

Expo contributes to developing entrepreneurship

This year's Business Opportunities and Franchise Expo (BOFE) will take place from 11-14 September at the Coca-Cola Dome in Northriding, Johannesburg. BOFE, presented in partnership with Eskom, has contributed significantly toward developing entrepreneurship in South Africa and is beginning to expand its reach on the continent.



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In 2013, an unprecedented 8% of visitors were international, representing countries as near as Zambia and as far as Afghanistan, while exhibitors from Cyprus, America, Australia and India joined local firms to present business opportunities to visitors.

Lynn Chamier, general manager of Thebe Reed Exhibitions, said the company is already in discussions with trade representatives from several African countries who are looking to bring contingents of both exhibitors and visitors to this year's show.

New opportunities

"Every year new exhibitors join a growing core of loyal exhibitors to reach an evolving market of up-and-coming entrepreneurs and returning investors in search of new business opportunities," Chamier said. "The exhibits include everything from franchise opportunities with established brands to innovative new opportunities with limitless potential for motivated entrepreneurs. It's this mix of established and new exhibits and of new and returning visitors that makes BOFE constantly fresh, relevant and effective."

Also included among BOFE exhibits is a comprehensive range of business support services, to meet the entrepreneur's every business need. The expo's dedicated pavilion for established BEE businesses has proven to be a major draw card for corporate procurement officers with BEE targets to achieve.

"BOFE's continued appeal to visitors is also partly due to the entrepreneurial workshops the expo is known for. Topics run

the gamut of all you need to know to start up and run a successful business and are presented by industry leaders with proven expertise in their subjects. They offer teaching, guidance, support and immeasurably valuable advice to the 40% of visitors who say their main reason for attending is to get advice on starting and growing a business," added Chamier.

Quality of visitors

Exhibitors have their own criteria for choosing to participate in the show. The research validated their choice of BOFE. In 2013, 74% of show visitors indicated they were likely to buy into a franchise or business opportunity available at BOFE, while 29% of visitors already had the funds readily available to invest in their new business.

This resulted in 61% of exhibitors saying they were satisfied with the quality of expo visitors, 58% confirming a good return on their investment, and 38% revealing they had more onsite sales than in the previous year.

"BOFE remains committed to continuing to play a pivotal role in developing entrepreneurship by being the premier marketplace and educational resource for entrepreneurs from not only South Africa but also the rest of Africa," concluded Chamier.

For more information, go to www.bofe.co.za.

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