



IFB calendar is already filling up one year out

ORGANISERS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE
REPORTS TONY MCDONOUGH

ORGANISERS of Liverpool's International Festival for Business (IFB) 2016 have already signed up one-third of the planned number of events - a year before it begins.

IFB 2016 chairman, Max Steinberg, told ECHO Business that plans for next summer's festival were already "significantly more advanced" than they were one year out from the 2014 event.

Next year's IFB, the second one to be held in Liverpool, is being backed to the tune of millions of pounds by the UK Government and will comprise 75 events and conferences over three weeks in June and July.

In 2014 there were more than 400 events over six weeks and organisers believe a shorter, more slimmed down festival will be more effective in helping to bring more jobs and investment into the UK.

Mr Steinberg, also chief executive of Liverpool Vision, said: "IFB is now an established product and people know what they are buying into.

"Also the results from last year were so powerful - £300m of investment, 10,000 jobs and more companies exporting. There will be 75 events for 2016 and we will concentrate on the events from 2014 that brought in the investment and the jobs."

Already signed up for IFB is the two-



Max Steinberg says preparations for IFB 2016 in Liverpool are well advanced

day Horasis conference, which was one of the highlights of the 2014 festival, when around 200 of India's top investors came to Liverpool.

The Government's export arm, UK Trade & Investment, will also be holding a series of events over the three weeks as it seeks to persuade more UK companies to do business overseas.

Other events include the International Waterfront Forum, the WIFI Global Congress and Port Finance International.

Last week, an IFB 2016 "one year out" event was held at the London Stock Exchange and was attended by a number of business leaders, including Gary Millar, Liverpool City Coun-

cil's cabinet member for business, enterprise and investment.

At the event a report was published that forecast Liverpool will see an extra 2,000 jobs created in its digital and creative sector over the next five years.

Cllr Millar said: "Having 75 events next year is more focused and they are the ones that will create jobs.

"We can only actually achieve those figures if we follow-up on events such as IFB where you actually have an international audience coming in to Liverpool."

IFB 2016 will be divided into three themed weeks - manufacturing, energy and environment and creative and digital.