

Brazil's "New Alternative" Campaign Bears Fruit in Middle East

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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Brazilian companies participating in the Big 5 Show, the largest trade fair in the construction material sector in the Middle East, left the event with good business perspectives for the next 12 months.

The show, which ended on Wednesday, November 1st, in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, received over 40,000 visitors. "The fair was very positive. Some companies closed immediate deals," stated the project analyst at the Brazilian Export and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex), Ricardo Santana.

The Brazilian stand at the event, which covered an area of over 400 square meters, was organized by the Apex in partnership with the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce. In total, representatives of 30 companies and organizations from Brazil participated in the fair.

According to Santana, Brazilian participation in the next edition has already been decided on. "We are going to bring more companies and to have a larger space," he said.

One of the companies that closed deals at the fair was Porto Ferreira, a maker of floor tiles, facing and ceramics, which is going to export 120 containers of material to Kuwait, Yemen, Oman and Iran.

Another company that already has potential business is Mineração Guidoni, which last year exported all the granite used in the flooring of Mall of the Emirates, in Dubai.

The contacts made at the event were so positive that the export manager at quartzite company SBC Pedras, Samuel Mangia, is going to spend one more week in Dubai to visit importers he met at the fair. "As our first participation, it was very good. We made many potential contacts," he said.

According to Santana, in the region there is a strong market for Brazilian companies. "The companies have great chances on the Arab market. We have quality, competitive prices and storage capacity," stated Santana.

According to him, the Apex, in partnership with the Arab Brazilian Chamber, has worked on a study that proved that these factors are the three main demands of Arab importers.

Ad Campaign Continues

Santana believes that the strong promotion of Brazilian products in Dubai was also a factor that contributed to the success of the companies.

"We placed 200 billboards all around Dubai, published ads in magazines, invited businessmen to the fair and sponsored all the carrier bags at the fair," he said. This was all part of campaign "Brazil: The New Alternative", developed by Apex to promote the image of the Brazilian product.

"Large constructions in Dubai, like the Burj Al Arab hotel, the airport and the Palace of the Emirates, already include Brazilian material, but promotion is lacking," stated Santana. To promote the Brazilian products in the Emirates, Apex is going to repeat the advertising campaign next year.

Apart from construction material, Arab businessmen are seeking Arab Brazilian Chamber representatives interested in importing sugar, wood, food in general and other construction materials that were not exhibited at the fair. Around 500 people contacted the organization at the fair.

The Brazilian presence at the fair also attracted the attention of the local press. Wednesday's edition of newspaper Emirates Today brought a picture of the Brazilian stand and an interview with the Arab Brazilian Chamber's president Antonio Sarkis Jr.

In the article, he says that Brazil is making an effort together with the Brazilian government to promote the Brazilian construction sector in the Emirates.

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