

## English Corner



### Bildergalerie

5 Bilder Ah Khing Theo (Desert Star Holding), Puneet Chhatwal (Deutsche Hospitality), Lina Annab (Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities Jordan), Ros Atkins (BBC), Simon Lehmann (Phocuswright), Sean Cleary (Strategic Concepts), Jason Fox (Head of Cleverness). Images: WTLF

## WTFL 2017: keep relevant and develop sustainably

Von Ben West 06.05.2017 – 15:22

Overcoming challenges currently faced by the travel and tourism industry and innovating for the future were the focus of the 5th World Tourism Forum Lucerne 2017.

An extremely high level of debate was maintained throughout the two days of the fifth World Tourism Forum Lucerne. With 500 participants from 75 countries, it was a truly international affair packed with events including keynote speeches from some of the most prominent speakers in the travel industry as well as panel debates, workshops, roundtables, interviews and brainstorming sessions.

The Forum kicked off with welcomes from Swiss Federal Councillor Johann Schneider-Ammann and Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Housed in the KLL conference centre in Lucerne, it focused this year upon staying relevant in uncertain times, against a backdrop of the international travel industry arguably dealing with an unprecedented number of issues, from terrorism threats to the sustainability challenge and fast-changing digitalisation.

Key speakers included Sean Cleary, Chairman of Strategic Concepts, who, in a hard-hitting presentation, explained how a multitude of factors including the upsurge of connectivity, current prominence of geopolitics and unprecedented population growth got us to the particularly unsettled and unpredictable place the world is at now.

In his keynote speech, Simon Anholt, Independent Policy Advisor on National Identity and Reputation, who has advised more than 50 countries on their competitive identity, asked 'Why does your country exist?'



## New models for financing tourism development

Rasoul Jalali, General Manager at Uber, explained how Uber had so profoundly transformed urban travel and would continue to do so. Best-selling author and leadership advisor Jason Fox invigorated the audience in his idiosyncratic way on how to unlock progress and build for the future of work.

Insights on how two small countries – Switzerland and St Lucia – manage to get their market share in a world crowded with much larger ones, keep relevant and develop sustainably, were delivered by Jürg Schmid, CEO of Swiss Tourism, and Allen Chastanet, Prime Minister of St Lucia.

Of course, no tourism project can get off the ground without the required cash, and John Perrottet, Senior Tourism Specialist at World Bank suggested new models for financing tourism development.

The day before the forum, 60 prominent members of government, academia, the travel industry and investing gathered at the beautiful Villa St Charles Hall in Meggen, Lucerne for a day-long Think Tank. Throwing off their job title badges to abandon any hierarchy, they got together for brainstorming sessions overseen by renowned 'experience engineer' David Pearl.

Through events like innovative 'networking picnics' and a 'stimulus session', he got them to discuss the questions beyond those that are most often discussed at travel forums, around such subjects as balancing the right to travel with the impact of travel, and finding new models of collaboration to enable working more effectively.

The Forum this year also very much focused on the issue of attracting and retaining talent, and held its first Start-Up Innovation Camp, whittling down 170 submissions from young companies from 50 countries to the four most promising, who were given 20,000 CHF prize money and two years of professional coaching.

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