

ArabLab 2006

A success in the Middle East

Andy Harris, Sub Editor, International Labmate Ltd.

Mid February saw the only annual trade show to cover the Arab and MENA (Middle East, North Africa) region, Arablab, take place in the wonderful city of Dubai, UAE.

The show, which started 24 years ago as a bi-annual show and went annual 10 years ago, covers six key areas in the scientific world: Biotechnology, Instrumentation, Laboratory Technology, Automation, Robotics, and Diagnostics. Arablab is growing very quickly, and looking at this years figures, it could well be up there with the likes of Achema, Analytica and Pittcon, certainly it is already in the top 5 shows.

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This year Arablab welcomed more than 8,300 registered conferees through its doors. This was comprised of trade professionals, practising technicians and distributors from 72 countries, and was the shows biggest attendance to date. However the success story doesn't stop with the large number of actual visitors. Companies in the trade obviously think that this is something they should be at as well, with exhibitor numbers totalling 697 from 45 countries.

Within the show itself though there are specific areas for countries, this year the German contingent weighed in with the largest collection of 112 exhibiting countries. The UK had a very successful show with 69 companies in its section. Other countries taking part included: Switzerland, Austria, France, Spain, China, and Korea. Away from the country specific areas, there were 218 individual exhibitors (from mixed origin), 51 domestic companies, and 148 principal companies with UAE agents.



Conferees at Arablab 2006 found a large array of companies exhibiting their products

Looking into the future, what is in store for Arablab 2007? Well, there will be four new sectors included, being: MediLab, EnviroLab, BioLab, and PetroLab, for those who aren't typically involved in the laboratory environment. There will also be another addition with branded meeting rooms for the exhibitors to hold their discussions away from the public eye. Looking to the future of the UK contingent is also another important issue to consider. New for Arablab 2007, Designs for You Ltd., an associate company to International Labmate, based in St Albans, Hertfordshire, has been appointed to handle the new UK pavilion.



From L to R: Publisher Michael Pattison, with show organiser David Domoney and Sheikh Hasher Maktoum.

This was previously managed by the UK trade organisation, Gambica. Managing Director of Designs for You Ltd, Russell Purvis said "This is an exciting opportunity for Designs for You. We have already taken bookings from over 30 companies, and we are confident that there will be a much stronger British presence next year, along with a fresh new look for British exporters."

So what does this mean?

Well, for the 2007 show, Arablab has expanded and now includes halls 2, 3, 4 and 5, and not just the Sheikh Maktoum and Sheikh Rashid halls in the Dubai International Exhibition Centre. This will provide an extra 35% more exhibition space than in 2006, and is a clear indication of where the show and its organisers want it to go in the future. Show organiser David Domoney commented, "In the past three years we have seen the show grow by 30% over each previous year, so who is to say what the future holds. But with the development of new areas within the exhibition the visitor number is likely to increase again this year by the same amount". At the time of writing, nearly 75% of the floor space for the 2007 show had already been reserved, so looks like the predictions will be met, if not superseded.



If you are a UK company and are interested in exhibiting at Arablab 2007, please contact:

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