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HH Sheikh Mohammed approves
Dubai’s New Tourism Vision for 2020: 20 Million Visitors per
year, trebling sector’s contribution to Dubai’s economy
- Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing to deliver “Ambitious but achievable”
strategy for growing central pillar of Dubai’s diversified economy

Dubai, UAE, 4 May, 2013: His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum,
Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, today officially
approves Dubai’s Vision for Tourism: By 2020, Dubai will welcome 20 million visitors
per year, and the annual contribution made by tourism to the city’s economy will
triple.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum said: “Today is not just about
launching a vision for one of the emirate’s priority economic sectors. It is about sharing the
story of our great city. Over the last eight years, we have doubled the number of visitors to
Dubai from five million to 10 million. Over the next eight years, we will double that number
again so that by 2020 we are welcoming 20 million visitors a year to Dubai. We will also
increase the economic impact of tourism threefold, shaping a new and even brighter future
for Dubai as a destination.

“These are ambitious aims – of course, we are Dubai – but they are achievable. The
Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing will receive the full support of all other
government departments and work closely with our partners in the tourism industry to ensure
that the welcome and the experiences offered to our guests are without parallel. As we
approach the 50th anniversary of the birth of our nation in 2021, never have we been more
ready to share the Dubai experience, and the excitement and energy of all that our city has
to offer.”

Developed by the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) under
guidance from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vision sets out
how the city will both double its annual visitor numbers from 10 million in 2012 to 20 million
in 2020, and increase the economic contribution of the tourism sector. Early estimates from
a study currently being conducted indicate that the current economic contribution is in the
range of AED100 billion.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General of DTCM, said: “The strategy
behind the Dubai Tourism Vision for 2020 will further leverage a sector which has been a
central pillar in the city’s economic growth, success and diversification. It is based upon two
central tenets: the first being to widen our range of tourism offerings across events,
attractions, infrastructure, services and packages and to enhance the overall visitor
experience from arrival to departure. The second tenet is to adapt our marketing approach in
order to showcase Dubai to a wider audience and grow the conversion rate of awareness to
bookings. There are a range of initiatives we will put in place in both of these areas which
will work together to attract more visitors to the city and encourage them to stay longer and spend more money during their time with us.

“Our role at DTCM is to act as a facilitator of growth, harnessing the collective power of stakeholders in the city and deepening engagement with parties outside of Dubai, so that we deliver the vision.”

The target of 20 million visitors will be achieved through meeting a number of objectives. First, maintaining existing market share of the outbound tourism of all source markets: economic and demographic factors will increase the amount of outbound tourists in each market, therefore maintaining Dubai’s existing percentage market share will deliver an up-lift in visitor numbers. Second, increasing awareness and consideration to visit in a number of source markets which DTCM has identified as having significant potential for growth, such as Latin America, China and the emerging economies of Africa. Third, increasing the number of repeat visits, already a significant driver for tourism in the city.

Meeting these objectives in addition to driving up the average length of stay (currently at 3.76 days) and increasing the amount of money spent by tourists during their visits will lead to the trebling of the economic contribution that tourism makes to the emirate’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri said: “The Vision of His Highness has created a destination with experiences that no other city can offer. We have a number of attractions that are famous throughout the world including the world’s tallest building Burj Khalifa, the Burj Al Arab, and The Palm Jumeirah; the world’s largest shopping malls; and an incredible infrastructure which acts as a magnet for global travellers. The city has a portfolio of world-class hotels, the second busiest airport on the planet and a world leading - and in my opinion, the best - airline and these are also very well-known. But in addition we have a substantial, wide-ranging and ever evolving destination offer that compliments the more renowned attractions and we will ensure that every potential visitor knows the depth and range of experiences they can enjoy on holiday in Dubai.

“As a city we have done a very good job in building awareness of Dubai. Part of our new strategy is to adapt our marketing approach to showcase Dubai to an even wider audience but also to grow the conversion rate of awareness to bookings, making sure that a potential visitor doesn’t just know about Dubai - he views it as his next holiday or business destination.”

To widen the range of tourism offerings, there are three key areas of focus:

- In line with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed’s statement earlier this year that the UAE should be the world’s leading family destination, DTCM will play a central role in coordinating the activities of industry and public sector partners to expand the existing attractions, events and experiences that cater to families. This will also include creating segmented packages and tailored offerings that make the most of the Emirate’s assets, including the city, desert and coastline - for example, by effectively marketing the historic and cultural sites; world-class sporting facilities; and capabilities in the cruise industry.

- Dubai as an event destination is a second area of principal focus, with the aim of moving from the regional events hub to a global events and entertainment destination. As part of this, both the Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment
(DEPE) - organiser of festivals such as Dubai Summer Surprises and Dubai Shopping Festival - and Dubai Calendar, were recently integrated into DTCM. DTCM will also continue to work closely with the Expo2020 team to support and promote the Dubai, UAE bid to bring the World Expo to the MENASA (Middle East, North Africa and South Asia) region for the first time.

HE Helal Saeed Almarri commented: “DEPE has been incredibly successful in creating and developing seasonal festivals that have driven the growth of the events and retail sectors. We will now leverage that expertise to create new festivals. Likewise, since it launched two years ago Dubai Calendar has proven a big success, growing from being an online portal at launch to becoming a catalyst for improving the city’s events offer 52 weeks of the year. By bringing these two entities into DTCM alongside Dubai Convention Bureau we can lead a coordinated approach to a year-round programme of events for residents, tourists and business visitors. Becoming the host city for the World Expo 2020 will of course further enhance Dubai’s status as an events capital, which is why we are putting the full weight of DTCM’s support behind the bid team.”

- The offer to business visitors is a third principal focus, with the strategy setting out plans for enhancing Dubai’s status as a business destination. Already the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) capital of the region, DTCM will work with the industry in improving the business tourism offer to make sure that Dubai is the easiest and most effective place to do business; and to adopt a more unified approach to business and leisure tourism.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri said: “We see no distinction between the business traveller and the leisure visitor. Today’s conference delegate is tomorrow’s holidaymaker and there are a number of steps we can take to encourage the business traveller to extend their stay or return for leisure trips with friends and family.”

Following today’s announcement of the Dubai Tourism Vision for 2020, DTCM and its partners in Government will share details of its plans with industry stakeholders from both within Dubai and its key source markets at this week’s Arabian Hotel and Investment Congress and Arabian Travel Market.

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About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM)
With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing’s (DTCM) mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai to global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the Emirate.

DTCM is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector; markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector; and is responsible for the licencing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the DTCM portfolio include Dubai Convention and Events Bureau, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (formerly known as Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment). In addition to its headquarters in Dubai, DTCM operates 20 offices worldwide.
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