



ONE GLOBAL FORCE  
FOR ONE BILLION

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### THE POWER OF ONE

What does it take to move one billion people across our world, as a force of good to change our world?

What does it take to unlock the lives of one in twelve people in a country, simply by giving them daily work, daily meaning, daily skills and daily satisfaction?

What does it take to become the third largest industry in the world, generating over USD\$ 6 trillion per annum?

What does it take to turn the colours of a nation's flag into an invitation to the world?

And what does it take to turn a crisis in one part of the world into a rallying cry of support across the globe?

It takes just one - one global community of tourism leaders who work one day after the next, to fulfill one vision: sustainable, meaningful, equitable growth of the global travel and tourism sector.

And even while operating as natural competitors, with ritual-like regularity they come together as one to face issues facing the industry. Together they are taking on challenges and embracing opportunities, for one and all. Whether it is the UNWTO General Assembly, the WTTTC Summit, the IATA, ACI or IHRA AGMs, whatever the case may be depending on the lens through which the industry is being viewed, competitors unite as colleagues, their energies channeled towards a common cause.

Why does it matter?

There are over a billion reasons. But one transcends all others: it is the absolutely right thing to do if the industry is going to grow by doing things right.

### TAKING A GLOBAL APPROACH

The theory is sound. The benefits are obvious. Growth requires collaboration as much as competition. As stated by Dr Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of the UNWTO,;: "*global issues should be dealt with in a global way.*"

And in these unique times of dramatic challenge and change, when no destination is spared from crisis in one form or another, the value of joining forces has become apparent at so many levels.

Across the globe, economic crisis, political conflict, threatening taxation, acts of God and social uncertainty have left many destinations in a state of shock. Take 2011 as an example. Revolutions, natural disasters, deep concerns of deepening debt crisis, all left leaders of the global tourism community questioning how such dramatic events could happen, and how on earth we can all move forward. Technology not only made information instantaneously available to the world – striking images that struck our hearts when we saw a nation in the tight grasp of crisis – it also made emotion transparent. Communication platforms have become rallying mechanisms.

As a result, rapidly and comprehensively, in times of crisis you find out who your friends are.

Coming together as one has not only been through the creation of one voice, expressing support, it has also been through unified action, activating collective support as a pledge of confidence and commitment to mobilize destination recovery.

Case in point: Japan. The world will never forget how, on the morning of March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, a nation of immeasurable strength and solidarity suffered incomprehensible damage as a result of a triple tragedy brought on by a 9.0-strength earthquake. Within a matter of days, the global travel and tourism community came together to, in one voice, pledge support of Japan in its recovery efforts. The importance of rebuilding traveler confidence in travel to Japan, as a prelude to national recovery in both economy and spirit, was understood and appreciated.

In addition to statements of support of Japan during the initial weeks and months of crisis recovery, the head of the WTTC, the world's global business leaders' forum for the Travel & Tourism industry, working to raise awareness of Travel & Tourism as one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries, traveled to Sendai, the epicenter of the disaster, as a show of solidarity behind Japan's recovery efforts. There the seed was planted for a coming together of leaders of the global travel and tourism community, as one body, committed to building the future of the tourism industry in Japan, and worldwide. The event: the 2012 WTTC Summit.

As expressed by David Scowsill, President and CEO of the WTTC,:

*"The Global Summit is attended by around 1,000 industry and government leaders from around the world. As such, the Summit offers an unparalleled platform for speakers from within and beyond our industry to share their views with an international audience of prominent business, financial, political and media leaders. Hosting the event in Japan is a clear expression of the global travel community's support in the nation as it rebuilds its vital tourism industry."*

Making a direct connection between the summit's purpose and the importance of its location in 2012, as stated by Scowsill,:

*"The overall theme of this year's Global Summit in Tokyo and Sendai is "Leading a Dynamic Industry through Turbulent Times", with sessions covering, inter alia, the recovery of Japan, making sense of a rapidly changing world and what it means for travel & tourism, ensuring we take steps today to guarantee we have tourism for tomorrow. The Summit helps to bring the industry together to present a more united, co-ordinated front to the world on issues that matter most to the growth of global tourism."*

The 2012 Summit is but one example of the immense value that comes from the global travel and tourism community standing tall, together, as one powerful force committed to equitable, meaningful and sustainable growth and development of the sector.

As individuals and as a collective, as events occur, it is vital that we make our support heard so that members of our global travel and tourism community know they are not alone, in whatever quest they are facing. The value of a spirit of solidarity should never be under-estimated. The support matters. The solidarity matters. The activation of ideation matters. The moment matters.

The global travel and tourism sector is stronger because of its collective energies. Destinations and businesses compete more effectively when all are committed to growth of the sector.

To all of the leaders in the global travel and tourism community, one billion thanks.

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