

TRENZ 2009 critical for NZ's future

By Tourism Industry Association New Zealand (TIA) Chief Executive Tim Cossar

TRENZ 2009, our industry's biggest international marketing and business to business event of the year, is just over a week away and I'm looking forward to seeing many of you there.

Although I have attended TRENZ as an Exhibitor at least 10 times, this will be my first as Chief Executive of TIA. It has been really interesting to see the event from a different angle and I have been impressed to see how much work goes on behind the scenes to put together the best event we can for both Exhibitors and Buyers.

It has been a challenging year putting TRENZ together but with the support of the industry I feel confident we once again have an event that will deliver results.



With the global economic downturn, TRENZ is more important than ever this year, to keep New Zealand's tourism industry strong and ensure it continues as one of our top foreign exchange earners.

We need to keep our share of voice in international markets strong and TRENZ, New Zealand's flagship tourism trade show, is critical in helping to make this happen.

TRENZ 2009 focuses on new ideas and New Zealand's latest world class tourism offerings.

Discovering new products is the primary reason many international Buyers attend TRENZ, so we aim to attract a good proportion of new products and new Exhibitors. We cannot forget though that we are in the relationship management business, and maintaining and developing existing relationships is a primary reason many attend.

Of the 270 tourism operators taking part in TRENZ this year, about 75 are offering brand new products to the international market, including 26 first-time Exhibitors. This is a similar number to previous years and reflects that New Zealand's tourism industry continues to be innovative and forward thinking.

TRENZ 2009 will be slightly smaller than in previous years, due to the economic climate. Changes to the traditional distribution pattern are also having an impact on Buyer numbers. Both Exhibitor and Buyer numbers are lower than in the last few years, but the quality of both remains as high as ever.

We have achieved 260 Buyer registrations, which is a great result given the rationalisations occurring in the distribution chain (company mergers and staff redundancies) and company travel bans that are in place for many of our targeted Buyers.

Achieving a good ratio of Exhibitors to Buyers to ensure quality appointment streams was a priority and we are confident we have achieved this.

In 2009, TRENZ is returning to Auckland for the first time since 2003 and we look forward to showcasing our major international gateway to the Buyers and media who are travelling to TRENZ from all New Zealand's major markets.

I'm confident TRENZ 2009 will be a great event that offers both Exhibitors and Buyers fantastic new opportunities to grow their businesses, as well as representing the best of New Zealand tourism.

TRENZ is managed by TIA as agent of the Tourism Industry New Zealand Trust and in partnership with Tourism New Zealand, Air New Zealand, Qantas, Tourism Auckland and other industry supporters. The Ministry of Tourism is also a major supporter of TRENZ 2009.