

Country Brand Index with Distinguished Expert Panel

By Travel and Tourism Foundation

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Country Brand Index is a comprehensive study examining how countries are branded and ranked, and identifies emerging global trends in the travel and tourism sectors, which accounted for US\$944 billion in international tourism receipts in 2008.

Bernard Metzger, Founder and Chairman of the Travel & Tourism Foundation, participated as an expert in the Country Brand Index 2009 launched in London on November 6. Metzger was joined on the panel, among others, by Greg Norman, Pro Golfer and Founder, Great White Shark, Enterprises (USA); Thomas L. Doorley III, CEO Sage Partners (USA); Marwan al Sarkal, CEO, Shurooq (UAE); Tony Charters, Principal, Tony Charters and Ass. (Australia), Jens Thraenhardt, President, Chameleon Strategies Inc. (China); Dr. Johannes von Thaden, VP, Head of Political Relations Germany, EADS Astrium (Germany); Robert Bailey, President & CEO, Abacus International, (Singapore); John Kent, CEO, Youtravel.com (United Kingdom).

Country Brand Index (CBI) is a comprehensive study examining how countries are branded and ranked, and identifies emerging global trends in the world's fastest growing economic sector – travel and tourism, which accounted for US\$944 billion in international tourism receipts in 2008.

This year's index, conducted by FutureBrand, a leading global brand consultancy, in conjunction with public relations firm Weber Shandwick's Global Travel & Lifestyle Practice, includes rankings and trends, themes in nation building and marketing issues, as well as more in-depth analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the top country brands.

FutureBrand has developed a three-tiered system for examining and ranking country brands. The Country Brand Index incorporates global quantitative research, expert opinions, and relevant secondary sources for statistics that link brand equity to assets, growth and expansion. The result is a unique evaluation system that provides the basis of our rankings and insights about the complexities and dynamics of country brands. The expert panel consists of 47 travel, tourism and hospitality professionals who are not associated with one specific destination.

The 2009 Country Brand Index reports on a variety of topics relevant to travelers and tourism professionals including: how small nations can compete with much larger countries; the different ways destinations can communicate value; and the year's best and worst country brand marketing. Other notable topics focus on the use of social media in country branding and how icons, national companies and sports drive the development of country brand image. CBI 2009 touches a number of emerging trends in travel and tourism that include: Value-Oriented Mindset, Attitudes Towards Travel Planning and the Mystery of Authenticity.

To download a free executive summary of the Country Brand Index 2009, go to <http://www.futurebrand.com/cbi>

About the Travel & Tourism Foundation

The Travel & Tourism Foundation was established as a non-profit making organisation by Bernard Metzger, who conceptualized and started an open-source repository database of the World's travel and tourism resources under the Travelindex Network. The Foundation aims to support and assist countries and regions that lack the framework or resources to achieve growth in the travel and tourism sector by working with governments, local leaders and professionals to identify and overcome barriers to growth while being

sensitive to people's needs and aspirations. The core purpose of the Travel & Tourism Foundation is to build and promote knowledge that will enhance international cooperation, reduce poverty, improve healthcare and advance human welfare. For more information about the Travel and Tourism Foundation, visit <http://www.tourismfoundation.org>

About Travelindex Network

Travelindex.com is an exciting and revolutionary new way for travellers to plan their travel and for travel marketers a showcase of their facilities and services where perfectly matched customers can meet quickly, effortlessly and without hefty price hikes and fees from intermediaries or middlemen. Travelindex.com offers the travel professionals and marketers a powerful, free, marketing platform. It is the ultimate travel directory and travel vertical where travel people connect. For more information, visit <http://www.travelindex.com>

About FutureBrand

FutureBrand, (www.futurebrand.com), part of the Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc. (NYSE: IPG – News), is a leading brand consultancy within IPG that commands a global presence spanning 24 major cities around the world. Partnering with the world's leading companies, FutureBrand helps its clients to develop profitable brands both today and into the future. Offering a full range of services from consumer branding and corporate identity, to brand identity, brand management and beyond, FutureBrand works with clients to measure and increase brand value, define breakthrough brand strategies and create powerful brand experiences. Clients include ArcelorMittal, P&G, Microsoft, Dubai World, Intel, Barclays Premier, Nokia, Nestle, MasterCard, UPS and Unilever.

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