**Press Release**

**Dubai Tourism LAUNCHES ‘DUBAI EXPERT’ training PROGRAMME IN 12 LANGUAGES & 40 COUNTRIES**

**Huge response to innovative game for travel agents introduced at ATM 2017**

**Dubai, UAE: 12 September, 2017:** Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism), has launched its “Dubai Expert” online training initiative for travel agents in 12 languages and 40 countries, taking this innovative game to a wider travel trade audience internationally, as part of efforts to highlight the multiple experiences that await visitors to Dubai across leisure, shopping, cuisine, culture, family entertainment, and more.

The development and roll-out of the Dubai Expert initiative was managed by the Dubai College of Tourism (DCT), an institution of Dubai Tourism. The tool features an engaging interface that includes information on Dubai’s tourism attractions, allowing travel agents to develop their skills and keep up to date with the latest tourism developments in Dubai. The training platform also helps agents to provide potential tourists with customised and unique experiences.

‘Dubai Expert’ was introduced in English during this year’s Arabian Travel Market in April, attracting an overwhelming response from travel agents. Following the positive feedback shown by travel companies around the world, Dubai Tourism developed the tool in a further 11 languages - French, Mandarin, Russian, German, Italian, Bahasa, Korean, Japanese, Polish, Czech, and Spanish – and launched it in 40 countries alongside the English version.

During ATM 2017, over 80% of the travel professionals who registered and played the game said they would recommend the game to others. 72% of them said they learnt a lot about Dubai through the programme, and that they enjoyed the learning experience.

**Issam Kazim, CEO of Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM),** said: “Dubai Expert was developed to assist the international travel trade in keeping up to date with all the destination updates in Dubai and ensure that all travel agents and tour operators have a sound knowledge of the emirate that they are trying to promote. Dubai Expert is also part of our continued investment in new technology and facilities that could help boost tourist arrivals in line with our strategic goal of welcoming 20 million visitors a year by 2020.

“We wanted to create a training tool that would result in more learning retention while being fun, interactive and engaging. And, at the same time, raise awareness of the diversity of Dubai’s offerings. The new tool is an incredible asset to the travel agent community - we believe that agents should not only sell Dubai to their customers but also have the capability to create customised itineraries for visitors to allow them to experience first-hand why Dubai is a ’must visit’ destination.”

The travel agents who are able to successfully complete the programme also stand to receive numerous benefits including the opportunity to market themselves as a Dubai Expert in their country, receive invitations to Dubai Tourism events, and the opportunity to participate in special market/country promotions, as well as receiving a ‘Dubai Expert Certificate’ and the use of the ‘Dubai Expert’ logo.

**Essa Bin Hadher, General Manager, Dubai College of Tourism,** added: “The Dubai College of Tourism is pleased to have been involved in the development of this training tool designed to help travel agents market Dubai more effectively. Travel agents not only play an important role in the entire booking process for tourists from arranging flights and cruises to accommodation and domestic transportation but are also required to have an extensive knowledge of the destination, its attractions and experiences. This programme ensures that agents have a sound knowledge of Dubai and also gives them the opportunity to grow their business and increase their earning potential by leveraging the emirate’s diverse tourism offerings to create tailor-made itineraries for visitors.”

‘Dubai Expert’ operates as a turn-based card game, where participants will need to select the best cards – each with an attraction in the city – from an automatically generated deck, to create an ideal itinerary for a traveller. Various traveller profiles make up the 30 ‘missions’ of the game, with the best combination of activities earning higher scores. The platform also includes 25 videos from experts that serve as a guide of what to do in Dubai – including family entertainment, gastronomy, shopping, theme parks, culture and heritage amongst others.

Participants can become a ‘Dubai Expert’ by completing 20 successful missions and watching all 25 expert videos, with a higher level Dubai Expert Plus achieved by successfully completing all 30 missions, watching all 25 videos, answering all pop-up questions about the city correctly and constructing all the attractions contained in the 3D map. In order to maintain the Dubai Expert status, players are required to return to the game every 2 years and complete updated missions.

To play the game visit [www.dubaiexpert.ae](http://www.dubaiexpert.ae)

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**About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)**

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate.

Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

**About Dubai College of Tourism (DCT)**

DCT was established by Dubai Tourism to help train the next generation of tourism professionals and provide school leavers with an alternative option for further education. DCT will provide foundation, certificate and diploma courses in tourism, hospitality, retail, events and culinary arts through the TVET accreditation framework. The college is also responsible for delivering fundamental programmes specifically designed for those working within the tourism industry, such as ‘Dubai Way’ (for tourist-facing staff in Dubai) and ‘Dubai Expert’ (an interactive online training tool for international travel agents). For more information on DCT email [info@dct.ac.ae](mailto:info@dct.ac.ae)

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