

# AN OASIS OF SCIENCE

*It is fair to say that as soon as you walk in to any hotel, business or conference centre of high repute you will be impressed. However, when you go to a trade show in Dubai, prepared to be impressed and then put a wow factor on top of that. Arablab 2007 in Dubai, UAE has had that wow factor right from the very start.*

If I were to comment further about Dubai, I would continue on about the number of hotels there are here (including the only 7\* hotel in the world "Burj Al Arab" *Figure 1*), the 6 lane expressways (reminiscent of large metropolis in the United States of America), the large splashes of green that are dotted throughout the city like small oasis' in the desert and the incredible rate of building that is occurring at the moment (several hotels *Figure 2*) and large pockets of regeneration, let alone a monorail linking all parts of the city together). But I shalln't continue on this line, this will have to come from your own observations of this amazing city, I will tell you about the extraordinarily high rate of commerce in the scientific market that is occurring in this small corner of the United Arab Emirates.

So where to start... well 2007 saw the 24th Arablab show appear in the city of Dubai, and also it is no coincidence that this was also the largest show to date. With the number of stands and companies that exhibit increasing over last years total by 9% to 756 companies from 47 countries, the number of visitors increasing by 11% to 9,200 from last years 8,300, and the increased size of the Technical Programme. These were not the only changes though. This year there was an increase in the advertising for the show, a huge increase in patronage and publisher partner systems, and moreover there was a high increase in the number of country stands or pavilions that were



*Figure 1. Burj al Arab, the only 7\* star hotel in the world, also a prominent landmark in Dubai.*

The show was opened as in the obligatory way with the ribbons being cut. This year's dignitary was the son of the Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Maktoum Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum *Figure 3*. He toured the 4 halls with a governmental entourage and was introduced to various companies, both big and small, by Show Organiser, and Managing Director of the Domus Group, David Domoney. One such exhibitor who was introduced to the group was George Robertson *Figure 4*, Managing Director of GR Scientific, from the United

## ArabLab 2007 Show Review

Andy Harris, Editor, International Labmate Ltd.

present. One could say that this is now a truly global show that is fundamentally at the centre of the commercial world with the Asian Pacific and Indian Sub-Continent less than four hours away to the East, and the far side of Western Europe (the UK for example) just six and a half hours away to the West. This year saw pavilions from the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France, Spain, Korea and China, along with companies from all other corners of the globe taking stands on their own, along with the addition of sub sections of the show, being: MediLab, BioLab, EnviroLab and PetroLab, especially for the needs of the purchasers or workers in that industry.



*Figure 2. The Emirates Towers and a view down towards Dubai city centre.*



*Figure 3. Sheikh Maktoum Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum officially opening the 2007 ArabLab show, with David Domoney Show Organiser.*

Kingdom Pavilion. Mr Robertson was also one of a select few UK exhibitors to take part in the technical programme schedule and discussed the various applications of KF (Karl Fischer) Coulometric Analysers.

As previously mentioned though, the number of pavilions present had increased over previous editions of the Arablab show, and in correlation with the rest of the show the number grew again this year. So who were on the aforementioned pavilions and why were they there?

It is true to say that by far the biggest pavilion at the show was the German contingent. The pavilion was big, bold, brash and a certainly a statement of intent as to how importantly the German scientific community and Instrument market take the Arabian and Middle Eastern business trend. There were 103 companies represented on the pavilion alone, with further Germans companies to be found as you walked around the floor. Of course on the pavilion were the big German laboratory instrument manufacturers and distributors, but the busiest stand was probably that of the Leica Microsystems stand *Figure 5*. Continuous streams of buyers were looking through the

### Author Details:

Andy Harris, Editor,  
International Labmate Ltd.  
Tel: +44 (0) 1727 855 574  
Email: andy@intlabbmate.com

# FOR THE MIDDLE EAST



Figure 4. George Robertson (MD of GR Scientific) being introduced to the touring party.



Figure 5. Leica Microsystems and the German Pavilion

microscopes and microscopy accessories on show, and a lot of business and demonstrations seemed to be taking place across the stand. This is of course not to say that the other companies were not busy, in fact far from it, but possibly the Leica Microsystems stand being the most imposing, maybe. Across the pavilion other companies had a good report of traffic including Hirschmann Laborgerate showing many types of liquid handling and transfer materials. Other companies that I had spoken to also reported to have a very good show and well beyond their expectations.

The rest of mainland Europe was also well represented with the French pavilion having innovative and exciting products across a whole spectrum of science and services. The pavilion had the look of Gaelic flare and most of the companies responded very well and showed excellent results, whereas some said that the show was just all right. The Spanish pavilion was big and bustling, with many companies making the trip over from Spain, and local dignitaries within Spanish commerce helping the flow of traffic along. As a consequence there was lots of movement and delegation going on between the stand personnel and the local traders, dealers and end-users. The Swiss pavilion was like all the country pavilions was busy, and after speaking to a couple of the companies involved the trend was that there was a lot of production of strong leads for the sales team to follow up on.

New for 2007 though was the Chinese pavilion (Figure 6), and in a statement of intent it was big, bold and brash. There were plenty of corporate logos and always had a busy flow around it and on stands. All the companies responded that business was very good and that this was possibly their biggest show away from the Chinese market. Korean pavilion, companies reporting that they had seen up to 40% more people passing through their area than had done last year, but thought that sales would increase by a similar margin subsequent to the show. They all felt very positive of the show and that it was the best possibility to get into the Middle East market. They had been there for a number of years and thought that the pavilion would grow and get better next year and for years to come.

The UK pavilion at Arablab 2007 was the biggest in the shows history (Figure 7). Within the pavilion there were more than 40 companies and in the entire show there were more than 80 companies representing the UK market. It was clear to see that while just wondering around the pavilion the interest that was being generated was substantial, and one that has possibly been rarely seen at such trade shows before. All the companies from the UK on the pavilion reported good to excellent responses for their goods and services that were on display, and some even leaving their products behind. Talking to the stand staff, which included Sales personnel, Managers, Marketing officials, CEO's and Managing Directors, it was easy to see why the UK companies were enthralled to be part of the show. Many companies were there looking for dealers and links to getting a bigger share of the Middle East market, but also picking up some leads to end-users and individual sales to companies and corporations. After speaking to one such impressed UK Director, he commented "The show is outstanding; we have done more business on the first day here than we did in an entire week at Pittcon... we will definitely be back next year."

As part of the UK's expanding pavilion at Arablab, Designs for You Ltd. has taken on the future growth and nurturing of the group, and is already looking at expanding the pavilion by an additional 50-75% for Arablab 2008. With a large proportion of the UK exhibitors already signed up again for next year, then sure it is time to think about booking your slot and making sure you are there. There is more news here though; Designs for You Ltd. are also in negotiations to create other pavilions after this years UK pavilion was so well received. The implementation of further countries could still be possible for the 2008 show, including: USA, The Benelux Countries, and Australasia. So watch this space for further details as they become clearer. Russell Purvis, Director of Designs for You Ltd., commented saying "We were delighted with the British Pavilion this year, with over 40 companies taking part. The feedback we received from our exhibitors was extremely positive, leading to us reserving 50% more space for the 2008 event, of which 70% has already been filled!" He further commented, "Arablab is rapidly becoming one of the main events of the industry, and is simply a MUST for any company exporting in to the Middle East region." So if all the companies had the same view, next year should be very exciting for the British pavilion at Arablab. For further details about the UK pavilion or any of the other pavilions please contact Designs for You Ltd. at the end of this editorial comment.

The main sponsors of the event were DuBiotech. So what is DuBiotech? Well it is a business and science venture with the backing from the UAE government and various scientific organisations to improve and enlarge the research and development industry in Dubai and moreover the UAE, and "To create a commercially sustainable biotechnology and life sciences cluster in Dubai." To quickly summarise DuBiotech would not do this justice, however to try, it is a multi-million dollar project approx 8 Km from the

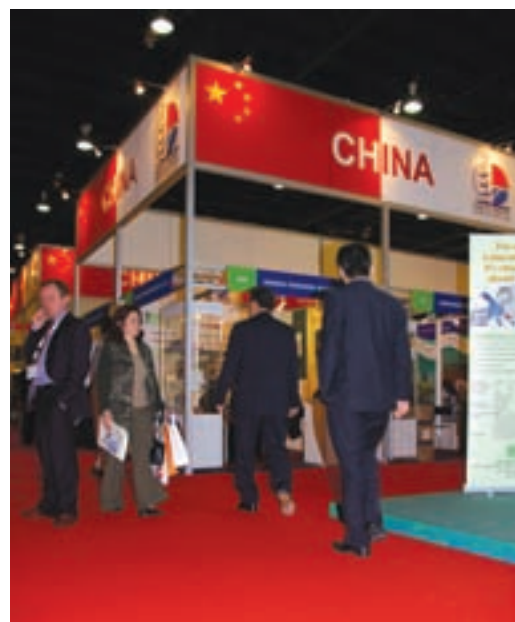


Figure 6. The new look Chinese Pavilion made an impression on it's visitors.



Figure 7. The UK Pavilion was the largest seen in ArabLab's history, and is looking to get bigger next year.



Figure 8. DuBiotech, an imposing stand for an imposing project.

coast of the Arabian Gulf and will house research laboratories, small to medium sized manufacturing plants, schools, universities, shopping centres, residential areas, mosques, churches, conference facilities and hotels, amongst other things. The DuBiotech team held various presentations during the week showing their proposed facilities and what could be possible with backing. Their vision is without question remarkable and had everyone talking at the show that went to see the presentations or went round the stand to talk to people (Figure 8). The figures that are mounting up are extremely impressive as well. Prior to any above ground building work taking place, or any of the large blue-chip organisation coming in with proposals, 15% of the 2,127,735 sq ft of Manufacturing space and 21% of the 5,369,092 sq ft of Research and Development space has been leased, and over 2,000 job applications and CV's have been posted on the recruitment database from skilled employees and graduates from the Asian subcontinent and the Middle East (figures correct at the 14.02.2007 press conference). For those companies who are thinking of moving to the Middle East or getting closer research links with Asia, a quick tour of the DuBiotech facilities and entire economical and strategic set up is well worth the trouble of finding and reading.

In conclusion, one could say that it is easy to see why ArabLab is still a fast growing trade show. The atmosphere, the city, the enthusiasm and the surrounds simply seem to accelerate business and the want to understand and learn. Dubai is certainly the place to be for the link into the Middle East and Asia.

For further information on booking a stand on the UK pavilion, catalogue design and possible marketing solutions, please contact Designs for you Ltd. on: +44 (0)1727 731 819, visit the website: [www.designs4you.biz](http://www.designs4you.biz), or email: [info@designs4you.biz](mailto:info@designs4you.biz)

For any queries relating to Arablab, or booking a general stand please contact The ArabLab Group on: +971 (4) 3 975 418, visit the website: [www.arablab.com](http://www.arablab.com), or email: [info@arablab.com](mailto:info@arablab.com)