



Expo Management acquires Best of Britain & Ireland

Best of Britain Events (BoB Events) has announced that it has transferred the rights to the future staging of Best of Britain & Ireland (BoBI), the UK's domestic travel trade and tourism exhibition, to Expo Management, the exhibitions and publishing group.

Commenting on the announcement, Rob Mackenzie, Managing Director of BoB Events says:

"BoBI 2011 was undoubtedly a real success for all our exhibitors and visitors, so this is a sad day for us as our team has worked extremely hard to develop BoBI in close partnership with the industry. Like many companies, the changes taking place to the structure of the tourism industry in the UK have meant it has been necessary for me to look at the future direction for my own company. With BoBI now being picked up by Expo Management, this gives me the opportunity to explore new opportunities.

Unfortunately, our company has been caught up in the sudden announcement of Visit London's administration, and the very substantial bad debt that this inflicted on us has forced me to conclude that now is the correct moment to pass the organisation of BoBI to new owners.

We're nevertheless delighted to be able to ensure that BoBI has a bright, secure future in the very capable hands of Expo Management whose intimate knowledge and close links with the tourism industry made them an obvious choice for us to approach as the best custodian for the industry's flagship event.

Our relationship with Expo Management, which people will remember began in competition with the launch of Travel Trade Britain, has, over the past two years, evolved into an extremely positive and productive partnership. TTB was merged into BoBI in August 2009 and, since that time, both companies have worked together closely on BoBI. Expo Management's Managing Director, Mark Griffin, actively served on BoBI's Steering Group and ensured all his company's publications, databases and contacts within the market were enthusiastically harnessed for BoBI's benefit."

The key elements of BoBI's success including its influential industry Steering Group, its VIP Domestic Hosted Buyer Programme, and the new, parallel VIP Overseas Hosted Buyer Programme, will all be retained and enhanced by Expo Management.

Expo Management's portfolio includes the trade exhibitions Euro Bus Expo and Coach & Bus Live, trade magazines Coach Monthly and routeONE, and the Coach Tourism Awards.

Mark Griffin, Managing Director of Expo Management says:

"We're delighted to be acquiring BoBI and are looking forward to working closely with all sectors of the market to continue BoBI's development as the centrepiece of the UK's domestic tourism industry. I have the greatest respect for all that the BoBI team have achieved, culminating in the great success of BoBI 2011. We have many new ideas which we will be discussing after the Steering Group's feedback in the coming months. The current BoBI team will be working closely with us over the next few months to ensure a smooth, professional handover.

With over 150 years of combined coach and group tourism industry experience in Expo we believe passionately that the UK domestic tourism industry has so much to offer. Those fortunate enough to have taken holidays and breaks in Britain and Ireland in recent weeks will confirm just that. We aim to continue to develop BoBI as a key trade only show and we look forward to getting the sales launch for 2012 underway in the coming weeks when we shall be out meeting customers to see how we can deliver their aspirations."

Commenting on the announcement:

"The CTC have been proud to have developed the Domestic Hosted Buyer Programme with the BoBI team over the last two years, making Best of Britain & Ireland a must-attend annual event for the coach tourism industry. Working with Expo Management will make the offering even stronger and we look forward to continuing to support both the Hosted Buyer initiative and the 2012 event. We also wish the BoBI team well, we worked together to enhance the events standing in the coach tourism industry and achieved a great step forward."

Sean Taggart, Chairman, Coach Tourism Council

"This is really positive news for the coach industry. The team at Expo Management have a strong reputation for putting on great trade shows. I'm sure that they will be working really hard to ensure that this show helps to continue to raise the profile of coach travel and tourism in the UK. CPT will continue to support this show as BoBI remains an important event in the calendar for our members, their businesses and everyone associated with this key sector of the UK economy."

Simon Posner, Chief Executive, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

"It has been a delight to work with Angie and the rest of the BoBI team over the last three years. Together we have created a solid platform for group travel organisers at BoBI, inviting them on the Domestic Hosted Buyer Programme and welcoming them as a vital part of the domestic travel trade. It will be good to work with Angie and the new team over the next few months to develop 2012 with the intention of producing an even better opportunity for our members and the industry."

Phil Moon, Chairman, Group Travel Organisers Association

www.britainandirelandevent.co.uk

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Editor's notes

- Best of Britain & Ireland Travel Trade Forum (BoBI) 2012 takes place at the NEC Wednesday 14 & Thursday 15 March. It is the official travel trade event of the year
- BoBI is a strictly trade-only two-day event
- BoBI is organised by Expo Management in consultation with the BoBI Steering Group
- Since BoBI 2010 an integral part of the event has been a targeted VIP Domestic Hosted Buyer Programme. The Coach Tourism Council, Confederation of Passenger Transport and Group Travel Organisers Association are the programme partners and key buyers attend from the coach tourism industry and group travel organisers sector
- BoBI 2011 hosted over 200 VIP Overseas Hosted Buyers and Press from 30 international markets. This will now be run in-house
- BoBI 2011 attracted 2534 trade visitors over the two days - 1490 on the first day, 1044 on the second day

For further information:

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