

Raising the bar for B2B engagement

The inaugural edition of *Mélange* 2024, held in Mumbai, set a new standard for B2B exhibitions in the travel trade industry. By curating a niche platform exclusively for trade professionals and suppliers, the two-day event facilitated meaningful connections and high-quality meetings, proving that sometimes, less is truly more.



Hazel Jain

Organised by a core team of three members from the Mumbai trade, *Mélange* 2024 was a masterclass in B2B excellence where business met immense opportunities. **Pradeep Saboo**, Chairman and Managing Partner, Guideline Travels and Co-Founder of MTF Events, gets to the crux of it. "Our aim was to clear every small and big pain points any exhibitor faces during big shows. This means building the stalls, having the same booth design for every category. But most importantly, we wanted to ensure a completely filtered crowd that actually comes only for business. At *Mélange* 2024, we have made sure that only the right kind of buyer is allowed to enter. So, either you are an exhibitor or you are a buyer, there is no one else in between," he explains, adding that, "When we do B2B business, we don't want people who come to sell their things there. So, every



Pradeep Saboo, Rajat Bagaria and Sameer Kamani

buyer that enters the show has to be a genuine buyer and the seller has to have a diversity in products that a travel agent actually needs."

Sameer Kamani, Owner of Arundaya Travels & Co-Founder of MTF Events, underlines the exhibitor profile and says, "We have tried to cover everything in this show – tourism boards like VisitBritain

and Tourism New Zealand, airlines, DMCs, international suppliers – so, it's a good mix. We have domestic, as well as international exhibitors with a lot of first-timers, who have come in, like India Tourism, VisitBritain, Sabre and even Virgin Atlantic. We have got agents from South America, Morocco, Bali, and Sri Lanka. In terms of buyers, we do have a hosted programme for them.

We have got buyers down from Pune, Nasik, Aurangabad, Gujarat, Chennai, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Delhi and Punjab as well."

Kamani emphasises that they were conscious of not accepting any B2B player as buyers. "They had to be purely B2C. Hoteliers were not allowed as buyers. We received about 2,500 registered buyers,

along with a few invitees. In total, we had about 3,000 plus buyers. The vetting process for buyer registration was stringent. We had a team of 10 people scrutinising their credentials!" he adds.

Rajat Bagaria, Managing Director, Shrishti Tours & Travels, and Co-Founder of MTF Events, says, "We are not looking at numbers; we are looking at quality buyers. We don't want the floor to be flooded with people. Moreover, the design of the show and the design of the booth was different. The idea was to standardise the designing. So, the expense on the designing and

the build-up of the booths was eradicated for exhibitors. Everybody gets the same kind of design if booked in the same category. The uniqueness of the show is that all the stalls are being fabricated, produced and provided by us to our exhibitors. So, there is a uniformity, there is no super spends that my exhibitors have to do."

"We are confident that *Mélange* will set new benchmarks in the industry. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants and look forward to welcoming everyone to what promises to be an exceptional event," said Bagaria.

Mélange 2025

MTF Events' *Mélange* 2025 will take place on 20–21 September 2025 at NESCO in Mumbai. They are offering special pre-registration rates for those who register before 30 September 2024. Current exhibitors may also be eligible for an early bird offer of 50 per cent rebate on all quoted prices if they register on or before 14 October 2024. Meanwhile, the team is preparing for the MTF Premier League 3, which will be held on 12 January 2025.