
- Automation Systems & Components [Halls 13, 22–25, 27](#)
- IIoT, Wireless & Cloud [Halls 14–16, 26](#)
- Industrial Software [Halls 14–16](#)
- Industrial Supply & Engineering Solutions [Hall 17](#)
- IT/OT Security [Hall 26](#)
- Production Logistics [Hall 26](#)
- Production Technology for Defense [Hall 26](#)
- Robotics & Assembly Automation [Hall 26](#)

ENERGY & INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Energy Infrastructure & Storage Technologies [Hall 12](#)
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- Power Engineering & Energy Automation [Halls 12 + 13](#)

RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

- Research & Innovation Transfer [Hall 11](#)
- Startups [Hall 11](#)



India's fight against cybercrimes

India's booming digital economy comes with the disadvantage of rapidly growing cybercrimes feels **Chandragupta Amritkar**

Cyberspace connects us virtually with crores of online users across the globe. With increasing use of cyberspace, cybercrimes is a rapidly growing problem globally and India is no exception especially with cases increasing from 10.29 lakh in 2022 to 22.68 lakh in 2024. Over 9.42 lakh SIM cards and 2,63,348 IMEIs linked to cyber frauds have been blocked.

The most common cybercrime is financial fraud (including digital arrest, click scams, phishing) as well as online sexual exploitation, blackmail, fake KYC requests etc. In 2025 AI-powered attacks was leading. In India Karnataka had the highest number of cybercrime cases, followed by Telangana. The best part is that India's Union Budget 2025-2026 has allocated ₹782 crore for cyber security projects.

Cyber Threats

Cyber frauds refer to deceptive activities carried out through digital platforms such as unauthorized access, data theft, or online scams, which are often intended to cause financial loss to victims.

Techniques like spoofing, where criminals act like trusted sources, are showing up in multiple fraud reports. Likewise, cases of deepfakes leveraging AI (Artificial Intelligence) and phishing, where individuals are lured into revealing sensitive information through deceptive emails or messages, are also on the rise.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI), India's most preferred digital payment mode, has also been targeted by fraudsters using compromised mobile numbers. To address this issue, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) launched the Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI), which classifies suspicious numbers as Medium, High, or Very High-risk.

The Government of India has implemented strong defence mechanisms aimed at safeguarding its vast online community. Over 1,05,796 police officers are now registered on the CyTrain portal, with more than 82,704 certificates issued, equipping frontline personnel with essential cybercrime investigation skills.

Illicit digital ventures have also emerged in the form of online betting apps, luring users into depositing funds in their online wallet to play such games with fake promises of large returns, generating over ₹400 crores in criminal proceeds.

Strengthening India's fight against cyber frauds, the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 was passed on 21st August 2025.

Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) is the national agency for responding to cybersecurity incidents. It monitors cyber threats, detect vulnerabilities, and issue necessary advisories. Upon identification of incidents such as data breaches, phishing campaigns, or malware intrusions, CERT-In disseminates alerts and prescribes remedial measures to affected organisations. This proactive mechanism ensures timely containment of risks and enhances resilience across government, industry, and critical service providers. As of March 2025, CERT-In facilitated 109 cybersecurity mock drills, engaging 1,438 organizations from different states and sectors to assess cyber readiness and build resilience.

To strengthen preparedness against cyber-attacks and cyber-terrorism, the Government has initiated CCMP for all government bodies. The plan serves as a strategic framework to ensure coordinated recovery from any cyber crisis. So far, 205 workshops have been conducted across the country to build capacity and awareness under this framework.

Cybercrime Volunteers in India

People keen on contributing to a safer digital environment, keen to make the internet a cleaner and safer place by assisting in the fight against cybercrime, he can opt to become a cybercrime volunteer.

Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) has been established under Ministry of Home affairs (MHA) to act as a nodal point at National level in the fight against cybercrime. It aims to provide a platform to deal with cybercrimes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. One of the important objectives of I4C is to create ecosystem that brings together academia, industry, public and government in prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of cybercrimes.

I4C has envisaged the Cyber Crime Volunteers Program to bring together citizens with passion to serve the nation on a single platform and contribute in fight against cybercrime in the country.

Citizens can report cybercrimes using the national helpline at 1930 or through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal at cybercrime.gov.in.



"I dream of a Digital India where cyber security becomes an integral part of our national security"

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

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FIBO 2026: Fitness Meets Technology



A rapidly growing sector, valued at around \$6.8 trillion in 2024 and projected to reach over \$11 trillion by 2034 is the health, wellness, and fitness sector. While North America leads, Asia-Pacific is catching up fast and India is no exception to the trend. The millennial and Gen Z, are pushing the industry forward especially on six dimensions of wellness—health, sleep, nutrition, fitness, appearance, and mindfulness. An active and holistically mindful lifestyle is more important than ever, and it will be the focal point of FIBO 2026.

FIBO is the leading international trade show for fitness, wellness, and health, organized by Reed Exhibitions Limited ("RX") and will be held from April 16-19, 2026 in Cologne, Germany. The annual FIBO Show therefore brings together all the players from the health, fitness and wellness sectors. Industry decision-makers, up-and-coming entrepreneurs and studio operators from numerous countries, trainers, athletes and the fitness community form the hot spot for innovations, investments and trends for an active lifestyle.

FIBO Congress 2026

When the international fitness and health industry gathers in Cologne, one event is indispensable: the FIBO Congress. On April 16 and 17, the Deutsche Hochschule für Prävention und Gesundheitsmanagement (DHfPG) and the BSA-Akademie will curate a program on behalf of FIBO that seamlessly blends science, practice, and innovation. For the first time, the event will be held exclusively on the two trade visitor days, ensuring an even sharper focus on the professional community.

Attendees can look forward to a diverse program of talks covering topics such as training, nutrition, mental fitness/coaching, corporate health management (BGM), and business management. The agenda will be continuously updated to reflect the latest trends, scientific insights, and pressing questions facing the industry.

Fitness Meets Technology

A quick glance at your smartwatch is enough to show how



close the future really is. The music app recommends the perfect beat for your workout, the wristband tracks your heart rate, an AI suggests breathing exercises after training and provides tailored nutrition tips. What many see simply as convenience is in reality the interplay of highly advanced systems – combining sensors, data analytics and, increasingly, artificial intelligence.

It is a billion-dollar market – and at the same time the foundation for performance improvements in many other industries, including fitness. In its current Sports Industry Outlook 2025, consulting firm Deloitte describes how deeply this connection has already entered our everyday lives: “Generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology could lend a hand in personalizing

fan content feeds ... and providing direct (and instant) customer support.”

FIBO Director Silke Frank explains: “What is already a global standard in sports is now rapidly entering the operational management of the fitness and health sector – and, just like consumer-facing digital solutions, it has found a home at FIBO: the new Confex Hall! Directly opposite the ‘Köln Messe/Deutz’ station with immediate access to the entire trade fair grounds.”

For 2026, the concept of this FIBO Tech hotspot has been consistently enhanced. The hall will be integrated into the user journey of the entire trade fair. Its concept makes innovation and sustainable digital services tangible and directly links them to education and networking for trade visitors.

Technology is no longer an add-on, but a core element of today's fitness culture – one in which prevention, health and performance merge, and where training, coaching, nutrition, recovery and business management are seamlessly linked for the benefit of all stakeholders.

What used to be called “digitalization” is already a normal part of studio operations in 2026. It is visible in new business models, smarter training and business steering, data-driven decisions – and in the new FIBO Confex Hall: the place where the future of fitness lives.

Chandragupta Amritkar



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