



KERALA TRAVEL MART SOCIETY

38/1912, Elankulam Road (Kalseer-Kadavonthra Road), Cochin - 682017. Telefax : 91-484-2203156
E-mail: ktm@keralatravelmart.org Website: www.keralatravelmart.org

Press Release

KTM 2016: Marts have advantage of personal contact and access in digital world

Kochi, September 30: Trade shows provide direct access between buyers and seller, the opportunity to monitor competitors and make services more visually perceptible in a digital world, according to Rika Jean-Francois, the CSR head of ITB Berlin, the world's largest tourism convention hosted by Germany.

Speaking at a seminar on digitisation and the relevance of marts at the Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) 2016, he said: "Personal contact is vital, particularly when each product has its own spirit. This can be reflected more comprehensively at a trade show, rather than on a website. KTM is a successful example of this; because it gives a networking platform to small and medium-sized companies, which cannot travel to a trade show such as ITB."

KTM Society President Shri Abraham George reiterated that KTM has a unique model that cannot be found anywhere else. "KTM is conducted by members for members in the industry and as long as organisers create marts for the benefit of sellers and buyers, trade shows will remain successful," he said.

Former KTM Society President Shri Jose Dominic, who moderated the seminar at the Samudrika Convention Centre, pointed out that the digital way of doing business allowed "people who don't have a single room to be the biggest hotelier and people who don't have a car to be the biggest car operators", referring to the success of companies such as Airbnb and Uber.

"While it is clear that trade shows will carry on because of the important personal encounters they offer, digitisation can supplement this when there is a demand for 365 days of engagement and digital presence," pointed out Shri Jose. "Digital is a democratic medium and a force multiplier."

KTM's digital consultant Shri P Krishnakumar said that every business should capitalise on the opportunities offered by the digital medium and not shun it.

Also speaking at the seminar were travel agents Sumi Atapattu and Beat Germann, who promote Kerala in Sri Lanka and Europe respectively.

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