



Member Interview



Name Michael Tauschmann
Nationality Austrian
Email michael.tauschmann@austria.info
LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-tauschmann-80123b14/>

Q: Being the Head of Markets for the Austrian National Tourist Office sounds like a fun job. Mr. Michael Tauschmann moved to Dubai in summer 2022 and is now the new Head of Markets for the Middle East and Indian Region. Michael, welcome to this interview, and let me just get into it: is being the Head of Market for India and the Middle East really this dream job? Is it something we should envy you for?

Michael Tauschmann:

Thank you, Werner, for the nice introduction. Well, it is a very fun job and it comes with a lot of travelling, so you have to be ready to travel. In my first two months here, I travelled to all the countries that we cover from our office in Dubai: which is Israel, India and all the GCC countries. I've been on a lot of airplanes so far and that can be considered as fun and most of the times it is. It is just not healthy for a relationship; hence I am here as a single person. I moved from Tokyo, another fascinating city and I am happy to be landed here in Dubai, which seems to be a very exciting city.

Q: Yes, it definitely is and as we see, a lot of big events are going on here. There is the EXPO 2020 in Dubai and in Qatar the Football World Championship and now even Saudi-Arabia got, very

surprisingly, the Winter Asian games. You see a lot of big events are coming to this region and a lot of tourists are expected. Is this a danger for tourism for Austria?

Michael Tauschmann:

Definitely not. Austria is ranked one of the top 15 tourism destinations worldwide. So, I don't think that we need to hide or need to be afraid of what's happening over here and that tourists come here, rather than to Austria. Austria is very popular in the Gulf region, especially in the UAE. We are known for our perfect climate, we are known for the safety, which is an important issue for the travelers from this region. We are definitely known for our historic cities, and we are also family friendly, which is a good point for our key target group here, which is mostly families who travel during summer season.

Q: How will you in the future attract those families from the Middle East and India to Austria. What kind of activities are you planning?

Michael Tauschmann:

I can basically say that the Austrian National Tourist Office is a marketing and PR agency that has one brand called "Holidays in Austria". We do a lot of things from B2C marketing activities, events to social media activities, to google ad campaigns, and so on. We also have a strong focus, and it is very important for this region, on B2B trade activities. We communicate on a regular basis over several channels with our multipliers, which are tour operators and media. We are the only National Tourist Office in this region that actually has a very direct and fast communication channel through a WhatsApp B2B channel, which got very popular with our agents. We have Instagram, Facebook and all in Arabic language. Doing so, we can cover all the Arabic countries and do the marketing for the brand "Holidays in Austria".

Q: Are you planning some kind of TV campaign or cinema campaign?

Michael Tauschmann:

We wish, to be honest. We have seen some of those activities from our competitor Switzerland, which unfortunately has much more budget than we do. Our campaigns are mostly online and together with influencers we put a lot of focus to bring them to Austria. Also, we try to focus on bringing influential families to Austria because it seems that word-of-mouth works very well, especially in the high society here. Apparently, when one part of the Royal family would go to Austria for vacation, then everybody else wants to do the same. We focus to bring celebrities to Austria and ideally that doesn't cost too much, because, as I said, the marketing budget would not allow us to do big outdoor events or TV commercials.

Q: Michael, let's talk about you personally. You are working in this industry for almost 20 years. What is your journey, from the very beginning to Dubai?

Michael Tauschmann:

That's a long journey, I rather keep it short. I finished my Masters in Tourism Management in Austria in 2000 and then my career started with my first step in Berlin within the hotel marketing industry. Back then in 2003, Berlin was booming, and the Austrian National Tourist Office moved all their offices, that they had all over Germany, into one big head office for Germany in Berlin. They were hiring quite a lot of people. I started there as an Event Manager, mostly doing events to promote Austria in Germany. I apparently did a good job, so they promoted me to go to Stockholm to open up our rather small office in Scandinavia. I liked it so much that I stayed 7 years. Then something bigger was waiting for me, I went to Tokyo, which is the biggest city in the world, and it was an amazing experience. Tokyo is basically a market where we have been marketing for Austria for over 40 years. And then an interesting market opened up, which was South Korea. I opened up an office in South Korea. And then it was time to leave and move to a warmer part of Asia, so I was posted here to Dubai. And it's going to be for quite some years, and I hope to see more of all of you.

Q: You lived in Berlin, in Sweden, in Tokyo and Seoul – partly as I understand – and now here in Dubai. What impresses you most about Dubai or the UAE compared to the other places that you lived in?

Michael Tauschmann:

That is a good question. It is very impressive how this country is so organized having so many different nationalities are living here. It's exciting and there is always something happening, so I am definitely looking forward to the times when it is not as hot. I think this is the biggest challenge over here – the temperatures and the climate. I was used to having seasons. In Stockholm and in Tokyo you have 4 seasons like in Austria. Here basically, it just seems to be one big hot season, but I am definitely looking forward to the beach times, because I was never living by the ocean in all those cities. I can't wait for the less hot period, which is starting hopefully now.

Q: Michael, we wish you all the best for your new position here in Dubai and thank you for this interview.

Michael Tauschmann:

Thank you for your time and see you soon.